



**The Role of Talent Management and its Outcomes to Achieve  
Sustainable Competitive Advantage: A critical investigation in  
Saudi Arabian oil and gas organisations**

**A Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**By**

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**September 2019**

## **Dedication**

*To my beloved parents .... For their unconditional love, prayers and encouragement*

*To my husband Dr “Ibrhaim Alenezi” ...for his everlasting love, understanding and considerable support throughout the whole journey*

*To my sisters & brothers... for wanting me to achieve my success*

*To my four little angels...for waiting for me patiently and proudly*

*I Love you all from the bottom of my heart.*

## **Acknowledgements**

*The accomplishment of this work would not be possible without helping and blessing my Almighty god then the support of a number of people. Words cannot sufficiently describe what I feel today, when I finally have the opportunity to express my appreciation and gratitude to all of them.*

*I owe extensive thanks and offer my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Abraham Althonayyan, for his great supervision and constant support during all stages of this research. Thanks for every moment he has spent to help me in my work and for encouraging me.*

*Sincere appreciation is extended to those people who helped me so much inside the organizations to carry on my interviews and questionnaires particularly in ARAMCO, SABIC, MAADEN, GAS and ALSAHRA companies. Very special thanks to Engineer Afet Alsharari who significantly supported me during collecting data.*

## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that the materials contained in this thesis have not been previously submitted for a degree in this or any other university. I further declare that this thesis is wholly my own work and is solely based on my own research.

I declare that all information in this research has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct.

Amal Alanazi

## List of Conference Papers

Alanazi, A (2017) ‘The Role Talent Management and its Outcomes to Achieve Sustainable Competitive Advantage: From Organisational And Employee Perspectives: *A critical investigation in the Saudi Arabia Private Sector, PhD Doctoral Symposium (Brunel University):* London, 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> May.

Althonayan, A. Alanazi, A. (2018) ‘Talent management and its outcomes in Saudi Arabia private corporations, *British Academy of Management Conference:* Bristol , UK, 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> Sep.

Alanazi, A (2018) ‘The Impact of Talent Management to Achieve Sustainable Competitive Advantage in Saudi Arabia private organisations, *PhD Doctoral Symposium (Brunel University):* London, 18<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> May.

Alanazi, A (2018) “mixed method advantages and disadvantages” LCSS (*LCSS – London Centre for Social Studies*) London 20 April

Althonayan, A. Alanazi, A (2019) “The role of Talent Management and its outcomes on employee engagement to achieve Sustainable Competitive Advantage” *British Academy of Management Conference* 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> Sep.

Althonayan, A, Alanazi, A (2019) “How Talent Management Achieve Sustainable Competitive Advantage” *British Academy of Management Conference* 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> Sep.

### ***Journal Paper***

Althonayan, A. Alanazi, A “Talent management: A strategy for improving employee recruitment, retention and engagement within oil and gas organisations.” *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* (Under Review).

## **Abstract**

This Research investigates the concept of talent management (TM) practices in oil and gas industry. In addition, this research investigates TM relationship with internal organisational factors including leadership, organisational culture, employer branding, rewards system. This Research investigates that effect TM implementation on TM outcomes, which includes employee attitudes (commitment, satisfaction, engagement and motivation) and How can TM achieve sustainable competitive advantage in oil and gas organisations. Despite the increasing number of TM adoptions in various organisations in recent years, this research found that TM practices are still in the early stages of development with a lack of effective framework which required further development. The literature review identified the gaps in TM literature; prompting the development of a framework for understanding the relationship between TM, its outcomes and internal factors, which are critical for the effective TM implementation Accordingly, TM framework was developed to address the key shortcomings of existing TM practices in the oil and gas organisations and to provide practical guidelines to academics and practitioners. This research is supported by two major theories including Resource-Based View (RBV) theory and SET (Social Exchange Theory). RBV is used for explaining how internal resources (talented human resources) could induce competitive advantage and improve organisational performance. SET is used for analysing the relationship between the employees and the organisation. This research adopted an interpretivist research philosophy along with the case study of the oil and gas organisations in Saudi Arabia. A two-stage empirical study employing sequential mixed methods of data collection and analysis was adopted in this research. A series of 26 semi-structured qualitative interviews from diverse managerial levels from various oil and gas organisations who have thorough knowledge and experience of TM practices was conducted. In addition, a quantitative “survey” with 417 “talented employees “in oil and gas organisations. This research will use statistical techniques for analysing the data. The data collected from the survey will be input into IBM SPSS Statistics for analysis, while the qualitative data will be analysed using Microsoft Excel using descriptive statistics

The analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data has identified that TM practises can result in effective talent outcomes including increased employee commitment, motivation, satisfaction and performance and efficiency, which would result to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. The relationship was identified between TM practices, talent outcomes (employee’s attitudes) and organisational outcomes. This research also reflected that it is important to identify the most important the influencing factors of TM in organisations, so that TM implementation is effectively and efficiently managed across the organisations. The main contribution to the knowledge and practical arena is the development of a TM framework for the oil and gas organisations, supported by practical guidelines for its effective implementation. This research has identified that effective implementation of TM practices can lead achieve sustainable competitive advantage. A key limitation of the research was identified as the nature and distribution of the sample population. The Researcher recommends that TM practises should be aligned with organisational strategy and must be continuously updated according to the changes in the internal and external environments (with respect to organisations) in order to improve sustainable competitive advantage. The Researcher recommends that future research should focus on evaluating the relationship between the TM and other internal and external organisational factors, which leads to the better understanding of issues pertaining to TM implementation in the oil and gas organisations.

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## Abbreviations

<b>AC</b>	Affective commitment
<b>CA</b>	Competitive Advantage
<b>GCC</b>	Gulf Cooperation Council
<b>GD</b>	Geographical Distance
<b>GTM</b>	Global Talent Management
<b>HR</b>	Human Resource
<b>HRM</b>	Human Resource Management
<b>IHRM</b>	International Human Resource Management
<b>KPIs</b>	Key Performance Indicators
<b>KSA</b>	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
<b>MT</b>	Managing Talent
<b>RBV</b>	Resource-Based View
<b>SC</b>	Social Capita
<b>SCA</b>	Sustainable Competitive Advantage
<b>SET</b>	Social Exchange Theory
<b>SHRM</b>	Strategic Human Resource Management
<b>SNSs</b>	Social Networking Sites
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
<b>TD</b>	Talent development
<b>TDP</b>	Training development programme
<b>TM</b>	Talent Management
<b>TR</b>	Talent retention
<b>UK</b>	The United Kingdom
<b>USA</b>	The United States of America
<b><math>\chi^2</math></b>	Chi-Square

## Chapter 1: Introduction

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### 1.1. Background

Since the beginning of this millennium, the business environment around the world has witnessed a spiral of events and changes that can be directly attributed to globalisation. Globalisation and the consequences of economic and cultural openness have placed unprecedented burdens on organisations, posing challenges to organisations in technology, communication, competition and human capital. As a consequence, organisations have been forced to make adjustments and improvements to their operations, products, methods of operation and assets, including the most important one: the human element. These improvements are essential for the survival of any organisation in the market place, as they redefine goals and objectives according to the changes in the market place. The main drivers of achieving the goals and objectives may include human capital, which can be coupled with other aspects such as technology upgradation, business process reengineering etc.

In today's global economy, the highly competitive pressure worldwide has created a dynamic and competitive environment in which most organisations must learn to compete effectively to accomplish sustainable growth (Scullion and Collings, 2011; Schuler, Jackson and Tarique, 2011a). The advent of globalisation and the intensity of competition have not only changed the way business is conducted, but also have identified talent resources as a key factor for prosperity, competitive advantage and organisational success. The growth and evolution of the world economy over the last two centuries have demonstrated that a nation's aptitude to identify, attract, develop and deploy human capital is the most significant factor in the international marketplace. Workforces around the world have become more educated, diverse and more mobile (Briscoe, Schuler and Claus, 2009).

In order to keep pace with developments and overcome the challenges that meet the organisation, the efforts of an organisation's staff should be directed towards the sustainable improvement that enables the organisation to meet the new demands of the customer and other stakeholders (Brito *et al.*, 2007). Consequently, it may be understood that the human element is the greatest common denominator in the process of continuous improvement (Alison *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, business leaders and human resources managers should go beyond the mere employment of staff to fill positions and focus on improving the efficiency of human capital, which could add competitive advantage (CA) and value to the organisations. They should convince themselves that a sustainable improvement requires a pool of employees who have

explicit talents and implicit capabilities in terms of innovation, foresight and mastery of technology (Beechler and Woodward, 2009).

The need for developing talent has become a global human resources (HR) concern in terms of the identification, recruitment and deployment of skills (Zhang *et al.*, 2018). However, there is still ambiguity in understanding the concept of managing talent within organisations and the approach to be adopted for talent management (TM) (Dimitrov, 2018; Obeidat *et al.*, 2019). In addition, the TM definitions spread across the various aspects increase the complexity of understanding TM practises, the roles and responsibilities for TM and its implementation in organisations. TM is regarded as the fundamental ingredient in a successful people strategy that focuses on the improvement of engagement among employees, encouraging high performance, commitment and higher retention rates. Kehinde (2012 p134) defines TM as “the organisation’s commitment regarding the hiring, management and retaining of talented employees available in the job market”. Further, TM involves the development of structures, systems and work processes that relate to the improvement of a superior workforce.

Kehinde (2012) explains that, while most businesses can attract individuals with high potential, the challenges of developing, managing and retaining the talent are massive. This therefore highlights the need to have planned strategies for TM. Furthermore, TM systems are vital for addressing the challenges of globalisation that are geared towards achieving the objectives and goals of sustainable improvements (Rabbi *et al.*, 2015; Latukha 2016). As a result of globalisation, the need for talent has been increasing and there has been a crisis of talent globalisation as human resources departments grapple to find quick solutions. This has been heightened by the new social technologies that focus on emotional intelligence and other specialised techniques to optimise TM. Gardner (2002) argues that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the survival of organisations solely relies on the ability to adapt, with regards to attracting and retaining talent. This awareness has made TM a critical discipline that has been approached from various perspectives within organisations.

More specifically, TM focuses on the administration of human capital that comprises of skills, people and knowledge. A recent study by Deloitte (2016), commissioned on over 2,500 HR leaders from developing countries, found that they are ill-prepared to face and tackle critical talent identification and management issues (Deloitte, 2016). This assertion is collaborated by Gardner (2002), who concurs that TM has become a global challenge facing most organisations

resulting from the scarcity of talent. This has necessitated such organisations to grapple and compete for the same pool of talent in terms of acquisition and retaining in order to sustain their operations and sustain their businesses (Collings and Mellahi, 2009). Most importantly, the human capital skills are gradually replacing technology and products as key assets of transformation and the management or organisational needs. However, the complexities surrounding TM and factors influencing its application and integration in the organisations were poorly focused by the research studies, as most of the studies considered the individual elements of TM such as talent attraction, development, retention, employee performance and efficiency etc. A comprehensive study of all the TM practises, the factors influencing the implementation of TM and the impact of TM practises at the employee level and organisational level remains largely unaddressed. In addition, TM practises vary from region to region and organisation to organisation, and according to the availability of resources, organisational requirements and external environmental conditions. Therefore, there is a need to increase the research in specific to TM and its outcomes at different levels.

## **1.2. Problem Statement**

As a concept, TM is vital for HR leaders in the implementation of global recruitment and selection strategies. This assists in the generation of essential insights that are required in the drive for quality hires and a proactive approach for building talent. According to Oracle (2013), understanding TM provides a holistic approach to HR managers regarding compensation, learning processes, recruitment, performance management and talent review mechanisms. However, the primary problem of TM emanates from the fact that most talent systems have failed to translate such structures into organisational performance. For example, the design of such structures has failed in the planning and implementation of management policies to have a positive impact on the process of acquisition, development and retaining of talent for the purposes of competitive advantage (CA) (Kehinde, 2012). In this regard, the need for businesses to continually devise new and innovative ways of achieving CA requires the positive alignment of its functional areas with organisational performance (Margi, 2014). Furthermore, it has become difficult to locate and nurture talent, thus making it easier to lose qualified people in short spans. Most organisations are privy to the fact that there is scarcity of talent, a shortage of young people to join the workforce and the abundance of old people within the workforce (Kehinde, 2012). Gardner (2002) explains that this arrangement has increased the demand for innovative skills to address the rising deficit and develop a more diverse workforce for organisational growth and sustainability.



Thus, it can be understood that human capital is one of the most important resources in an organisation, and managing it is one of the most important processes of the organisations. This is no exception in the oil and gas organisations. In pursuit of becoming sustainable organisations, employees in these corporations have to strive towards improving skills and competencies and deliver high performance. This suggests that the organisations should be able to identify and optimise the talent and potential of their employees. However, the current level of TM practises in these corporations are not favourable. Bennett (2017) stated that Saudi Arabia (KSA) was ranked as the fifth lowest country globally in terms of loss of talent. According to Al-Mansour (2013), the country faced employee turnover due to lack of loyalty and ineffective retention strategies, which has resulted in a total loss of SR 35 billion in business annually. It was reported that KSA has suffered competitive disadvantage due to dismissal costs, with estimation costs of 80 weeks of salary per employee (The National Competitiveness Center, January 2009). Employee turnover and dismissals will undeniably affect the human capital talent and corporation performance (Samad, 2013). This also indicates corporations' inefficiency to attract, retain and motivate employees. This is contradictory to the Saudisation policy, which demands effective management of HR functions and activities especially in terms of talent attraction, learning and development, managing talent and talent retention. The problem that this research is concerned with is the issues of talent attraction, learning and development, managing talent and talent retention, which limits corporations' approaches towards gaining sustainable competitive advantage (SCA) and high performance. Accordingly, the extent that these issues may affect the employee attitudes (commitment, satisfaction, engagement and motivation) and performance (sustainable competitive advantage) are not well understood. Whereas most studies have emphasised the linkages among the above variables, they are limited to the other regions (mostly Western countries, as shown in Figure 1.1). The above issues need to be solved as the loss of great talent in the oil and gas organisations will affect the overall productivity of the organisations, national income and GNP. In addition, there are other factors that stress the need for conducting the research on TM in KSA.

Documents by country or territory  
Compare the document counts for up to 15 countries/territories

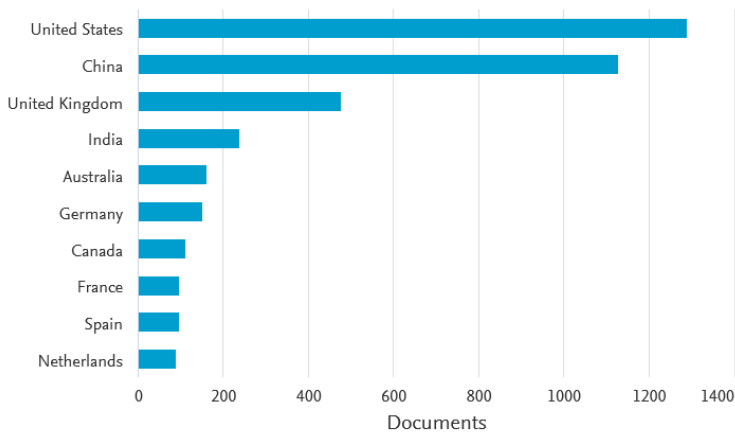


Figure 1.1: Distribution of TM studies by countries  
Source: Brunel University library (2019)

Angari (2013) points out that TM focuses on an evaluation of employees' performance in granting rewards and compensation, in addition to giving personnel the opportunity for appropriate development. In Saudi private sector organisations, Achoui (2009) points out that the case of TM in most Saudi organisations is similar to a large extent to that in other bureaucratic organisations in the world. These organisations do not manage administrative talent effectively, although there is interest in the management of human resources. However, in terms of attention to TM, this is almost non-existent or, at best, is of minimum concern in some organisations (Angari, 2013). As the demographic conditions, TM and employment conditions in KSA are different to other countries given the strong cultural background and the changing government policies in improving business opportunities, it is essential that detailed research into TM operations in these corporations has to be conducted. Accordingly, this research attempts to answer several questions as highlighted in the research questions and objectives, as presented in Section 1.4.

To this end, this research aims to investigate the role of Talent Management and its outcomes to achieve Sustainable Competitive Advantage. And develop a TM framework in the private oil and gas organisations, supported by practical guidelines for both academics and practitioners. This research will also attempt to investigate several issues related to the managerial practices of oil and gas organisations in managing talent.

### 1.3. Research Rationale

Firstly, the oil and gas organisations in the world play a very important role in building the national economy. Currently, the concept and practices of TM are not well understood as there

are limited studies being conducted in this research area especially in KSA. Generally, the quality of human capital (in particular talented human capital) is not at maximum level. Furthermore, the government has listed a high priority in its policy formulation for utilizing highly skilled and competent employees in every sector to increase productivity and reduce the dependency on expatriates. Furthermore, empirical studies are rather scarce and investigation into how the concept of 'talent' is applied in oil and gas organisations, which are currently facing a lack or shortage of skilled manpower, provides support to conduct the research in this area which ultimately adds to the existing body of knowledge or literature on TM.

Previous studies on TM (Baum, 2008; Hughes and Rog, 2008; Nzonzo and Chipfuva, 2013), for example, focused on factors that influence TM in the hotel industry and the strategy for TM. However, fewer studies evaluated the context of the oil and gas organisations. Hence this research will fill the gap of previous research findings and provide valuable contributions to the body of knowledge on TM in the domain of the oil and gas organisations. Moreover, the motivation for this research is to find out if the concept of TM is relevant to the oil and gas organisations sector based on the lack and shortage of skilled employees. If it is relevant, the next question is how TM is defined and identified in the sector of the oil and gas organisations, how the talent is managed in this sector, and how TM would impact the employee attitudes and performance and organisational performance. These are a few questions that will be addressed in this research.

Accordingly, the significance of the study stems from the importance of the human element in business organisations. As a result of the intensification of the competition between organisations at both the local and global levels, the focus has shifted from quantity to quality, whereby the quality of staff has become the major concern. Organisations are now struggling to attract capable people whose skills and experience they can enhance through opportunities that they hope would expose hidden talent. This is because talented people have the ability to innovate and improve work practices (Reuter, 2010; Margi, 2014).

This research is significant because it will provide positive insight into how employees can be effectively managed in relation to their talents comprising of skills and expertise. In any working environment, it is critical to develop competitive practitioners and business management practices in integration with TM. Therefore, this research will be highly informative for HR leaders on how to develop innovative ways of attracting, managing, improving and retaining talent as a way of creating competitive advantage and improving sustainable competitive advantage.

#### **1.4. Research Motivation**

TM is likely to be a major challenge in all economies right across the world. Despite recent increased attention and rapid growth in the area of TM, there is still considerable criticism regarding the rigour and lack of sufficient understanding of the definition of TM and its theoretical development, mainly in the global context (Collings and Mellahi 2009; Scullion, Collings and Caligiuri 2010; Scullion and Collings 2011; Festinga, Schafera and Scullion, 2013). Other studies have reported that there is little evidence that organisations implement talent management in an effective manner (Sparrow, Brewster, and Harris, 2004; Cohn, Khurana and Reeves, 2005; Scullion and Collings, 2006; Cappelli, 2008b). Although organisations tend to recognise the importance of TM, they frequently fail to manage it effectively (Sparrow, Brewster, and Harris, 2004; Collings, Scullion and Morley, 2007; Cappelli, 2009).

This section discusses the key factors that motivate the research undertaken in this research. Firstly, there is a dearth of research on the use of TM in oil and gas organisations (Alamri, 2015; Ali, 2011; Al Ruwaili, Bright and Alhameed 2014). Secondly, there are various challenges identified with respect to TM in oil and gas organisations (Randeree, 2012). Thirdly, the changing business environments and the government policies highlighted the need for TM in KSA oil and gas organisations. These aspects and the motivational factors are discussed in the following sections.

##### **1.4.1. Knowledge gaps**

There are various gaps in research related to TM were identified. The lack of understanding TM (Ashton and Morton, 2005; Lewis and Heckman, 2006; O'Connor and Crowley-Henry, 2017; Isa *et al.*, 2018; Walter *et al.*, 2010), lack of empirical studies investigating the relationship between TM and organisational outcomes, internal factors such as organisational culture, leadership etc. (Jolyn *et al.*, 2013; Christina and Nicky, 2013; Nsour and Tayeh, 2018; Latukha, 2016; Dana and Snejina, 2018), and lack of effective framework for implementing TM were identified. In addition, various challenges were identified with respect to TM in oil and gas organisations, which included workforce mobility, talent shortages, increasing businesses focusing on human capital with the initiative of Vision 2030 by KSA government, varying business practices across the organisations etc. (Alamri, 2015; Ali, 2011; Al Ruwaili, Bright and Alhameed 2014). These changes adopted according to Vision 2030 are aimed at transforming Saudi economy from oil dependent to knowledge dependent economy (Alshanbri

*et al.*, 2015; Dirani, Hamie and Tlaiss, 2017), which highlights the need for effective TM practices in order to foster organisational growth and sustainability. These challenges have motivated the Researcher to take up this research, which focuses on understating the concept of TM in relation to the internal organisational factors, TM outcomes, and sustainable competitive advantage.

#### **1.4.2. Potential benefits**

There are various benefits of conducting this Research which have motivated the Researcher to take up this research study. Firstly, the extensive literature review and the empirical findings can contribute to the academia in understanding the concept of TM from various perspectives. Secondly, the relationship between the TM practises, internal organisational factors, TM outcomes, and sustainable competitive advantage (SCA) is explained and evaluated using the framework, which can have both practical (managing talent in organisations) and academic (expanding the scope and understanding of TM implementation) implications. In addition, the practical guidelines proposed in this Research can benefit the oil and gas organisations for implementing TM practices and managing talent.

#### **1.5 Research Aims**

1. Investigate the role of Talent Management and its outcomes to achieve Sustainable Competitive Advantage.
2. Develop a TM framework in the private oil and gas organisations, supported by practical guidelines for both academics and practitioners.

#### **1.6 Research Objectives**

To achieve the Research aim(s), the following objectives are developed:

1. Critically investigate how the concepts of talent management are defined and understood and in oil and gas organisations.
2. Investigate and identify various internal factors that influence TM implementation in the oil and gas organisations.
3. Investigate and identify the various TM practises adopted and identify TM challenges in the oil and gas organisations.
4. To examine the impact of TM on TM outputs in terms of attitudinal aspects
5. Identify the relationship between TM outcomes and sustainable competitive advantage.
6. Identify TM literature gaps and evaluate current frameworks.

7. validate TM framework for managing talent by considering TM practices, internal factors, the TM outcomes, and sustainable competitive advantage; and develop practical guidelines for its implementation in the oil and gas organisations.

### **1.7. Research Questions**

The research problem of this Research is discussed through the following questions:

1. How is TM defined and understood in oil and gas organisations?
2. What are the managerial practices applied by the oil and gas organisations in TM? What TM challenges are faced?
3. What are the main internal factors influencing TM implementation in oil and gas organisations?
4. What is the impact of TM practices on TM outputs in terms of attitudinal aspects?
5. How can TM and its outcomes achieve sustainable competitive advantage?

### **1.8. Research Contributions**

The main contributions resulting from achieving the Research aims and objectives can be summarised as follows:

1. This Research makes a considerable contribution in the development of the TM framework (Chapter 3, Figure 3.5) for the oil and gas organisations;
2. This Research supports in increase awareness of TM practices and how TM achieve sustainable competitive advantage. This Research contributes to improved understanding of the role and importance of TM and its outcomes in the oil and gas organisations. The Research aims to focus on the main practices of TM and offer appropriate guidance on how it can be successfully accomplished.
3. The Research contributes to literature by identifying the existing TM practices applied by oil and gas organisations, that has proven to bring about a positive impact on sustainable competitive advantage for organisations and the underlying factors that add to the concept;
4. This Research identifies the relationship between the TM practise (talent attraction, identification, development and retaining), employee attitudes (employee engagement, commitment, motivation and satisfaction), organisational outcomes (sustainable competitive advantage) and the influence of internal factors (employer branding, organisational culture and rewards systems) on TM operations. This is one of the major contributions, which is achieved by addressing the gaps in the literature through an

empirical study;

5. To the best of Researcher's knowledge, lack of studies has been conducted on TM practise and TM outcomes in the Saudi context. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has one of the most rapidly developing economies in the Middle East and is one of the G20 countries. This increases the importance of completing a study in this particular context.

### **1.9. Research Methodology**

This section outlines the methodological approach taken in this Research that is later discussed in detail in Chapter 4. The discussion of research methodology attempts to present some of the specific tools and techniques that can be used in the design of this Research and the development of its accurate interpretation (Walliman, 2005).

The aim of this Research is to investigate the role of Talent Management and its outcomes to achieve SCA and develop a TM framework for the private oil and gas organisations. This Research adopts an interpretive research philosophy as it includes the social research and qualitative data collection from the social entities, using an inductive approach. After examining the various possibilities of research choices, mixed methods were found to be the most appropriate choice of methods. Accordingly, the study uses a case study (the oil and gas organisations in KSA) and adopts a qualitative approach supported by quantitative methods for data collection and analysis. The flexibility and dynamic nature of mixed methods can be useful in improving the analytical power of the studies (Sandalewski, 2000). The Researcher found that a sequential study starting with qualitative research followed by a quantitative study was an appropriate approach in order to effectively analyse and support the research approach for validating the framework and subsequent findings. The qualitative approach was administered using semi-structured interviews, and the quantitative approach was administered using an online survey.

The qualitative study focused on conducting the semi-structured interviews for gathering information from the managers in Saudi oil and gas organisations regarding the TM practices adopted in their respective organisations. Based on the findings from the qualitative study, an online survey was developed for collecting the employees' perspectives of various TM practises and influencing factors and TM outcomes based on their experience in their respective organisations. The findings from the quantitative study would be useful for identifying the relationship between TM outcomes practises, sustainable competitive advantage. This research will use statistical techniques for analysing the data. The data collected from the survey will be

input into IBM SPSS Statistics for analysis, while the qualitative data will be analysed using Microsoft Excel using descriptive statistics.

### 1.10. Research Outline

The Research will be presented in two segments comprising of theoretical and field research. There will be eight chapters in this Research. The structure is outlined in Figure 1.2. Part I comprises of five chapters based on theoretical aspects. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the research. It describes the key areas of research to be explored, objectives, contributions and the research outline. It sheds light on the structure of the corresponding body of research.

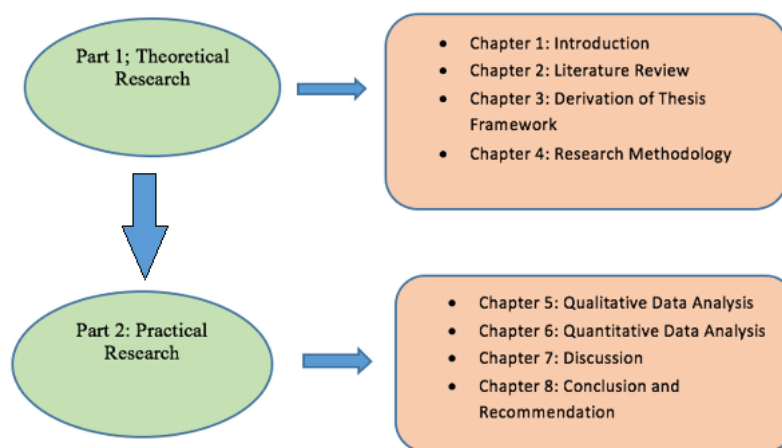


Figure 1.2: Research Structure  
Source: Researcher

Chapter 2 discusses the academic concepts of TM prevalent in the existing scholar portals and libraries. It explains how TM has evolved and the implementations of various aspects. It defines the industry-based research existing in the area, TM strategies and approaches, surveys and case studies in the current age. It also provides insight into the literature gap arising from thorough evaluation of the existing literature and uses a four-quadrant framework to highlight a gap in the literature.

Chapter 3 presents the proposed theoretical TM framework, developed based on the review of literature (Chapter 2) and an assessment of its shortcomings (Chapter 3), the aim being to generate long-term sustainable value for organisations. It discusses the contents, operation and shortcomings of the framework.

Chapter 4 presents the research design and methodology including the philosophy of the research design, exploratory study, data collection (target population, sampling, research



instrument, tackling potential biases and piloting), analytical strategy (data analysis, assessment of nonresponse bias data needs matrix) and ethical considerations.

Part II is devoted to the field research and consists of chapters of an empirical nature.

Chapter 5 explains the qualitative data accumulated, processed and documented. It reports on the findings of descriptive analysis of the interviews conducted with the participants. It provides thorough understanding and semi-structured interviews from respondents of the research.

Chapter 6 explains the various quantitative data collected and analysed from the survey responses. It explores the data gathered through quantitative research and helps the researcher gather substantial results from the data assessed through the research.

Chapter 7 provides validation of the thesis framework deriving from the findings of the mixed methods data analysis.

Chapter 8 summarises the research, draws conclusions, discusses the contributions of the study and its limitations, and makes recommendations for future research.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

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### 2.1. Introduction

TM is one of the major organisational operations and has gained importance in various organisations in recent years. It is perceived by various authors that TM can positively contribute to organisational growth and achieve competitive advantage, thereby achieving sustainability (Rabbi *et al.*, 2015; Latukha 2016). However, the concept of TM can be understood from various perspectives as it can be influenced by various factors (Alison *et al.*, 2019). The focus of TM is on managing the talent within the organisations in such a way that it adds value to the organisations by increasing the operational outcome, leading innovation and maintaining effective talent resources, which may comprise of talented employees (Collings *et al.*, 2018).

Talented professionals can positively or negatively affect an organisation. Managing talent is thus an essential and significant topic in relation to organisational growth, sustainability and competitive advantage (CA) (Latukha 2016). Talent retention is very important to organisations that seek to adopt changes in the business environment and develop accordingly, while maintaining their competitive edge. Therefore, through teams of “talent pools”, organisations must continuously work to improve product-operations, customer service, human resources and all other parts of the organisation. These improvements must not stop because they were conducted to meet the stakeholders’ needs, which are always renewed based on the CA (Reuter, *et al.*, 2010). Focusing on these aspects, this chapter presents a review of the concept of talent and TM streams, perspectives, the need for managing talent and the issues associated with managing talent. In addition, TM systems and practices are discussed in detail along with their impact on human resources, such as motivation, satisfaction, engagement and commitment.

The TM system includes several practices that are similar to those of HRM. Consequently, TM relates to the best practices of HRM. Margi (2014) suggests the main elements of a TM system include talent attraction, talent selection, talent retention and recognition of the gifted. TM is concerned with the retention of staff with the highest performance, the development of their abilities as well as those of their peers who show average performance (Collings and Mellahi 2009; Zhang *et al.*, 2018). TM usually monitors these attributes so that staff can make a greater contribution and will act decisively towards those with a lower performance. Based on these points, this chapter presents a detailed analysis of TM and its association or relationship with various organisational entities and operations.

Collings and Mellahi (2009) show that organisations that want to exploit their internal talent should first identify the positions that have the most significant potential impact on organisational performance. The process also requires deep thinking as to how to fill these positions and which employees from the internal staff are suitable to fill such positions. Therefore, organisations should develop a talent pool. Lewis and Heckman (2006) suggest links between the components of TM and some strategic questions, such as the recruitment and training strategic plan. Beechler and Woodward (2009) propose that business practitioners and academics should go beyond mere competitiveness of winners and losers towards a distinctive approach; however, in order to create an approach to “talent solution”, it depends on the language, substance and innovation that can provide a suitable paradigm to attract, develop, motivate and retain talented employees. Based on these factors, this chapter also analyses the strategic TM operations by comparing them with various influencing factors such as talent retention, training and development, reward systems, empowerment, leadership and cultural impacts. In addition, the major focus is applied to how the TM practices, or their derivatives, can improve organisational performance and achieve a sustainable competitive advantage.

## **2.2. Talent Definitions**

Talent has been conceptualised by various authors and the definition has evolved over time. Michaels *et al.*, (2001, p. 4), for example, defined talent as "... the sum of an individual's abilities, their intrinsic gifts, skills, knowledge, experience, intelligence judgment, attitude, character and drive". Talent has also been defined as a person's ability to learn and grow. Michaels *et al.*, (2001) stated that talent refers to the best and the brightest top 10-20 percent of employees in organisations. In concluding the term ‘*war for talent*’, Dries (2013) suggested that talent is derived based on the assumptions that knowledge economy as the traditional source of CA is not as popular as human talent. This is because this resource is a renewable resource and cannot be easily imitated by competitors. Secondly, it is increasingly difficult to attract and retain talented people due to demographic trends. Generally, scholars are in agreement that human capital talent is one of the most important resources for organisations. “Without better talent, most of the other actions (performed by organisations) would not have been successful” (Lewis and Heckman, 2006, p. 142). Due to the importance associated with talent (specifically human capital talent), it is important for organisations or business corporations to manage talent.

The definition of talent within an organisation lacks a consistent description and appears to have broad boundaries within scholarly and human resource practitioner literature. Due to this

ambiguity and its association with many theories, TM scholars rarely define what they exactly mean by "talent" (Barab and Plucker, 2002). Despite these many differences in definitions, the concept of talent has become a relevant topic for the study of human resources in order to advance TM (Tansley, 2011; Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and Gonzalez-Cruz, 2012). It is imperative to review the discussions and academic research to decipher what talent exactly means within an organisation. Is it the people of an organisation and the characteristics of these people, or is it the performance and potential of an individual in order to effectively manage this talent?

The term "talent" seems to exist everywhere and has evolved over time. A historic review of the term reveals origins from the Latin word *talentum* (Knowles, 2005; Stevenson, 2010), which in turn originated from a Greek word referring to "balance, weight, sum of money" (Hoad, 1996). Through this historical point of view, talent represented a unit of weight for Babylonians, Assyrians, Greeks and Romans (Cresswell, 2009). Over time, it developed other meanings and by the nineteenth century, talent was referred to as people (Tansley, 2011). In taking a more direct approach, when consulting the Oxford English Dictionary, talent is defined as a "natural aptitude or skill". It further expands this definition to "people possessing such aptitude and skill".

Essentially, within the workplace, the individuals making an immediate or long-term contribution to the organisation's performance in delivering its product or service are referred to as talent. Talent can be used to describe anything; for example, a business leader can use it to mean to gain a CA within the marketplace (Ulrich, 2011). The concept of talent can be understood in two ways. The first approach is talent as people or the contributors within an organisation. The second approach is the characteristics of these contributors to the organisation, such as knowledge, abilities and/or competencies (Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and Gonzalez-Cruz, 2012). Therefore, the word talent may be used interchangeably regarding people or the knowledge, skills and abilities of the people depending on a business' need.

There is difficulty in providing a universally understood definition of talent since each organisation uses the term for their own terminology. Ulrich and Smallwood (2012) even developed a formula to define this obscure word: "Talent competence [knowledge, skills and values required for today's and tomorrow's job; right skills, right place, right job, and right time] commitment [willing to do the job] contribution [finding meaning and purpose in their job]" (Ulrich and Smallwood, 2012, p.114). Talent, therefore, encompasses a person's knowledge, skills and potential for growth, or the sum of the person's ability (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod, 2001). Meanwhile, performance and key positions appear to be

at the core of talent. While talent may be associated with anyone in an organisation with the skills and aptitude to complete a job, scholars have used it more often to describe those who have high potential or demonstrate high performance. Even though an objective approach to talent fits within the syntax of talent in research, which defines talent as characteristics of people (Tansley, 2011), a subjective approach of defining talent as people is more common in organisational practice (Iles, Preece, *et al.*, 2010). These various definitions of talent lead to ongoing confusion, thus requiring more thorough research and definition of TM.

Table 2.1: Talent Definitions

Year	Author/Source	Definition
2000	Gagne	“superior mastery of systematically developed abilities or skills” (p. 67).
2001	Buckingham and Vosburgh	“Talent should refer to a person’s recurring patterns of thought, feeling, or behaviour that can be productively applied” (p. 21).
2006	Lewis and Heckman Tansle	“...is essentially a euphemism for ‘people’” (p. 141).  “Talent can be considered as a complex amalgam of employees’ skills, knowledge, cognitive ability and potential. Employees’ values and work preferences are also of major importance” (p. 2).
2007	Stahl <i>et al.</i> ,  Ulrich	“A select group of employees - those that rank at the top in terms of capability and performance - rather than the entire workforce” (p. 4).  “Talent equals competence [able to do the job] times commitment [willing to do the job] times contribution [finding meaning and purpose in their work]” (p. 3).
2008	Iles	“Observes talent as the employees, who are particularly valuable to an organisation-either in view of their ‘high potential’ for the future or because they are fulfilling business/operation-critical roles” (p. 215).
2009	Cheese, Farley and Gibbons  Gonzalez- Cruz, Martinez- Fuentes, and Pardo-del- Val	“Essentially, talent means the total of all the experience, knowledge, skills, and behaviours that a person has and brings to work.” (p. 46). “A set of competencies that, being developed and applied, allow the person to perform a certain role in an excellent way.” (p. 22; translation by Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and Gonzalez- Cruz, 2013).
2010	Silzer and Dowell	“An individual’s skills and abilities (talents) and what the person is capable of doing or contributing to the organisation.” (p. 14).
2012	Ulrich and Smallwood	“Talent = competence [knowledge, skills and values required for today’s and tomorrow’s job; right skills, right place, right job, right time] × commitment [willing to do the job] contribution [finding meaning and purpose in their job]” (p. 60).

Source: Researcher

While a variety of definitions of the term "talent" have been suggested, the continuing confusion about its meaning is hindering the establishment of widely acknowledged TM theories and practices, and thus obstructs scholarly advancement. Furthermore, the lack of a clear constructive approach might lead to a lack of confidence in the conclusions that can be drawn from the existing literature. Owing to these conclusions, there is wide differentiation on the definitions of talent, whether focusing on particular people, a set of characteristics or

statements of need mainly based on the strategy of each organisation. Therefore, the aim of the current research is not to consider talent itself; instead, it will contribute to the theoretical literature on TM by offering an in-depth review of TM within the specific context of the world of work and test a proposed framework for its generalisation. Having reviewed the definitions of talent, it is necessary to explore the meaning of TM in detail, which can be found in the following section.

### 2.3. Talent Management (TM)

The classical theory refers to management as its functions, such as planning, organising, coordinating, leading and evaluation or control. Most scholars have described management as the art of achieving or accomplishing organisations' outputs or results via the command of people and activities. People tend to argue that management would be effective if supported by talented human capital or people. He *et al.*, (2011) opined that CA could be attained through suitable talent and appropriate management of talent in organisations. Moreover, literature has reported that over time, business organisations undeniably are facing a shortage of talent (Collings and Mellahi, 2009).

Table 2.2: Definitions of TM

Year	Author/Source	Definition	Key Attributes	Benefits/Outcome
1990	Jackson and Schuler	Having the right person in the right job at the right time	Typical HR practices, activities and functions	Competency and effective performance
1994	Rothwell	An organisation's systematic efforts to ensure continuity of personnel and encourage individual advancement	Systematic processes aligned towards career progression	Suitable flow of resources within the organisation
2001	Michaels <i>et al.</i> ,	The sum of a person's abilities	Gifts, skills, intelligence, knowledge	Learning and growth
2004	Pascal	Managing the supply, demand and flow of talent through the human capital engine	Managing talent without restricting oneself to organisational resources	Customised management of talent among top performers
2006	Ulrich	Combination of competence, commitment and contribution	Wholesome development of talent and ability	Competency
2006	CIPD	Systematic attraction of potential and people with value to an organisation	Development, engagement, retention and deployment	Bridging the gap in knowledge and developing competency
2007	Stockley	The unconscious and deliberate approach used to attract, develop and retain people to meet the current and future organisational needs.	Recruitment, selection, retention and development of personnel	Development of capacity and talents for high performance of individuals and organisations
2008	Cappelli	The process programs and culture used by employers to anticipate and meet the needs of human capital	Skills, knowledge, resources	Identification of highly qualified and talented individuals
2009	Collings and Mellahi	The use of activities and processes to identify key positions that give an organisation a competitive	Human resources, capacity development and competitive individuals	Development of a pool of highly talented performers

		advantage		
2011	Tansley	Innate giftedness	Natural ability and aptitudes	Development of the innate potential to excel
2012	Wikstrom et al.,	Greater mastery of developed abilities and knowledge systematically in the field of human endeavour	TM is a learning process—it's dynamic and not as static as widely perceived	Gradual and systematic growth of talent
2015	Hughes and Rog	As both a philosophy and a practice. It is both an espoused and enacted commitment – shared at the highest levels and throughout the organisation by all those in managerial and supervisory positions – to implementing an integrated, strategic and technology enabled approach to HRM, with a particular focus on human resource planning	To elevate the practice of HRM, to implementing an integrated, strategic and technology enabled approach to HRM, with a particular focus on human resource planning	As a source of competitive advantage and an opportunity to elevate the role of HR practitioners
2016	Acar and Yener	TM overlap is practically about all activities of human resource management, such as recruitment, selection, hiring, developing, rewarding, etc.	TM applications are not just for discovering and educating the abilities, they are also for promoting the position to the potential or talented employee without holding them too much	Creates a high-performance, sustainable organisation that meets its strategic and operational goals and objectives
2017	Glaister et al.	It is a process which, along with HRM, leads to the improvement in firms' performance	HRM strategy and business strategy are to be aligned for better performance	High performance and a need to link organisational goals with HRM and TM approaches
2018	Saleh Mohammad Sohel-Uz-Zaman	It is a process to create a talent mind set and culture through people-oriented leadership, formulating HR-driven business strategy and investment in people development	Talent planning, talent strategy, talent resourcing and succession planning	Competitive advantage and improved organisational performance. Needs an integrated framework for implantation; lack of clear definitions.
2019	King and Vaiman	TM is shaped by economic, political, regulatory, technological and cultural conditions, and has the potential to directly or indirectly empower or disrupt organisational ability to attract, engage and retain the talent crucial to achieving competitive business objectives	Organisational culture, HRM, employee engagement, motivation and commitment	A complex system to align with organisational strategy; proposes an exclusive framework and competitive advantage

Source: Researcher

TM definitions can be categorised by two approaches: inclusive (all employees) or exclusive (a select group) (Powell, 2012). According to Sparrow (2011), organisations use both inclusive and exclusive approaches, although the exclusive approach appears to be most preferred. In their research on global TM, Stahl *et al.* (2007) found that many organisations combine the use of approaches. Collings and Mellahi (2009) also highlighted the importance of a differentiated HR architecture. Lewis and Heckman (2006) reviewed the practitioner-oriented literature on TM and identified three types of conceptualisations of TM:

1. Typical human resources management systems or jobs;
2. Talent pools or flows of employees into jobs in an organisation;
3. A common view of TM, which focuses attention on either high-potential and high-performing staff or talent overall (Lewis and Heckman, 2006).

TM relates to typical human resource management (HRM)/human resource development (HRD) practices or tasks (for example, recruiting, retaining, developing and rewarding). The definition of TM, much like the word "talent", is difficult to identify. There is much confusion surrounding the concept of TM. As Lewis and Heckman noted in 2006, it is often used interchangeably with other human resources terminology such as "talent strategy", "succession management" and "human resource planning". This is more related to a process-driven activity yet confuses the outcomes of the process with various decision alternatives. Within practitioner literature, the focus of TM is as "a mind-set" (Creelman, 2004) and forms the basis of effective succession planning (Cheloha and Swain, 2005). Ultimately, the message that practitioners receive is that good TM is important.

The concept behind TM is not defined in a single way. Some literature merely substitutes the term TM for human resources management, while other literature and organisations define it as a way to manage staffing needs within the organisation. TM may also refer to identifying key positions that have the potential to provide competitive advantages for the organisation. According to Collings and Mellahi (2009, p. 305), "strategic TM has been defined as collection of activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions which differentially contribute to the organisation's sustainable competitive advantage, the development of a talent pool of high potential and high performing incumbents to fill these roles, and the development of a differentiated human resources architecture to facilitate filling these positions with competent incumbents and to ensure their continued commitment to the organisation". The idea of TM has garnered academics' and human resources practitioners' attention since a group of McKinsey consultants studied the topic and developed the phrase "war for talent" in 1997 (Axelrod, Handfield-Jones, and Michaels, 2002). Through this research, companies were surveyed to determine the value of top performers by examining how much more revenue these top performers generated. This demonstrated a shift from traditional human resources management activities within an organisation to develop a focus on the management of the talent within an organisation to compete in today's global economic environment.

Many firms and research studies relate TM to the resources and capabilities that form an



organisation's competitive advantage, which are linked directly to the abilities of the workforce within the organisation (Cheese, Thomas, and Craig, 2008; Wright, McMahan, and McWilliams, 1994). Furthermore, a research study on 40 global companies pointed out that nearly all these companies stated that when the pipelines for sufficient talent did not exist, it put a strain on the ability to grow the business (Ready and Conger, 2007).

Through a review of academic literature, TM is beyond the work traditionally performed by human resources. It encompasses a wide range of stakeholders, from first line managers to top tier executives in managing what the company defines as talent. Increasingly, more CEOs are becoming involved with TM. In 2006, the Economist Intelligence Unit discovered that most CEOs specifically argued that the subject of TM was highly important to the success of an organisation, and it was an effective approach for TM to be managed only by human resources. This demonstrates the popularity of the TM concept in advancing an organisation. Recent studies (Glaister et al., 2017; Saleh Mohammad Sohel-Uz-Zaman, 2018) have highlighted the importance of aligning and integrating HRM strategy, business strategy and TM strategy in relation to the organisational goals and objectives, highlighting the need to understand the relationship between the HRM practices and TM practices.

There may be differences with the definitions and theories of TM, but they all involve the ability to attract, identify, retain and develop individuals within the organisation. Additionally, by nature, TM is more strategic by being associated with the overarching goals of an organisation. It holds heavy responsibility for many stakeholders. These definitions push beyond the traditional human resources activities, which are more tactical and include dealing with the day-to-day management of people within an organisation. However, recent studies (Glaister et al., 2017; Saleh Mohammad Sohel-Uz-Zaman, 2018; King and Vaiman, 2019) have further expanded the scope of TM processes by relating to organisational performance and competitive advantage.

From these definitions, it can be understood that TM is a multifaceted factor, which can be explained and understood by relating it to various processes pertaining to managing the talent, with a specific focus on employees and their retention, development, recruitment and rewards. In addition, there are several factors influencing TM, which can be observed within the organisations and also from an external environment. Observing various definitions of TM from different perspectives reflects its importance and applicability in various organisational processes which can achieve various outcomes. This aspect highlights the need to understand

the use and advantages of TM in organisations, which is explained in the next section.

#### **2.4. The Need for TM**

The concept and process of TM has become a “mainstream” strategy in the management of people because of its ability to assist organisations to acquire, engage, align, develop and retain their high performers (Margi 2014). Although challenges are imminent, HR leaders have developed innovative ways of managing talent by deploying competent practices and measures to align people in the right places, in the right jobs and at the right time (Kontoghiorghes 2016). In a study of 300 HR practitioners, Brown and Hesketh (2004) found that most organisations grapple with similar challenges regarding TM. Some of the challenges include retaining high performers and reducing staff turnover, reducing external recruitment costs and improving overall HR reporting. Other challenges include the development of talent, succession pools and aligning the current and future talent needs to address the ever-changing business needs (Brown and Hesketh, 2004).

In view of this background, an organisation can achieve its competitive niche by placing the right employees in the right positions and jobs. Thunnissen *et al.*, (2013) observed that when people are linked to jobs for which they are not qualified, the results can be disastrous for the organisation. These include low productivity, high levels of absenteeism, low morale and job dissatisfaction. Since every person has a unique talent, the responsibility of the HR department is to ensure that jobs are properly profiled so that suitable employees can be aligned to relevant positions. Furthermore, research studies have proved that the lack of TM leads to the “wrong fit” of people being placed in positions or jobs that they are not qualified for. More often than not, this leads to re-hiring, re-training and wastage of resources (Kontoghiorghes, 2016).

Today, most organisations are facing a massive “skills gap” since the majority of the workers who joined the workforce in the late 1970s and early 1980s are reaching retirement age (Medina 2014). The problem of the skills gap is further compounded by the fact that the majority of baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) reached the age of 65 in 2011, hence making over 50% of the U.S. labour force viable for retirement. For this reason, Medina (2014) discusses what most corporations currently do to address the escalating problem of the skills gap, in which the majority of companies report that there are delays in most of their projects due to the talent shortage and a lack of relevant skills. Most organisations combine their learning approaches with practical methods, such as instructor-led coursework, workshops and case study learning. Other learning approaches used to bridge the talent gap include mentoring and coaching programs, on-the-job training, field trips and visits to manufacturing and

engineering factories in order to improve the competency levels of staff and workers. Overall, the emphasis is now on the practical application of knowledge (particularly in such fields as IT and engineering) rather than the traditional approach of "learning by doing" (Poocharoen and Lee, 2013).

Globally, most organisations and companies have adopted various practices such as team building, constant feedback, training and the identification of talent as mechanisms of management of talent. Moreover, it is important to point out that while the process of TM starts at the point of recruitment, the practices differ from industry to industry. The concept of the "war for talent" was coined by McKinsey (1997), a management consulting firm in the early 1990s, as a part of a critical business challenge. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the role of TM in organisations has become strong and persuasive because of its strategic approach in the business strategy (Thunnissen *et al.*, 2013). According to Fajčíková *et al.*, (2016) the management of talent deals with the implementation of systems that are designed to increase the productivity at the workplace. This is achieved through the process of recruiting, developing, retaining and utilising people's skills as a pre-requisite for achieving the current and future business needs. Similarly, Brown and Hesketh (2004) explain that TM is closely related to human resources planning and employability because it provides opportunities for people to expose or showcase their skills, abilities and attributes.

In the modern workplace, the pressures of attracting and retaining talent has necessitated organisations to craft talent-related initiatives and programs as a way of gaining a competitive advantage. In this regard, crucial human resources functions, such as recruitment, selection, training, development and staff welfare, have been engrossed into the overall strategy of the organisation (Karin 2015). This is informed by the understanding that TM intends to ensure a steady supply of talent by aligning the right people for the right jobs at the right time. Therefore, effective TM can be achieved through the application of measurable, predictable and actionable skills that are based on strategic business objectives (Karin 2015). As originally coined by McKinsey in 1997, TM is highly regarded as the pillar of an organisation since the development of human capital comprises a company's greatest asset. This is because organisations that fail to recognise the value of their staff continuously grapple with the devastating effects of staff turnover as they risk losing talented employees to more attractive competitors. The underlying issue about TM is the use of qualitative and quantitative tools to improve the concept of ROI and succession planning as critical parts of TM strategies. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, TM software is increasingly being used for tracking training needs, career progression and other key HR focal points (Latukha and Selivanovskikh, 2016).

Similarly, the need for TM can be assessed for developmental factors such as employee satisfaction, employee engagement, employee motivation, employee development, employee retention, employee commitment, customer satisfaction and retention and improving organisational performance (Goldsmith and Carter, 2010). Therefore, the need for TM in any organisation is two-fold. Firstly, effective TM will be highly beneficial to an organisation itself through increased productivity, commitment of valued employees and increased turnover through employee-related approaches such as employee motivation, engagement, development, commitment, retention, satisfaction, rewards etc. Also, the organisation will have a better fit between people's skills and jobs and achieve its objectives as a result of the improved individual efforts and business goals. Secondly, individuals will benefit from higher motivation levels, job satisfaction, career development and higher levels of job commitment (Karin, 2015). From this review, it can be understood that TM within organisations can be referred to as the process or approach towards improving organisational performance, which would ensure CA by maintaining a talented workforce and achieving sustainable growth (Wilcox, 2016).

It is important to note that various concepts, streams, approaches and processes related to TM have to be understood for its effective implementation, as it can lead to various benefits for organisations. Being a multifaceted factor, TM needs to be understood from various perspectives on its role in organisations. It can be viewed as an HR function or a separate function within the organisation focusing on managing talent etc. Focusing on this aspect, the next section explains the various TM streams that are important considerations in this Research.

## **2.6. Perspectives of TM**

TM is driven by a belief that maximisation of human talent is a source of organisational CA (Collings, Scullion Vaiman, 2011). There is, however, general lack of well-grounded research on TM that sets it apart from traditional human resources management (HRM) practices such as planning both current and future human resources needs (Lewis and Heckman, 2006), the general development of employees as an organisations' human capital (Tarique and Schuler, 2010) and from strategic human resources management (SHRM) (Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and González-Cruz., 2013). The problem starts from the lack of agreement on the conceptualisation of talent and TM. Questions on the ontology of talent revolve around whether it is people who are valuable and difficult to replace or the characteristics or attributes of people. If it is the characteristics of people, does this include the attributes of all employees (inclusive) or of some specific groups (exclusive) (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.*, 2013)?

TM has been conceptualised as human resources development or human resources management concerned with ensuring that the right people with the appropriate skills are placed in the right jobs at the right time throughout the organisation (Tarique and Schuler, 2010; Lewis and Hackman, 2006), as integrated HRD that focuses on a selected pool of employees both inside and outside the organisation who have been defined as talent based on their performance and potential, and as focused management and development of flows of organisational talent with the focus being on the talent pipeline as opposed to the pool (Iles, Preece and Chuai, 2010). Leading from the three strands of TM, Iles *et al.* (2010) summarised perspectives of TM into four groups: exclusive-people, exclusive-positions, inclusive people and social capital. Extant definitions of TM fall into these broad groups.

### **2.6.1. Inclusive Perspective**

Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* (2013) defined TM as the process of attracting, selecting, developing and managing employees in an aligned and strategic way, a definition similar to strategic human resources management. Similarly, Duttagupta (2005) defined it as the strategic management of the flow of talent through an organisation, and Ashton and Morton (2005) viewed all employees as constituting an organisation's talent. These definitions have an inclusive perspective and therefore do not distinguish between TM and strategic human resources management but rather view the former as part of the latter. From an inclusive perspective, all employees in the organisation are considered to have talent to an extent that everyone has a specific role to play (Buttiens and Hondeghem, 2012; Buckingham and Vosburgh, 2001; Stainton, 2005; Walker and Larocco, 2002). Inclusivity in defining talent is predominant, as was found by Leigh (2009). Seemingly coming from an inclusivity perspective, O'Reilly and Pfeffer (2000) stated that organisational success comes from harnessing the whole workforce and not a few star performers. Consistent with an inclusive definition of talent, this perspective ensures that available TM resources are distributed equally among all employees; an approach which, according to Groysberg, Nanda and Nohria (2004), ensures that no group of employees are demoralised by knowing that they are not considered as part of the favoured few superstars. Turner (2017) identified the interdependency among all the roles, including the board, executive team, line managers and HR professionals, reflecting an inclusive approach for TM in organisations. However, Mousa and Ayoubi (2019) identified that leadership has no mediating effect on the inclusiveness/exclusiveness of TM in a study on three educational institutions in Egypt. Though there is strong support for inclusiveness of TM, organisations in recent times are shifting towards exclusive TM for identifying and utilising

available talent. Inclusivity is, however, not without critics. The approach is criticised for failing to distinguish between strategic human resources management and TM, which may result in an escalation of HR costs without any linkage to productivity and/or business performance (Collings and Mellahi, 2009).

### **2.6.2. Exclusive Perspective**

The exclusive perspective is in two forms: exclusive people and exclusive positions. The exclusive people perspective is based on defining specific individuals or groups of individuals as talent based on specific criteria or merit for preferential treatment for affected employees (Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and Gonzalez-Cruz, 2012). According to Morton (2005) and Tansley *et al.*, (2007), those individuals who are identified as potentially capable of impacting organisational performance through their immediate or anticipated future contribution, fall into this category. Supporting the exclusivity of talent, Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod (2001) argue that talent refers to the best and the brightest top 10-20 percent of employees ('A' players). Chabault, Hulin and Soparnot (2012) use the label in reference to the top 25 percent highly performing employees, and Stahl *et al.*, (2012) use it in reference to those that rank at the top based on their capability and performance. Based on these levels, Huselid *et al.*, (2005) define talent as the level of 'A' players. Through this approach, an organisation is able to focus and mobilise resources where it hopes to get large returns from investing in people. Focusing on the individual, Gladwell (2010) defines talent as equal to one having invested 10 years or 10,000 hours in a specific field, implying that talent is those who are experts in their area of specialisation. Linking talent with one's level in the organisation, Gan, Zeng and Xie (2006) define talent as the limited pool of employees with "innovatory consciousness, innovatory skills and innovatory practice". While accepting that talent is exclusive, Iles, Preece and Chuai (2010) view TM as organisation-wide human resources development of a select few, focused on managing and developing talent flow within the organisation with the focus being on talent pipelines as opposed to talent pools.

Justifying the exclusive approach, Walker and Larocco (2002) state that considering that resources are always limited, it is prudent to invest in those employees identified as most talented without necessarily neglecting the less talented. Segmentation of employees is supported by Ledford and Kochanski (2004) who consider it as fundamental in managing talent for organisational success. Berger (2004) views talent as a small group of 'superkeepers', and Smart (2005) sees high performers (talent) as significant drivers of organisational performance because of their capacity to be innovative and deliver at significantly higher levels.

### **2.6.3. Exclusive Position**

The exclusive positions perspective is premised on the belief that every organisation has certain positions that are critical to its success. It involves identification of critical jobs ('A' jobs) and placing what are termed 'A' players in those jobs (Huselid, Beatty and Becker, 2005). This responds to the perennial problem of financial constraints faced by organisations which makes it impossible to always fill every position with the right level of skills at the right time. Differentiating or segmenting exclusive positions enables an organisation to deploy average performers in less critical positions while ensuring that critical positions are resourced by best performers, given evidence that deployment of employees based on capacity to deliver has a positive impact on organisational performance (Hunter, Schmidt and Judiesch, 1990).

The exclusive positions perspective is closely related to the exclusive people perspective as one can be perceived as a corollary of the other. Identification of star performers is within the context of positions that need a particular level of performance for differentiating individual employees and, therefore, differentiated positions (Al Ariss *et al.*, 2014; Huselid, Beatty and Becker, 2005). Combining exclusive positions and exclusive people, Collings and Mellahi (2009) define TM as: "activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions that differentially contribute to the organisation's sustainable competitive advantage, the development of a talent pool of high-potential and high-performing incumbents to fill these roles, and the development of a differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling these positions with competent incumbents, and to ensure their continued commitment to the organisation".

The focus in Collings and Mellahi's (2009) definition mainly considers the position and the people with specific characteristics that are aligned to the exclusive position. Talent is linked initially to the criticality of the position, implying that a high-potential and high-performing incumbent who is not in an identified critical position or is not targeted for a critical position would not fall within the domain of TM. This view, also held by Collings (2014) and Cunningham (2007), is criticised for seeming to assume that either the role or the talent is static, which, in fact, is not the case as organisations are dynamic and the criticality of roles may change from time to time.

### **2.6.4. Social Capital**

Social capital perspectives view TM in a different way compared to exclusive positions and exclusive people in that it is about organisation-wide competence development that focuses on relationships and networks that constitute contextual social capital (Iles and Preece, 2006). It

emphasises group actions that help build bonds and networks to deepen organisational social capital. Organisational capital, as embedded in its processes and routines, is considered more influential than focusing on individuals given that studies have demonstrated that an individual performance can be specific to the context. Groysberg, Nanda and Nohria (2004) found that the performance of some star performers declined when they changed organisations, indicating social capital—a situation that underlines the need for organisations to grow talent internally. Social capital perspectives highlight problems of explaining organisational performance based on a select few star performers to the exclusion of other organisational systems and the contexts (Iles *et al.*, 2010).

Iles, Chuai and Preece's (2010) model of TM is based on the four discussed perspectives: exclusive positions, exclusive people, inclusive positions and social capital (as illustrated in Figure 2.1).

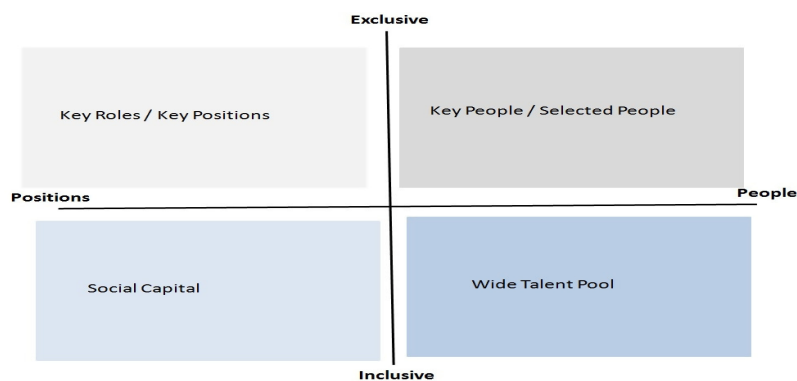


Figure 2.1: TM Perspectives  
Source: Iles, Chuai and Preece (2010)

What is apparent from literature is that there is no commonly agreed opinion on what talent is and what constitutes TM in the business arena. Inclusivity versus exclusivity is at the crux of TM controversy among scholars and practitioners alike (Downs and Swailes, 2013). Al Ariss *et al.*, (2014) argue that in recent trends there has been a shift in the definition of talent and TM from an inclusive perspective to a more exclusive one. However, approaches that are widely used are not based on any empirical evidence, being largely products of HRD consultants (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.*, 2012). For purposes of this research, TM is defined as referring to the exclusive people perspective. In that regard, talent refers to employees that are regarded as a key resource, have high levels of performance and have the potential to sustain their performance into the future.



There is an increasing influence on building social capital by utilising various resources for managing talent within organisations. Focusing on this aspect, Nayak et al. (2017) identified the growing utilisation of social networking sites (SNSs) as part of the organisational HR strategy for employer branding and talent sourcing, acquisition and retention, and reinforcing stronger relationships with their employees as a process of building social capital. Similar approaches to using skilled labour for social capital was found to be deployed in various organisations across the globe (Nguyen, 2017; Dirani et al., 2018). Accordingly, the next section focuses on the various TM systems and practices adopted in various organisations.

### **2.7. TM Systems and Practices**

The primary concern for various firms regarding the issue of TM systems and practices lies on the various methods used to manage a wide variety of talent pools. This involves key HR practices that act as a guiding mechanism on how the concept of talent is managed to assist all the concerned employees to realise their full potential. According to Guerci and Solari (2012), some of the key HR practices linked to TM include training and development, career planning, performance assessment and management and the measurement of employee satisfaction.

A research study report by Guerci and Solari (2012) on the TM practices of Italian companies found that managerial practices yield positive results and implications for the human resources practice. The research study took the form of analysing 19 Italian firms in the automotive, energy and banking industries with the aim of understanding the process of TM on three key areas. These included the talent pool strategy, TM systems and practices, and the sustainable strategies that yielded a CA and implications for talent. A different trend of TM was observed in the automotive industry where the Chief Executive Officer initiated a new focus for the company strategy in terms of the sustainability of the system. In most organisations, it is the HR department that champions the process of TM regarding the implementation of the TM systems and practices. The most outstanding feature regarding TM in most Italian firms is that the process of training and development is crucial for human resource development. This means that it is integrated in the overall company strategy and involves the aspects of learning and work as key mechanisms for managers and HR approaches (Guerci and Solari, 2012).

Poocharoen and Lee (2013) observed that most governments and public institutions are constantly grappling with the problems of recruiting, retaining, rewarding and developing a pool of talented staff across its departments. This is informed or precipitated by the strong competition from the private sector that has well developed systems of developing talent through hefty remunerations. As mentioned by Kitson (2008), the lack of effective TM

practices in the public sector leads to weak governance, thus accelerating the “war for talent” as initially exposed by McKinsey (1997) in a report about TM in the private sector.

Poocharoen and Lee (2013) found that TM comprised of six strategic perspectives. The *competitive* perspective guards against staff turnover by providing talented people with what they require. The *process* perspective manages talent as a daily activity. The *HR* perspective ensures that the right people are matched with the right jobs and develop a strong HR team. The *development* perspective accelerates development paths to talented people. The *cultural* perspective creates and ensures that the concept of TM is engraved in people’s mind sets, and the *change management* perspective ensures that the process of TM acts as a catalyst for change (Poocharoen and Lee, 2013).

In relation to the TM perspectives described above, the comparative research study found that the process and mode of implementation was different. The governments applied the perspectives differently in the management of their talent pool. For instance, Singapore relied more on the competitive perspective, which entailed highly remunerating their staff and fast-tracking their career paths on the civil service ladder. Furthermore, Singapore adopted a more exclusive approach to TM by targeting the most academically gifted people by giving them more priorities in terms of training and development (Poocharoen and Lee, 2013).

On the other hand, the research found that Malaysia adopted a more inclusive approach and process perspective in addressing TM issues. For instance, the government provided scholarships as a way of building its human capital and giving equal opportunities to all who may not be academically gifted to stand a chance to benefit from training. Overall, the comparative research study found that the process of TM was less effective in Thailand because of its conservative and exclusive approach. This is because Thailand makes use of the HiPPS scheme to administer its TM approach that does not focus on building new capacity but rather concentrates on retaining the in-service talent (Poocharoen and Lee, 2013). As a result, the TM practices in Thailand are not competitive enough, thus explaining the deficiencies in their human resources development capacities.

A research study by Iqbal *et al.*, (2013) among 150 management employees on 25 listed organisations in Pakistan found a positive relationship between TM practices and emotional stability. The findings of the study indicated that organisations with well-grounded TM practices recorded low staff turnover and developed a high-performance culture. This also promoted a positive work ethic as the emotional stability among employees contributed significantly towards improved organisational performance (Iqbal *et al.*, 2013). Similarly, in 2013, investigative research on the psychology of TM in Belgium revealed gaping

discrepancies in definition and application (Dries, 2013). This was related to the fact that different organisations utilised the concept of TM in different ways and capacities. For instance, some organisations utilised talent as giftedness, others as capital, and others as strength, identity and individual differences (Dries, 2013). Despite the glaring differences, the research was highly informative as it formed a basis for theory building, development of new methodologies and empirical framework.

The empirical review of TM has identified that the systems and practices widely differ among the countries, among the industries and among the organisations with various influencing factors from both internal and external environments (Nguyen, 2017; Dirani *et al.*, 2018). However, there are few practices that are commonly applied among all types of institutions, as discussed in the above sections. These practices are explained and analysed by Singh and Sanjeev (2015), which are included in the following sections.

### **2.7.1. Talent Attraction**

Attracting talent is one of the important functions of TM, as it creates an advantage for the company which is able to select the talented candidates from a list of skilled candidates across the globe or region. According to Banks *et al.*, (2015), the characteristics of the job and the organisation influences its ability to attract desired applicants. The recruitment process can also influence applicants' attraction to the organisation. Barber (1998) proposed that the three stages of the recruitment process, namely the job advertising phase, maintenance of applicant status phase through keeping them interested in the organisation and the phase of influencing their choice, all influence applicant attraction. Talent attraction is also affected by their perception that they can fit into the organisation. Banks *et al.*, (2015) opine that since people generally have a desire to improve their social identities, they are attracted to organisations that are more likely to enable them to do so. Therefore, social identities play a mediating role between generally accepted predictors of applicant attraction. According to social identity theory, people derive a sense of who they are from psychologically perceiving themselves as part of specific social groups (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). To enhance their self-image, they seek out opportunities that would enable them to enhance their status, such as preferring organisations that have a strong brand value and those that are likely to enhance their social identification.

Young (2014) identified top drivers of employee attraction from the perspective of both employees and employers. From an employer perspective, Young identified opportunities for career advancement; basic pay; work content that is challenging; the organisation's reputation

as a good employer; the organisation's vision, mission and values; opportunities for learning and development; and job security in that order of importance (Singh and Sanjeev 2015). Other than having holiday time or time off and not having the organisation's vision, mission and values, employees had the same items as those identified by employers. However, the prioritisation of the items differed with the employee order of priority being basic pay; job security; opportunities for career advancement; opportunities for learning and development; work content that is challenging; the organisation's reputation as a good employer; and holiday time and time off in that order of importance. Differences in prioritisation suggest that organisations may be focusing their attention on areas that may not necessarily result in talent attraction.

The attractiveness of an organisation to potential talent is also affected by the way it conducts recruitment. Chapman *et al.*, (2005) and Banks *et al.*, (2015) found that some of the factors that influence talent attraction include the way the organisation articulates the characteristics of the job; the way the organisation presents itself as an employer; the manner in which the recruiter handles the process; the information given to the job applicant during the recruitment process; applicant perceptions on their ability to fit into the organisation; applicant ability to identify with the organisation; and the reputation of the organisation. An organisation's recruitment processes are part of and communicate its branding as an employer of choice (Edwards, 2017).

In the oil industry, inability to attract skilled workers was identified as one of the major risks facing businesses (Orr and McVerry, 2007). Orr and McVerry have attributed talent challenges to an aging oil industry workforce, scarcity of experienced applicants, industry globalisation and difficulty in attracting entry-level talent. Dordan (2014) observed that one of the pillars of operational excellence in the oil industry is having competent staff, yet one of the challenges in the sector is competition for talent among competitors. Dordan highlights the challenges in sourcing talent as follows: people are generally not attracted to the oil and gas organisations and hence there is a shortage of competencies; and changes in the expectations of the new generation of workers means they are less mobile because of concerns over the careers of their spouses; and increases in salaries in other more attractive sectors. Hutchings, De Cieri and Shea (2011) highlighted the need for employers in the oil sector to attract talent through offering flexibility in work practices, work-life balance especially among those based in remote areas, improving infrastructure, providing schools for those with children and medical facilities. As with Young's (2014) findings, Hutchings, De Cieri and Shea (2011) also observed different perspectives on employee attraction and retention between employees and management.

However, with the changing market place, competition and employee attitudes, organisations are adopting various strategies to attract talent. For example, Osburg *et al.*, (2018) stated that organisations are increasingly using ethical certifications (which is under their control) to build a strong ethical e-WoM (Word of Mouth) (not under company control) to position themselves as a strong brand in order to attract new talent. Likewise, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is being used to improve employer branding in Turkey, which is being used as a tool for attracting and retaining talent (Farndale and Atli, 2019). Therefore, the approaches towards talent attraction are changing with respect to the changing market conditions.

The next step in the process is to identify the talented individuals, which is explained in the following section.

### **2.7.2. Talent Identification**

Talent identification is part of the TM system that deals with creating a pool of high-performing and/or high-potential employees that are intended to fill the key positions critical for achieving the organisation's strategic objectives (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Singh and Sanjeev, 2015). Identification of talent both within and outside the organisation is achieved through the recruitment process. Recruitment among its other dimensions includes "those practices and activities carried by the organisation with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees" (Barber 1998, p.5). Through the recruitment process the employer identifies talent by attracting their attention through job openings, influencing them to apply for the job and ensuring that the targeted talent maintains interest in the open position until a job offer is extended to them (Breaugh, 2008). Given that most organisations now operate at a global level, the process of talent identification is managed at a global level with some initiatives having a specific focus on talent that is interested in international work (Tarique and Schuler, 2009).

In the gas and oil sector which has to deal with market vacillations, there are peculiar talent identification challenges as organisations have to deal with identifying talent externally for some areas while at the same time rationalise talent in other areas in an environment where there is general shrinkage of the talent pool (Deloitte, 2013). The peculiarity of talent identification initiatives in different industry sectors is also highlighted by Ayetuoma, Swailes and Handley (2016), who observed differences between practices in the private and public sector. Firm size has also been identified as a factor in the talent identification process (Krishnan and Scullion, 2017).

It has been claimed that the performance criteria used to identify the talent pool are obscure to many employees in terms of what they should and should not do, making the identification of talented employees more difficult (Lynette and Carley, 2010). Repko (2005) states that research on TM has shown that businesses can identify talented employees at an early stage with the company. If organisations succeed in doing this, they will be able to give these employees training and development, getting results faster than if they were late in identifying them. However, the selection of the group of employees for special training and development can be seen as a source of discomfort for managers who are used to the idea of equality and justice for all employees (Opas and Pacapol, 2010).

The process of talent identification involves addressing where the desired talent pool will be found. Debate in this area of TM is on whether talent should be internally grown or bought (McDonnell and Collings, 2011). Cascio and Aguinis (2008) argue that the challenges in talented employee identification are similar to the challenges of measuring job performance, mainly owing to the fact that it is difficult to predict future performance in a new role.

The importance of talent identification is highlighted in various studies (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Constantine and Kalomyra, 2009) as it is the initial step in the process of TM. Accordingly, it was identified that it can directly influence operations such as talent development, motivation and commitment etc., which are directly considered to be the influencing factors for organisational performance (Khoreva *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, a transparent framework is required for talent identification, which may be embedded in a supportive organisational culture, which would result in improved performance and employee retention (Isa *et al.*, 2018). Supporting employees through training, motivating and educating etc. can develop the talent in organisations, which is one of the important approaches in TM and is explained in the following section.

### **2.7.3. Talent Development**

Learning is the formal or informal acquisition of skills, knowledge and capabilities that results in changes in behaviour and attitude (Cacciattolo, 2015). Learning is said to have occurred when new knowledge is changed into different and replicable behaviour (Argyris and Schon, 1978). Talent development (TD) is the planning, selection and implementation of development strategies encompassing the learning of employees in order to ensure the availability of both current and future skills and competencies to enable the organisation to attain its strategic objectives (Garavan, Carbery and Rock, 2012). Although organisations tend to acquire talent

through recruiting externally, in the long term a more sustainable approach is that of sharpening talent that is already within the organisation, as industry- and firm-specific knowledge and skills are what gives an organisation a CA (Stahl *et al.*, 2012; Singh and Sanjeev, 2015). Internally focused TD approaches ensure that barring resignations, the organisation experiences zero outage of critical skills and has a clear succession plan that is based on known factors. Such a situation, according to Gandz (2006), improves branding of an organisation as a talent magnet.

Most TD programmes are characterised by focus on developing managerial and leadership skills; increasing the high-potential talents' ability to work in diverse work environments (Dierdorff and Morgeson, 2007; Dirani *et al.*, 2018); and developing generic competencies which include “problem solving and analytical skills, communication skills, teamwork competencies and skills to identify, access and manage knowledge” (Garavan, Carbery and Rock, 2012, p.8). TD focuses on organisational needs such as that of posting good performance in line with stated objectives (Scullion and Collings, 2011); facilitation of succession planning to ensure continuity (Lawler, 2008); strengthening organisational leadership (Bryan and Joyce, 2007); and ensuring constant availability of high-performing employees (Groysberg, 2010). The learning and development initiatives focus on sharpening employee competencies in identified areas. Boyatzis (1982, cited in Caldwell, 2008) introduced the concept of competencies and linked them to organisational performance. Competency is defined as an underlying characteristic of an employee which results in superior work performance; for example, motive, trait, skill, aspect of one's self-image, social role or a body of knowledge. Byham and Moyer (1996) define it as a combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviours and attitudes that are related to both job success and failure. Dubois *et al.*, (1998) define competencies as those characteristics possessed by individuals which they use appropriately and consistently to attain targeted levels of performance.

Competencies can be generic or differentiating. Generic competencies are basic characteristics required for satisfactory or average performance in a position. Differentiating competencies are those behavioural characteristics that are displayed by high performers and are related to high levels of performance. Each organisation determines what it considers generic and differentiated competencies. Carlyle (2014) opines that in the oil industry, whereas the base business is exploring, drilling, transporting and refining—and by implication businesses in the sector needs those generic competencies—the differentiating competencies are in geological interpretation and modelling and financial risk management.

Gandz (2006) proposes a TD architecture in which the components are stating development needs, establishing developmental pathways, having an HR system capable of identifying needs, assessment and development of identified talent and using multiple development strategies. Garavan, Carbery and Rock (2012, p. 11) propose use of competency maps or models to facilitate formal, systematic talent review processes that lead to the identification of the developmental needs of high-potential employees. Competency modelling has a number of benefits which feed into learning development and ultimately to organisational performance. Rodriguez (2002) identified the benefits of using competence models as forcing the organisation to focus on information that is critical for job performance; assisting the organisation to differentiate between high performers and average to poor performers; reflecting on changes in competencies along job hierarchies; and linking knowledge, skills, attitudes and other attributes to the business strategic objectives. Further, because they are cascaded from the apex of the organisation, they are futuristic and ensure that there is alignment of learning and development at the highest level.

Extant competence models specific to the oil industry cover wide aspects of the industry, including geosciences and subsurface engineering; business and project management; supply chain management; health, safety and the environment; facilities engineering; and operations and maintenance (PetroSkills, 2016). Competency models have been criticised for being vague and inflexible and for being based on past successes without much regard for the future. They have also been criticised for treating jobs as homogenous when this is not always the case. In fast-changing environments where competencies change on a regular basis, it has been found to be unsuitable.

Learning and development is among the mechanisms that organisations use to retain talent. After investing in talent, organisations need to retain it to preserve their competitive position. Various studies (Dirani *et al.*, 2018; McFarland and Jestaz, 2016; Mayfield *et al.*, 2016) have found a positive relationship between TD and job performance or employee performance, which could result in improved organisational performance. In addition, TD as a function of TM is also identified to be a factor that increases the CA of an organisation (Mayfield *et al.*, 2016; Oseghale, 2018). Therefore, TD can be considered as an important approach of TM which is not only aimed at developing employees but also as a strategy for increasing the organisational performance and competitive advantage.



The approaches, including talent attraction, identification and development, aim to fulfil one of the main objectives of TM: retaining talented employees. This is explained in the following section.

#### **2.7.4. Talent Retention**

Talent retention is another important function of TM that focuses on retaining the key talented employees in an organisation by adopting various approaches. Orr and McVerry (2009, p.22) proposed that oil organisations need to focus on concomitantly “attracting, developing, and retaining employees with the knowledge and capabilities required for success.” Retention refers to an organisation’s ability to retain those employees it considers critical for the attainment of its objectives. This is achieved through retention management, which refers to the policies and practices the organisation puts in place to ensure that it reduces the chances of losing employees considered critical for efficient and effective strategy execution (Chadwick, Super and Kwon, 2015; Dirani *et al.*, 2018).

Talent retention is premised on an understanding of the process an employee goes through when they quit a job. Mobley (1977) posits that when an employee is deciding to quit, they evaluate their job, determine job satisfaction or dissatisfaction, think of quitting, evaluate the idea of searching for another job and the costs associated with changing jobs, plan the search for a new job, undertake the search, evaluate available alternatives, compare the alternatives to the current job, plan to quit or stay and finally proceed with quitting or staying.

Lee and Mitchell (1994) build on Mobley’s model (1977) and propose that an employee’s evaluation of their current job only occurs when a reason for doing so arises. They term such reasons “shocks” that precipitate the decision to leave. The shocks can be negative (for example, where one is overlooked for a promotion) or positive (for example, being made an offer that is hard to resist). They therefore dispute Mobley's multiple-steps model, arguing that individuals follow different paths when leaving a job. The first path is where an employee decides to quit because of Script Drive Decision, which is a situation where an employee finds themselves experiencing something they experienced before which led them to resign from a job. The second path is the Push Decision, which results from an employee feeling dissatisfied or being treated unfairly. The third path is the Pull Decision, which is the shock of getting an opportunity outside the current organisation which the employee finds impossible to ignore. Lee and Mitchell (1994) present the Push and Pull Decision pathways as two parts of the same pathway. They illustrate that on-the-job dissatisfaction results in an employee quitting the job

impulsively and searching for another job after quitting, indicating that the act of quitting was a result of a sudden shock.

Following up on Lee and Mitchell's (1994) and Maertz's (2001) research, Maertz and Campion (2004) present eight categories of motivational forces that drive quitting intentions, namely affective, contractual, constituent, alternative, calculative, normative, behavioural and moral. They further present four profiles of quitting that represent an integration of process and content theories of turnover. The first decision type is where an employee quits impulsively when they have no job offer in hand and no prior plan to quit. In this situation, the employee's motives for leaving the organisation exceed those for remaining. This is a situation akin to what Lee and Mitchell (1994) describe as a result of a "shock". The second decision is comparative quitting, which is a result of an employee having a better job offer despite not having had an intention to quit. The third decision is pre-planned quitting, which is where an employee has a specific plan for quitting based on specified conditions. The fourth decision is conditional quitting, which is where an employee plans in advance to quit should certain conditions come to pass. While making the quitting decision, the employee may or may not have had another job offer.

Mitchell *et al.*, (2001) explain employee intentions to stay through the concept of embeddedness. According to the concept, job holders become embedded by the extent to which there is a match between the job or community and their other interests, their links with people and activities both inside and outside their work, and the sacrifices they would have to make both on and off the job if they were to leave. Mitchell *et al.*, (2001) posit that in light of these factors there will be some organisational contexts that increase the likelihood of employees preferring to remain or to leave so that organisations have the challenge to create contexts that embed individuals in both the organisation and the community. William Lee, Burch and Mitchell (2014) establish that assisting employees to be more engaged has an effect on performance, citizenship behaviour and accrual of social and human capital, all of which can reduce intentions to leave.

Literature indicates that the reasons for talent staying or leaving an organisation are not necessarily two sides of the same coin. Cho, Johanson and Guchait (2009) posit that the psychology of staying and that of quitting do not engage the same emotions. To that extent, over-focusing on reasons for leaving without also considering reasons for staying presents a partial view of the participation of individuals in organisations and of talent retention.

Employee turnover models agree on three components relating to employee turnover: employee morale, labour-market mechanisms and intentions to leave or to remain (Steel and Lounsbury, 2009; Dirani *et al.*, 2018). Critical factors in talent retention therefore relate to managing the human resources management systems from resourcing to total reward management with a focus on creating an environment that attracts and retains talent. Muir and Li (2014) distinguish between retention factors for individual turnover and those for collective turnover. Individual retention factors include addressing gender, minority, job level and performance issues. Collective retention factors include opportunities for internal mobility, high commitment HR systems and staffing selectivity. Retention initiatives targeting employees as a collective focus on establishing a fit that goes beyond just the job to be performed to include hiring selectivity to ensure cultural fit, and developing high commitment HR systems and establishing pathways for internal mobility.

Young (2014) identified the top drivers of employee retention from the perspective of both employees and employers. Findings indicate that drivers of attraction are not necessarily retention drivers. Retention drivers from the perspective of employers were identified as basic salary, opportunities for career advancement, the relationship with the supervisor or manager, managing or limiting work-related stress, learning and development opportunities, short-term incentives and challenging work. From the perspective of employees, the drivers were identified as basic salary, opportunities for career advancement, trust or confidence in senior leadership, job security, the distance to travel to work, the relationship with the manager or supervisor and managing or limiting work-related stress. Talent retention mechanisms cited in literature include culture fit (Ehrhart and Kuenzi, 2017; Ramesh and Gelfand, 2010), self-directed work teams (Haines III, Jalette and Larose, 2010; Guthrie, 2001), talent engagement (Martin and Schmidt, 2010; Schuck and Wollard, 2009), management of the psychological contract (Rayton and Yalabik, 2014) and socio-cultural factors (Allen and Shanock, 2013).

Most of the talent retention mechanisms fall under employee engagement. Schuck and Wollard (2009) define employee engagement in a work situation as “a positive cognitive, emotional and behavioural state directed toward organisational outcomes” (p.138). According to May, Gilson and Harter (2004), employee engagement is a product of psychological meaningfulness which can result from job enrichment and work-role fit; psychological safety which is associated with supervisor and workmate relations and co-worker norms; and psychological availability which is linked to availability of work-related resources, job insecurity and work-life balance. High levels of employee engagement have been associated with low intention to quit among affected

employees. Hausknecht, Rodda and Howard (2009) found an availability of opportunities for advancement and organisational prestige to have been a more common explanation for low turnover among high performers and monthly paid workers. While retention of talent is critical for organisational performance, Hausknecht (2017) suggests that there are some drawbacks to talent retention. Similarly, Iduddin *et al.*, (2015) identified that integrating reward systems such as bonus, high salaries, incentives and profit sharing etc. into the retention strategies could lead to an increase in employee commitment, thereby increasing the CA and organisational performance.

### **2.7.5. Managing Talented Employees**

Kaliannan (2015) argues that many senior managers claim that their employees are the most important asset, but that the truth is ultimately that they are not doing anything different to their employees; in other words, they are not investing in their employees. This explains why leadership and management play significant roles in TM implementation, maintaining that leaders are responsible for creating an organisation's culture, which ultimately helps talented employees to deliver more and more. Furthermore, managers are responsible for identifying talent and are also in charge of motivating and encouraging other employees to follow in talented employees' steps. In short, managers are the most important part of TM implementation (Kaliannan, 2015).

Lynette and Carley (2010) believe that it is imperative for top management in organisations to incorporate TM systems into their organisation's strategy, as it is very important for talented employees to have support from the highest level. Gibbons (2006) comments on the key factors that help businesses retain talented employees in the public sector in Canada and states that having good managers who can understand his or her employees' needs is a significant factor in retaining talented employees.

The implementation of TM activities requires revisiting established organisational principles of equality and diversity, which influence policy and employees' perceptions about fair treatment (Hutchinson and Purcell, 2003). Where HR practices focus on creating a "metaphorical level playing field" to manage fairness issues in the employment relationship, introducing TM activities that require singling out a select group of individuals for special treatment presents a significant challenge. Such a shift in emphasis requires investment in line management coaching and mentoring to effectively support targeted TM interventions and assist the broader development of employee talent (Lynette and Foster, 2010).

The idea of managing talented employees comes from an exclusive perspective of talent whose premise is that not every employee in an organisation qualifies to be called talent, and as a result those so designated need to be managed differently in terms of the applicable HRM tools (Cooke, Saini and Wang, 2014 citing Iles, Chuai, *et al.*, 2010; Iles, Preece, *et al.*, 2010). There is, however, no consensus on how to go about managing talented employees; although it is agreed that the intention is to enhance their contribution to organisational performance (Gelens *et al.*, 2015; Swailes, 2013; Sheehan, 2012). Rezaei and Beyerlein (2018) found that managerial issues were common in how an organisation implements TD and therefore how it manages its talented employees. Piansoongnern (2013) identified flexible leadership dimensions of openness, approachability and trustworthiness as having an impact on the engagement and performance of talent. Martin (2016) focused on the insurance sector and found that offering competitive compensation maintained frequent two-way communication, offered growth opportunities and encouraged understanding of employee needs, and that these were the main components of managing talented employees.

Talented employees, like other groups of employees, cut across demographic groupings. To that effect, generalised approaches to managing them may be problematic. Robertson and Abbey (2003) highlighted the need to first understand what drives talented employees to be able to manage them. Nolan (2015) identified sources of dissatisfaction for younger talent (the millennials) as expectations of work-life balance, lack of meaning, lack of internal branding, low enticement and management styles. Managing talented millennials requires adoption of work-life balance practices through, for example, flexible working arrangements, enhancing the organisation's internal brand as an employer that avails meaningful work to employees, providing customised perks and benefits, adjusting management styles to incorporate treating employees as individuals, building relationships with subordinates and facilitating knowledge sharing (Nolan, 2015). Khan *et al.* (2016) theorised that contrary to expectation that poor performers may attract a negative response from their superiors, in some contexts it is actually the star performers who receive abusive treatment from superiors. They attribute the abuse to perceived threat to the hierarchy. This demonstrates the contradictions and challenges associated with managing talent.

## **2.9. Issues in TM**

TM, as identified in earlier sections, is an approach or a process that is influenced by various factors within an organisation. In addition, there is ambiguity relating to its alignment with

other organisational strategies, approaches, departments (such as HR) and cultures. Considering its multifaceted dimension, there are various issues that can be associated with TM, some of which are analysed in the following sections.

### **2.9.1. Talent Shortages**

Gardner (2002) highlighted that whatever social norms used to deter organisations from poaching one another's talent had disappeared and that there were going to be differences among the raiding, the raided and the targeted firm. This reflects the shift in approach towards a knowledge-based economy where human capital has become a main source of competitive advantage. In Asia, Zheng Soosay and Hayland (2007) noted an increasing demand for job-related technical and managerial capabilities in what they described as a battle for talent among the Dragon and Tiger economies that necessitated adoption of a strategic approach to employee attraction and retention. Sheldon and Li (2013) looked at skills shortages of manufacturing employees among MNEs in China and found that employer unwillingness to invest in training partly accounted for the shortages. Focusing on the Indian and Chinese market, it was found that talent shortages were concentrated on the highly skilled end of the labour market (Chatterjee, Nankervis and Connell, 2014; Khilji *et al.*, 2015), which is a situation that confirms Sheldon and Li's argument that shortages could be a result of not investing in training or upskilling. Yang, Zhang and Yu (2018) emphasised the need for China to act to address talent gaps.

In the oil and gas organisations talent shortages have been attributed to fluctuations in product prices, which have implications on the capacity to pay and employee perceptions of capacity to pay (Speers and Henchy, 2016). Another factor in the industry is the specialist nature of the skills (Alleyne and Alexander, 2018). Also underlining the importance of training and challenges of talent shortages in the oil and gas sector, Al-Khalifa (2016) highlighted speeding up the development of junior employees, drawing from the experience of senior staff, systematic knowledge sharing and adopting new methods of attracting talent as relevant pillars of addressing shortages.

Talent shortage has been linked to untapped potential from minorities and disadvantaged groups. In the Asia Pacific region, covering China, Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong and Taiwan, talent shortages exist adjacent to either untapped or underutilised female potential (Tatli, Vassilopoulou and Ozbilgin, 2013). A similar situation is observed in the fast-developing economies of the Middle East (Alselaimi, 2014; Sidani and Al Ariss, 2014). Talent

shortage is clearly a multifaceted phenomenon that affects every region, as illustrated by studies from different regions and sectors focusing on the problem (Pinnington *et al.*, 2018; Dalayga, Mohkber and Rashid, 2017; Skuza, Scullion and Collings, 2016; Speers and Henchy, 2016). While the causes may neither be clear nor agreed, what is apparent is that it accounts for what has been termed "talent wars" and "talent battles", highlighting the need for an understanding of this particular aspect of human resources management.

### **2.9.3. Other Challenges**

Oppong (2013) presents TM as replete with hurdles emanating from a lack of definitional clarity and lack of consensus on how to implement it. This view has been noted by Vaiman, Scullion and Collings (2012), who posit that the challenge of TM cuts across the world's major economies. They look at the challenges from the perspective of management decision-making processes on the following areas influencing global TM: shortage of talent, societal and demographic trends, need to exhibit corporate social responsibility, need to manage diversity, talent mobility, a shift to a knowledge-intensive economy and increasing importance of emerging markets. Schuler suggests a 5-C framework of TM with one of the Cs being "challenges". The challenges are listed as talent shortages; motivation, engagement, energy and focus; handling talent surplus, reduction and removal; location and relocation; and the requirement for continuous adaptation and flexibility. Erikson (2008) identified attraction and retention of the right numbers and calibre for organisational growth; managing knowledge transfer across generations of employees; and containing turnover among mid-career employees while also attracting and holding on to young talent.

Demographic groups present specific TM challenges. Young talent, otherwise referred to as millennials or Generation Y, is perceived to be needy, disloyal and casual and have a sense of entitlement, and thus present problems to their managers (Nolan, 2015; Thompson and Gregory, 2012). Challenges linked to this group include the need to keep them motivated by addressing their interest in corporate social responsibility, work-life balance, access to continuous training and development and mobility. Another demographic grouping is Generation X, comprising of those who are more likely to pursue second careers. The challenge for organisations is that of creating opportunities that are appealing enough for them to remain with the organisation (Erikson, 2008) while addressing their need for independence, work-life balance and access to appropriate work-enabling technology (Festing and Schäfer, 2014). Older and ready-to-retire talent that falls in the bracket of baby boomers are profiled as

generally less likely to want to change jobs as compared to other generations (Festing and Schäfer, 2014). They present the challenge of how to harness their knowledge (Carlo, 2008). This is particularly a problem in knowledge-intensive industries (Joe, Yoong and Patel, 2013). Women and other minorities in the workplace present diversity management-related TM challenges (Daubner, 2016; Hunt, Layton and Prince, 2014). Sheehan and Anderson (2015) highlighted the need for companies to link TM and diversity management. This is in the context of considering the possible detrimental implications of TM, such as a rise of exclusivity and being elitist in a manner that could threaten perceived organisational justice and suggest possible discriminatory practices.

Deficiencies on the part of executives in implementing TM have been highlighted as a major TM challenge. Changing the attitudes of executives who do not appreciate that people are not easily interchangeable is another challenge that has been highlighted (Erikson, 2008). Focusing on China, Wellins, Liu and Qiuyong (2010), they identified a lack of competency on the part of managers in managing talented employees together with the absence of an assessed pool of talent in an organisation, failure to measure the outcome of TD initiatives and failure to link talent strategy to business strategy as challenges. The other challenges identified by Wellins *et al.*, (2010) are in fact a reflection of lack of capacity on the part of management.

There are various other challenges surrounding TM in organisations, out of which the first challenge is associated with attracting and identifying the right talent. Other challenges include providing attractive salaries, providing engaging work for employees, developing new interests among the employees, motivating and encouraging passion and maintaining a supportive organisational culture with transformational leadership (Vaiman *et al.*, 2018; Dana and Snejina, 2018). However, these challenges can vary from industry to industry as TM practises vary. Companies have also been found to adopt a non-integrated approach to implementation of TM, failing to realise the benefits of an integrated approach (Hejase *et al.*, 2016; Hejase, Hamdar and Haddad, 2012). With specific reference to companies in China and India, Cooke, Saini and Wang (2014) identified the barriers to TM as individual, organisational and macro factors. At an individual level, the challenges were associated with talent's attitudinal and behavioural issues, competence problems and their bargaining power where there are skill shortages. Organisational barriers included leadership problems such as having a short-term view of performance and poor or a lack of strategic human resources management orientation. Macro factors included the education system failing to produce the required talent, lack of industry-level TD and a culture that is hierarchy oriented. With respect to China *et al.*, Fang (2014) also



highlighted culture as a factor together with viewing TM as part of a national development strategy. Focusing on Japan, Furusawa (2014) also identified cultural differences at a national level as among the challenges to TM. Other factors are the negative effect of TM on those employees not labelled as such and management silo thinking, which may hinder their understanding of TM and further compound feelings of alienation among other employees. Talent mobility was cited as a challenge by, among others, Piansoongnern (2014). With specific reference to India, although also applicable elsewhere, Pereira and Fontinha (2014) identified the need for TM to keep pace with the growth of knowledge-intensive work.

This section has explained various issues related to TM from different perspectives. To address various issues surrounding TM, adopting a strategic approach is effective, which is explained in the next section.

## **2.10. Influencing Factors**

The concept of achieving sustainable development requires that effective TM systems should not only address recruitment and hiring concerns, but also focus on performance management, development of leadership capacity, employee engagement and building HR capacity as key influential factors for the management of talent. Many private industrial companies are grappling with the challenges of competition, rapid changes, increased technological innovation and unpredictable markets due to globalisation. This has necessitated them to adopt new mechanisms of TM as a result of heightened competition for skilled manpower. Consequently, most companies endeavour to link TM with internal organisational factors (Beechler and Woodward, 2009).

### **2.10.1. Organisational Culture**

Organisational culture can be understood as the shared norms, values, practices and behaviours among all the units and members in the organisations, which is developed for ensuring good work and environmental practices that could achieve success to the organisations (Schwartz and Davis, 1981; Jelinek, Smircich and Hirsch, 1983; Schein, 1985; Angelle, 2010). The culture reflects how the employees manage their work, identify and develop personal and professional goals, and the ways of achieving these goals. In addition to the employees' operations, organisational culture also influences the organisational performance, practices, policies, training and development programmes and HRM practices (Garz and Morgeson, 2012; Ali *et al.*, 2008; Caldwell *et al.*, 1990).

Organisational culture can be influenced by the managers within the organisation, as they are the main drivers in creating and developing the culture. Accordingly, the attitudes, beliefs, commitment, performance and values may differ, which could influence the TM practices and approaches (Lok and Crawford, 2004). Additionally, the geographical locations that have different cultural norms may also be an influencing factor, as is supported by various authors (Hofstede, 1991; Chen, 2001; El-Kahal, 2001) who have identified significant differences in the organisational culture and practices of Eastern and Western regions of the globe. Therefore, the geographical location is also considered an influencing factor of TM.

In addition to the influencing factors there are various components that are used by different authors in defining the organisational culture, which can be considered as major factors influencing TM practices. For example, as identified in various studies (Litwin and Stringer, 1968; Ouchi, 1980; Wallach, 1983), organisational culture is explained under three types: bureaucratic, innovative and supportive. This is a completely different perspective of defining the organisational culture, which traditionally is understood by the values and customs shared together by the organisational entities. Accordingly, Wallach (1993) developed a three-dimensional method of measuring organisational culture using the three dimensions of bureaucracy, support and innovation, or the Organisational Culture Index (OCI). These three topologies are explained in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3. Wallach’s Typology of Organisational Culture

<b><i>Culture Typologies</i></b>	<b><i>Explanation</i></b>
<b>Bureaucratic</b>	This topology can be related to focusing on responsibility and authority. It is structured vertically, with a highly regulated and systematic flow of powers and authority along with responsibility at each level. The focus of this approach is on controlling, coordinating, administrating and maintaining efficiency. However, it is considered to be negatively associated with employee engagement, satisfaction, attitudes and commitment (Koberg and Chusmir, 1987; Chen, 2004).
<b>Innovative</b>	An innovative culture focuses on creativity enterprising, stimulating engagement and interest, motivation and challenges in order to drive the results-oriented approach. Though the approach has good professional development benefits and increases the performance of employees, it is considered to be a process associated with creating a stressful environment, where the employees may sometimes feel pressurised (Shadur, Kienzle and Rodwell, 1999; Wallach, 1983).
<b>Supportive</b>	This is one of the effective types of organisational cultures that could stimulate motivation, growth, commitment and retention among the employees by practicing social strategies such as adopting a friendly approach, open communication, fair practices, collaborative efforts in the workplace and maintaining good relationships etc. According to Marks, Mathieu and Zaccaro (2001) and Erkutlu (2012), this type of culture allows for individual support and encourages a collaborative and supportive approach, which helps to create an environment where employees in a team feel that their input is valued and appreciated.

Source: Wallach (1993)

Therefore, the type of organisational culture can be related to the TM influencing factors. For example, a bureaucratic type of culture is based on strict rules and the responsibility has to be fulfilled according to the authority given. This approach may be useful in some public entities such as customs departments or military organisations etc., where TM is not focused to a great extent. Similarly, an innovative culture may not be suitable for all employees, as it is clearly aligned with business goals and objectives which may create a stressful working environment, where TM practices may not be effectively implemented. However, a supportive culture can positively relate to TM practices as it encourages learning and development, motivates employees, creates employee satisfaction and increases their engagement and commitment to the organisation (Lucas *et al.*, 2018; Choi *et al.*, 2018).

### **2.10.2 Employer Branding in TM**

Employer branding is an integral part of managing talent. It is the first step in hiring prospective talent and building a resourceful workforce (Kotler and Lee, 2008). Candidates know about employers through the messages they convey via branding. Today's marketplace is on the lookout for talented employees who can bring companies more than just the delivery of job responsibilities. The search is for individuals who can increase the customer database, increase business and gain a competitive edge. Hiring talented employees becomes easy when the employer portrays a significant and unique brand of itself in the marketplace. Effective TM is initiated through effective employer branding (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004).

Branding could be termed as the process of building a brand identity (Kotler and Lee, 2008). The objective of branding is to differentiate companies and products for the purpose of building an economic value for the company and the consumer. Employer branding concerns paving the way to attracting, engaging and retaining employees through portraying a valued image of the company and its culture in the marketplace. It helps companies market their offerings to potential employees, helping them to maintain their loyalty. Employer branding promotes internally and externally the clear view of the elements that make the firm unique and desirable as an existing employer (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). Employer branding works effectively in attaching employees emotionally with the vision of the company and helping them feel engaged, which enhances employee satisfaction. Employer branding also assists in building a CA by aligning employees' attitudes with company values (Kotler and Lee, 2008).

A company is evaluated whenever it communicates with potential employees, advertises and provides presentations at professional meetings. Potential employees are influenced by the way

an organisation responds on the telephone, describes open positions and the way it presents itself (Kotler and Lee, 2008). Various surveys conducted on employee turnover and employee satisfaction reveal a number of issues that trigger dissatisfaction in the workplace. These include low career progression opportunities, company culture, differentiation between job advertisement and actual job and lack of expected remuneration, etc. These are critical factors that an employer must look into in order to understand the TM concept better. The employee recruitment process alone is an expensive part of TM. It takes a great deal of time, money and effort to find and attract the right people for the right jobs. Another critical and expensive factor in TM is employee turnover (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). Successful companies have low employee turnover. When employees leave an organisation, the company faces multiple expense areas including replacement costs, existing vacancy costs and costs associated with the time it takes to fill the vacant position (Jawahitha *et al.*, 2011).

The companies portray a clear image of its vision, environment and focus areas through branding. It helps candidates know what the company expectations are for them, and they make their choice of passing or joining a company. As employers hire the right people for the right roles, the loyal and good performers increase in the personnel base. Especially in the industries where the employees are considered as the face of the companies, employees are considered as a valuable asset as they represent the brand of that company (Wilson and Ellison, 2018). Similarly, companies with a good working environment and an organisational culture with strong leadership can be reflected as a good brand identity. Therefore, TM and employer branding are interrelated, as TM practises lead to improved employee efficiency, motivation, satisfaction, retention and a positive working culture, which results in a strong brand identity (Espinoza *et al.*, 2018). The ultimate result is a productive output for the company (Kotler and Lee, 2008).

Employer branding provides a clear connection between effort, reward and opportunities through the brand message. It gives a clear view of on-target earnings; for example, the effort it will take for the candidate to reach the target and the authentic rewards associated with the role. Setting clear expectations through such branding can help filter candidates and make the screening process more effective (Jawahitha *et al.*, 2011). A successful branding message discusses the essential information on an open forum, with space for potential candidates to make their choice and follow through with personal interests and passions. Such information could be conveyed through job descriptions, social media networks and review sites. Specific and authentic information regarding the positions, company vision, culture and rewards paves the way for dedicated and committed professionals to join, perform and stay in an organisation

(Robin, 2007). In order to set clear expectations, some companies advertise video job descriptions where an existing employee working in the same position describes their typical work day and shares their experience of working in that exact same role within the company. It leaves no space for surprise and draws the attention of only the right candidates (Kotler and Lee, 2008). It helps to reduce the time and money spent on the selection process to nearly half. Hiring managers save themselves from wasting time with a candidate who has the wrong expectations and who would probably decline the job offer at the last stage of the selection process. Hiring the right people in a company makes TM easier and helps achieve results faster (Gilliver, 2009).

Firms are applying branding to more diverse scenarios, even though it is not a new concept, and to a setting where its role is gradually gaining importance (Wentz and Suchard, 1993). According to Kotler, it is the procedure of building an intended identity of a brand (Kotler and Lee, 2008). An employer brand makes an organisation visible in the marketplace and portrays it as a unique company (Gilliver, 2009). Ambler and Barrow (1996) initiated applying the branding concept to HRM. They helped view the employees as the customers and the employer as the brand itself. Employer brand is the package of the psychological, economic and functional benefits provided through employment, and the employing company identifies the brand.

Thus, it is essential that focus is on attracting, retaining and staying in control of TM through employer branding, and targeting the right kind of people who will perform and deliver results as expected by the company (Nayak *et al.*, 2017; Nguyen, 2017; Dirani *et al.*, 2018). The ultimate aim for an organisation should be targeted towards nurturing loyalty in employees in order to bring out the best of their performance, since they are the vital entities that run an organisation and TM is expensive when it goes wrong. Employer branding should be planned, analysed and positioned in the appropriate job market, which will assist in hiring and retaining the right people for the right positions in a limited amount of time (Jawahitha *et al.*, 2011).

### **2.10.3. The Effect of Leadership on TM Implementation**

Leadership is a process of influence (Yukl, 2001). In this regard, in an organisation leadership can be viewed as residing in those occupying positions of influence, namely the managers; although not every leader is necessarily a manager. Leadership practice is generally viewed from two broad perspectives: transactional and transformational. Under transactional leadership, the employer-employee or manager-subordinate relationship is based on exchanging value or favours between the two on a cost-benefit basis (Sarros and Santora,

2001). The exchange of value is based on achieving agreed-upon goals which, according to Burns (1978), are not necessarily shared as each party is solely focused on its own interests. Transformational leadership focuses on the pursuit of mutually beneficial higher goals by the leader and the follower (Burns, 1978). In the context of TM, those goals could be professional growth for the employee and improved performance for the leader, which could result in the employee getting even more fulfilling work assignments within the organisation. In its purest form, transformational leadership is premised on moral foundations and is distinguished by its practices of idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration (Bass and Steidlmeier, 1999). In literature there is increasing consensus that leadership practices and styles are context-sensitive (Osborn, Hunt and Jauch, 2002; Dinh *et al.*, 2014). From the definitions of transactional and transformational leadership, the latter seems more akin to TM. It can therefore be expected that certain leadership practices may be found in organisations that have adopted TM as part of their human capital strategy. The role of leadership in TM stems from its multiple roles of setting the tone of an organisation at a strategic level through its vision, objectives and strategies (Capelli, 2008); formulating the TM philosophy of an organisation whether they see it as exclusive or inclusive, stable or developable (Meyers and Van Woerkom, 2014); identifying key positions for strategy execution and realisation of objectives through aligning talent with business goals (Sheehan, Grant, and Garavan, 2018); and developing a competency framework/model for assessing talent (Williams-Lee, 2008).

Turner (2018) posits that there is a symbiotic relationship between TM on the one hand and all levels of organisational leadership, identified as the role of board and executives with their strategic direction and resources allocation, the role of management with their implementation, and the role of human resources management to ensure consistency of approach throughout the organisation. Also focusing on the role of leadership, Seth (2014) found that leadership had a role in the attraction, acquisition and retention of talent and in managing the leader-employee perceptions of what form TM should take. This suggests that TM is the responsibility of all leadership levels or positions in an organisation, with each playing a role in a manner aligned to roles played elsewhere within the leadership structure. While TM policy and overall approach decisions may be taken at a strategic level, implementation and regular monitoring are in the hands of managers.

Lawler (2008, cited in Barkhuizen *et al.*, 2014) suggested that senior managers (these constitute part of leadership) should spend up to 50 percent of their time on TM. Consistent with this view, Du Plessis *et al.*, (2015) found that there was a significant relationship between perceived

organisational support (as seen through the practices of managers and supervisors) and TM practices. Supportive supervisors have been found to be important in TM interventions because of the role they play in coaching subordinates (Illinger, 2013).

A study of 33 multi-national companies based in 11 countries by Stahl *et al.*, (2012) identified senior management commitment, management involvement and embedding TM in the leadership philosophy and culture of an organisation as among the critical factors for successful TM together with alignment with strategy, internal consistency, a balance of global and local needs, and employer branding through differentiation. Among eight categories of TM initiatives identified by Morton (2005) is leadership. The criticality of leadership to TM has been noted by several other researchers (Lawler, 2008; Cheese *et al.*, 2008). Das and Baruah (2013) associated it with employee retention, which is an aspect of TM. Employee empowerment, long viewed as a factor in TM, links leadership to TM (Khandelwal and Shekhawat, 2018). Empowerment functions, where there is enough support from top management, and management support has been associated with reduced turnover intentions (Li, Kim and Zhao, 2017). Mathieu *et al.*, (2016) found that turnover intentions are affected by forms of leadership behaviour. Zhang *et al.*, (2015) also found that the style of leadership affects talent retention.

Despite the apparent role of leadership, its commitment to TM has remained questionable (Gurthridge *et al.*, 2008). Barkhuizen *et al.*, (2014), in a SA-based study, found that leadership orientation towards TM was below average. This raises the question of whether there are forms of leadership that are more amenable to TM. Onyango (2015) explored the relationship between participative leadership styles and TM and found that a transformational leadership style, which by nature is participative, enhances TM. Murithi (2017) found that there was a positive relationship between leadership style and TM. Leadership style has also been associated with talent retention during organisational change. In a Chinese context, Zhang *et al.*, (2015) found that a relationship-focused approach that is also authoritative, task oriented and coaching influenced talent retention positively.

#### **2.10.4. Reward Systems for TM**

Having a reward system that is cognisant of the need to attract and retain talent can help the implementation of TM. Kumar (2016) found that compensation packages were among factors that assisted talent retention. A reward system deals with the strategies, policies and processes used to recognise employee contribution to the achievement of organisational objectives

(Armstrong, 2010). It aims at ensuring that the organisation can attract, motivate and retain the right talent to ensure successful implementation of its strategic objectives.

In organisations with a focus on TM, rewards management is one of the main HR functions used to retain talent. Workplace rewards are premised on an organisation's rewards philosophy, which represents its guiding views and values that determine its attitude towards rewards (Kwon and Hein, 2013). Factors that influence an organisation's approach to rewards management include its vision and mission, strategic objectives, nature of business, prevailing culture in the organisation, structure and capacity to pay (Armstrong, 2010; Bussin and Rooy, 2014). The strategic objectives determine the type of employee an organisation targets (Buller and McEvoy, 2012). This has implications for the administration of the rewards of such employees and influences or even determines the organisation's reward management system. Where rewards management practices are aligned with the type of required human resources, there is more integration and TM is more successful (Romans and Lardner, 2005). There is therefore a link between TM and other organisational processes and rewards management systems (Bange, 2013). At McDonald's, the TM process includes linking it to reward systems as part of aligning TM processes to organisational performance (Williams-Lee, 2008). Similarly, Zingheim and Schuster (2001) highlighted the need for organisations to reconsider their approach to remuneration by moving towards "total rewards" if they are to attract and retain talent. Total rewards comprise both the monetary and nonmonetary returns given to employees in lieu of the time and effort they put into their work (Christopherson and King, 2006). In a more inclusive definition, Aon Hewitt (2012) defined total reward as everything an employee finds rewarding received from the employer, while Kaplan (2007) defined it as a holistic way of aligning a business' strategy with its people strategy.

Structuring of rewards for purposes of talent retention requires flexibility and responsiveness in addressing variations in the needs of talented employees. Armstrong (2010) divides rewards into transactional (financial rewards) and relational (non-financial intrinsic rewards) rewards—a separation that makes it possible to focus on specific needs. The increase in knowledge-type workers and women in workplaces has brought about the need to look beyond financial rewards to incorporate relational-type rewards. Schlechter, Thompson and Bussin (2015) propose use of a bundle of strategies that also include non-financial benefits, such as work-life balance, learning, career advancement, flexibility and family-friendly policies (Schlechter, Thompson and Bussin, 2015). Adopting a total reward approach that includes a performance component has been associated with increased performance (Bussin, 2018), a situation that suggests that



such reward structures motivate high performers (talent) to higher levels of performance and increases their loyalty and commitment to the organisation.

The total rewards approach is consistent with most theories of employee motivation and therefore constitutes a major component of TM. According to Maslow's theory, employees remain in an organisation if it meets all their needs, which range from the basic needs to self-actualisation. A progression of needs is better met by a flexible total rewards-based approach to rewards management. Theories that link rewards management to TM as part of aligning the latter to organisation performance through the practice of variable rewards include Reinforcement Theory (Skinner, 1948), Expectancy Theory (Vroom, 1964), Goal Setting Theory (Locke & Latham, 1990) and Incentive Theory (Killeen 1981). Reinforcement Theory follows the idea that behaviour that is followed by a pleasant outcome increases the frequency of occurrence of that behaviour if the reward is entirely dependent on the said behaviour and the reward is given immediately following the behaviour. A reward system that has mechanisms for immediate recognition of employee contribution would address motivation-related talent retention issues. Linked to reinforcement is Expectancy Theory, according to which one's performance of an act is based on the extent to which one expects their actions to lead to a desired specific reward. Talented employees may have an expectation to be rewarded differently from non-performers, a situation that can result in perceptions of fairness.

Models of total reward management have the common features of adopting a holistic and integrative approach by incorporating non-monetary reward, non-cash benefits and monetary rewards (Zingheim and Schuster, 2001; Sakshi and Sharma, 2016). Non-monetary benefits are intangible and intrinsically valued elements that can be classified as psychological rewards, such as development opportunities, positive work climate, work-life balance and job enrichment. Several studies have pointed to a link between developmental opportunities and intention to remain in an organisation (Kossivi, Xu and Kalgora, 2016; Cardy and Lengnick-Hall, 2011). Oladapo (2014) found opportunities for individual development to be among the top three reasons for employees leaving an organisation, while Coetzee and Stoltz (2015) found that employees' career satisfaction affects their retention. Linked to perceptions of development opportunities is the organisation's vision clarity. A compelling future vision has been highlighted as a constituting part of organisational psychological rewards. Olckers and Plessis (2015) observed that among highly skilled employees, issues relating to direction clarity and alignment of goals are necessary for talent retention. It can therefore be expected that organisations with a formal and communicated approach to employee development that is

backed by a clear strategy would have a positive work environment that gives employees a sense of being psychologically rewarded.

Non-cash rewards include perquisites and benefits. Perquisites include cars, housing and club membership and benefits include retirement, health and time off with pay (Sakshi and Sharma, 2016, citing Zingheim and Schuster, 2001). These constitute part of the lower levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. They have been associated with an organisation's ability to attract young talent (Zaharee *et al.*, 2018) and have been found to have a statistically significant effect on the perceived attractiveness of a job offer (Schlechter, Thompson and Bussin, 2015). The monetary rewards component of total rewards includes long-term incentives such as stock options, short-term variable pay such as performance bonuses, and guaranteed cash in the form of a salary and non-performance-linked bonuses (Sakshi and Sharma, 2016). Long-term incentives in the form of stock options have been associated with reduced levels of turnover, especially where there are high chances of growth (Aldatmaz, Ouimet and Van Wesep, 2018). Singh and Sharma (2015) observed that UAE organisations use both short-term and long-term retention strategies, with stock options falling under long-term strategies. Stock options have been found to be part of TM strategies (Hosen *et al.*, 2018; Naim and Lenka, 2017). Variable pay that enables an organisation to distinguish between top and average performers has been incorporated as part of TM, while a competitive salary has been identified as a retention mechanism (Bhattacharyya, 2015). Some have argued that although pay can be used to retain employees, it is not the most important (Oladapo (2014). Gevrek *et al.*, (2017) noted that how monetary compensation impacts employee retention depends not so much on the magnitude of the money but whether the employee perceives it as fair. This suggests that rewards management needs to focus on not just the external competitiveness of the pay and benefits but also on internal fairness. Next section has discussed in detail the various practices adopted in oil and gas organisations for TM. Each of these practices would deliver various outcomes, which are summarised in the following section.

## **2.11. TM Outcomes**

The above section discussed the various factors influencing TM practices and different TM strategies that can achieve organisational growth, sustainability and competitive advantage. Accordingly, this section focuses on explaining how the various TM strategies can improve the

factors including employee engagement, motivation and satisfaction, which could contribute to the process of achieving SCA and organisational growth.

### **2.11.1. Employee Engagement**

With increasing competition and the need for organisations to maintain their place in the global market place, it is very important for companies to think about TM and how it can significantly impact employee engagement. Studies have identified that a skilled and motivated workforce or employees are significant for the success of the organisation (Aljunaibi, 2014). However, the process of reengineering and decentralisation has resulted in exhausting the employees instead of empowering them, and has not provided positive outcomes. Only limited attention has been placed on employee engagement and their capabilities. According to Casademunt (2016), management practices in organisations are stuck between theory and practices, due to which the human capital is not being effectively used, misused or wasted. Since change is the most important element of sustaining companies, TM is a significant strategy in driving continuous change within companies.

Business leaders currently focus more on the decision-making techniques that could enhance employee engagement that can benefit the business. Studies have identified that TM has a positive link with employee engagement that can also improve employee performance. TD can be defined as the “planning, selection and implementation of development strategies for the entire talent pool to ensure that the organisation has both the current and future supply of talent to meet strategic objectives and that development activities are aligned with organisational TM processes” (Garavan, Carbery and Rock, 2012, p. 6). A study conducted by Höglund (2012) also focused on examining the relationship between human resources practices and human capital through the psychological contract within the system of TM. Hoglund (2012) stated that TM could be an effective framework that could define and communicate the development qualities that are important for the present and future objectives and goals of organisations. Therefore, TM could be significant in enhancing employee engagement, as it allows potential employees to master new expertise quickly and also allows them to deliver positive outcomes for organisations (Berger and Berger, 2011). Though there are various benefits of employee engagement, such as employee motivation and retention (Pandita and Ray, 2018), there are few issues that are related to the management of employee engagement. Segalla and Denisi (2019) stated that it is important to analyse the type of engagement being achieved by using TM practises. Accordingly, various types of engagement including Active Employee Engagement,

Unsatisfied Employee Engagement, No Employee Engagement and Abusive Employee Engagement were analysed, and it was stressed that TM practises should focus on Active Employee Engagement.

The studies have identified some of the important factors associated with TM that help in enhancing employee engagement. The first factor is recognition, including compensations and benefits. Berger and Berger (2010) noted that there is a significant link between recognition and employee engagement. Financial recognition provided under strategic TM can be significant in improving employee engagement and employee performance. Another important factor is 'talent culture' (Berger and Berger, 2010). This means that developing a positive work culture that promotes talent, respects people, values diversity and helps individual development and empowerment can enhance employee engagement within organisations. TM stimulates change and also encourages creativity and innovation among the workforce (Mohammed, 2016). TM studies find managers who consider financial capital to be a strategic resource are required to view human capital as the strategic resource in order to drive TM strategies that can promote and enhance employee engagement (Aljunaibi, 2014; O'Connor and Crowley-Henry, 2017; Obeidat *et al.*, 2019). Lack of effective management of employee engagement may result in various issues such as lack of motivation among employees and decreased employee efficiency, performance and satisfaction etc., which may directly affect the overall organisational performance (Matthews, 2018).

### **2.11.2. Motivation**

Motivation is an important element that is associated with employee performance and directly affects the productivity of organisations. The individual competencies and capabilities are also influenced by motivation. Studies have shown that the level of personal motivation is a significant factor that informs how an individual will utilise his or her capabilities and competencies and directly impacts their professional behaviour and their performance. According to Downs and Swailes (2013), employee motivation can be considered as the collaboration between three distinct social motives that influence the willingness of an individual to improve their performance and productivity. These three social motives are personal understanding of motivation, their drive towards achievement and their drive to achieve power (Downs and Swailes, 2013). The main challenge for organisations in the current market is to focus on enhancing the capabilities of the employees and receive success through manpower for sustainability. Therefore, some of the complex factors that require attention are

efficiency of organisation, efficient leadership, effective TD and TM and producing a productive workforce (Rastgoo, 2016).

Organisations are required to provide the needed motivation to employees and must pay attention to the motivational forces of employees. Masvaure, Ruggunan and Maharaj (2014) state that intrinsic motivation is found more in employees who are satisfied with the development and growth opportunities they receive in the workplace. Therefore, strategic TM can significantly drive employee motivation, as it can be helpful in providing training, enhancing the skills of employees, developing a positive work culture that provides motivations and also enhances trust and integrity among employees and management. Recruitment of talented employees through the strategic TM process provides the opportunity for organisations to retain such talent through recognition, effective self-development opportunities, growth and learning opportunities and effective work environments (Paramitha, and Indarti, 2014). Intrinsic motivation is considered to be very significant for improving employee performance and enhancing organisational performance, as intrinsic motivation encourages people to complete their tasks with more creativity and also to do it faster (Thunnissen, Boselie and Fruytier, 2013).

TM strategies can be included with motivational techniques in the context of retaining employees and improving their performance. TM strategies can drive talented employees to perform better and feel valued; therefore, motivating strategies can keep the wider workforce engaged and committed (Stone *et al.*, 2015; Siddiqui and Bisaria, 2018; Kumar, 2018). Rewards and recognition is an important TM strategy that is directly associated with employee motivation to display their complete potential and enhance productivity (Mensah, 2015; Kumar, 2018). Some of the significant TM strategies identified in the literature are employing talented people, providing recognition through incentives and benefits, providing an effective work environment and providing growth and learning opportunities, such as strategies that significantly influence the extrinsic and intrinsic motivation of employees. Therefore, the organisational strategies are significantly influenced by TM strategies and TM strategies can drive employee motivation, by focusing on their strengths, capabilities, development needs and developing a positive work culture (Mensah, 2015).

### 2.11.3 Employee Commitment

Employee commitment is a relationship that exists between the employees and the organisations. Commitment can be expressed in terms of employees' connection with the organisation, which reflects their understanding of the goals and objectives of the organisation, and their perceptions that they fit into the organisation. Such relationships can add value to the organisations as the employees tend to work efficiently and offer support with determination, which results in high productivity (Meyer, 2016). Commitment from the employees can achieve various benefits for organisations. Committed employees reflect positive behaviour with organisations and are more likely to adapt (professionally and personally) and reflect strong determination in achieving the organisation's vision. In addition, they are unlikely to leave the organisation, which can add CA as it helps in retaining key talented employees (Hodges, 2018). Developing clear objectives and goals of the organisations; deploying clear communication strategies to provide the information and interactivity at all levels within the organisations; placing employees in the positions according to their skills, competencies and interests; monitoring employee progress and providing support for development; providing an excellent work atmosphere; involving employees in decision-making; and encouraging employees by management through appreciation, appraisals, good pay packages etc. can all strengthen employee commitment (Tworek, 2019; Meyer, 2016).

Studies related to employee commitment have highlighted its relationship with various factors. For example, Georgellis (2015) found that employee commitment can be influenced by external factors as well as internal factors such as support, motivation and training etc. It was found that employees in a region with high unemployment exhibit more loyalty and commitment towards their organisation, and the effect of unemployment on commitment may vary across various industries (Georgellis, 2015). Similarly, Alfalla-Luque *et al.*, (2015) used employee commitment as an antecedent to the effect of supply-chain integration on performance, reflecting the impact of employee commitment on external factors such as supplier and customer satisfaction.

Accordingly, employee commitment can be influenced by various internal factors of organisations. For example, Lam *et al.*, (2015) investigated the impact of superior and subordinate relationships on employee commitment and identified that influencing tactics such as collaboration, consultation, ingratiation, inspirational appeals and rational persuasion improves the superior and sub-ordinate relationship and leads to strong employee commitment and

continuous improvement initiatives. These influencing tactics may be related to the approaches used for increasing engagement and improving work environment by superiors. In this context, it was found that employee engagement, positive working environment, and organisational learning initiatives have a significant positive impact on employee commitment (Hanaysha, 2016). Steers and Lee (2017, cited in Landy, 2017), similar to Lam *et al.*, (2015), focused on the influencing factors in organisational climates, including communication, legitimacy and validity, instrumentality, job standards and expectations, participation, and managerial support, and found that these factors are strongly correlated with employee commitment. It highlights employee expectations, which is a key factor that needs to be addressed for achieving employee commitment. Likewise, Bailey *et al.*, (2016) identified that internal marketing (the promotion of a company's objectives, products and services to employees within the organisation) has a strong positive impact on job satisfaction and employee commitment. Furthermore, Sharma *et al.*, (2016) found that internal service quality (positive organisational behaviour and transformative services) had a positive effect on employee satisfaction, commitment and employee well-being, which in turn positively influenced employee performance.

Thus, it can be considered that employee commitment is an important factor that can be influenced by both internal and external factors and can add value to organisations by improving CA and retaining talent within organisations.

#### **2.11.4. Satisfaction**

The main focus of TM within organisations is to recruit and retain talent for the success of the organisations. TM strategies include “*the task of identity, select, develop, appraise, motivate and retain talent to secure the sustainable competitive advantage of the organisation*” (Dixit and Arrawatia, 2018, p. 426). Therefore, TM significantly helps in enhancing the CA of the organisation. Development of the talent, retaining talent and keeping the talented employees committed is significantly associated with employee satisfaction with their job. Job satisfaction can be considered as the measure that helps in understanding the connectedness of the employees with their job and also the feeling of contentment that employees feel in the workplace. Job satisfaction is an important aspect of organisational management and TM. Job satisfaction could be an important element that can help in employee retention and using the complete potential and skills of employees (Luna–Arocas and Morley, 2015). Therefore, TM strategies can significantly drive employee job satisfaction. Employee satisfaction within organisations is associated with the recognition and incentives they receive, with a positive

work environment and culture, with growth and development opportunities, and with getting the chance to present their creativity, ideas and knowledge (Luna–Arocas and Morley, 2015).

The high-potential identification also enhances the confidence of employees, enhances their commitment towards the organisation and improves the level of satisfaction (Gelens *et al.*, 2014). Studies have also associated the level of job satisfaction with the sense of achievement, success and growth that individuals receive. It has also been generally associated with employee performance and productivity. Therefore, the organisational strategies are significantly influenced by the TM strategies that help in driving employee satisfaction (Kontoghiorghes, 2016). The key ingredients of job satisfaction are recognition, income, promotion, growth and professional achievements that further lead to the feeling of contentment and fulfilment. Employee satisfaction with their job, work environment and opportunities they receive helps in aligning their personal goals and objectives with the goals and objectives of the organisation. Such employees tend to work within organisations and always focus on enhancing their performance, thus job satisfaction also promotes employee retention. TM strategies within organisations requires improving the operations by focusing on human capital and provides the opportunity of career development and enhancing their skills. Kamaland Lukman (2017) also concluded that TM strategies must promote a respectful and collaborative environment, appreciating the performance of employees and designing the jobs in such a way that make employees feel that their work is important for organisational success.

Positive relationship development and collaborative working has also been associated with employee satisfaction. Exchange of information and positive information flow (in the context of work environment and work culture) improve employee satisfaction, as employees get the opportunity to learn, share their knowledge and enhance their skills with effective information (Hamidi, Saberi and Safari, 2014). Employee satisfaction is also associated with the personal attitudes and perceptions of the employees towards their job. Therefore, TM strategies that focus on understanding and influencing the personal attitudes and perceptions of employees and can motivate them to improve their performance, and such strategies are significant for organisational success. Therefore, to a significant extent, TM strategies can drive employee satisfaction and influence organisational strategies (Hamidi, Saberi and Safari, 2014). TM can also be viewed as an important strategic tool that can drive the performance of employees, improve their organisational commitment and also improve job satisfaction. TM allows organisations to identify the internal as well as external talent pool and helps management to



develop strategies that could retain such talent. When the skilled workforce receives the opportunities to enhance their skills further and get appropriate recognition, their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is enhanced, resulting in improving their satisfaction. Engaged, motivated and satisfied employees are significant for the success of organisations in the competitive world. The following sections (2.13, 2.14, and 2.15) thus look into the aspects of CA and sustainability and examine the relationship between TM and sustainable competitive advantage.

## **2.12. Competitive Advantage**

CA is an aspect that aids a company or an entity to outperform its competitors by deploying various competitive strategies (West *et al.*, 2015). CA aims at creating value that would result in enhanced performance which would achieve a competitive edge over other companies. However, there are various aspects that need to be considered in creating value, which may include identifying value-creating activities, resources and strategies etc. (Porter, 1998; West *et al.*, 2015). Porter (1998) identified three strategies for achieving competitive advantage, which include cost leadership, differentiation and focus strategy. Cost leadership strategy focuses on providing goods or services at a lower price, usually less than that of competitors, thus adding reasonable value. Usually, companies deploy this strategy by improving operational efficiency or by employing low-wage workers (Moon and Dathe-Douglass, 2015). Walmart, Costco and Tesco are examples of companies deploying this strategy. Similarly, China, for example, exports goods at lower prices by utilising the low-wage workers in the country, thereby reducing input costs and maintaining the lower prices compared to other international exporters.

Differentiation, on the other hand, adds value to the company by providing goods or services that are unique, such as high-quality products, fast delivery and effective customer service usually led by innovation. Innovation, in this perspective, can be defined as inventing products or services that meet the same needs in new and more effective and efficient ways than the existing products or services (Zenger, 2016). For example, Apple iPhones are smartphones with unique features, such as effective touch functionality, and are of a high quality, which helped the company to capture good market share even while pricing its products at premium prices. Considering this example, it can be understood that the profit margin using the differentiation strategy can be high when compared with the cost leadership strategy (Moon and Dathe-Douglass, 2015). Similarly, using the focus strategy, companies select a specific target market that they understand and provide services better than anyone else. Cost leadership

or differentiation strategies can be used in this process. It is often practiced by smaller firms, as they may not have the resources to target everyone (Zenger, 2016). For example, small financing firms and cooperative banks target particular regions or markets and deliver services such as farm loans and personal loans. This strategy is also referred to as segmentation as strategy as it focuses on particular geographical regions or particular types of markets.

Companies can achieve CA in two ways: through external changes (PEST, Change Management etc.) and internal changes (improving operational efficiency, innovation, resource management etc.). However, the increasing competition and growing technology adoption has led to the integration of various strategies for achieving a competitive advantage, as relying on one strategy may not be effective (Belton, 2017). Various studies (Molina-Azorin *et al.*, 2015; Darroch *et al.*, 2014; Dyer and Singh, 1998; Haas and Stuebiger, 2017) have been conducted on using different approaches for increasing competitive advantage. Darroch *et al.*, (2014) argued that innovation can be used for creating new markets, which can add a competitive edge to the companies. Dyer and Singh (1998) identified four sources within the companies, including specific assets, knowledge management, resources and capabilities and effective governance, which can achieve CA and devise firm-level strategies. It was found that knowledge sharing can enhance the relationship between the various entities within organisations and also between organisations and customers (Haas and Stuebiger, 2017). By providing quality services through effective knowledge management strategies, firms can improve customer relations, which can add value and achieve CA (Haas and Stuebiger, 2017). Similarly, an ethical approach, such as corporate social responsibility, was found to have a positive impact on increasing customer satisfaction, reputation and value, thereby increasing the CA (Saeidi *et al.*, 2015). In addition, Albrecht *et al.*, (2015) found that HRM approaches, such as selection, socialisation, performance management and training, can be used for increasing the efficiency of the employees and thereby the competitive advantage. Furthermore, a positive correlation was found between quality management in the delivery of services and CA in terms of both costs and differentiation (Molina-Azorin *et al.*, 2015; Nsour and Tayeh, 2018). These studies identified various business operations or techniques that can increase competitive advantage. One of the important developments in the last few decades is the development of human resources and information and communications technology, which have rapidly transformed the way businesses operate.

### 2.13. Sustainable Competitive Advantage

Sustainability is one of the major business approaches that is practiced by organisations to achieve long-term growth (competitive advantage). SCA is an approach that utilises the resources within a company in order to achieve value by delivering products and services that are unique and by deploying long-term strategies that cannot be easily duplicated or surpassed by other companies (Porter 2005; Chaston, 2012, Porter, 1985)

. Companies can achieve long-term growth by maintaining a sharp competitive edge over competitors through innovative approaches (Kumar, 2016). There are different approaches to creating sustainable competitive advantage, which include the following:

- Creating effective brand value: A good brand value can help companies to achieve customer loyalty and increase the company's reputation. This would not only ensure continuous growth, but also increase competitive advantage. However, creating a brand value is a complex and time-consuming process (Vomberg *et al.*, 2014);
- Low-cost leadership: When companies continue to provide goods and services at lower prices for a long term, it is often preferred by customers and creates a strong barrier for new entrants. This approach helps to create a competitive edge that cannot be easily surpassed by competitors (Kumar, 2016);
- Strategic assets: Companies can gather valuable assets over time, which not only creates value but also ensures continuous development. For example, investing in research and development activities can lead to new innovations, which can be patented, and creates a valuable asset for companies. Similarly, retaining efficient human resources, deploying new innovative technologies to improve operations and expanding the operations etc. are a few approaches that can quantify strategic assets (Porter 2005; Chaston, 2012);
- Differentiation: As discussed in the previous section, differentiation can achieve CA for companies. However, to achieve sustainable competitive advantage, the differentiation approach must be continuously updated within organisations (Porter 2005; Mazen and Samy, 2017);
- Eco-friendly approaches: Climate change and the increase in carbon emissions has led to changes in companies' operational approaches. Companies are focusing on eco-friendly approaches in order to reduce carbon emissions and are leading the way in adopting environment-friendly approaches. These approaches would increase the brand value and the reputation of the companies and would lead to an increase in CA (Leonidou *et al.*, 2015; Leonidou *et al.*, 2014).

Krishnaswamy (2018) identified various sources of (SCA), including quality, speed, focusing on specific segments of the market, innovation, developing human assets, outsourcing, entering into strategic alliances, creating virtual organisations, knowledge management and building a learning organisation. Various studies in this area, linking SCA and various approaches, were reviewed which found some interesting approaches that can be attributed to various business development models. Innovation approaches such as market and product innovations were found to be positively correlated with SCA (Kuncoro and Suriani, 2018), reflecting innovation as a driving force for SCA. Similarly, coopetition (collaboration of competitors for mutually beneficial results) was also found to be positively correlated with SCA and also led to the increase in mutual trust among competitors (Corte and Aria, 2016). Such an approach can be effective in the current market scenario, where the competition between the companies is increasing exponentially.

Various approaches across the supply chain were also found to have a positive impact on performance-related attributes, which increases the SCA. A dynamic capabilities approach with supplier integration in supply chain management has resulted in various benefits for the buyers, such as cost management, supply-demand management and flexibility etc., which has improved operational efficiency and led to strategic engagement between suppliers and buyers, providing a platform for long-term business growth (Vanpoucke *et al.*, 2014). The use of technology-enabled systems such as ERP, CRM, e-procurement, e-commerce and s-commerce have been proved to add value to organisations by creating SCA (Marinagi *et al.*, 2014). SCA, isolated from business operations such as SCM and service quality (Sweis *et al.*, 2016), can also be correlated with organisational resources.

Human resources can also be related to SCA in different ways. Huang *et al.*, (2015) identified that firms with a strong market position can only attain temporary competitive advantage, whereas firms with a superior market position in the use of human resources and technology resources can attain SCA, reflecting the importance of human resources in achieving SCA. Information management technology applications such as accounting systems (Holm *et al.*, 2016) and database management systems (Moayer *et al.*, 2015) were found to be effective in developing SCA. Few studies have also investigated the human resources perspective in assessing the impact on SCA. Strategic leadership was found to be an essential factor for achieving SCA (Mahdi and Almsafir, 2014). Similarly, a transformational leadership style was found to be positively correlated to achieving increased SCA (Chen *et al.*, 2018). Absorptive

capacity, knowledge transfer and organisational learning, the entities focusing on knowledge management among human resources and technology resources were all found to be effective in developing SCA (Liao *et al.*, 2016; Che and Ngah, 2016).

#### **2.14. TM and Sustainable Competitive Advantage**

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, SCA was discussed as a dominant feature in the field of strategic management. Porter (2005) defined the term SCA, having presented generic strategies to achieve SCA, such as low cost, differentiation and focus. The analysis of sources of SCA has become one of the most important issues of strategic management (Coyne, 1986; Barney, 1991; Foss and Knudsen, 2003; Vanayan, Jayashree and Marthandan, 2009). In the 1990s, traditional sources of SCA were recognised as access to natural and financial resources, technology and economies of scale. Barney (1991) proposed that resources can be the SCA of the company.

Emerging companies possess specific CAs, such as the ability to survive in difficult market and economic environments, creativity in overcoming bureaucracy, production at a low cost, and highly technically educated and talented people (Cooke *et al.*, 2014; Ramamurti, 2012). Cappelli (2000) sees TM as an enduring process to achieve the needs and goals of a company. Collings and Mellahi (2009) expand the definition further with additional details, including the influence on SCA, the recruitment of the most talented candidates and the creation of an internal HRM system to develop and motivate these candidates at work. Moreover, TM is seen to contribute more to the strategic goals of a company rather than just filling positions with the right people (Farndale *et al.*, 2010; Lewis and Heckman, 2006) and is seen as a set of instruments to create a firm's CA. On a global scale, TM practices consist of all the activities to identify, recruit, develop, motivate and retain the best people to achieve strategic goals and strongly facilitate the SCA of a company with a focus on key positions (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Scullion and Collings, 2011). Similarly, Latukha (2016) highlighted the importance of TM, considering it as a basic fundamental factor for achieving SCA in Russian organisations. Pinnington *et al.*, (2018) (cited in Vaiman *et al.*, 2018) further stated that TM is one of the essential factors in identifying the pivotal positions in organisations, which would strive to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. Accordingly, it is evident that TM can be an important function for achieving organisational goals such as improved growth and performance, sustainability and competitive advantage.

TM is one of the most important HRM practices, which is integrated with other practices such as employee motivation, employee retention, performance, learning and development. It is one

of the essential assets that is becoming complex with short supply, whose benefits can result in employee recruitment and retention, employee engagement and commitment, which in turn results in improved operational and financial performance of the company and thus increases CA (Hughes and Rog, 2008). TM can be affected by both internal and external factors. For example, the Western MNCs in China are facing issues with TM, and they are identifying, developing and retaining key talented employees using various strategies. The scarcity of talented people (external factor) in the market is causing issues with TM and, accordingly, performance and CA are being affected (Hartmann *et al.*, 2010). Such scarcity can be addressed by utilising skilled migrants who can fulfil the needs and requirements of the various operations in the organisations. They are not just considered as contributors to SCA, but as the source of SCA (Zikic, 2014).

Furthermore, Lawler (2008) identified four areas within organisations where TM (human capital) can be very useful in improving performance efficiency. These four areas include corporate boards, leadership, HRM and information practices. These four areas support TM by effectively managing information resources and learning practices. TM in corporate boards can lead to effective decision-making at high levels in organisations, which can result in improved performance and competitive advantage. It was found that TM as a part of HRM is the most important factor among the four areas identified for achieving CA (Lawler, 2008). Al Ariss *et al.*, (2014) identified that TM practises were positively correlated with operational efficiency and competitive advantage. In addition, the importance of succession planning approaches for managing talent has been highlighted in various studies, which usually include training and competencies, learning and development, employee assessment and employee evaluation etc. for assessing and identifying key talented employees, retaining them and preparing for potential positions in the future (Al Ariss *et al.*, 2014). Such key employees can steer the organisation towards success by implementing effective decision-making, deploying TM strategies and resource management strategies. Thus, TM can be considered as the source for CA that focuses on improving the human and information resources which would increase performance efficiency and achieve CA (Rabbi *et al.*, 2015).

TM philosophies, including categorisation of employees, key practices, management of positions and management of human capital as a collective, are found to be creating, capturing, leveraging and retaining value in organisations (Sparrow and Makram, 2015). Thus, TM is positively correlated with value creation, which thereby increases the competitive advantage. However, any barriers or issues that are affecting TM in creating value could affect the growth

in competitive advantage. Issues associated with TM, including structural challenges (policies and practices), environmental challenges (work environment and resources), behavioural challenges (attitudes of the managers and colleagues in the workplace) and managerial challenges (leadership, motivation etc.) are a few aspects that have been found to correlate with improving employees' efficiency and operational efficiency (Tafti *et al.*, 2017). If these aspects of TM are found to be negatively affected, then the performance would be reduced and accordingly the CA may be negatively affected. Therefore, to achieve SCA, it is essential that the barriers or challenges associated with TM have to be effectively managed, mitigated or addressed.

Collings and Mellahi (2009) defined strategic TM as "activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions which differentially contribute to the organisation's sustainable competitive advantage, the development of a talent pool of high potential and high performing incumbents to fill these roles". The concept of differentiation is used in TM with a focus on increasing employee potential and retention using a systematic approach. Therefore, in order to achieve sustainability, a strategic approach in managing talent among the employees is essential. Accordingly, TM practises in MNEs and local firms were investigated by Tatoglu *et al.*, (2016) to identify the differences in the approaches and the impact. The results indicated that MNEs use more tactical motivations and implement robust systems for TM, while local firms adopt simplified approaches according to the local market and customers, which are usually society bound (Tatoglu *et al.*, 2016). This reflects that the process of TM becomes more complex with the increase in the size of the organisation and, accordingly, its impact on the competitive advantage.

It was found that many researchers have undermined the importance of employees (human capital) in identifying the factors for achieving CA and developing the models. Davis (2017), through the resource-based theory, showed that the employees of an organisation are not just contributors of the competitive advantage, but they themselves can be the source of competitive advantage. This research reflected the change in perception of talent from just as a contributor to the source of competitive advantage. Cooke *et al.*, (2014) investigated how TM is perceived in India and China—two of the fastest-developing economies in the world—and found that there are different needs for capacity building in HRM and to manage talent. Though the needs and approaches to be adopted in both countries varied, it was identified that both countries were required to adopt a particularistic view of TM rather than a universalistic view, which requires a clear focus on each employee's performance and management (Cooke *et al.*, 2014).

TM relies on how the internal resources, especially employees, information, etc., are managed for developing and retaining talent. It is essential that there is a need for integrating various resource management approaches or strategies in order to achieve SCA. For example, it was found that both resources capital (employees, knowledge, information, technology etc.) and institutional capital (organisational culture, state, society, interfirm relations etc.) are indispensable to SCA, and integration of both approaches can help to achieve SCA (Oliver, 1997). Similarly, Luthans and Youssef (2004) found that human, social and positive psychological capital are the few aspects that need to be collectively managed to achieve SCA, highlighting the good returns on investment on human capital, especially managing the talent aspect of the human capital. Many companies have recognised the importance of human resources and talent as the key attributes that can help in achieving SCA. TM can be closely aligned with other HR practices such as succession planning, training and development and leadership etc., which would help in building human capital and knowledge by developing the potential candidates who can fill key positions at the right time. In addition, these TM strategies should be closely aligned with the organisational goals and objectives and integrate all related processes and approaches in the organisation to create long-term growth and success and CA (Ashton and Morton, 2005). The Resource-Based View (RBV) is being increasingly adopted in organisations as the companies are looking within themselves for the potential utilisation of various resources for achieving SCA, especially through strategic human resources management, which mainly focuses on TM (Delery and Roumpi, 2017). Information technology is one such resource which has been identified as being effective in managing various aspects of TM and operational efficiency and achieving sustainability (Benitez-Amado *et al.*, 2015).



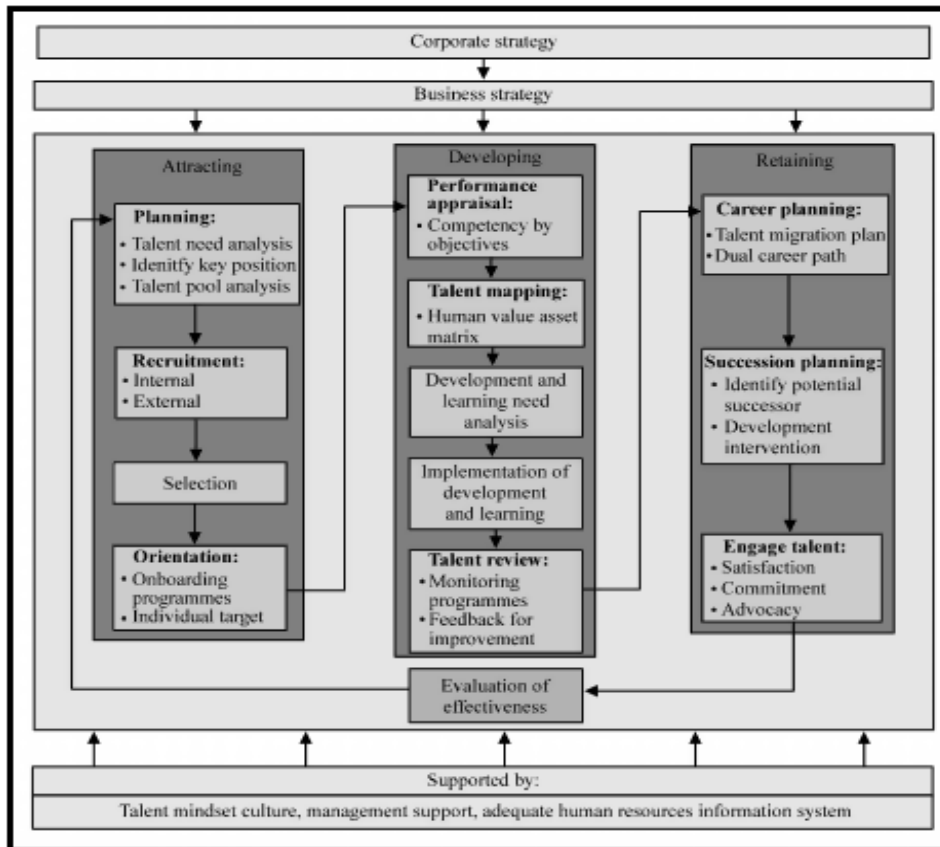


Figure 2.3: Integrated Model for TM  
Source: (Wahyuningtyas, 2015)

Different methods and technologies can be applied for managing talent within organisations. Karatop *et al.*, (2015) applied 'fuzzy logic' techniques for managing talent and human resources in organisations, which would identify the right people with the right talent for the right positions. Such an approach helps in investigating competency levels of employees and utilising this information to obtain an optimal level from employees' emotional and intellectual capabilities and experiences, using which the employees' skills and abilities can be matched with job requirements (Karatop *et al.*, 2015). Similarly, Wahyuningtyas (2015) proposed an integrated model for TM to achieve SCA, as shown in Figure 2.3. The model focused on aligning the three approaches, including attracting and identifying, developing and retaining, with the business strategies using different resources such as information systems for managing talent. The model emphasises the need for integrating TM practises with business strategies to achieve SCA. The importance of this integration can be identified from the study conducted by Almaaitah *et al.*, (2015), which measured the impact of the core principles of TM and SCA. The study found that the core principles, including compatibility with the organisation's strategy, using a form of functional skills, comprehensiveness of TM and investment in deposits of talent, were positively correlated with SCA.

The literature review has so far discussed various concepts related to talent and TM and also the relationship between the various factors influencing TM and TM outcomes. The next section focuses on the concept of TM and its application in the context of the Saudi Arabia oil and gas organisations.

### **2.15. TM in Saudi Arabia**

KSA has its own significance globally and is considered as appropriate for conducting empirical research for various unique reasons. The first main reason for selecting KSA is the recent developments that are being made in various industries related to TM (Alamri, 2015). A study conducted by Ali (2011) stated that TM research in the Middle East can provide appropriate measures to understand this concept and the developing knowledge regarding it. Therefore, TM could be a significant concept to be explored in KSA organisations, because there are various barriers and challenges that Saudi Arabia organisations encounter related to workforce mobility (Gulati and Carrera, 2012). Currently, the industry is also facing the issues of global talent shortage. Studies have identified that there is quite a large generation gap in the industry. Most of the workforce in the industry will retire in a few years, which will also lead to a significant exodus of the already accumulated knowledge in the oil and gas organisations. Therefore, there is a substantial requirement for technical talent, mainly engineers and also production staff (Gulati and Carrera, 2012).

TM in KSA is a global market that has been under-researched in comparison to many other advanced-market economies. The productivity and availability of human capital is considered as the major limitation for promoting sustainable development of the industry. Therefore, understanding and exploring the significance of TM and understanding the scope of TM leadership in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which also includes KSA, is a significant business, academic and social issue (Sidani and Al Ariss, 2014). To survive in the dynamic and competitive environment, modern organisations are required to significantly focus on human capital. TM is a very comprehensive and important approach in developing human capital, as it consists of various activities and processes that help in attracting talented people with extensive potential and also help in developing the employee capabilities for enhancing the productivity within the organisation (Armstrong and Taylor, 2014).

Various studies found within the literature inform us that the Islamic culture has always encouraged talent discovery and also TM (Al Ruwaili, Bright and Alhameed, 2014). The Islamic culture has substantial influence over the KSA culture, because social and business culture in KSA follows the Islamic laws, practices and regulations, according to which talent identification and development of talent among people applies. According to Sidani and Al Ariss' study (2014), there is a gap between the current business practices and the desired business practices in the business environment of Arab countries. Therefore, the business environment in Arab countries, including KSA, requires the implementation of appropriate and effective TM. Studies have further identified that most of the organisations in KSA significantly lack TM (Al Ruwaili, Bright and Alhameed 2014). Another important factor about TM in KSA is related to the policy of Saudisation. This policy requires companies to replace expatriates or the foreign workforce with Saudi nationals. It is especially associated with the top management positions, where Saudi nationals are required to be employed (Moussa, 2013). According to the study of Torofdar (2011), the impact of Saudisation on the private sector of the kingdom has been significant and the organisations have been successful in maintaining their position in the market even after the application of the Saudisation policy, which could also be considered an example of TM.

Through this policy, KSA organisations were able to replace expatriates with Saudi nationals by attracting and employing talented employees from their own country. Employing the right talent has been a major challenge for organisations; therefore, through TM, organisations can overcome such challenges in the future (Randeree, 2012). The change taking place in the KSA culture has a major impact on the freedom and idealisation of TM in the private sector of the kingdom. TM decision-making requires focussing on understanding the different contexts in which management of the people and such practices take place. TM and talent identification require organisations to explore various factors according to their culture and context (Alshabri *et al.*, 2015). However, a major gap identified in the literature is regarding the lack of empirical research focused on the issue of TM in KSA, which provides motivation to conduct empirical research related to the gap.

Another significant aspect of and the reason for conducting this empirical research is that it is easier for the researcher to administer empirical research in KSA, as the researcher is completely aware of the KSA culture, law and business environment. The final reason for conducting this TM empirical research in KSA is the support that TM receives through the

KSA Vision 2030. Vision 2030 significantly focuses on enhancing the employment opportunities in the kingdom and enhancing the employment of effective and talented nations for improved economic development. Vision 2030 encourages the government to see the real wealth of the country in its people and society, thus focusing on improving employment and promoting TM (Dirani, Hamie and Tlaiss, 2017). For the aforementioned reasons, the researcher has selected the context in order to understand TM and how the talent decision-making takes place in KSA. In the following sub-sections, the information regarding the general geographic and political profile of KSA will be explained, including understanding the economy of KSA and the role of the private sector in the country.

### **2.15.1. Economic Development in KSA**

Studies have shown that over the past three decades the Kingdom of KSA has experienced significant growth and development efforts that have brought major enhancements to the Saudi economy. The oil and gas sector have undoubtedly played a significant role in enhancing the economy; however, the kingdom has also promoted the non-oil producing sector. According to Vision 2030, the government of the kingdom seeks to empower the non-oil sectors and private sectors to make significant economic growth. Non-oil producing sectors have also contributed to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the kingdom (Vassiliev, 2013). The government's strategy to focus on the private sectors is to enhance foreign investment and increase employment for Saudi nationals.

KSA is significantly rich in its oil and gas reserves, largely contributing to the economy of the kingdom. KSA is also the largest petroleum exporter of the world. Studies have identified that KSA has seen a significant economic and social transformation. This transformation in the kingdom has been achieved through the extensive focus of the government on planning and investment through five-year development plans (Al Rajhi *et al.*, 2012). The government has focused on using the petroleum-based income to enhance and improve its oil-based economy in the form of a highly diverse and modern economy. The eight development plans in KSA, led by the government, has informed the government's investment towards developing human capital, infrastructure and social and healthcare services within the kingdom (Samargandi, Fidrmuc and Ghosh, 2014).

### **2.15.2. The Role of the Oil and gas organisations in the Saudi Economy**

The role of the oil and gas organisations in the kingdom has its own important place, as the government has always focused on it through its five-year development plans. Using the recent KSA Vision 2030, the government aims to improve operations and empower the oil and gas organisations in KSA. The oil and gas organisations can be considered as an important pillar for the economic development of the kingdom in terms of creating a free market. The industrial diversification is also a significant reason behind the fluctuating global oil prices. Due to the overwhelming influence of the government's investment in the oil and gas organisations, it has resulted in contributing significantly to GDP, with 39 percent in the year 2017 (Moshashai, Leberand Savage, 2018). Contribution to the government sector was 17 percent, while that of the oil sector was 44 percent (Moshashai, Leberand Savage, 2018).

Another significant effort that the government of KSA has made in order to diversify the economy of the kingdom is to enhance the employment and training opportunities for Saudi nationals in order to replace the non-Saudi workers or expatriates who have mainly acquired senior management positions (Cappelen and Choudhury, 2017). This process of replacing the expatriate workforce with nationals has been termed 'Saudisation'. The term 'Saudisation' was first included in the development plan of 1989-1995, in order to enhance the number of nationals in the workforce, which has remained a major challenge of the Saudi government (Peck, 2017). Such programmes (Nitaqat and Hafiz) were applied in the oil and gas organisations. The Saudisation programme provides various employment channels that could help the organisations hire a talented and qualified workforce. The Hafiz programme supports people seeking jobs in the private sector of the kingdom (Farhan, Brevetti and Laditan, 2016). The oil and gas organisations of the kingdom has significant financial and TM capabilities. According to the KSA Monetary Agency (SAMA), the labour force in the private sector of KSA increased to 1.738 million in the year 2015. The recruitment of nationals in the private sector increased by 23 percent (Peck, 2017). The Ministry of Labour also enhanced its efforts to increase Saudi manpower in the private sector and developed and commenced the Human Resource Development funds. These funds have significantly contributed towards increasing the job opportunities of Saudi nationals in various sectors and industries. The main aim of the fund is specifically to support the talent of the people and encourage better qualifications among the nationals, through training programmes. This is being done so that private sector employees can be effectively trained, who could then offer support in enhancing the productivity and success

of the private sector. The qualified and talented national workforce can be helpful in replacing the expatriate workforce and provide more benefits to the internal labour force. The application of TM in KSA, especially in the oil and gas organisations, was reviewed in this section, which has highlighted some important findings and limitations. Based on the literature reviewed in this chapter, the next section identifies the gaps in the literature, which forms the basis for the investigation in this research.

## **2.16. Literature Gap**

This chapter explores the literature on TM in the private sector. An evaluation was made on critical areas such as the role of TM practises leading to employee motivation, satisfaction and engagement and in achieving sustainable competitive advantage. However, based on the existing literature and empirical review methods, the researcher has identified key shortcomings related to the concept of TM, its practices and approaches; TM outcomes; organisational performance; and sustainable development.

### **2.16.1. Literature Evaluation**

Based on the comprehensively reviewed literature in this chapter, this section makes use of the Four-Quadrant Framework that attempts to categorise the existing research works into quadrants as a result of the different perspectives and approaches. This is reflected in the different theoretical frameworks and empirical reviews that have been utilised by the authors. In this regard, the research philosophy is divided into the visionary, descriptive, perspective and implementation aspects of TM, as itemised below.

The Four-Quadrant Framework is used to categorise the academic and industry-based contributions to the TM literature discussed in this chapter. The Four-Quadrant Framework creates research categories based on purpose (visionary or implementational) and outcome (descriptive or prescriptive) (Althonayan, 2003). Visionary research focuses on a vision of TM rather than on the dynamics of the implementation process, whereas implementational research prioritises practical recommendations for that process. Research with either type of purpose can then be descriptive or prescriptive in its outcome, yielding four key categories of TM research in a matrix which can be applied to the findings of the literature review presented in Chapter 2, as follows: I) visionary and descriptive, II) visionary and prescriptive, III) implementational and descriptive, and IV) implementational and prescriptive. This framework is often utilised to achieve a clear categorisation of research literature by determining which quadrants each contribution falls into (Table 2.4).

Table 1.4: Literature Evaluation Framework

		Research Philosophy	
		Visionary	Implementational
Research Outcomes	Descriptive	Quadrant I	Quadrant III
		<p><b>Describes TM definitions and discusses the TM systems and perspective.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Definitions of TM are drawn from different organisations' aspects; key organisational areas may be discussed in the framework of exclusive or inclusive.</li> <li>○ The TM implementation process is unlikely to be discussed.</li> <li>○ Research based on theoretical assumptions are supported by the literature discussion.</li> <li>○ Some form of conceptual (theoretical) framework or model may be introduced.</li> <li>○ Global TM.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Describes the process of TM implementation and discusses some practical guidelines.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ General TM implementation guidelines and discussions about the challenges and practical ways of implementation are discussed and supported by the literature.</li> <li>○ Theoretical TM framework may be defined and discussed.</li> <li>○ Research describing empirical examples of TM implementation based on the existing literature.</li> <li>○ TM involves the integration of key HR activities.</li> <li>○ Management of talent.</li> </ul>
	Prescriptive	Quadrant II	Quadrant IV
		<p><b>Provides a prescriptive TM approach and discusses the links to organisational factors.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ TM integration within key organisational areas may be discussed prescriptively.</li> <li>○ Theoretical TM framework explaining the nature of TM may be introduced.</li> <li>○ Research may present a basic vision towards the TM implementation process.</li> <li>○ Identifying strategic positions and TM systems.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Provides a prescriptive TM approach and discusses the implementation process.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ TM integration within key organisational areas may be discussed as a part of implementation.</li> <li>○ TM implementation steps, challenges and practical recommendations may be discussed.</li> <li>○ The benefits of TM implementation based on empirical data (value creation, competitive advantage, TM outcomes) may be examined.</li> <li>○ TM as a contributor to individual, group and organisational outcomes.</li> </ul>

Source: adopted from Althonayan (2003)

Each of the quadrants described above allow for the exploration of the key shortcomings in the research that have been critically evaluated based on the literature reviewed in this research. According to the existing literature review on TM, it is evident that the “war for talent”, as described by McKinsey, began in the early 1990s when organisations' need for competitiveness and global recognition became apparent. This assertion was also affirmed by Kehinde (2012), who explained that TM focused on attracting individuals with high potential. The challenges of developing, managing and retaining talent are massive, thus the need for having planned strategies for TM.

Most of the literature reviewed by the researcher found that the concept of TM is highly

complex considering the differing opinions of the definition, techniques of strategy management and the process of implementation. In most of the key publications that took the form of case studies, the results indicate that most of the empirical evidence falls into quadrant I followed by quadrants II and III, as they were highly descriptive but lacked the implementation dimensions. However, the most significant progress of TM was evident in cases where proper sampling procedures were followed to identify the target groups for the study and the contributions to sustainable development were exceptionally evident. Poocharoen and Lee (2013) were two of the few scholars who proved to have been concerned with the implementational side of TM and therefore looked for ways to improve TM adoption from empirical case studies (quadrant IV).

From the existing and reviewed literature, the gap was evident in most of the authors who only relied on secondary sources of data in the analysis of the whole concept of TM. While it provides a rich source of information, Kaliannan (2015) noted that there is a need for universality in the findings of research activities devoid of the distance, environment and time. Therefore, the use of case studies, focus groups and triangulation will provide the most accurate feedback and results on such exploratory concepts such as TM. Most of the research gaps have been extensively described in detail in Chapter 2.

As a way of creating an in-depth understanding of the Four-Quadrant Framework and the gaps in literature, the researcher categorised the works of the authors to fall into the respective quadrants as itemised below.



Table 2.5: Research Literature Evaluation

		Research Philosophy	
		Visionary	Implementational
Research Outcomes	Descriptive	Quadrant I	Quadrant III
		Kavita and Kumar (2014), Annakis, Dass and Eerni binti (2014), Chabault, Hulin and Soparnot (2012), Skuza, Scullion and McDonnell (2012), Tansley and Tietze (2013), Silvana and Muntean (2014), Mathur (2012)	Padmajand Rao (2015), Latukha (2014), Holditch and Brinkley (2011), Powell, Macfarlane and Moss (2013), Padmaj and Venkateswara (2015), Thomas, and Garavan (2012), Marina Latukha (2014), Dhanabhakyaam and .Kokilambal (2014)
	Prescriptive	Quadrant II	Quadrant IV
		Marion, Schafera and Scullion (2013), Thunnissen, Boselie and Fruytier (2013), King (2015), Ora and Lee (2013), Dhanabhakyaam and Kokilambal (2014), Pimapunsri (2013), Onwuka, Enyinna and Ezinne (2015), Nillson and Ellstorm (2011), Collings and Mellahi (2009), James Kwame (2015), Phillips and Roper (2007), Mathur, (2012)	Chuck and Bennett (2014), Preece, Paul and Jones (2013), Festing, Kornau and Schäfer (2015), Hana and Lucie (2015), Yetenek and Yöneti (2014), Kontoghiorghes (2016), Guerci and Solari (2012), Poocharoen and Lee (2013)

Source: adopted from Althonayan (2003)

The researchers who fall in the first quadrant (visionary-descriptive) focus on the theoretical underpinnings of TM. For instance, in both their works, Kavita and Kumar (2014) make use of extensive reviews to evaluate the factors affecting TM. Similarly, other authors in the same category evaluate the influence of HR activities such as job flexibility, organisational culture, succession planning and other issues of TM. Furthermore, Skuza, Scullion and McDonnell (2012) and Tansley and Tietze (2013) also use extensive reviews to evaluate the application of TM in the public sector by describing the various techniques of the entire process. Therefore, the views of authors in this category are perceived to be descriptive in nature as they are backed by theoretical underpinnings.

Quite often, the concept of TM is highly complex and confusing, especially in the identification of the factors of influence and the context of application. For instance, some definitions allude to TM as the skills and knowledge held by employees, while some refer to the strategy and measures put in place to develop the available talent. It is on this premise that Pimapunsri (2013) and Ora and Lee (2013) explore the differing views of different HR practitioners on the best methods of TM. Though they used different contexts, they agreed that there is inconsistency in the definitions given to the term “TM”. The TM program particularly focused on the company’s major positions, the company’s TM program activities, talent competency

and HR processes that were used in the company's TM program. This assessment also resonates well with the realisation that implementing TM effectively requires the following to be taken into account: the range of activities within the talent system, collaboration amongst inter-dependent actors, awareness of complementary roles and the stakeholders' scope of influence (Russell and Bennett, 2015). Research pertaining to this category relies heavily on reviewed literature and case studies in order for the authors to make sound, informed opinions about their perceptions of TM.

Researchers who fall in the second quadrant (visionary-prescriptive) focus on the theoretical prescriptions produced by earlier academics regarding TM. There have been initiatives to contribute to empirical and conceptual understandings of TM in small and medium enterprises in different geographical locations. There has also been a search to find alternative perspectives in order to develop a broader theoretical framework for TM through critical reviewing of existing academic literature and scholarly articles; for example, the Systems Approach to TM Framework (Alok K Mathur and Anita Mathur, 2012), the Strategic TM Model (Collings and Mellahi, 2009), the Values and Competency Framework (Phillips and Roper, 2007) and the Coalesced Framework of TM and Employee Performance (James Kwame Mensah, 2015). Initiative has been taken to form a comprehensive understanding of global TM and management practice. Some of the literary work investigates TM schemes in the public sector for a number of countries including Malaysia, Thailand (Guerci and Solari, 2012), Nigeria (Onwuka *et al.*, 2015) and some other countries of the world. There has been a number of shortcomings for these scholarly researches. These include the absence of descriptive survey design, accurate sample size of respondents and proper distinction of factors that influence TM. Some of these studies adapted a unitary approach, leaving out important aspects of the term and making it too narrow in review. This makes it difficult to draw conclusive recommendations regarding TM practices. The studies also lack informed comparisons of methodology. The opportunity to utilise focus groups and experimental designs and to deliver robust data to wholly understand TM also exists. These studies are limited to a specific geographic location and require supportive data and further research to apply the study results in other sectors or industries.

Researchers who fall in the third quadrant (descriptive-implementation) focus on describing the implementation side of TM research (Garavan, 2012; Scullion and McDonnell, 2012; Marina Latukha, 2014; Dhanabhakym and Kokilambal, 2014; Padmaj and Venkateswara, 2015). These researchers illustrate the procedures of utilising data in order to enhance decisions regarding TM, which will lead to increased performance of the organisation. Some of these

studies help gain empirical insight, explaining how the human capital composition affects the design and implementation of career management policies. These studies also explore TM in specific firms, small and big industries and in specific geographic locations. Chabault *et al.*, (2012) identify good TM practices currently operational within French clusters so that they can be shared with other clusters throughout the world. First, it seeks to promote the benefits of inter-organisational TM and to demonstrate the difficulties and challenges involved; second, it seeks to identify the best operational practices and what would best suit specific clusters. In order to do this, it first needs to re-examine the notion of talent. Marina Latukha (2014) investigates TM practices in Russian and foreign companies and their influence on a company's performance.

Research classified in the fourth quadrant (implementational-prescriptive) is scarce and primarily represents the aspect of implementation. From a global perspective, TM has become a hard nut to crack because of the lack of mechanisms for proper implementation. For instance, Powell *et al.*, (2013) explored the use of TM in the NHS, focusing on process evaluation. Their results displayed a number of issues that may undermine the TM strategy. This included unclear definitions, conflicting principles, problematic measures, exclusive focus, sustainability and lack of necessary infrastructure, culture and data. Furthermore, Guerci and Solari (2012) reviewed the implications of TM in Italy and found that in the Italian context, the process of TM occurs for very different objectives within organisations. The main aim is to foster segments of the workforce and commit top and line managers to HRD activities. This shows a difficulty in the process of implementation that makes TM a theoretical rather than a practical HR activity. Sharma and Bhatnagar (2017) stated that future research may look at the talent outcomes mentioned here, using the theoretical framework of an exclusive or inclusive TM approach (Iles, Chuai and Preece, 2010; O'Connor and Crowley-Henry, 2015).

Recent work on TM has begun to propose potential theoretical venues that could help in explaining employees' behaviours (for example, Björkman *et al.*, (2013)). Nonetheless, these studies are limited and this gap in the TM literature needs to be filled. Positive TM effects have been proposed but not tested.

Kaliannan (2015) noted that there is a need for universality in the findings of research activities devoid of the distance, environment and time. Therefore, the use of case studies, focus groups and triangulation will provide the most accurate feedback and results on such exploratory concepts as TM. There is limited empirical study in this area. Also, most TM studies reviewed

did not directly link TM with organisation performance, and therefore there is a need to fill the existing research gap by conducting a study locally to determine the role of TM on organisation performance (Lyria, 2014).

This Research considers that the paucity of such studies indicates that the prescriptive-implementation quadrant is under-researched, and on that basis aims to make a significant contribution to the TM research literature. The literature review further reveals that the gaps in TM research are still not completely understood. This research has identified the following key gaps in TM literature, which are categorised under different sections as shown in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6: Literature Gaps in TM

Category	TM Gap	Research Author(s)
<b>TM</b>	Difficulty in TM implementation and measuring its outcomes	(Kaliannan, 2015; Yukl, 2001; Erikson, 2008; Vaiman <i>et al.</i> , 2018; Dana and Snejina, 2018)
	Poor understanding about combining TM with an organisation's factors	(Ashton and Morton, 2005; Lewis and Heckman, 2006; O'Connor and Crowley-Henry, 2017; Isa <i>et al.</i> , 2018; Walter <i>et al.</i> , 2010) Jolynet al. (2013) Christina and Nicky (2013) Iles, Chuai, &Preece (2010) and O' Connor & Crowley-Henry (2015:4).
	Diversified definitions	(Ulrich and Smallwood, 2012; Iles, Preece <i>et al.</i> , 2010; Powell, 2012; Creelman, 2004; Glaister <i>et al.</i> , 2017; Saleh Mohammad Sohel-Uz-Zaman, 2018; King and Vaiman, 2019)
<b>TM Empirical Studies</b>	Empirical studies on TM are limited, and a theoretical framework to advance academic knowledge on TM is lacking. Much empirical research on TM is still based on Western experience; research on the subject in other national contexts is limited.	(Jolyn <i>et al.</i> , 2013; Christina and Nicky, 2013; Nsour and Tayeh, 2018; Latukha, 2016; Dana and Snejina, 2018; Isa <i>et al.</i> , 2018; Khoreva <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Lucas <i>et al.</i> , 2018; Nsour and Tayeh, 2018)
	Differing talent attraction, TM, development and retention approaches specific to the industry/region	(Pascal, 2014; Osburg <i>et al.</i> , 2018; Khoreva <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Siddiqui and Bisaria, 2018; Glaister <i>et al.</i> , 2017)
<b>TM Process and Framework</b>	Lack of comprehensive framework reflecting TM, internal and external factors and the outcomes.	(Williams-Lee, 2008; Hoglund 2012; Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Dries, 2013; King and Vaiman, 2019)
	Lack of understanding about the internal issues affecting TM processes in organisations	(Dierdorff and Morgeson, 2007; Bryan and Joyce, 2007; Subramony, 2009; Hitu, 2015; Khandelwal and Shekhawat, 2018; Armstrong, 2010; Bussin and Rooy, 2014; Lucas <i>et al.</i> , 2018; Choi <i>et al.</i> , 2018; Wilson and Ellison, 2018; Espinoza <i>et al.</i> , 2018)
<b>Organisational Culture</b>	Lack of understanding in creating a TM culture and aligning with an organisation's culture	(Armstrong, 2010; Bussin and Rooy, 2014; Lucas <i>et al.</i> , 2018; Choi <i>et al.</i> , 2018; Wilson and Ellison, 2018; Espinoza <i>et al.</i> , 2018)
<b>Other Internal Factors</b>	Lack of effective leadership for TM	(Osborn, Hunt and Jauch, 2002; Dinh <i>et al.</i> , 2014; Li, Kim and Zhao, 2017; Murithi, 2017; Capelli, 2008; Kaliprasad, 2006)

	Lack of understanding about how internal factors such as rewards, support, empowerment, etc. would affect TM	(Van <i>et al.</i> , 2017; Mathieu and Zaccaro, 2001; Erkutlu, 2012; Li, Kim and Zhao, 2017; Zaharee <i>et al.</i> , 2018; Aldatmaz, Ouimet and Van Wesep, 2018; Siddiqui and Bisaria, 2018; Kumar, 2018)
<b>TM outcomes</b>	Lack of clear empirical findings in evaluating the impact of TM outcomes on organisational performance, and other outcomes including sustainability and competitive advantage	(Corte and Aria, 2016; Chen <i>et al.</i> , 2018; Liao <i>et al.</i> , 2016; Che and Ngah, 2016 : Sharma and Bhatnagar 2017: Sheehan & Anderson, 2015 Mensah and Bawole 2017)
	impact of TM outcomes on sustainable competitive advantage.	(Pimapunsri, 2013; Koberg and Chusmir, 1987; Chen, 2004; Gurthridge <i>et al.</i> , 2008; Robin, 2007. Mensah 2016:2018)

Source: Researcher

The discussions of the TM approach and the effect of its outcomes on both organisational and individual levels discussed in chapters two and three have resulted in five issues being identified which warrant further consideration:

- Lack of clear TM implementation guidelines and difficulties in understanding how to combine TM into existing organisational processes;
- Difficulties with defining TM, its benefits and its values;
- Lack of understanding of the impact of TM on organisational performance and what the benefits of TM can be;
- Lack of understanding of how TM affects individual outcomes such as employee satisfaction, commitment and engagement on organisational performance;
- Lack of understanding of how TM can contribute to sustainable and competitive advantage;
- Lack of clear empirical findings in evaluating the impact of TM outcomes on including sustainable competitive advantage.

### 2.17.2. lack of TM in Non-Western Contexts

Recently, researchers have stressed the importance of context when studying TM and urged for studies to take place in different locations globally to help create an understanding of what factors—such as values, norms or government regulations—shape or disable TM (Al Ariss, Cascio and Paauwe, 2014). Iles *et al's.*, (2010) study concludes by suggesting that TM has been implemented globally and that similarities do exist between their data and results obtained from a Western setting. Yet despite Iles *et al's.*, (2010) conclusions, to suggest that TM is practiced globally and perceived in a similar manner is risky, because as of yet, there is limited evidence as to how universal TM actually is.

Cultural characteristics vary across the world, and what may be of value for individuals in one nation may be viewed differently in another. Indeed, according to Hofstede's (1985) cultural dimensions, in countries that are high in power distance, employees are more likely to accept unequal distribution of resources than individuals in cultures with low power distance levels. Additionally, the collectivist-individualistic dimension implies that if a society is perceived as an individualistic society, individuals tend to take care of and depend on themselves, while in a collectivist society individuals rely on being part of the group. In relation to differentiated TM, cultural characteristics can perhaps influence employees' perceptions of TM differently. Therefore, research based in a non-Western culture such as the Gulf States is needed to better understand the effects of TM on individuals, which may suggest whether the results from studies such as Iles *et al.*, (2010) can be generalised.

### **2.17. Conclusion**

The first part of the literature review presented the different definitions of talent, TM, TM streams and perspectives of TM. The definition starts off by tracing the origins of the term 'talent'. It then details how the term is identified (for example, is it natural ability or acquired? Is it some workers or all workers? Is it transferable or context-dependent?). The section also explores how the concept fits within the specific context of the industry. The Research aimed to identify the gaps in literature and issues of defining talent.

The second part of the chapter discussed managing talent and is developed from the theory of TM. It focuses on the barriers to managing talent in industry, and specifically focuses on the challenges of talent turnover (which is one of the most important barriers). Moreover, this part presents talent retention (motivation), best practices in talent retention and the factors that influence/effect talent retention. The concept of TM has been applied widely across organisations as a "unified strategy" that assists HR departments to utilise the talent of their human capital in the most effective manner. The proper utilisation of talent also assists organisations to utilise their human capital to achieve their visions and ensure a maximum return on the investments made in advancing their talents. It was observed that such an approach to TM creates an attractive organisational culture that results in loyalty and commitment.

Having reviewed the works of different scholars, it is sufficient to conclude that a gap still exists in knowledge about the application of TM practices. While the aspect of globalisation and market forces have created opportunities in the private sector in companies in KSA, the skills gap is also widening at similar trends, owing to a lack of effective mechanisms of

managing talented staff. As a result, the battle, or “war”, for talent as envisaged by McKinsey has widely been noticed in organisations as they strive to maintain a competitive staff and gain a competitive advantage. Most research studies have concluded that 80 percent of organisational activities are undertaken by only 20 percent of the staff that is talented. Thus, there is a need to create effective TM plans and programs to develop the workforce in order to improve their skills and knowledge, and also develop a process for identifying the relationship between TM outcomes and the organisational outcomes such as performance, growth, CA and sustainability.

It is evident from the literature reviewed that there is a lack of understanding about how TM would be used in improving employee performance, engagement and commitment, and how these factors would influence organisational performance. In addition, the relationship between these factors and their relationship with SCA is not analysed in most of the studies. Considering these research gaps, the next chapter proposes a framework for effective TM in oil and gas organisations.

## Chapter 3: Framework Development

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### 3.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to develop TM framework based on the literature reviewed and the research gaps identified in Chapter 2; Section 2.16. There has been a significant lack of adequate research on TM in offering appropriate guidelines for the implementation of the topic for the SCA of private oil and gas companies in general. This research has been presented after successful review of several theoretical literary documents and concepts on TM and has attempted to discuss the areas unexplored and provide a structured analysis of information that could serve as an effective source of information to stakeholders of the topic. The literature gap identified can be filled by this sophisticated research. This research offers an insight into the multiple facets of TM, and also justifies the need for a framework to analyse TM to achieve sustainable improvement in organisational performance.

The main purpose of this chapter is to elaborate and explain several of the essential theories that are relevant to TM and to critically analyse these and choose the most appropriate theory to best describe the researcher's core hypothesis. Therefore, this chapter discusses the derivation of all the proposed components of the TM framework based on the literature gap presented in Chapter 2, Section 2.16, which can be summarised under the following points:

- Lack of clear TM implementation guidelines and difficulties in understanding how to combine TM into existing organisational processes;
- Difficulties with defining TM, its benefits and its values;
- Lack of understanding of how TM affects individual outcomes such as employee satisfaction, commitment and engagement on organisational performance;
- Lack of understanding of how TM can contribute to sustainable and competitive advantage;
- Lack of clear empirical findings in evaluating the impact of TM outcomes on sustainable competitive advantage.



### **3.2. Evaluation of the Current TM Frameworks**

This section reviews the major TM frameworks and relevant studies as presented in (Table 3.1 Appendix C). Various studies have identified the relationship between different TM elements and the related organisational factors through conceptual and theoretical frameworks. Accordingly, Mensah (2017) proposed a conceptual framework for demonstrating the relationship between TM elements and employee performance and found that implementation of TM can lead to improved employee performance. Similarly, Lewis and Heckman (2006), through a theoretical framework, developed a high-level depiction of a TM hierarchy including the TM components strategy, sustainable competitive advantage, talent pool strategy and TM systems and practices and linked them with organisational processes (HRM activities). Collings and Mellahi (2009), through their theoretical framework, provided a clear and concise definition of strategic TM, which earlier had various definitions from different perspectives. In addition, the model can be used by the researchers for defining the conceptual boundaries of TM.

From an industry-specific study, Kaliannan *et al.*, (2015) developed an effective TM framework for Malaysian SMEs. In This Research, four major TM practices, including staffing and recruitment, training and development, rewards and recognition, and retaining practices, were explored and found that there is a need to strategise these practices relevant to the SMEs' practices. In a similar context, Phillips and Roper (2009) identified the purpose of TM in the real estate industry through a framework integrating TM strategies focused on multiple generations. The study found that there is a need to adopt innovative recruiting techniques to attract a new generation of employees with a focus on engaging the existing employees and developing strategies. Mathur and Mathur (2012) similarly focused on the Indian pharmaceutical industry and proposed a systems approach involving four steps, including review, acquire, capacity building and orchestrate for TM, and stressed the need to align the TM strategy with the business strategy. Similarly, Tarique and Schuler (2010) reviewed various studies and developed an integrative framework for organising TM literature. In addition, several challenges and drivers to address these challenges in TM were proposed, where the role of HRM in addressing the challenges was highlighted.

Narayanan *et al.*, (2018) focused on evaluating the relationship between TM and employee retention. The study found that it is informational justice, and not distributive justice, that mediates the relationship between TM and employee retention. Thunnissen and Buttiens (2017) investigated

TM in public organisations and identified that TM in these institutions is highly contextual. Similarly, Bolander *et al.*, (2014) identified three approaches to TM, including humanistic, competitive and entrepreneurial approaches, and described TM in an organisational and cultural context. Likewise, Khoreva *et al.*, (2016), through theoretical framework, found a positive impact of TM on employees' potential and their commitment to leadership and competence development. Also, Mensah and Bawole (2017) found that TM does not only have a direct effect but also an indirect effect on talented employee outcomes of affective commitment and quit intention via person–job fit.

Thus, from the review of major studies, it can be assessed that there is a research gap pertaining to the understanding of TM practises (talent attraction, talent development, managing talent and talent retention), TM outcomes (employee engagement, employee motivation and employee Satisfaction) and organisational outcomes (sustainable competitive advantage). Accordingly, this research focuses on developing the theoretical framework for identifying the relationship between these entities.

### **3.3. Underpinning Theories**

This research is supported by two theories, mainly Resource-Based View (RBV) (Barney, 1991) and Social Exchange Theory (SET) (Redmond, 2015). RBV suggests that internal organisational resources (both tangible and intangible) are assets that are important to gain a competitive advantage and achieve organisational performance. In this research, the talented human capital is considered to be a resource that is critical to gain CA and achieve higher performance of the organisation. This particular (talented human capital) resource valuable, imperfectly imitable and non-substitutable characteristics (Barney, 1991). Literature in strategy management has highlighted RBV as the dominant framework which explains how internal resources (in this research referring to talented human capital) in organisations or corporations could induce CA and ultimately increase the performance of different firms in any industry (Newbert, 2007). Samad (2013) suggested firms with specific talent in their human capital, such as valuable skills, knowledge and competencies, will help companies gain a CA and improve business performance as compared to their competitors.

The workforce differentiation in organisations was supported in HRM literature for the effective management of talent resources, and also in achieving the goals and objectives of the organisations

(Becker and Huselid, 2006). However, there are implications in this process as distinctions are made among employees, especially in key jobs/positions. This approach may lead to variations in the rewards, benefits and incentives received by the employees, which may account for various responses from employees (Gelens *et al.*, 2013). In addition, studies that consider employee perspectives in workforce differentiation are limited (Becker *et al.*, 2009). As workforce differentiation can lead to various employee reactions and describes the reciprocation between employees and organisations, SET is used to explain this relationship.

Similarly, the social exchange theory (SET) represents an exchange relationship between an organisation and its employees (Blau, 1964; Settoon *et al.*, 1996; Takeuchi *et al.*, 2007). Thus, the recruitment, management and retention of talented employees reflects an investment in employees who are then felt obligated to reciprocate with beneficial attitudes and behaviours (Kuvaas and Dysvik, 2010) of motivation, satisfaction, commitment and engagement in their jobs (Bethke-Langenegger *et al.*, 2011). SET is considered to be one of the most effective paradigms in explaining the organisational behaviour based on three foundational ideas, including norms of exchange, resources exchanged and relationships that emerge (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Usually, employees reflect positive reciprocation when they are treated positively. Employees may feel obliged (satisfaction, empowerment) by receiving the favours (rewards, training, skill development) and reciprocate with positive attitudes such as commitment towards the organisation and greater engagement in the workplace (Kuvaas and Dysvik, 2010). SET has been used in various studies relating to TM in order to explain the influence on psychological contract breach, perceived organisational justice and job satisfaction (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.*, 2015; Gelens *et al.*, 2013). Accordingly, in this research, SET is adopted to predict the employee outcomes of implementing TM practises, which include employee satisfaction, empowerment, motivation, engagement and commitment (Gould-Williams and Davies, 2005).

### **3.4. Derivation of the TM Framework**

This section examines the derivation of the TM framework through the evaluation of the literature (Chapter 2) and the formulation of the literature gap presented in Chapter 2. Mathur and Mathur (2012) consider that there is a need to understand the four e's when dealing with human resource management/TM. These are enhancing, engaging, enabling and empowering. Russell and Bennett

(2015) argue that induction alone is not enough and that TM practices in the private sector must be supportive towards individuals so they can relate to their personal and organisational vision through getting them involved in work that they enjoy. The companies should put more emphasis on talent strategies.

According to Kaliannan (2015), talent is what an individual possesses; brilliance, on the other hand, is what possesses an individual. TM in total assists promising staff to gradually grow into the company and enables companies to tackle critical situations. This helps the companies to run a flawless operation and grow better. Mathur and Mathur (2012) explain the systems approach to TM, which involves four steps: review, acquire, capacity building and orchestrate.

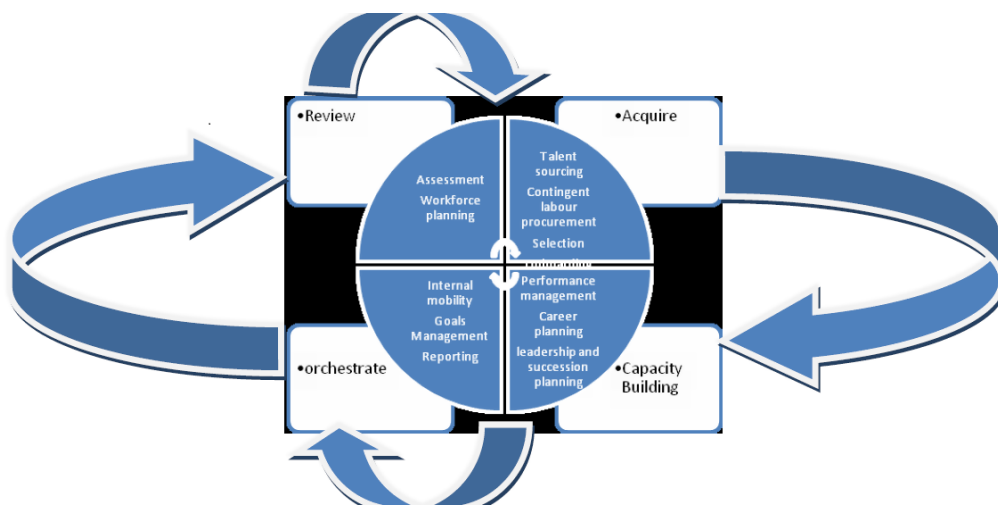


Figure 3.1: Process of Systems Approach to TM  
Source: (Mathur and Mathur 2012)

### 1. Review

Review is termed as the preparatory stage, which plays a critical role in the effectiveness of the total process. The purpose of the term is to conduct workforce planning through determination of the talent in the companies. The key activities of this stage include developing the job description, job specifications and job analysis (Russell and Bennett, 2015);

### 2. Acquire

The acquire stage explains the process of targeting the best talent in the related industry. Emphasis is given to identifying and attracting the most talented people since it is imperative for the company's success. This stage initiates the recruiting process where people are invited

to join the relevant company. The people who are selected are ultimately hired at this stage (Kaliannan, 2015);

### 3. Capacity Building

This is the stage where hired employees are trained and provided capacity development boosts in order to familiarise them with the skills required for the specific positions and to enhance their expertise for the betterment of the company. Mathur and Mathur (2012) argue that retention is the core purpose of the TM process. It is flourished by addressing specific packages, such as job specification, pay package, personal development, designation, culture and fit between the job, talent and recognition;

### 4. Orchestrate

This is the stage where succession planning takes place. The company will map the skills of an employee with a focus on ability and competency, knowledge, attitude, behaviour and potential. This is done through evaluation of the employee's actual performance. Talent segregation and segmentation is an integral part of this stage (Latasha and Selivanovskikh, 2016).

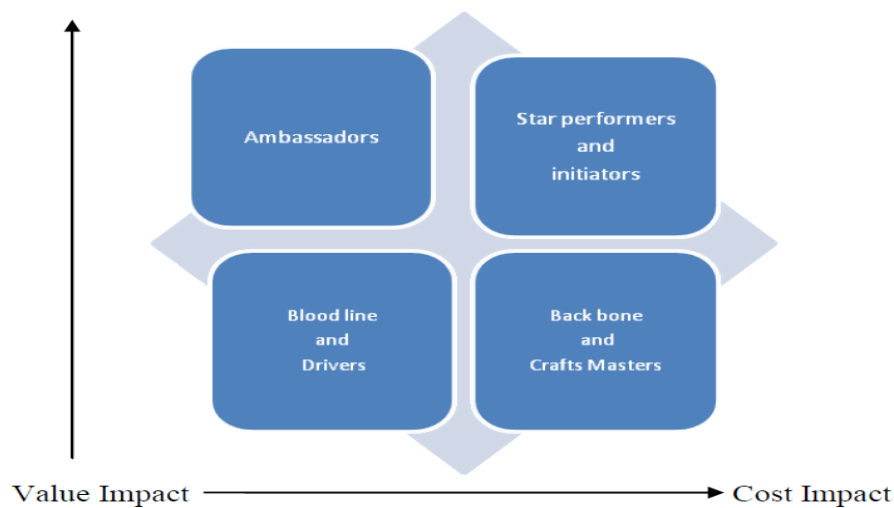


Figure 3.2: Talent Segmentation and the Systems Approach of TM  
Source: Mathur and Mathur (2012)

#### 3.4.1. Talent Segmentation

Mathur and Mathur (2012) state that talent can be segmented from an operational effectiveness point of view. This is an initiative to differentiate between simple titles to critical talent.

##### 1. Star Performers and Initiators

Star performers and initiators are people who implement a business model of an organisation. These people are expensive to sustain and develop. These include senior executives in a company.

## 2. Back Bone and Craft Masters

The back bone and craft masters are those who ensure quality, discipline and cost effectiveness of any organisation and play a vital role in ensuring faultless execution of the business strategy of a company. They may include quality controllers and the operations manager (Mathur and Mathur, 2012).

## 3. Blood Lines and Drivers

Another segment of the talent is the blood line and drivers of the organisation, who keep the business running. These are back-office executives, assembly line operators and administrative assistants. These people are not hard to hire or are not crucial to the organisation, but they represent a huge portion of the human capital. They must be managed well in order to avoid operational commotion (Mathur and Mathur, 2012).

## 4. Ambassadors

An integral segment is the ambassadors. They are the ones responsible for customer experience and they represent the public-facing aspect of the company. They might include the area sales manager or sales representatives. They are, to some extent, replaceable and their work is not sophisticated (Mathur and Mathur, 2012).

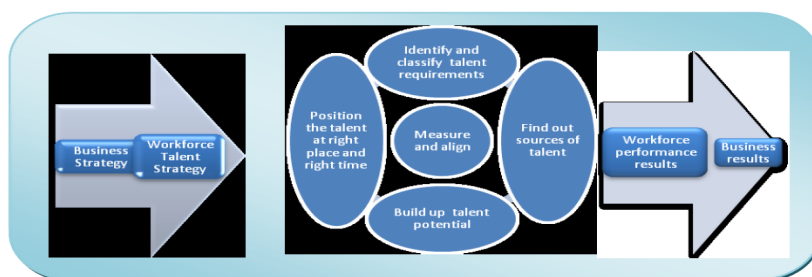


Figure 3.3: The Systems Approach of TM  
Source: Mathur and Mathur (2012)

In order to cope with the changing market scenario, a company must strategise within HR planning and retention, which leads to proper TM. Mathur and Mathur (2012) have discussed several TM strategies.

*Retaining the Rare* involves addressing the need to retain human resources. The integral part of this strategy is to make employees feel that they are cared about and to develop a sense of belonging to the company. Companies must present a career path for the employees and make it public. The competency needs of the company should be clearly presented and motivate the employees to acquire those skills. According to this strategy, the company must strive for a high employee retention rate (Mathur and Mathur, 2012). *Aligning Attitudes* tells companies to focus on building a strong organisational culture. *Suave Switching* advocates for the creation of mentoring programs for the new hires in order to utilise them quickly to prepare them to contribute to the productivity of the company. *Motivating Makers* entails nurturing highly skilled professionals in the company. They are termed as initiators and star performers, and the way to keep them motivated is through empowering them and providing them with options for autonomy. They should be made aware of the opportunities the company can offer them (Mathur and Mathur, 2012).

Mathur and Mathur (2012) conclude by stating that it should be embedded in the business strategy of a company to align and measure the existing talent in the company and forecast future needs. Companies must choose from organic and inorganic options for developing and hiring people. Choosing the inorganic option might involve hiring the best talent beyond the geographic area and getting them into transitional movements. This could be a complicated task, since getting the best out of them through transitional movements comes with consequences. The other option is to organically develop talent within the geographic area and within the company. This will involve deploying talent at the accurate time on the basis of their work performance. This can be followed by further performance appraisals in order to follow the flow of TM (Onwuka *et al.*, 2015).

### **3.4.2. TM Process**

Phillips and Roper (2007) highlight the importance of TM as a critical factor that contributes to organisational success in today's marketplace. The value lies in having the best and brightest employees, attracting and retaining them and achieving higher market share.

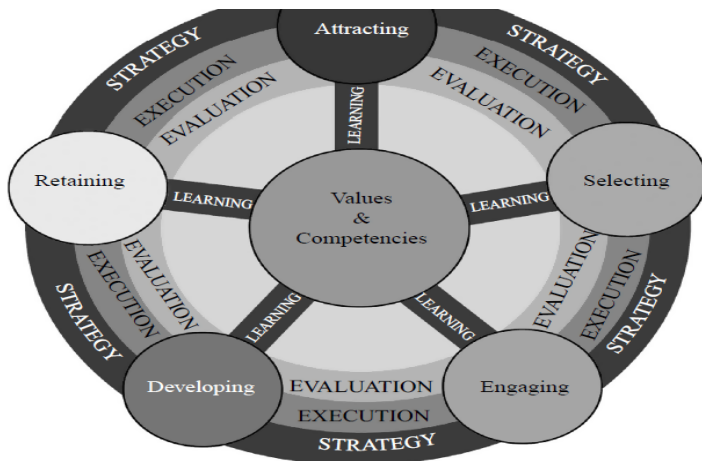


Figure 3.4: Values and Competency Model  
 Source: Phillips and Roper (2007)

Phillips and Roper (2007) tried to define a values and competency model addressing effective TM. There are five components to the theory. All the actions deriving TM can be discussed from this framework.

1. Attracting

Most of the recruiting tasks are dependent on the source. This is an expensive and time-consuming task, especially when external assistance in recruiting has been adapted. According to Phillips and Roper (2007), recruiting must be dealt with creatively. Since organisations are dealing with Generation Y, certain creative strategies, such as using interactive networking sites, referral programs, open-house events, social hubs, online job boards and internships, could be utilised (Dychtwald *et al.*, 2006). In order to attract Generation Y, it is recommended to offer competitive or attractive compensation packages that are above market value and better than competitors. Creative selection strategies including behavioural interviews, job knowledge tests and personality assessments are recommended.

2. Selecting

As real estate firms find themselves struggling to identify a “niche” that can set their firm apart from larger, more established organisations, the area of selection can become equally challenging. Traditional hiring practices, such as examining resumes, checking references and conducting interviews, are becoming more obsolete, not to mention that the subjective nature of evaluating resumes and answers to interview questions makes these practices less reliable and exposes companies to more legal ramifications (Dychtwald *et al.*, 2006). It is



becoming more common to include an objective measure of performance, such as psychological assessment, in combination with other recruitment tools in order to improve a company's chances of matching the right person to the job. Behavioural interviews, personality assessments and job knowledge tests can serve as valuable selection, promotion and placement tools (Phillips and Roper, 2007).

### 3. Engaging

Employee engagement means much more than mere employee satisfaction. A satisfied employee will be happy with the pay but can be reluctant to show any extra achievement or initiative. On the other hand, engaged employees exert qualities that include creativity and innovation, providing care and special attention to work, owning work or showing a sense of responsibility in bringing results. They have the drive to make an organisation successful. They can relate to the company mission and vision and develop a bond to the organisation (Wagner and Harter, 2006). Phillips and Roper (2007) argue that engaged employees are easy to spot in an organisation and they are known as the 'go-to' people. These people are always ready to go the extra mile to help a customer and they acknowledge the impact of this action on the bottom line (Gostick and Elton, 2007).

There is a need for understanding the characteristics of new hires in order to promote the 'engaged employee'. Phillips and Roper (2007) discuss the importance of identifying the four different generations working in organisations, which include traditionalists (1900 and 1945), baby boomers (1946 and 1964), Gen-Xers (1965 and 1981) and Generation Y (1982 and 2001) (Lancaster and Stillman, 2002).

There is a need to adapt distinct and specific protocol for increasing the engagement of each generation. According to Phillips and Roper (2007), traditionalists are most engaged and satisfied because they work for fun and activity rather than as a means of making ends meet. Baby boomers, on the other hand, are commonly known to be workaholics and stressed out. This generation needs energising; they are the lowest satisfied group to their supervisors (Lancaster and Stillman, 2002). Generation Xers and Millennials are always finding their work uneasy because of the mismatch of practical work and their expectations. They look for enthusiasm and a team-driven, fun environment, and always seek feedback from their mentor. They want to work for a client who appreciates their point of view and helps them grow (Dychtwald *et al.*, 2006).

#### 4. Developing

According to Phillips and Roper (2007), TM strategies should be customised for each generation. However, there exist common factors that increase retention in general. Employee retention factors include a quality relationship with the manager, a work-life balance, meaningful work, adequate training and opportunities for growth (Gostick and Elton, 2007). According to Dychtwald *et al.*, (2006), a nationwide survey found that the opportunity to grow and learn and trying new areas ranked higher than additional pay, a flexible workplace, a flexible schedule, more holidays and work that is personally stimulating, and it ranked third out of ten preferences (Dychtwald *et al.*, 2006).

The core idea of learning and development is to improve the skills and competencies of the employees. Various TM practises are identified in relation to this aspect, such as coaching, mentoring, leadership development, opportunities to deploy skills, diverse learning options and career progression for employees, etc. (Poocharoen and Lee, 2013; Thunnissen *et al.*, 2013; Karin 2015). The learning programs should also address the employees' personal learning interests for career progression (Rothwell, 1994). This approach would lead to the TM outcomes such as engagement, improved competencies and motivation. As employee engagement means much more than employee satisfaction, a satisfied employee will be happy with the pay, but can be reluctant to show any extra achievement or initiative. On the other hand, engaged employees exert qualities that include creativity and innovation, providing care and special attention to work, owning work or showing a sense of responsibility in bringing results. They have the drive to make an organisation successful. They can relate to the company mission and vision and develop a bond to the organisation (Wagner and Harter, 2006). Phillips and Roper (2007) argue that engaged employees are easy to spot in an organisation and they are known as the 'go-to' people. These people are always ready to go the extra mile to help a customer and they acknowledge the impact of this action on the bottom line (Gostick and Elton, 2007).

#### 5. Retaining

In order to keep employees in the organisation, it is recommended that a meaningful compensation package is built that clearly states the skill requirements, behaviour, expectations and expected performance. Such a system could drive top performance at

every level. There is a need to follow the HR scorecard, where people and strategy are related to performance (Dychtwald *et al.*, 2006).

The opportunity to develop in a career is one of the major factors that drives employee retention in Europe and the USA. Studies show that prolonged waiting for a promotion disenchant employees and they quit. According to Fairis (2004), a survey on Generation Y revealed an average patience duration of only ten months for an opportunity to take place until they thought of it as a blocked advancement and decided to move on. Succession planning comes into existence at this stage and must be addressed seriously and creatively. Instead of following the traditional job ladder concept, the focus should be on determining the most eligible employee for a vacancy in advance (Dychtwald *et al.*, 2006).

Phillips and Roper (2007) conclude by stating that employers are aware of the fact that employees are becoming the new brand for them, and their activities towards customers affect them. It is a necessity that these employees stay engaged and focused on productive work. Disengaged employees cost a company far more than what they acknowledge. When addressing these issues, the factor that makes it more difficult is the scarcity of talent in the right area and the lack of skilled workers in the right position. This becomes a tremendous challenge for an organisation and needs attention through adapting sophisticated and calculated TM techniques. The five specific strategies suggested in the TM framework attempt to measure performance at all fronts (Phillips and Roper, 2007).

### **3.4.3. Internal Factors**

The influencing factors (internal environment) of TM implementation can include various elements. However, the major internal factors included in this research are listed in the following sections.

#### **1. Leadership**

Most TM practises focus on developing the various skills and competencies of employees. Developing leadership skills through TM practises is considered to be one of the major objectives of skills development (Dierdorff and Morgeson, 2007; Ehrhart and Kuenzi, 2017; Ramesh and Gelfand, 2010; Kaliannan 2015), which can be achieved through various learning and developmental programs. In addition, Kaliannan (2015) identified the role of leadership in effectively implementing the various TM practises by adopting

different approaches such as mentoring, coaching, motivating employees, assessments and job rotations in order to effectively engage employees in the workplace.

The role of leadership has evolved over time and has been explained in various contexts, especially in managing and supporting employees, motivating them and leading them to achieve the organisational objectives (Bird and Mendenhall, 2016). The impact of leadership roles can be explained from two perspectives. Firstly, the role of a leader in managing the talent among employees, and secondly, the role in using the talent resources in achieving the organisational objectives. In the first case, the role of a leader would be to enable employee development and increase their skills and competencies as per the organisational requirements (Kasemsap, 2016). In the second case, the role of a leader would be in making effective and efficient use of the talent resources in achieving the goals and objectives of the organisation (Zhang *et al.*, 2014). Therefore, leadership is one of the major internal factors that would impact TM practises, and organisational performance in turn.

## 2. Rewards System

Rewards systems are used for recognising talented individuals and the services they offer to organisations by offering them rewards, incentives and bonuses. The recognition programs must be carefully aligned with the business improvement operations using effective performance evaluation techniques. Various studies (Muir and Li, 2014; Iduddin *et al.*, 2015; Subramony, 2009; Marie *et al.*, 2013; Hitu, 2015; Kwon and Hein, 2013) have identified the outcomes, including employee retention, commitment, satisfaction and attraction as a result of deploying efficient rewards systems. In order to keep employees in the organisation, it is recommended that a meaningful compensation package is built that clearly states the skill requirements, behaviour, expectations and expected performance. Such a system could drive top performance at every level. There is a need to follow the HR scorecard, where people and strategy are related to performance (Dychtwald *et al.*, 2006).

## 3. Organisational Culture

Coleman (2008) suggested certain factors that can help the successful implementation of TM strategy. TM strategy should be integrated and aligned with organisational strategy,

and it is also of vital importance to articulate TM strategy. TM is linked to the culture and people of the organisation. The people and culture are the heart of the organisation for creating a successful TM strategy. The biggest challenges for managers in managing talent is not technical; it's cultural. Overcoming cultural hurdles is a very difficult task, especially when holding knowledge is considered more important than sharing it with others (Cole-Gomulka, 2007). The reason for the sentiment is that the nature of the employees is competitive, and they tend to hold the knowledge than compare it because sometimes they don't want others to have the same competencies as they do.

Several studies have shown that the impact of culture on individual behaviour and attitudes is well recognised. For example, the difference between Eastern and Western cultures is relatively significant (Hofstede, 1980; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998). On the other hand, differences in culture are reflected in how organisations are managed, structured and performed (Hofstede, 1991; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998; Cheng, 1995; Chen, 2001). By way of illustration, Western organisations, for instance, are flatter in structure, less bureaucratic, decentralise decision-making, promote individualism and do more to empower their workers (Chen, 2001; El-Kahal, 2001; Lok and Crawford, 2004). In contrast, Eastern organisations have a tendency to be more bureaucratic, hierarchical, have central decision-making and are policy driven. In addition, they are more authoritarian, promote values of collectivism and have high power distance (Somers, 1995; Sommer, Bae and Luthans, 1996; Chen, 2001; El-Kahal, 2001). Thus, organisational cultures contribute to individuals creating their own behavioural experiences and then employing these behavioural experiences to decide the kind of behaviour that is appropriate for a particular situation (James *et al.*, 1978).

Several scholars in the field of organisational culture have proposed different types of organisational cultures.

However, the results from these studies do suggest the relationships between management styles and organisational culture might result in greater differentiation in organisational outcomes, including managing talent. In this sense, greater consideration of the relative importance of organisational culture needs to be given to organisational and management styles that determine individual decision-making in different organisational contexts.

#### **3.4.4. Outcomes in Terms of Attitudinal Aspects**

TM outcomes is the third major component in the framework that is considered to be a direct outcome as a result of implementing TM practises. These outcomes are mainly related to employee outcomes which include motivation, satisfaction and engagement, which can lead to improved employee efficiency and performance. TM outcomes in employee performance has been analysed in various studies, which provide the evidence to link TM and TM outcomes from employee performance perspectives (Barkhuizen *et al.*, 2014; Chami and Garavan, 2013; Gelens *et al.*, 2013; Collings and Mellahi, 2009). The proposed framework in this research considers TM outcomes as the antecedents to organisational outcomes (sustainable competitive advantage), reflecting TM outcomes as a mediating factor between TM and organisational outcomes. The mediating role of TM outcomes between TM employee performance and organisational performance was identified in various studies (Sharma and Jyotsna Bhatnagar, 2017; Barkhuizen *et al.*, 2014; Chami-Malaeb and Garavan, 2013; Gelens *et al.*, 2013; Anand, 2011; Collings and Mellahi, 2009). A distinctive feature of this framework is that it captures all the dimensions of employee performance and enables the organisation to understand the relationship between the internal factors affecting TM practises, TM practises resulting in TM outcomes, and TM outcomes as mediating factors in achieving organisational outcomes. This would enable organisations to develop a comprehensive view of TM and develop TM strategies and align it with business strategy.

It can be observed from Figure 3.5 that TM is directly related to organisational outcomes, and also various dimensions that affect employee performance. The necessary implication to be considered in this aspect is that TM may impact various dimensions affecting employee performance differently. Therefore, the relationship between TM and employee performance is not just limited to the overall employee performance but to various dimensions of employee performance. Accordingly, studies (Bethke-Langenegger *et al.*, 2011; Sharma and Jyotsna Bhatnagar, 2017) found that employees who were considered as talent resources by their organisations reflected higher levels of in-role performance with greater engagement, motivation and satisfaction.

Similarly, another important consideration in the framework is that the relationship between TM and organisational outcomes is mediated by TM outcomes. The insights into this specific approach can be drawn from SET, as approaches such as learning and development, training and support (organisational exchange with employees) would result in TM outcomes (motivation, satisfaction and engagement) among employees, which would in turn lead to improved organisational outcomes (sustainable competitive advantage). A social exchange relationship can be observed between employees and their organisations.

That is, by placing the talented employees in strategic positions, they can be motivated, and this motivational factor would mediate the relationship between TM and employee performance (Mathafena *et al.*, 2017; Collings and Mellahi, 2009). Similarly, the social exchange theory represents an exchange relationship between an organisation and its employees (Blau, 1964; Settoon *et al.*, 1996; Takeuchi *et al.*, 2007). For example, approaches including talent identification, attraction, planning, development and retention reflect an investment in employees who reciprocate with beneficial attitudes and behaviours (Kuvaas and Dysvik, 2010) of motivation, satisfaction, commitment and engagement in their jobs (Bethke-Langenegger *et al.*, 2011).

Though managing talented employees is often a challenging task, organisations adopt various approaches such as training, providing support through good leadership, rewards and non-monetary benefits etc. (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; De-Meuse *et al.*, 2009), which would result in multiple outcomes such as employee satisfaction, motivation, and engagement (Barkhuizen *et al.*, 2014; Lockwood, 2006; Sharma and Jyotsna Bhatnagar, 2017; Dries *et al.*, 2012). Accordingly, various studies (Anand, 2011; Hughes and Rogs, 2008; Bhatnagar, 2007; Lockwood, 2006) have found that TM has a positive impact on employee engagement. The use of effective and efficient TM policies demonstrates strong commitment by the organisations in relation to human capital, which would result in increased employee engagement and retention. Accordingly, employee engagement is positively related to employee productivity and talent retention (Lockwood, 2006). Martel (2003, pp. 30, 42) stated that, “in order to obtain high performance in post-industrial, intangible work that demands innovation, flexibility, and speed, employers need to engage their employees by giving them participation, freedom, and trust – is the most comprehensive response to the ascendant post-industrial values of self-realization and self-actualization”. TM practices in this aspect can deploy the necessary factors such as participation, freedom, support and motivation leading to trust for achieving greater engagement of employees.

Also, TM practices can also lead to other important TM outcomes: employee satisfaction and motivation. Various studies have identified a positive relationship between TM and employee satisfaction (Gelens *et al.*, 2013; Tobias, 2007) and employee motivation (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Bhatnagar, 2007; Gandossy and Kao, 2004). Therefore, TM practices, as they primarily focus on improving employee performance, can indirectly lead to improving organisational performance, as employee performance can be considered as one of the important factors for achieving organisational performance. Employee performance can be one of the most important factor in addressing various challenges, such as maintaining CA while entering competitive markets and maintaining a competitive edge in existing markets, and reducing labour costs and

expenses in maintaining talent resources, which would solve various organisational problems, improve competitiveness and efficiency and maximise return on investment (Jackson *et al.*, 2009; Sadler, 2009; Yapp, 2009; Hengst, 2007).

As the main aim of TM is to make efficient use of talent resources and achieve improved employee performance by effectively managing talent resources, the focus should be on linking TM practices, TM outcomes and organisational outcomes “sustainable competitive advantage”. Though there are various studies identified analysing the relationship between individual elements, there is no study that has used a comprehensive framework including all dimensions. Therefore, this framework includes all the dimensions and evaluates the relationship between various elements.

### **3.4.5. Sustainable Competitive Advantage**

CA was defined as is gained advantage over competitors by offering more value to customers, either through lower prices or through the provision of additional benefits and services (Davis *et al.*, 2007). The ultimate goal of any organisational approach or entity is to improve the performance of the organisation. Koopmans *et al.*, (2011) completed a comprehensive literature review on the topic of organisation performance and stated that it covered four components: contextual, high quality, speed in response to market and innovation speed, and enhance supply chain efficiency. Investing in the recruitment, retention and management of talented employees ensures that employees are obliged to reciprocate behaviours and attitudes that are beneficial (Chami and Garavan, 2013), and it also includes satisfaction, commitment, engagement and motivation in their specific roles (Bethke *et al.*, 2011). The framework presents the idea that TM relates positively with organisation performance by having the TM outputs as mediators.

Talent management practices can create effective competitive advantages, new technologies and innovations that can be easily be replicated by competitors and generate only temporary competitive advantages. Sustained CA comes from TM practices; in other words, how the organisation attracts, develops, retains, motivates, manages and rewards its talent (Mathafena *et al.*, 2017, Heimen *et al.*, 2004). An organisation will fail to operate successfully if key elements such as processes, systems and structure are misaligned or hindered by friction between those elements. Like a machine, a business must be designed, operated and maintained. These functions are performed by the talent – the human capital employed by the enterprise. Indeed, talent (i.e., an organisation’s employees) is typically the single biggest lever for driving improvements in business performance. The collective skills of the talent employed in an organisation largely



comprise the organisation’s core capabilities. An organisation’s talent injects capabilities that are very difficult for competitors to benchmark and replicate. More than any other asset, talent provides the potential for long-term competitive advantage (Paauwe, 2014; Lawler, 2008).

Seventy-three percent of executives in the USA agree on the positive relationship between TM and business strategy to obtain the success of the organisations (Ballesteros *et al.*, 2010). It means that companies recognise the importance of TM integration with business strategy to get organisation excellence. Therefore, the proposed integrated framework can be an effective source of approach for deploying, monitoring and upgrading TM practises and processes in organisations.

### 3.5. TM Framework

TM has been recognised as a pillar of any organisation and, if well managed, it provides a competitive edge in the oil and gas industry. This Research is grounded in the conceptual framework that the effective use of TM tools coupled with relevant human resources practices is necessary to achieve a SCA in private corporations. Accordingly, this Research proposes a TM framework by considering the inputs from the TM and related factors discussed in section 3.4, as shown in Figure 3.5. In addition, the relevant literature sources for the components and their relevant elements in the framework are presented in Table 3.2.

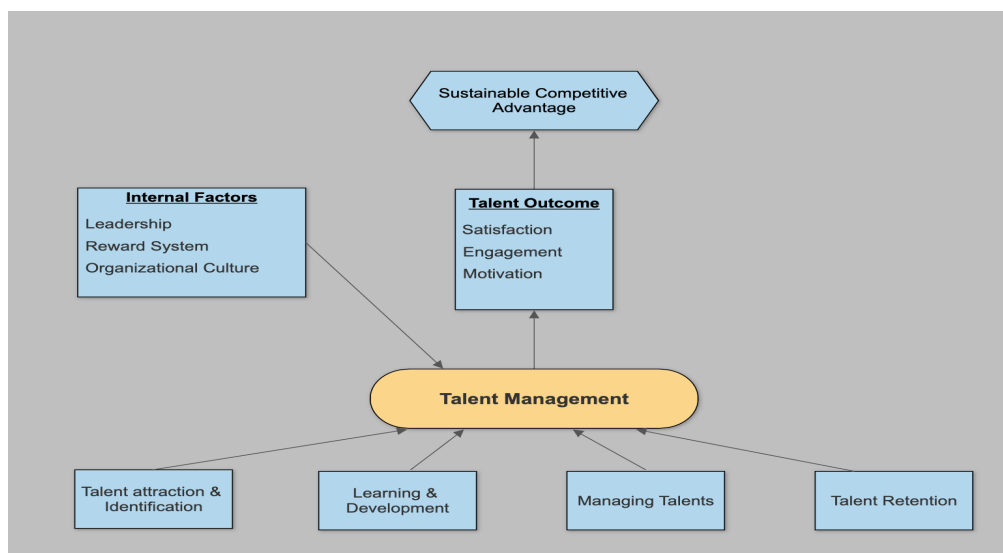


Figure 3. 5: TM Framework

Source: Researcher

There are four parts to the framework: TM (process), internal influencing factors, TM output at the employee level (satisfaction, engagement and motivation) and organisational outcomes

(sustainable competitive advantage). The TM process must start by identifying pivotal positions that are able to contribute differentially to organisational performance (Collings and Mellahi, 2009). Once the positions are identified, a company has to be able to recruit the desired talent and take necessary action in developing their skills and competencies, retaining them and managing them. This will serve as the base for the construction of the framework.

Table 3.2: Framework components and relevant literature sources

<b>Internal Factors</b>	<b>References</b>
Organisational culture	Beechler and Woodward (2009); Ogbonna and Harris (2000); Erkutlu (2012)
Reward system	Ranik and Kumar (2014); Padmajand Venkateswara (2015)
Leadership	Osborn, Hunt and Jauch (2002); Dinh <i>et al.</i> , (2014); Capelli (2008); Kaliprasad (2006); Matthews and Farmer (2008)
<b>Components of TM</b>	<b>References</b>
Talent attraction and selection	Phillips and Roper (2007); Mathur and Mathur (2012); Russell and Bennett (2015); Kaliannan, Abraham, Ponnusam (2016); Deborah (2009); Kagwiria (2013); Rabbi (2015)
Talent development	Phillips and Roper (2007); Mathur and Mathur (2012); Russell and Bennett (2015); Kaliannan <sup>[L1]</sup> , Abraham, Ponnusam <sup>[L1]</sup> (2016); Deborah (2009); Kagwiria (2013); Rabbi (2015)
Talent retention	Phillips and Roper (2007); Mathur and Mathur (2012); Russell and Bennett (2015); Kaliannan, Abraham, Ponnusam (2016); Deborah (2009); Kagwiria (2013); Rabbi (2015); Kaliannan <i>et al.</i> , (2015)
Managing talent	Phillips and Roper (2007); Mathur and Mathur (2012); Deborah (2009); Kagwiria (2013); Rabbi (2015); Kaliannan <i>et al.</i> , (2015)
<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>References</b>
Satisfaction	David G. Collings and Kamel Mellahi (2009); Kwame Mensah (2015) Mensah and Bawole (2017)
Engagement	David G. Collings and Kamel Mellahi (2009); Kwame Mensah (2015); Deborah (2009)
Motivation	Kwame Mensah (2015); Collings and Mellahi (2009)
<b>Organisational Performance</b>	<b>References</b>
Sustainable competitive advantage	Kaliannan, Abraham, Ponnusam (2016); Tarique and Randall (2010); Rabbi (2015); Beechler and Woodward (2009); David G. Collings and Kamel Mellahi (2009); Kagwiria (2013)

Source: Researcher

The second component, internal factors, reflects the major factors that would affect the TM implementation process, which include leadership, rewards systems and organisational culture. The nature of leadership may directly impact the various TM processes such as planning, learning and development programs; providing support; creating effective workplace culture; and motivating the employees. Similarly, the rewards systems focus on rewarding the talented employees. This process may adopt differential treatment for employees and may lead to reactions from other employees, which may affect the TM process. Again, the role of leadership is critical

in this scenario for maintaining the supportive, competitive and constructive environment in the workplace without affecting the sentiments of the other employees. The organisational culture is another important factor that may influence the TM process. As TM processes are directly aimed at employees and their efficiencies to deliver better outcomes, the workplace culture; a supportive, motivational and learning environment; and communication strategies are few essential aspects that need to be considered.

TM output at the employee level is the third component of the framework. These are direct outcomes deriving from TM. Such outputs consist of employee motivation, employee engagement and employee satisfaction. There exists adequate evidence that adheres to the role of TM output in the employee performance relationship (Barkhuizen *et al.*, 2014; Chami and Garavan, 2013; Gelens *et al.*, 2013; Collings and Mellahi, 2009). It has been observed in the current framework that TM outputs are the antecedents of the performance of organisations; thus, it mediates the relationship between organisation performance and TM.

SCA (organisational outcome) is the fourth component of the framework. Koopmans *et al.*, (2011) completed a comprehensive literature review on the topic of organisation performance and stated that it covered four components: speed in response to market and innovation speed, enhance supply chain efficiency and enhance supply chain efficiency (Chami and Garavan, 2013), and it also includes satisfaction, commitment, engagement and motivation in their specific roles (Bethke *et al.*, 2011). The framework presents the idea that TM relates positively with SCA by having the TM outputs as mediators.

### **3.6. Conclusion**

This chapter has reviewed and evaluated various TM frameworks, assessed literature gaps identified in Chapter 2, and proposed a TM framework for understanding TM practises (talent attraction, talent development, managing talent and talent retention), TM outcomes (employee engagement, employee motivation and employee satisfaction) and organisational outcomes (sustainable competitive advantage). The increasing attention on TM in an organisational context and the reported shortage of talent indicates that the issue of TM is likely to continue to be of great importance. Therefore, the proposed framework in this research intends to fill the gaps identified

in the literature review. The theoretical background used to develop the conceptual model and the hypothetical relationships between the model variables stems from the TM literature and competitive advantage studies. The review of the literature has revealed that a manager's perception and experiences towards the talent identification process are influenced by individual, organisational and societal factors and these, in turn, influence the fairness of TM. The conceptual approach encompasses a number of constructs, which have been identified based on their significant effect on TM literature. It has been observed that TM leads to employee performance while at the same time helps organisations to respond to challenges, enter new markets and move ahead of the competition. Managing talented employees helps to reduce expenses and labour costs, improve competitiveness and efficiency, solve organisational problems and ultimately help to maximise return on investment. In other words, TM leads to employee performance leading to organisational performance. This framework will be validated from the findings of quantitative survey and qualitative interviews, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

## Chapter 4: Research Methodology

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the methods used to conduct this research. The research design in this research is explained using the ‘Research Onion’ developed by Saunders *et al.*, (2009), which is an effective framework used for explaining the research study. Identifying the appropriate methodology is an important task in a research study, which would justify the various elements used in the research. The researcher examines the research question; discusses the aims and objectives of the study; identifies the theoretical assumptions, data collection and analysis process; and draws conclusions based on the findings (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The research methodology can be considered as a blueprint of the overall approach adopted in the study in investigating the research problem; therefore, the methods adopted may vary with the nature of the research (Remenyi *et al.*, 2003). In a research study, it is necessary that the methodological approaches adopted should be consistent with the research questions, objectives, and theoretical approaches (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Accordingly, this chapter discusses the methodology in relation to the research questions and objectives outlined in Chapter 1 and adopts the terminology of the ‘research process onion’ (Saunders *et al.*, 2009) presented in Figure 4.1.

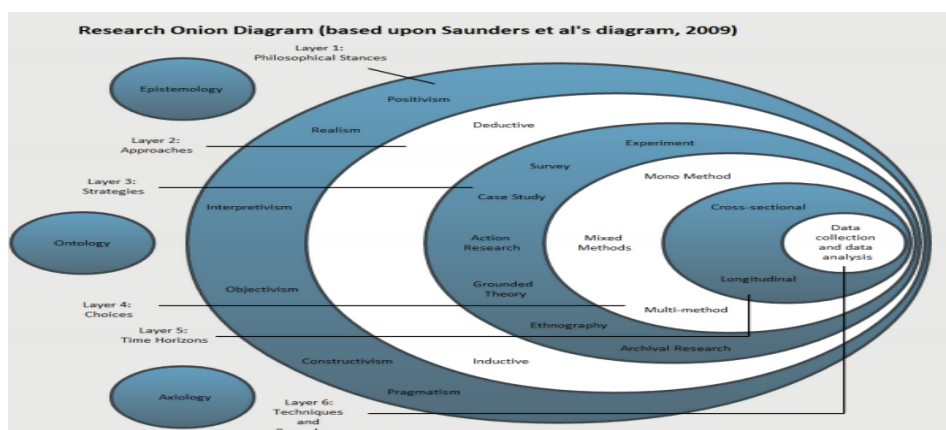


Figure 4.1: Research Onion  
Source: Saunders *et al.*, (2009)

### 4.2 Research Philosophy

The philosophy of the research relates to the development of knowledge and the nature of that specific knowledge (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). May and Williams (2002) state that research

philosophy focuses on knowing the kind of things that exist in this world and the properties that can be understood. People tend to make assumptions at every stage of research (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). The assumptions are mostly about human knowledge and the various nature of practical realities that shape how the research question is understood by the researcher, and how different methods will be used in the interpretation of the findings. The philosophy of the research mainly sheds light on the way a researcher perceives the world. Realism, positivism, pragmatism and interpretivism are the four major research philosophies that are found to be mainly used in various research studies. Positivism and interpretivism are the two philosophies involved in business research, and interpretivism is highly appropriate and applicable to business and management research (Bryman and Bell, 2003; Saunders *et al.*, 2012).

The philosophy that concerns the natural science is positivism. It involves collecting data, searching for relationships and regularities about reality and creating generalised concepts. Existing theories are used to form a hypothesis by the researcher according to this philosophy. According to Saunders *et al.*, (2012), positivist research outcomes will all be objective. In the case of positivist research, there is a use of methodology that is highly structured in order to facilitate replication of the research (Strauss and Corbin, 2009). Historically, the positivist philosophy in social sciences is associated with natural sciences research, which involves empirical testing (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). This approach is concerned with numerical data collection for understanding human behaviours and attitudes in the way it reveals information about people through objective values. According to Collis and Hussey (2009), the positivist approach seeks facts or causes of social phenomena, with slight regard for the subjective state of the individual. In this approach, researchers apply the language of theories, variables and hypotheses. This paradigm is more appropriate when the object of the research is to gather data related to the frequency of occurrence of phenomena. The positivist approach is reliant on a host of scientific methods that produce numeric and alphanumeric data (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2008). According to positivists, reality is objective as they believe that social science is not affected by humans and that the research will not affect the reality of nature (Carson *et al.*, 2001). In positivist research, a topic is usually identified through the detection of an external object of research rather than by creating the actual object of study. Positivists suggest that this approach promotes the idea of experimentation and testing to prove or disprove hypotheses in order to increase the predictive

understanding of certain phenomena and to generate new theory by placing facts together to generate 'laws' or principles (Myers, 1997; Greener, 2008).

Positivist principles emphasise the use of research strategies such as surveys and experiments (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Further, positivists employ a set of formalised techniques to try to discover and measure independent facts about an individual reality which is assumed to exist, driven by natural laws and mechanisms (Carson *et al.*, 2001). Additionally, a significant characteristic of positivism includes the tendency of positivists to believe that everything can ultimately be known and proved (Fisher, 2007). This will assist the researcher to obtain large quantities of empirical data which can be analysed statistically to bring out any underlying regularities (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2008). Finally, this approach is about objective rather than subjective statements, and only objective statements are considered to be the appropriate domain of scientists.

Similarly, realism is another major research philosophy which focuses on the idea of independence of reality from the human mind (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). It is a view that states that entities exist independently of being perceived, reflecting the concept that what the human mind perceives can be a reality or just manifested reality, which could be deceptive (Novikov and Novikov, 2013). There are two types of realism philosophies: direct and critical realism. Direct realism states that the world is perceived through human senses and states "what you see is what you get" (Sobh and Perry, 2006); whereas critical realism in the real world can be perceived through human senses, but they can be deceptive and may not portray the real world (Fletcher, 2016).

In contrast to the positivist philosophy, and with few similarities with realism philosophy, the interpretive paradigm engages with the social sciences as a phenomenon of human behaviours and experiences (Remenyi *et al.*, 1998; Bryman, 2012). Interpretivists, thus, believe that behaviours and actions are created within the individual's mind. Further, they focus on humans as they think that individuals are the key elements of sense-making (Collis and Hussey, 2003; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). The aim of the interpretive researcher is to see the world through the eyes of people being studied, which allows them multiple realities, different actors' perspectives, researcher involvement and taking account of the context under study (Carson *et al.*, 2001; Greener, 2008). Therefore, the interpretive philosophy is about arguments, intuition, experiences, explanations, assessments and descriptions (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012).

Researchers of the interpretivist school of thought believe that the world is a complex entity needing rationalisation and leading to the development of general rules and theories. This is supported by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007), who add that it is challenging to fully understand the world around us. According to the interpretivists, reality is not objectively determined; rather, it is constructed socially (Hussey and Hussey, 1997). Therefore, the key assumption of this approach is that it provides a greater opportunity to comprehend the perceptions and experiences of people by placing them in the correct social context (Collis and Hussey, 2009). Additionally, the very nature of interpretive philosophy promotes the importance of qualitative data in the development of knowledge (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). Thus, qualitative research methods were developed in the social sciences so that researchers could collect, examine and develop theories based on the evidence extrapolated from that data.

People who practice interpretivism believe that institutions and people are the subject matter of social science, which is different than that of natural science (Bryman and Bell, 2003). The core trait of interpretivism states that social scientists normally interpret subjective meanings for actions that are social. It may be added that a researcher is the component of the topic of observation and the research is the component that is driven by interest (Bryman and Bell, 2003).

Interpretivism explains the necessity for any research to assess the differences between humans when they are playing the role of social actors (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). This kind of interpretation focuses on people-based research rather than object-based research. Accordingly, this research study investigates the role of TM in improving the SCA of “organisational performance” from the employees’ perspectives working in private oil and gas companies in KSA. As TM practises involve various social approaches such as motivation, incentives, satisfaction and commitment etc., it is important that the researcher identifies the perceptions of various employees, where the focus is on the employees (talent) and the way they respond to the TM practises in their companies. The very significant portion of interpretivism philosophy lies in the fact that the researcher must get involved with the research subjects' world from their specific points of view, which can be termed as an ‘empathetic stance’ (Bryman, 2006).



Table 4.1. Comparison of research philosophies

Elements	Positivism	Interpretivism	Realism
<b>Ontology</b>	Reality is real and apprehensible.	Reality is socially constructed and can be accessed only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings and instruments.	Reality is “real” but only imperfectly and probabilistically apprehensible and so triangulation from many sources is required to try to know it.
<b>Epistemology</b>	Findings are true – the researcher is objective by viewing reality through a “one-way mirror”.	Created findings – the researcher is a “passionate participant” within the world being investigated.	Findings are probably true – the researcher is value-aware and needs to triangulate any perceptions being collected.
<b>Methods</b>	Quantitative methods such as surveys, experiments and verification of hypotheses.	In-depth unstructured interviews, participant observation, action research and grounded theory research.	Mainly qualitative methods such as case studies and convergent interviews.
<b>Researcher relationship</b>	Rigid separation	Interactive, cooperative and participative.	Part of the study.

Source: Adapted from Sobh and Perry, 2006; Saunders *et al.*, 2012; Novikov and Novikov, 2013.

As presented in Table 4.1, the research philosophies including realism, positivism and interpretivism are compared and analysed. The interpretivism philosophy was chosen for this research since the TM (the research subject) process in private oil and gas organisations (the research field) was the research topic of interest, As was mentioned in the literature review chapter, there is a lack of study in the field of TM. Accordingly, it is significant to garner more details about the phenomenon under study, which is that of TM and TM outcomes. TM is a new research area in the research context (KSA); therefore, more, rich data are needed in order to meet and answer the research questions, and it requires interaction with social entities and the need for interpreting reality from the social entities. The research acknowledges the fact that humans play different roles as social actors and their interpretation of life is according to their perspective. In this research, the researcher tries to perceive and analyse the events in the world (organisations) through the eyes of the people (manager/employees). In addition, this philosophical approach brings the researcher’s work closer to understanding the TM practices and approaches in private oil and gas organisations, providing the observations to interpret the reality, which would help in understanding the implementation of TM processes in private oil and gas organisations. The findings from the interpretivist study can be used for validating the proposed TM framework in specific to KSA

private oil and gas organisations. It explores the various interpretations and perceptions of TM in order to bring forward different views of the topic and take a closer look into the TM process of KSA oil and gas companies in the private sector. This research does not test any pre-existing theory or propose a new theory; rather, it proposes a TM framework based on the empirical findings.

### 4.3 Research Approach

Two research approaches can be significantly distinguished: inductive and deductive. The deductive approach states the fact that there exists a nature of relationship between research and theory. Based on the knowledge that the researcher has about the certain subject, he or she deduces a hypothesis, which is again empirically scrutinised (Bryman and Bell, 2003). The deductive approach is not dependent on observation nor experience. It is rather a logical matter. Conversely, the inductive approach has the researcher infer to theoretical implications. The researcher will draw conclusions from various facts and evidence.

A distinction between deduction and induction is distinguished by Saunders *et al.*, (2012). They came to believe that deduction relates to scientific principles while there is a shift from theory towards data. There also lies a necessity to elaborate on the normal relationships of variables. The deductive approach deals with quantitative data. Also, there exists an application of controls to make sure that there is validity of data and it is considered a structured approach.

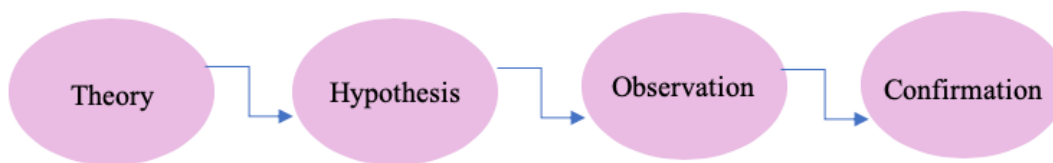


Figure 4.2 Deductive (top-down) approach  
Source: Burney (2008)

As Figure 4.2 illustrates, the deductive (top-down) approach begins with a general theory or question that needs to be examined, related to a topic of interest. The theory is then refined to a hypothesis, which is tested for truth or falsity (Blaikie, 1993; Gill and Johnson, 2002). The hypothesis must be presented as testable and enable the relevant variables to be measured in order to either confirm or reject the hypothesis and consequently the truth of the theory. The outcome of the testing should describe the relationship of those variables. Based on this outcome, the hypothesis may need to be refined to allow for more definite results to be achieved.

There is a necessity for the existence of research independence in this approach and the requirement to select a sample size. Further, there is a certain logic behind the deductive approach which believes that the conclusion is true as long as the premise is true. The deductive approach goes to the specific terms from the general terms. The data collected is used to evaluate certain propositions relating to the existing theory. The research aims to verify the theory using the deductive approach (Creswell, 2013).

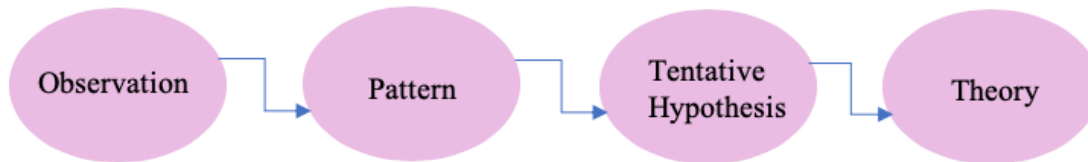


Figure 4.3 Inductive (bottom-up) approach  
Source: Burney (2008)

Unlike the deductive approach, in the inductive approach (bottom-up) research, as illustrated in Figure 4.3, the researcher tries to understand the meanings of events that are man-made. There also exists an understanding of the context of the research. The inductive approach refers to collecting qualitative data, flexible structure and the space to permit changes, and allowing the researcher to be an integral part of the research. Untested conclusions are generated through the usage of premises in the inductive approach. In the case of an inductive approach, it moves from specific terms to general terms. Here, phenomenon is explored, themes are identified and conceptual framework is created by using collected data. The induction approach is used to build theory (Saunders *et al.*, 2012).

While the deductive and inductive research methods seem as though they conflict, they individually achieve a significant intention in the course of research, and, nevertheless, research typically includes both approaches during each phase of the process (Trochim, 2000). Figure 4.4 depicts a model showing the cyclical interaction between the two approaches.

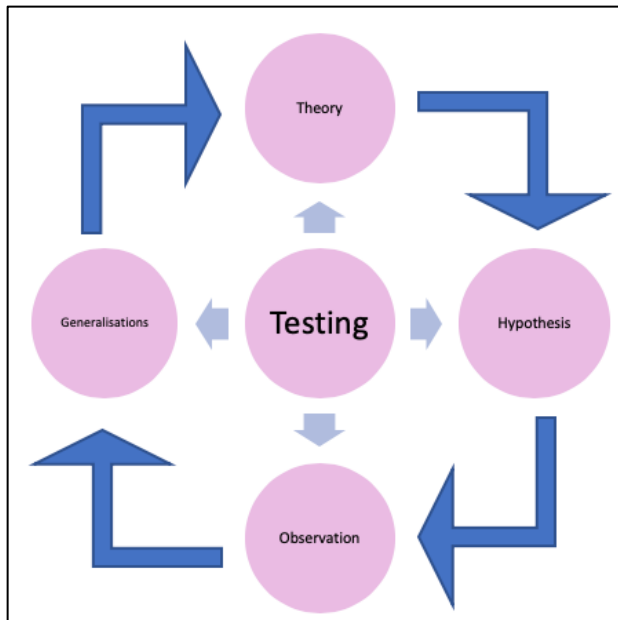


Figure 4.4 Uniting the deductive and inductive approaches  
 Source: Blaikie (1993), citing Wallace (1993)

There is another research approach that involves the combination of both the inductive and deductive approaches. The abduction approach moves back and forth between data and theory. The abduction approach requires observation to take place first, and then forms a theory on the occurrence of an event. This conveys the logic of generating conclusions that are testable. The approach generalises between the specific terms and general terms. The process involves exploring a phenomenon, identifying patterns and themes and locating them in a framework that is conceptual and tested. The theory revolving around the abduction approach is either modified or generated (Saunders *et al.*, 2012).

The contention that researchers develop theories inductively indicates that studies could employ deductive and inductive logic at any time in the cycle. However, researchers should perform specific additional inductive actions to improve the theory's suppositions. Consequently, Wallace (1993, cited by Blaikie, 1993) incorporates testing in this model; testing permits the researcher to integrate developing premises into the original theory.

This research will use the inductive approaches as a part of developing the reasoning. As explained by Saunders *et al.*, (2009), the inductive approach will be essential in the development of general and particular issues and variables related to the management tools for TM. Therefore, it is very important in the case of analysing TM practices that the researcher has to be part of the study and investigate the environment through observations. Accordingly, the inductive approach will help

rule out irrelevancies and assist in capturing accurate data through ensuring a valid and effective research process (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

#### **4.4. Research Strategy**

A research strategy is an element of the approach to the research and provides direction in conducting research (Remenyi *et al.*, 2003). The research strategies portion of this research focusses on the central concepts and proposes a basis for choosing the case study approach.

Researchers define research strategy in various ways. For example, Saunders *et al.*, (2009) explain the overall strategy for the researcher to perform in resolving the research questions. Similarly, Bryman (2008) explains it as “a general orientation to the conduct of research”. Consistent with Blaikie’s (1993) definition, research strategy documents a connection between the researcher and the process of collecting and analysing the data. Correspondingly, Yin (2003) states that the investigative strategies apply to all research studies irrespective of the strategy’s purpose and that by answering the research questions, the study’s purposes are realised (Denzin and Lincoln, 2012). Accordingly, the research strategies adopted in this research study are explained in the following sections.

##### **4.4.1. Case Study**

Researchers consider various approaches to data gathering as an asset while implementing a case study (Yin, 1994). A researcher should conduct a case study in a normal environment exclusive of the influence of any outside elements (Yin 2003; Gerring, 2007). Yin (1994, 113) posits that “the ability to track changes over time is a major strength of case studies”. Some of the academic community has criticised the flexibility of the case study method (i.e., its outcomes can lack precision in testing, collecting information and examination). Yin (1994) criticises case studies because they generate enormous amounts of data. Moreover, Denscombe (1999) elevates the issue of its fundamentally descriptive nature. Although some of these criticisms are valid, the case study is a valuable method that will be used in this research.

In fact, the principal reasons for using the case study for this research are its flexibility in allowing for diverse techniques to collect and analyse research data and its provision of an abundant mixture of data and detailed information concerning TM and the experience being investigated (Yin 2003; Gerring, 2007). In addition, the case study can be used for the intensive study of a unit, which

leads to the thorough investigation and exploration of an event or concept by comparing different types of facts about the study of a unit (Zainal, 2007). Moreover, it is a comprehensive method for data collection in social research which can be used for formulating questionnaires and also provides grounds for generalisation of data for illustrating statistical findings (Arroyo *et al.*, 2016). In addition, it can also contradict or support the existing theories and practices and provide new insights (Sprinz, 2008). Along with these advantages, the flexibility is an added advantage, which supports the researcher in using multiple methods for data collection, which is one of the major strengths considered in this research for using multiple methods of data collection and analysis. In addition, case study technique is used in this research after careful consideration of the following factors:

- To seek an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of TM practices, implementation and challenges;
- To address the research questions;
- To investigate and identify the contextual aspects of the phenomenon.

The research context and the targeted sector used in the case study method is explained in the following sections.

#### **4.4.1.1. Research Context**

The context or the location of study refers to the setting in which the research is conducted (Collis and Hussey, 2014). By ‘context’, the researcher includes the national setting, resources and attitudes which are likely to be supportive of the research (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012). Therefore, choice of an appropriate place for collecting data is critical, for successful theory testing occurs simultaneously with the practicality of ensuring that existing data allows the proposed hypotheses to be tested (Anderson and Widener, 2007). In quantitative research studies researchers must consider several issues when selecting an appropriate place for collecting their data: data availability, the appropriateness of organisations for the study, suitability of the unit of analysis and whether adequate statistical power is used in testing the theory (Anderson and Widener, 2007). According to the different research conducted, it has been identified that the research context can include the attitude, research location and the resources, which can be supportive for the research (Bryman, 2016). For the success of testing the theory, it is significant for making the appropriate choice regarding the place where data can be collected, ensuring that the data to be collected will support in testing the proposed hypothesis. In the quantitative research,

there are various issues that should be considered by the researcher, the correct decision to be made regarding the selection of an appropriate place for collecting the data, issues related to the availability of data, selecting the appropriate organisation for collecting the data, appropriate unit analysis and whether appropriate statistical analysis power can be used for testing the theory (Barnham, 2015).

After addressing the research issue on the basis of the evidences collected from the review of literature, the conceptual framework for the research were developed. The various aspects and the issues identified in the conceptual framework were ready for the empirical analysis. On the basis of the empirical studies, it has been identified that the research design would be the mixed method approach under which the semi-structured interviews will be used first for the qualitative analysis, which is followed by survey technique for the quantitative analysis of the data (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). Also, the researcher has selected KSA for answering the research question and for fulfilling the research objectives, because KSA is rapidly transforming through the Vision 2030 initiative, where various oil and gas organisations are being encouraged to increase their operations and expand business and create employment and sustainable development (Alshuwaikhat and Mohammed, 2017). In such an encouraging environment, oil and gas organisations are focusing on various TM practices to retain and recruit the best employees. In addition, lack of skilled labour is one of the major factors affecting the oil and gas organisations, as a result of which they are largely dependent on expatriates (Budhwar and Mellahi, 2016). Considering these factors, KSA would be appropriate according to the research context for conducting the qualitative and quantitative research.

#### **4.4.1.2 Identifying Targeted Sectors**

The oil and gas organisations are considered to be in the midst of significant global expansion. Therefore, there is a significant requirement of for qualified and talented employees for supporting the growth of this sector. (Ali, 2011). The organisations are required to select the correct sample, who could contribute to enhancing the productivity of the company and can be helpful in achieving the desired goals. The oil and gas organisations of KSA is considered to be very vast, stable and also profitable (Achoui, 2009). However, the selection of the oil and gas organisations of KSA is done due to various factors. Firstly, significant changes have recently occurred in the government

of KSA and various developments are being made in the kingdom for enhancing the economy. Secondly, the oil and gas organisations of KSA has started focusing on enhancing their capabilities through the process of TM within the industry. Also, for fulfilling the criteria of the research, the research will focus on conducting semi-structured interviews, followed by surveys with the participants who work in the oil and gas organisations. KSA has the largest oil organisation, named as Saudi Aramco, which has taken significant initiatives and steps to modify their organisational culture in order to focus on TM (Alferaih, 2018).

KSA oil and gas organisations are significantly focusing on their human resources and measuring them in relation to TM. The role of human resources management in TM is highly significant, because of its important involvement in identifying, recruiting and motivating talented people in the industry (Shuen, Feiler and Teece, 2014). Finally, the major reason of selecting the oil and gas organisations is that organisations working in this sector provide an ideal environment for exploring the research topic and also for implementing the TM practices because of the significant contribution of this industry in the economy of the kingdom. Also, human capital is considered to be the key resource in the oil and gas organisations of KSA, where the competitive global oil market requires KSA companies to enhance their effectiveness and efficiency. Finally, the KSA Vision 2030 significantly focuses on enhancing the capabilities of the private sector of the kingdom and enhance their contribution in economic development and economic activities. Vision 2030 “is built around three themes: a vibrant society, a thriving economy and an ambitious nation” (Vision 2030, p. 13). The Vision also aims to improve the quality of services provided by private and public organisations, privatising some effective government services, providing more effective business environments and attracting the finest talent globally. Therefore, Vision 2030 also drives the need for understanding the TM initiatives and their outcomes.

Undoubtedly, in the oil and gas organisations in KSA are concerned about selecting their staff, discovering their potential talents and developing these talents towards the desired goals. Private sector organisations such as those in the oil and gas industries in KSA are characterised by a high degree of stability and profitability (Poghosyan and Hess, 2009). The selection of oil and gas organisations was based on several factors. First, those industries have implemented or are in the process of implementing TM initiatives, which is a necessary criterion in order to accomplish the aim of the research. Saudi organisations such as Saudi Aramco, the largest oil organisation in the



kingdom, have taken major initiatives to modify and convert their culture to focus on TM (Khursani, Buzuhair and Khan, 2011; Al-Ruwaili, Bright and Alhameed, 2013). Similarly, the Saudi oil and gas organisations is applying optimal planning for human resources in general, and measures related to TM in particular, as core duties of human resources management in terms of recruiting, developing and motivating talented employees (Kehinde, 2012). Second, the organisations working in those industries provide an ideal environment for implementing TM. Finally, those two industries are co-operative, supportive and interested in the study of TM; accordingly, they were found to be highly appropriate in terms of satisfactory responses.

Considering these factors, this research is carried out within the context of the oil and gas organisations, and specifically focuses on major organisations or players in this field in KSA. The case is a single case study (embedded units) in which there are 10 oil and gas organisations operating in KSA. These 10 organisations contribute to the major participation in the oil and gas organisations, as a result of which they can be considered as the representation of the Saudi oil and gas organisations. That is why this research conducted the semi-structured interviews, from these organisations in KSA in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of the application of the talent and TM practices in the Saudi oil and gas organisations. Information about the participating organisations (10) in this research is illustrated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Participating Organisations

S. No.	Organisation	Type
1	Saudi Aramco	Oil
2	Sabic	Oil
3	Saudi Arabian Mining and gas Company	Gas
4	National Gas and Indust.co.	Gas
5	Jubail United Petrochemical Company	Petrochemical
5	Petrochemical Company	Oil Gas
6	Arabian Petrochemical Company	Petrochemical
7	Saudi International Petrochemical Company	Petrochemical
8	Sahara	Oil and Petrochemical
9	Maaden Gold	
10	Saudi International Petrochemical Company Sipchem	Oil and Petrochemical

Source: Researcher

#### 4.4.2. Mixed Methods

This section explains the rationale behind the use of mixed methods in order to answer the research questions of this research. The mixed methods research is a relatively robust, albeit not new,

paradigm. It taps into the strengths of both qualitative as well as quantitative research methods in order to arrive at answers to the research questions posed in a study (Venkatesh *et al.*, 2013). Mixed methods typically involve the use of at least one quantitative and qualitative method (it could be more), and they are performed either sequentially or concurrently (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Creswell, 2009; Hanson *et al.*, 2005; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998).

The use of mixed methods has continued to evolve over time. Chief among its use is when the researcher is trying to connect dots or pieces of a puzzle in a form of “triangulation” in which only mixed methods can accomplish. Related to the goal of triangulation is the objective of trying to obtain subjective-objective perspectives or insights into a particular research problem (Creswell, 2003). A researcher might want to employ mixed methods when they are trying to generate a wealth of objective and systematic data via a survey and then pair them with some deeper insights through a qualitative approach in the form of follow-up interviews with selected human subjects (Creswell, 2007; Greene and Caracelli, 1997; Brewer and Hunter, 1989).

The mixed methods approach is also ideal for exploratory studies, development studies, advocacy and longitudinal studies, especially with an eye towards tracking the progress of individuals or human subjects over time (Hanson *et al.*, 2005). In this particular study, mixed methods are being employed to achieve a high degree of detail, credibility, reliability and validity whereby the findings can be inferred and insights can be potentially applied to other situations and scenarios with regards to TM and the attendant determinants or factors of success that it plays in an organisation. The data obtained from both the interviews of HR managers and the surveys of oil and gas workers will be compared and used to complement each other in such a way that it will yield a richer and more holistic analysis of the research questions.

The benefits and value of mixed methods over the past few decades and the mixed methods approach has seen a rise in popularity as well as a diversification in applications (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). Researchers highlight the complementary nature of the mixed methods and argue that a combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses often tend to result in offsetting each other’s limitations compared to when applied alone (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Jick, 1979). The aspect of complementarity of purpose, according to Caracelli and Greene (2003), are often manifested and achieved when both methods measure overlapping yet separate and distinct aspects of the research questions being investigated. This researcher acknowledges Sandelowski’s

(2000) contention that qualitative research leads to the surfacing of “the voices of the research participants”. However, the attendant bias in these “voices” can be further accounted for and minimised in this research via the quantitative measurement of their views and perceptions.

#### 4.4.2.1 Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research

Cresswell *et al.*, (2003) argued that mixed methods research has become an increasingly popular research design. They defined mixed methods as “the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study in which the data are collected sequentially or concurrently, are given a priority, and involve the integration of data at one or more stages in the process of research” (Cresswell *et al.*, 2003, p. 212).

There are several reasons or criteria given as to why mixed methods might be the best approach in finding out the answers to a set of research questions. Greene and Caracelli (1997) outlined a typology for mixed methods design (see Table 1). According to them, mixed methods is the best design, especially in situations whereby the researcher is trying to “triangulate”, meaning to say that the points obtained from the different methods are being used to corroborate and create a clearer picture of the phenomenon. Another reason for using mixed methods is the idea of iteration whereby the researcher aims to examine the dynamic interplay of the different findings obtained through different methods throughout the research process (Green and Caracelli, 1997).

Table 4.3. A typology of mixed methods design

Design	Key Features
Component	Data gathering methods implemented as separate aspects of the evaluation and remain distinct throughout.
Triangulation	Findings from one method used to corroborate findings generated through other methods.
Complementarity	Findings from one dominant method are enhanced or elaborated through findings from another method.
Expansion	Different methods are implemented to generate results for distinct components of the research study; results presented “side by side” (Greene and Caracelli, 1997, p. 23).
Integrated	Methods integrated throughout the evaluation.
Iterative	Dynamic interplay of findings generated through different methods throughout the evaluation.
Embedded or nested	One method is located within another; framework of “creative tension” (Greene and Caracelli, 1997, p.24).
Holistic	Simultaneous integration of methods throughout the research study, building towards one integrating explanation of results.
Transformative	Mixing methods to capture differing value commitments which can lead to “reconfigure using the dialog across ideological differences” (Greene and Caracelli, 1997, p.24).

Source: Rallis and Rossman (2003, p.496).

According to Creswell (2009), there are several aspects to consider in designing the procedure for mixed methods including timing, weighting, mixing, theorising or transforming perspectives (see Table 2). Researchers need to consider the timing of their data collection with either quantitative or qualitative research being employed first depending on the intent of the researcher.

Creswell (2009, p. 206) emphasised that: “When qualitative data are collected first, the intent is to explore the topic with participants at sites. Then the researcher expands the understanding through a second phase in which data are collected from a large number of people (typically a sample representative from a population). When data are collected concurrently, both quantitative and qualitative data are gathered at the same time and the implementation is simultaneous”.

Weighting, according to Creswell (2009), is about the priority given to a particular procedure in a mixed methods study. Mixing is about merging the types of quantitative and qualitative data collected for analysis. Finally, the type of theorising or theory being used dictates the procedure in mixed methods research. A theoretical perspective has a major influence in guiding the research design, according to Creswell (2009). If the framework being used is a theory from the social sciences, for example, then the quantitative aspect of the data collection might be given priority.

Table 4.4. Planning a mixed methods design

<b>Timing</b>	<b>Weighting</b>	<b>Mixing</b>	<b>Theorising</b>
No sequence – concurrent	Equal	Integrating	Explicit
Sequential – qualitative first	Qualitative	Connecting	
Sequential – quantitative first	Quantitative	Embedding	Implicit

Source: Creswell *et al.*, (2003)

Finally, a mixed method design usually falls into either one of the two main categories: sequential design or concurrent design (Cresswell *et al.*, 2003). Sequential designs include sequential explanatory, sequential transformative and sequential exploratory. Concurrent designs include concurrent nested, concurrent triangulation and concurrent transformative (Cresswell *et al.*, 2003). According to Creswell (2009), sequential exploratory strategy, for example, “involves a first phase of qualitative data collection and analysis, followed by a quantitative data collection and analysis that builds on the results of the quantitative phase” (p. 211). Weight or priority is often given to the qualitative phase and this is often a good approach to use when the researcher is trying to test a new or emerging theory (Morgan, 1998). Meanwhile, sequential explanatory is a popular

approach often used by researchers with particular leanings toward quantitative data. It starts with a quantitative approach, such as a survey, and then the findings are further elaborated by adding a qualitative approach (i.e. follow-up face-to-face interviews of select respondents), with more weight given to the quantitative data and findings (Morse, 1991).

Therefore, both approaches have both advantages and disadvantages and are supposed to be selected according to the type and context of the study. Table 4.4 compares both the methods with respect to research elements, including objectives, research questions, approaches, sampling, data collection and analysis.

Table 4.5. Comparison of qualitative and quantitative methods

	Qualitative Research	Quantitative Research
<b>Objective</b>	Understanding of underlying reasons and motivations	Quantifying data and generalise results from a sample to the population of interest
	Provides insights into the setting of a problem, generating ideas and/or hypotheses for later quantitative research	Measures the incidence of various views and opinions in a chosen sample
	Describes meaning, discovery while using communication and observation.	Establishes relationships and causation, and uses specific instruments.
<b>Research approach</b>	Reasoning is dialectic and inductive	Reasoning is logistic and deductive
<b>Research questions</b>	What? Why?	How many? Strength of association?
<b>Literature review</b>	Literature review may be done as study progresses or afterwards	Literature review must be done early in study
<b>Sample</b>	Sample size is not a concern; seeks informal, rich sample	Sample size: n>100
<b>Data collection</b>	Unstructured or semi-structured techniques e.g. individual depth interviews or group discussions.	Structured techniques such as online questionnaires, on-street or telephone interviews.
<b>Data analysis</b>	Non-statistical.	Statistical data is usually in the form of tabulations (tabs). Findings are conclusive and usually descriptive.
<b>Outcome</b>	Exploratory and/or investigative. Strives for uniqueness; patterns and theories developed for understanding.	Strives for generalisation leading to prediction, explanation and understanding.

Source: Adopted from Anderson (2006)

As far as the concurrent mixed methods design is concerned, Cresswell (2009) noted that the “concurrent triangulation” is the most common one being used by researchers (Morgan, 1998; Greene, Carecelli and Graham, 1989). In concurrent triangulation, “the researcher collects both qualitative and quantitative data concurrently and then compares the two databases to determine if there is convergence, differences, or some combination” (Cresswell, 2009, p. 213). Other researchers mentioned that they look for disconfirmation, confirmation, corroboration or cross validation (Morgan 1998; Greene *et al.*, 1989). This research uses the sequential exploratory strategy whereby interviews and qualitative data will be collected and analysed (priority given)

and then a following subsequent survey will be used to support and confirm some of the points and insights gained from the first approach.

#### **4.5. Research Design**

After examining numerous academic theories in the literature, this section looks to a research design that works within the limitations of the mixed model method. In this case, the research design is a way to join the experiential information with the research questions that lead to the results and assumptions (Yin, 2009). This research design is in three phases: (I) research meaning, (II-A) qualitative data gathering and examination, (II-B) quantitative data gathering and examination, and (III) research results as shown in Figure 4.5.

The chronology of events for the research design begins first by identifying the research problem. The next phase is a comprehensive review of the literature to evaluate the gaps in the literature and speak to the research questions. Moreover, the gaps in the literature afford the standard for which to advance the TM framework. Phase 1 of the research design culminates in choosing the best research methods. Phase 2 concentrates on delineating the suitable design using mixed quantitative and qualitative approaches to the data collection and analysis. Phase 3 includes a clarification of the collective data sets, the authentication of the data sets within the TM framework and the creation of the study's conclusions.

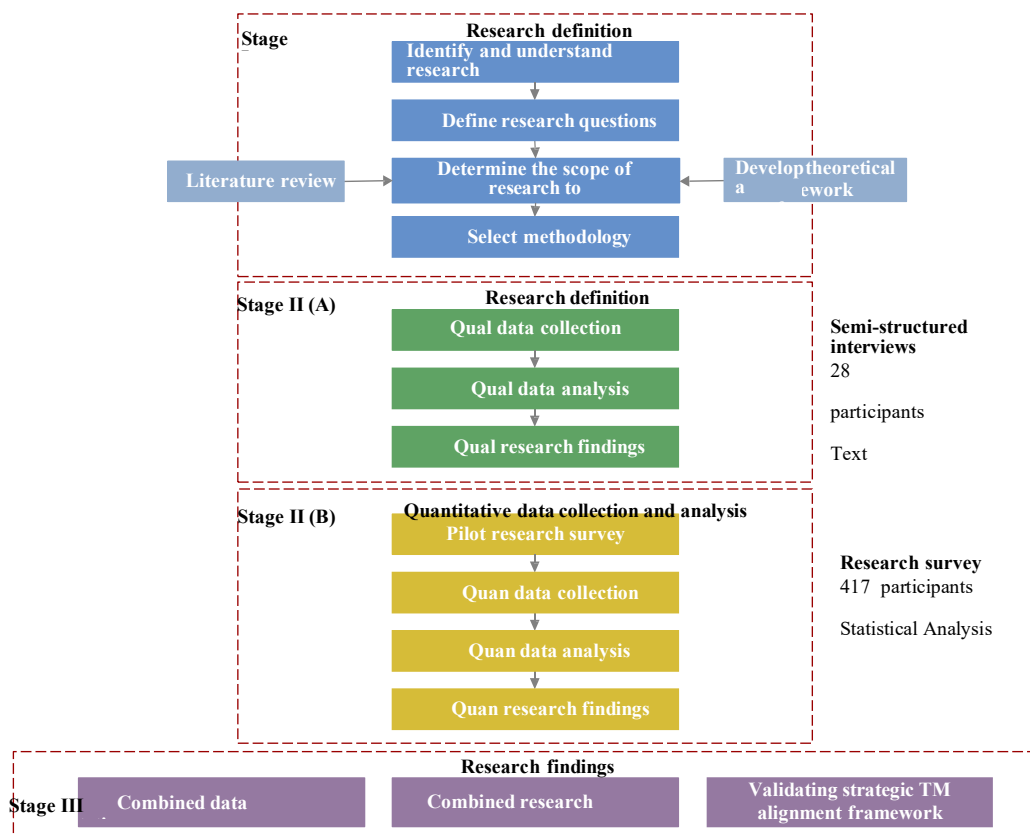


Figure 4.5: Sequential Exploratory Mixed Methods Design  
 Source: Adopted from Creswell (2007) and Driscoll *et al.*, (2007)

Creswell (2011) presents the notion of a “strand”, which he defines as the part of the research that comprises the essential procedures for guiding quantitative or qualitative research while investigating four influences that contribute to the selection of a suitable mixed methods research design. Those parts of a study are (a) the amount of interface between independent and interactive strands, (b) the strand’s relative importance, (c) the strand’s staging, and (d) a process to integrate the strands. Qualitative and quantitative strands interact with each other; however, the qualitative strands take precedence before the quantitative strands. Consequently, the files are gathered and evaluated successively. Likewise, Driscoll *et al.*, (2007) identified mixed methods study designs concerning the timing of information gathering.

Creswell (2006) focusses on the process of mingling approaches to attain an added wide-ranging grasp of the research problem. As can be seen, there are diverse methods for mixing the data sets: (a) amalgamation or joining, (b) linking (one form on top of another), (c) inserting (one kind of information gives support to the other), and (d) by means of a structure to attach the files together.

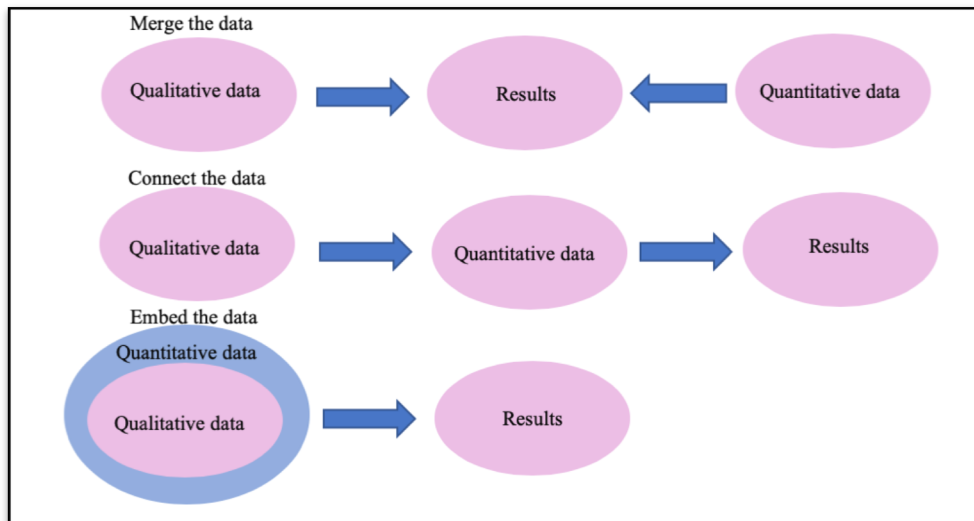


Figure 4.6. Methods of Mixing Measurable and Soft Data  
 Source: Creswell (2006)

Accordingly, gathering and examining quantitative and qualitative information is inadequate; each data set must be mixed to provide a definitive portrait of the problem (Creswell, 2006). Consequently, this research connects the qualitative and quantitative data as it is the best method for this research.

Sandelowski (2000) posits that mixed method research typically presupposes that qualitative and quantitative methods are each combined (Caracelli and Greene, 1997) or persist separately as design factors. Either a qualitative or a quantitative method to sample, collect and analyse the data will typically succeed. Moreover, each may be employed consecutively, concomitantly, continuously or fit together (Sandelowski, 2000; Creswell, 2011). Furthermore, Sandelowski (2000) posits that several mixed method design models combine timing, significance and data mingling (Morse, 1991; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Morgan, 1998; Tashakkorri and Teddlie, 1998). Contingent upon an underlying reasoning, there may be evident standards that are most suitable for a particular study design.



Table 4.6. Preliminary design considerations

Design Type	Variants	Timing	Weighting	Mixing	Notation
Triangulation	Convergence Data transformation Validating quantitative data Multilevel	Concurrent: quantitative and qualitative at same time	Usually equal	Merge the data during the interpretation or analysis	QUAN+QUAL
Embedded	Embedded experimental Embedded correlational	Concurrent or sequential	Unequal	Embed one type of data within a larger design using the other type of data	QUAN (qual) or QUAL (quan)
Explanatory	Follow-up explanations Participant selection	Sequential: Quantitative followed by qualitative	Usually quantitative	Connect the data between the two phases	QUAN-> qual
Exploratory	Instrument development Taxonomy development	Sequential: Qualitative followed by quantitative	Usually qualitative	Connect the data between the two phases	QUAL-> quan

Source: Creswell and Clark (2007)

As stated earlier, this research involves the sequential use of data collection methods usually related to qualitative and quantitative research. The study design shows a sequential approach: qualitative research is followed by quantitative research (see Figure 4.5), reflecting the exploratory design (Sandelowski, 2000).

Subsequently, based on Creswell and Clark's (2007) recommendations, the researcher initially observes how researchers define the TM research topic when being interviewed. Next, the researcher designs a survey that is circulated amongst a sizeable number of people. The data sets are examined in order; since the qualitative data are primary, they are initially analysed by the researcher. Analysis of the quantitative data confirms the results of the examination of the qualitative data by studying, in detail, the opinions of individuals who participated in the research (Rossman and Wilson, 1985; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Creswell *et al.*, 2003). The sequential design aims to apply a quantitative strand to explicate the qualitative findings (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Creswell *et al.*, 2003).

#### 4.5.1. Research Process

The research process used here is divided into two segments: field research and desk research. The two serves as a baseline for the formation of the research framework.

## 4.6. Data Collection

Stenhouse (1985) states that “the interview is the main road to multiple realities”. Moreover, Yin (2003) suggests that three reasons should be emphasised when agreeing to use a case study: (a) style of the research questions (how and why), (b) the researcher’s degree of influence on the behavioural events, and (c) the amount of emphasis on current subjects. Accordingly, in this research, the researcher has no control over the participants in the process of data collection. The researcher remained only as an observer and had no control over the events (TM practices in participants' organisations) and did not manipulate the behaviour of the participants either in surveys or interviews. The researcher has chosen two data collection techniques: semi-structured interviews and surveys. These are popular research strategies seen in the management studies field. These techniques are explained in the following sections.

### 4.6.1. Semi-Structured Interviews

In a mixed methods approach, there are several procedures to follow in terms of data collection based on several combinations or iterations of both qualitative as well as quantitative approaches. The most common qualitative data collection types or modes include, but are not limited to, the following: observations, interviews, examining documents and audio-visual materials as shown in Table 4.4 (Cresswell, 2009). Observations could simply mean the researcher is playing the role of an objective observer or even an active participant in the process (Cresswell, 2003).

Table 4.7: A list of qualitative data collection approaches

<b>Observations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather field notes by conducting interviews as a participant</li> <li>• Gather field notes by conducting observations as an observer</li> <li>• Gather field notes by spending time as a participant or observer</li> <li>• Gather field notes by spending more time as a participant rather than an observer</li> <li>• Gather field notes by observing as an outsider rather than an insider</li> </ul>
<b>Interviews</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct unstructured, open-ended interviews and take notes</li> <li>• Conduct unstructured, open-ended interviews, tape interviews and transcribe</li> <li>• Conduct semi-structured interviews, tape and transcribe</li> <li>• Conduct a focus group interview, tape and transcribe</li> <li>• Conduct different types of interviews: email, face-to-face, focus group, online and telephone</li> </ul>
<b>Documents</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Journaling during the research study</li> <li>• Participant diary during research</li> <li>• Collect personal letters from participants</li> <li>• Analyse public documents</li> <li>• Examine autobiographies and biographies</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have participants take pictures or videos</li> <li>• Medical records</li> <li>• Chart audits</li> </ul>
<b>Audio-Visual Materials</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine physical trace evidence</li> <li>• Videotape or film a social situation or group or individual</li> <li>• Examine photos and tapes</li> <li>• Collect email messages</li> <li>• Collect text messages</li> <li>• Examine possessions of ritual objects</li> <li>• Collect sounds, smell, tastes or any stimuli of the senses</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Cresswell (2007)

Three typical forms of qualitative interviews can often be (1) structured, (2) unstructured, or (3) semi-structured. A structured interview means that a set of questions are asked to all respondents. An unstructured interview generally implies a free-flowing conversation touching on general themes and often with some follow-up questions (Mosely, 2013; Gillham, 2000). Meanwhile, a hybrid form of interview is the semi-structured interview, where standard questions are prepared in advance; however, the interviewer is given leeway to ask follow-up questions and to probe deeper into certain answers.

Qualitative interviews can be carried out one-on-one either in person or using communications technology. Interviews can also be conducted in the format of a focus group (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Cresswell, 2007) with roughly up to a dozen or so participants. Interviews can also be done via a panel where participants are asked questions in a setting where there is a panel of interviewers or a panel of participants. Table 4.7 provides a list and descriptions of the most common interview approaches.

Table 4.8: Types of interviews

Unstructured Interviews	Semi-Structured Interviews	Structured Interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No fixed questions</li> <li>• Participant driven</li> <li>• Engaging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires the interviewer to have the ability to create instant questions, if necessary, during the interviews.</li> <li>• Must ensure repeatability, including emerging topics.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fixed questions</li> <li>• Rigid schedule</li> <li>• Non-flexible</li> </ul>

Source: Saunders *et al.*, (2002)

The interview strategy, on the other hand, offers a wide range of possibilities. Interviews can be segmented into semi-structured, structured, in-depth or unstructured interviews. An identical set of questions or standardised questions are used in the case of structured interviews. Qualified data

usage is seen in such interviews (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). The researcher uses a number of key questions or a list of themes in semi-structured interviews. In this case, there might be a difference in the order of questions, which is dependent on the topic of the conversation, and there might be a requirement to add more questions. Unstructured interviews are mostly informal. The objective of the unstructured interviews is to get into the details of the general area of research. In-depth exploration takes place. In this case, the researcher has a clear idea of the aspects that need to be explored but might not have a list of questions (Remenyi *et al.*, 2003). Unstructured interviews are great at uncovering insights into the research area. The responses of these interviews are more direct. The negatives are that the data is difficult to analyse, and the interviewer's skills dictate the quality of the interviews (Remenyi *et al.*, 2003).

The stages of the interview investigation often involve the following steps: (1) research and interview preparation, (2) actual interview, and (3) follow-up interview or conversation, if necessary (Mosely, 2013; Gillham, 2000). Research and preparation often involve getting some background information about the interviewees, getting more background knowledge about the topic at hand and preparing the themes and questions that need to be covered during the actual interview (Mosely, 2013; Gillham, 2000; Brinkman and Kvale, 1999). The preparation stage also means that the investigator needs to make sure that the venue is appropriate and conducive to the interview and that the materials and technology that need to be used are in order (Wimmer and Dominick, 2000). During the actual interview, the interviewer needs to make sure instructions are clear (if any) and that the participants are put at ease and they understand the questions and, at the same time, they are fully aware of their rights with consent duly afforded (Brinkman and Kvale, 1999). Meanwhile, after the interview, the researcher needs to provide his or her contact information as well as obtain/check the contact information of the participants in case follow-up questions and conversations need to be performed for clarity and in furtherance of the research investigation (Mosely, 2013; Gillham, 2000). After considering the different types of interviews, semi-structured interviews are considered to be most appropriate for this research. As the study focuses on investigating TM practises in private oil and gas organisations, a fixed questionnaire would be used for collecting the appropriate information relating to TM practices in their respective companies. In addition, semi-structured interviews would allow the researcher to add additional questions instantly during the interview if required. This would allow the interviewer to

focus on core concepts related to the research subject and leaves ample space to accommodate any other aspects as required.

As noted in Chapter 2, TM is a new area of research and there are many gaps and inconsistencies in knowledge within the field. Qualitative research is regarded as the most suitable vehicle for such an inquiry, which will enrich the research with new information that will help to gather better understanding about TM challenges, which is an under-studied area.

Qualitative research will provide rich descriptions of event and phenomenon under investigation ( Näslund 2002)

#### **4.6.1.1 Design of Semi-Structured Interviews**

This section explains the process of developing interview questions related to TM research areas from the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

- Influencing factors in TM implementation;
- TM definition/understanding;
- Criteria for talent identification;
- Talent attraction/recruitment;
- Talent retention;
- Talent development;
- Managing talent
- TM impact on employee attitudes;
- TM impact on sustainable competitive advantage.

Accordingly, the interview questions were divided in to four main sections. The first section focuses on TM and its implementation. Six questions in this section focus on TM practises and the next four questions are related to the TM definition and scope. Three questions in this section focus on the criteria for talent identification; six questions on talent attraction; five questions on talent selection; and six questions on talent development. The second section focuses on TM outcomes. In this section, one question focuses on employee engagement; one question on employee satisfaction; and one question on employee motivation. The third section focuses on TM's impact on sustainable competitive advantage. The fourth section focuses on influencing factors in TM implementation.

The researcher adopted Kyale's (1996) recommendations such as introducing concepts, elaborating on a few core approaches and direct and indirect questions. The participants were asked to interpret their responses wherever there is a need for additional clarification as observed by the researcher.

Figure 4.7 reflects the process of formulating the interview questions.

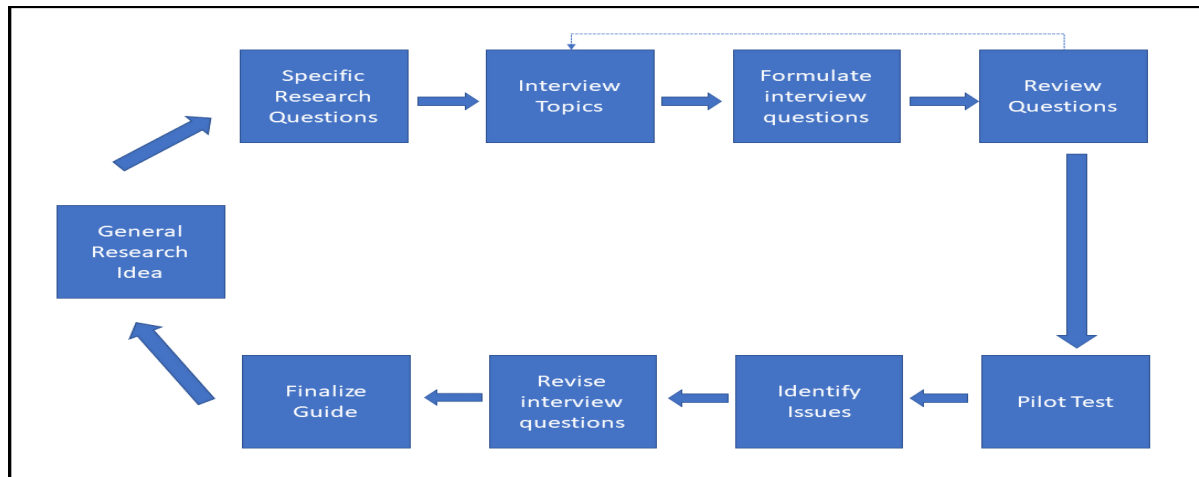


Figure 4.7: Interview questions formulation

Source: Bryman (2012)

It is important to establish an interview protocol to support the interview process in which all the dimensions can be considered (Bryman, 2012). For example, the researcher initially starts the interview with a greeting and discusses general topics to become familiar with the interviewees and make them feel comfortable and aware of the research area. Similarly, the order of questions will be changed according to the interviewees' profiles and their level of awareness as the interviews progress. A pilot study (one-to-one interviews) was carried out with three HR managers (from Saudi Aramco). Using the feedback, a few questions were restructured using more practical terms. A couple of words in the initial questionnaire were not clear, which resulted in interviewees providing information that was not relevant. Therefore, the questions were rearranged in four main sections (demographics, organisation details, TM implementation and TM outcomes), with 11 sub-sections in TM implementation and TM outcomes, making the questions clear, concise and relevant to the topic. Additionally, the original instrument included 24 questions that were reduced to 18, eliminating indirect repetitive questions and incorporating some questions with others to amplify the level of focus.

Accordingly, all the interviews are planned to be started with an introduction to the area of research, the purpose and the objectives of the interviews, and any other relevant aspects such as

privacy and security of their personal information. All the participants' profiles will be kept anonymous in order to ensure their privacy.

#### 4.6.2. Survey

Surveys are effective strategies because they allow the researcher to collect standard data from a large population and pave the way for easy comparison (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Accordingly, the surveys are used for collecting the employees' "talent" perceptions about TM practices in their organisations and the impact it has on their personal and organisational performance. The survey strategy is also easy to understand and explain. Administering the questionnaires is also easy. There exists the opportunity to collect and analyse data with the usage of inferential and descriptive statistics. Survey data could be utilised to advise possible causes to relationships between variables and create relationship models. There is limitation of how many questions can be used in the survey strategy, and normally these are multiple-choice or close-ended questions. There lies specific issues or problems with fixed-response questions, including the inefficiency of the alternatives in the questions to allow bringing forth a correct answer. Moreover, at times, respondents may not be interested or might be unable to write down accurate information (Silverman, 2013).

##### 4.6.2.1. Design of Survey Questionnaire

This section explains the survey design and how the questionnaire is developed from the literature review and linked to the research questions. Table 4.6 illustrates the structure of the survey.

Table 4.9: Structure of the survey

Section in the Survey	Topics from the Literature Review	Research Questions
Section I: Demographic Profile	Descriptive Variables	N/A
Section II: Organisation Details	Descriptive Variables	N/A
Section III: Internal Factors	Leadership, Employer Branding, Rewards System, Organisational Culture	What are the main factors influencing TM implementation in the private oil and gas sector?
Section IV: TM Implementation	TM Definition, Talent Identification, Attraction, Selection, Development, Retention and TM Challenges	How is TM defined in oil and gas organisations? What are the criteria applied to identify talent among employees? What are the managerial practices applied by private oil and gas companies in TM?

		What are the main factors influencing TM implementation in the private oil and gas sector?
Section V: TM Outcomes	Motivation, Commitment, Satisfaction Engagement	What is the impact of TM on TM outputs in terms of attitudinal aspects?
Section VI: TM Outcomes	Sustainable Competitive Advantage	How can TM achieve sustainable competitive advantage?

All the indicators in this Research allowed respondents to answer on a five-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree) except the TM scale. A total of 54 elements were distributed across nine sub-sections ( Influencing factors, talent identification, attraction, development, retention, managing talent and TM challenges) in section III (TM implementation); in Section IV (TM outcomes) 23 questions under four sub-sections (employee engagement, motivation, satisfaction, commitment, and sustainable competitive advantage) (Appendix D)

In This research , job satisfaction was measured using four items of overall job satisfaction developed by Seashore *et al* ( 1982); employee engagement was measured using five items of overall job satisfaction developed by Rush, and Lance (1999) ); employee commitment was measured using four items developed by Meyer and Allen’s (1997) and motivation was measured using four items developed by Lockwood, 2007) SCA was measured using five items developed by (Barney and Wright, 1998; Porter 2006; Barney 2008).

A pilot survey was conducted before starting the actual survey as a part of preliminary evaluation and to rectify any mistakes identified. seven managers from different companies participated in the pilot study (two from Saudi Aramco; two from Ma’aden; and three from Sahara). The feedback from the pilot study is presented in Table 4.7. The participants were presented the questionnaire with a brief description for each section. They read the questionnaire and answered the questions. Normal survey completion time varied between 15 and 22 minutes.



Table 4.10: Feedback from pilot study

Organisa tion	Departme nt	Region	No. of Perso ns	Position	Feedback
Saudi Aramco	HRM	Saudi Arabia "Dhahran"	2	1- Manager 1-Senior Manager	Reduce the length of the questions. Categorise questions in a sequence.
Ma'aden	HRM	Saudi Arabia "Riyadh"	3	2-HR Manager 1-Operations Manager	Ensure the time for completing the questionnaire does not exceed 20 minutes. Ensure the questions are brief, concise and to the point, to direct respondents towards answering accurately and understanding what is asked of them.
Sahara	Management	Saudi Arabia "Riyadh"	2	1-CEO 1-HR Manager	Order the questions in a sequence and according to the sub-sections.

Based on the feedback, the questions were reformulated reducing the length, so that time can be saved in reading the questions. For example, in the sub-section 'talent identification criteria' in Section III, there are various elements in which one statement included "The talents of employees are determined through informal chats". This statement was remodified to just "informal chats". In addition, the sub-sections were arranged in a sequence and the questions in the sections were arranged in an order so that the participants find it easy to answer the questions.

#### 4.6.2.2 Translating the Questionnaire and Cultural Considerations

Translation of the questionnaire in the language that participants understand is highly significant and important in order to ensure that participants could easily decode and answer the questions as intended by the research (Epstein, Santo and Guillemín, 2015). On the initial level, the survey was prepared in English, which was translated to the official Arabic language. This was also done to ensure participant retention and to enhance the level of responses. A total of seven experts were used in the translation process, whose roles are presented in Table 4.8. This is also an important aspect of cultural consideration.

Table 4.11. Translation process of questionnaires

Approach	Performance	Performer
Back-Translation	English to Arabic,	An expert bilingual
	Arabic to English	An expert bilingual
Validation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three bilingual PhD. researchers who had experience in the area of HRM.</li> <li>• Two bilingual academic professors in business management at Brunel University reviewed the English version of the questionnaire.</li> <li>• Two bilingual academic professors in business management at King Abdul Aziz University reviewed the Arabic version of the questionnaire.</li> </ul>	

The Arabic version of the questionnaire is used in the online survey process, where a link is generated and distributed to HR managers of 10 oil and gas organisations.

#### 4.6.3. Sample Composition

The study uses a sequential mixed methods approach beginning with qualitative data gathering followed by quantitative using a survey instrument. The main goal is to generate a rich set of analytical data along with a deeper context and answers to the research questions (Creswell, 2007; Hanson *et al.*, 2005; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998). According to Patton (1990, p. 169), purposeful sampling involves “selecting information-rich cases for study in depth”. This method assumes that the research participants have first-hand experience of the research topic and be able to discuss it and share their views. The Researcher establishes a clear rationale and criteria for sample selection in the qualitative study, which includes the following:

1. The (oil and gas) organisations should have TM practices for more than three years;
2. The interviewees should work with managing talent for more than a year.

The primary goal is not the generalisation of findings but rich descriptions of phenomena by those who have experienced them (Jackson and Verberg, 2007). There are two general types of sampling methods: probability and non-probability. Probability sampling means that each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected to participate in the study, whereas non-probability implies that participants are selected using other non-random criteria (Babbie, 1997). Examples of probability sampling includes random sampling, systematic sampling, cluster sampling and stratified sampling. Random sampling might simply involve using a computer program to generate random names from a list of participants (population), with everyone having an equal chance of being selected (Wimmer and Dominick, 2000). Examples of non-probability sampling includes purposive or judgement sampling, convenience sampling, quota sampling and snowball sampling. The latter type of sampling (snowball) might simply comprise of asking

friends in a social media network to answer a survey and then ask them to forward it to other people who might be interested (Cochran, 2007; Babbie, 1997; Kerlinger, 1986).

In qualitative data collection, non-probability sampling is often commonly employed as it is the most efficient (Bryman and Bell, 2011, p. 441). Randomisation may be irrelevant notwithstanding expense, especially that the aim of this approach is to target certain people or representatives of the population who can shed light or further insight into the research questions being investigated (e.g., deviant sample, critical case sample and key informant sample. In this research, a non-probability technique is employed to select the most appropriate sample for the semi-structured interviews planned for this research (Merriam, 2002; Babbie, 1997).

Qualitative research is often employed with an eye towards gaining a deeper understanding of the phenomenon in question. It is designed primarily for exploration as well as analysis of the research question being investigated (Merriam, 2002). The method often carries a degree of subjectivity, although there are published general practices and procedures to ensure validity, consistency and credibility of the findings of the study. The approach is often heralded for providing more in-depth insights and shedding light onto the vagaries and complexities of the human existence (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Creswell, 2007; Green, Caracelli and Graham, 1989).

There is a gamut of popular techniques being used in qualitative research, and chief among them is the face-to-face interview using a clearly defined purposive sample (Teddlie and Tashakori, 2009). Ethnography—the process of observing and documenting subjects in their so-called ‘natural habitat’—is also a commonly used tool. The same goes with grounded theory or critical theory, which often uses the perspective or framework derived from a particular worldview (i.e., feminist, Marxist etc.) (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2002; Brewer and Hunter, 1989).

A quantitative research method is the most common and, arguably, the most highly regarded method, especially in social sciences and behavioural research (Cresswell, 2003; Kerlinger, 1986). The backbone of the quantitative approach is the idea of sampling—especially random sampling—from a defined population (Kerlinger, 1986). Random sampling, for example, within the context of a survey method allows researchers to extrapolate and make inferences about the findings of the study to the general population. A quantitative approach tends to offer a higher degree of internal as well as external validity compared to qualitative, although the latter offers a greater depth in terms of analysing the context and background of a given research question (Teddlie and Tashakorri, 2009; Kerlinger, 1986).

Venkatesh, Brown and Bala (2013) argued that using the mixed methods research approach offers high value and strengths to the success of the research inquiry. The authors noted, for example, that “mixed methods research, by combining both qualitative and quantitative methods, has the ability to address both exploratory and confirmatory questions within the same research inquiry” (Venkatesh *et al.*, 2013, p. 24). Secondly, they noted that “mixed methods research has the ability to provide stronger inferences than a single method or worldview” (Venkatesh *et al.*, 2013, p.25). The approach is capable of producing some meta-inferences, representing an integrative view from both aspects of the mixed methods approach (i.e., qualitative and quantitative).

Finally, Venkatesh *et al.* (2013), citing the work of Teddlie and Tashakori (2009), observed that mixed methods research offers the ability to generate diverse viewpoints and/or complementary/contradictory viewpoints. Venkatesh *et al.*, (2013, p.25) observed that when conducting mixed methods research, a researcher may find different conclusions from the quantitative and qualitative strands. Such divergent findings are valuable in that they lead to a re-examination of the conceptual framework and the assumptions underlying each of the two strands of mixed research methods.

For its qualitative component, this research uses the face-to-face interview with a select group of 14 human resources (HR) managers /line manager in the oil and gas organisations who met the relevant research criteria using a non-probability and purposive sampling technique, in order to gain insights into the challenges, influences, factors and determinants of success in the realm of TM within the context of working in said industry. The sample is purposive because the goal is to be able to dig deeper into the causality and the complexities of TM within an organisation (Greene, 2007). HR managers have a lot of credibility on this subject and so the information obtained offers a high degree of internal validity as well as multi-layered and nuanced answers to the research questions posed in this research (Hanson *et al.*, 2005; Creswell, 2003). Due to the nature of the research (focused on TM) and restrictions on employees’ time, the sample was limited to those industry professionals having key involvement in TM. This limited population of potential candidates with specific TM expertise made non-probability purposive sampling appropriate. This method was selected to ensure that participants represented a wide range of business, HR, leadership and managerial backgrounds within their profession (Glaser and Strauss, 1968). As the initial sample included only 14 participants, the researcher adopted the snowball sampling technique (Saunders *et al.*, 2002) for increasing the number of participants. Initially, identified

interviewees were requested to refer a friend or colleague who met the research criteria. Accordingly, the referred employees were contacted for interviews. Thus, by adopting this sampling technique, the total sample for semi-structured interviews increased to 26.

The qualitative study is then followed by the quantitative study in the form of an online quantitative survey administered to employees in oil and gas organisations who met the research criteria. The researcher establishes a clear rationale and criteria for sample selection in the quantitative study based on similar studies (Wilson and Ellison, 2018; Baum, 2008; Hughes and Rog, 2008; Nzonzo and Chipfuva, 2013), which includes the following:

1. The companies should be oil and gas organisations and should have TM practices;
2. The employees must have at least one years' experience in the company.

As a first step, a letter of permission was sent to the HR managers of these 10 oil and gas organisations to conduct the study. The second stage involved ensuring that our respondents were actually talented employees. After receiving approval from the HR managers, the survey link was shared with the HR managers to administer to the sampled talent pool members. This is because the researcher had no direct access to the talented employees and, therefore, it was imperative to use the HR managers to facilitate the proper administration of the survey. Similar approaches were adopted in other studies (Chami-Malaeb and Garavan, 2013; Mensah et al., 2016).

These participants were selected by a random sampling method. All stages of data collection represent a different perspective from participants of diverse professional backgrounds and could therefore provide sufficient theoretical and practical expertise. The survey will use a standardised set of questions and will ask participants about their perceptions of the quality and role of TM in their organisation. The survey will also ask for their agreement or lack thereof on statements related to determinants of TM success within the context of their own experience. The survey instrument will also include standard questions about TM, TM outcomes and the impact of TM on TM outputs in terms of attitudinal aspects and other background information (e.g., Creswell, 2007; Greene, 2007; Palmer and Cochran, 1998; Luzzo, 1995). Based on the approach adopted, a total sample of 417 was achieved for surveys.

As far as the quantitative aspect of the data collection process in a mixed methods research design goes, there are several common ways to collect data, with administering a survey being the most common one. A researcher has to make sure, however, that the survey instrument is clear, reliable

and valid (measuring what it is setting out to measure on a consistent basis) and the sample being studied is a representative one. There are several ways to obtain a representative sample using some known sampling techniques such as simple random sampling, cluster sampling and stratified sampling, among others (Cresswell, 2009; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Cresswell, 2007).

According to the study of Patten (2016), a survey is the most widely used research instrument for the purpose of collecting reliable data for management research. Surveys are also helpful in conducting quantitative research. A questionnaire is considered as a list of well-structured questions, prepared after comprehensive research, to seek reliable responses of the participants (Brace, 2018). Conducting the questionnaire-based survey is a cost-effective way of collecting a large amount of data and also considered as more convenient than interviews. Such surveys are also easier to be statistically tested and analysed (Patten, 2016). Therefore, the main advantages of a questionnaire-based survey over an interview can be seen in the form of saving time, costs and providing easy data collection. For achieving the objectives of this research, a large amount of data from various organisations is required to be collected, which can be done easily and effectively through an online questionnaire-based survey.

This Research utilises the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative Research and moulds them into a mixed method approach starting with a purposive sample of highly targeted subjects (HR managers) using a face-to-face interview approach and then followed by a standardised quantitative approach using surveys, to be administered to a non-random sample of employees of the same company in order to gain systematic insights and data about the Research questions being explored.

#### **4.6.4. Sample Size and Data Saturation**

Credibility, reliability and validity underpin the success of mixed methods research. In using a qualitative approach, for example, credibility means the interview subjects have the voice of authority and can provide the necessary information and insights into the questions being investigated (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998). This means that the idea of 'data saturation' is key to the interviews, meaning to say that the quality of information is a paramount consideration and not necessarily the number of interviews conducted (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Although, typically, it must be noted that there is a benchmark set of interviews to

target in qualitative research, and it usually ranges from at least a dozen to less than a hundred (Creswell, 2009). The researcher sets the number of interviews and makes a judgement as to whether certain 'data saturation' has already been reached. This simply means that, according to Glaser and Strauss (1967), a point has already been reached in the data collection process where continuing further with the interviews has no longer added value nor does it shed further light onto the research question being explored.

As far as the quantitative method is concerned, there are many considerations to be carefully considered in carrying out the procedure, and they mainly revolve around the issue of reliability and validity. In order for the survey to be reliable, for example, it must consistently measure what it sets out to measure from one respondent to another (Kerlinger, 1986). There should not be any variations in the instrument, otherwise it will have an impact on the researcher being unable to infer the findings to the general population (Wolf *et al.*, 2013). The same principle applies to the issue of validity of the survey instrument. However, in this case, it means that the survey instrument must be structured in such a way that it will truly measure and provide answers to the research questions (Wolf *et al.*, 2013; Kerlinger, 1986).

The researcher also considered limitations to the size of the sample, such as the population of senior TM professionals available for interviews and the time available for data gathering. As a result, an initial sample of between 15 and 40 interview participants was considered likely to provide ample qualitative data to address the research aims and answer the research questions. The researcher also outlined a minimum of 10 oil and gas organisations to be represented in the interview process, to ensure diversity in the qualitative data obtained. Consequently, a sample of 26 interviewees was determined to be optimum to allow valid deductions about the population and to address the research questions adequately (Marshall, 1996).

Sample size is also a key consideration in achieving external validity in a quantitative survey study. A researcher has to make sure that the number of people interviewed is enough to justify, statistically speaking, an ability on the part of the researcher to make valid inferences of the findings to the general population (Kerlinger, 1986). According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998), a sample size of at least 100 is an appropriate minimum number to at least lend the data collected to a reliable statistical analysis (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). Hence, for the quantitative part of this research, the researcher settled at 417 being the optimum sample size, with a random sampling

procedure being used in order to decrease sampling error and increase the inferential, internal and external validity (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Kerlinger, 1986).

#### **4.7. Data Analysis**

The data analysis in this research is explained under the two following sections, which includes qualitative and quantitative analysis.

##### **4.7.1. Qualitative Analysis: Semi-Structured Interview Data**

According to Baptiste (2001), notwithstanding one's research design or area of specialisation, their analysis of data is a product of their philosophical views on research, the context they find themselves in and how they would have designed their study. Data analysis in this research is a product of the researcher's view that it is not possible to achieve complete objectivity and that there are multiple truths, each reflecting perceptions of people at specific periods in time, circumstances and contexts and that such 'spaces' may not be replicable in their exact form. Further, the researcher was closely involved in the data gathering and analysis processes, making the research interpretive and subjective as per Pope and Mays' (2006) description of qualitative research.

Fundamental approaches to analysing qualitative data are either deductive or inductive or both. An inductive approach allows findings to emerge from the frequently occurring themes in the raw data, condenses data and establishes links between the research's objectives and a study's main findings and facilitates the development of an explanatory model of the phenomenon being studied (Thomas, 2003). A deductive approach is guided by the research objectives and/or a predetermined research framework. The study uses an inductive approach in the analysis of qualitative data. The inductive component of the analysis was a result of the study being guided by a framework derived from the literature review, which also guided the broad interview questions asked by the researcher and the responses obtained from the interviewees. The inductive component was in the analysis involving extracting meaning from interview data.

The qualitative component of data analysis was in six broad stages: i) review of interview transcripts and notes; ii) organisation of data based on interviewee characteristics; iii) grouping data into categories; iv) reflecting on the data; v) extracting themes; and vi) analysing the prevalence and linkages of themes. While the stages provided a guide, the actual process of



analysis was occurring concurrently with data gathering as the preliminary analysis of data from one interview revealed gaps that needed filling by another or other interviews through using theoretical sampling, a process whereby the researcher, guided by data already collected, decides on what additional data to collect and where to find it (Goulding, 2005).

Interview transcripts and notes were reviewed to familiarise the researcher with all the available data and to identify any information gaps that could necessitate further interviews. The responses from the interviewees were recorded in Arabic, which were translated into English using bilingual experts. The translated transcripts were reviewed by the seven experts who reviewed the questionnaire (Table 4.8). The translated document was then reviewed by the researcher, who is bilingual, in order to identify any gaps in the translation. After careful review, the final set of translated interview transcripts were used for analysing the interview data (Appendix B). Emerging concepts at this review stage led the researcher to search for specific interviewees that could further explicate identified TM practices. The approach used is consistent with Glaser and Strauss (1967), who state that collection of additional data is controlled by the emerging explanations of a phenomenon, and Morse (2007), who indicates that it is the emerging properties of phenomenon that need clarification that guide the collection of additional data. During the transcript review process, interview data was subjected to the 'editing approach' (Miller and Crabtree, 2005) whereby the researcher reviewed and identified text segments. Using colour coding to highlight areas that 'struck a code' with the researcher, the identified text segments were allocated initial labels and/or comments that represented what the researcher had gleaned from the data.

The data collected was organised under various themes through coding (Lee, 1999), giving a meaningful structure by grouping the similar views given by the participants under a single theme. Three distinct coding approaches were suggested by Lee (1999), which include open, axial and selective. Selecting the right approach reflects the data analysis process. However, Glaser and Strauss (1967) stated that these approaches can be mixed when the data collection process is clear and concise. Accordingly, the researcher adopted this mixed approach in the process of analysing the qualitative data and developing various codes/themes. This approach allows the researcher to add new categories while examining the data collected from the interviews. Such an approach can be flexible, as the strict rules specified (using one datum to one code) can be relaxed, and the data can be organised under broader codes (Lee, 1999). This would help the researcher in identifying the emerging issues and formulate new codes relating to the research topic.

Usually, a code in a qualitative dataset reflects the concept it is designed for, in which all the qualitative data supporting the concept can be grouped for review and comparative analysis with other datasets (Sivesind, 1999). Therefore, all the data reflecting a particular issue or concept can be grouped under a single code regardless of the way it is expressed. Accordingly, the interview data was coded and categorised under various themes to reflect a comprehensive understanding of a research topic or concept (Rossman and Eallis, 1998). Charts of the quantified data (represented under various themes) demonstrating trends were produced, making it possible to identify and interpret patterns of prevalence of codes and relationships among them (Miles and Huberman, 1994). This process of converting qualitative data into quantitative codes was referred as 'quantizing' (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998). Due to the qualitative nature of the data, the descriptive reporting was used to present the results under each code using the 'frequencies' as a measurable component, reflecting the number of times a qualitative code emerges during the interviews (Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie, 2003). Thus, by using the mixed approach as specified by (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998), the quantized data can be compared with other quantitative data collected through quantitative surveys (Chapter 6). The various themes formulated include the following:

- Influencing factors in TM implementation;
- TM definition/understanding;
- Criteria for talent identification;
- Talent attraction/recruitment;
- Talent retention;
- Talent development;
- TM impact on employee attitudes;
- TM impact on sustainable competitive advantage.

In addition, the interview data that cannot be quantified was presented using the direct quotations in order to effectively present the various perspectives of the interviewees regarding the research topic or concept.

#### **4.7.2 Quantitative Analysis: Survey Data**

The qualitative interview data is used for validating the quantitative survey data, and a combination of both is used for validating the proposed TM framework. The quantitative data can be analysed using various analytical methods. However, researchers usually tend to use the methods that they are familiar with and rely on their experience and expertise in such analytical methods (Robson, 2002). The completed surveys are edited and reviewed in order to delete any invalid forms or inaccurate responses, where the data is considered to be unusable. This approach ensures consistency in the data, which is essential for the statistical analysis. Initially, the survey data is loaded into the Microsoft Excel, which is then imported to SPSS software for statistical analysis of the data. As the researcher is familiar with Microsoft Excel and SPSS, both software is used for analysing the data. Univariate and bivariate analysis was performed to interpret the data in Microsoft Excel. Univariate analysis is used for describing the single variables, which are used in the descriptive analysis of the survey data. Bivariate analysis is used for measuring the relationship between two variables. Accordingly, the steps involved in quantitative data analysis can be summarised as: 1) editing and coding the data in Microsoft Excel; 2) descriptive analysis including frequency distribution; 3) correlation analysis (Pearson Coefficient); and 4) Chi-Square static tests to determine the significance of results at 0.05 confidence intervals to be conducted in SPSS software.

In addition, Pearson Chi-Square tests were conducted between two variables for assessing the impact of one variable on the other variable at a 0.05 confidence interval. The *p-value* indicates whether the result is significant or not. If the value is  $p < 0.05$ , the result is considered to be significant. If the value is  $p > 0.05$ , the result is considered not to be significant (Prien and Kuckartz, 1995). Basic data analysis and the calculations related to the various TM aspects are presented in Appendix C.

#### **4.8. Research Quality**

This section explains the standards adopted for assessing the quality of this research in terms of reliability and validity. Research quality is generally about reliability and validity. While the two terms are clear from the perspective of quantitative research, it is not the case for qualitative research or for the qualitative component of a mixed methods study. In qualitative studies the concept of quality serves the purpose of ensuring understanding (Stenbacka, 2001) and how a

researcher can persuade the audience that the research findings are credible and authentic and, therefore, worthy to be considered (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). This, in qualitative studies, is achieved by paying attention to issues of credibility, neutrality or confirmability, consistency or dependability and applicability or transferability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Quality issues in this research are handled from both a qualitative and quantitative perspective. In qualitative research, reliability and validity are replaced by the broader term 'verification' (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Strauss and Corbin, 1998), which focuses on the research findings being accurate from the perspective of both the researcher and the subjects being studied. Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006) view the term 'legitimation' as more representative of the range of issues relating to quality than just validity and reliability, while Creswell (2003) opines that the strength of qualitative research hinges on internal validity.

Internal validity (accuracy) can be observed from the literature review and the research gaps (Chapter 2). The review of the literature provides significant evidence concerning the assessment of previous research of a similar nature. The review of the literature identified various concepts of TM, its applicability in organisations and its impact on various organisational entities. However, the relationship between TM practises and organisational entities such as employees, culture and performance were not considered to a great extent in the research arena. The issue of achieving internal validity arises only if a researcher is unable to generate a convincing case for the observed behaviours, which historically has not been described in the literature as a problem. However, there are a few limitations identified, which includes there being no studies identified in this area of research with respect to (oil and gas) organisations in KSA. These aspects were identified from the literature review which justifies the limitations in the research topic and the selection of research subjects and the context.

However, external validity is more difficult as a result of which it must be addressed in primary data collection. The criterion for external validity can be related to the quantitative results, as they can be analysed and applied to the larger section of the population. These aspects (reliability and validity) are discussed in detail in the following sections.

#### **4.8.1. Reliability**

Reliability in research refers to the extent to which a study's findings can be considered dependable (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Ordinarily, reliability of a study is attributed to its repeatability, stability

over time and the similarity between measures used (Libarkin and Kurdziel, 2002). In qualitative studies this is difficult to achieve given that the subjects are bound to change over time, making it near impossible to collect identical data (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Patton (2001), in qualitative studies reliability and validity cannot be separated as the former is a precursor of the latter so that there can be no validity without reliability. In view of this, it has been argued that talking about reliability in the research study is superfluous, as demonstration of validity presupposes that a study has reliability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Reliability in this research is guided by Lincoln and Guba's (1985) assertion; therefore, measures used to achieve reliability included conducting an inquiry audit of both the process and the results of the research to ensure that there was consistency. Parallel forms reliability is obtained by conducting an assessment of the same phenomena (TM) with the participation of the sample group via more than one assessment method, including semi-structured interviews and surveys. Accordingly, two assessment techniques are used in quantitative analysis and the similarity in results are observed.

Reliable research methods entail the ability to record observations consistently. Neuman (2003, p.184) argues that for qualitative researchers, "reliability means dependability of consistency and that they use a variety of techniques (interviews, participation, documents) to record their observations consistently". So, reliability can be addressed by using standardised methods to write field notes and proper transcripts in the case of interviews; Neuman (2003, p.288) also asserts that "reliability can be improved by comparing the analysis of the same data by several observers". Table 5-8 lists a number of verification strategies that can support the reliability of research.

Table 5-8 Reliability Strategies

<b>Reliability strategies</b>	<b>Adoption in the research</b>
<b>Methodological coherence</b>	The researcher confirms the congruence between the research questions and the components of the method.
<b>Defining consistent sets of questions for research interviews and surveys</b>	The researcher determines a set of measurable questions linked directly to research objectives.
<b>Think theoretically</b>	The researcher utilises new ideas emerging from data and reconfirmed in new data; this gives rise to new ideas that, in turn, must be verified in data already collected.

<b>Recording and transcribing research interviews</b>	All interviews are recorded to present more reliable evidence and avoid any bias which might happen if the researcher attempted to remember the conversations with the participants.
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Source: Adopted from Creswell (2007)

The sample size in the data collection process may affect the reliability and applicability of the results. As reliability cannot be measured in qualitative data statistically, it can be analysed based on the trustworthiness, i.e. the extent to which the results can be trusted (Trochim 2000). It is essential to examine the trustworthiness in qualitative study in order to ensure the reliability of the data collected (Seale 1999). Accordingly, the researcher needs to consider reliability throughout the research study (Bogdan and Biklen 1998). Repeatability or consistency in data collection is an important aspect which need to be considered. The order of questioning, the parameters used for each participants' during the data collection process must be similar and consistent in order to increase the reliability. The consistency and reliability of the findings is strengthened by the use of mixed methods. The primary data collected from the interviews was transcribed and analysed with a very high degree of accuracy; and the validity of secondary data used is verified by the authorised and recognised sources (journals, conferences, articles etc.).

#### **4.8.2 Validity**

Different terms have been used to describe validity from the perspective of a research study. Some of the used terms are: “authenticity, goodness, verisimilitude, adequacy, trustworthiness, plausibility, validity, validation, and credibility” (Creswell and Miller, 2000). Creswell and Miller (2000) define validity as referring to how accurately and credibly an account reflects the realities of the research participants' experiences of a social phenomenon. According to Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007, p.234) internal credibility refers to a study's “... truth value, applicability, consistency, neutrality, dependability, and/or credibility of interpretations and conclusions within the underlying setting or group” and external credibility refers to “... the degree that the findings of a study can be generalized across different populations of persons, settings, contexts, and times.” Maxwell (1992) posits that validity pertains to the relationship between the account of a phenomenon as given by the researcher and “something outside of that account, whether this something is construed as objective reality, the constructions of actors, or a variety of other possible interpretations”. Notwithstanding difference in the terms used to define and/or describe

validity, general agreement is that it is about credibility. Some common procedures used to establish credibility in qualitative studies include checking interview transcripts by research participants, using thick descriptions in reporting the findings, triangulation, review by peers and external audits (Creswell and Miller, 2000). This research addressed credibility issues by deriving guidance from Tracy (2010), Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2006) and Chiovitti and Piran (2003).

Tracy (2010) presents eight key markers of quality in qualitative research as having a worthy topic and rich rigor, sincerity, credibility, resonance, significant contribution, ethics and meaningful coherence. The following paragraphs discuss how these were used to improve the research's validity. A worthy research topic "... is relevant, timely, significant, interesting, or evocative" (Tracy, 2010, p. 840). Different aspects of TM are topical, as illustrated in the last two chapters. In that regard, they meet Tracy's test of relevancy, timeliness and significance.

Tracy's element of 'rich rigour' is addressed through Chiovitti and Piran's (2003) guidelines of enhancing rigour in interview-based qualitative studies. The guidelines focus on allowing the interviewees to guide the inquiry process; checking the emerging theoretical construction against the meanings participants attach to the phenomenon being studied; using participants' spoken words in the theory or explanations; complete disclosure by the researcher of their personal views on the phenomenon being studied; criteria influencing their thinking; how and why they selected the study participants; delineating the research's scope; and detailing how each category emerging from the research relates to extant literature.

Tracy's element of credibility was addressed through deriving guidance from Chiovitti and Piran's (2003) identified four areas affecting credibility. The first was the use of semi-structured questions that allowed interviewees to speak freely with minimum guidance from the researcher and remaining conscious of not imposing any prepared specific questions during the initial stages of an interview. At the analysis stage, use of codes based on the exact words used by interviewees was employed as a way of enhancing credibility. Explanations generated from the data were also continuously and iteratively cross-checked against participant narrations of their experiences of the phenomenon to ensure that the researcher's interpretations remained consistent with the data on which they were based. This approach is consistent with Patton's (2002) view that continuously returning to the data enables a researcher to establish whether there is any sense in the emerging constructs, categories, descriptions and interpretations. The approach ensured 'descriptive

validity' described by Maxwell (1992) as focusing on factual accuracy by ensuring that what is claimed to have been said by interviewees was accurately captured.

Credibility also refers to a study's auditability and transparency, which refer to the extent to which it can be repeated by another researcher using its methods and conclusions (Creswell, 2007). This, according to Chiovitti and Piran (2003), can be achieved by clearly stating the criteria guiding the researcher's thinking and the rationale behind the sampling methods used. The importance of transparency is also highlighted by O'Reilly and Parker (2012), who identify it as a marker of quality in qualitative studies. The Researcher's assumptions and what guided the sampling process have been clearly stated in Sections 4.6.3 and 4.6.4 respectively. Given the problem identified by Jones and Alony (2011) of interviewees tending to say what they think the interviewer wants to hear, the researcher maintained a log of interviewees and their contact details for purposes of having both a chain of evidence (Riege, 2003) and a way of going back to get confirmation in the event of encountering contradictions. The researcher also maintained copious notes and a log of activities and chronology of data collection. Data analysis procedures were captured in detail to illustrate how codes were derived from categories and themes. This was meant to add trustworthiness to the study which, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), is linked to credibility and refers to a study also being dependable, confirmable and transferable.

Sincerity is another of Tracy's (2010) eight markers of quality. Sincerity is defined as the researcher's honesty and transparency regarding their biases, goals and shortcomings and how these could have affected the "methods, joys, and mistakes of the research" (Tracy 2010, p. 841). Sincerity therefore relates to the views and biases of the researcher in dealing with interviewee reports. Throughout the process, the researcher remained conscious of the potential influence of their beliefs, values and biases on both the data collection and analysis process. Further, the researcher disclosed their own beliefs and biases at the initial stages of the research. Disclosure enables consumers of the research to bracket researcher biases (Creswell and Miller, 2000).

Resonance refers to the transferability of a study's findings to situations that are similar to those studied. Tracy (2010) posits that there is resonance when "...readers feel as though the story of the research overlaps with their own situation and they intuitively transfer the research to their own action" (p. 845). Transferability is facilitated by the researcher being explicit about the characteristics of the participants, sample size, how the participants were selected, the setting and/or context, the relationship between the researcher and the participants (Johnson, 1997;



Chiovitti and Piran, 2003) and the level of theory generated (Chiovitti and Piran, 2003). Transferability in this research is enhanced through use of thick, rich descriptions. Use of such descriptions, according to Creswell and Miller (2000), creates verisimilitude, which they define as those statements that make the readers feel that they have had previous experienced, or can experience what is detailed in the study.

Significant contribution refers to a study's contribution at various levels, such as extant literature solving a practical problem "morally, methodologically and heuristically" (Tracy, 2010, p. 840). The significant contribution of this research is in providing and interpreting data that can enhance the understanding of approaches to talent identification and management in organisations and adding a dimension to the talent definition debate.

Ethics are another of Tracy's (2010) measures of a study's quality. Angen (2000) posits that qualitative research has an ethical obligation to demonstrate integrity and rigour. Integrity includes ensuring that interview data is an unencumbered reflection of interviewees' words. Given the sensitivity of how talent is defined, identified and managed in organisations, the research took measures to maintain participant confidentiality which then made them comfortable to candidly narrate their experiences and observations. Only interviews where the interviewee granted express consent were recorded; where such consent was not granted, notes were taken, and the interviewee was given an opportunity to read the notes if they so desired. Confidentiality was maintained through identifying interviewees using codes and not their names. This approach is consistent with Lincoln's (1995) research of highlighting the need to be sensitive to participant circumstances.

Meaningful coherence refers to rationality, lucidity, logic, consistency and soundness. A coherent study achieves its stated purpose and objectives, uses methods that are consistent with existing theories and approaches and links the study's foci, methods and findings to extant literature (Tracy, 2010). According to Kirk and Miller (1986), in qualitative research validity requires the researcher to know whether they see what they think they are seeing; meaning, is what they claim to be seeing consistent with the methods leading to what they claim to have seen? Meaningful coherence is akin to Maxwell's (1992) interpretive validity which concerns itself with whether in constructing meanings out of or interpreting interviewee accounts the researcher's inferences are sensible. Lack of detail in analysis of qualitative data has earned it criticism that it is "impression analysis" and by implication lacks soundness. This research addressed this shortcomings by adding depth to data analysis through using manual analysis, which enabled the researcher to closely observe and

analyse the data, further analysis using Microsoft Excel, for analysing interview data, and SPSS Version 2.0, for analysing the survey data and addressing the need to use quasi statistics to understand patterns in the data, as suggested by Whittemore, Chase and Mandle (2001).

Tracy’s (2010) eight quality criteria in qualitative research—namely worthy topic, rich rigor, sincerity, credibility, resonance, significant contribution, ethics and meaningful coherence—enabled the researcher to take a methodical approach to data analysis and address the validity and credibility issues of the study. Table 4.10 presents a summary of how the study employed the eight criteria.

Table 4.12. Summary of use of Tracy's (2010) eight quality criteria

<b>Tracy's Quality Criteria</b>	<b>How it is implemented</b>
<b>Worthy topic</b>	TM and the controversy of how to define talent is topical, as illustrated in Chapters 1 and 2.
<b>Rich rigour</b>	The process of choosing participants is clearly explained. Interviewees are allowed to guide the inquiry process during data collection. Emerging themes are checked against the meaning that participants attach to the phenomenon being studied. Using participant-direct words. Disclosure of the researcher's thinking process at all stages of analysis. Detailing how each category emerging from the research relates to extant literature.
<b>Credibility</b>	Maintained copious notes and a log of activities and chronology of data collection. Detailed capturing of data analysis procedures illustrating how codes were derived from categories and themes.
<b>Sincerity</b>	Remained conscious of the potential influence of own beliefs, values and biases on both the data collection and analysis process. Full disclosure of own beliefs and biases at the initial stages of the research.
<b>Resonance</b>	Use of thick, rich descriptions,
<b>Significant contribution</b>	Data collection and analysis guided by the need to contribute towards the talent identification and management debate.
<b>Ethics</b>	Maintaining participant confidentiality throughout the process. Respecting the wishes of those who did not want audio recording. Keeping sensitive data anonymous through the use of identity codes.
<b>Meaningful coherence</b>	Use of manual analysis, SPSS 2.0. and Microsoft Excel software and alternating between the study objectives, the analysis results and the raw data.

Source: Researcher

#### 4.9 Conclusion

Both theoretical and analytical discussion of the research methodology is presented in this chapter. This research has adopted an interpretivist philosophical perspective with a mixed research approach of an inductive approach. The researcher has collected the data within a specific time period at different intervals for qualitative and quantitative studies, as a result of which this research can be considered as a cross-sectional study.

After examining the various possibilities of research choices, mixed methods were found to be the most appropriate choice of methods. The flexibility and the dynamic nature of mixed methods can be useful in improving the analytical power of the studies. The researcher found that a sequential study starting with qualitative research, followed by a quantitative study, was an appropriate approach in order to effectively analyse and support the research approach for validating the framework and subsequent findings. The qualitative approach was administered using semi-structured interviews, and the quantitative approach was administered using an online survey. This chapter also explained how the data was analysed in this research. The qualitative data was grouped under various codes representing an aspect of the research topic. These codes are summarised with quantized data, which can be used for validating the results from the survey. The quantitative analysis used various statistical methods (Correlation, Chi-Square test, frequency distribution etc.) to analyse the quantitative data. Both qualitative and quantitative studies were combined, and the results are used to validate the TM framework. This chapter concluded with the discussion of research quality in terms of reliability and validity.

The next chapter focuses on analysing the qualitative (semi-structured interviews) data collected in this research.

## Chapter 5: Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis

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### 5.1. Introduction

Following the discussion of methodology presented in Chapter 4, this chapter investigates the collection and analysis of the qualitative data generated by semi-structured interviews. The aim of a qualitative analysis is to identify certain patterns, coherent themes, meaningful categories and new research ideas that improve the understanding of a phenomenon or process (Trochim, 2009). In the case of this chapter, the main analytical challenges were to reduce the data, identify valuable connections and offer reflective conclusions relevant to this research. This chapter also highlights the theoretical aspects of TM discussed throughout the desk research reported in Chapters 2 (literature review and literature gap) in accordance with the researcher's methodological stance (Chapter 5). The foremost aims of this chapter are thus to analyse the qualitative data collected during interviews and apply the empirical evidence to validate the theoretical TM framework developed in Chapter 4 (Figure 4-2). Subsequently, Chapter 7 presents the second phase of data collection and analysis, concluding the empirical part of this research by discussing the outcomes of the quantitative research phase.

### 5.2. Demographic Data

This section presents the descriptive statistics of the qualitative data collected in scope of this research study.

Age: All respondents (26) were male with 69.2% falling within the 40-49 age group and 23.1% in the 30-39 age group. The rest fell in the over 50 age group (Figure 5.1).

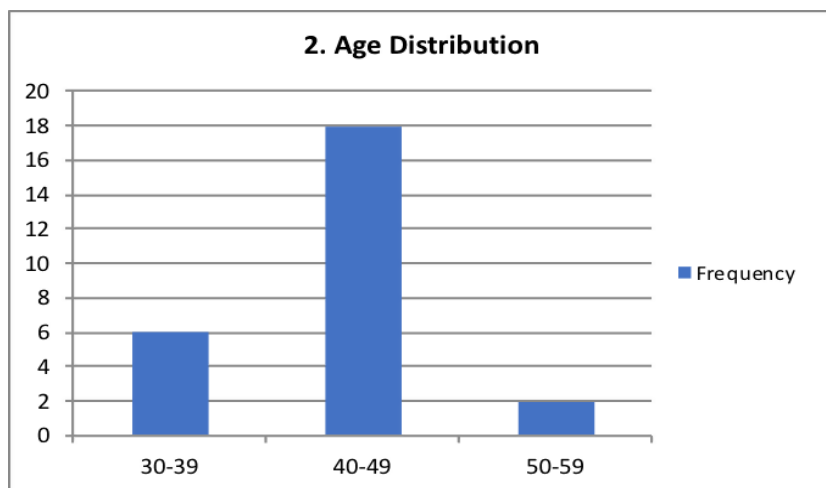


Figure 5.1: Age Distribution

Qualifications: Over 90% of the respondents have a university education, with 53.8% holding Bachelors' degrees, 23.1% PhDs and 19.2% MAs. Only one respondent holds a vocational qualification (Figure 5.2).

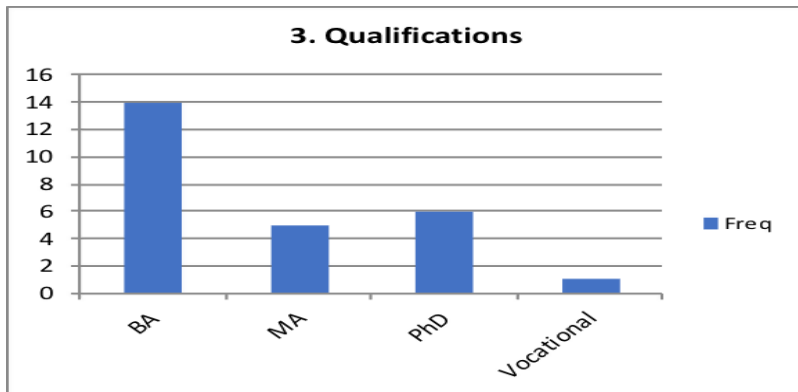


Figure 5.2. Qualifications Held

Job positions: The 26 respondents represented seven job positions. Most respondents came from human resources management combined with TM (53.8%), followed by senior management (23.1%). Executive management represented (7.7%) of the respondents with the rest coming from other areas of management (Figure 5.3). These differences in the roles of the participants is achieved by purposive and snowball sampling technique as discussed in Chapter 4. The seniority and TM expertise are a few parameters used to determine the composition of the interview sample.

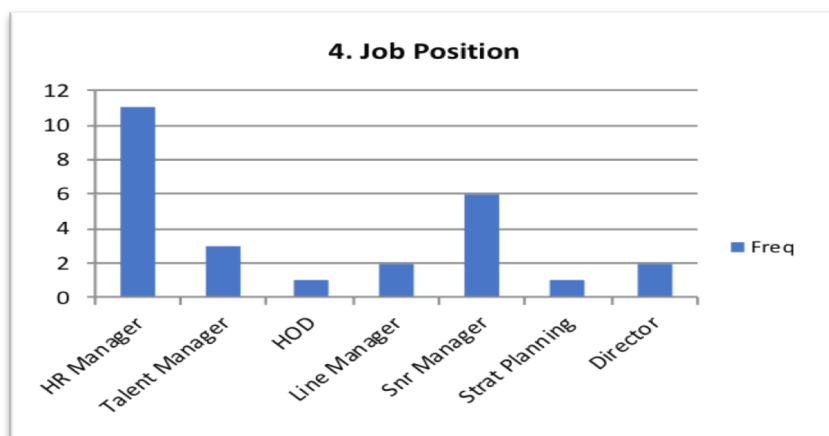


Figure 5.3. Job position/Title

Years of experience: Most of the respondents (73.1%) had more than 16 years' experience in the organisation, with only 7.7% having less than five years' experience (Figure 5.4).

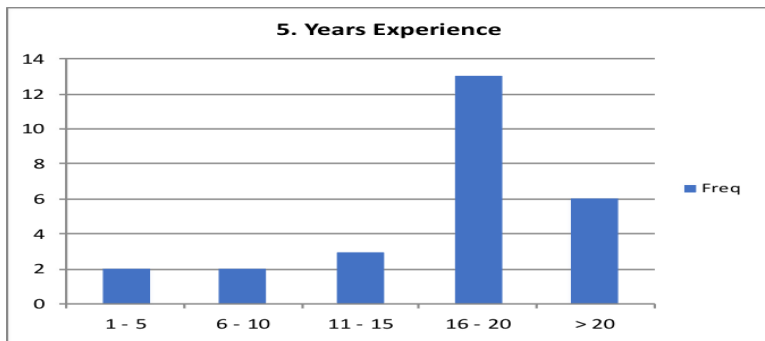


Figure 5.4. Years of work experience in organisation

Sector: The participants represented four sectors: petrochemicals (34.6%), oil (30.8%), gas (26.9%) and mining (7.7%) (Figure 5.5).

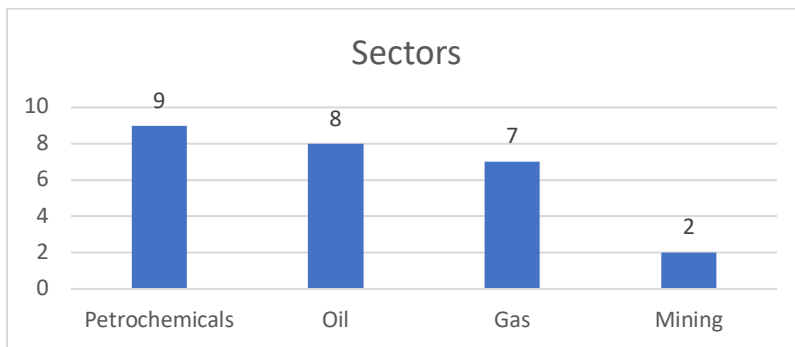


Figure 5.5. Job Roles of Interviewees

Office location: Most of the respondents were located at the head offices (76.9%), with only 23.1% located in branches. Application of TM: 61.5% of the respondents indicated that their organisation formally applied TM practices, while 35.5% indicated that the application was informal. Working with TM: 76.9% of the respondents indicated that they have formally worked with TM, while 23.1% indicated that they did it informally.

The first five questions in this section (6.2) focused on the participants' profiles. The next two questions focused on their organisational details. The seven questions in this section were designed to ensure that the interview sample selected for the study met the research criteria (organisation deploying TM practices for more than three years, and participants with experience of more than one year in the current company). The research criteria ensure that the participants selected for interviews had sufficient knowledge and expertise so that they can share relevant data related to the study by taking inputs and experience from their existing organisations or employers. This approach was necessary to establish a business context of TM (i.e. every organisation adapts different forms of TM suitable to its culture and organisational structure), and to understand the

nature of TM is specific to each organisation. Based on the selected descriptive variables, the professional profiles of all interviewees were deemed sufficient to provide the adequate field of TM expertise critical to this research.

### **5.3. TM practices**

This section discusses the TM practices of the qualitative interviews under eleven different questions related to TM. The first seven questions focus on identifying the various factors related to the impact of internal organisation factors on TM; interviewees' understanding of TM; talent identification criteria; talent attraction approaches; talent recruitment processes; talent retention; and TD approaches adopted in the interviewees' companies, respectively. The next two questions focus on the TM practices adopted in the interviewees' organisations and the challenges associated with them. The last two questions focus on the impact of TM on employees' attitudes, and also on (sustainable competitive advantage). Thus, the findings for each question are analysed in the sections below.

#### **5.3.1. The Effect of Internal Organisational Environment Factors on TM**

The internal organisational environment of an organisation defines the culture, practices and structure of the organisation. As discussed in (Chapter 2, Section 2.14.2), and (Chapter 3 Section 3.5.3) the internal environment reflects how the employees manage their work, identify and develop personal and professional goals, and the ways of achieving these goals, which can be observed in the organisational culture, which in turn influences the organisational performance, practices, policies, training and development programmes and HRM practices (Garz and Morgeson, 2012; Ali *et al.*, 2008; Caldwell *et al.*, 1990). Therefore, a friendly organisational culture can be useful in companies that focus on innovation. Similarly, every factor of the organisational environment can be attributed to the type of organisation. However, there are few general factors related to the internal organisational environment, which includes the following: These factors are analysed in the following sections:

##### **1. A good/bad leadership style of upper managerial hierarchy can positively/negatively impact TM implementation.**

Leadership styles can be analysed from transactional, transformational, laissez-faire and autocratic styles etc. Although there are different types of leadership, it was suggested that leaders must

reflect different styles according to the needs of the organisations and situations to improve the efficiency of process and performance. The leadership qualities of the managers can affect the implementation of TM policies. There are many influencing factors in this aspect, such as the influence of top-level management in HRM functions, the role of the HR department and the leadership practices adopted. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 24 stated that:

*"Yes, of course leadership can be an effective approach which focuses on TM practices or supported TM activities such as training and development, motivation, retention, good working environment, effective communication practices, team management, job rotation etc. Therefore, the leadership style in the organisation can be directly related to the TM policies, practices and approaches... and play a very important role..."*

Interviewee No. 26 stated that:

*"I think that the link between TM and leadership is supported vigorously by many. The main and common theme is that leadership and management through talented individuals can add a strategic and competitive advantage, which appeals to many organisations.... Leadership is key for both organisations and employees to advance, organisations could exploit talented individuals in order to drive their competitiveness and to create an organisation of talent."*

Similarly, another participant, Interviewee No, 2, argued that:

*"The leadership style in relation to the relationship between top management and other departments such as HR, operational, marketing etc. can affect the TM approach...For example, a strategy proposed by the HR department for TM may not be accepted by top management and vice versa, which would lead to the complexity in developing and implementing TM practises ...in this case leadership plays a very important role."*

The above statements reflect the direct relationship between leadership styles and TM practices. The need for effective leadership and its integration with all other departments with good communication practices and decision-making approaches is essential for implementing TM policies. The responses to this statement clearly indicate the influence of leadership practices on the implementation of TM policies, as shown in Figure 5.6. The majority of the interviewees (70%) strongly agreed, and 15% of interviewees agreed that the leadership styles of the top management can affect the implementation of TM policies. Only 15% of the interviewees were uncertain about the statement. These findings can be related to Kaliannan (2015), Kontoghiorghes (2016), Hughes and Rog (2015), Rothwell (1994), and Stockley (2007), who identified an interdependence relationship between TM policies implementation and leadership styles.

## **2. Having a formal culture in the organisation can help with TM implementation.**



The culture of organisations reflects many aspects, especially the working environment, the values adopted and the practices followed. Culture can be related to TM implementation, as it has to accommodate TM practices. It is a good approach to define the organisational culture, which encourages employee development, and align this approach with the organisational objectives. Focusing on this aspect, Interviewee No. 7 said that:

*"The managers and the top management are responsible for creating a structured organisational culture, which focuses on employee empowerment in line with the organisational goals, aiming to create a strong work ethic and ensuring the integration of talented employees into the organisational working culture."*

Similarly, Interviewee No. 16 stated that:

*"Organisational culture can greatly influence TM implementation, as most of the TM practices such as training and development, motivation, support, communication, retention, recognition etc. are directly associated with organisational culture... which will affect implementing TM "*

The above responses are supported by Makela *et al.*, (2010) statement which identifies the role of leaders in recognising talented employees by their fit with the organisation's culture, plus their personal interests and values; and Kaliannan's (2015) and Sang *et al.*, (2016) reflections that it is the responsibility of the leaders to create a strong organisational culture, where empowered employees become more accountable, committed, develop a strong work ethic, create a positive culture and remain focused to achieve the organisational goals. As illustrated in Figure 5.6, the responses clearly indicate this approach as 65% of interviewees strongly agreed, and 35% of them agreed that having a formal structure and organisational culture would help in implementing TM practises

### ***3. Having a reward system in the organisation can help with TM implementation.***

As identified in the previous section, approaches such as reward systems are an integral part of the organisational culture and practices. The responses were similar to the previous question, as 65% strongly agreed, 31% agreed and 4% of the interviewees were uncertain that reward systems can help in implementing TM practises. These finding are supported by the studies from Jawahitha *et al.*, (2011), Rani and Kumar (2014) and Padma and Venkateswara (2015).

Interviewee No. 7 said that:

*"Reward systems serve several purposes in organisations, such as TM implementation. Effective reward systems help an organisation be more competitive, retain key employees and reduce*

*turnover. Reward systems also can enhance employee motivation and reinforce the image of an organisation among key stakeholders or future employees."*

**4. "Other comments": *The employer's brand can positively/negatively impact TM implementation in the organisation.***

Employer branding is associated with TM processes such as talent attraction, recruitment and retaining (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). The talented individuals prefer organisations that would support their personal aspirations regarding their career development and which also have an effective brand identity. Therefore, maintaining a good brand image can help in effective management of talent in the organisations. The relationship between employer brand and TM implementation is an interesting aspect for analysing the relationship between brand (influenced by the internal and external environment) and TM (mostly internal). Accordingly, Interviewee No. 15 stated that:

*"The brand value or brand identity of an organisation may develop an interest among the individuals for working with the company. For example, I would prefer working with Google or Facebook due to its brand identity reflected by unique organisational culture. .... All organisations have, consciously or otherwise, an employer brand. It's the way in which organisations differentiate themselves in the labour market, enabling them to recruit, retain and engage the right people. A strong employer brand helps businesses compete for the best talent and establish credibility. It should connect with an organisation's values and must run consistently through its approach to people management."*

Another participant, Interviewee No. 16, stated that:

*"As long as there is a need for employment or high unemployment, the brand may not influence TM implementation such as recruitment of talented individuals...Similarly, when offered with high pay packages, I don't think brand really matters."*

Both statements reflect conflicting perceptions of brand and TM implementation policies. Depending on various circumstances, the impact of brand identity on TM implementation would change. For example, according to Kaliannan *et al.*, (2015) and Kotler and Lee (2008), organisations would retain employees in order to maintain a CA in a highly competitive market. Here, market competition determines TM implementation, which is related to the brand management. The responses to this statement are distributed on different scales. The majority of the participants (54%) agreed to the statement, 23% strongly agreed and 19% were uncertain. Only 4% disagreed with the statement. The high acceptance levels can be related to the studies by

Backhaus and Tikoo (2004), and Kotler and Lee (2008), which identified a relationship between brand and TM implementation policies, and found that for companies with good brand identity, the hiring process may be easy.

### 5. Overall analysis of the effect of internal organisational environment factors on TM.

The overall responses of the impact of various factors on TM implementation are analysed in the Figure 5.6.

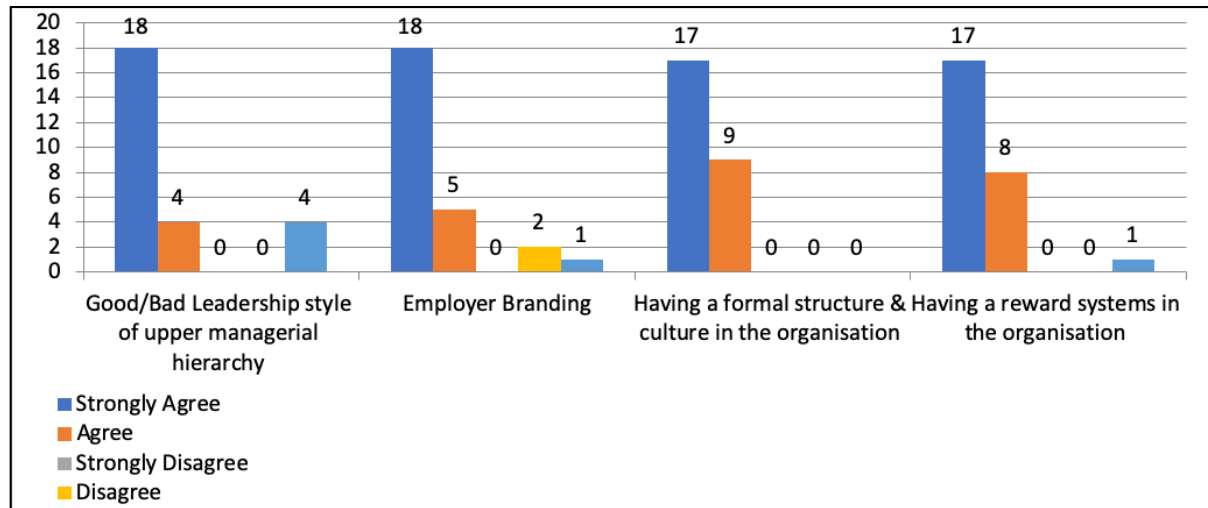


Figure 5.6: Comparison of factors affecting TM implementation

All four factors identified were found to have an influence on the implementation of TM practices. These findings presented in Figure 5.6 were supported by many researchers, including Kaliannan (2015), Kontoghiorghes (2016), Hughes and Rog (2015), Rothwell (1994), Stockley (2007), Kotler and Lee (2008), Backhaus and Tikoo (2004), Guerci and Solari (2012), Makela *et al.*, (2010), Sang *et al.*, (2016), Jawahitha *et al.*, (2011), Rani and Kumar (2014), Padma and Venkateswara (2015), Dychtwald *et al.*, (2016) and Cappelli (2008).

#### 5.3.2. How Do You Personally Define and Understand the Concept of TM?

Respondent definitions and understanding of TM were measured using the following statements:

##### 1. An integrated set of processes, programs and culture used by employers to anticipate and meet the needs of human capital

Defining and understanding the concept of TM as an integrated set of processes, programs and culture was strongly agreed with by 38.5% of respondents and agreed with by 42% of the respondents. None strongly disagreed, 3.8% disagreed and 15.4% were uncertain of the position.

The number of responses for each option is presented in Figure 5.7. As much as 80.5% of respondents defined the concept of TM in terms of integrated processes, programs and cultures. Defining talent from an integrative perspective is consistent with Morton and Ashton (2005), who view talent from the context of integrating related aspects and creating an organisation-wide talent mind set.

Though the majority of the participants agreed with the statement (as identified in Figure 5.7), it has to be understood that the concept of TM is wide and includes various aspects of managing talent. Reflecting this view point, Interviewee No. 4 stated that:

*"TM cannot be described only as a set of processes, programs and culture. It has many correlated factors and the definition/understanding must include a clear description of what exactly TM is..."*

Accordingly, the definitions of Hughes and Rog (2015) and Guerci and Solari (2012) reflect a wider context, which states that it is an integrated, strategic and technology-enabled approach to HRM, with a particular focus on employee management and HR planning.

## **2. Systematic attraction, retention, identification, development and engagement of talent to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage**

This statement focuses on the functions and approaches of TM. The responses to this statement are presented in Figure 5.7. Most respondents (65.4%) strongly agreed that they define and understand TM to be the systematic attraction, retention, identification, development and engagement of talent, with 30.8% agreeing and 3.8% being uncertain.

None expressed disagreement with this perspective. Viewing TM as a systematic approach is consistent with the definitions of van Zyl, Mathafena and Ras' (2017) framework that views TM as involving specific processes and clear articulation of how they are to be implemented. In addition, the definitions of Wikstrom *et al.*, (2012), Rothwell (1994) and Stockley (2007) support the need for a systematic approach in TM processes. They specifically identify planning (for attraction, recruitment and selection) and coming up with strategies for development, engagement and aligning with organisational goals. However, Interviewee No. 13 said that:

*"It is essential to discuss the nature of the processes. The TM practises and functions are continuous in organisations. They need to be changed and updated according to the changing needs, goals and objectives of the organisation... to achieve sustainable competitive advantage."*

This statement was focused on the nature of the approaches, which is consistent with the definition of Wikstrom *et al.*, (2012) stating that TM is a dynamic learning process, which mostly recognised people as a static process.

### **3. HR processes: the right person in the right job at the right time**

The statement of defining and understanding the concept of TM as HR processes is strongly agreed with by participants (34.6%) and agreed on by as many employees. Some 23% expressed uncertainty over the issue, while 7.7% strongly disagreed. Conceptualising TM as part of HR processes is consistent with the view that it is that aspect of HR concerned with ensuring that the right people with the appropriate skills are in the right jobs at the right time throughout the organisation (Tarique and Schuler, 2010; Lewis and Hackman, 2006). Kontoghiorghes (2016) argued that HR is limited to guest role while most of the TM operations are handled by executives and managers. Reflecting this view, according to Interviewee No. 6:

*"HRM is an important operation in an organisation, which has to be strategically aligned with the business goals and objectives... Though the HR team has to focus on employee management aspects, there is a limited role of the HR team in TM these days. It may be due to identifying the potential candidates that require clear assessment of different types of skillsets, which may require both HR department and other operational managers to jointly operate the process of TM... there is no clear process for such integration; it may be hard to assess the TM as a specific approach designed for employee management by HR departments..."*

These opinions reflect the multifaceted aspect of TM, which requires the integration of various units in organisations.

### **4. Inclusive (applied to all employees)**

TM is defined and understood as inclusive by 26.9% and 30.8% of employees who strongly agree or agree (respectively) with the statement. Some 15.3% disagree with the statement, while 26.9% are uncertain. An inclusive perspective of talent is consistent with, among others, Buttiens and Hondeghem (2012), who suggest that every employee has a specific role to play and to that extent is talent. That over 50% of respondents hold this perspective confirms Leigh's (2009) assertion that inclusivity is the predominant perspective of talent. Inclusiveness is identified as an important perspective for understanding TM by Powell (2012) and Ashton and Morton (2005). Ashton and Morton identified inclusiveness to reflect the TM process as a part of HRM, but not as separate entities. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 8 stated that:

*"It is sometimes common that all the employees may be regarded as a single entity for managing and improving the skillsets. For example, in creating an awareness about new change in the company policy or new introduction of IT architecture, such instances reflect the inclusiveness of*

*the TM approach as a part of HRM...However, both inclusiveness and exclusiveness aspects have to be adopted in companies..."*

This statement reflects the importance of inclusiveness as one of the important approaches in TM, as opined by Powell (2012).

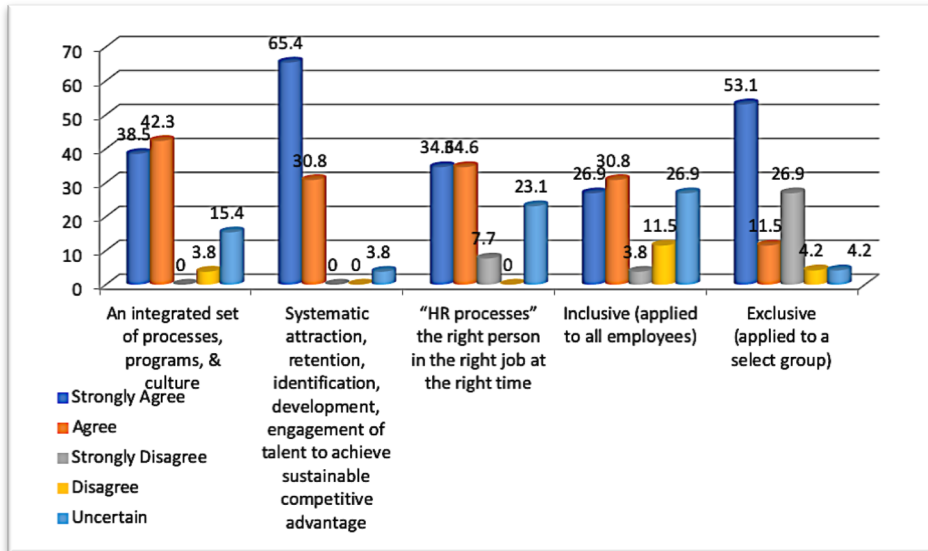


Figure 5.7: Comparison of responses for TM definitions

### 5. Exclusive (applied to specific groups)

TM is defined and understood as exclusive by 53.1% and 11.5% of employees who strongly agree or agree (respectively) with the statement. Very few participants were uncertain (4.2%) and disagreed (4.2%) with the statement, while 26.9% strongly disagreed. The findings indicate that most respondents (64%) agree, while 30% disagree. This is consistent with Chabault, Hulin and Soparnot (2012) and Stahl *et al.*, (2012) who use “talent” to refer to highly performing employees, and Huselid *et al.*, (2005) who defines it as referring to “A” players. Exclusiveness is one of the important features of TM, as it is very essential to identify different groups or people with particular skillsets for managing and developing the talent and leadership. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 15 added that:

*"Exclusiveness and inclusiveness both are essential, but the preference has to be given to exclusiveness in TM, because this would help in identifying key candidates with specific skillsets suitable for key positions or maintaining a talent pool...Inclusiveness cannot be used for specific positions or for the requirement of highly skilled positions."*

### Overall analysis of TM definitions

This statement reflects the opinion of Sparrow (2012), which reflects the preference given by the companies to exclusiveness compared to inclusiveness in managing the talent. The overall responses for each category are shown in Figure 5.7. An analysis of the five statements relating to how respondents personally define and understand the concept of TM reveals that it is mostly defined as the systematic attraction, retention, identification, development and engagement of talent, with 96.2% either strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement. The next highest perception is that it is an integrated set of processes, programs and culture, with 80.8% either strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement. HR processes are third at 60.2%. The varied findings on personal definitions of TM confirm what has been established by other studies that the concept of talent, and by implication its management, has no universally accepted definition and is therefore context specific based on organisation-specific factors and the type of work being performed (Tansley, 2011). Defining TM, a systematic process of attracting, retaining, identifying, developing and engaging talent is consistent with extant literature that emphasises the importance of being systematic through, for example, systematically linking it to other organisational processes (Schuler, Jackson and Tarique, 2011; Stahl *et al.*, 2012; Dries, 2013; Meyers and van Woerkom, 2014). That there is an involvement of many processes that are integrated resonates with Iles *et al.* (2010) view of TM as integrated HRD focusing on specific aspects (programs). While studies have highlighted the importance of HR processes in TM, the findings seem to illustrate that HR processes are subsumed under the “integrated set of processes” and following a systematic approach to attracting talent. This is consistent with Hughes and Rog's (2015) conceptualisation of TM as an elevation of HRM practices to involve implementing an integrated, strategic and technology-enabled approach with an emphasis on human resources planning. This confirms Lewis and Heckman's (2006) observation on the absence of empirical studies that separate TM from traditional HRM practices involving planning for current and future HR needs. The absence of a clear picture on whether TM is perceived as inclusive or exclusive confirms ongoing discourse on the inclusivity and or exclusivity of TM (Al Ariss *et al.*, 2014; Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.*, 2013; Iles *et al.*, 2010).

The analysis of TM's definition has gathered various views from the participants. By considering the definitions of Hughes and Rog (2015), Guerci and Solari (2012), Morton and Ashton (2005), Wikstrom *et al.*, (2012), Rothwell (1994) and Stockley (2007), and the responses from the interviewees, it can be stated that TM is a multifaceted approach which has various interlinked

approaches or functions, and that it can be linked with various other operations in the organisations for managing the talent within the organisations.

### **5.3.3. What Criteria are Used to Identify the Quality of Talent?**

Criteria used to identify the quality of talent were measured using these statements:

#### **1. The talents of employees are determined through informal chats**

In looking at the criteria used to identify the quality of talent, 3.8% strongly agreed and 15.4% agreed that this was done through informal chats. Some 30.8% strongly disagreed and 23.1% disagreed that informal chats were used as criteria for identifying the quality of talent. As much as 26.9% were uncertain. This indicates that employees view the process of identifying talent as formal. According to Björkman *et al.*, (2013) employee perceptions of having been formally identified as talent influence their identification with the organisation and their commitment, implying that informal methods may not result in a similar outcome. However, Interviewee No. 6 argued that:

*"It is necessary that for managers, the use of informal methods may be effective when formal methods may fail to identify the talent or poorly assess the talent among the employees. For example, performance evaluation ratings may focus on specific skills of the employees, but in order to identify cognitive skills such as decision-making skills or problem management skills through quick reactions, informal methods such as personal observations may prove to be useful."*

Thus, an integrated approach of formal and informal can be one of the effective approaches for identifying the talent within an organisation. This integrated approach was also suggested by (Campbell and Smith, 2016). However, managers or management evaluation through both formal and informal approaches can lead to issues such as 'LikeMe' bias or favouring the particular employee by managers etc. The next option focuses on this aspect.

#### **2. Depending on the employee's efficiency from the point of view of his management's evaluation of potential and competencies (for example, accumulated skills/experience, ability to learn new skills and willingness to tackle bigger/more complex challenges)**

identify quality talent depends on the employee's efficiency from the point of view of management evaluation, while 11.5% strongly disagreed and 7.7% disagreed with the statement and 34.6% were uncertain. General lack of consensus on employee efficiency as a possible basis for determining employee talent confirms Cascio and Aguinis' (2008) observation of challenges faced by



organisations in trying to predict future employee performance. However, Interviewee No. 21 stated that:

*"Identifying the talent by management must adopt more formal methods. We can evaluate the employees by using their potential and competencies (for example, accumulated skills/experience, ability to learn new skills and willingness to tackle bigger/more complex challenges). The efficiency of the employee can be identified using various performance evaluation techniques. The manager's decision must be based on the evaluation ratings rather than sole decisions without any basis to prevent the misuse of their power or status. In addition, a formal approach for identifying talent with potential performance indicators may be more useful in identifying the right talented employees."*

This statement reflects the need or basis for supporting the management's decisions regarding the employee's assessment practices and supporting metrics for identifying the talent, as identified by Mone (2018) and Shields (2015). The next option in the question is based on this aspect, as to the use of different measures for identifying the talent.

**3. By results from subjective measures, like total contribution/team effort etc.; objective measures like sales/production etc.; or job evaluation (the annual performance assessment)**

Some 38.5% strongly agreed and 42.3% agreed with the statement that the criteria used to identify the quality of talent depend on the annual performance assessment results. Some 3.8% disagreed with the statement, while 15.4% were uncertain. None strongly disagreed with the statement. It would seem that notwithstanding challenges associated with the lack of clear indicators of individual performance, as was observed by William and Schiemann (2013), annual performance appraisals are used in determining the quality of talent, which could be one of the effective methods. However, Interviewee No. 18 stated that:

*"The annual performance ratings were usually given by the managers, which are based on the personal opinions of the managers. This can lead to bias if the managers misuse their power by giving a good rating for a favourable employee rather than a hardworking employee. Therefore, additional measures such as team's opinion, client's performance review of the employee or ratings should be included in giving the annual performance rating."*

Interviewee No. 11 said that:

*"Annual review is used in our company; Although, we may find some problems considering the level of performance an employee should achieve in order to be considered as a talented employee. So, the company should keep in mind and understand the meaning of talent, and then move on to talent identification."*

#### 4. Overall assessment of criteria used to identify the quality of talent

An analysis of the three statements used to establish the criteria used to identify the quality of talent among respondents indicates that results based on subjective measures like total contribution/team effort etc. and objective measures like sales/production etc. or job evaluation (the annual performance assessment) are what respondents perceive as what is used.

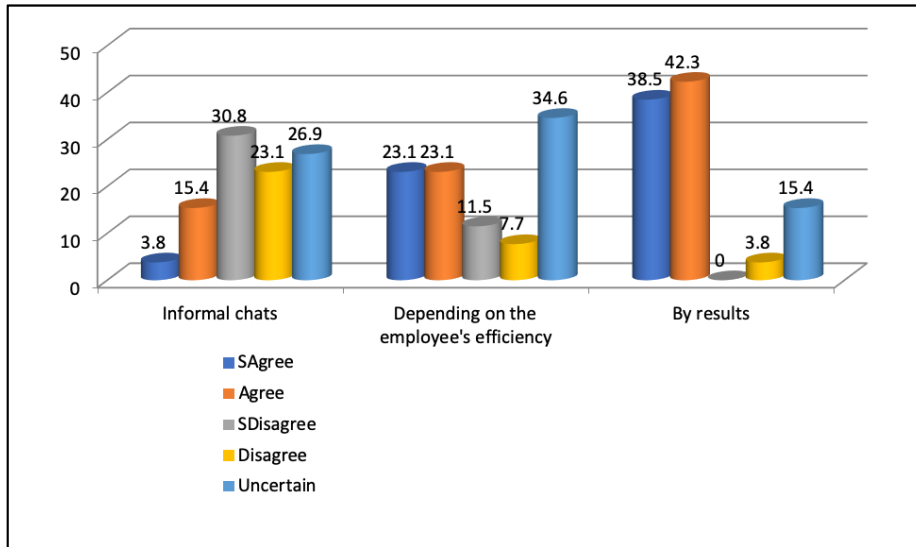


Figure 5.8 Summary of criteria used to identify the quality of talent

Identification of talent based on results which are defined as subjective measures, like total contribution/team effort; objective measures, like sales/production etc. and/or annual performance assessments is akin to Collins and Kehoe's (2009) professional model of talent identification that emphasises a focus on possession of specific task-related abilities and capacity to handle challenging work. Perceptions that talent is identified based on results contradicts William and Schiemann (2013) and Cascio and Aguinis (2008), who believe that employee measurement is problematic. William and Schiemann (2013) view it as fragmented and that most organisations lack clear indicators of the output of talented employees. Cascio and Aguinis (2008) argue that both identification of talented employees and measuring job performance have challenges because it is difficult to predict an individual's future performance once in a new role. This may explicate the high level of those indicating that they are uncertain about the use of the employee's efficiency from the point of view of management's evaluation as a way of identifying the quality of talent.

### 5.3.4. How Does Your Company Attract Talented Individuals?

Attracting talented individuals is one of the important approaches towards TM, using which the new talent pool and new leadership with required skillsets can be moved into the organisations. The approaches in attracting the talented individuals were measured using the following statements:

#### 1. Contracts with agencies to provide talented employees

Contracting with agencies is a third-party approach for recruiting new talented individuals. However, the focus is on the agencies that identify and recruit the talents. This approach of outsourcing can be associated with the risks and also on the efficiency of the agencies. The responses towards outsourcing the process of attracting new talent are presented in Figure 5.9.

Relating to how the company attracts talented individuals, only 7.7% strongly agreed while 30.8% agreed with the statement that the company does it through contacts with agencies. Some 23.1% strongly disagreed and 15.4% disagreed with the statement. Those uncertain of whether the company has contracts with agencies represented 23.1% of the respondents, meaning there are as many uncertain respondents as there are those who agreed with the statement. This may suggest a situation where employees are actually not conversant with the relationship, if any, between the company and agencies where attraction of talent is concerned or that they were not recruited through agencies and neither are they aware of any of their colleagues who joined the company through an agency. The total of those who strongly agree and those who agree, and those who strongly disagree and those who disagree, were found to be equal. There is a considerable number of participants who were uncertain. The results reflect the ambiguity with respect to contracting with agencies. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 11 argued that:

*"We have contracts with agencies to provide us with employees.... we share the requirement with many agencies so we can increase the chance of having talented employees. "*

However, Interviewee No. 20 stated that:

*"Contracting to agencies may not be beneficial always, and may not be an effective approach in TM. Relying completely on the third-party sources for recruiting the talent may be associated with risks of recruiting people with insufficient skills. Trust and proved efficiency of the agencies is one way to identify if this approach is effective or not..."*

Use of agencies in attracting talent has been found to be dependent on the forces of supply and demand of the sought-after talent, the type of specialist skills and the duration for which they are

required. Weitzel, Eckhardt and Laumer (2009) highlighted circumstances under which head-hunters or agencies could be used to attract talent.

## **2. Close ties with top universities to attract the best talent**

Partnering with top universities may be a good approach in recruiting the new and innovative talents. However, the training and development costs have to be considered in this process, as the newly recruited students need training in relation to the organisational processes and operations. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 15 stated that:

*"Recruiting students through campus selections based on different evaluation criteria is a good approach for recruiting new minds with innovative thinking, which are in line with the current market and lifestyle trends...such as King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals."*

Interviewee No. 21 stated that:

*"Though it is a good approach, the talent pool recruited may be only useful at low- or medium-level positions... rise in costs can be observed for training and skill development programs for these students, which can be avoided by directly recruiting the experienced and talented individuals."*

However, there are few programs being implemented in KSA which focus on the transference of knowledge into the country. From this perspective, Interviewee No. 17 stated that:

*"There are various educational programs being implemented for the entry-level professionals; for example, the College Degree Program for Non-Employees (CDPNE), which is a scholarship program designed for Saudi high school graduates who complete a ten-month college preparatory program in Dhahran and are provided with a scholarships to study at KFUPM, an international university. The results from the program are providing good results. About 308 CDPNE graduates were employed in 2017 alone. Similar programs are being adopted at various locations, and the students were enrolled at various universities in Europe, Australia, Asia and North America. Through these programs, the graduates can acquire the knowledge from top institutions across the globe and implement them in the KSA organisations, which would add competitive advantage. It is our policy."*

These statements reflect both strengths and drawbacks of partnering with universities in attracting talent. However, the majority of the participants are in favour of partnering with universities, as shown in the Figure 5.9, with very few participants who were either uncertain or strongly disagree. Close ties with top universities was strongly agreed on by 23.1% and agreed on by 46.2% of the respondents. Some 19.2% were uncertain, while 3.8% strongly disagreed and 7.7% disagreed with the statement. This suggests that, generally, most employees (69.3%) perceive having close ties

with top universities as a method the company uses to attract talented individuals. Stahl *et al.*, (2012) identified on-campus recruitment fairs as one of the ways of attracting talent.

### **3. Networking sites and online job boards**

Networking sites for attracting talent can be a good approach. For example, LinkedIn or other social networking platforms can be used for assessing the skillsets before recruiting the employees. In addition, the referenced employees along with the ratings can be useful in attracting the right individuals. Focusing on these aspects, Interviewee No. 17 stated that:

*"The connections between the employees on networking platforms can be used as a good way for attracting talent. Moreover, the reliability can be increased by assessing the network connections of an individual..."*

Online job boards may be a good approach, as it can attract a wide audience. However, the process of identifying the right talent becomes a complex process due to the large number of audiences. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 17 stated that:

*"It may result in collecting a large number of applications and require more resources for analysing key candidates. However, for attracting the individuals, this can be a good approach..."*

As this approach may come with various influencing factors (as discussed above), the effectiveness of using this approach may depend on the time and requirement of its application. The results reflected distributed responses across all the rating criteria. Those who strongly agreed with the statement that networking sites and online job boards were a method used by the organisation represented 23.1% of the respondents, while those who agreed represented 34.6%, indicating that generally the majority (57.7%) held this perception. Where 26.9% were uncertain, none strongly disagreed, and a minority (15.4%) disagreed with the statement. The use of networking sites and online job boards to attract talent has been noted by (among others) Stahl *et al.*, (2012).

### **4. Internships**

In relation to the issues raised in previous statements, such as the increase in training costs and use of additional resources etc., internships can be an effective approach for targeting these issues. Both individuals and companies can benefit from this approach, as it reduces the training costs for the companies and helps the individuals in gaining real-life experience and application of his/her knowledge in real time. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 14 stated that:

*"Internship opportunities for students can be a more effective approach compared to the direct recruitment from the universities...It would help in attracting the talented individuals from the*

*universities, who can be assessed during the internship, which would help in deciding whether to recruit them after the internship or not..."*

Focusing on the same point, Interviewee No. 17 stated that:

*"Our focus is on developing skills among the millennials and preparing the next generation to be 'job ready' with good standards. Industrial sponsorship programs that focuses on preparing the high school and vocational college students for jobs in various streams such as administration, security fabrications, operations management etc. is an effective approach so far. More than 3200 apprentices joined the workforce through this program in 2017."*

Similar views were presented by Dychtwald *et al.*, (2006). Similarly, most of the responses received were in support of the statement. The statement relating to using internships as a way of attracting talented individuals by the company was strongly agreed on by 34.6% and agreed on by 61.5% of the respondents, representing a combined 96.1% agreement with the statement. Instructively, none strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement, with 3.8% indicating that they were uncertain. This is consistent with practices in knowledge-based organisations where required skills are specialised and internship program are used to fill the long-term talent pipeline (Weitzel, Eckhardt and Laumer, 2009).

## **5. Offer the best compensation and benefits**

Compensations and benefits for the employees would improve the relationship of employees with their organisation and motivate them to increase performance and build trust. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 6 stated that:

*" salary is important; however, many other things can make a difference to employees. We have made a contract with a high-quality private school for our employees' families; we have increased the level of job security,."*

Interviewee No. 1 said that:

*"Benefits for employees is one of the good approaches, but it is sometimes not used effectively. Organisations usually focus on gaining maximum output with limited costs, even in HR."*

This reflects the current practices or approaches according to the participant's views. However, Interviewee No. 3 stated that:

*"Compensation and benefits have to be coupled with other approaches such as scope for personality and new skills development etc. for attracting the talent."*

This statement reflects that offering mere financial incentives may not always be effective. In addition, the promotion of the scope for development is also an essential aspect required for

attracting talent. The majority of the participants were in favour of offering the compensation and benefits. Offering the best compensation and benefits as part of the company's practices for attracting talent was strongly agreed on by 42.3% and agreed on by another 42.3%. None disagreed and 15.4% were uncertain, indicating general consensus (84.6%) with the company's use of compensation and benefits to attract talented individuals. Use of compensation and benefits to attract talent has been widely reported in different studies (Schlechter, Hung and Bussin, 2014; Bussin and Toerien, 2015). The high percentage of those agreeing with the statement confirms Latukha and Selivanovskikh's (2016) observation that successful companies spend a significant portion of their revenues on compensation and benefits.

## **6. Strong company branding**

Branding can be related to all the above statements which reflect the organisation's approaches in attracting talent. The brand of the company is associated with various factors, including financial, operational and marketing capabilities. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 15 stated that:

*"A company with good brand value attracts larger individuals as the brand is associated with trust. However, along with the brand, there is a need for other areas to be focussed on, such as good income, good development opportunities etc."*

Financial benefits are one of the popular approaches, as identified by the various participants for attracting individuals. Similarly, most of the respondents (80.8%) agree with the statement that strong company branding is used by the company to attract talented individuals. Just over 38% strongly agreed with the statement, representing the highest level of "strongly agree" to statements on attracting talented individuals. Those who were uncertain represented 15.4% of respondents, while 3.8% disagreed and none strongly disagreed. Using company branding as a talent-attracting mechanism is widely reported in literature (Sokro, 2012; Khalid and Tariq, 2015; Ahmad and Daud, 2016).

## **7. Overall analysis of how the company attracts talented individuals**

Overall analysis of how the company attracts talented individuals indicates that based on the percentage of employees agreeing with statements, the top three tools trusted are internships (96.1%), offering the best compensation and benefits (84.6%) and strong company branding (80.8%). These are summarised in Figure 5.9. Internships are part of an organisation's talent-attraction strategy. Banks *et al.*, (2015) proposed that the characteristics of the job, the way the organisation presents itself as an employer, the manner in which the recruiter handles the process,

the information given out during the recruitment process, applicant perceptions on their ability to fit into the organisation and their ability to identify with the organisation influence applicant willingness to join an organisation. Similarly, the ability to attract talented interns would be affected. Where an organisation has over 90% agreeing that the internship route is the method used to attract talent, it suggests that the job characteristics of the intern position have been configured in a manner that makes it attractive.

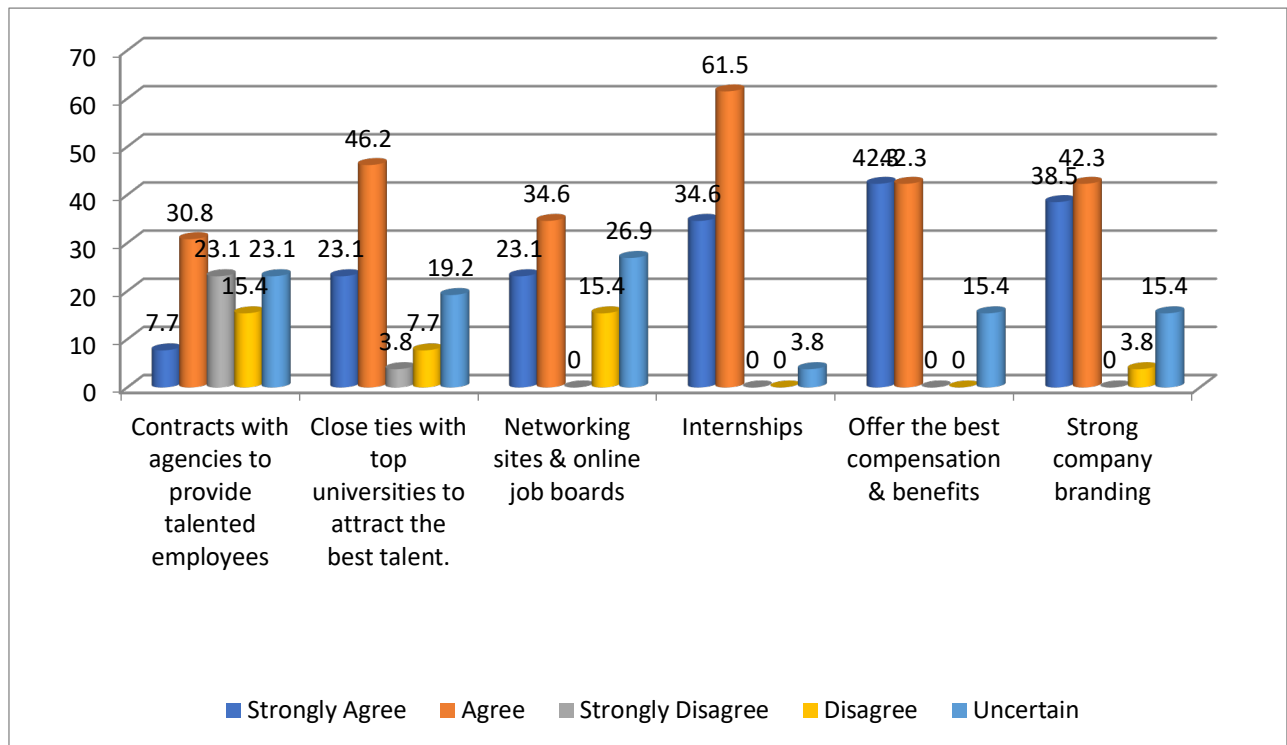


Figure 5.9: Summary of approaches used for attracting talent

Rating compensation highly (84.6%) as how the company attracts talented individuals highlights the criticality of an integrated approach to HRM, in particular the compensation and rewards component. The importance of compensation and benefits has been highlighted by, for example, Latukha and Selivanovskikh (2016), who indicated that successful companies spend over a third of their revenues on compensation and benefits. Included in this is strengthening the capacity of the HR department to deal with talent-focused compensation practices. Having a high percentage (80.8%) of respondents indicating that the organisation uses strong branding to attract talent is a confirmation of Edward’s (2017) view that an organisation’s recruitment processes communicate its branding as an employer of choice.



### **5.3.5. What Personal Attributes Would You Consider When You Recruit a Talented Employee?**

Personal attributes such as qualifications, experience, certifications, analytical skills etc. are a few general attributes that would be used in assessing an individual in the recruitment process. Usually these attributes are identified based on the job position and required skillset. The following attributes are identified as possibly being considered while recruiting talented individuals. The responses for each attribute are explained in the following sections:

#### **1. Skills and capabilities**

Skills and capabilities can be directly related to the job position and the requirements to be fulfilled to perform operations in the job. They are one of the most important attributes usually used in the process of identifying talent in the recruitment process. Focusing on this aspect, Interviewee No. 19 stated that:

*"Assessing skills and capabilities of the employees or individuals may be a complex task for the interviewers/agencies. It can be possible that, though an individual possesses required skills, he may not be able to implement them according to the organisational specifications as needed... therefore a careful assessment is necessary to analyse the skills..."*

Focusing on this aspect, another participant, Interviewee No. 14, stated that:

*"It is always good to use a set of clearly define attributes against any job. This would help in creating a right mix of methods to assess an individual."*

These statements reflect the views of Beechler and Woodward, (2009), which reflect the need for an integrated approach for recruiting an individual.

As skills and capabilities are one of the key factors used for assessing individuals, the majority of the responses supported the statement, as shown in Figure 5.10. Skills and capabilities were strongly agreed on by 60% and agreed on by 36% of the respondents as attributes they would consider when recruiting a talented employee. None disagreed and 4% indicated being uncertain. Skills and capabilities form the basis for employee and organisational performance and therefore constitute the core of talent. This is consistent with Cerdin and Brewster (2014), who view TM as including high-potential development.

#### **2. Experience**

Experience is an important factor in assessing individuals' capabilities. Experience in different positions can help in assessing individuals' capabilities to fulfil the requirements of various job roles. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 23 stated that:

*"This attribute would help in gaining information about the individual, the roles he is involved in, his decision-making skills, awareness about various aspects, and ability to manage operations and tasks assigned... however there are some jobs, for example, that need candidates with experience and other jobs that just need those who have recently graduated."*

This statement reflects the importance of experience, using which various qualities of the individuals can be assessed. However, the overall responses indicated a different perspective about the role of experience in assessing an individual.

Respondents indicated general uncertainty on the role of experience as a personal attribute to be considered when recruiting a talented employee, with 53.8% indicating that they were uncertain. A minority (15.4%) strongly agreed and 11.5% agreed with the statement, while a combined 19.2% either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement. The high percentage of those uncertain of the role of experience runs contrary to Waheed, Zaim and Zaim's (2012) framework for recruiting talent that lists experience as among the factors to be considered.

### **3. Level of education**

The majority of the respondents were in favour of using education as an attribute in assessing an individual. However, there are a few participants who reflected a different perspective. For example, Interviewee No. 18 stated that:

*"Education is the most important thing when we recruit a talented employee. The first thing I look for is her/his level of education; however, mere education as an attribute is not sufficient for assessing the individual for a job role. It has to be integrated with other related attributes for assessing the individual."*

This can contradict with the approach of partnering with universities in selecting the individuals. As identified earlier, students, along with their educational credits, have to be assessed for other skills and abilities. Another participant, Interviewee No. 4, stated that:

*"Education is not a very important attribute, as sometimes an individual may have high levels of experience, skills and competencies, but low educational qualifications. In such instances, the attribute of education has to be undermined for retaining or recruiting highly talented individuals."*

This particular response indicates that skills and competencies and experience are more important in assessing the individual for key positions, while education could only be a supporting factor.

These opinions were supported by Harvey (2000) and Patel *et al.*, (2003). However, the overall responses contradicted these views. Level of education was strongly agreed on by 30.8% and agreed on by 34.6% of respondents as a personal attribute considered when recruiting a talented employee. While none strongly disagreed with the statement, 11.5% disagreed and 23.1% were uncertain. Identifying education as a necessary attribute when identifying talent is consistent with related findings where it is viewed as signifying a person's trainability (Di Stasio, 2014).

#### **4. Creative thinking/problem solving**

As discussed in the previous statement's responses, there is a need for additional attributes for assessing individuals or employees. Problem-solving skills and creative thinking abilities can form such additional attributes for assessing and identifying the right candidates. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 9 stated that:

*"Key positions in organisations require excellent communication skills, creative skills, decision-making and problem-solving skills along with creative thinking abilities. It may be applicable to all positions which can be assessed at various levels, especially when we need to recruit a manager for the project..."*

This opinion reflects the need for assessing additional attributes as mentioned for assessing the individuals for key positions. In addition, these attributes can be assessed at various levels as for different job positions. This approach was identified by Tierney *et al.*, (1999) and Carmeli *et al.*, (2015). The responses from the interview favoured the use of creative thinking and problem-solving attributes for assessing the individuals. Creative thinking and/or problem solving were strongly agreed on by 53.8% and agreed on by 34.6% of respondents as attributes they would consider when recruiting a talented employee. Although none disagreed with this statement, 11.5% indicated that they were uncertain. The high regard for creative thinking and/or problem solving as necessary attributes when recruiting talent resonates with several studies that have associated employees classified as talented with both problem-solving and creative thinking abilities (Mumford, Medeiros and Partlow, 2012; Cherksova, 2015; van Heugten, 2016).

#### **5. Computer knowledge and skills or communication skills**

Computer skills are the most common skills required for most of the job positions in the organisations. Due to the greater dependence on computing and information systems, these skills have become the basic and essential skills for any job position. Accordingly, most respondents (84.6%) agreed with the statement that they would consider computer knowledge and skills or

communication skills when recruiting a talented employee. As many as 53.8% strongly agreed with the statement, none disagreed and 15.4% were uncertain. This is consistent with the demands of contemporary workplaces where such skills have become a basic requirement for employees (Carnevale and Smith, 2013).

### 6. Overall analysis of personal attributes that respondents would consider when recruiting a talented employee

An overall analysis of the personal attributes that the respondents would consider when recruiting a talented employee indicates that the top three attributes are skills and capabilities (96%), creative thinking and/or problem solving (88.4%), and computer knowledge and skills or communication skills (84.6%), as presented in Figure 5.10. All attributes were considered to be important by the participants, except the education attribute which received a slightly divided response.

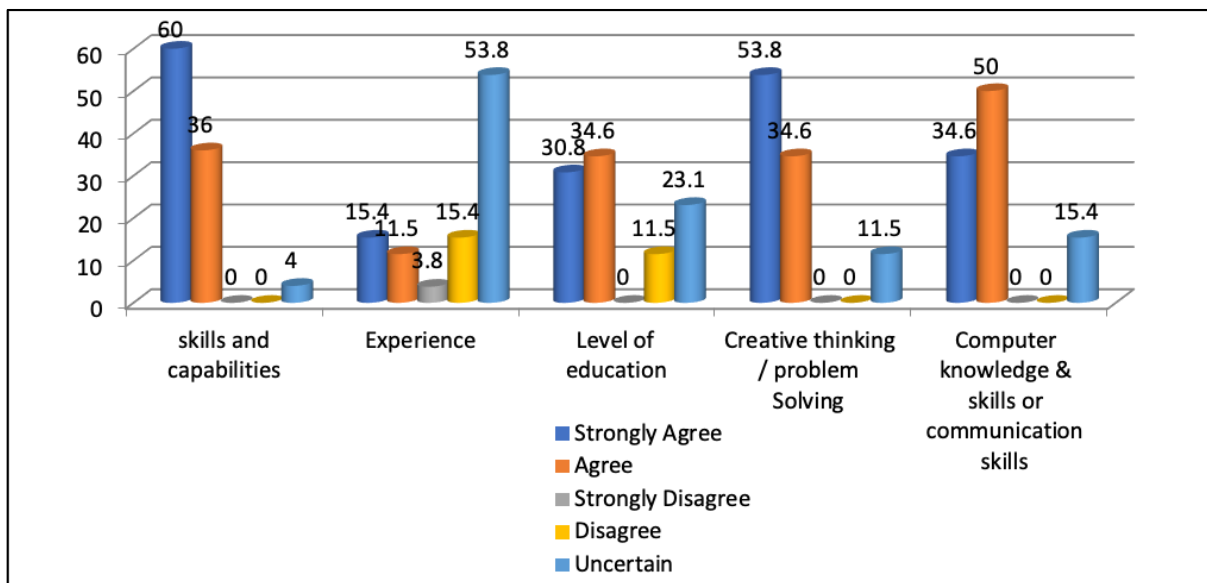


Figure 5.10. Summary of approaches used for recruiting employees

Identification of creative thinking and problem-solving skills and capabilities together with communication skills have been found to be important considerations when recruiting talented employees. Zeeshan (2013) noted the use of a “success profile” as a management practice for attracting, developing and retaining top talent ensuring that talent competencies are aligned with business priorities. Noting the importance of creativity, skills and capabilities, Alsakarneh and Hong (2015) highlighted the need for organisations to focus on employees with creative

competencies and capabilities. The results demonstrate that respondent perceptions of important attributes for those designated as talent are consistent with best practices.

### **5.3.6. As a Manager, What Do You Do in Order to Encourage Retention of Talented Employees?**

Retaining talented employees is an important aspect of TM. This approach can benefit organisations in minimising the costs involved in training new employees, minimising the loss in operational efficiency until the position is filled with a new employee, and for improving the value of resources. Various approaches are practised for retaining the key employees. The following are a few practices that are analysed in the interviews:

#### **1. Monetary – Compensation, benefits and retention bonuses**

As identified in earlier statements, financial incentives are one of the most important approaches identified for attracting talented individuals. The same approach is also used in retaining talented individuals. The majority of the participants supported this approach. For example, Interviewee No. 6 stated:

*"Although there are various approaches available for retaining the key talented employees, monetary benefits and bonuses are the most effective approach that can ensure retainability.."*

Similarly, Interviewee No. 15 stated that:

*"Increments and bonuses can be useful in influencing employees' decisions to quit the companies in favour of receiving high-salary packages. In addition, granting increments and bonuses based on the performance reviews would limit the decision to quit the company, where one has been working for a while..."*

Interviewee No. 2 state that:

*" We rewards employees for their accomplishments in achieving their relevant targets. This appreciation boosts their morale and strengthens the concept of effective team work."*

The responses from the interview supported the use of monetary increments and compensation in order to retain the employees, as shown in Figure 5.11.

Use of monetary rewards in the form of compensation and benefits and retention bonuses is a popular practice. As many as 93% of the respondents either strongly agree or agree that this is the situation. This is consistent with Kumar's (2016) finding in India that compensation packages are among common employee retention factors. Bhattacharyya (2015) also identifies competitive compensation and benefits among employee retention mechanisms. Despite the high level of

strong agreement with the statement (58%), this in fact lags behind all other factors analysed in the current study that affect retention. The result is consistent with Oladapo (2014), who although identified compensation as one of the factors, found that it was not the most important factor, while Gevrek *et al.*, (2017) noted that how monetary compensation impacts employee retention depends on employee perceptions on the fairness of compensation.

## **2. An open environment and culture**

Organisational environment is another important factor that could affect employee retention. The environment should be in accordance with the international standards, support employee development, motivate employees in learning new skills and provide options for career development within a healthy working environment with a unique and friendly organisational culture. This is reflected in the participants' statements. Interviewee No. 24 stated that:

*"We try to make our working environment in our organisations friendly and motivating, allowing employees to develop skills and competencies and enhance innovation capabilities. For example, Google do not pressurise its employees on fixed working hours, but rather provide flexible timings with fixed deadlines. In addition, it provides various career development opportunities, with good pay scales. In such instances it is employee satisfaction that takes the first seat rather than the monetary offers, where employees may prefer to stay with good companies rather than with those companies that offer high pay scales but forces them to operate in a stressed organisational culture..."*

Interviewee No. 8 stated that:

*" our company maintains continuous interaction with its employees. The employees are kept updated... policies, procedures and decisions. This approach keeps the employees well informed which helps them to make sound decisions and remain motivated and productive."*

Therefore, an open environment and culture are important approaches to be adopted by organisations to retain talented employees. The concept that the existence of an open environment and culture encourages the retention of talented employees is strongly agreed with by 81% and agreed with by 8% of the respondents. None disagreed, while the rest indicated that they were uncertain. The importance of an organisation's culture to employee retention has been recognised by, among others, Tlaiss, Martin and Hofaidhllaoui (2017), who noted that notwithstanding the importance of incentives in promoting talent retention, workplace culture and organisational norms also have influence. Also highlighting the importance of culture, Kontoghiorghes (2016) found a high association between perceived organisational culture and talent attraction and retention, a

finding also validated by Anitha (2016) who found organisational culture to have a higher impact on employee retention than commitment. Complete absence of disagreement on the role of an open environment and culture in talent retention resonates with Inabinett and Ballaro's (2014) findings that matching an employee's values with an organisation's culture positively affected their decision to remain in an organisation.

### **3. Employee stock options**

Employee stock options is one of the effective approaches being practiced by the organisations to retain employees. However, it may not always be viable for all types of employees. For example, Interviewee No. 16 stated that:

*"Our organisation provides many training programmes, Also, our employees are offered a fixed percentage of the organisation's profits. By offering this, the employees feel they are working for their own organisation."*

Though there are a few negative perceptions about employee stock options, the majority of participants favoured the approach. Belief in the use of stock options is prevalent among managers, with 65% of them strongly agreeing and 27% agreeing that they use them as a way of encouraging talent retention. The rest stated that they were uncertain about this. In extant literature, employee stock options have been associated with reduced level of turnover, especially where there are high chances of growth (Aldatmaz, Ouimet and Van Wesep, 2018). Belief is that use of stock options is consistent with Singh and Sharma's (2015) observation that in the UAE, organisations use both short- and long-term retention strategies, with stock options falling under long-term strategies.

### **4. A quality relationship with his or her manager**

The relationship between the managers and the employees may not only affect the operations but also the employee motivation and abilities. Interviewee No. 17 stated that:

*"It is the duty of the manager to maintain a healthy relationship with the employees; however not at the cost of affecting the organisational operations... it requires effective leadership and team management skills for creating a healthy working atmosphere. In addition, any issues with managers not only affect the employee retention approach but also affects the brand value and reputation of the organisation...In addition, the participation of employees in decision-making can make a huge difference in helping an organisation to remain attractive to talented employees. I think arranging an informal gathering out of the organisation—such as once a month, for example—is an important way of retaining employees. It is a chance to increase organisation networking, especially in our culture, where we always like to escape formality."*

This response reflects the role of managers in maintaining a good relationship with employees. However, the role of employees is undermined in this response. It is also essential that the employees follow fair practices and maintain a good relationship with managers. The majority of the participants responded that this statement is very important, which can affect employee retention.

The quality of the relationship between the employee and his or her manager is considered as a retention method by 96% of the respondents, while the rest are uncertain. Sixty-five percent (65%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the role of the quality of the manager–subordinate relationship. These results are consistent with Mathieu *et al.*, (2016) who found that turnover intentions are affected by forms of leadership behaviour. Zhang *et al.*, (2015) also found that style of leadership affects talent retention.

### **5. Opportunities for personal growth and professional development**

As identified in earlier discussion, opportunities for professional development and career growth are also important factors in determining the employee retention process.

For example, Interviewee No. 11 stated that:

*"There are many things we do in order to remain attractive to talented employees. Our organisation provides many training programmes and professional development programmes, which are important to employees, especially young employees."*

Such practices may affect employees' motivation levels, which may not only affect their professional growth but also the organisational culture. The responses to this statement are presented in Figure 5.11.

Opportunities for personal growth and professional development and viewed as methods of encouraging employee retention by 73% of the respondents, who strongly agree, and 27% of respondents, who agree, with none disagreeing or being unsure. This seems consistent with Oladapo's (2014) finding that among the top three reasons for employees leaving an organisation is opportunity for advancement, and Coetzee and Stoltz (2015) findings that indicate that individual employee's career satisfaction affects their retention. The link between developmental opportunities and intention to remain in an organisation is also highlighted by several researchers (Kossivi, Xu and Kalgora, 2016; Cardy and Lengnick-Hall, 2011).

### **6. Other non-monetary rewards that satisfy employees' psychological needs**



There can be other monetary rewards for employees, such as awards and recognition of their service or performance, which may motivate them to work with same organisation. For example, Interviewee No. 23 stated that:

*"I knew a lot of our employees who receive cars, homes as gifts or recognition for their services or performance which benefitted the company to a large extent... Similarly, I knew few friends who received commissions which are more than their monthly salary. Such policies may motivate them for improving their performance and work with the same organisation, but they may come at the expense of long working hours and a stressful working environment..."*

Interviewee No. 2 added that:

*"Praise and recognition are effective workplace motivators. Many employees work harder when they feel appreciated. In turn, workers who feel that they matter and play an important role to the company they work for are likely to remain on the team. Recognising employees could be as simple as adopting an employee of the month initiative, rewarding employees with gift cards to reputable restaurants, or giving an employee a pat on the back for a good job."*

Interviewee No. 23 stated that:

*"Our company is located in an area that is harder to access, and thus we provide mini-buses to pick up our employees at designated pick-up points."*

Similarly, Interviewee No. 7 stated that:

*"We offer a free bus, four meals, and free accommodation in order to help our workers to reduce their living costs."*

Therefore, though this approach may seem to be beneficial in the short term, it may not work in the long run, as the rewards are based on performance which may not be consistent all the time. When there is a failure, it would affect the employee's dedication and motivation, who may look out for other opportunities. However, the majority of the responses favoured this approach. This approach was strongly agreed on by 62% and agreed on by 35% of respondents. Belief in utility of psychological rewards is consistent with Olckers and Plessis (2015), who observed that highly skilled employees' issues relating to psychological ownership, such as communication, relationships, direction clarity, goals that are aligned, ethical behaviour, leadership recognition and acknowledgement, are necessary for talent retention. Similarly, Haider *et al.*, (2015) highlighted the importance of non-financial psychological aspects of employee retention.

### **1. Overall analysis of what managers do in order to encourage retention of talented employees**

All the interviewees agreed that their organisations do as much as they can in order to retain talented employees. Almost all of the interviewees said that they send an annual survey to all the employees in their organisations asking about their needs in order to accomplish organisational objectives. However, the managers typically use personal and informal relationships to help employees achieve their personal desires.

The three most popular practices are opportunities for personal growth and professional development, other non-monetary rewards that satisfy employees’ psychological needs and high-quality a relationship with his or her manager (Figure 5.11).

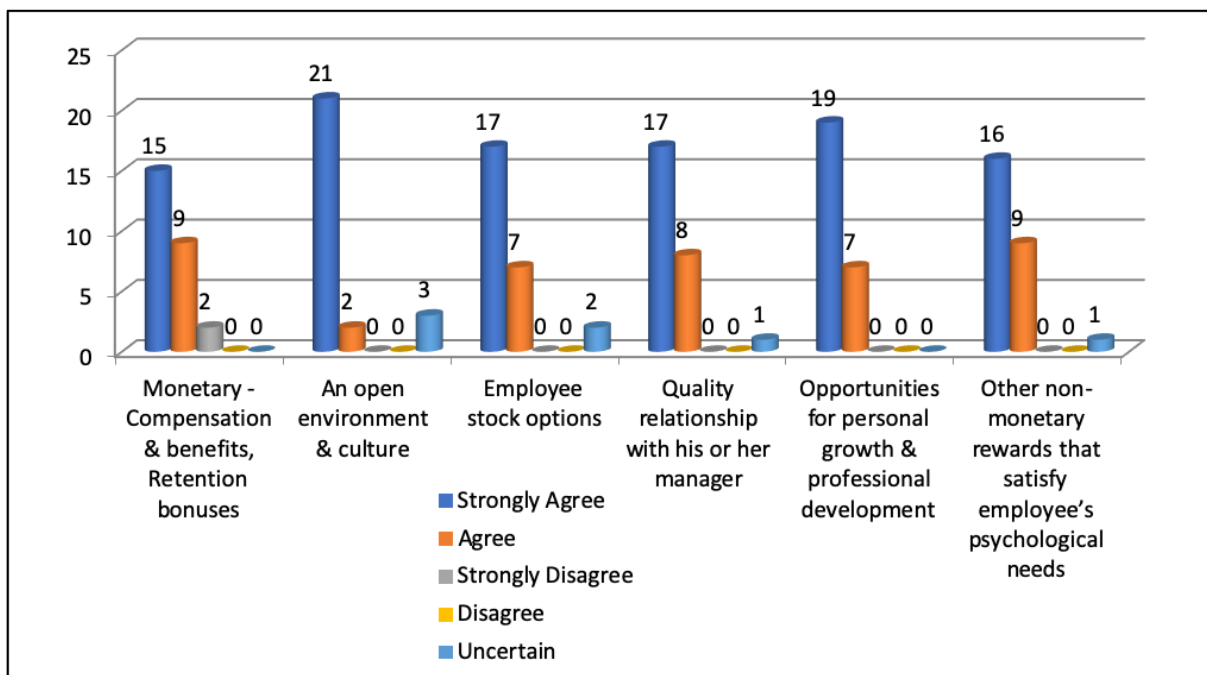


Figure 5.11. Summary of practices used for retaining employees

Instances of disagreeing with the statements were limited to 8% strongly disagreeing with the statement that compensation, benefits and retention bonuses were used to encourage talent retention. Uncertainty was also limited to not more than 12% of respondents.

### **5.3.7. Does Your Company Have Any Talent Development Practices? If Yes, What Activities Are Used to Develop Talented Employees?**

There are various activities that are used for empowering or developing the employees as a part of TM practices. Some of the following major approaches are evaluated in this section:

#### **1. Training and coaching as a part of each development discussion and education**

Training and coaching are the common developmental practices adopted in the various organisations. It may be associated with newly recruited employees and also the existing employees. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 16 stated that:

*"Training and coaching must be a continuous process, which needs to be updated according to the changing requirements, changing market conditions, and changing organisational goals in order to prepare the employees in different areas..."*

Similarly, Interviewee No. 17 stated that:

*"Leadership skills is one of the important aspects that need to be entrusted with the next generation of the workforce, making them efficient and effective in handling various operations in various industries. Our talent development programs specifically focus on this aspect and ensures these skills are imparted at each level."*

Interviewee No. 11 argued that:

*" employees and their managers work together to determine the most beneficial training needs, programs and development opportunities. Training and development include constructive feedback, coaching and counselling from managers and senior co-workers. Employees receive formal and informal development training delivered through live classroom sessions as well as on the job and through special assignments. also offers opportunities for employees to learn critical elements of other jobs, while further developing in their own. We strongly believes that it is a great way to prepare our employees to explore potential career opportunities internally, yet outside of their current jobs."*

This response focuses on the need to update training and coaching programs at regular time periods according to the external and internal changes in order to maintain competitive efficiency. Similarly, the overall responses indicate that training and coaching must be a part of each development discussion and education. Accordingly, use of training and coaching as part of discussions on employee development and education is prevalent among respondents, with 58% strongly agreeing and 38% agreeing that they use it as part of TM. The rest (4%) were uncertain. Having training and coaching as part of the performance review discussion indicates a performance

evaluation process that is systematic and consistent with Rodriguez and Walters' (2017) suggestion that such an approach ensures that employees are afforded relevant training and development suitable for both the individual and the organisation. An open discussion that is purposeful enables the supervisor and employee to mutually identify gaps in current performance and gaps likely to compromise future performance. Tse (2016) notes that such an open discussion enables the supervisor to equip the employee with the knowledge and tools they need and to expose them to appropriate training and coaching. Coaching as part of TM has been associated with employee satisfaction, talent retention and organisational long-term sustainability.

## **2. Peer-to-peer feedback and mentoring**

Use of peer-to-peer feedback and mentoring is used by 84% of the respondents, as indicated by 42% strongly agreeing and another 42% agreeing to its use. Use of peer-to-peer review as part of TD is prevalent in specialist areas such as the oil and gas organisations (Al-Abdulbaqi *et al.*, 2013). Mentoring is a component of peer-to-peer feedback. Lacey and Groves (2014) identify mentoring as part of TM. Using mentoring is consistent with Minor's (2016) observation that a formal organisational mentoring program assists individuals to develop personal future skills while assisting the organisation to develop a talent pool that would ensure its future success. Bhatnagar and Budhwar (2018) identify mentoring as part of developing talent, while Ambrosius (2018) considers it as part of strategic TM.

According to Interviewee No. 26:

*"As a manager we use peer-to-peer feedback and mentoring for two reasons. Mentors can develop leadership skills and gain a personal sense of satisfaction from knowing that they've helped someone. Mentees can expand their knowledge and skills, gain valuable advice from a more experienced person, and build their professional networks."*

## **3. Perform regular reviews and evaluations**

Reviews and evaluations can be used as methods for assessing the employees' strengths and weaknesses. Identifying weaknesses can be used for focusing on areas of development among the employees, according to which training and development programs can be designed. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 23 stated that:

*"Reviews and evaluations are mostly used for assessing the performance of employees for deciding the increments and promotions...the evaluations or assessments are also used for training and development programs to know what type of training the talent need."*

This reflects the opinion of the interviewee, which highlights the use of performance reviews and evaluations in a limited context and poor usage in designing training programs. However, the majority of interviewees responded differently. Performance reviews and evaluations are used by 84% of the respondents, while 15% were uncertain whether this is used. Performance reviews have become an integral part of employee development in organisations (Randhawa, 2017). Cooke, Saini and Wang (2014) identify performance management (which includes performance reviews and evaluations) as one of the human resources management practices used in TM, while Oladapo (2014) identifies performance management as being one of the five major categories of TM. Studies acknowledge that although TM started off focusing on recruitment and selection, it now includes performance management (Sonnenberg, Zijderveld and Brinks, 2014).

#### **4. Empowerment and support from top managers**

Empowerment and support by the top managers can benefit managers and employees and the organisation as a whole. According to Interviewee No. 3:

*"It usually depends on the managers and their leadership style, which reflects the possibility of support being received from them. Autocratic managers may not provide any support rather enforce more responsibilities on the employees; similarly, transactional leaders may provide support only when it is needed; while transformational leaders provide support whenever it is necessary.*

Interviewee No. 11 argued that:

*"Employee empowerment could result in building key talented employees .... we have developed great employee empowerment approaches and systems that enhance their retention rates. As a result of the evolution of technology, learning and development is the best mode of empowering employees to equip them with skills and knowledge to deal with emerging challenges in the business world. As a result of empowerment, employers can benefit from increased revenue and profits, low turnover, better customer service, innovation and strong organisational culture. Similarly, empowered employees become more accountable, committed, develop a strong work ethic, create a positive culture and remain focused to achieve the organisational goals."*

The above response clearly supports the role of managers and their leadership style in deploying support and empowerment approaches, as identified by Sahoo and Das, (2011), Dychtwald *et al.*, (2016) and Cappelli (2008), which may completely depend upon the managers. Therefore, top management has to ensure that the lower managers are supportive in nature with the lower-level employees. The interview responses favoured the use of empowerment and support for employee

development. Use of empowerment and support by top managers is perceived as a practice used as part of TM, as indicated by 46% strongly agreeing and 46% agreeing with the statement and none disagreeing. Employee empowerment has long been viewed as a factor in TM as it is associated with high-performance environments (Khandelwal and Shekhawat, 2018). Empowerment functions where there is sufficient support from top management and management support has been associated with reduced turnover intentions (Li, Kim and Zhao, 2017).

### **5. Establish a structured system of developing talent to meet the growth and change requirements that will help to fill the skills gaps**

As identified earlier, the change in organisations is inevitable, and the changes across various activities have to be synchronised with other changes. Therefore, there is a need for a structured system to implement change in organisations. For example, Interviewee No. 13 stated that:

*"Change has to be clearly managed in relation to the external and internal environments of the organisations, and accordingly the necessary changes have to be made in the processes and approaches of developing the talent..."*

Another interesting approach was stated by Interviewee No. 16:

*" employees and their managers work together to determine the most beneficial training needs, programs and development opportunities. Training and development ...include constructive feedback, coaching and counselling from managers and senior co-workers. Employees receive formal and informal development training delivered through live classroom sessions as well as on the job and through special assignments.*

Interviewee No 1

*" we have an effective mentoring and coaching program dedicated for the development of employees focusing on improving communication skills and problem-solving approaches. Additionally, a job-enrichment approach adopted in the company, such as team meetings, presentations, volunteering etc., proved to be very successful in creating an attractive environment and workplace in the organisation."*

Another manager, Interviewee No. 9, stated:

*"We work with our employees in determining and developing the effective training programs that would meet the needs and requirements of our employees. Approaches such as counselling, motivation and constructive feedback from the seniors help the employees in their personal and professional development. Additionally, both formal and informal training programs are designed and implemented to ensure the overall development of the employees. This approach is one of the*

*innovative processes adopted ...which is designed to explore potential career opportunities within the organisation and can also be useful outside the current jobs."*

The overall responses strongly support the use of a structured system. Establishing a structured system of developing talent to meet the growth and change requirements that will help employees get the skills they need is strongly agreed on by 58% and agreed on by 35% of the respondents. This together with “training, making coaching a part of each development discussion, and education” obtained the highest levels of “strongly agree”, indicating that TD is considered critical by the respondents. A structured approach to TM is consistent with Newhall (2015), who highlights the importance of aligning TD and succession planning,

**6. Overall analysis of the responses**

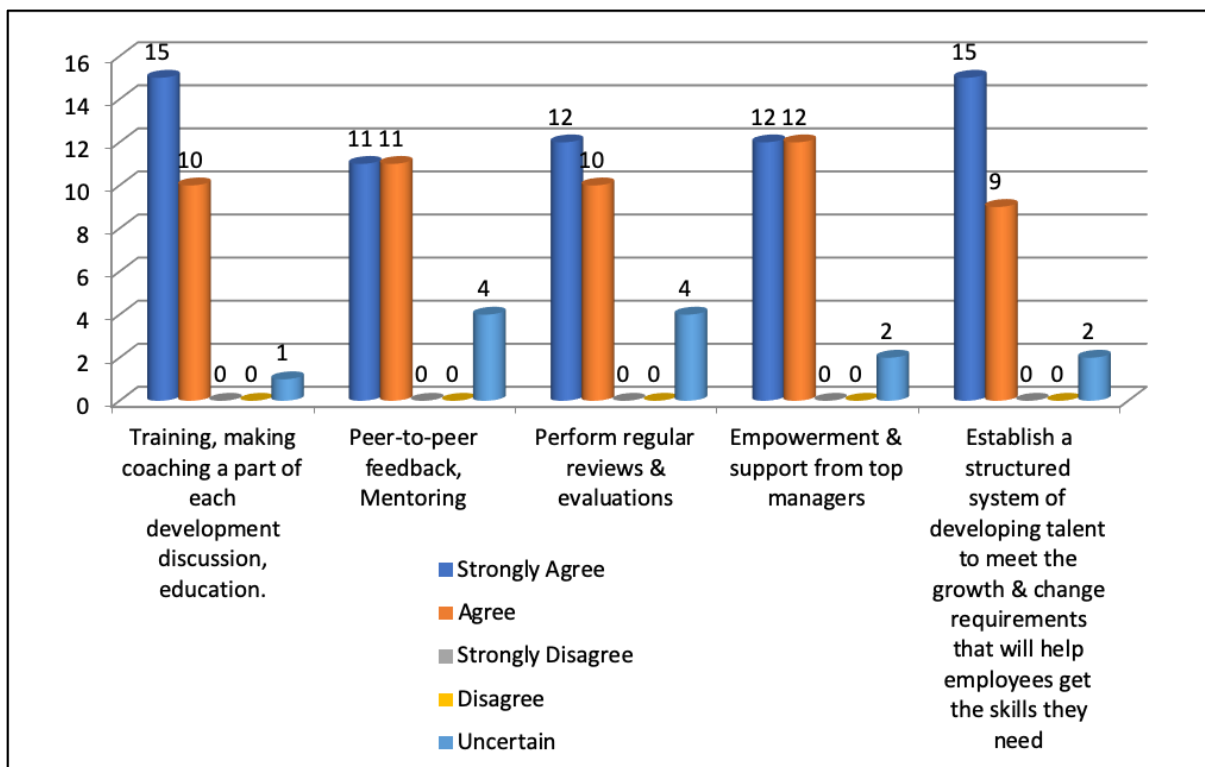


Figure 5.12. Summary of practices used for talent development

The two most used practices to develop talented employees are training and coaching (Figure 5.12). Deploying a structured system is another approach that was strongly supported by various interviewees. Few other approaches such as assignments, certifications etc. were identified by interviewees. The results are consistent with extant literature that has emphasised a structured

approach to talent development. For example, with specific reference to UAE, Vassilopoulou *et al.*, (2016) suggest that focusing on empowerment and employment of Emirati talent is important but insufficient for organisations to tackle the complexity of TM.

### **5.3.8. Does Your Company Have Any TM Practices or Particular HRM Practices to Manage Talented Employees? If Yes, What Are They?**

To establish whether a company had any TM practices or particular HRM practices meant for managing talented employees, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

#### **1. Creating a motivating environment and strong engagement**

Creating a motivating environment and strong engagement as part of TM practices was strongly agreed on by 42% and agreed on by 38% of respondents, while 19% indicated that they were uncertain, as shown in Figure 5.13.

This is the highest percentage of those indicating uncertainty among all the statements. A motivating environment has been associated with high levels of employee engagement, which in turn has been associated with lower levels of intention to leave an organisation and of actual turnover (Umamaheswari and Krishnan, 2016; Thompson and Gregory, 2012).

#### **2. Providing coaching, and focus on future career**

Forty-six percent (46%) strongly agreed and 35% agreed with the statement that the company uses the provision of coaching, focusing on an employee's future career as part of its TM practices, as shown in Figure 5.13.

This is consistent with Kim *et al.*, (2013), finding that coaching of managerial employees can result in benefits that include satisfaction with work and career commitment. Fifteen percent (15%) indicated that they are uncertain about this, while 4% strongly disagreed with the statement. The latter seems to contradict earlier findings in response to the question, "Does your company have any TD practices? If yes, what activities are used to develop talented employees?" Levels of uncertainty were much lower (4% and below) and none expressed any level of disagreement. It is possible that while coaching is provided, a minority may feel that it does not focus on their future careers.

#### **3. A good personal relationship with their manager**



There was also consensus among the participants that building strong internal relationships among co-workers/supervisors increases talent retention. This view was mostly prevalent among general managers and company owners, with most general managers and owners expressing the view that all their employees are the part of their family and they treat them as family members. Interviewee No. 10 argued that:

*"The focus and one of the strategies of the company in the workplace is to build strong and committed relationships with the employees. It is one of the effective strategies adopted to achieve sustainability and improved organisational performance by ensuring strong employee relationships. As a part of this approach,... adopts a competitive wages system and provides other benefits such as medical care, housing and rental allowances, educational allowances, bonuses etc. In addition, the dedicated training programs ensure the continuous growth and development of its employees' skills and competencies, their care, relocation benefits, housing benefits, transportation, assistance with educational programs and bonuses. Moreover, Ma'aden provides training and professional development programs throughout its operations and projects to ensure the occupational growth of its employees."*

According to Interviewee No. 3:

*"We look after our staff as part of the family. This is the policy from the owner because he thinks all workers are like their son/daughter... if we look after them well it will make a big difference in their work...they will become more loyal to our organisation.... These relationships are created by different approaches like employee activities, employee birthday parties, New Year parties, etc. .... Talent will not stay if the workers are not in good relations."*

Good personal relationships were identified as among the practices used in TM, as indicated by 69% agreeing with the statement (strongly agree 23% and agree 46%). However, 27% indicated that they were uncertain that manager-subordinate relationships were part of practices linked to TM. Supportive supervisors have been considered to be important in TM interventions because of the role they play in coaching subordinates (Linger, 2013).

#### **4. Incorporate TM systems into an organisation's strategy**

It is essential that organisation strategy covers all the important aspects in organisations. TM—one of the key operations in organisations which focus on identifying, managing and retaining talent—must be included in developing an organisation's strategy. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 24 stated that:

*"We work to make sure TM strategy is strategically aligned with organisational strategy in order to ensure smooth implementation of TM practises ..."*

Such strategical alignment can be possible when organisations prioritise a TM approach along with other main organisational activities. Most of the responses favoured this approach, as it is clearly evident from the responses in Figure 5.13.

Forty-two percent (42%) strongly agreed while 38% agreed with the statement that TM systems are incorporated in the organisation's strategy. Fifteen percent (15%) were uncertain and 4% strongly disagreed with the statement. TM is driven by business strategies (Oladapo, 2014) and has been identified as part, if not one, of the main components of an organisation's overall human resources management strategy (Bryant and Allen, 2013).

### **5. Building the talent pipeline (succession planning/opportunities)**

One of the important objectives of TM, as identified in various studies (Cheloha and Swain, 2005; Latukha and Selivanovskikh 2016; Lawler, 2008), is to manage a pool of talented employees to minimise the risk of untimely and unexpected vacancies of key individuals in the companies, the process which can be stated as succession planning flexible, were strongly agreed on by 56% of respondents and agreed on by 27%. Fifteen percent (15%) were uncertain, while 4% strongly disagreed with the statement. Building a talent pipeline or preparing talent to fill future roles was evident from some from the participating interviewees' companies. In this context, according to Interviewee No. 11:

*“Planning for talent to inherit and develop in key positions is very important for the organisation as this reduces the risk of losing talent.”*

Moreover, they indicated that:

*“We have to prepare our workers to meet the required standard to be able to fill the future positions by providing regular training to employees.”*

Similarly, Interviewee No. 17 stated that:

*“We have clear, long-term plans for employees within the organisation and these plans are revised annually...not only that, but every month in the meeting we discuss if there are problems or any further requirements from the departments at all levels .... and the plans are revised any time if the circumstances demand a change.”*

By building talent pools and regularly reviewing the needs and requirements across all the departments in the organisations, it would minimise the risk of talent loss and provides a strategic way for building talent specifically for various requirements, which also helps in retaining talent. However, the transparency in the succession planning process is identified to be an important

aspect by various interviewees, which would ensure that talent stays loyal to the organisation. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 19 stated that:

*“The more opportunities to be part of the talent pipeline and the career pathways which the organisation offers...the more talent will stay.”*

Similarly, Interviewee No. 7 noted that:

*“Any movement (promotion) of our staff needs be transparent as it might affect other workers.”*

Interviewee No. 7 also added that the evaluation process that helps to support these promotions needs to be transparent, and stated that:

*“We build talent inside our company, we choose the best from the operational level...appoint them to be senior employees, team leaders, captains, supervisors, etc... They are evaluated through key performance measures and acceptance from other team members and their mentor.”*

The scope of the employees’ profiles tends to increase as they are updated with new skills and competencies and are offered more responsibilities and new positions. Thus, the “pool of talent” can be readily used to cover vacancies that arise within the organisation. These practices are already put into place in a few organisations, as Interviewee 14 stated that:

*“We build our talent and hope that they will help our company in the future; not only to understand the job but also to understand our organisation and keep our standard of work...we don’t have to do much on induction.”*

Therefore, it can be concluded that senior management creates an environment that allows them to build talent pipelines, and through this scheme to gain loyalty from talented workers. This also means that they have a ‘ready pool of talent’ ‘ready to use’, which can contribute to the competitive edge for the organisations.

## **6. Giving empowerment, authority and flexibility**

Another notion from the participants is that in order to influence talented workers to stay, organisations have to give them authority and flexibility in the decision-making process. This will naturally be based on their position in work. According to participants, this is especially true for key positions (that is, managerial talent).

In this context, Interviewee No. 19 indicated that:

*“Giving them authority to manage their work in the team is needed for talent because sometimes they don’t want anyone outside the team to interfere in their job...without that trust they may not be happy and thus not be loyal to the organisation.”*

There are some other participants (for example, Interviewees 16, 4 and 12) who noted that talent should be given authority at work because when they feel they have authority, then they enjoy working for the organisation. However, there is an argument that the authority and flexibility granted should be limited or commensurate with the position, for the organisation's benefit. The practice of empowering employees, giving them authority and being flexible were strongly agreed on by 54% of respondents and agreed on by 27%. Fifteen percent (15%) were uncertain, while 4% strongly disagreed with the statement. Employee empowerment has been associated with their engagement and intention to remain in a specific organisation (Deery and Jago, 2015). Giving employees authority and allowing for flexibility in the accomplishment of their tasks have been associated with both having a sense of being empowered and feeling engaged (Idris, 2014).

### **7. Building employer branding/employer attraction**

Branding is the process adopted to improve the value of the organisation, and also its sales and marketing processes. However, branding also influences the TM within the organisation. It would help in attracting the talented employees and retaining them by adding value to their profiles. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 3 stated that:

*“...We are well-known...not just due to launching one or two days of advertisements but through repeatedly branding our company over long periods of time... Our main aim in branding is to influence customers and at the same time we can attract future employees...When we are well-known many ‘potential workers’ will come to us...”*

This process helps in identifying and retaining talent. Building employer branding is perceived by 80% of the respondents (strongly agree 42% and agree 38%) as part of their organisation's practices intended to manage talented employees. Of the remaining employees, 8% strongly disagreed while 12% indicated that they were uncertain. The findings are consistent with observations elsewhere where employer branding has been linked to attraction and retention of talent (Sokro, 2012; Stahl, 2012).

### **8. Recognizing and valuing employee performance**

Recognizing and valuing the performance of talent is considered as one of the important aspects to influence talent to stay in the organisation.

Interviewee No. 12 commented that:

*“Everyone wants to be important, especially talent. They want to be recognised as talent and their performance should not be ignored.... Their enthusiasm to work and contribute the best performance increases when talent knows that the organisation recognises their performance.”*

Recognising and valuing employees is perceived by 81% of respondents as a practice targeting employee TM. Four percent (4%) strongly disagreed with the statement while 15% were uncertain. These findings can be related to Angari (2013) and Achoui (2009) as they identified that assessing and valuing employee performance is one of the effective TM practises that can retain employees.

### 9. Providing appropriate pay and other compensation/benefits

Appropriate pay and benefits are perceived by 81% of the respondents to be part of practices to retain talented employees; 4% strongly disagreed while 15% were uncertain of this.

Both recognising and valuing employee performance and providing appropriate pay and other benefits constitute forms of employee recognition. The former has been associated with talent retention as it has also been associated with reduced turnover intentions (Garr, 2012) and reduced actual turnover (Yang, Wan and Fu, 2012).

### 10. Overall analysis of TM practices or particular HRM practices to manage talented employees

Generally, this section had the highest level of agreement with the statements (over 60% for all statements), indicating the importance of human resources management practices to TM.

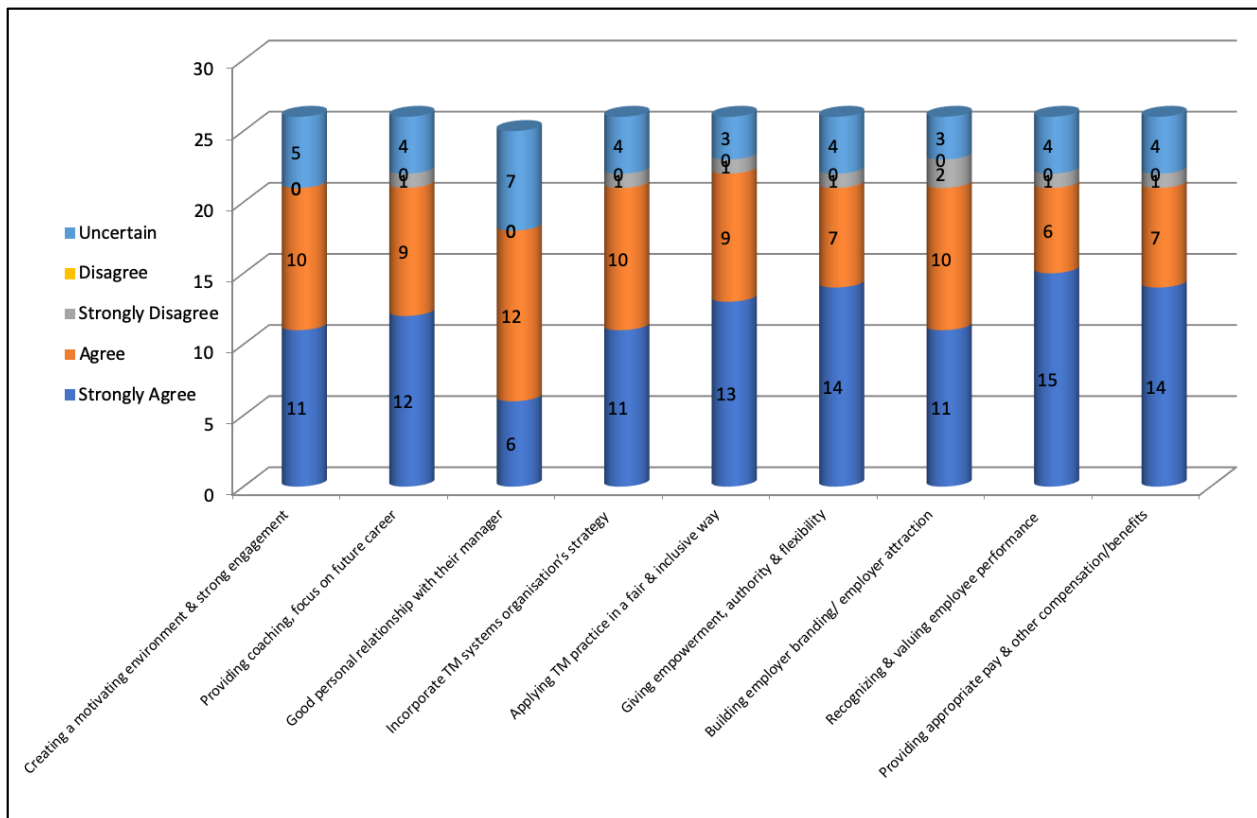


Figure 5.13. Summary of TM practises practiced in interviewees' companies

The three most agreed-on statements, where over 50% of respondents indicated that they strongly agreed, (Figure 5.13) are:

1. Recognising and valuing employee performance (58%)
2. Providing appropriate pay and other compensation/benefits (54%)
3. Giving empowerment, authority and flexibility (54%)

The three statements are all linked to strategic human resources management. The criticality of the latter has been highlighted in literature where the effectiveness of TM practices is linked to it being closely aligned with aspects of an organisation's human resources management systems, its business strategy, value systems and leadership philosophy (Stahl *et al.*, 2012).

In addition to these practices, there are some interesting practices adopted by the participants' companies. Some of the practices include hiring the local talent, offering training and development opportunities to them and identifying their potential at an early stage to fast-track their career development. Similarly, another approach included the priority of internal promotions compared to external recruitment to fill a vacancy or new position, leading to high retention rates. In addition, practices such as leading the change through innovation, research and development by extending the support to all employees in these areas is another interesting approach identified. In addition, the feedback and suggestions from the employees are regularly reviewed and the issues are addressed by the companies, which would lead to enhanced satisfaction among the employees. One of the interesting approaches is the employee engagement and satisfaction survey, adopted by Sahara, for addressing the issues related to the employees and their performance and engagement. Regarding the TM practices,

### **5.3.9. What Challenges Are You Facing in Managing Talent?**

#### **1. Talent shortage**

Talent depends on the required skillsets, and it changes with the change in industry and change in positions. As different jobs require different skillsets, talented individuals have to be present in each sector for different positions. However, Interviewee No. 21 said that:

*"We have a shortage of talent in various fields and as a result we have to depend largely on expatriates...however the scenario is changing. Various programs are being implemented to train and develop Saudi individuals..."*

This statement reflects that there is a shortage of talent in KSA, which is being addressed by recruiting talented individuals from other countries. However, the overall interview responses reflect a different perspective with mixed responses, as shown in Figure 5.14.

Talent shortage was agreed on by 50% of respondents as a challenge faced in TM. Another 50% did not agree, and 11.5% strongly disagreed. Some 11.5% disagreed and 27% were uncertain. Respondents are clearly split on the effect of talent shortages on TM. Shortage of talent is a global phenomenon. That the demand-supply gap in talent acquisition presents challenges in TM has been observed by, among others, Stahl *et al.*, (2012) and Bessen (2014). The split in responses seems to defy Stahl *et al's.*, findings. This situation may reflect differences in definitions of what constitutes talent and therefore differences in conceptualising what amounts to talent shortage.

## **2. Saudisation**

As identified in an earlier response, there are various programs being undertaken to increase the talented workers among Saudi individuals. Focusing on this aspect, Interviewee No. 6 stated that:

*"The Saudisation policy, which is an integral part of Vision 2030, has been achieving good results...There has been an increase in the innovation, research, and skill development activities which is helping the Saudi millennials to improve their skills and awareness about various developments...however the result of Saudisation means we miss a lot of foreign talents."*

However, this approach may initially create an ambiguity in the workplace where the majority are expatriates. An increase in Saudi employees may create conflicts in organisational culture if the change in human resources is not managed effectively. Therefore, Saudisation is a new and complex aspect which may or may not be considered a challenge of TM. As a result, the interviewees' responses are widely distributed, as shown in Figure 5.14.

The policy of Saudisation is believed to cause challenges in TM (42%), with 19% strongly agreeing and 23% agreeing with the statement. A total of 30% disagreed with the statement (15% strongly disagree and 15% disagree) and another 27% were uncertain, presenting a situation where over 50% did not agree that Saudisation was a problem in the TM process. This response confirms observations of the Saudisation policy being a double-edged sword; on the one hand it seeks to ensure availability of talent in the long term, but simultaneously, it does not ensure the availability of sufficient levels of talent (Azhar, Duncan and Edgar, 2018; Al-Asfour and Khan, 2014).

## **3. Lack of leadership**

Leadership in Saudi organisations is a complex aspect that needs to be understood clearly. As there is a considerable number of expatriates working at various levels, the leadership styles may differ based on the leader's abilities and approaches. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 24 argued that:

*"Leadership in Saudi organisations comes with a mix of styles including Laissez Faire, transformational, transactional etc. Moreover, the lack of leadership qualities among managers can be considered as an important challenge for TM..."*

Similarly, Interviewee No. 7 said that:

*"Over dependence on expatriate managers is shaping the Saudi organisations' culture in different perspectives...However this may not be feasible if the number of Saudi employees increases, which would require a change in leadership approaches, and the existing managers may lack such change management skills Or it may lead to issues in the workplace..."*

The lack of leadership aspects can be clearly identified from these responses. Accordingly, the responses are widely distributed. Lack of leadership was identified by 65% of respondents as a challenge faced in TM. Twenty-three percent (23%) strongly agreed with the statement, while 42% agreed with it. However, 16% disagreed with the statement and 19% indicated that they were uncertain, presenting a total of 36% not entirely agreeing with the statement. The criticality of leadership in TM is confirmed by, among others, Vaiman, Scullion and Collings (2012) and Stahl (2012), who identify decisions relating to it as strategic and therefore meant to be made at a leadership level.

#### **4. Maintaining staff engagement and commitment within the current culture**

This question can be related to the previous question: how leaders manage staff engagement and commitment to support the current organisation culture. Similarly, the responses are widely distributed (Figure 5.14) as there is no clear understanding or policies about how to manage such changes, support employee engagement and commitment by using the current culture and without affecting the organisational performance. Well over 60% of respondents (23% strongly agree and 46% agree) agreed with the statement that maintaining staff engagement and commitment within an organisation's current culture presented challenges to TM. Where 23% indicated that they were uncertain, 8% strongly disagreed.

The importance of TM on staff engagement and commitment on the one hand and organisational culture on the other has been noted in literature (Al Ariss, Cascio and Paauwe, 2014; Jauhari, Sehgal and Sehgal, 2013). Looking at TM from a people equity perspective, Schiemann (2014) identifies TM as a cycle that includes employee engagement and commitment-related activities.



Organisational culture has also been associated with TM (Kontoghiorghes 2016), linking a high-performance organisational culture and TM.

### **5. Lack of knowledge and understanding of establishing a structured system of developing talent to meet the new growth and change requirements that will help employees get the skills they need**

As identified in the previous questions, many changes are taking place in KSA, which is rapidly transforming itself in various aspects. Interviewee No. 18 argued that:

*"The approach of the Saudi government in shifting towards a knowledge-based economy from an oil-dependent economy has involve major changes and developments across various industries in different sectors. This would lead to many changes in the working cultures and organisational management... A lack of clear policies or structure to manage such large change is one of the major drawbacks..."*

This response clearly states that the lack of specified structural policies is one of the major disadvantages and challenges in the process of transformation. The responses clearly support the statement. Lack of knowledge leads to a percentage of respondents (42%) strongly agreeing that it is a challenge faced in managing talent. Another 31% agreed with the statement, making it the single most important factor affecting TM. The statement also leads in the percentage of those agreeing with the statement. However, another 35% either disagreed (16%) or indicated that they were uncertain (12%). Al Ariss (2014) noted that there is a general lack of knowledge of TM especially given its multiple definitions and conceptualisations.

### **6. Geographical location**

The location of the company is another factor identified by the interviewees that would affect the TM in organisations. For example, Interviewee No. 13 stated that:

*"Our company is far from the city and there is no public transport, and therefore employees have to travel using their own vehicles... This limits our company's ability to retain the best."*

Similarly, Interviewee No. 9 said that:

*"Our company is located near to the villages, and most of the employees prefer living in cities. Therefore, I guess that talented employees, when they have better opportunities in cities, may not prefer to work with companies that are remotely located."*

Thus, it can be concluded that geographical location would impact various TM practises, including talent identification, attraction and retainment.

A combined 65% of respondents either strongly agreed (27%) or agreed with the statement that geographical location was a challenge in TM; 35% either disagreed or were uncertain. That the practice of TM can be specific to geographic locations is illustrated in context-specific studies conducted by, for example, Furusawa (2014) focusing on Japan; Piansoongnern (2014) focusing on Thailand; Cooke, Saini and Wang (2014) focusing on China and India; and Biygautane and Al Yahya focusing on the MENA region.

### **7. High staff turnover and difficulties in recruitment**

The Saudisation process is relatively recent, and still there is a large number of expatriates working in Saudi organisations. Recruiting employees from other countries can be a difficult task as it involves various risks and high costs. Interviewee No. 22 said:

*"We recruit employees mainly from the South Asian region and they want to stay for a maximum of four years and go back to their country; however, there are many complications associated with it. As the recruitment process is handled by agencies, we often face situations where the recruited employees lack sufficient skills..."*

This response indicates recruitment difficulties, and the interview results support this aspect. A combined 61% of respondents strongly agreed (23%) or agreed (38%) with the statement that high staff turnover and difficulties in recruitment presented challenges for managing talent. Sixteen percent (16%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement and 23% indicated that they were uncertain.

High levels of turnover have been associated with the depletion of organisational talent (Shabane, 2017; Harhara, Singh and Hussain, 2015). Difficulties in recruitment affect TM in the way that organisations have to compete for limited talent (Al Ariss, 2014; Vaiman, Scullion and Collings, 2012).

### **8. Inadequate alignment between the organisational strategy and talent strategy**

Interviewee No. 24's response in the previous section (6.3.8) clearly identify the need to integrate organisational strategy and TM strategy. The responses clearly support the integration for effective TM implementation and inadequate integration as a challenge to TM implementation. Inadequate alignment between the organisational strategy and talent strategy is perceived as causing challenges in TM by 65% of the respondent; 27% are uncertain while 8% strongly disagree with the statement. This echoes Stahl *et al* (2012) findings that what is critical in TM for purposes of

deriving requisite benefits is achieving internal alignment of all aspects related to TM and having TM practices embedded in the firm's value system and business strategies.

### 9. Overall analysis of challenges faced in managing talent

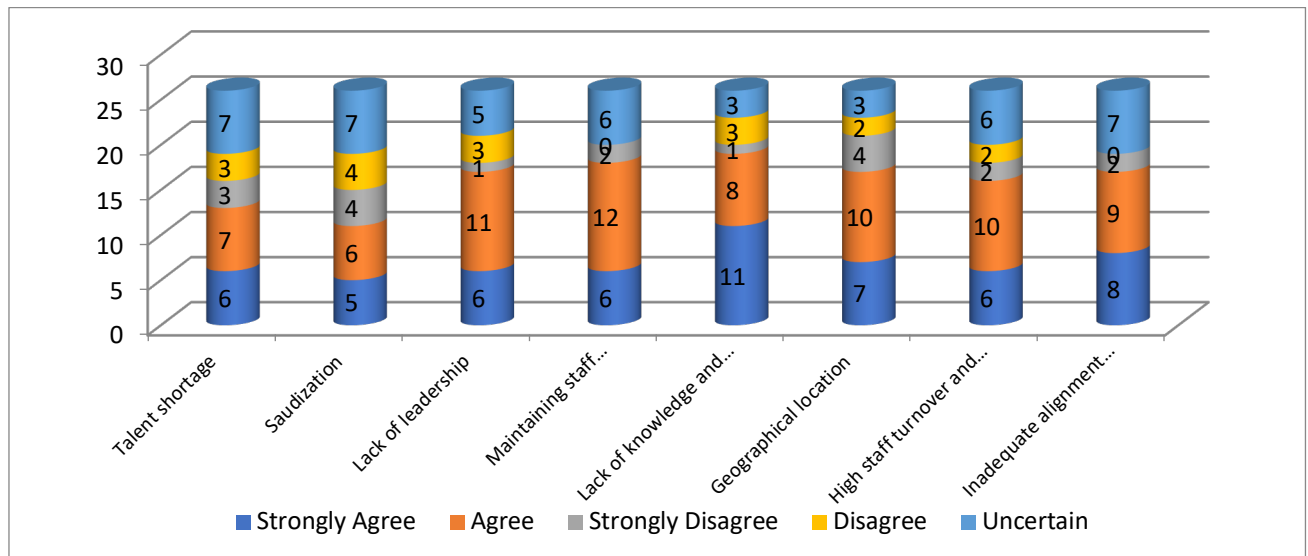


Figure 5.14. Summary of TM challenges

The main challenges experienced in managing talent are represented by the combined percentage of those who strongly agreed and those who agreed with the given statements, constituting more than 50% of respondents (Figure 5.14):

- Lack of knowledge (73%)
- Maintaining staff engagement and commitment within the current culture (69%)
- Lack of leadership, inadequate alignment between the organisational strategy and talent strategy and geographical location (all with 65% of respondents agreeing with the statements)

These challenges are highlighted in Brown and Hesketh (2004), Thunnissen *et al.*, (2013) and Kontoghiorghes (2016) as some of the major challenges of implementing TM.

#### 5.3.10. How Would You Describe the Effect of TM on Your Employees' Attitude?

Employees' attitude towards the organisation or work is very important, as it defines their commitment and dedication towards the organisation. TM practises may or may not influence employees' attitudes, but a positive influence can achieve various benefits for the organisation such as employee commitment and satisfaction dedication and retention etc. Therefore, this particular question is selected to investigate the impact using the following statements:

## **1. Improved satisfaction of the employees**

The two responses in the previous section by Interviewee No. 16 and Interviewee No. 1 indicate the increase in employment satisfaction as a result of deploying TM practises in their organisations. The interview responses clearly support this statement as evident from the findings in Figure 5.15. Among the total interviewees, 61% of them strongly agreed and 39% of them agreed that TM practises can improve employee satisfaction. In this perspective, Interviewee No. 17 commented:

*"TM practises such as training and motivation can lead to employees' skills development, which could increase their satisfaction levels. We adopt training practices for specific individuals who are selected against specific roles in order to maintain a talent pool for succession management... This would improve their commitment and enable them to perform more effectively..."*

Similarly, Interviewee No. 16 argued that:

*"By supporting the employees in their career development through dedicated allocation of tasks and training programs and using approaches like job rotation, we increase employee satisfaction levels, which may directly influence their commitment towards us..."*

Various studies have supported the positive impact of TM practises on employee satisfaction (Silverthorne, 2004; Koberg and Chusmir, 1987; Chen, 2004; Kotler and Lee, 2008; Bethke-Langenegger *et al.*, 2011), and the results from the interview clearly indicate this aspect.

## **2. Greater engagement**

TM may lead to greater engagement of employees in the organisational operations. Approaches such as career development and motivation can enhance employee commitment and dedication in various operations. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 25 stated that:

*"Using TM techniques such as training and motivation can help the managers in improving the employees' capabilities and skills, which would result in improved engagement of employees in the areas related to their job positions."*

Likewise, Interviewee No. 21 stated that:

*"Once the employees are updated with new skills and competencies, their performance will be improved provided they are placed in the right positions with the right support from the managers... This would ultimately lead to the motivation of greater engagement of the employees..."*

Interviewee No. 19, in this aspect, commented:

*"We completed the talent identification and development program in 2017, which is one of our major achievements towards TM strategy development and implementation. Our internal survey*

*on employees, which was enthusiastically participated by 81% of the employees has revealed that the employee engagement index and performance enablement index have steadily improve since 2013, which is 3% higher than global and Saudi average."*

Both responses indicate that the TM practises, when applied at the right time with the right employees and given support, can result in greater engagement and improved performance from employees. The interview results have clearly supported the approach as analysed from Figure 5.15.

Among the total interviewees, 54% strongly agreed and 39% agreed that TM practises can lead to greater engagement of employees. Only 7% of the interviewees were uncertain about the impact. The results are consistent with the analysis of Wagner and Harter (2006), Phillips and Roper (2007), Gostick and Elton (2007), Bethke *et al.*, (2011) Collings and Mellahi (2009), Mensah (2015) and Deborah (2009), which has found positive a relationship between TM implementation and employee engagement.

### **3. After applying a good TM practice, our employees are more motivated**

The relationship between employee motivation and TM practises is an interesting aspect. TM practises may influence psychological aspects such as motivation, commitment and dedication among employees. Focusing on this aspect, Interviewee No. 16 stated that:

*"Motivating employees by providing support, training, coaching and undertaking professional certifications is a part of our organisational culture... This approach has proved to be effective in our organisation, which not only increased employee performance but also the employee retention rates..."*

Similarly, Interviewee No. 13 said that:

*"We believes that our employees are among the most motivated, highest-performing people in the chemical industry, and they represent meaningful competitive advantage for our company. This gives us strong reason to recruit good, talented people and keep them with us."*

Furthermore, Interviewee No. 17 argued that:

*"Employee relationship management is one of the key principles of Sahara, in order to ensure a healthy, motivated and developmental organisational environment. Any issues arising in the workplace are dealt in a timely manner, without affecting the work environment. Effective communication systems at all levels further contribute to the effective resolution of all issues and ensures the maintenance of a healthy work environment. The TM approach instils a sense of positivity among the employees, who feel their identity as Sahara's employee as an achievement..."*

In addition, Interviewee No. 13 stated that:

*" we believe that employees are an important asset and they are an important resource for achieving continuous development, which could deliver sustainability and competitive advantage. Therefore, we value employees and offer them competitive salaries and also consider their opinions and feedback in the policy formulation and strategy development. For example, 'Sharik', an employee satisfaction and engagement survey stemmed from company's principles, provides an effective way to understand the employee needs and design their training programs. This survey focuses on collecting the opinions of all the employees on various organisational functions and needs and design their training programs. This survey focuses on collecting the opinions of all the employees on various organisational functions."*

The interview responses clearly support this opinion as the majority of interviewees supported this statement (Figure 5.15). Among the total interviewees, 57% of them strongly agreed and 39% of them agreed to the statement, with only 4% of them being uncertain about the relationship between TM implementation and employee motivation. The findings are consistent with various studies (Kwame Mensah, 2015; Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Sharma and Jyotsna Bhatnagar, 2017; Barkhuizen *et al.*, 2014; Chami-Malaeb and Garavan, 2013; Gelens *et al.*, 2013; Anand, 2011; Collings and Mellahi, 2009) that have identified a positive relationship between TM implementation and employee motivation.

#### **4. "Other" effective TM can lead to improving employees' commitment**

Most of the interviewees agreed that TM can lead to employee development which may influence their commitment towards their organisations. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 1 stated that:

*"TM practises such as training and motivation can lead to employees' skills development, which could increase their satisfaction levels. We adopt training practices for specific individuals who are selected against specific roles in order to maintain a talent pool for succession management... This would improve their commitment and enable them to perform more effectively..."*

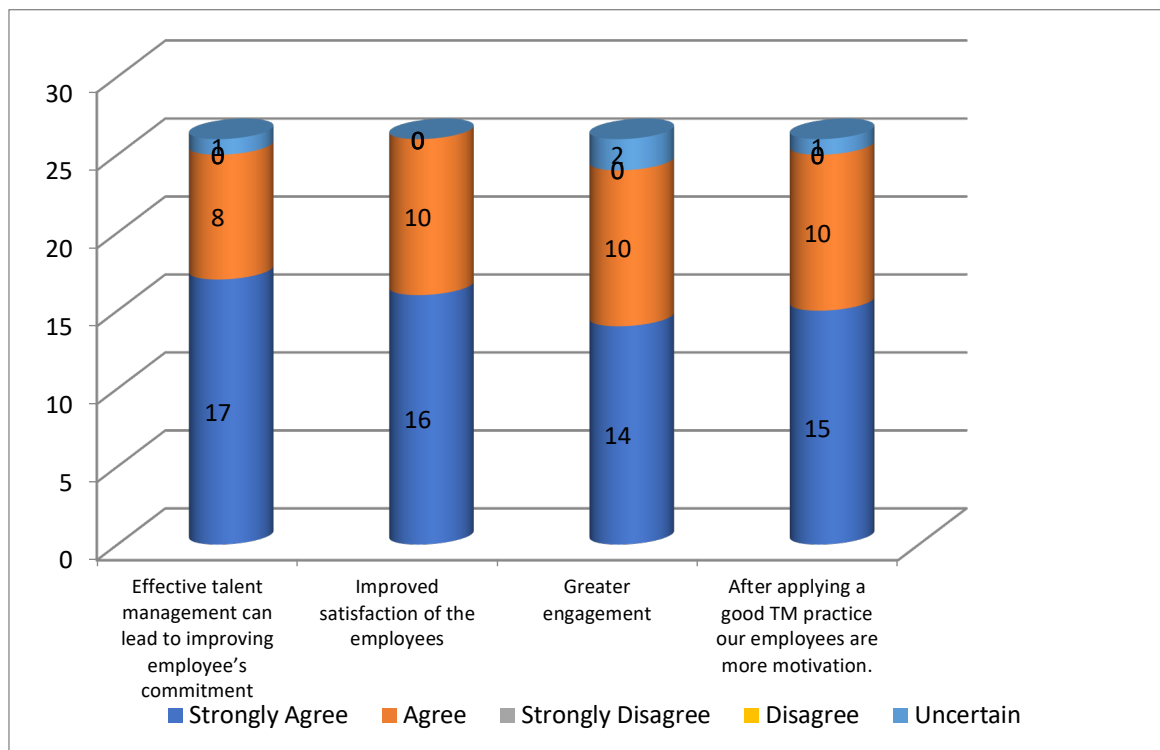
Similarly, Interviewee No. 16 stated that:

*"By supporting the employees in their career development through dedicated allocation of tasks and training programs and using approaches like job rotation, we increase employee satisfaction levels, which may directly influence their commitment towards us..."*

These responses strongly indicate that TM practises can have a positive impact on improving the employees' commitment. The positive impact of TM practises on employees' commitment were supported by Karin (2015), Paauwe (2004), Sahoo and Das (2011), Sang *et al.*, (2016) and Tansley and Tietse (2013), and the results clearly indicate this aspect.

**5. Overall analysis of the effect of TM practises on employee attitudes**

The overall responses indicated that TM practises can be positively correlated with employees' commitment, satisfaction, engagement and motivation, which are supported in the studies (Kwame Mensah, 2015; Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Sharma and Jyotsna Bhatnagar, 2017; Barkhuizen *et al.*, 2014; Chami-Malaeb and Garavan, 2013; Gelens *et al.*,. 2013; Anand, 2011; Silverthorne, 2004; Koberg and Chusmir, 1987; Chen, 2004; Kotler and Lee, 2008; Bethke-Langenegger *et al.*, 2011; Karin, 2015; Paauwe, 2004; Sahoo and Das, 2011; Sang *et al.*, 2016; Tansley and Tietse, 2013 Mensah and Bawole 2017).



Figure

5.15. Effect of TM on employee attitudes

### **5.3.11. How Can TM Achieve Sustainable Competitive Advantage?**

TM is directly associated with the human resources in an organisation, and HR in organisations can add value and improve the performance of the organisation, which could result in increased competitive advantage. The following statements are used for assessing the impact of TM on achieving sustainable competitive advantage:

#### **1. The sustainable competitive advantage of “effective TM can lead to effective firm performance which in turn can lead to sustainable competitive advantage”.**

Focusing on this aspect, Interviewee No. 9 commented:

*"Sustainability can be related to various organisational activities and operations, in which TM must be one of the activities... Competitive advantage, similarly, can be related to the various value-adding activities... TM practises and employees outcomes can add value to the organisations by developing HR and also by maintaining the knowledge and innovative resources, speed in respond to market product / service quality ,innovation speed which can be used for increasing the competitive edge..."*

Another participant, Interviewee No. 22, argued that:

*"An improved efficiency of the employees through TM activities such as training and development, support, motivation and recognition can lead to improved employees performance and organisation performance. This has been observed in our organisation for years... TM operations in our respective organisations lead to development of high-quality products/services, operations and customer relations and I clearly agree with the statement that improved employee's performance can lead to sustainable competitive advantage."*

Similarly, Interviewee No. 15 stated that:

*" we are integrating the new innovative TM practises in line with the global changes across our processes and practices relating to employment, sustainability and corporate governance and advanced technology across all of our business operations. In addition, ....Academy, an initiative led by the company in grooming its employees for adapting changes, learning new skills and leading innovation, which is practices, has been providing good results in terms of sustainable competitive advantage."*



Furthermore, Interviewee No. 19 stated that:

*" we are trying to use innovative TM practise and approaches such as recruiting new talented, capturing the knowledge and experience of senior managers and delivering it to the new engineers and geoscientists to increase their skills and performance levels, high quality product / service ,innovation speed levels, which is not only adding value to the organisation, but also increasing the sustainability."*

Interviewee No. 17 said:

*" are retaining a skilled and talented workforce who are highly experienced in the Petro-chemical industry to meet and manage the operations according to the changing requirements of our customers using a framework based on sustaining talent and improving motivation. which in turn can lead to organisational sustainable competitive advantage such as 1) productivity growth, 2) supply chain efficiency: , and 3) new products: "*

The above responses clearly indicate a positive relationship between SCA and TM practises. The interview responses have indicated the same as observed in Figure 5.16.

Among the total interviewees, 61% strongly agreed and 32% agreed to the statement, with only 7% being uncertain about the impact of the TM practises on organisational sustainability. These results are consistent with Kehinde (2012), Gardner (2002), Kontoghiorghes (2016) and Francis (2008), Rabbi (2015) whose studies have found a positive relationship between TM practises and organisational sustainability.

## ***2. The TM- practices help organisations to focus on long-term competitive advantages by investing in talented professionals.***

Long-term competitive advantage can be related to the enhancement of value-adding resources such as technologies, innovation and human resources etc. These aspects achieve CA which can be continued over the long term using the innovative capabilities from time to time. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 17 stated that:

*"Increasing knowledge resources by retaining talented employees, and enhancing their skills by practising training programs on regular basis, would help in attaining competitive advantage, which can be maintained over long terms..."*

In a similar approach, Interviewee No. 15 stated that:

*" received the prestigious Responsible Competitiveness Award from the King Khalid Foundation in 2017, reflecting its efforts in improving the competitive advantage as one of the means to achieve sustainability. Adopting a responsible competitiveness framework, we are using various*

*approaches such as evaluation, analysis, feedback etc. for creating a business environment that would increase competitive advantage and focus on long-term."*

Additionally, Interviewee No. 17 commented:

*"By adopting a cultural diverse and inclusive environment, we are attracting the new talent, increasing retention and fostering innovation, which could directly increase competitive edge over other competitors. however, we need for strategic alignment of TM practises with organisational strategy in order to achieve long-term competitive advantage"*

The response indicates that by increasing the knowledge resources (HR) using TM practises can be useful in increasing organisational value and achieving long-term competitive advantage. The interview responses are presented in Figure 5.16.

Among the total interviewees, 54% of them strongly agreed and 32% of them agreed to the statement and only 14% of them are uncertain about the use of TM a practises in achieving long-term competitive advantage. The results are consistent with various studies (Guerci and Solari, 2012; Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004; Kotler and Lee, 2008; Newbert, 2007; Kaliannan *et al.*, 2016; Tarique and Randall, 2010; Rabbi *et a*, 2015; Ramadan 2012; Alma'aitah *et al* 2013; Beechler and Woodward, 2009).

### **3. TM practices can positively impact the overall performance of the organisation.**

The performance of the organisation can be influenced by various factors in the organisation, which may include technology infrastructure, operational strategies, human resources management, marketing and distribution capabilities and brand management etc. TM practices is one such aspect that focuses on retaining and improving the knowledge resources by employee management. Accordingly, Interviewee No. 18 argued that:

*"Our organisational performance is greatly dependent on human resources, which we develop and engage from time to time... Employees in key positions who are skilled and efficient can take decisions which can improve the organisational performance... Similarly, their decisions can affect the organisational performance, which I have observed. Therefore, a positive impact can be possible by effective management of TM practises along with the succession planning approaches..."*

This response reflects the relationship between the TM practices and organisational performance. However, for a positive impact, it is necessary to effectively manage TM practises and integrate it with other approaches that focus on improving the organisational performance. Interviewee No. 15 stated that:

"We are working closely with line managers to embed the overall process and position it as a key enabler in career development and engaging with employees, giving our workforce a higher level of confidence in their future."

Interviewee No. 3 stated that:

"The employee developmental programs and related approaches have led to significant cost reduction and efficiency improvements across the organization Group. In 2017, we achieved further consolidation primarily across human resources, administration and healthcare functions.... yes, I agree with that TM practices can positively impact the overall performance of the organisation."

Similarly, Interviewee No. 17 commented:

" annual goals include sustainable performance by adopting employee-based programs such as performance reviews, due recognition and rewards programs which is TM and the outcomes from TM which will improve organisational performance "

The interview responses indicated favourable results, as shown in Figure 5.16. Among the total interviewees, 57% of them strongly agreed and 31% of them agreed, with only 12% of them being uncertain about the impact of TM practises on improving organisational performance. These findings are consistent with Hartmann *et al.*, (2010), Ramadan (2012) Zikic (2014), Lawler (2008), Rabbi *et al.*, (2015) and Tafti *et al.*, (2017), who identified a positive relationship between the TM practises and organisational performance.

#### 4. Overall analysis of the impact of TM Achieve Sustainable Competitive Advantage

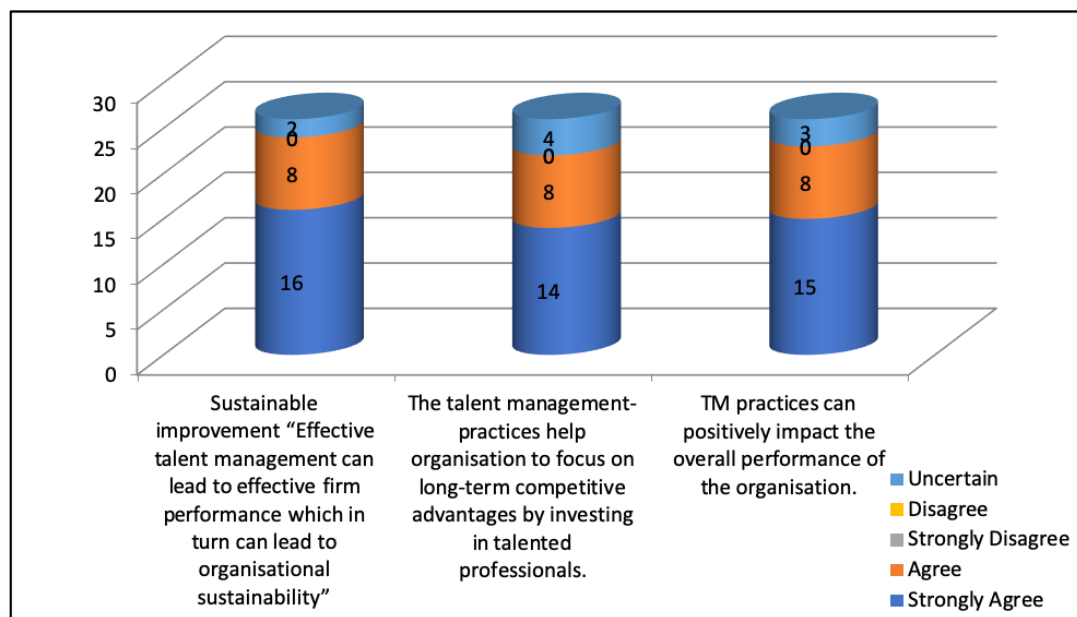


Figure 5.16. Impact of TM practises on Sustainable Competitive Advantage

Thus, three main factors emerge from interviewees' responses and the literature review as paramount to TM achieve sustainable competitive advantage

- 1.Speed in response to market and innovation speed;
- 2.Enhance supply chain efficiency;
- 3.lead to high-quality products/services, operations and customer relations.

Thus, three main factors emerge from interviewees' responses and the literature review as paramount to TM sustainable competitive advantage. The results relating to organisational SCA are in similar to the studies (Rabbiet al., 2015; Latukha 2016; Wilcox, 2016; Kumar, 2016; Vomberg et al., 2014; Mazen and Samy, 2017; Krishnaswamy, 2018; Kuncoro and Suriani, 2018), which have identified that improved employee efficiency, engagement, satisfaction etc. can lead to effective management of talent, which supports sustainable growth; and similarly, results related to long term-competitive advantage are supported by (He et al., 2011; Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Saleh Mohammad Sohel-Uz-Zaman, 2018; King and Vaiman, 2019; Glaister et al., 2017).

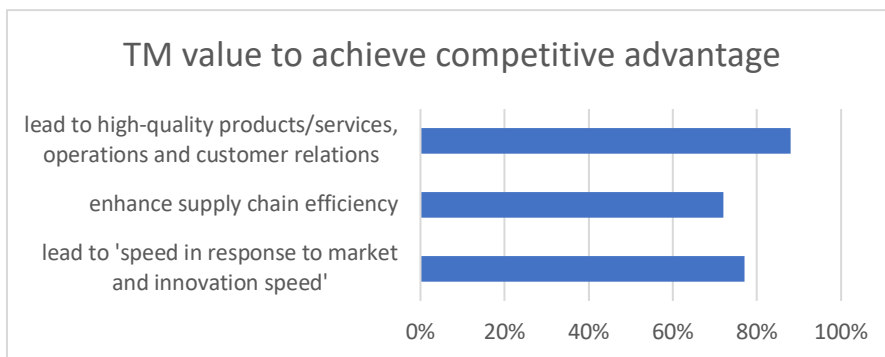


Figure 5.17

Organisational performance, SCA are positively correlated with TM practises, which clearly indicate that TM practises can achieve sustainable competitive advantage. Various studies (Hartmann *et al.*, 2010; Zikic, 2014; Lawler, 2008; Rabbi *et al.*, 2015; Tafti *et al.*, 2017; Guerci and Solari, 2012; Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004; Kotler and Lee, 2008; Newbert, 2007; Kaliannan *et al.*, 2016; Tarique and Randall, 2010; Rabbi, 2015; Beechler and Woodward, 2009; Kehinde, 2012; Gardner, 2002; Kontoghiorghes, 2016; and Francis, 2008; Alma *et al* 2013) have supported a similar relationship between TM practises and sustainable competitive advantage.

## 5.4. Conclusion

The participants in the qualitative study included highly experienced individuals with good educational qualifications, and who were mainly employed in the roles of HR managers, which increases the reliability and credibility of the data collected. Good and supportive leadership styles, employer branding, organisational culture and rewards systems are the four internal factors identified which would influence TM operations. The level of understanding about TM among the participants can be compared with the current trends of TM applicability. The results indicated that most of the participants identified TM as a systematic approach for managing talent in order to achieve sustainable competitive advantage, which is one of the major areas of focus of current research studies.

Focusing on talent identification, various approaches (both formal and informal) were used for identifying talented employees. In addition, various approaches such as employer branding, third-party recruiters, academic institutions, online publishing and rewards systems etc. were used for attracting talented individuals. Participants' organisations deployed various techniques for retaining employees. Among these techniques, providing a supportive organisational culture, opportunities for personal growth and development and ensuring good relationships with seniors were found to be more deployed compared to the monetary or financial rewards. Though there are various TD approaches deployed, there are still a few challenges which are identified from the results. These challenges mainly include lack of efficient leadership, talent shortage, geographical location and Saudisation.

In addition, the results have shown that TM practises can be useful in employee management, which would result in various benefits such as improving information and knowledge resources, maintaining the talent pool, retaining key employees, employee satisfaction, commitment, motivation and dedication. The results have indicated that these aspects could improve the organisational performance and achieve a competitive edge. The TM practises can also be used in achieving long-term growth and a sustainable competitive advantage.

The next chapter analyses the quantitative (surveys) data collected in this research, using which the relationship between various factors is determined.

## Chapter 6: Collection and Analysis of Quantitative Data

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### 6.1. Introduction

This chapter analyses the quantitative survey results using both descriptive and statistical analysis techniques, complementing the qualitative phase of this mixed method study. As discussed in (Chapter 4, Section 4.6.3) the empirical part of this Research had a cross-sectional sequential design. The data through surveys was collected over a period of four weeks. Initially a letter seeking permission was sent to the HR managers of the 10 oil and gas organisations considered in the study. After receiving approval from the HR managers, the survey link was shared with the HR managers to administer to the sampled talent pool members and ensuring that our respondents were actually talented employees. This is because the Researcher had no direct access to the employees and, therefore, it was imperative to use the HR managers to facilitate the proper administration of the survey. Similar approaches were adopted in other studies (Chami-Malaeb and Garavan, 2013; Mensah et al., 2016). These participants were selected by a random sampling method. The questionnaire is divided into four sections, out of which Sections I and II focus on the demographic and organisation details of the participants, respectively. A total of 54 elements were distributed across six sub-sections: TM practises (talent identification, attraction, selection, development, retention, and TM challenges) in Section III (TM implementation), and 23 questions under four sub-sections (employee engagement, motivation, satisfaction, and SCA) in Section IV (TM outcomes). Where applicable, their responses were scored on a five-point scale of importance: “Strongly disagree; Disagree; Neither; Agree; Strongly agree” with a multiple-choice questions and related responses.

Descriptive analysis is used in analysing the demographic information and the various TM functions. Statistical analysis, such as correlational analysis using the Pearson coefficient or Chi-Square tests, are used for comparing and analysing the findings. The data analysis presented in this chapter is in a form consistent with the findings of theoretical and empirical research discussed in Chapters 2, 4 and 6, in order to facilitate comparisons and draw valid conclusions.

## 6.2. Section I: Descriptive Statistics

The gender distribution of the participants is shown in Figure 6.1. The majority of the participants were male, comprising 77.2% of the total 417 participants, and 22.8% were female participants.

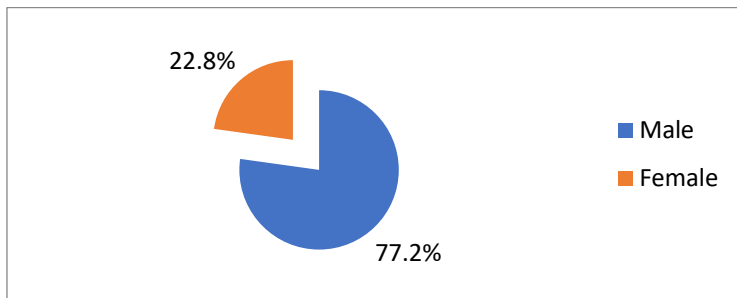


Figure 6.1. Gender distribution of participants

The distribution of participants across the age groups is shown in Figure 6.2. The majority of the participants (194) belonged to the 30-39 age group; followed by 139 participants in the 40-49 age group; 53 participants in the 20-29 age group; and 27 participants in the 50-59 age group. Only four participants were aged above 60 years old. The educational qualifications of the participants are shown in Figure 6.3. The majority of the participants (267 out of 417) have a bachelor's degree; followed by 85 participants with a Master's degree; 32 participants being PhD scholars; 22 participants with vocational/technical education; and 11 participants with high school or equivalent education.

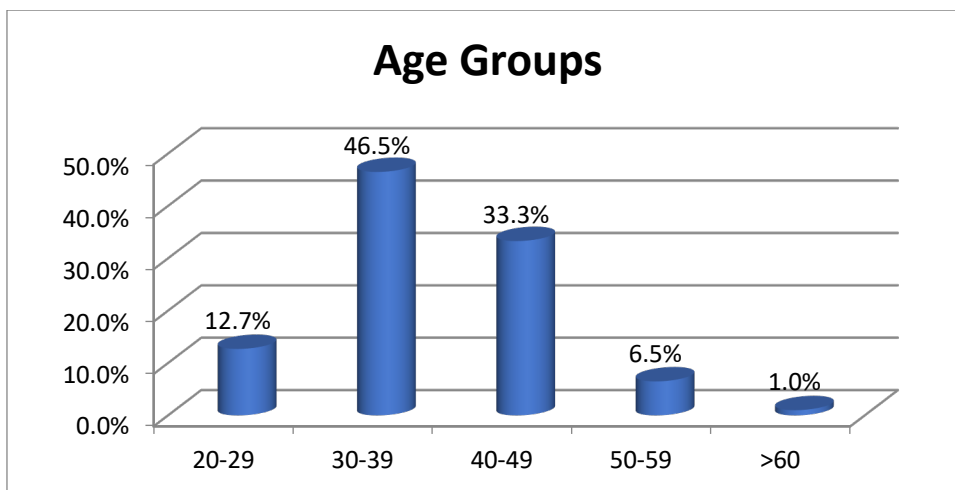


Figure 6.2. Distribution of participants by age groups

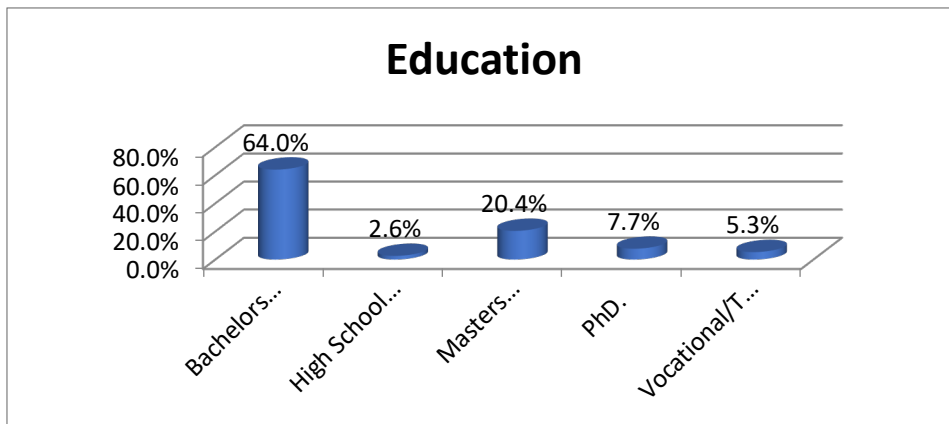


Figure 6.3. Educational qualifications of the participants

The level of experience among the participants can be analysed in Figure 6.4. The participants are almost evenly distributed across the different levels. The majority of the participants had 6-10 years of experience (107 participants); followed by 81 participants with 11-15 years of experience; 81 participants with 0-5 years of experience; 78 participants with 16-20 years of experience; and 70 participants with experience of more than 20 years. Almost 35% of the participants had experience of more than 16 years.

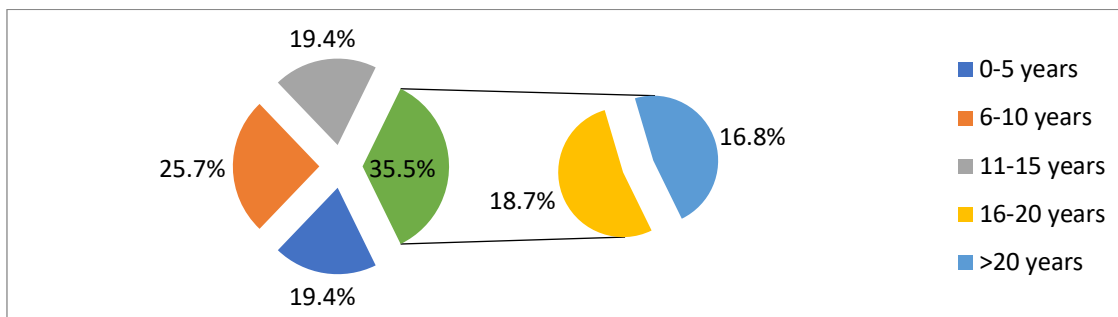
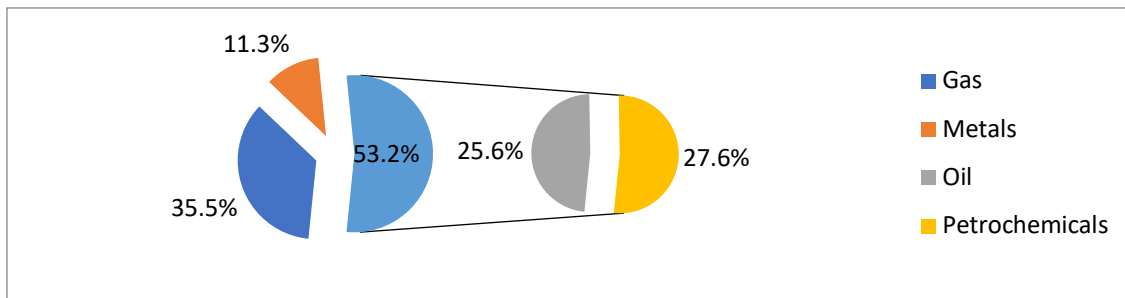


Figure 6.4. Experience levels of the participants

### 6.3. Section II: Organisational Details

The distribution of participants across various industries is shown in Figure 6.5. The majority of the participants belonged to the gas industry (148 participants).





Figure

#### 6.5. Distribution of participants by industry

Almost 53% of the participants belonged to the oil and petrochemical industry, with 107 participants in the oil industry and 115 participants in the petrochemical industry. Only 47 participants worked in the metal industry.

Almost 90% of the participants agreed that their organisations adopt TM practices, with 266 participants stating that they adopt formal practices and 109 stating that they adopt informal practices. Only 42 participants stated that their organisations do not apply TM practices.

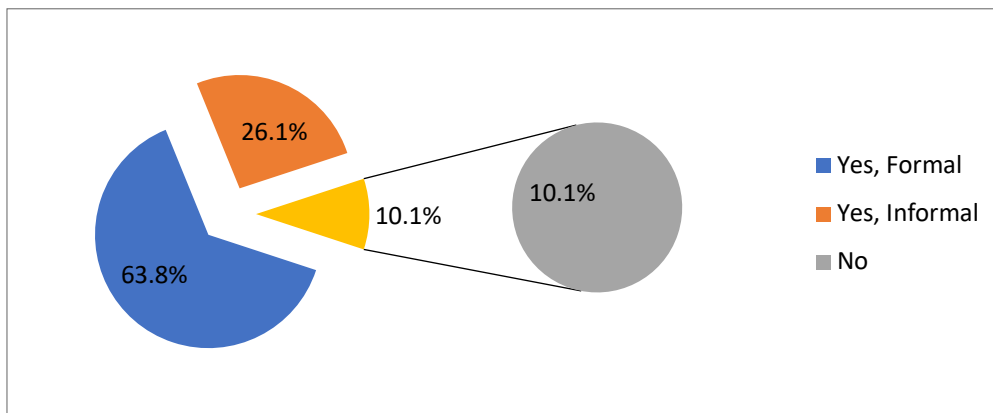


Figure 6.6. TM adoption in participants' organisations

Assessing the level of understanding of TM practices among the participants has found some interesting results. There is an even distribution of participants with a good, very good and excellent level of understanding, as shown in Figure 6.7. A good understanding was identified among 137 participants, followed by a very good understanding among 134 participants. Only 49 participants had a poor or fair understanding of TM practices. In addition, 97 participants had an excellent understanding of TM practices.

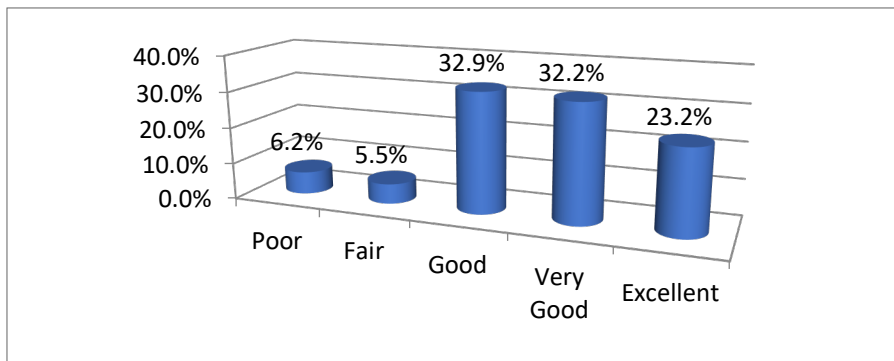


Figure 6.7. Participants' level of understanding about TM

The majority of the participants had a good understanding of the TM practices, where the experience had minimal effect.

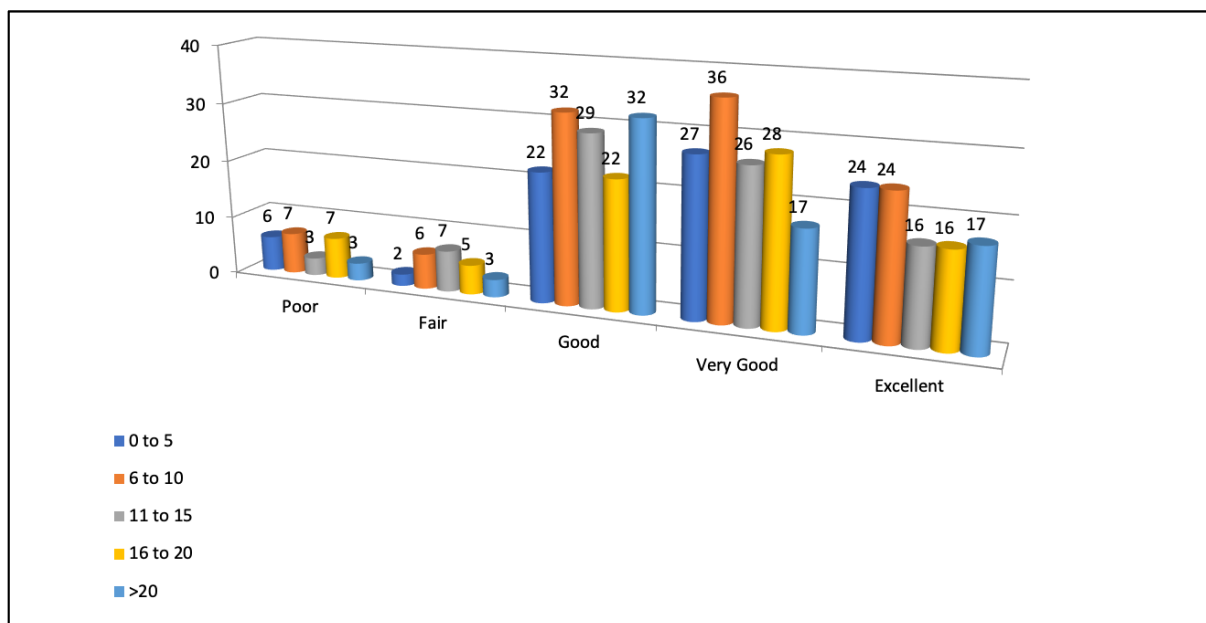


Figure 6.8. Cross-tabulation of experience and understanding

In order to examine the relationship between the experience of the participants and the level of understanding, a Chi-Square test was conducted as shown in Appendix A. The result was found to be negative, and no significant relationship was identified between the level of experience and the level of understanding ( $p=0.32$ ,  $p>0.05$ ). Though there is an increase in the level of understanding and an increase in the level of experience, it was observed that the level of understanding is high even among the participants with lower experience levels (6 to 10 years). However, the level of understanding among the participants with experience of 0 to 5 years is comparatively lower compared to other groups, but only with a slight difference. The good educational qualifications

of a large number of young participants (59.2% aged between 20 and 39) can be related to the finding of high levels of understanding with low experience levels.

#### 6.4. Section III: TM Applications

This section focuses on collecting responses from the participants regarding the various areas of TM applications and also the approaches.

The first question focuses on the concept of TM and how it is perceived by the participants, to which the responses are presented in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1. Understanding and Define TM

How do you personally define and understand the concept of TM?	frequency	relative Frequency
An integrated set of processes, programs and culture used by employers to anticipate and meet the needs of human capital	224	53.7%
Systematic attraction, retention, identification, development and engagement of talent to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage	385	92.3%
HR operation	246	58.9%
A comprehensive system that must apply to all employees.	312	74.8%
The system is limited to a talented (distinguished) category of employees only.	98	23.5%
All of the above.	399	95.6%

The results in Table 6.1 indicate how TM is an organisational practice understood by the participants. The majority of the participants (almost 95%) agreed with all the statements defining TM. TM as an integrated set of processes, programs and culture was accepted by 53.7% of the participants. As identified by Rothwell (1994) and Wikstrom *et al.*, (2012), TM can include various processes and approaches that are systematically arranged, focusing on developing and managing the talent among the employees in organisations. Similarly, Cappelli (2008) identified it as the set of processes used by the employers to anticipate and meet employees' needs. These two definitions reflect TM as a set of processes aimed at managing employee needs and talent. However, over time, the understanding and the scope of defining TM has evolved. The second statement in Table 6.1 gives a clearer definition (i.e., a system to attract, retain, develop and engage in the work of the organisation), which was accepted by 92.7% of the participants. Detailed definitions have emerged describing the objective of the TM. CIPD (2006) explained it as a process to identify potential people who add value to the organisation; similarly, Stockley (2007) explained it as an approach to attract, retain and develop employees to meet the current and future organisational

needs. Collings and Mellahi (2009) focused on the same aspect, which is to identify the talented individuals or key positions, which can increase the competitive advantage of the organisation.

Almost 59% of the participants identified TM as an HR operation. Similarly, Acar and Yener (2016) identified it as an HR system that manages recruitment, selection, hiring, developing and rewarding operations. Similar explanations were given by Hughes and Rog (2015) and Collings and Mellahi (2009). The majority of the participants (74.8%) identified it as an inclusive approach that has to consider and include all the employees, and only 23.5% of the participants stated that it is an exclusive approach that has to be applied on selected employees. Based on the responses, the next questions focused on the various functions of TM.

The next question focused on the approaches used for identifying the talent in the organisations. The responses are presented in Table 6.2. Three different approaches are outlined. Determining the talent through informal chats was found to be effective by 62.1% of the participants. Informal chats can be an effective approach; however, it completely depends on the manager who is assessing the talent without any formal mechanism to support and justify the talent identified. This approach can be misused in some cases and may lead to conflicts in the workplace. Evaluation from the management point of view is an effective approach, as the management recognise and identify the talent that meets its organisational goals and objectives and that can add value to the organisation. However, only 49.8% of the participants supported this approach to talent identification. It is important that they use proper evaluation mechanisms in this process. As management has the authority to make any assessments and evaluations, it must be ensured that they follow an effective and justified approach. For example, Matthews and Farmer (2008) identified instances where the evaluations were not done on merit but were based on the achievement of the minimum expectations of the divisions of work. Such practices would affect the talent identification approach which might directly affect the organisational operations.

**Table 6.2. Criteria to identify talent**

What criteria are used by your organisation to identify the quality of talent?	Frequency	Relative Frequency
The talents of employees are determined through informal chats.	259	62.1%
Depending on the employee's efficiency from the point of view of his management's evaluation.	208	49.8%
Depending on the outcome of the employee's results (e.g., job evaluation (annual performance), sales, production, etc.).	314	75.3%

All of the above.	345	82.7%
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Therefore, formal evaluation mechanisms with effective and systematic evaluation criteria can be an effective approach in identifying the talent within an organisation. Accordingly, the majority of the participants (75.3%) supported the idea of formal employee evaluation methods such as annual performance review, sales results and production results etc. It is possible that performance criteria used in some cases may not be effective, which could increase the complexity of identifying talent (Lynette and Carley, 2010), and this can be attributed to the failure of HR departments in implementing TM practises (Opas and Pacapol, 2010). Therefore, from the responses, it can be determined that talent identification should adopt different approaches which have to be integrated systematically and strategically. Accordingly, the majority of the participants (82.7%) identified all three approaches as important for identifying talent.

One of the important aspects of TM is attracting talent, and there are many approaches identified for attracting talent as shown in Figure 6.9.

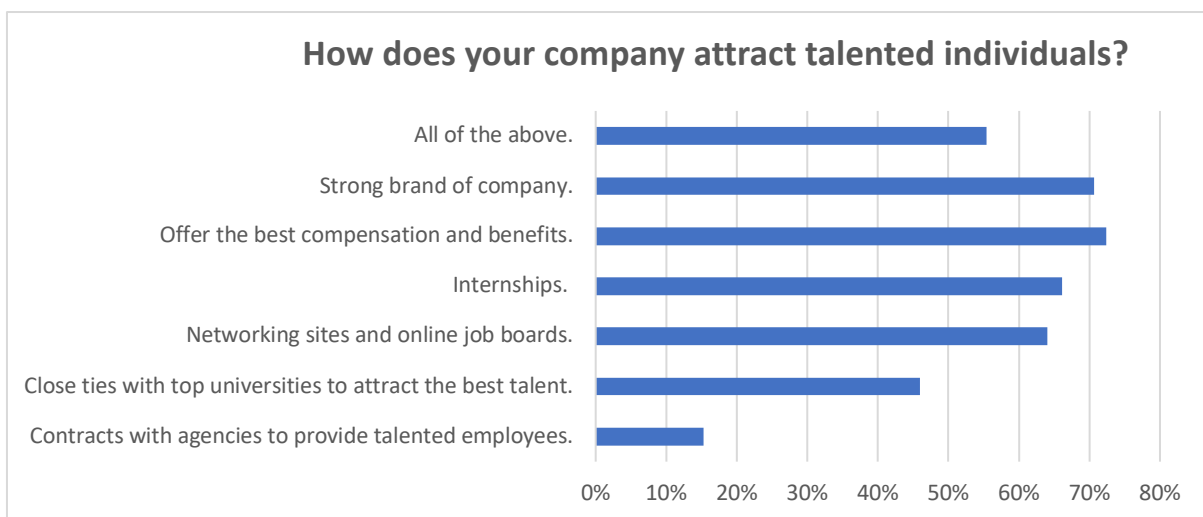


Figure 6.9. Criteria to attract talent

Outsourcing recruitment processes or using third-party recruiters through contracts is the least preferred approach for attracting talent, as identified from the participants' responses. Kaliannan (2015) has stressed that attracting talented employees is a complex process, and in relation to this process, Phillips and Roper (2007) stressed that this process should be creatively managed. Contracting with agencies may include a few issues such as relying completely on third-party organisations, the possibility of talent mismatch and recruiting employees with different skillsets

etc. Fewer responses to this approach can be related to these issues. Universities are an important source for talented individuals; however, lack of experience may require additional training sessions for the newly recruited students. However, 46% of the participants preferred this approach. Networking sites and online job boards can help in accessing a wide range of talented individuals distributed across various regions. This approach can help in gaining wide access to the talent; however, filtering the required talent may be a complex task. This can be one of the most effective and creative approaches in the globalised world with a high application of networking (Dychtwald *et al.*, 2006).

To minimise the issues associated with university recruitment, internships can be an effective solution, which not only attract students but also other job hunters with good skills. This approach is preferred by 66% of participants. Offering the best compensation and benefits is another approach, which is preferred by 72.4% of participants. Providing good packages, compensations and benefits can attract a wide range of talented individuals who can be assessed and the best can be recruited. This process was suggested and found to be effective in various studies (Kagwiria, 2013; Rabbi, 2015). Assessing the overall responses reflects that the majority of the participants (95.4%) preferred all the options. Therefore, it can be understood that a combination of approaches is required for attracting talent, which includes new and innovative approaches such as networking posts etc.

Though attracting employees is an important step, recruiting them is a crucial step as it identifies the right candidates at the right time. The responses to the various criteria used in the process of recruiting talented employees are shown in Figure 6.10.



Figure: 6.10: Criteria to recruit talent

Skills and capabilities are important factors, which is preferred by 56.5% of participants that need to be considered in recruiting talented individuals. Behavioural interviews, personality assessments and job knowledge tests were found to be important approaches for assessing the skills and capabilities (Phillips and Roper, 2007). Recruiting individuals with good skills and competencies can also add value to the organisation and improve its CA (Eisenhardt and Santos, 2000). Experience is another important factor which was considered to be important in selecting the right candidates by 82.7% of participants. Experience is considered as one of the important factors in successful candidates' profiles (Lewis and Heckman, 2006). Experienced candidates may be preferable compared to the new individuals as they are already trained and possess dynamic skills (job-related and interpersonal skills). It is interesting to note that the level of education is not considered as an important factor in recruiting the employees, as only 28.3% of participants considered it for recruiting talented employees. Creative thinking and problem-solving skills were identified to be an important factor by 69.7% of participants, and computer knowledge skills by were considered important by 82% of participants. Various studies (Kettl, 2002; Terry, 2003; Denhardt, 2004; Shadur, Kienzle and Rodwell, 1999) have identified creative skills as an element of innovative capabilities of the employees which can be an added advantage. With the increasing automation and use of computer systems across all organisations, computer literacy has become one of the basic essential requirements for employees. Accordingly, a large number of participants

(82%) considered it to be an important factor in recruitment. However, similar to the previous question, 88% of the participants selected all the factors to be considered, which reflects the need for dynamic and integrated approaches in the recruitment of talented individuals.

Another important function of TM is the development of employees, and the responses to the various development approaches are provided in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3. Talent development

Does your company have any talent development practices?	Frequency	Relative Frequency
Training, making coaching a part of each development discussion, education.	309	74.1%
Staff are provided with individual training sessions designed to address performance gaps and improve talent.	273	65.4%
"Empowerment and support from senior managers" by allowing them to work in projects.	252	60.4%
Establish a structured system to develop talent to meet growth and change requirements that will help employees acquire the skills they need.	305	73.5%
Employees are encouraged to innovate by dedicating time to experimenting with new things and developing new ideas.	294	70.7%
All of the above.	372	89.2%

TD is considered to be an important function of TM in various studies (Phillips and Roper, 2007; Mathur and Mathur, 2012; Russell and Bennett, 2015; Kaliannan, Abraham, and Ponnusam, 2016; Deborah, 2009; Kagwiria 2013; Rabbi 2015). Foundation training could be very effective in developing employees, especially new recruits. Some 74.1% of participants preferred foundation training for talent development. However, it is also essential to assess individual employees' strengths and weaknesses and accordingly plan the training sessions. Such personalised training programs proved to be effective in increasing the employees' skills and abilities (Poocharoen and Lee, 2013). However, there is a need for careful selection of employees for dedicated training sessions in order to decrease the costs in cases of employees leaving and recruiting occurring more frequently (McCall, 1994).

Empowerment and support from senior managers are another important approach which is preferred by 60.4% of participants. Such practices have to be embedded into organisational culture and structure in order to deliver effective results (Sahoo and Das, 2011). With the changes being observed in both internal and external environments, organisations have to frequently adopt these changes in order to maintain their value and competitive advantage. There is a need for a structured



system to develop the talent in order to meet the changing requirements. Most of the participants (70.5%) supported the idea of having a structured system for talent development, as supported by Collings and Mellahi (2009). Supporting innovation by helping the employees to research and investigate new ideas is also an important approach preferred by 70% of participants. Sang *et al.*, (2016) supported the idea of self-driven innovative skills with the right set of employees that can develop the talent and improve organisational value and competitive advantage. Most of the participants (89.2%) preferred all these approaches to be considered for talent development, which again signifies the importance of integrated and dynamic approaches to be adopted in talent development.

Another important aspect of TM is retaining the talented employees, and the responses to the various approaches to be adopted for retaining the talented employees are presented in Table 6.4. Retaining talented employees is one of the most important functions of TM, as identified by (Dychtwald *et al.*, 2006; Phillips and Roper, 2006; Fairis, 2004; Kehinde, 2012; Mathur and Mathur, 2012; Tansley and Tietse, 2013).

Table 6.4. Talent retention

<b>As an employee, what do your organisation do in order to encourage retention of talented employees?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Relative Frequency</b>
Monetary – compensation and benefits, retention bonuses.	218	52.2%
An open environment and culture.	361	86.5%
Employee stock options.	239	57.3%
Quality relationship with his or her manager.	305	73.1%
Opportunities for personal growth and professional development.	394	94.4%
Other non-monetary rewards that satisfy employees’ psychological needs.	281	67.3%
Managing and developing the talents of our employees helps us retain employees because they feel that we are investing in their future.	365	87.5%
All of the above.	337	80.8%

Monetary compensation or benefits is considered to be an important factor in retaining employees, which was preferred by 52.2% of participants. Monetary support and good financial packages were found to be a good approach for retaining employees (Dychtwald *et al.*, 2006). However, recent changes have led to the consideration of non-financial rewards also to be an important aspect for retaining the employees. Accordingly, an open environment and culture can be a good way to improve employee motivation and experience which could help in retaining talented employees.

For example, Kaliprasad (2006) identified that a good learning environment could help in improving employee satisfaction levels and enable retention. Similarly, employee stock options, which is preferred by 57.3% of participants, was found to be effective in retaining employees. The relationship with the manager is an important aspect and it is required that the manager should possess good leadership skills and improve satisfaction levels among employees by providing support and empowering them (Macfarlane *et al.*, 2012). Accordingly, a good relationship with managers was preferred by 73.1% of participants. As discussed earlier, non-financial approaches, such as providing opportunities for personal and professional development, can increase employee satisfaction levels and thereby support employee retention (Gostick and Elton, 2007). This approach was preferred by 94.4% of participants.

Other non-financial rewards that satisfy the psychological needs of the employees may be a good approach, as it was preferred by 67.3% of participants. This approach was supported by Meyer and Allen (2007) in increasing the organisational commitment which could result in greater retention rates. Employees' perceptions that their company is investing in their future by developing them achieved 87.5% of the responses, reflecting the positive employees' attitude towards their respective companies. Therefore, employees' perceptions of the organisational approach may or may not be effective in talent retention. In addition, 80.8% of the participants preferred all the above discussed approaches for retaining talent, signifying the need for a systematic and strategically integrated and dynamic approach for retaining key talented individuals.

The above questions focus on the specific approaches for managing talent in organisations. However, there are various approaches that can be used in this process. Some of the major additional approaches deployed in the participants' respective organisations and the responses to them are presented in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5. TM in participants' organisations

<b>Does your company have any TM practices or particular HRM practices to manage talented employees? If yes, what are they?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Relative Frequency</b>
Creating a motivating environment and strong engagement.	358	85.8%
Providing coaching, focus on future career.	376	90.1%
A good personal relationship with their manager.	308	73.8%
Incorporate TM systems into the organisation's strategy.	269	64.5%

Building the talent pipeline (talent planning/opportunities).	294	70.5%
Giving empowerment, authority and flexibility.	319	76.4%
Building employer branding/employer attraction.	361	86.6%
Recognising and valuing employee performance.	354	84.8%
Providing appropriate pay and other compensation/benefits.	332	79.6%
All of the above.	391	93.7%

Having a motivating environment and creating strong engagement in employees of the organisation was identified to be an important factor in the earlier sections. Motivation can lead to the improved operational efficiency of the employees which can add value to the organisations and increase CA (Tafti *et al.*, 2017). This approach is adapted to a great extent, as only 85.8% of the participants' responses were received. Similar responses were received for coaching and focusing on the future growth of employees, as 90.1% of participants stated that their organisations focus on these aspects. Having a quality relationship with the managers was identified by more than 70% of participants' organisations, reflecting a good relationship with management among the managers and employees.

Incorporating TM strategy with organisational strategy ensures the smooth operations of TM as the related factors are assessed and managed in accordance with TM operations. For example, ensuring support by managers to employees or providing training opportunities for new recruits require an integration of organisational cultural practices and TM practices. Some 64.5% of the participants responded that their organisations incorporate TM strategy into organisational strategy. There are approximately 70% of participants who stated that their organisations adopt Building the talent pipeline (talent planning/opportunities), which is one of the major supporting factors identified. In addition, almost 84.8% of the participants stated that their companies recognise and value employee performance, and only 20% of the total participants stated proper pay and compensation benefits are not adopted. Additionally, almost 86.6% of the participants stated that their organisations are promoting and developing their brands to attract talented employees. The responses reflect a good implementation of TM practises in the KSA organisations to which the participants belong. However, it is observed that almost 70% of the participants' organisations are implementing TM practices in a fair and inclusive way.

The next question identifies the major challenges faced by the participants' organisations in implementing TM practices. Development and competitive environments require a significant focus on human capital (Khursani, Buzuhair and Khan, 2011). KSA largely depends on expatriates for meeting the talent needs in various organisations. Accordingly, a talent shortage was identified to be an important challenge by 64.2% of participants.

Table 6.6. Challenges in managing talent

In your opinion, What challenges are your organisation facing in managing talent?	Frequency	Relative Frequency
Talent shortage	268	64.2%
Saudisation	169	40.5%
Lack of leadership	254	60.9%
Maintaining staff engagement and commitment within the current culture	314	75.3%
Lack of knowledge and understanding of establishing a structured system of developing talent to meet the new growth and change requirements that will help employees get the skills they need	207	49.6%
Geographical location	295	70.7%
High staff turnover and difficulties in recruitment	184	44.1%
Inadequate alignment between the organisational strategy and talent strategy	216	51.7%
All of the above	142	24%

Since the involvement of the private sector in the policy of Saudisation, Saudi organisations have started to replace expatriates with Saudis (Figure liolini, Hofmann and Kanjirath, 2008). This matter was considered as a considerable challenge for Saudi employers and training organisations to acquire and identify the right talent to occupy key positions. However, only 40.5% of the participants considered Saudisation as a major challenge. Lack of leadership (60.9%), geographical location (70.7%) and maintaining organisational commitment with Saudi culture (75.3%) were found to be two major challenges. A large dependence on expatriates might lead to a lack of leadership and issues in achieving organisational commitment. One of the interesting aspects to be noted is that almost 50% of the participants identified lack of knowledge and understanding of establishing a structured system for developing talent to meet the new growth and change requirements that will help employees get the skills they need. The rapidly changing environment due to Saudisation and government strategies such as Vision 2030 is one of the major challenges affecting TM in KSA, which can also be related to the ‘inadequate alignment between the organisational strategy and talent strategy’.

### 6.5. Section IV: TM Outcomes

This section focuses on the effect of TM on the employees from various perspectives. Firstly, TM's effect on employees' attitudes is analysed from different aspects, as shown in Figure 6.9.

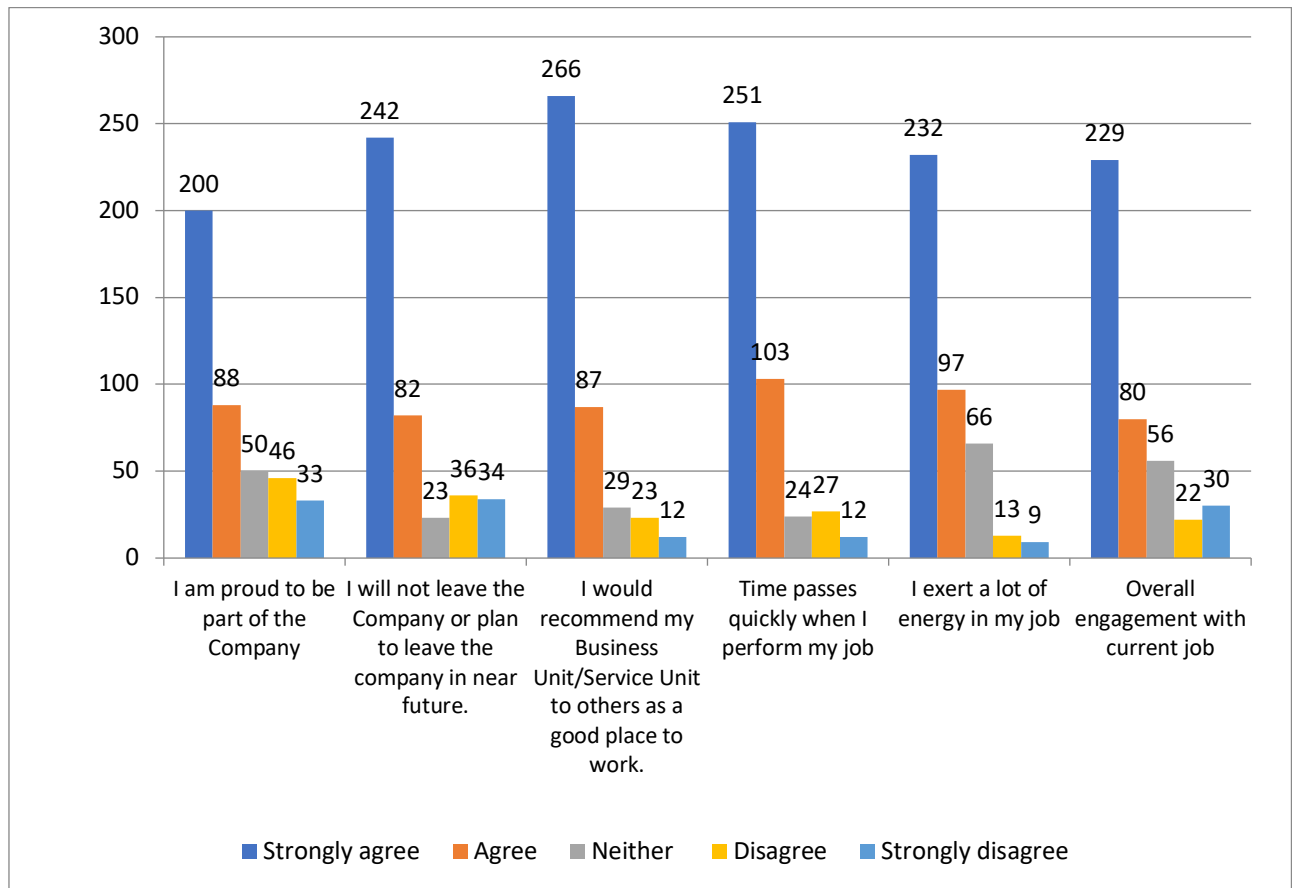


Figure 6.11. TM impact on employee’s engagement

It is interesting to note that only 74.1% of participants were found to be very happy or happy working in their respective organisations. Only 25% of participants were either neutral or not happy about working in their respective organisations, reflecting good satisfaction levels of participants. TM functions, such as recruitment, management and retention of talented employees, reflects an investment in employees who are then felt obligated to reciprocate with the beneficial attitudes and behaviours (Kuvaas and Dysvik, 2010) of motivation, satisfaction, commitment and engagement in their jobs (Bethke-Langenegger *et al.*, 2011). Some 77.7% of the participants (those who rated very high and high) were found to not be planning to leave their organisations. Only 5.5% of the total participants were neutral, and the remaining participants were either planning or ready to leave their organisations. These results reflect the good organisational commitment and

the good influence of TM practices on increasing employee commitment. Considering the TM practices in the participants' organisations (Table 7), it is evident that they are effectively implemented, which might be the reason for good levels of organisational commitment observed in this section. Similar to these results, almost 85% of the participants were found to be very happy or happy in referring their organisation or service units to their colleagues, reflecting their positive attitudes towards their organisations.

Organisation culture is an important factor that has an impact on employee attitudes, and accordingly, TM practices have to be aligned with organisational culture for better results. Various studies (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1992; Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Farndale, Scullion and Sparrow, 2010; Kim and Scullion, 2011) have found a significant relationship between these factors. It is interesting to note that almost 79% of the participants (those rated very high and high) stated that they exert a lot of energy at their workplace, which might be reflecting the good work environment fostered by the motivation to deliver and learning. Accordingly, 84.8% (those rated very high and high) of participants felt that time passes quickly at their workplace, reflecting the complete dedication and involvement in the work. In addition, 80.8% of participants (those rated very high and high) felt that they have sufficient opportunities to question their managers without hesitation, while only 13% felt that they do not have sufficient opportunities. These findings reflect the good TM practices and good alignment of TM practises with organisational culture.

The next question focusses on assessing the impact of TM practices on employee satisfaction, and the related responses are presented in Figure 6.10. One of the important factors for employee satisfaction is the basic pay that the employees receive. The absence of factors such as good salary, conducive work environment, employee freedom etc. can lead to job dissatisfaction. (Dartey, 2011). Almost 87% of participants (those rated very high and high) were found to be happy with the basic pay they receive, and only 5.2% of the participants were neutral, reflecting good TM practices for achieving employee retention and satisfaction through financial benefits by the participants' respective organisations. Pimapunsri (2013), in a study of TM among 13 private companies located in Thailand, found that there exists a significant “engagement gap” between middle- and senior-level employees, which affects the retention and development of talent, which could directly affect employee satisfaction levels. As KSA is a developing country and an employee market, it is essential to empower employees, which cannot be underestimated as it leads

to efficiency, effectiveness, loyalty and willingness to support and achieve the long-term goals of the company (Angari, 2013).

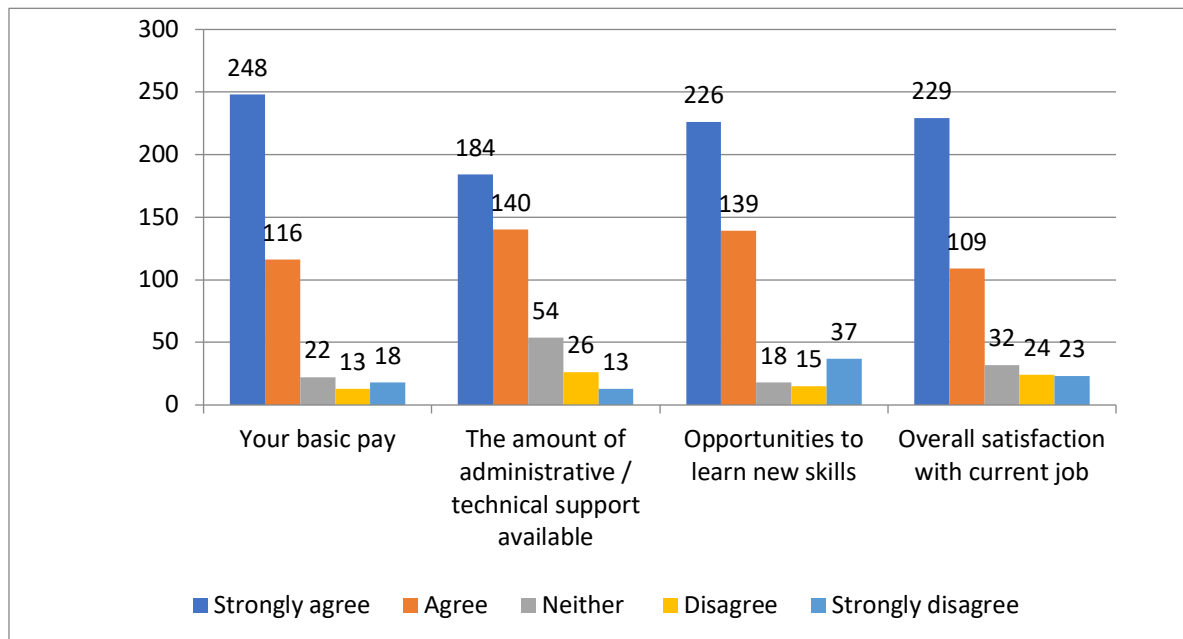


Figure 6.12. TM effect on employee satisfaction

Therefore, there is a need for effective support from the managers for employee empowerment through proper engagement. Accordingly, the survey results have found that only 77.7% of the participants (those rated very high and high) were happy with the administrative support they received in their organisations. In addition, only 12.9% of the participants were found to be neutral in this aspect. These findings reflect the good TM practises in providing support and empowering employees in the majority of the participants’ organisations. Personal and professional development through learning is another significant factor that can improve employee satisfaction levels. In a recent survey, it was found that the opportunity to grow and learn and trying new areas ranked higher than additional pay, a flexible workplace, a flexible schedule, more holidays and work that is personally stimulating (Dychtwald *et al.*, 2006). Therefore, the opportunity to learn new skills is one of the major motivational factors for employees that can achieve satisfaction in the workplace. It was found that 87.5% of participants (those rated very high and high) were found to be satisfied with the opportunities available in their respective organisations for learning new skills. In addition, only 4.3% of participants were neutral and only 8% of the total participants were not satisfied with the opportunities available.

Accordingly, linking people to the jobs for which they are not qualified can result in low productivity, high levels of absenteeism, low morale and job dissatisfaction (Thunnissen *et al.*, 2013). In contrast, managerial actions such as being socially responsible or having a supportive manager can help buffer employee satisfaction levels and prevent talent loss (Walter *et al.*, 2010). The survey responses have indicated good satisfaction levels. Almost 81% of participants (those rated very high and high) were found to be satisfied with their organisations, followed by 7.6% of participants being neutral. These results reflect good TM practices adopted in the participants' organisations, indicating that an integrated approach of TM that is systematically and strategically designed to be aligned with organisational strategy and culture is needed in order to achieve high employee satisfaction, which could result in employee retention.

The next question focuses on the impact of TM on employee motivation levels, and the responses are presented in Figure 6.13.

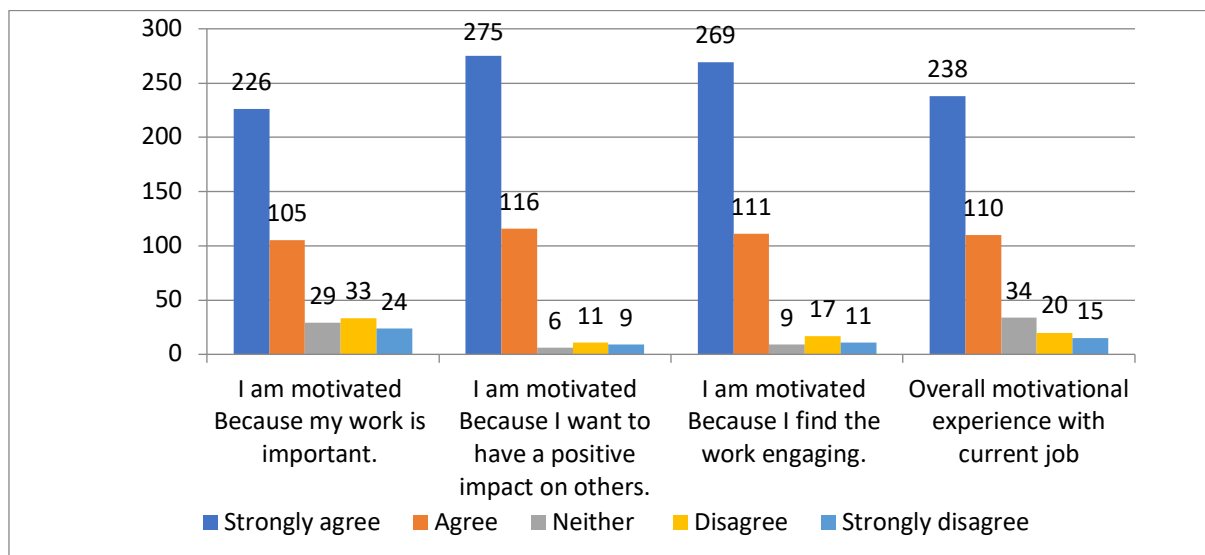


Figure 6.13. Impact of TM on employee motivation  
Employee motivation is an important aspect of TM as it could increase employee performance and commitment which could result in increased organisational performance. In contrast, the absence of motivation among employees would lead to poor performance, loss of CA and loss of confidence among shareholders (Francis, 2008). Most organisations overlook the concept of motivation and the interest of its employees in the quest for profit maximisation, thus leading to low productivity and low engagement (Francis, 2008). The survey responses have found good motivational levels among the participants, mostly driven by the work and the surroundings.



Almost 83.4% of participants (those rated very high and high) stated that they are motivated because they feel that the work is important. In addition, only 8.1% of participants were neutral and 8.3% were not motivated in this aspect. Motivational factors among employees include responsibility, commitment to achieve targets and goals and showing concern for the business (Shamir, 2005). They might be motivated to have a positive impact on others. In relation to this aspect, 93.7% of participants (those rated very high and high) were found to be motivated because they wanted to have a positive impact on others at work. Similarly, 91.1% of participants were motivated because they found their work engaging.

These findings reflect that the participants are mostly motivated by their self-driven approach towards work, which they consider to be important and engaging. However, there is a need for an individualistic approach to motivation, as not all employees possess self-driven enthusiasm in the workplace (Achoui, 2009). Accordingly, motivating factors such as recognition, career advancement, achievement and responsibility (Dartey, 2011) may be deployed in the organisations.

The next question focuses on the impact of TM on the employees' commitment, and the related responses are presented in Figure 6.14. Employee commitment is one of the new attributes included in the survey based on the findings from the interview analysis (Section 5.3.10), where the majority of participants stated that TM practises would lead to improved employee commitment towards their organisations.

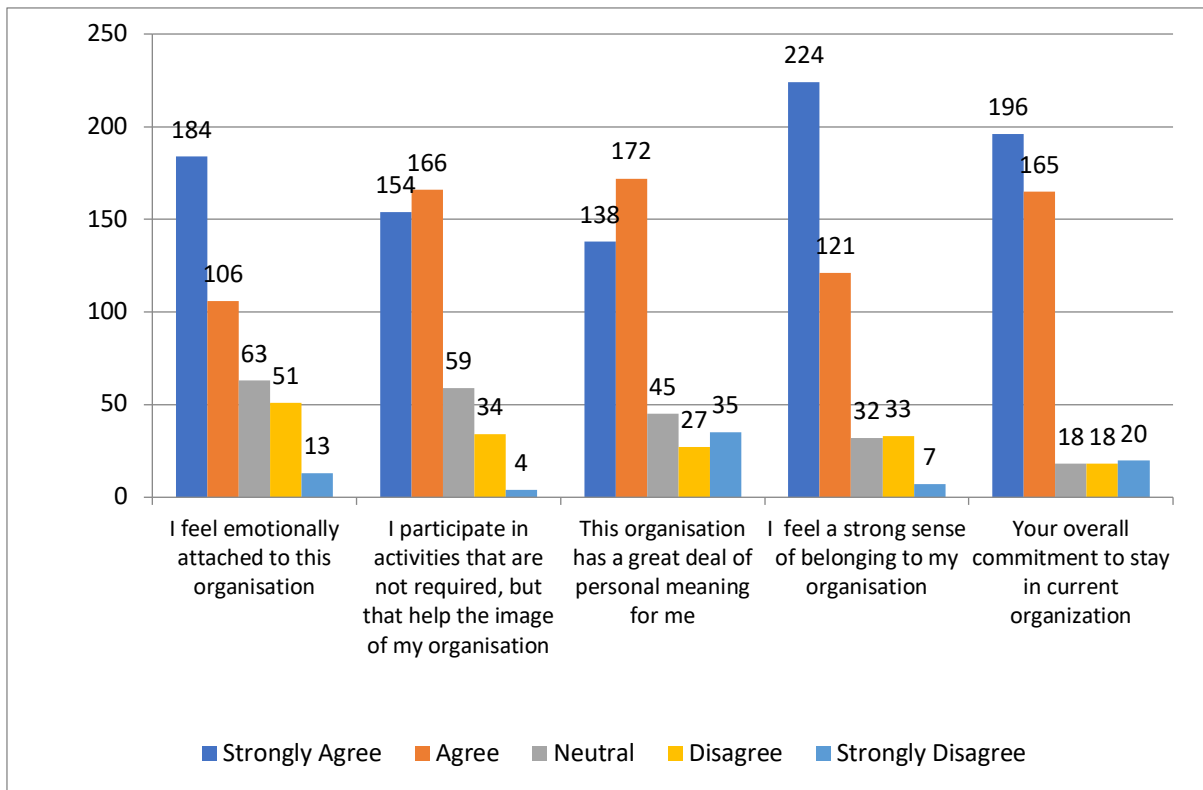


Figure 6.14. Impact of TM on employee commitment

The majority of participants (69.5%) feel emotionally attached to their organisation, which is an important factor to be assessed, which can increase their commitment towards their organisations. In addition, 76.7% of participants were ready to do extra work, which can build the image of their organisation, reflecting the commitment of the participants to make extra efforts for their organisations. Similar responses were received for other options, reflecting employees' emotional attachment and professional commitment with their organisations. These findings can be supported by various references from the literature review (Ulrich and Smallwood, 2012; Collings and Mellahi 2009; Goldsmith and Carter, 2010 Mensah and Bawole 2017). The commitment towards the organisation can increase employee retention, maintain talent resources and make optimum use of them, allowing the organisations to maintain their CA and value (Goldsmith and Carter, 2010). In addition, findings from interview results reflected that by adopting TM practises such as learning and development, job rotation, support etc., the satisfaction levels of the employees can be increased, which would result in improved employee commitment. Thus, it can be analysed that employee commitment is one of the major TM outcomes which can add value to the organisations and promote sustainable development by retaining talent resources and making optimum use of them.

The next question focuses on the impact of TM on SCA, and the related responses are presented in Figure 6.15.

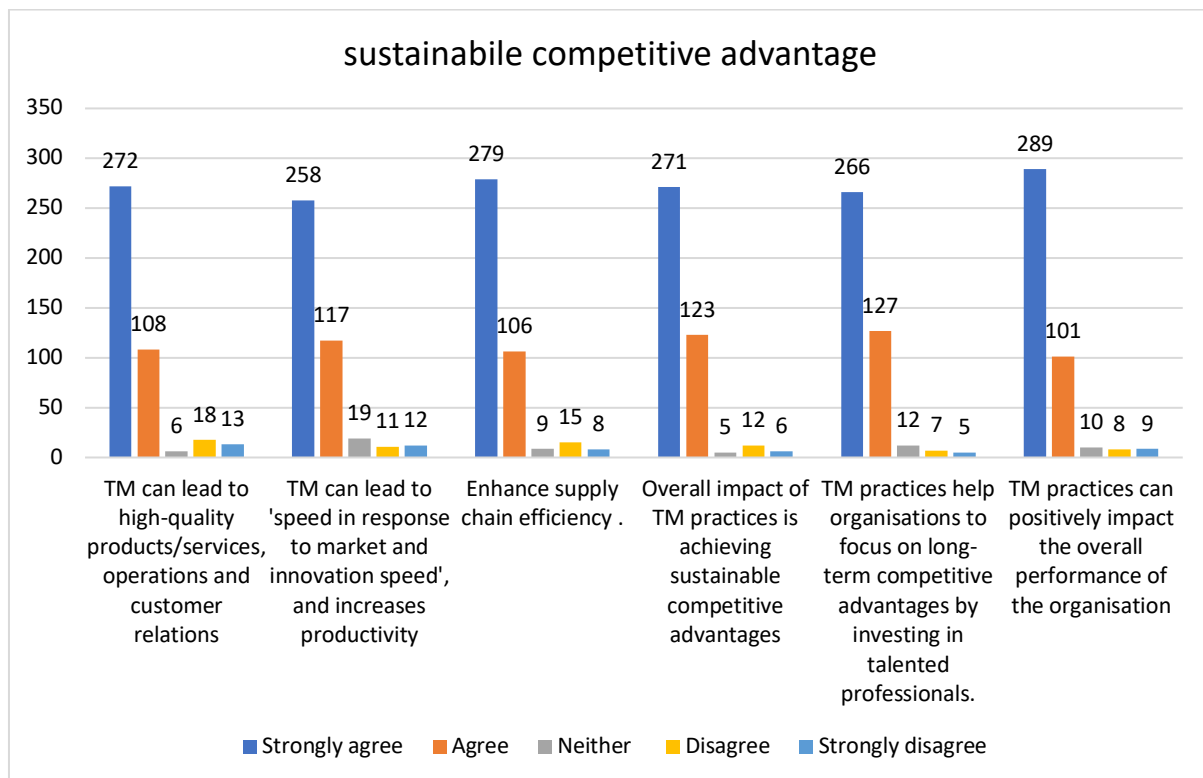


Figure 6.15. Impact of TM on SCA

The impact of TM on participants' organisation's performance is assessed in terms of various factors such as SCA and improvement in products and services. TM can help in improving employee performance levels which could result in improved customer services (Sang *et al.*, 2016). Similarly, TM can foster innovation through learning, empowerment and development of employees which can improve the products and services of an organisation. Accordingly, 91.1% of the total participants (those rated very high or high) stated that TM operations in their respective organisations lead to development of high-quality products/services, operations and customer relations. Only 1.4% of participants were neutral. TM can lead to effective (speed) responses to the changes in market, which could also support in leading innovation can enhance the growth and productivity and accordingly the supply chain efficiency, to which the decision-making from talented individuals is applied. Accordingly, 94% of the participants stated that implementation of

effective TM applications would enhance supply chain efficiency, increases productivity and contributes to the organisational growth.

Similarly, the relationship between TM applications and long-term growth/sustainability has been investigated in various studies (Benitez-Amado *et al.*, 2015; Tatoglu *et al.*, 2016; Gardner, 2002). Effective TM can lead to highly skilled and innovative employees and a diverse and innovative workforce who can contribute to growth, which could increase sustainability (Gardner, 2002). Accordingly, 94.4% of participants strongly agreed (those rated very high and high) that TM applications can lead to improved SCA. Only 5.6% of participants were either neutral or disagreed/strongly disagreed, reflecting good TM applications in their respective companies. To further assess the relationship between TM and SCA, a Chi-Square test was conducted between the TM factors such as motivation, satisfaction and engagement, as analysed in previous sections, and the sustainable competitive advantage. The relationship between SCA and TM applications was investigated in various studies (Cheese, Thomas and Craig, 2008; Wright, McMahan and McWilliams, 1994; Collings, Scullion Vaiman, 2011; Guerci and Solari, 2012). Most of the studies found a positive correlation between TM and sustainable competitive advantage. However, from the survey responses, it can be assessed that only 94.2% of participants strongly agreed that TM applications in their respective organisations increased the competitive advantage. In addition, only 5.8% of participants were either neutral or strongly disagreed with the statement. To further assess the relationship between SCA and TM factors, Chi-Square tests were conducted between the factors SCA and employee satisfaction, SCA and employee motivation, and SCA and employee engagement. A significant relationship was identified between employee motivation and SCA ( $X^2 = 24.556$ ,  $p = 0.000062$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ); employee satisfaction and SCA ( $X^2 = 36.7676$ ,  $p = 0.00001$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ); employee commitment and SCA ( $X^2 = 30.5913$ ,  $p = 0.00001$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ); and employee engagement and SCA ( $X^2 = 67.5235$ ,  $p = 0.00001$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) (Appendix E). These findings reflect good TM practices such as employee engagement, motivation and satisfaction in the participants' organisations, which are effective enough in adding competitive advantage. In addition, it can be analysed that the TM practices adopted in the participants' organisations are effective in supporting organisational growth by increasing CA and leading to sustainable development. Similarly, to further support the findings and reliability of quantitative results, single-tailed t-tests were conducted using the data collected from the surveys. The findings

are presented in Table 6.11(Appendix E)..The results from the t-test were found to support the results from Chi-Square tests, which not only addresses the reliability of the quantitative analysis but also signifies the relationship between TM outcomes (employee satisfaction, commitment, engagement, and motivation) and organisational outcomes (sustainable competitive advantage). The next question focuses on identifying the factors in the internal environment of the organisations which would affect the TM operations. The responses to the various factors are presented in Table 6.8.

Table 6.8. Internal factors that affect TM

Choose the organisation's most influential internal environmental factors on TM?	Frequency	Relative Frequency
1. Good/bad leadership style of upper managerial hierarchy can positively/negatively impact TM implementation.	308	73.8%
2. The employer's brand can positively/negatively impact TM implementation in the organisation.	311	74.5%
3. Having a formal structure and culture in the organisation can help in TM implementation.	344	82.5%
4. Having reward systems in the organisation can help in TM implementation.	302	72.4%
All of the above.	242	58%

Some 58.5% of the total participants stated that a formal structure and an effective organisational culture would help in effectively implementing the TM practices. Rothwell (1994) and Wikstrom *et al.*, (2012) similarly stated that a formal TM strategy integrated with organisational culture and strategy could simplify the implementation of TM practises. Similar responses (72.4%) were received for the reward system. It is interesting to note that the participants also perceived that the brand of an organisation would affect TM implementation, as only 64.5% of the participants supported it. Some 73.8% of participants stated that good leadership can have an impact on TM implementation. The leadership impact is supported by the majority of participants. The findings reveal that there are various internal factors to the organisations which could impact TM implementation. Therefore, formal and clear planning is essential in developing and implementing TM practises and strategy, which would consider all the influencing factors.

## 6.6. Conclusion

The quantitative survey results discussed in this chapter have identified some interesting aspects relating to TM applications in organisations. Firstly, participants have good education levels and a good understanding of TM applications, which increases the reliability of the findings. The responses presented in Table 6.1 clearly reflect the good awareness levels of the participants

regarding TM. Various approaches for talent identification, talent attraction, recruitment, development, retaining and managing talent in the organisations were preferred by most of the participants. However, the majority of participants considered all the approaches specified for each factor. This reflects the need for integrated TM practises, which is systematically and strategically designed and aligned with the organisational structure and culture. Maintaining employee commitment and engagement, geographical location, talent shortage and lack of leadership are a few major challenges affecting TM, which are identified within the participants' organisations. These challenges were found to be similar to the challenges identified from the qualitative study findings (Chapter 5). One of these challenges (maintaining employee engagement and commitment) reflects the lack of effective TM processes in the participants' organisations.

An engaging organisational culture and environment and a good organisational commitment were two major aspects supported by the majority of participants (based on the employee attitudes responses). The findings revealed that the workplace is engaging and the freedom to express (or ask questions) themselves was found to be effectively supported in the participants' organisations. Similarly, the majority of participants were highly satisfied with their jobs in their respective organisations. Sufficient and competitive pay scales, good support and abundant opportunities to learn new skills are a few important factors identified for achieving high satisfaction levels. One of the interesting findings from the survey is that the majority of participants were motivated by their self-driven psychological aspects such as the intention to work and the scope for learning and to create a positive impact on others, in contrast to the financial rewards or non-financial rewards.

In addition, the TM practises were found to have an impact on the employees, which resulted in improved employee efficiency, performance, motivation, commitment, engagement, satisfaction and retention. Accordingly, the TM outcomes including employee engagement, commitment, satisfaction and motivation were found to be positively correlated with SCA and the performance of organisations. These results indicate that TM practises, when effectively deployed, can lead to improved SCA and organisational performance. Accordingly, findings from the quantitative survey reflect the good implementation of effective TM practises being deployed in most of the participants' organisations located in KSA.

The next chapter provides a detailed discussion of the findings from the literature review (Chapter 2), qualitative analysis (Chapter 5) and quantitative analysis (Chapter 6) from which the implications of this research study can be determined.

## Chapter 7: Discussion

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### 7.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the key findings and links them with the academic research and the practical scenarios of the oil and gas organisations. One of the main aims of this research is to design and develop TM framework for implementing. The discussion is made under key factors including TM definition, TM practise, TM outcomes, internal factors affecting TM, TM challenges and TM outcomes. Accordingly, the concepts from the literature review (Chapter 2) are drawn and analysed with the industrial and practical scenarios along with the findings from the qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys. The next part of the chapter validates the proposed framework through an empirical investigation by assessing the impact of the influencing factors of TM and the impact of TM on achieving sustainable competitive advantage. In addition, the practical guidelines for the effective implementation of the framework are presented.

Considering the foundation for this research, two theories were used to support this Research and the relevant considerations of various elements used in the theoretical framework (Figure 3.5, Chapter 3). RBV suggests that the internal resources of the organisation (e.g., talented employees) can be useful in improving organisational performance and competitive advantage. However, the impact of TM on these internal resources has to be measured by considering the employees' social exchange relationships and their attitudes towards the TM practises, which highlights the need to use SET, which consider the resources exchanged and the relationships emerged after implementing the TM practises. Considering these aspects, various behavioural attitudes such as employee motivation, satisfaction, engagement, commitment and TM practises like learning and development, talent attraction and identification and managing and retaining talents were considered in the study. The impact of these behavioural aspects on improving the sustainable competitive advantage were measured in this Research by using these two theories as a foundation to the study.

### 7.2. TM Definition

Various definitions were provided for TM by different authors, as reviewed in (Chapter 2 Section 2.3). While few authors focused on defining it from a HRM perspective by placing the right



individuals in the right positions at the right times (Jackson and Schuler, 1990; Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Hughes and Rog, 2015), others (Rothwell, 1994; Pascal, 2004; CIPD, 2006; Capelli, 2008) defined it as a systematic and strategic approach aimed towards improving skills, competencies and performance. However, all the definitions were aimed at improving performance but defined from different perspectives. Similarly, the findings from the quantitative survey reflected the multi-faceted aspect of TM, as the majority of participants (95.6%) understood it as a system to manage talent; an integrated set of processes, programs and culture that must be aligned with other organisational operations; and a systematic approach that must be applicable to all employees or only a set of talented employees. Similarly, the findings from the interview's analysis reflected that the definition cannot be limited to stating it as the integrated set of processes, operations and culture, but it must also consider inclusion of various correlated and influencing factors.

An analysis of the five statements relating to how respondents personally define and understand the concept of TM reveals that it is mostly defined as the Systematic attraction, retention, identification, development, engagement of talent to achieve sustainable competitive advantage, with 96.2% either strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement, and 92.3% of the survey participants. The next highest perception is that it is an integrated set of processes, programs and culture used by employers to anticipate and meet the needs of human capital (80.8%); however, this was agreed by only 53.7% of survey participants. HR processes are third at 60.2% (interview) and 58.9% (survey). The varied findings on personal definitions of TM confirm what has been established by other studies that the concept of talent and by implication its management has no universally accepted definition and is therefore context-specific based on organisation-specific factors and the type of work being performed (Tansley, 2011). Defining TM, a systematic process of attracting, retaining, identifying, developing and engaging talent is consistent with extant literature that emphasises the importance of being systematic through, for example, systematically linking it to other organisational processes (Schuler, Jackson and Tarique, 2011; Stahl *et al.*, 2012; Dries, 2013; Meyers and van Woerkom, 2014). That there is an involvement of many processes that are integrated resonates with Iles *et al.*, (2010) view of TM as integrated HRD focusing on specific aspects (programs). While studies have highlighted the importance of HR processes in TM, the findings seem to illustrate that HR processes are subsumed under the "integrated set of processes" and under following a systematic approach to attracting talent. This is consistent with

Hughes and Rog's (2015) conceptualisation of TM as an elevation of HRM practices to involve implementing an integrated, strategic and technology-enabled approach with an emphasis on human resources planning. This confirms Lewis and Heckman's (2006) observation on the absence of empirical studies that separate TM from traditional HRM practices involving planning for current and future HR needs. The absence of a clear picture on whether TM is perceived as inclusive or exclusive confirms ongoing discourse on the inclusivity and or exclusivity of TM (Al Ariss *et al.*, 2014; Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.*, 2013; Iles *et al.*, 2010). Accordingly, the qualitative results indicated TM as mainly exclusive (53.1%), as very few participants indicated it as inclusive (26.9%); while the quantitative results reflected it mainly as inclusive (74.8%), and very few indicated it as exclusive (23.5%). The results reflect the difference in the understanding and perception of TM among senior employees who participated in qualitative interviews (preferred exclusive), and middle- and low-level employees who participated in the quantitative survey (preferred inclusive).

The analysis of TM's definition gathered various views from the participants. By considering the definitions of Hughes and Rog (2015), Guerci and Solari (2012), Morton and Ashton (2005), Wikstrom *et al.*, (2012), Rothwell (1994) and Stockley (2007), and the responses from the interviews, it can be stated that TM is a multifaceted approach which has various interlinked approaches or functions, and that it can be linked with various other operations in the organisations for managing the talent within the organisations.

The approaches adopted by the industries reflects the importance of TM in Saudi organisations, as they are focusing and developing skills and competencies through various programs (KSA Oil Co., 2018). Its multifaceted aspect and the importance of alignment can be observed from the Sahara company's approach, which identified TM as one of its major goals and systematically integrated TM with its organisational strategy (Saharapcc, 2017). Accordingly, from the discussion, the Researcher defines TM as follows:

*"As a process of managing the talent resources within the organisation which involves various approaches including talent attraction, recruitment, learning and development, rewards (TM practises ) through effective integration with organisational factors such as organisational culture, leadership, reward system, and employer branding (influencing factors) which improves*

*the employees' motivation, satisfaction, commitment and retention (TM outcomes/mediating factors) for achieving sustainable competitive advantage (organisational performance)."*

This definition identifies the TM practises, outcomes and influencing factors and highlights the importance of TM for achieving improved sustainable competitive advantage. However, it is necessary to identify and discuss all the elements, which is achieved through the discussion in the following sections.

#### **7.4. Internal Factors**

Internal factors in this Research refer to those factors that are related to organisational approaches aimed at influencing the TM processes. Various factors such as employer branding, organisational culture, leadership practices and rewards systems adopted may influence various TM processes such as talent attraction, identification, development and retainment. Accordingly, from the organisation's perspective, various practices must be adopted in order to attract talented individuals. Employer branding is one of the most preferred options identified in the quantitative survey analysis (74%). Various approaches such as providing good pay scales, learning opportunities and maintaining a supportive and motivating organisational culture would reflect the brand identity, which will be used as an element by the talented individuals in selecting the companies.

Employer branding has been shown to increase the quantity and quality of job applicants (Collins and Han, 2004) and to have positive consequences for organisational performance (Fulmer, Gerhart and Scott, 2003; Hah *et al.*, 2005; Mosley, 2007; Elving *et al.*, 2013; Wallace, Lings, and Cameron, 2012; Mihalcea, 2017). Potential recruits' beliefs that an employer will satisfy their needs represents the value of the employer's brand in the recruitment market. Potential recruits who perceive an employer to have high employer brand value consider that working for the employer is more attractive or at least less risky than working for an employer with low brand value (Berthon, Ewing and Hah, 2005).

The interview analysis found that brand identity must be achieved by using various approaches including providing good pay scales, compensation, benefits and, most importantly, learning opportunities and enabling the growth of the employees.

Maintaining diversity in the workplace is another key aspect identified in the interview analysis. It reflects a positive organisational culture and it has been a major factor considered in the KSA organisations. For example, Sahara Petroleum Company has a diverse workforce from nine different nationalities, and 90% of them are from emerging economies (Saharapcc, 2017). This reflects a diverse working environment, where employees are bonded together with a positive organisational culture with a mix of people with different skills and competencies. Such approaches promote the employers' brand which would attract talented individuals to meet the skill requirements from across the globe.

Employer branding allows an organisation to create an attractive image of itself as a distinct and desirable employer, both internally and externally (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). Employer branding serves as a management framework that can help to improve recruitment, retention and commitment, in addition to increasing productivity and the focus on priorities (Ambler and Barrow, 1996). The employer branding concept is based on the conviction that an employer can be seen as a brand (Ambler and Barrow, 1996).

Other internal factors identified from the survey and interview analysis and the literature review both indicate the importance of the organisational culture, especially as TM is new to KSA. Reem (2014) agrees that the organisational structure and culture can help organisations to attract and retain talented employees, emphasising that improving the organisational structure has a greater impact on retaining talented employees than increasing employees' salaries. Based on this, it is very important to develop a healthy organisational culture to motivate employees. In addition, Kontoghiorghes (2016) found that the most important factor behind talented employees leaving their organisations is unhealthy organisational cultures.

It is important for organisations to create a good work environment to support new employees and to allow them to learn and accept their mistakes in the beginning, as past studies have shown that the performance of new employees will be low in the first few years because of their weak social networks, which have a significant impact on their performance. One of the interviewees said that the organisational environment must allow employees to invent and create new ways to provide services to customers. This idea is mentioned by Joyce and Slocum (2012), who state that organisations should give employees the chance to invent. By doing so, the organisations can operate more effectively.

Organisational culture is fundamentally important for TM implementation. Each organisation needs to make changes in relation to structure and culture before implementing any new system. In addition, the improvement of organisational culture and environment helps employees accept new policies.

Almost all interviewees agree on the importance of culture. And (82%) of the survey participants, especially in terms of the policies related to motivating and assessing employees. Organisations assess employees to establish who is talented using old, inefficient tools. New ways, such as management by objectives, should be applied. Management by objectives, for example, can firstly motivate employees by showing them that they are achieving some of the firm's objectives. Secondly, management by objectives can increase the level of justice in terms of talented employee identification, as other employees can clearly see what these employees have done to be considered talented.

The qualitative results identified that leadership can positively or negatively impact TM operations. Accordingly, the quantitative analysis of survey results has supported the qualitative findings, as the majority of participants (more than 70%) agreed with the statement. However, lack of leadership is one of the major factors identified that affects TM operations in the participants' organisations. Similarly, the literature review has identified that leadership styles can influence the implementation and management of TM practises in organisations (Dierdorff and Morgeson, 2007; Bryan and Joyce, 2007; Osborn, Hunt and Jauch, 2002; Dinh *et al.*, 2014). Transactional leadership was identified to positively impact TM practises in a few studies (Capelli, 2008; Meyers and Van Woerkom, 2014). Similarly, the companies like Sahara are adopting more supportive leadership styles to support employee development and retention. Therefore, from the discussion it can be assessed that leadership and styles of leadership is one of the most important internal factors which may positively or negatively impact TM practices.

Rewards systems is another internal factor that may affect TM practises. Rewards systems may include both monetary and non-monetary benefits. The qualitative analysis identified that major companies like Sahara and Ma'aden provide both monetary and non-monetary benefits to their employees upon them achieving specific targets, and it was identified that these rewards would result in improved employee satisfaction and engagement. The quantitative results show that more

than 72% of participants agreed that rewards systems will affect TM implementation and reflected that the employees were more satisfied with non-monetary rewards than monetary rewards. These results from both qualitative and quantitative analysis can be related to various studies (Armstrong, 2010; Kumar, 2016; Kwon and Hein, 2013; Bussin and Rooy, 2014; Bussin, 2018; Thomson and Bussin, 2015) that have found a positive relationship between rewards systems and employee attitudes, especially engagement, satisfaction, commitment and motivation, which are major TM outcomes. Thus, from the discussion, it can be stated that rewards systems can influence TM practises and outcomes.

### **7.5. TM Practises**

As identified in the literature, there are various approaches for managing talent, including talent attraction, identification, learning and development programs, managing talent and retaining talent. Accordingly, the attracting talent process can be planned and initiated according to the requirements to fulfil the skills gap. The recruitment process can be a complex task, which needs to be creatively managed (Phillips and Roper, 2007). Outsourcing the recruitment process is the least preferred option identified by the participants in both survey and interviews. However, partnering with good universities to recruit talented individuals (46%), offer the best compensation and benefits (72.4%), strong brand of the company (70.7%) and internships (66.1%) were found to be a preferred option in both the surveys and interviews. The qualitative analysis also shows that partnering with good universities to recruit talented individuals (46%), offer the best compensation and benefits (42.4), strong brand of the company (42%). Accordingly, the KSA Oil Company has been partnering with ten international universities and offering college degree programs in KSA to provide internship opportunities and can be recruited later based on their performance (Saudi Arabian Oil Co., 2018).

Accordingly, the recruitment process can be planned and initiated according to the requirements to fulfil the skills gap. The recruitment process can be a complex task and needs to be creatively managed by analysing various attributes and abilities of individuals (Phillips and Roper, 2007). Regarding the recruitment process, outsourcing the recruitment process is the least preferred option identified by the participants in both the survey and interviews. However, partnering with good universities to recruit talented individuals was found to be a preferred option in both the survey and interviews.

As identified from the responses from the semi-structured interviews and survey, skills and capabilities (60%), creative thinking and problem-solving skills( 53%), computer knowledge from interviews (34%) however from survey (82%) and experience( 15%) However the result from the survey (82%) Level of education (30%) were found to be the major factors considered while recruiting talented individuals. However, experience can be avoided from managers opinion because the managers preferred recruiting talented individuals directly from the universities or through internships.

Approaches for attracting talent are discussed in the previous section, where various factors such as branding, compensation and benefits, incentives and supportive organisational culture would enable talent attraction. Similarly, the qualitative results identified that talent identification, attraction and retaining processes are a part of talent planning, which needs to be continuously evaluated and updated according to the changing requirements. The results from qualitative data are supported by the quantitative data. The quantitative survey results identified various approaches such as informal chats (62.1%), management evaluation of employees and employee performance for identifying the talent. The majority of participants (75.3%) supported the idea of formal employee evaluation methods such as annual performance reviews, sales results, production results in terms of tools for the identification of talented employees and performance appraisals. This is consistent with the work of Opas and Pacapol (2010), who argue that most organisations use performance appraisals to identify talented employees because human resources departments want to measure difficult matters like individual talent in the easiest way possible. Annual performance appraisals were criticised by the interviewees as an old way to assess and identify talented employees; they are also based on employees' individual differences. One interviewee from a private sector organisation claimed that they allow employees to participate in the process of assessment. This is in line with Leventhal's (1980) suggestion that employees should participate in the process of employee assessment and in the identification of talented employees, which was supported by various studies (Tarique and Schuler, 2009; Baron *et al.*, 2001; Collins and Kehoe, 2009; Srivastava and Bhatnagar, 2008; Krishnan and Scullion, 2017).

Remarkably *et al.*, (2013) believe that the best solution for private sector organisations is to remove performance appraisals from the process of identifying talented employees in order to increase the level of fairness. New tools and methods could be used to assess employees; one of the

interviewees suggested adding new criteria to the performance appraisals and conducting assessments more than once per year in order to solve any problems as soon as possible.

Accordingly, various TD practises were proposed by this researcher. Providing foundation-level training was found to be one of the most preferred approaches (74%) in the quantitative survey analysis, which can be collectively organised for all employees, followed by establishing a structured system to develop talent to meet growth and change requirements that will help employees acquire the skills they need (73.5%), and employees are encouraged to innovate and innovate by dedicating time to experimenting with new things and developing new ideas (70 %). In addition, individually designed training programs were also preferred (65.4%), reflecting the need to adopt both inclusive and exclusive approaches in providing learning and development opportunities. The interview analysis found that the learning process should be continuous and needs to be updated according to the changing requirements within and outside the organisations. Various studies (Jonathan *et al.*, 2011; Meyers and Van Woerkom, 2014; Berger and Berger, 2011; Al Ariss *et al.*, 2014; Huselid, Beatty and Becker, 2005) have identified both inclusive and exclusive approaches practised by the organisations in different scenarios, highlighting the fact that the exclusive or inclusive approach must be adopted based on the organisational requirements. Focusing on these aspects, KSA Oil Company introduced both inclusive and exclusive practices in the processes of skills development. For example, through inclusive approaches, KSA Drilling Academy (SADA) and King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture were launched for developing the skills of all the employees, and streamlined programs were selected with partner institutions (universities) for exclusively providing scholarships for the employees to acquire new knowledge and talent through various programs (KSA Oil Co., 2018b). Another important finding from the quantitative survey analysis is the need for a structured system to develop talent, which needs to be integrated with the working environment. Accordingly, the interview analysis found that Sahara, a KSA company, adopts a strategic and structured TD approach that integrates various job enrichment approaches such as coaching programs, counselling, motivation and constructive feedback from seniors, which are integrated into the organisational culture. Furthermore, empowerment approaches, such as creating a motivated and collaborated learning environment and providing managerial support, were identified to be an important aspect of TD in both the survey and interview analysis. Accordingly, the findings from the literature review revealed the importance of leadership roles of managers in providing a supportive environment for learning,



which would result in improved employee efficiency, which is supported in various studies (Lynette and Carley, 2010; Walter *et al.*, 2010; Mathieu and Zaccaro, 2001; Erkutlu, 2012). Another important finding interview analysis was that the employees must be encouraged to lead innovation by providing sufficient opportunities to deploy their skills in experimenting and research and also for gathering new ideas. Accordingly, the findings from the literature review suggested that the self-driven innovative skills of the employees can be nurtured by providing sufficient opportunities which could increase the organisation's value and SCA (Sang *et al.*, 2016). In terms of training and its impact on retaining talented employees, interviewees from oil and gas organisations agreed that developing employees' skills helps to retain talented employees. Employee training is one of the strategies that Christensen and Evelina (2008) suggested. Training and development increases satisfaction and, as a result, talented employees will be less likely to consider leaving (Balzer, 2000). Based on this—and taking into account various interviewee responses regarding the limited opportunity to train in the workplace, organisations need to plan employee training and allow their employees to participate in this planning so as to achieve sound results from training and development programs. This acts as a tool to improve employee performance and as a strategy to retain talented employees.

Another important approach for managing talent is talent retention (TR). The survey results supported the view that various approaches such as monetary (compensation, bonuses, incentives (52.2%)), an open environment and supportive organisational culture (86.5%), employee stock options (57.3%), good relationships with managers and employees (73.1%) and providing opportunities for personal growth and profession interests (94.4%) are major TM practises, as identified in the literature review (Dychtwald *et al.*, 2006). However, it may not be effective in all cases, as the employees are looking for a good learning environment and culture within the organisations that could help in improving efficiency and satisfaction levels and enable retention (Kaliprasad, 2006). An open environment and culture (86.5%) with good opportunities for personal growth and professional development (94.4%) and quality relationships with managers (73.1%) are the major approaches preferred by the majority of participants in the survey. Similar results were identified in the interview analysis where growth opportunities and an open environment and culture were more preferred than monetary benefits. This reflects the shift in the employees' approaches in selecting the organisations from purely monetary perspectives to

personal growth perspectives. This scenario further highlights the importance of learning and development and other TM operations, which would ensure TR within organisations. Therefore, an integration of various approaches is essential for achieving high retention rates. This is evident from an industrial scenario, as seen by Sahara Petroleum Company in KSA, for example, which promotes the culture of diversity and inclusion and also provides sufficient pay scales and monetary benefits and has achieved TD with high TR rates (Saharapcc, 2017).

Key findings from the interview analysis and survey results analysis include the approaches that focus on improving employee efficiency through various approaches such as training, providing coaching, focus on future career (90%). support and motivation from managers (85%) and Recognising and valuing employee performance (84%) and providing opportunities to learn and deploy skills. (79.6%) Building the talent pipeline talent planning/opportunities (70%).Accordingly, managers are considered to be the main drivers of managing talent within organisations, especially in setting up and managing the organisational culture to implement TM practises , applying HR practices in a fair and inclusive way and motivating and supporting the development of employees (Neeti and Aparna, 2008; Lynette and Carley, 2010; Jonathan *et al.*, 2011).

The interview results are consistent with the literature review regarding the tasks that managers and leaders must accomplish to implement TM systems: encouraging shareholders to support TM and making sure TM practices are applied to all employees. Walter *et al.*, (2010) emphasise the role that managers can play in retaining talented employees by improving the quality of the work environment. Talent planning is an important aspect of TM which can be understood from two different perspectives. Firstly, from an organisation perspective that focuses on promoting through branding and maintaining excellent organisational culture and other promotional activities in order to attract the talented individuals, and secondly, through assessing the skills gap within the organisation and, accordingly, planning the recruitment and selection process along with the learning and development programs. In addition, a plan for strategically aligning TM practises with the organisational strategy must be formulated. Analysing the skills gaps within the organisation is an important step involved in the talent planning which would enable the way forward for TM. ‘Skills gaps’ is one of the major problems facing Saudi organisations (Medina, 2014). Having shortages in skills and competencies would affect the various projects and business operations of the organisations and affect the competitive position of the company in the market.

In addition, the overall performance of the organisation can be affected due to the shortage of talent (skills and competencies). Assessing these gaps would lead to the identification of skills requirements, which would in turn lead to the identification of new roles and responsibilities and the learning and development programs. The recruitment, learning and development approaches have to be engrossed in the organisational strategy, reflecting a strategic alignment of TM practices with organisational strategy (Karin, 2015).

Both qualitative and quantitative analysis have supported the role of managers in managing talent within the organisations by systematically managing and implementing TM practices and promoting employee development with an objective to promote organisational growth and achieve objectives. Various studies (Phillips and Roper, 2007; Mathur and Mathur, 2012; Russell and Bennett, 2015; Kaliannan, Abraham and Ponnusam, 2016; Deborah, 2009; Kagwiria, 2013; Rabbi, 2015) in the literature review have identified (TD) as one of the main objectives of TM.

#### **7.6. TM Outcomes**

As explained in Section 7.2, TM Definition, there are various outcomes such as employee motivation, engagement, satisfaction, commitment and improved performance that can be regarded as mediating factors for achieving organisational growth, sustainable competitive advantage, improved performance. Various studies (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1992; Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Farndale, Scullion and Sparrow, 2010; Kim and Scullion, 2011; Rabbi *et al.*, 2015). The TM impact on employee attitudes analysed in the quantitative survey found that effective TM practises in the organisations can achieve positive employee attitudes towards the organisations, which would result in improved engagement, performance, commitment and satisfaction. Similar results were identified in the interview analysis which reflected the concept that the motivated employees, as a result of practicing effective TM practises, would perform more effectively in achieving the organisational goals and objectives. In addition, from an industrial scenario, it was observed that Ma'aden Company in KSA is practicing various TM practises such as maintaining strong employee relationships through various approaches like competitive salaries, excellent working environment and good organisational culture, and streamlined learning and developing programs etc., which have resulted in improved organisational performance and achieving sustainability.

Similarly, various studies from the literature review (Wagner and Harter, 2006; Phillips and Roper, 2007; Gostick and Elton, 2007; Bethke *et al.*, 2011; Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Kalam *et al.*, 2015; Mensah, 2015; Deborah, 2009; Mensah, 2018) found a strong relationship between TM practises and employee engagement. High responses to options such as ‘I have sufficient learning opportunities in my company’, ‘Time passes quickly in the workplace’, and ‘I am not planning to leave the current company’ from the quantitative survey analysis reflects greater employee engagement in KSA companies practicing good TM practises. Therefore, it can be stated that the impact of TM practises can be positively correlated with employee engagement. The findings from the interviews analysis stress the importance of organisational culture and the role of managers (leadership) in achieving greater engagement by effectively deploying various TM practises, supporting employees’ growth, and by placing the right employees in the right positions at the right time.

Similarly, various studies from the literature review (Kwame Mensah, 2015; Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Sharma and Jyotsna Bhatnagar, 2017; Barkhuizen *et al.*, 2014; Chami-Malaeb and Garavan, 2013; Gelens *et al.*, 2013; Anand, 2011; Mensah, 2018) have identified a positive relationship between the TM practises and employee motivation. TM practises —by providing good learning and growth opportunities—and managers—by providing a supportive environment (culture) in the workplace—can improve the motivation levels of employees which could result in greater engagement and improved employee efficiency. The majority of participants in the quantitative survey stated that they are motivated because their work is engaging and they have sufficient opportunities to freely discuss and express their concerns or issues with managers in a supportive and friendly organisational environment. The interview analysis found that by providing support, training, coaching, undertaking professional certifications as a part of the organisational culture and maintaining good relationships, employee motivation levels can be increased. This is supported by a practical example: the employee relationship management systems, effective communication strategies and strong organisational culture stemmed from the roots of shared cultural norms deployed at Sahara Petroleum Company has resulted in motivating the employees. Accordingly, a positive correlation was identified between TM practises and employee satisfaction in various studies (Silverthorne, 2004; Koberg and Chusmir, 1987; Chen, 2004; Kotler and Lee, 2008; Bethke-Langenegger *et al.*, 2011) analysed in the literature review. TM practises such as relative learning opportunities, training programs for acquiring new skills and a friendly working

environment in a supportive organisational culture can achieve satisfaction among employees as these contribute to the development of their skills and competencies. The key findings from the quantitative survey analysis revealed that monetary benefits, supportive working environment (organisation culture) and learning and growth opportunities are the three main factors that would impact satisfaction levels of the employees. The interview analysis found similar results where a strong association between TM practises and employee satisfaction is identified. In addition, by deploying an effective TM strategy at Sahara Petroleum Company, it was found that the employee engagement index and performance enablement index have steadily improved since 2013, which is 3% higher than global and Saudi average.

Similarly, a positive correlation was identified between TM practises and employee commitment, which was identified in various studies (Karin, 2015; Paauwe, 2004; Sahoo and Das, 2011; Sang *et al.*, 2016; Tansley and Tietse, 2013; Mensah, 2015; Mensah, 2018). One of the key findings from the interview analysis is that by increasing the motivation, engagement and satisfaction levels of the employees through effective implementation of TM practises, the commitment of the employees towards their organisations can be increased to a greater extent. In addition, a good organisational culture and supportive learning environment, by offering approaches such as job rotation, opportunities to innovate etc., can increase employee commitment towards the organisations. This factor is highlighted in Sahara's Sustainability Report, 2017, highlighting the practice of various TM practises in order to achieve improved employee satisfaction, engagement, motivation, commitment and efficiency. All three factors (employee motivation, engagement, and satisfaction) can lead to increased employee efficiency which would result in improved performance.

Thus, deploying effective TM practises in the organisations can deliver improved employee engagement, motivation, satisfaction and commitment levels along with improved employee efficiency, which would result in improved performance.

The social exchange theory represents an exchange relationship between an organisation and its employees (Blau, 1964; Settoon *et al.*, 1996; Takeuchi *et al.*, 2007). Thus, the recruitment, management and retention of talented employees reflects an investment in employees who are then felt obligated to reciprocate with beneficial attitudes and behaviours (Kuvaas and Dysvik, 2010)

of motivation, satisfaction, commitment and engagement in their jobs (Bethke-Langenegger *et al.*, 2011).

### **7.7. Sustainable Competitive Advantage**

TM practices can lead to improved performance in various areas of the organisation, which would result in sustainable competitive advantage, overall organisational performance improvement. Lawler (2008) identified four areas including corporate boards, leadership, HRM and information practices, where TM practises can result in improving performance efficiency. Similarly, Al Ariss *et al.*, (2014) identified that TM practises were positively correlated with operational efficiency and competitive advantage. Accordingly, various studies (Sparrow and Makram, 2015; Tafti *et al.*, 2017; Rabbi *et al.*, 2015; Tatoglu *et al.*, 2016; Benitez-Amado *et al.*, 2015) used elements of TM which resulted in improved employee performance, which in turn increased the performance metrics such as speed in response to market and innovation speed, enhance supply chain efficiency and lead to high-quality products/services, operations and customer relations, talent provides the potential for long-term competitive, sustainable competitive advantage, and organisational growth etc.

This research used the TM outcomes, including employee motivation, engagement, satisfaction, commitment and performance, as mediating factors that would achieve sustainable competitive advantage. Accordingly, the findings from the quantitative survey analysis using Chi-Square statistical tests have indicated a strong positive correlation between TM outcomes including engagement, satisfaction, motivation and sustainable competitive advantage. The interview analysis found similar results which reflected the improvements in various aspects such as the competitive edge of organisations, employee efficiency, organisational values and branding etc. One of the key findings from the interview analysis is that there is a need for strategic alignment of TM practises with organisational strategy in order to achieve long-term competitive advantage. In addition, change management is another important aspect identified, where the TM practises are frequently updated according to the changing requirements in the external and internal environments of the organisations. These practices were supported from the industrial practices, where KSA companies including Ma'aden, Sahara and KSA Petroleum Company Aramco, as highlighted by the interviewees, were using innovative approaches for managing TM operations

in line with the changing requirements and integrating them into their business processes to achieve long-term competitive advantage.

### **7.8. TM Challenges**

The literature review identified various challenges and issues associated with TM in organisations. These issues are mostly associated with the organisational culture which must be effectively managed and aligned with the TM framework for effective implementation of TM practises. According to Speers and Henchy (2016), issues such as fluctuations in oil prices and the rise in oil prices can be attributed to the talent shortages in the organisations. As the operational costs can be greatly reduced by using the skilled resources, it is essential for the oil and gas organisations to deploy effective TM practices in their organisations in order to achieve competitive edge and organisational growth. Maintaining staff engagement and commitment within the current culture (75%) has been identified as one of the major challenges facing the KSA organisations. after that Geographical location (70%) and Talent shortage (64%) Many companies are largely reliant on expatriates, which is increasing the costs for acquiring talent. Some of the other challenges include lack of leadership, Inadequate alignment between the organisational strategy, Saudisation and lack of knowledge and understanding of establishing a structured system of developing talent to meet the new growth and change requirements that will help employees get the skills they need (Jackson and Schuler, 1990).

The interview analysis reflected the similar challenges identified in the literature review. In addition, other challenges identified from the interview analysis included talent shortages, lack of leadership, lack of a structured system or strategic framework for integrating TM into organisations, lack of a specific approach for TM implementation, and inadequate alignment of TM strategy with organisational strategy. However, Saudisation was found to be one of the major benefits that is minimising all the challenges associated with TM in KSA companies. Another key challenge identified from the quantitative survey analysis is related to the employee management, engagement and commitment in the organisations and the need for an effective organisational culture that can integrate TM practises into it.

## **7.9. Validation of TM Framework**

This section validates the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 3 (Figure 3.5) by comparing the key elements introduced in the framework with the findings from the quantitative survey and the qualitative interview analysis. The findings from the empirical study are embedded in the framework, making it applicable to the oil and gas organisations. Accordingly, this section also offers practical guidelines for implementing the TM framework based on the findings from the empirical study and academic and industry research contributions. The framework presented in Chapter 3 (Figure 3.1) was derived from the key findings from the literature review, with an aim of addressing the literature gap, where the need for a TM framework specific to oil and gas industries was assessed. The key elements introduced in the framework are fundamental components of TM, the importance of which are validated in the empirical study (qualitative interviews and quantitative survey analysis).

The TM framework proposed by the researcher included three major components: TM practises (talent attraction and identification, learning and development, managing talent, and talent retention), TM outcomes (sustainable competitive advantage, employee motivation, satisfaction, and engagement), and internal factors (leadership, rewards system, organisational culture). TM practises including talent attraction, learning and development, and retention are identified to be the key practises adopted. These practises were required to be aligned with other business processes including leadership management, and performance management. TM outcomes were determined and could be achieved as a result of implementing TM practises. They include engagement, satisfaction, motivation, and individual performance. These outcomes can be used as mediating factors that would result in improved sustainable competitive advantage, which is another major component in the framework. In addition, the business metrics and analytics can be used to define the use of key indicators to measure performance and growth, which includes sustainable competitive advantage, growth and the talent resources availability, which can add value to organisations.

The findings from the quantitative survey analysis and qualitative interview analysis have supported the, employer branding. In addition, the empirical findings have supported the various TM practises including the main focus on learning and developmental programs and training programs such as foundation-level training. In addition, other approaches such as rewards,



compensation, benefits etc. have been identified; however, the opportunities for personal and professional growth provided by the organisations were more preferred compared to the monetary benefits. This reflects that employer branding in terms of services offered to employees, the value of the organisation in the market, its reputation and the culture forms the basis for brand, which would attract talented employees and retain the existing talented employees. From the interview results, it is evident that brand can influence TM practises, especially talent attraction and retaining and gaining trust in the organisations. Similarly, survey results have shown that over 70% of the participants' companies believe in and maintain a strong brand identity to attract and retain talented employees. Therefore, employer branding is considered to be an important element that needs to be included in the internal factors affecting the TM framework. Similarly, TM outcomes including employee engagement, motivation and satisfaction were positively correlated with organisational performance indicators such as sustainable competitive advantage and overall organisational performance. The Chi-Square tests in the quantitative analysis validated these results, positively linking TM outcomes with sustainable and competitive advantage.

However, empirical findings revealed some major aspects that need to be considered in the TM framework. Firstly, the proposed TM framework only considered the internal factors that influence TM operations. However, there are other challenges identified from external environments such as talent shortages and issues faced due to the geographical location of organisations. In addition, lack of a structured system or framework and systematic guidelines for TM is another important factor identified. The findings stressed the importance of organisational culture and the need for aligning TM with the culture. As most of the analysis in the TM practises stressed the need for a supportive and friendly organisational culture for effective implementation of TM practises, the need to integrate the concept of organisational culture into the framework is realised. Emphasis was laid on the support from the senior managers for providing a friendly and supportive working environment where different practices such as job rotation, training and availability to help were highlighted for achieving greater engagement, motivation, satisfaction and commitment among the employees. Senior managers were considered to be the key resource in ensuring the maintenance of effective organisational culture and the drivers for implementing TM practices by providing support and leading empowerment. Employee satisfaction, engagement and motivation were already identified from the literature review and were considered to be the employee

outcomes of implementing TM practices. However, the interview analysis has identified employee commitment towards the organisation as an important element to be included in employee outcomes. Employee commitment is identified as being one of the major TM challenges in organisations (Chapter 5, Section 5.3.9), and was also identified to be one of the major outcomes of implementing the TM practises (Chapter 5, Section 5.3.10) in the interview analysis. Similarly, employee commitment would result in greater retention rates, and the survey participants reflected stronger commitment attitudes (Chapter 6, Figure 6.12) towards their organisations as a result of implementing effective TM practises and maintaining a strong employer brand. In addition, a significant positive relationship was identified between employee commitment and SCA in the survey results analysis (Chapter 6, Section 6.5). Therefore, employee commitment can be one of the important employee outcomes of implementing TM practises.

Accordingly, these new concepts are added to the TM framework to make it more reliable and increase its validity. These changes can be identified with the newly added features highlighted in red (employer branding and commitment) as shown in Figure 7.1.

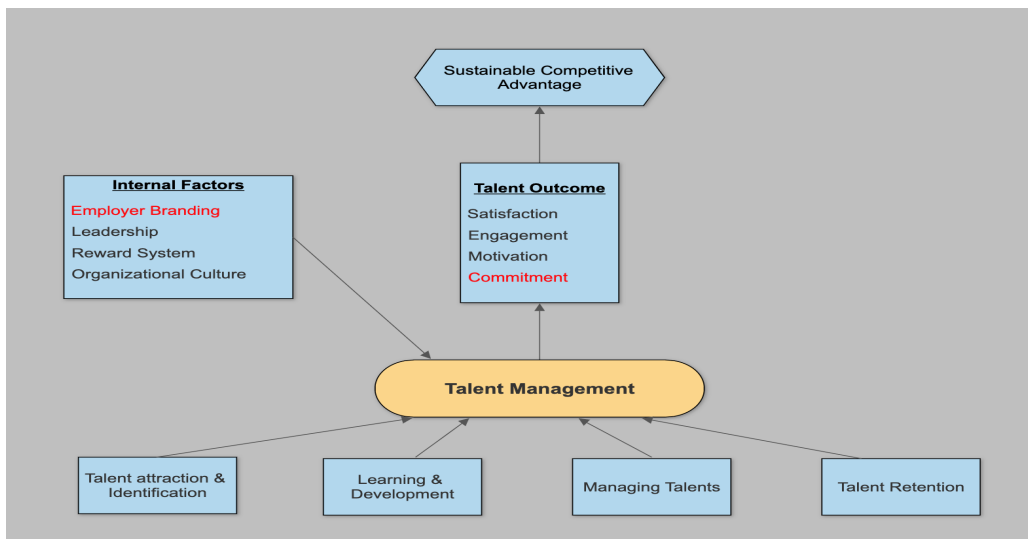


Figure 7.1: Revised TM framework  
Source: Researcher

Two new components were added to the framework, including employer branding in internal factors and employee commitment in employee outcomes. is one of the most important factors as it is identified from the empirical findings (Chapter 2, Section 2.3, 2.7) and also in the qualitative analysis (Chapter 5) and quantitative analysis (Chapter 6). It ensures smooth implementation of

TM practices. Accordingly, the internal factors in the organisation are managed and updated for TM implementation. Employer branding is an important factor, as analysed in the previous chapters (Chapter 5 and 6), which would influence TM operations including attraction, development and retention. Various studies from the literature review (Gandz, 2006; Nolan, 2015; Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004; Kotler and Lee, 2008; Jawahitha *et al.*, 2011; Robin, 2007; Gillover, 2009) identified the relationship between employer branding and TM from different perspectives. Employer branding can be used to filter candidates and recruit the talented employees as per the requirements and convenience of the organisation due to its high brand value, which would increase the interests of the candidates for being recruited. Similarly, it can also help in attracting and retaining key individuals in the organisations.

The next factor added in the framework is the employee commitment, which is considered to be one of the major employee outcomes that can increase the retention levels. As it is identified from the empirical findings, the TM practises have to be embedded into the organisational culture by creating a supportive and friendly environment which can promote learning and growth opportunities among the employees. Creating a culture that stimulates the TM applications, such as learning and development, talent attraction and retention, can result in improved commitment towards the organisation among the employees. In addition, employee efficiency can be improved to a great extent in such an environment, which also increases satisfaction, engagement and motivational levels. However, as identified in the empirical findings, the managers are the drivers of implementing the TM practises. They need to practice transformational leadership styles by promoting the growth and engagement of the employees in a collaborative working environment. Accordingly, they need to provide sufficient learning options and the opportunities to deploy the skills learned and monitor the progress of the employees. The creation of such a culture largely depends on the managers and senior-level executives in the organisations. As a result of the managers' efforts and a supportive organisational culture reflecting the strong employer brand, the employees reflect strong commitment towards their organisations.

In addition, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) can be used for measuring employee performance and the impact of TM practices on SCA. Accordingly, metrics such as talent resources, talent pools and skills can be used for determining the value of the organisations which can add competitive advantage. Similarly, the sustainability factor can be assessed by analysing performance-related

factors such as employee engagement, performance, commitment and satisfaction levels, which can be used as mediating factors for analysing organisational performance. From the empirical results it is evident that these factors can have a positive impact on sustainable competitive advantage. In addition, there are some aspects that are determined by the researcher that require continuous efforts in upgrading according to the changes. These include the following:

- Updating learning and development programs continuously according to the changes in skills requirements and market needs;
- Updating the talent planning and talent approaches continuously according to the internal and external requirements;
- Continuous assessment of risks and challenges involved in TM and accordingly planning the addressable techniques;
- Adopting these changes in the organisational culture systematically without affecting the business operations.

Thus, by reflecting the addition of new components and justifying them with empirical findings, the TM framework is validated. The next section focuses on providing practical guidelines for the implementation of TM framework Figure 7.1.

#### **7.10. Practical Guidelines for the Implementation of a TM Framework**

This section discusses the practical guidelines proposed by the researcher for effective implementation of the TM framework designed specifically for the oil and gas industries by considering the empirical findings and the academic research literature. Various frameworks are proposed by different authors that focuses on various elements of TM. Jackson and Schuler (1990) proposed a 5C Analysis is a marketing framework to analyse the environment in which a company operates. It can provide insight into the key drivers of success, as well as the risk exposure to various environmental factors. The 5Cs are company, collaborators, customers, competitors, and context. Company When analysing a company using the 5C marketing framework, the key issue is to identify the Sustainable Competitive Advantage that belongs to the focal company. It can be in the form of brand equity, economies of scale, technological development, etc. Collaborators are entities that allow or enhance a company to provide its particular good or service in the way that it does. It primarily revolves around a company's supply chain that ranges from spot contracts up to quasi-vertical integration. Competition can be found in the form of other companies operating

in the same industry as the focal company. To determine the industry, industry classification systems. Customers The group of potential customers a company can reach with its products or services can be broken down into three main sizes: total available market, serviceable available market, and target market.

Context the context in which a business operates is most often analysed with the use of PESTLE analysis. 5-C framework of HRM with a focus on the challenges, including talent shortages; motivation, engagement, energy and focus; handling talent surplus, reduction and removal; location and relocation; and the requirement for continuous adaptation and flexibility. TM stems from its multiple roles of setting the tone of an organisation at a strategic level through the vision, objectives and strategies (Capelli, 2008); formulating the TM philosophy of an organisation whether they see it as exclusive or inclusive, stable or developable (Meyers and Van Woerkom, 2014); identifying key positions for strategy execution and realisation of objectives through aligning talent with business goals (Sheehan, Grant. and Garavan, 2018); and developing a competency framework/model for assessing talent (Williams-Lee, 2008). These approaches reflect the multifaceted dimension of TM which can be influenced by various factors from both internal and external environments. Therefore, there is a need for a strategic framework that includes all the major elements, which can be utilised for the effective implementation of TM practises by integrating them with the organisational factors, along with the systematic practical guidelines for implementation. However, before moving on to the guidelines or the process of implementation, it is essential that some major questions are addressed by the organisations, which include the following:

- What are the benefits of TM practises to the organisation?
- What are the challenges involved in implementing TM practises within the organisation?
- What is the status of the current organisational culture and the risks involved in integrating the TM framework?
- How can the TM framework be aligned with the organisation's goals and objectives?
- How can a supportive organisational culture be developed for integrating TM practises into it?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of the managers and senior executives, the level of support and their leadership styles required for implementing the TM framework?
- How can SCA be achieved by implementing the TM framework in the organisation?

- How can internal factors affecting TM in organisations be managed and improve employee efficiency, motivation, satisfaction, engagement and commitment?

These questions help in analysing the need for TM practises in the organisations, the impact it would create and the factors it would affect. This analysis would help the organisations in deciding on the implementation of TM and assessing the Challenges involved in the process so that precautionary measures can be planned in advance. In addition, it prepares the managers and senior executives in leading the change and defines their roles in successfully implementing the change by deploying the TM framework in accordance with the business goals and objectives. After considering these factors, the following steps explained in the following sections are proposed by the researcher, which can be used for the implementation of the TM framework in the organisations.

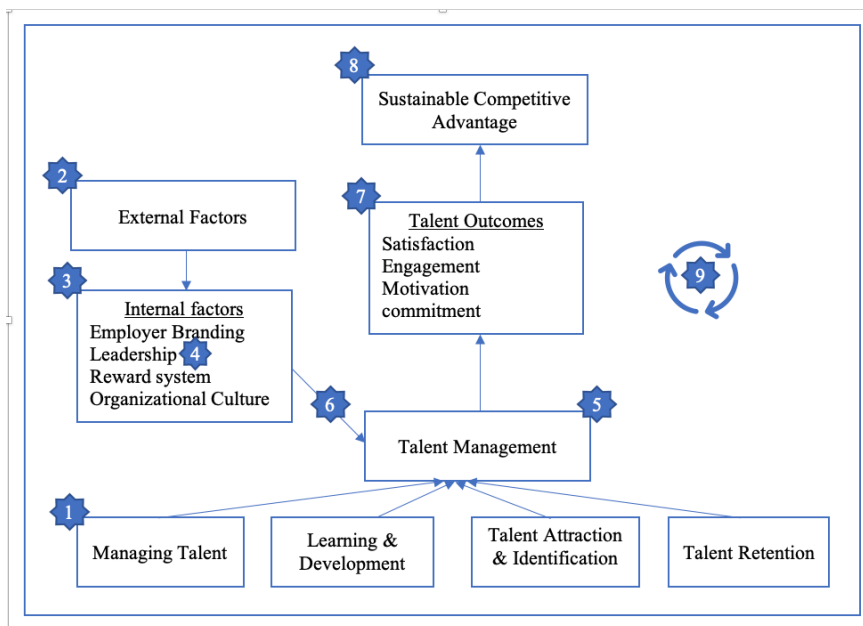


Figure 7.2: Practical Guidelines for the Implementation of TM Framework  
Source: Researcher

### 7.10.1. Step 1: Identify Skills Gaps and Requirements

Skills add value to the organisations and can be a very useful resource for achieving the organisational goals and objectives. However, organisations need to develop skills regularly in order to increase their operational efficiency, to maintain their CA and to meet the changing requirements and needs in the marketplace. Skills is one of the talent resources that needs to be monitored and the gaps in the skills for meeting the objectives of the organisations must be

analysed continuously. This approach forms one of the core activities of talent planning, where the gaps are assessed and the need for acquiring new skills through training programs and the recruitment process can be analysed. Accordingly, the new roles and responsibilities can be determined for different related positions in the organisations.

### **7.10.2. Step 2: Identify TM Challenges (External and Internal)**

The challenges associated with TM and other factors influencing TM practises need to be identified. These challenges can be identified from both external and internal environments of the organisations. The external challenges can include talent shortages in the market, issues arising out of geographical locations such as socio-political and cultural issues which might create hurdles in attracting the new talent, and the frequent changes in the marketplace that may affect talent planning. Accordingly, the internal factors such as organisational culture, business goals and objectives, leadership and employer branding may affect the TM process. Therefore, a clear assessment of all the influencing factors may need to be made in the initial stages so that necessary risk management approaches can be outlined.

### **7.10.3. Step 3: Identify Key Organisational Factors**

The various organisational factors need to be considered before implementing the TM processes. These can include the following:

- **Strategies and Objectives:** The business goals and objectives need to be outlined so that the TM strategy can be aligned with the organisational strategy. Various TM strategies such as engagement strategy (defining the approaches to be used for achieving employee engagement), motivational strategy (defining the approaches to be used for achieving employee motivation), learning and development strategy (defining the approaches to be used for achieving employee learning and training programs), branding strategies (defining the approaches to be used for achieving good brand identity to attract new talent) and retention strategies (defining the approaches such as rewards systems or monetary benefits to be used for achieving good retention levels) need to be identified for effectively aligning with organisational strategy;
- **HRM:** As it is associated with the management of employee resources, the strategies to implement TM practises need to be identified. Accordingly, the responsibilities and the role of the HR department in managing talent need to be clearly outlined. As every

employee is involved in the TM process, the role of HRM has to be clearly defined for implementing TM practises.

#### **7.10.4. Step 4: Governance of TM**

Defining the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders in implementing the TM framework is essential as it may address any ambiguities or issues that may arise in the areas of implementation. There is a need for a collaborative approach for implementing the TM framework in organisations, where different departments are required to work together in implementing TM practises. From the governance perspective, this aspect can be explained in the following points:

- **Role of HRM:** The roles and responsibilities of HRM, as explained in the previous section, need to be clearly outlined. The involvement of HRM in implementing TM practises need to be clearly stated. As TM is related to managing talent resources (employees), the HR department should be given the responsibility of implementing the TM framework and managing the talent within the organisations;
- **Role of Managers and Senior Executives:** As TM involves various organisational factors to be considered, such as organisational culture, working environment, rewards systems, performance etc., it requires the involvement of managers in all departments and also the involvement of senior-level executives to effectively align the TM strategy with the organisational strategy. In addition, managers, on the other hand, are assigned the responsibilities of creating a supportive organisational culture, motivating and supporting employees and thereby empowering them to improve their efficiency.

#### **7.10.5. Step 5: Design TM Framework**

The TM framework proposed in this Research can be used for identifying the various elements to be considered in designing the framework. Accordingly, the emphasis is to be laid on the following elements:

- **Identifying Pivotal Talent Position** The first stage of the system is identifying the pivotal talent positions. the identification of 'A performers' which have the potential to differentially impact on SCA and focuses on their retention and development who emphasise a top-down focus, discussing that employees will contribute to a firm's strategic objectives when they have (strategic) value;



- **Talent Planning:** The approaches for the recruitment process, such as using various platforms like online job portals, partnering with educational and other institutes for recruiting the talented individuals, and outsourcing etc., need to be identified. Similarly, approaches such as offering competitive pay scales, benefits and compensation, providing growth opportunities etc. for creating the employer brand should be identified in order to attract talent;
- **TM practises:** Various practises have been identified in this Research, including training courses, foundation programs, scholarships, empowerment, providing innovation capabilities and leading innovation, research and development, rewards and compensation, leadership support and collaborative learning environment. These approaches have to be selected based on the organisational structure, culture and the skill requirements;
- **TM Outcomes:** TM can be related to various outcomes, which are usually focused on the employees, such as improved employee efficiency, motivation, commitment, satisfaction and engagement. Therefore, the outcomes of TM practises need to be outlined and how these mediating factors would achieve value, competitive advantage, sustainability, growth and performance improvement need to be analysed.

#### **7.10.6. Step 6: Integrate the TM Framework with Organisational Strategy**

This is the most crucial stage in implementing TM practises and the framework in the organisations. As highlighted in the framework (Figure 7.2.), TM practises have to be aligned with various business processes defined in the organisational strategy. This process needs to consider the following points:

- **Deploy Effective Communication Strategies:** The decision to implement TM practises needs to be effectively communicated across all the employees in the organisations. In addition, during the implementation of TM practises, communication plays an important role, as it can be used as a medium for providing support and adopting learning programs;
- **Change Management:** As there would be a situation where the new processes and approaches are implemented, these changes may or may not be received positively by the employees and other stakeholders in the company. Therefore, necessary change management techniques need to be adopted while implementing the TM framework in the organisations;

- Integrating with Organisational Culture: As highlighted in the framework proposed (Figure 7.2), TM practises need to be integrated into the organisational culture. Accordingly, all the related processes such as succession management, career management, leadership management and performance management are to be aligned with TM practises. In addition, the role of managers is crucial in the process of integration, which needs to be effectively managed by adopting various leadership styles.

#### **7.10.7. Step 7: Monitor and Evaluate the Impact of TM practises on Employee Outcomes (Engagement, Motivation, Commitment and Satisfaction)**

The impact of TM practises on the employees must be monitored and evaluated at regular intervals. This approach helps the organisational managers in reviewing TM practises and strategies, if required. As managing talent resources is one of the main objectives of implementing TM, it is essential to keep track of the impact on these resources (employees).

#### **7.10.8. Step 8: Monitor and Evaluate the Impact of TM practises on Organisational Performance**

The main objective of implementing the TM framework is to increase organisational performance and achieve sustainable competitive advantage. Therefore, after implementing the TM framework, the impact of TM outcomes on improving the organisational performance needs to be evaluated using KPIs such as profits, growth, value, competitive edge, and SCA etc.

#### **7.10.9. Step 9: Re-Plan**

After evaluating the impact of TM on organisational performance, review the TM practises and outcomes and assess the drawbacks or issues identified in the implementation process. Accordingly, re-plan the process by repeating it again from Step 1.

### **7.11. Conclusion**

This chapter has aligned the findings from the literature review, qualitative interview analysis and quantitative survey analysis. The discussion of the findings are made using the factors including TM definition, TM practices, TM outcomes, sustainable competitive advantage, internal factors affecting TM, and TM challenges. Firstly, TM's definition, as identified from the findings, has evolved over time. The function has increased from merely placing the right employee in the right

position to the overall management of talented employees (attraction, identification, recruitment, development, and retainment) through achieving employee motivation, satisfaction, commitment and engagement with an aim to achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

Secondly, the internal factors of the organisations, including organisational culture, rewards systems and leadership practices, play an important role in the process of implementing TM practices. Based on the findings, an additional internal factor, employer branding, was included in the proposed framework. Focusing on the next factor, TM practises, this Research identified various approaches including talent attraction, identification, recruitment, development, retention, empowerment and motivation etc. All these approaches included various techniques that are aimed at TM. The next important aspect of discussion is TM outcomes, which are identified to be employee motivation, satisfaction and engagement. Based on the findings from the qualitative and quantitative research in this Research, an additional outcome—employee commitment—was added to the existing TM outcomes. The next important factor is organisational performance, where it was identified that TM practises can lead to TM outcomes, which would result in improved sustainable competitive advantage. Considering these factors, the proposed framework in (Chapter 3) Figure 3.1 is validated as a result of which two new components were added: employee commitment in TM outcomes and employer branding in the internal factors affecting the TM practices. These changes are reflected in the revised framework presented in Figure 7.1.

The last factor to be considered is TM challenges in oil and gas corporations, which highlighted various issues including talent shortage, poor alignment of TM strategy and business strategy in these organisations, and lack of effective leadership etc. Considering these challenges and in order to address the limitations identified from the empirical findings (lack of a systematic approach for implementing TM practises), practical guidelines for implementing the TM framework were proposed by the researcher. Thus, this chapter justifies and validates the proposed TM framework by providing discussion through which the supportive findings are explained from the academic and industrial research along with the empirical findings.

## Chapter 8: Conclusion

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### 8.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the research contributions and demonstrates that the aim and objectives have been met. In addition, the research questions are answered, and conclusions are drawn from the findings in the study. Accordingly, the research gaps identified in Chapter 2 (Section 2.17) are addressed and the need for more studies into TM practises and TM outcomes is demonstrated.

This chapter starts with the review of the research aim, objectives and research questions with reference to the findings in this research. The limitations of the research are outlined in Section 8.3; research contributions are outlined in Section 8.4; recommendations for future research are presented in Section 8.5; and Section 8.6 draws conclusion from the findings and proposes recommendations on TM implementation in the oil and gas organisations.

### 8.2. Conclusion

This research is summarised and concluded by comparing the findings with aim, objectives, and research questions in the following sections.

#### 8.2.1. Aims, Objectives and Research Questions

This section reviews the research aims, objectives and research questions (Chapter 1, Sections 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6). The overall research aims as outlined in Chapter 1 include the following:

- Investigate the role of Talent Management and its outcomes to achieve Sustainable Competitive Advantage.
- Develop a talent management framework in oil and gas organisations supported by practical guidelines for both academics and practitioners.

Both aims have been achieved in the study. The literature review (Chapter 2) and the framework (Chapter 3) identified various contributions from the industry sectors with respect to TM in oil and gas organisations. The discussion of literature in Chapter 2 on TM provided a good theoretical and empirical foundation for the framework developed in Chapter 3. Based on the research gaps identified in Chapter 2 (Section 2.16), the TM framework is derived in Chapter 3 (Figure 3.5) illustrating the relationship between the TM practise, internal factors affecting TM operations, TM

outcomes and sustainable competitive advantage. Based on the findings from the study, two additional factors were included in the framework (Chapter 7, Figure 7.1): employer branding in internal factors and employee commitment in TM outcomes. In addition, a step-by-step guide for the practical implementation of TM practises in oil and gas organisations is proposed.

To achieve the specified aims, nine detailed objectives were identified, which include the following:

1. Critically investigate how the concepts of talent management are defined and understood and in oil and gas organisations.
2. Investigate and identify various internal factors that influence TM implementation in the oil and gas organisations.
3. Investigate and identify the various TM practises adopted and identify TM challenges in the oil and gas organisations.
4. To examine the impact of TM on TM outputs in terms of attitudinal aspects
5. Identify the relationship between TM outcomes and sustainable competitive advantage.
6. Identify TM literature gaps and evaluate current frameworks.
7. validate TM framework for managing talent by considering TM practices, internal factors, the TM outcomes, and sustainable competitive advantage; and develop practical guidelines for its implementation in the oil and gas organisations.

Existing published sources, knowledge, theories and key research contributions related to TM were reviewed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. Different TM practises, outcomes and influencing factors along with the TM framework were reviewed, which led to the development of the TM framework (Figure 3.5). The framework (Chapter 3, Figure 3.5) was developed based on the theoretical research (Chapter 2), which is used as a foundation for identifying the various TM factors and related implications in Chapters 5 and 6. This has helped in aligning the TM framework with the existing oil and gas organisations practices and structure. As a result, the theoretical TM framework has transformed into a validated TM tool for practical application in oil and gas organisations (Figure 7.1). Table 8.1 illustrates the aims, objectives and how they are addressed in detail.

Table 8.1 Aims, Objectives and how they are addressed

Aims	Objectives	How They Are Addressed
<p>Investigate the role of Talent Management and its outcomes to achieve Sustainable Competitive Advantage.</p>	<p>Critically investigate how the concepts of talent management are defined and understood and in oil and gas organisations.</p>	<p>The evolution of definitions of talent and TM, the need for TM and the various perspectives of TM were discussed in Sections 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 (Chapter 2), respectively, in the literature review.</p>
	<p>Investigate and identify various internal factors that influence TM implementation in the oil and gas organisations.</p>	<p>Various internal components, including the relationship between TM and HRM (Section 2.8), issues in TM (Section 2.9), TM practises (Section 2.10), TM's relationship with organisational culture (Section 2.11.2), employer branding (Section 2.11.3), leadership (Section 2.11.4) and rewards systems (Section 2.11.5) were discussed in the literature review (Chapter 2).</p>
	<p>Investigate and identify the various TM practises adopted and identify TM challenges in the oil and gas organisations and identify.</p>	<p>The TM systems and practices are discussed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.7) of literature review. Surveys and semi-structured interviews were used for identifying these relationships in Chapter 5 (Section 5.3.10) and Chapter 6 (Section 6.5) respectively.</p>
	<p>To examine the impact of TM on TM outputs in terms of attitudinal aspects</p>	<p>The impact of TM practises on employees is discussed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.12, 2.12.1, 2.12.2, 2.12.3, 2.12.4), which include employee engagement, motivation, commitment and satisfaction. Surveys and semi-structured interviews were used for identifying these relationships in Chapter 5 (Section 5.3.10) and Chapter 6 (Section 6.5) respectively.</p>
	<p>Investigate and identify the relationship between TM outcomes and sustainable, competitive advantage.</p>	<p>The concepts of competitive advantage (Section 2.13), sustainable competitive advantage (Section 2.14) and the relationship between TM and sustainable competitive advantage (Section 2.15) were discussed in the literature review (Chapter 2). Surveys and semi-structured interviews were used for identifying these relationships in Chapter 5 (Section 5.3.11) and Chapter 6 (Section 6.5) respectively.</p>
	<p>Identify literature gaps and evaluate current frameworks</p>	<p>TM and its practices in the oil and gas organisations (Section 2.16) and the evaluation of literature (Section 2.17.1) were discussed in the literature review (Chapter 2). Accordingly, the literature gaps were presented in Chapter 2 (Section 2.17, Table 2.6, and Section 2.17.2). evaluate current frameworks Chapter (Section 3.2,)</p>
<p>Develop a talent management framework in private oil and gas sectors supported by practical guidelines for both academics and practitioners.</p>	<p>Validate TM framework for managing talent by considering TM practices, internal factors, the TM outcomes, and sustainable competitive advantage; and develop practical guidelines for its implementation in the oil and gas organisations.</p>	<p>Current TM frameworks (Section 3.2), underpinning theories (Section 3.3) and the TM framework (Section 3.5, Figure 3.1) were presented in Chapter 3 (framework development). The proposed framework is validated in Chapter 7 (Section 7.9) and the practical guidelines for TM implementation were presented in Chapter 7 (Section 7.10).</p>

The aims and objectives of the research have been pursued by addressing the six research questions as stated in Chapter 1. These Research questions are divided into two groups and discussed in detail in the following subsections.

#### **8.2.1.1. Research Questions Related to General TM Practices**

The first three research questions focus on understanding and analysing the concept of TM in oil and gas organisations. These include the following:

1. How is TM defined and how are they understood, and applied in the oil and gas organisations?
2. What are the managerial practices applied by the oil and gas organisations in TM? What TM challenges are faced?
3. What are the main factors influencing TM implementation in oil and gas organisations?

To address the first question, which focuses on understanding the TM concept and its perception by the organisations, the existing literature is reviewed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.3). It can be observed that in the early 1990s, TM is observed only as positioning the right employees in the right jobs at the right time (Jackson & Schuler, 1990; Rothwell, 1994), which reflects TM more as an HRM activity. However, more detailed definitions in the later 1990s highlight the importance of TM practises, which include talent attraction and retention strategies (CIPD, 2006; Stockley, 2007), reflecting a shift from mere HRM activity to an organisational-wide activity. Similarly, in recent years, TM is considered as resource management activity at an organisational level, as it is considered as one of the important organisational activities that could achieve SCA (Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Wikstrom, 2012; Hughes and Rog, 2015; Acar and Yener, 2016). This shift in the understanding and perception of TM has highlighted the importance of TM practices as an approach towards sustainability and competitive advantage. Lack of clarity in understanding TM practises among the organisations across the world was highlighted by Oppong (2013) and Vaiman, Scullion and Collings (2012). The lack of clarity was connected with the TM challenges from the perspective of management decision-making processes on the following areas influencing global talent management: shortage of talent, societal and demographic trends, the need to exhibit corporate social responsibility, the need to manage diversity, talent mobility, the shift to a knowledge-intensive economy and the increasing importance of emerging markets.

The findings from the qualitative (semi-structured interviews) (Chapter 5, Section 5.3.2) and quantitative (survey) (Chapter 6, Section 3, Table 6.1) analysis identified the understanding of TM concepts from the oil and gas organisations. Most of them perceived TM to be an integrated set of processes, programs and cultures, and the planning to meet an organisation's needs, and agreed with the process of systematic attraction, retention, identification, development and engagement of talent to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. In addition, very few considered it to be solely a HR process, and there is a lack of clear understanding about inclusiveness or exclusiveness of TM practises. Quantitative analysis has identified that very few participants supported the exclusive approach in TM (23.5%). however, more than (60%) from the qualitative analysis believe that TM is exclusive approaches, there is an absence of a clear picture on whether TM is perceived as inclusive or exclusive, which confirms ongoing discourse on the inclusivity and/or exclusivity of TM.

In addressing the second research question about the managerial practices adopted in the oil and gas organisations for managing talent, the literature review (Chapter 2, Section 2.7) identified various approaches for talent attraction, identification, development, retention and managing talented employees by motivation and empowerment. Most of the studies (Guerci and Solari, 2012; Poocharoen and Lee, 2013; Nguyen, 2017; Dirani *et al.*, 2018) were conducted in Western countries and limited to the public sector (Kitson, 2008), highlighting the limitation of TM research in the Middle East. Various practices were identified in the literature review. Poocharoen and Lee (2013) analysed six strategic perspectives including competitive, process, HR, development, cultural and change management perspectives reflecting the consideration of both external and internal environmental factors. The major approaches identified by various authors (Banks *et al.*, 2015; Young, 2015; Farndale and Atli, 2019; Khoreva *et al.*, 2019; Isa *et al.*, 2018; Oseghale, 2018; Alcover *et al.*, 2017) included talent attraction, identification, development and retention. Approaches with respect to organisational culture such as motivation and empowerment (Siddiqui and Bisaria, 2018; Kumar, 2018; Glaister *et al.*, 2017) were also considered to be a few other practices adopted in the organisations.

The qualitative results (Chapter 5, Section 5.3.3) and quantitative results (Chapter 6, Section 3, Table 6.2) identified various practices adopted for talent identification in the oil and gas



organisations. These mainly included informal chats, using employee efficiency, annual reviews and performance etc. for identifying talent. Among these approaches, identifying talent by an employee's efficiency and the results they produced were mostly preferred. Similarly, qualitative (Chapter 5, Section 5.3.4) and quantitative results (Chapter 6, Section 3, Figure 6.9) identified various practices adopted for talent attraction in the oil and gas organisations. These mainly included contracts with agencies to provide talented employees, close ties with top universities to attract the best talent, networking sites and online job boards, internships, offering the best compensation and benefits and strong company branding. Among these, maintaining strong company branding, providing internships and recruiting from top universities were found to be effective by senior-level employees in quantitative results. In addition to these, providing good compensation and benefits was preferred by middle-level employees in quantitative results. With respect to talent recruitment discussed in qualitative (Chapter 5, Section 5.3.5) and quantitative results (Chapter 6, Section 3, Figure 6.10), various practices such as skills and capabilities, experience, level of education, creative thinking/problem solving, computer knowledge and skills or communication skills were identified. Among these practices, skills and capabilities, creative thinking, education level and experience were preferred. However, qualitative results indicated preference for education and experience, while quantitative results indicated higher preference for experience than education.

Additionally, with respect to TD discussed in the qualitative (Chapter 5, Section 5.3.7) and quantitative results (Chapter 6, Section 3, Table 6.3), various practices such as training and making coaching a part of each development discussion, education, peer-to-peer feedback, mentoring, performing regular reviews and evaluations, empowerment and support from top managers, establishing a structured system of developing talent to meet the growth and change requirements that will help employees get the skills they need, foundation courses and making innovation part of employee responsibilities were identified. Among these, providing individual support and training was mostly preferred. In addition, quantitative results indicated preference for enabling opportunities for employees for innovation, which focuses on employee professional growth and engagement.

Furthermore, qualitative results (Chapter 5, Section 5.3.8) and quantitative results (Chapter 6, Section 3, Table 6.5) identified various practices adopted for managing talent in the oil and gas organisations. These included creating a motivating environment and strong engagement, providing coaching, focusing on future career, a good personal relationship with their manager, incorporating TM systems in an organisation's strategy, building the talent pipeline (succession planning/opportunities), providing empowerment, authority and flexibility, building employer branding/employer attraction, recognising and valuing employee performance and providing appropriate pay and other compensation/benefits. Among these practices, motivation, empowerment, valuing employee performance and providing opportunities for development were preferred. Similarly, qualitative (Chapter 5, Section 5.3.6) and quantitative results (Chapter 6, Section 3, Table 6.4) identified various practices adopted for retaining talent in the oil and gas organisations. These included monetary compensation and benefits, retention bonuses, an open environment and culture, employee stock options, a quality relationship with his or her manager, opportunities for personal growth and professional development and other non-monetary rewards that satisfy an employee's psychological needs. Among these, supportive organisational culture, opportunities for personal and professional growth and both monetary and non-monetary benefits were mostly preferred. The results reflected that the TM practises are mostly aimed at non-monetary aspects such as professional growth, developmental opportunities and recognising and valuing employee efforts etc. rather than monetary benefits such as compensation, salaries and rewards.

In addressing the research question about "What TM challenges are faced?" the literature review (Chapter 2, Section 2.9) found various challenges related to TM practices in oil and gas organisations. A skills gap (Thunnissen *et al.*, 2013), lack of productivity in the workplace (Fajcikova *et al.*, 2016), talent shortages (Sheldon and Li, 2013), organisational capacity to pay for talented employees (Speers and Henchy, 2016), lack of definitional clarity and lack of consensus on implementing TM practices (Oppong, 2013), societal and demographic trends (Nolan, 2015), present diversity management-related talent management challenges (Daubner, 2016; Hunt, Layton and Prince, 2014), included leadership problems such as having a short-term view of performance and poor or lack of strategic human resources management orientation (Fang, 2014) are some important factors that influence the process of TM implementation.

The qualitative and quantitative analysis supported and justified the findings from the literature review. Issues such as inadequate alignment between the organisational strategy and talent strategy, difficulties in recruitment procedures, lack of leadership, employee engagement and commitment (varying with culture), diversity in the workplace, lack of knowledge and understanding of establishing a structured system of developing talent to meet the new growth and change requirements that will help employees get the skills they need, and talent shortages are a few important aspects identified that influence TM practices. These findings highlight the need to adopt a strategic TM framework for deploying TM practices and an effective and efficient leadership strategy and transformational organisational culture in order to minimise the factors influencing TM practices.

Likewise, in addressing the third research question about the influencing factors of TM, the literature review (Chapter 2, Section 2.11) identified some major findings, which are discussed in this section. It was identified that opportunities for career advancement and the employer brand identity (internal factors) were found to be more appealing to talented employees than the regular modes of attraction, which include good salary and incentives (Young, 2014). This highlighted the shift in the managerial practices to attract and retain talented employees by promoting the organisations' brand. Accordingly, other practices such as training, learning and development, managerial support and motivation etc. (Cacciattolo, 2015; Garavan, Carbery and Rock, 2012; Dierdorff and Morgeson, 2007; Dirani *et al.*, 2018) were found to be associated with the TD process, which were found to have a positive impact on employee performance. Similarly, motivational and friendly organisational culture, good leadership (Kontoghiorghes, 2016; Ehrhart and Kuenzi, 2017; Ramesh and Gelfand, 2010) and good leadership practices (Kaliannan 2015) are other managerial practices identified which are effective for implementing TM practises. In addition, a rewards system was identified to be one of the most common practices of attracting and managing talent. However, the organisations are considering other approaches in addition to the financial rewards system, such as employer branding, in order to attract and retain talented employees.

The qualitative results (Chapter 5, Section 5.3.1) and quantitative results (Chapter 6, Section 3, Table 6.5) supported these findings from the literature. Accordingly, four major influencing factors

were identified, which included a good/bad leadership style of upper managerial hierarchy positively/negatively impacting TM implementation, having a formal culture in the organisation can help in TM implementation, having a reward system in the organisation can help in TM implementation and the employer's brand positively/negatively impacting TM implementation in the organisations. Qualitative results have highlighted that all four factors significantly influence TM implementation. Similarly, quantitative results with respect to the approaches adopted for attracting talent (Chapter 6, Section 3, Figure 6.9), developing talent (Chapter 6, Section 3, Table 6.3) and retaining talent (Chapter 6, Section 3, Table 6.4) identified factors such as employer branding, supportive organisational culture, good leadership and rewards and compensation etc. as the few major factors for implementing TM practices such as attracting, developing and retaining talented employees.

In addition, employer branding, incentives and a good pay scale are the major managerial approaches analysed for attracting talent. For developing the talent, various approaches were preferred by the participants, especially deploying foundation courses, providing individual training sessions, addressing performance gaps, support from senior team members and motivational organisational environment. Providing growth opportunities, maintaining a good and supportive organisational culture and ensuring a quality relationship between the management and employees are the major approaches identified for retaining employees. It can be observed that the managerial practices are more focused on the employees' development options and innovation rather than old-fashioned approaches such as incentives and benefits, which explains the change in the employees and managers' attitudes with respect to employment and TM respectively.

#### **8.2.1.2. Research Questions Related to TM Framework**

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 mainly focuses on the specific aspects of TM. As identified in Chapter 2, there are various limitations and gaps identified that requires an effective TM framework for TM practices in oil and gas organisations. By connecting the TM practises with value-adding concepts, such as sustainable competitive advantage, the foundation for a TM framework in oil and gas organisations was developed. Accordingly, the following three research questions were addressed:

4. What is the impact of TM on TM outputs from the employee perspective?
5. How can TM achieve sustainable competitive advantage?

## 6. How effective are current TM practices?

Focusing on the fifth research question (the impact of TM on the TM outcomes from employees' perspectives), the literature review (Chapter 2, Section 2.12) has identified four important outcomes including employee engagement, employee motivation, satisfaction and employee commitment. Various factors such as compensation and benefits (Berger and Berger, 2010), organisational practices such as stimulating change and also encouraging creativity and innovation among the workforce (Mohammed, 2016), opportunities for career growth, opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge and opportunities to enhance the relationship between leaders and employees and also encourage employee development (Mone and London, 2018) are a few major factors identified as leading to greater employee engagement. Similarly, intrinsic motivation (within employees) (Thunnissen, Boselie and Fruytier, 2013), empowerment (Dries, 2013), rewards and recognition (Mensah, 2015) and motivation by team members and managers (Stone *et al.*, 2015) are considered as very significant for improving employee performance and enhancing organisational performance, as they encourage people to do their tasks with more creativity and also faster, and increases satisfaction levels. These findings can be supported by SET, which highlights the relationship between employees and the organisation. As TM outcomes reflect improved employee efficiency and performance as a result of inducing TM (development, empowerment, supportive environment etc.) by the organisation, the TM outcomes benefit the organisation in exchange, with increased SCA.

The qualitative findings (Chapter 5, Section 5.3.10) supported the literature findings, reflecting that deploying effective TM practices would result in improved employee engagement, satisfaction and motivation. The quantitative analysis (Chapter 6, Section 4, Figures 6.11-6.14) has found that apart from employee motivation, engagement and satisfaction, employee commitment towards the organisation is another major outcome of implementing TM practices.

Addressing the fifth research question of how TM achieves sustainable competitive advantage, the literature review (Chapter 2, Section 2.15) identified some important findings. TM is considered an enduring process in achieving the goals of the organisations (Cappelli, 2000). The concept of TM is expanded as one of the processes for achieving strategic goals from mere filling of positions

(Farndale *et al.*, 2010; Lewis & Heckman, 2006). By deploying the right approaches in talent identification, attraction and recruitment, the TM process can lay the foundation for improving organisational performance (Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Scullion & Collings, 2011). Similarly, by deploying the approaches for TD and talent retention, TM practices can support the improvement of employee performance which would result in improved organisational performance (Al Ariss *et al.*, 2014; Hartmann *et al.*, 2010; Zikic, 2014). In addition, maintaining the talented resources would add CA to the company and lead to sustainable development (Rabbi *et al.*, 2015; Sparrow & Makram, 2015; Tafti *et al.*, 2017).

The qualitative findings (Chapter 5, Section 5.3.11) in this Research revealed that improvement in organisational performance can lead to sustainable competitive advantage, as the TM practices help organisations in improving performance with a focus on long-term competitive advantages by investing in talented professionals. Accordingly, the quantitative findings (Chapter 6, Section 4) revealed some interesting relationships between TM outcomes on employees and organisational sustainable competitive advantage. Chi-square tests revealed a significant relationship between employee motivation, engagement, satisfaction, commitment, sustainable competitive advantage. These findings revealed that TM practices are effective in improving SCA and the overall organisational performance. These results are supported by RBV theory, which states that effective management of internal resources can add CA to the organisation. The results from statistical analysis accordingly support RBV theory, as the TM outcomes were identified to be mediating factors between TM and organisational outcomes (sustainable competitive advantage). Thus, talent resources in organisations can be a source of CA for organisations.

Focusing on addressing the sixth research question, the literature review (Chapter 2, Section 2.7, Section 2.9) identified that the lack of aligning the talent strategy with the business strategy is one of the major drawbacks in the current TM practices (Wellins, Liu and Qiuyong, 2010; Cooke, Saini and Wang, 2014). It is apparent that while some talent management practices cut across different settings, some are context-sensitive (Reis and Quental, 2014; Fang, 2014; Furusawa, 2014; Piansoongnern, 2014; Pereira and Fontinha, 2014; Biygautane and Al Yahya, 2014; Przytula, 2014; Suutari, Wurtz, and Tornikoski, 2014). The two most critical elements with respect to TM practices are attraction and retention (Jauhari, 2012). Every other activity identified and engaged in with regards to talent revolves around these two factors. Accordingly, in the different business,

geographical, social, organisational and economic contexts, the approaches towards these elements differ from region to region (Guerci and Solari, 2012; Hitu, 2015; Van *et al.*, 2017). Further, different organisations adopt different TM practices. However, the lack of frameworks for TM practices, specifically for different oil and gas industries, is one of the major issues affecting the effective implementation of TM practises.

In order to address the literature gap regarding the varying TM practices, concepts and definitions, and lack of systematic framework, a TM framework for understanding TM practises (talent attraction, talent development, managing talent and talent retention), TM outcomes (employee engagement, employee motivation and employee satisfaction) and organisational outcomes (sustainable competitive advantage) was proposed in this study. The increasing attention on TM in an organisational context and the reported shortage of talent indicates that the issue of TM is likely to continue to be of great importance. Therefore, the proposed framework in this research intends to fill the gaps identified in the literature review. The theoretical background used to develop the conceptual model and the hypothetical relationships between the model variables stems from the TM literature and competitive advantage studies. The framework examines different factors including TM practices, TM outcomes, internal organisational factors, and sustainable competitive advantage, which can be applied in different organisations, in which all these factors may be different.

The findings from the qualitative (Chapter 5, Section 5.3.9) and quantitative analysis (Chapter 6, Section 3, Table 6.6) identify some similar issues with respect to TM practices in oil and gas organisations. For example, a few participants (qualitative analysis) stated that their organisation prefers informal chats and in-office recommendations or referrals to identify and recruit talent, while other participants stated that their organisations adopt a systematic approach in evaluating the employee skills and capabilities by the management. While informal chats are effective in understanding the skills and capabilities; and also, the psychological aspects (motivation, engagement, commitment), professional approaches such as professional approaches performance evaluation largely focuses on skills of the employees. Similarly, a few organisations, as identified from the quantitative analysis, preferred employer branding and development opportunities for attracting talent, while others relied on good pay scales and incentives. As identified from the

interview results, employer branding is an effective method in attracting new talent; providing incentives and good salary packages is less preferred by the employees, as most of them are seeking opportunities for professional growth, which is undermining the incentives and salary packages. In addition, emotional bonding rather than monetary bonding plays effective role, as the employees engage and contribute more when they are professionally attracted to a company rather than purely monetary. Fewer responses were received with respect to the organisational cultural management by providing a supportive and transformational environment, reflecting the limitations in the organisational culture context.

This Research has analysed and investigated various aspects related to the concept of TM. Accordingly, various conclusions can be drawn from this Research, which are summarised in the previous sections. It can be concluded from the literature review that the concept of TM is under-researched or very little research has been completed in recent years relating to the concept of TM and its implementation, specifically in the oil and gas organisations. Firstly, the definition of TM by various authors and companies create ambiguity in its scope relating to the references used with respect to organisational factors. The scope of TM's definition has evolved over time, which is now being considered as one of the major organisational strategies to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. In addition, difficulties were identified for the organisations in defining TM, specifically concerning their goals and objectives, in the process of integrating TM with organisational processes and culture, and also in creating a culture that would support TM implementation.

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there has been little academic research to date into the concept of developing the TM framework, which can be aligned with other key organisational factors, taking into consideration internal and external influencing factors. It is also concluded that every industry focuses on specific TM practices that are suitable for their organisation; however, as there are similarities and commonalities in the TM practises and implementation process, a collaborative study with both academic and industry experts would result in valuable knowledge and experience.

In developing a TM framework, organisations need to consider both internal and external factors influencing the TM processes. By addressing these issues, management can mitigate the risks in TM implementation and effectively integrate TM with organisational processes. The TM



framework and the guidelines provided in this Research can be an important source for integrating TM with organisational processes, especially in creating a culture that supports TM implementation for achieving sustainable competitive advantage. Though there are both internal and external factors that influence TM, this Research has focused only on internal factors to get a detailed analysis of the relationship between the internal factors and TM practices. Due to the volatile nature of the internal factors, TM professionals may continue to face challenges in understanding the interrelationship between these factors as they are related to the organisational culture and behavioural aspects of the employees and senior management, such as leadership approaches. Therefore, the researcher proposed a continuous process in implementing the TM framework, which reviews the changes and accordingly updates the approaches. From the implementation perspective, the researcher recognises that there is still poor understanding of the importance of TM alignment with organisational objectives, strategic planning and execution. As a result, oil and gas corporations struggle to identify an effective way to incorporate them into the strategy. In this respect, the framework can be used as a source to identify TM and its relevant organisational elements, and the relationship between them, based on which objectives can be outlined and how the strategic planning and execution of TM can be organised.

As an approach, the researcher concludes that it is essential to develop a supportive and motivational organisational culture with transformational leadership, which is challenging for oil and gas organisations. Creating awareness of TM would change the mind-set, which would encourage a two-way communication process at all levels in the organisations, as being implemented by organisations such as Sahara and Ma'aden. Therefore, robust communication, cooperation and effective decision-making with transformational leadership can lead to effective implementation of TM practices.

Finally, given the nature of the oil and gas organisations, which largely relies on expatriates, it is very much essential that effective TM practices have to be incorporated, as the course of employee commitment and retention is volatile in nature. It is essential that these organisations implement effective talent attraction and retention strategies and develop local talent that is more reliable. The TM framework thus can be used as a foundation with its use in both academic literature in expanding the knowledge and in practical implementation in the organisations.

### **8.3. Limitations of the Research**

The researcher has conducted various activities throughout the research including the development of a theoretical framework, research methodology, data collection and sampling and data analysis etc. The limitations in this Research in relation to these activities are explained in the following points:

- Complexity of the TM framework: As identified in the literature review, the concept of TM has evolved over time from a simple employee recruitment process to an organisational process delivering sustainable competitive advantage. This has led to the identification of TM and its relationship with various organisational elements, including HR activities, organisational culture, leadership and performance, which made it difficult to analyse the influencing factors on TM, TM practises and their outcomes at employee and organisational levels. Accordingly, only internal factors were used for identifying the influencing factors on TM, which can be extended to external factors in the future research;
- Confining the fieldwork to private oil and gas organisations: The empirical investigation was limited to participants having worked in oil and gas corporations in KSA. In order to minimise this effect, the qualitative study (semi-structured interviews) included senior managers with extensive experience in TM and also HR managers;
- Limited sample size: The sample in the qualitative study includes 26 participants, and the quantitative study includes 417 participants. Considering the nature of the oil and gas organisations along with the cultural restrictions in which the study was undertaken, and the high profile of the people interviewed, it justifies the small sample size in the qualitative study;
- Qualitative case study as research study: There is scope for bias in the way that interviewees and interviewers interpret social reality (Silverman, 2001). In order to mitigate the risk, mixed methods are used to collect and analyse the data and avoid the shortcomings of using semi-structured interviews alone;
- Interviewees' gender: The qualitative participants of this Research were all male, as the researcher could not get access to any organisations managed by women, despite attempts made by the researcher prior to starting the data collection process. As a result, future research should seek to take a sample of female participants.

Additionally, in order to enhance the quality of interpretive research, the reliability and validity of the findings are explained and justified in Chapter 4. The interview agenda and the survey questionnaire were prepared on a sound theoretical foundation, ensuring relevant and reliable data was collected and analysed. In addition, the purposive sampling with an aim of maximising the variability of the sample to achieve meaningful analysis of qualitative datasets strengthens the internal validity of the findings.

## **8.4 Research Contribution**

This research has various contributions to academic literature and knowledge, and also practical implications with respect to oil and gas industry. These contributions are explained in the following sections.

### **8.4.1 Contributions to Knowledge and Literature**

This section discusses the key contributions to the literature and knowledge made by this Research. This research makes a contribution to the literature by developing a TM framework for the oil and gas organisations. This framework addresses one of the limitations of lacking proper framework for TM implementation in the oil and gas organisations. In addition, this framework provides a clear understanding of the internal factors influencing the TM operations and the impact of TM operations at the employee and organisational levels, which can be related to the outcomes including sustainable competitive advantage.

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is a lack of studies identified that has examined the TM outcomes in Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is one of the fastest-growing economies in the Middle East, and the country, being one of the G20 members, is focusing on transforming itself from an oil-dependent economy to a knowledge-based economy. In light of Vision 2030 for Saudi Arabia, this research gathers utmost importance and value, as it highlights the existing challenges in the TM practises and the approaches to effectively managing talent in Saudi Arabia. This contribution is in line with the increasing need for more research on TM practises in developing

countries, to allow government and oil and gas organisations in developing countries to take advantage of their talented employees.

This research makes a contribution to the literature by in-depth review of various concepts related to TM, supported by the thorough review of academic literature and reports of the practitioners in the field, and the researcher's recognition of the issues and the drivers in the internal environment on the adoption and implementation of TM can be considered as a valuable contribution to the knowledge. To the best of the Researcher's knowledge, this is a lack of studies specific to the oil and gas organisations that has indicated key organisational factors that can support the effective implementation of TM practices. While considering the evolution of the concept of TM, which now being considered as one of the most important organisational operations, the Researcher has identified some major limitations as explained in Chapter 2, which have not been empirically addressed in prior studies in such a broad context.

### **8.5. Contributions to Practice**

The research proposed prescriptive guidelines for the implementation of TM practises based on the theoretical and empirical investigations performed in the study. In addition, it also contributes to the better understanding of the role of TM in oil and gas organisations. It also highlights the framework, (Chapter, 7, Figure 7.1 and Figure 7.2) and the implementational guidelines, (Chapter 7, Section 7.10), which can be a source of knowledge for practical implementation in various organisations.

This research supports in creating awareness of TM practices and improve on effective organisational performance. This research contributes to improved understanding of the role and importance of TM and its outcomes in the oil and gas organisations. The research aims to focus on the main drivers of TM and offer appropriate guidance on how it can be successfully accomplished in exploring differentiated TM from organisational and employee perspectives.

Furthermore, the results of this research can be used in a similar context to that of KSA, such as in Arabian Gulf countries, owing to the fact that such regions have a similar culture and environment. In addition, developing countries can use the findings of this Research in TM implementation;

however, each organisation should take into account the differences in terms of internal and external factors that could impact the implementation of TM.

### **8.5. Recommendations for Future Research**

A number of recommendations from this Research can be suggested to oil and gas managers, and, more broadly, to firms with a differentiated TM system in place. First, managers should take into consideration the complex nature of talent identification. Managers should aim to utilise managerial cognition judgements as well as tools to ensure higher levels of accuracy. Second It also might be helpful to let talent know of their identification, since so doing linked to positive employee reactions, such as their attachment to the firm and being less likely to leave. Additionally, it might be important to consider employees own perceptions of their talent, as this could explain some of their attitudes, such as variation in their discretionary behaviours. Finally, it is worth managers considering procedural transparency in differentiated TM. Awareness of why and how the few individuals who are considered talent are managed differently is likely to increase the acceptance of such unfair management by both talent and non-talent. The Researcher recommends that TM practises should be aligned with organisational strategy and must be continuously updated according to the changes in the internal and external environments (with respect to organisations) in order to improve sustainable competitive advantage.

The literature review has identified the need for further research into TM practices in various industries by revealing the various TM practices across different sectors (Reis and Quental, 2014; Fang, 2014; Furusawa, 2014). The literature review has identified a need for further research into TM by revealing that most published research addresses TM implementation from the theoretical viewpoint, unsupported by empirical data. In addition, a lack of TM framework for other industries is identified, and differing practices were observed among the organisations “oil and gas”. In addition, TM can be related to social, political, economic and cultural factors which highlights the need to adopt multiple methods in data collection and analysis in order to gather a larger picture of the TM practices, issues, approaches and outcomes in the various organisations. Therefore, future research can focus on the analysis of TM practices using different methods, and also provide framework for implementation in different industry sectors.

The selection of methodologies as specified can be more qualitative in nature for future research, extending the prospects of interpretation of the reality from various contexts. It would help in

identifying the influence of various organisational factors in TM practices and provide new elements to be considered in TM frameworks.

In addition, future research can focus on the influence of external factors on TM practices, and also TM's impact on other attitudinal aspects such as employee behaviour and organisational outcomes such as value, competitive edge etc. Moreover, future researchers may choose to examine specific factors affecting the TM framework, seeking a better understanding of the impact that individual framework elements have on its overall implementation and potential future enhancements.

This Research relies a lot on investigating the TM from organisational perspective because of time constrains. Therefore, in observing this phenomenon, we would suggest the future research to look at the talent management from other perspective; especially in defining talent. The perspectives would be from workers at all levels. As the result, it would add knowledge in industry in from wider picture in the knowledge of talent management and thus focus will be on how workers, graduates, and education establishments understand and prepare talents that are needed by the organisations.

Comparing talent management in other countries would also be ideal to see the differences in the definition and management of talent. For example, comparing Eastern and Western contexts (such as the UK) would shed further light on the different approaches in the use of talent management.

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## **Appendix A: Introduction and Purpose of Interview**

I am a PhD student at Brunel Business School. I am in the process of writing my doctoral thesis and I am collecting data for that purpose. For my doctoral thesis I am very interested in exploring The Role of Talent Management and its Outcomes to Achieve Sustainable Competitive Advantage: A critical investigation in Saudi Arabian oil and gas organisations

The purpose of this letter is to ask for your assistance as a human resource department manager/ Talent manager/ Line manager by agreeing to be a participant in this study. The interview will take about 2 hours in length. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions about participating in this project at any time. I want you to have all required information that you may need to make your decision about accepting this interview.

Best wishes.

Amal Alanazi

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*Appendix B: Consent Form*

**CONSENT FORM**

**Talent management and its outcomes: A critical investigation in the Saudi Arabia Private Sector**

**Researcher name: Amal Alanazi**

<b>The participant should complete the whole of this sheet</b>		
	<i>Please tick the appropriate box</i>	
	YES	NO
Have you read the Research Participant Information Sheet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you currently working as a HR manager and have you had experience in managing talent?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you understand that you will not be referred to by name in any report concerning the study?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study:		<input type="checkbox"/>
• at any time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• without having to give a reason for withdrawing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• (where relevant, adapt if necessary) without affecting your future care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(Where relevant) I agree to my interview being recorded.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(Where relevant) I agree to the use of non-attributable direct quotes when the study is written up or published.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you agree to take part in this study?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signature of Research Participant:		
Date:		
Name in capitals:		
<u>Witness statement</u>		



<b>I am satisfied that the above-named has given informed consent.</b>	
<b>Witnessed by:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Name in capitals:</b>	
<b>Researcher name: Amal Alanazi</b>	<b>Signature: Amal</b>
<b>Supervisor name: Dr. Abraham Althonayan</b>	<b>Signature:</b>

## Appendix C: Interview Questions

### SECTION 1. Demographical Information:

Please tick the relevant box and answer the following questions:

**1. Your Gender**

Male       Female

**2. Your Age**

20-29       30-39       40-49       50-59       > 60

**3. Your Highest Level of Education**

Vocational/technical college       Bachelor's degree       Master's degree or equivalent       PhD or equivalent       Other, please specify.....

**4. Your Current Job Position**

HR manager       Talent manager       Line manager       Senior manager       Director  
 Head of the Department       Strategy and planning Department  
 Other, please specify.....

**5. Years of Experience**

1-5       6-10       11-15       16-20       > 21

**What Sector Does the Organisation Belong To?**

Oil       Gas       Petrochemical       Metals       Other, please specify.....

### SECTION 2. Organisation Details:

**1. Where is Your Office Located?**

Head Office       Branch Office       Other, please specify.....

**2. What Sector Does the Organisation Belong To?**

Oil       Gas       Petrochemical       metals

Other, please specify.....

**3. Does the organisation apply any talent management practices?**

- Yes,
  - Formal
  - Informal

**1. The effect of Internal Organizational Environment Factors on Talent Management**

	Factor Effect	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain N/A	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Good/Bad Leadership style of upper managerial hierarchy can positively/negatively impact the talent management implementation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	Having a formal culture in the organisation can help in talent management implementation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	Having a reward system in the organisation can help in talent management implementation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- Other, please specify :
  - -
  - -

**Could you explain more details why you chose this answer?**

**2. How do you personally define and understand the concept of TM?**

	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain N/A	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	An integrated set of processes, programs and culture used by employers to anticipate and meet the needs of human capital	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	Systematic attraction, retention, identification, development, engagement of talent to achieve sustainable competitive advantage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	“HR processes” the right person in the right job at the right time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	Inclusive (applied to all employees)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	Exclusive (applied to a select group)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- Other, please specify :
  - -
  - -

### 3. What criteria are used to identify the quality of talent?

	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain N/A	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	The talents of employees are determined through informal chats	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	Depending on the employee's efficiency from the point of view of his management's evaluation of potential and competencies (for example, accumulated skills/experience, ability to learn new skills and willingness to tackle bigger/more complex challenges)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	By Results: subjective measures like total contribution/team effort etc objective measures like sales/production/etc or job evaluation, (the annual performance assessment)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

○ Other, please specify :

- -
- -

### 4. How does your company attract talented individuals?

	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain N/A	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Contracts with agencies to provide talented employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	Close ties with top universities to attract the best talent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	Networking sites & online job boards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	Internships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	Offer the best compensation & benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6.	Strong company branding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
----	-------------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

○ Other, please specify :

- -
- -

**5. What personal attributes would you consider when you recruit a talented employee?**

	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain N/A	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	skills and capabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	Experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	Level of education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	Creative thinking / problem Solving	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	Computer knowledge & skills or communication skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

○ Other, please specify :

- -
- -

**6.As a manager, what do you do in order to encourage retention of talented employees?**

	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain N/A	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Monetary - Compensation & benefits, Retention bonuses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	An open environment & culture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	Employee stock options	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	Quality relationship with his or her manager	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	Opportunities for personal growth & professional development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.	Other non-monetary rewards that satisfy employee's psychological needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other , please specify :

- -
- -

**7. Does your company have any talent development practices? If yes, what activities are used to develop talented employees?**

	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain N/A	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Training, making coaching a part of each development discussion, education.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	Peer-to-peer feedback, Mentoring	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	Perform regular reviews & evaluations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	Empowerment & support from top managers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	Establish a structured system of developing talent to meet the growth & change requirements that will help employees get the skills they need	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

○ Other, please specify:

- -
- -

**8. Does your company have any talent management practices or particular HRM practices to manage talented employees? If yes, what are they?**

	Factor Effect	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain N/A	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Creating a motivating environment & strong engagement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	Providing coaching, focus on future career	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3.	Good personal relationship with their manager	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	Incorporate TM systems organisation's strategy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	Building the talent pipeline (succession planning/opportunities)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.	Giving empowerment, authority & flexibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.	Building employer branding/ employer attraction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8.	Recognizing & valuing employee performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9.	Providing appropriate pay & other compensation/benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other, please specify :

- -
- -

### 9. What challenges are you facing in managing talent?

	Obstacles or Challenges	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain N/A	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Talent shortage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	Saudization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	lack of leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	Maintaining staff engagement and commitment within the current cultural	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	Lack of knowledge and understanding of establish a structured system of developing talent to meet the new growth & change requirements that will help employees get the skills they need.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.	Geographical location	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.	High staff turnover and difficulties in recruitment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8.	Inadequate alignment between the organisational strategy and talent strategy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- Other, please specify :
- -
- -

**10. How would you describe the effect talent management has on your employees' attitude?**

	Factor Effect	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain N/A	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Improved satisfaction of the employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	Greater engagement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	After applying a good TM practice our employees are more motivation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other, please specify :

- -
- -

**Could you explain more why you chose this answer?**

- -
- -

**10. How can TM achieve sustainable competitive advantage?**

	Factor Effect	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain N/A	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	<b>sustainable competitive advantage</b> “Effective talent management can lead to effective firm performance which in turn can lead to sustainable competitive advantage”	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	The talent management- practices help organisation to focus on long-term competitive advantages by investing in talented professionals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	TM practices can positively impact the overall performance of the organisation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- Other, please specify
- -
- -

**Could you explain more details why you chose this answer?**



- -
- -

Additional comments or suggestions:

If you have any additional comments or suggestions you would like to share, please write them in the provided field below.

- -
- -
- -
- -
- -
- -
- -

Do you want to receive the data analyses and the recommendations of your organisation of this interview? (Please leave your e-mail address below when you choose “Yes”)

- Yes
- No

Thank You

## Appendix D: Research Survey

THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH)  
BRUNEL BUSINESS SCHOOL

Dear Participant,

I am a PhD researcher at Business School, Brunel University in the UK. I am undertaking a study on The Role of Talent Management and its Outcomes to Achieve Sustainable Competitive Advantage

As part of my thesis, I am conducting this survey to find out how managers applied talent management in your organization and how does talent management applying effect employees and organization. I am interested in finding out your personal perception, experience and practices in the talent management.

Your participation is voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw at any stage of the study. All the information you provide will be treated as completely confidential and will be only used for academic research purposes.

The questionnaire is designed to be user-friendly. There is no “right” or “wrong” answers. It will only take 10 to 15 minutes to be completed. Please answer all questions as honestly and fully as possible. Your cooperation is highly appreciated and will contribute to the success of this study.

If you have any concerns or questions about the survey or require further details, please contact me on: [amal.alanazi@brunel.ac.uk](mailto:amal.alanazi@brunel.ac.uk)

Yours Sincerely,  
Amal Alanazi

Thank you very much for taking the time to help!  
PhD Researcher  
Brunel Business School, Brunel University London  
UK

**SECTION 1. Demographical Information:**

Please tick the relevant box and answer the following questions:

**6. Your Gender**

- Male       Female

**7. Your Age**

- 20-29     30-39     40-49     50-59     > 60

**8. Your Highest Level of Education**

- Vocational/technical college       Bachelor's degree     Master's degree or equivalent     PhD or equivalent  
 Other, please specify.....

**9. Years of Experience**

- 1-5       6-10       11-15       16-20       > 21

**SECTION 2. Organisation Details:**

**4. What Sector Does the Organisation Belong To?**

- Oil       Gas       Petrochemical       metals  
 Other, please specify.....

**5. Does the organisation apply any talent management practices?**

- Yes,  
 No  
 Formal       Informal

**How would you rate your understanding of talent management practices?**

- Excellent       Very Good       Good  
 Not familiar with TM       Poor

**SECTION 3: Talent management implementation**

Please select ALL that apply

**1. The effect of Internal Organizational Factors on Talent Management**

	Factor Effect
4.	Good/Bad Leadership style of upper managerial hierarchy can positively/negatively impact the talent management implementation.
5.	Having a formal culture in the organisation can help in talent management implementation.
6.	Having a reward system in the organisation can help in talent management implementation.
7.	The employer’s brand can positively/negatively impact talent management implementation in the organisation
8.	All of the above.

- Other,
  - -

**2. How do you personally define and understand the concept of TM?**

	Statements
6.	An integrated set of processes, programs and culture used by employers to anticipate and meet the needs of human capital
7.	Systematic attraction, retention, identification, development, engagement of talent to achieve sustainable competitive advantage
8.	“HR processes” the right person in the right job at the right time
9.	Inclusive (applied to all employees)
10.	Exclusive (applied to a select group)
11.	All of the above

- Other, please specify :
  - -

**3. What criteria are used to identify the quality of talent?**

	Statements
4.	The talents of employees are determined through informal chats
5.	Depending on the employee's efficiency from the point of view of his management's evaluation of potential and competencies (for example, accumulated skills/experience, ability to learn new skills and willingness to tackle bigger/more complex challenges)
6.	By Results: subjective measures like total contribution/team effort etc objective measures like sales/production/etc or job evaluation, (the annual performance assessment)
7.	All of the above

○ Other, please specify :

- -
- -

**4. How does your company attract talented individuals?**

	Statements
7.	Contracts with agencies to provide talented employees
8.	Close ties with top universities to attract the best talent.
9.	Networking sites & online job boards
10.	Internships
11.	Offer the best compensation & benefits
12.	Strong company branding
13.	All of the above

○ Other, please specify :

- -
- -

**5. What personal attributes that your company consider when recruiting a talented employee?**

	Statements
6.	skills and capabilities

7.	Experience
8.	Level of education
9.	Creative thinking / problem Solving
10.	Computer knowledge & skills or communication skills
11.	All of the above

○ Other, please specify :

- -

**6. As an employee, what do your organisation do in order to encourage retention of talented employees?**

	Statements
7.	Monetary - Compensation & benefits, Retention bonuses
8.	An open environment & culture
9.	Employee stock options
10.	Quality relationship with his or her manager
11.	Opportunities for personal growth & professional development
12.	Other non-monetary rewards that satisfy employee's psychological needs
13.	Managing and developing the talents of our employees helps us retain employees because they feel that we are investing in their future.
14.	All of the above

Other , please specify :

- -
- -

**7. Does your company have any talent development practices? If yes, what activities are used to develop talented employees?**

	Statements
6.	Training, making coaching a part of each development discussion, education.

7.	Staff are provided with individual training sessions designed to address performance gaps and improve talent.
8.	Employees are encouraged to innovate by dedicating time to experimenting with new things and developing new ideas.
9.	Empowerment & support from top managers, by allowing them to work in projects. by allowing them to work in projects
10.	Establish a structured system of developing talent to meet the growth & change requirements that will help employees get the skills they need
11.	All of the above

○ Other, please specify:

- -
- -

**8. Does your company have any talent management practices or particular HRM practices to manage talented employees? If yes, what are they?**

	Factor Effect
11.	Creating a motivating environment & strong engagement
12.	Providing coaching, focus on future career
13.	Good personal relationship with their manager
14.	Incorporate TM systems organisation's strategy
15.	Building the talent pipeline (succession planning/opportunities)
16.	Giving empowerment, authority & flexibility
17.	Building employer branding/ employer attraction
18.	Recognizing & valuing employee performance
19.	Providing appropriate pay & other compensation/benefits
20.	All of the above

Other, please specify :

- -
- -

**9. In your opinion, What challenges are your organisation facing in managing talent?**

Obstacles or Challenges	
9.	Talent shortage
10.	Saudization
11.	lack of leadership
12.	Maintaining staff engagement and commitment within the current cultural
13.	Lack of knowledge and understanding of establish a structured system of developing talent to meet the new growth & change requirements that will help employees get the skills they need.
14.	Geographical location
15.	High staff turnover and difficulties in recruitment
16.	Inadequate alignment between the organisational strategy and talent strategy
17.	All of the above

○ Other, please specify :

- -
- -

#### SECTION 4. Talent management outcomes:

Please select the level that best evaluate the situation in your organisation by using a 1 to 5 Likert scale, Where

1= Strongly disagree 5= Strongly agree.

Talent Management Outcomes		Level of Agreement				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain N/A	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>Engagement</b>	I am proud to be part of the Company	5	4	3	2	1
	I will not leave the Company or plan to leave the company in near future.	5	4	3	2	1
	I would recommend my Business Unit/Service Unit to others as a good place to work.	5	4	3	2	1
	Time passes quickly when I perform my job	5	4	3	2	1



	I exert a lot of energy in my job	5	4	3	2	1
	Overall engagement with current job	5	4	3	2	1
Satisfaction	Your basic pay	5	4	3	2	1
	The amount of administrative / technical support available	5	4	3	2	1
	Opportunities to learn new skills	5	4	3	2	1
	Overall satisfaction with current job	5	4	3	2	1
Motivation	I am motivated Because my work is important.	5	4	3	2	1
	I am motivated Because I want to have a positive impact on others.	5	4	3	2	1
	I am motivated Because I find the work engaging.	5	4	3	2	1
	Overall motivational experience with current job	5	4	3	2	1
Commitment	I feel emotionally attached to this organisation	5	4	3	2	1
	I participate in activities that are not required, but that help the image of my organisation	5	4	3	2	1
	This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me	5	4	3	2	1
	I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organisation	5	4	3	2	1
	Your overall commitment to stay in current organization	5	4	3	2	1
SCA	TM can lead to high-quality products/services, operations and customer relations	5	4	3	2	1
	TM can lead to 'speed in response to market and innovation speed', and increases productivity	5	4	3	2	1
	Enhance supply chain efficiency.	5	4	3	2	1
	Overall impact of TM practices is achieving sustainable competitive advantages	5	4	3	2	1
	TM practices help organisations to focus on long-term competitive advantages by investing in talented professionals.	5	4	3	2	1
	TM practices can positively impact the overall performance of the organisation	5	4	3	2	1

## Appendix E: Quantitative Data Analysis

Results						
	Very High	High	Neutral	Low	Very Low	Row Totals
Motivation	238 (252.00) [0.78]	110 (118.50) [0.61]	34 (23.00) [5.26]	20 (13.50) [3.13]	15 (10.00) [2.50]	417
Competitive Advantage	266 (252.00) [0.78]	127 (118.50) [0.61]	12 (23.00) [5.26]	7 (13.50) [3.13]	5 (10.00) [2.50]	417
<b>Column Totals</b>	504	237	46	27	20	834 (Grand Total)

The chi-square statistic is 24.556. The  $p$ -value is .000062. The result is significant at  $p < .05$ .

**Chi-Square Test (Survey Participants Experience Vs Awareness of Talent Management)**

Results						
	good	very good	excellent			Row Totals
11-15	29 (29.03) [0.00]	26 (24.83) [0.05]	16 (17.14) [0.08]			71
16-20	22 (26.99) [0.92]	28 (23.08) [1.05]	16 (15.93) [0.00]			66
>20	32 (26.99) [0.93]	17 (23.08) [1.60]	17 (15.93) [0.07]			66
<b>Column Totals</b>	83	71	49			203 (Grand Total)

The chi-square statistic is 4.7058. The  $p$ -value is .318837. The result is *not* significant at  $p < .05$ .

Results						
	Very High	High	Neutral	Low	Very Low	Row Totals
Employee Engagement	229 (247.50) [1.38]	80 (103.50) [5.34]	56 (34.00) [14.24]	22 (14.50) [3.88]	30 (17.50) [8.93]	417
Competitive Advantage	266 (247.50) [1.38]	127 (103.50) [5.34]	12 (34.00) [14.24]	7 (14.50) [3.88]	5 (17.50) [8.93]	417
<b>Column Totals</b>	495	207	68	29	35	834 (Grand Total)

The chi-square statistic is 67.5235. The  $p$ -value is  $< 0.00001$ . The result is significant at  $p < .05$ .

Results						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Row Totals
Employee Commitment	196 (231.00) [5.30]	165 (146.00) [2.47]	18 (15.00) [0.60]	18 (12.50) [2.42]	20 (12.50) [4.50]	417
Competitive Advantage	266 (231.00) [5.30]	127 (146.00) [2.47]	12 (15.00) [0.60]	7 (12.50) [2.42]	5 (12.50) [4.50]	417
<b>Column Totals</b>	462	292	30	25	25	834 (Grand Total)

The chi-square statistic is 30.5913. The  $p$ -value is  $< 0.00001$ . The result is significant at  $p < .05$ .

### Pearson Correlation Coefficient Calculation

#### Result Details & Calculation

##### *X Values*

$$\Sigma = 302$$

$$\text{Mean} = 50.333$$

$$\Sigma(X - M_x)^2 = SS_x = 4803.333$$

##### *Y Values*

$$\Sigma = 295$$

$$\text{Mean} = 49.167$$

$$\Sigma(Y - M_y)^2 = SS_y = 20.833$$

##### *X and Y Combined*

$$N = 417$$

$$\Sigma(X - M_x)(Y - M_y) = 241.667$$

##### *R Calculation*

$$r = \frac{\Sigma((X - M_x)(Y - M_y))}{\sqrt{(SS_x)(SS_y)}}$$

$$r = 241.667 / \sqrt{(4803.333)(20.833)} = 0.764$$

##### *Meta Numerics (cross-check)*

$$r = 0.764$$

Table 6.7. T-test results between variable TM outcomes and organisational outcomes

<b>Factor 1</b>	<b>N1</b>	<b>SS1</b>	<b>T-Value</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>SS2</b>	<b>N2</b>	<b>Factor 2</b>
Employee Satisfaction	417	548.65	-5.47	$p < 0.00001$ ( $p < 0.05$ : Significant)	229.6	417	Sustainable Competitive Advantage
Employee Commitment	417	449.88	-5.63	$p < 0.00001$ ( $p < 0.05$ : Significant)	229.6	417	Sustainable Competitive Advantage
Employee Engagement	417	639.35	-6.30	$p < 0.00001$ ( $p < 0.05$ : Significant)	229.6	417	Sustainable Competitive Advantage
Employee Motivation	417	453.04	-4.05	$p < 0.00001$ ( $p < 0.05$ : Significant)	229.6	417	Sustainable Competitive Advantage

N: Sample; SS: Sum of Squares

Table 3.1: Review of TM framework studies

Reference /year	Model measures	Construct issue/objectives theory/concept	Operationalisation	Model strength/finding
James Kwame Mensah (2015)	TM and employee performance	TM, TM output and employee performance	<p>*TM outputs mediate the relationship between TM and employee performance.</p> <p>*TM outputs are antecedents of employee performance.</p> <p>* Components of the framework are TM and employee performance.</p>	Distinctive features of this framework are that it captures all the dimensions of employee performance and enables the organisation implementing the TM strategy to have a comprehensive view of how TM will impact the various dimensions.
Robert E. Lewis, Robert J. Heckman (2006)	Critical review of TM and link it with HRM	This research reviews the various practitioner-oriented publications hosting discussions regarding TM and addresses the problems associated with the concept in terms of definition, operation and support.	The research proposes a high-level hierarchy of the components of a strategic TM that begins to separate the questions that have been addressed in TM and strategic HRM literature so as to provide perspective.	This research provides insights for researchers to markedly improve the quality of talent conversations in organisations.
David G. Collings and Kamel Mellahi (2009)	Strategic TM	It aids managers in engaging with some of the issues they face with regard to TM.	<p>*In the first aspect of our definition we argue that organisations should differentiate between employees who are strategic performers and those who are not.</p> <p>*High-performing or high-potential employees.</p> <p>*Supported with appropriate HR policies.</p>	It is also important in helping to differentiate strategic TM from strategic human resources management.
Maniam Kaliannan, Mathew Abraham Vanitha Ponnusamy (2015)	The research examines TM practices that influence organisational commitment and job satisfaction in employees in Malaysian SMEs.	The research explores four core TM practices: training and development, staffing and recruitment, retaining practices and rewards, and recognition.	<p>The following TM practices make up the independent variables for this study: staffing and recruitment, training and development, rewards and recognition, and retaining practices.</p> <p>Organisational commitment and job satisfaction are dependent variables.</p>	The research findings may assist Malaysian SMEs to explore TM better and increase organisational performance.

Ibraiz Tarique Randall S. Schuler (2010)	Integrative framework of global TM	The framework discusses several drivers and challenges of global TM and the criteria of effective global TM.	To guide this research, our framework highlights several selected challenges in global TM and several drivers of those challenges. It also highlights the potential role of IHRM activities in addressing those selected challenges. Our proposed integrative framework illustrates the influences and interrelations of the factors in a MNE's external and internal environment that may help shape its global TM system.	The research serves as a guide for the MNEs in addressing the drivers of global TM challenges better. The framework in the research can guide future academic research on the topic.
Deborah R. Phillips and Kathy O. Roper (2009)	Values and competencies	There are five strategic components to the values and competency model: 1. Attracting 2. Selecting 3. Engaging 4. Developing 5. Retaining	The five specific strategies suggested for the TM framework attempts to measure performance at all fronts.	The framework will provide real estate practitioners with effective strategies to processes and systems to attract, retain and manage talent in today's competitive market.
Mathur, AK, and Mathur, A (2012)	Systems approach to TM	The systems approach to TM involves four steps: review, acquire, capacity building and orchestrate	It should be embedded in the business strategy of a company to align and measure existing talent in the company and forecast future needs. The company must choose from organic and inorganic options for developing and hiring people.	Indian pharmaceutical companies can find a guideline to effective TM from this research.
Anoopa Narayanan, S. Rajithakumar, and Manoj Menon (2018)	The article studies the relationship between TM and employee retention.	Distributive justice mediates the relationship between TM and employee retention. It is a conceptual model explaining the role of talent perception, congruence and organisational justice in the relationship between TM and employee retention. It is developed by incorporating the Perceived Organisational Justice Theory and congruence.	Informational justice mediates the relationship between TM and employee retention.  Talent perception congruence mediates the relationship between TM and employee retention.	The role of talent perception congruence in the relationship between TM and employee retention.

<p>Marian Thunnissen and Dorien Buttiens (2017)</p>	<p>Explains how the environment of an organisation influences the adoption of an inclusive versus a segmented people management approach.</p> <p>Factors can also affect the actual implementation of TM as well as the perceptions and attitudes and behaviours of employees.</p>	<p>The theory is based on institutional mechanisms and institutional logic.</p>	<p>The study concerns a qualitative study on TM policies and practices.</p> <p>It is focused on the TM policies for academic staff.</p>	<p>The case study research was carried out within five Dutch university departments. The selection of the cases was based on four criteria.</p> <p>It focused on the TM policies for academic staff.</p>
<p>Pernilla Bolander, Andreas Werr and Kajsa Asplund</p>	<p>Identifying TM types begins with the talent definition.</p>	<p>The first dimension is whether talent is seen as a subject or object. The second dimension is inclusive or exclusive. The third dimension is whether talent is a natural ability or something that can be taught and learned. The fourth dimension is whether talent is based on input or output. Lastly, talent may be seen as a quality that remains unchanged when transferred between contexts, or as something that emerges and is recognised only in specific contexts.</p>	<p>In the framework we include five well-established dimensions derived from theoretical perspectives on talent that exist in six streams of literature: HRM, I/O psychology, educational psychology, vocational psychology, positive psychology, and social psychology.</p>	<p>A comparative study was conducted of the TM practices of 30 organisations based in Sweden. The findings comprise a typology consisting of four distinct TM types that exist in practice: a humanistic type, a competitive type, an elitist type and an entrepreneurial type. Descriptions are provided that probe into how specific practices are differently shaped in the different types.</p>
<p>Violetta Khoreva Vaasa, Finland Vlad Vaiman, and Maarten Van Zalk (2016)</p>	<p>The process through which TM practice effectiveness impacts high-potential employees' commitment to leadership competence development.</p>	<p>This study supports social exchange theory.</p> <p>Structural equation modelling was utilised to analyse survey data representing a sample of 439 high-potential employees from 11 Finnish multinational corporations.</p>	<p>TM practice effectiveness is positively related to commitment to leadership competence development.</p> <p>Psychological contract fulfilment mediates the association between TM practice effectiveness and commitment to leadership competence development.</p> <p>Gender moderates the association between TM practice effectiveness and commitment to leadership competence development, so that the relationship is stronger for males than for female high-potential employees.</p>	<p>First, the authors found that the more high-potential employees perceived TM practices to be effective, the more they were committed towards leadership competence development. Next, the findings revealed that the association between TM practice effectiveness and commitment to leadership competence development operates by means of psychological contract fulfilment.</p>

<p>Maniam Kaliannan, Mathew Abraham* Vanitha Ponnusamy  (2016)</p>	<p>Examining TM practices that influence job satisfaction and organisational commitment among employees in focus group interviews in Malaysian SMEs.</p>	<p>1. TM practices are identified for this research (i.e. staffing and recruitment, training and development, rewards and recognition, and retaining practices) 2. Organisational performance (job satisfaction and organisational commitment).</p>	<p>TM practices are identified for this research (i.e. staffing and recruitment, training and development, rewards and recognition, and retaining practices).</p>	<p>Findings indicate a gap between employees and employers in terms of expectations of TM practices. Employees are looking for better training opportunities and some form of remuneration and recognition that demonstrates their full potential at work. Management transparency and open communication is essential to build trust, which cultivates commitment and job satisfaction that eventually retains talent in an organisation.</p>
<p>James Kwame Mensah and Justice Nyigmah Bawole  (2017)</p>	<p>The purpose of this paper is to examine the mediating role of person-organisation (P-O) fit on the relationship between TM and employee's job satisfaction, and organisational citizenship behaviours.</p>	<p>The purpose of this paper is to examine the mediating role of person-organisation (P-O) fit on the relationship between TM and employee's job satisfaction, and organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs). It uses the ability, motivation and opportunity (AMO) theory,</p>	<p>P-O fit will positively affect talented employees' job satisfaction. P-O fit will positively affect talented employees' OCBs.  P-O fit will partially mediate the relationship between TM and talented employees' job satisfaction.</p>	<p>The results showed that TM had a positive relationship with P-O fit, job satisfaction and OCBs. The findings further show that P-O fit had a positive relationship between job satisfaction and OCBs and partially mediated the relationship between TM and both job satisfaction and OCBs.</p>

Source: Researcher