



A Comparative Study of Talent Management Models: Lessons for Iran's Human Resources System

Mehrdad Yazdani¹

Seirajuddin Mohebbi²(Corresponding author)

Mehdi Bagheri³

Mohammad Hossein Ranjbar⁴

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Received: 18 March 2020 Revised: 25 April 2020 Accepted: 30 April 2020 Online: 01 May 2020</p>	<p>The current paper aims at investigating talent management models to provide Iran's human resources system with lessons. This research paper is a qualitative comparative research based on understanding similarities and differences in talent management models. Data was collected using theoretical sampling (data saturation) method. Content analysis method was applied to analyze the main components of the well-known talent management models. Induction Analysis was performed in qualitative content data analysis. Accordingly, the current paper introductory section contains information about the importance of talent management, research underlying factors, current status of talent management in Iran's human resource management system, and research objectives and questions. The research method is explained in the second section. Third section begins with research results with a brief introduction to talent management models assessing the similarities and differences. The final part of the paper is conclusion. The findings show that models can be classified into three general categories: individual-oriented, organization-oriented and environment-oriented, according to the emphasis of the components. The findings also show designers overlook role of cultural components in talent management. According to findings, it is suggested that courses be designed for all graduates in the education system - and in particular in the Iranian higher education system - to explain concept of talent and role of elites. It is also suggested that the human resource management system pay more attention to environmental factors (non-organizational factors) such as culture, religion, and language, with positive or negative impacts on talent management in Iranian society.</p>
<p>KEYWORDS</p> <p>Educational System Human Resources Pattern Talent Management</p>	

¹ PhD Student in Public Administration, Human Resources Management, Human Resources Department, Islamic Azad University of Qeshm, Iran (yazdanimehrdadd@gmail.com)

² Assistant Professor, Department of Human Resources Management, Islamic Azad University of Qeshm, Iran (Mohebi.abcd@gmail.com)

³ Assistant Professor, Department of Human Resources Management, Islamic Azad University of Qeshm, Iran (Mbagheri.sbu@gmail.com)

⁴ Assistant Professor, Department of Human Resources Management, Islamic Azad University of Qeshm, Iran (Mranjbar54@gmail.com)

1. Introduction

The importance of the developments of the time, such as globalization, the spread of information and communication technologies, economic competition, and the growing growth of global competition over the performance of individuals, organizations, and human societies is crystal clear. Human being is the element receiving, accepting, or counteracting these developments called workers and employees in private or public organizations and companies around the globe. It is clear that the majority of these people are employees who are more accustomed to doing things in a routine. Leading human resources are those that are referred to as elite, talented, or creative. These people are in the minority. If all employees were elite and talented, commercial failure or failure to achieve organizational goals would no longer make sense. That's why psychologists have called talented people "elites," whom management experts refer to their absence in organizations as a global challenge (Adamsen & Thomsen, 2015; Beamond, Farndale, & Härtel, 2016, Cappelli, 2008). Society for Human Resource Management in 2006 reports that in most countries, organizations are terribly face with difficult to recruit, train, hire, and retain talented individuals for key positions (Fegley, 2006; Yalcin Vural et al., 2012). This challenge drew the attention of researchers of organizational behavior and management to the concept of competence and talent and emergence of basic concept of "talent management" (Armstrong, 2006).

Taking into account talent management, the organizational researchers first faced with how to train talented people. Therefore, research shows a long history of attention to the concept of talent through scientific disciplines such as psychology, economics, and educational sciences. Psychologists first looked at concepts such as intelligence, talent, and the elite (Boudreau, & Ramstad, 2005). Economists such as Adam Smith, Fischer, Psacharopoulos, and Gary Becker then noted the importance of talent in the process of economic development and called talented people the human capital of nations (Hage, Garnier, and Fuller, 1988). The efforts of psychologists and economists have paid more attention to the role of educational system in the production and training of human resources. In fact, educational scholars have found that educational systems are the most important social institution producing human resources in any country (Ramirez, Luo, Schofer, Meyer, 2006). The term talent management was first coined by a private company in the mid-1990s. Since then, several researches have been conducted on the dimensions, factors and patterns related to talent management in different countries of the world. For example, talent

warfare (Chambers, Foulon, HandBeld-Jones, Hankin, and Michaels 1997); Talents Recognition and Growth (Berger, & Berger, 2004), Talent Management in the New Millennium (McCauley, & Wakefield, 2006), Talent Demand (Cappelli, 2008), Talent Management in Transiting Societies (Skuzza, Scullion, & McDonnell, 2013), Talent Management Strategies, Challenges and Capacities (Bhatia, 2015), Human Resources and Talent Management (Miller, & Mehrotra, 2015), and Employee Understanding Talent Management (King, 2016). Tatoglu et al (2016) also examined talent management in the emerging Turkish market. The number of 201 companies participated in this study. Data analysis showed that multinational companies have more incentive tactics to use talent management. Rogers (2013) also showed that companies actively understand the importance of talent when executives understand the importance of the idea. Swim (2009) also showed the effect of talent management on employee commitment in the United States. He found that constant improvement, Open organizational climate and clear and unambiguous relationships at the top of the organization are important components of a Talent management system. Thus, today the growth and development of existing talents in leading organizations has become one of the main responsibilities of managers (Collings & Mellahi, 2009). Successful organizations are those whose top managers have the necessary support in recruiting and retaining elites in practice with requiring their subordinates to support them (Haji Karimi and Hosseini, 2010).

It is important for government officials, policymakers, planners and managers in Iran to take into account the impact and the role of talent management for several reasons. The first reason is the young country's population and the large number of university graduates. The second reason is the attention to the migration rate of people prone to emigration. The third reason is the low productivity rate of Iranian organizations - especially government agencies. Evidence to support these three reasons can be found in the remarks of the head of the National Productivity Organization of Iran. Pahlavani (2018), points out that the unemployment rate in the country is 12%, emphasizes that 40% of the unemployed are graduates of higher education. Also, the share of productivity in Iran from 2000 to 2015 was 7%, and this number has remained constant since 1970, which indicates a decrease in job opportunities for talented people. These reasons recruited the attention of Iranian researchers in recent years to the concept of talent management and its role. For example, Nasiri Valik Bani, Emadi, and Sarchehani (2016) found that there is a strong relationship between organizational culture and the ability to manage talent in Iranian sports organizations. Hemtian and Niroumand (2016) by examining the status of talent management in the National Iranian Gas Company showed that recruiting and maintaining talents in the company

under study have a favorable situation . Zein al-Dini Bidmashki, Adli and Vaziri (2014) found that there is a significant difference between the current and favorable situation of talent development in public universities in Tehran, in all dimensions. Maali Tafti and Amiri (2012) conducted a study entitled "Identifying Barriers and Challenges of Talent Management in the Automotive Industry". The findings showed that the challenges could be classified into four categories: structural, environmental, behavioral, and managerial. Javaherizadeh, Moghimi, Gholipour and Tahmasebi, (2014) showed that research atmosphere has most impact on recruiting talents at the University of Tehran.

Despite the development of concept of talent management and interest of senior managers of organizations around the world, in practice the implementation of this idea - especially in developing countries such as Iran - is still a problem and many organizations has failed to effectively manage their talents due to the lack of strong empirical examples (Thunnissen, 2016). Also, although some organizations have sometimes considered one or two of the following in implementing this idea (Goldsmith & Karter, 2005), the multiplicity of key elements influencing talent management has become a major weakness for its implementation (Thunnissen, (2016). In addition, the ongoing challenge of ensuring the decisive support of senior and middle managers of organizations for talent management is another well-known challenge (Morton, 2004). In the last two decades, various models have been proposed to address these challenges and identify key components of talent management to provide basis for its implementation in organizations. Most of these models have been developed by researchers in the developed countries, although in recent years a number of Iranian researchers have tried to design models for talent management in various public and private organizations. These models are often not fully comprehensive or are ambiguities in its indicators and components. Accordingly and taking into account the absence of a suitable and optimal model for talent management in the Iranian human resources system, it seems that the first step should be to compare existing patterns and recognize similarities and differences. The current comparative study of talent management models paper aims at providing those involved in the Iranian human resources system with suggestions. Accordingly, the research questions are as follows:

- What are the components of talent management in the models studied?
- What are the similarities and differences between the models studied in terms of talent management components?

2. Research Method

The research method of present study is a qualitative comparative based on content analysis approach to understand and recognize similarities and differences among talent management models. The statistical population includes all talent management models and research samples have been selected through theoretical sampling method. Data collection method is a documentary method by examining the content of Internet resources, Web search engines, books, journals, and academic projects to determine main components of well-known models of talent management from a comparative perspective with suggestions for Iranian organizational managers. Using theoretical sampling, the researchers selected models that could answer the purpose and questions of the research. The end of theoretical sampling was determined based on data saturation. This method usually occurs in qualitative research when a new set of concepts is not obtained by reviewing new cases (Given, 2008). The current paper found theoretical saturation in the thirteenth model.

3. Results

This section consists of two parts: First, a brief explanation of models (first question of research); Second, similarities and differences of components of selected models (second question of research).

First: A brief description of the models

Although concept of talent management indicates entry of a new variable in the scientific field of management, especially in last two decades, it has a long history in the field of psychology. In the science of psychology, the emphasis on the word talent is mainly a reflection of the characteristics that a person inherits from his or her parents (Cappelli, 2008). In the science of management, this concept has found wider dimensions that have not been of much interest to psychologists. The conceptual development of talent management led to the emergence of a group of effective components that represent the communication and functional space of the individual. Also, diversity and multiplicity of components led to various models in the field of talent management by

researchers and theorists. Given the theoretical saturation approach, the main components of 13 models are briefly mentioned here:

1- Wellins, Smith & Rogers Model

This model was first developed by Wellins, Smith & Rogers (2006) based on organization's missions as well as cultural and strategic priorities. The main components of talent management based on this model are: identifying existing potentials, assessing their readiness, developing talents, selecting and using talents, and evaluating performance (Wellins, Smith & Rogers, 2006).

2- Louise and Hackman Model

This model was first developed by Louise and Hackman, (2006) as a conceptual framework with the preferred organizations components , strategy and competitive advantage. At this stage, organizations determine strategic concepts related to talent taking into account decision-making, then identify and classify Talents. The main components of talent management in this model are: selection, employment, performance management and service compensation.

3- Phillips and Rupper Model

The core to this model is competencies and values of organization. These factors are interconnected through a continuous process, strategy, implementation, and evaluation. Talent management starts and develops from the core of this model. Successful organizations have a strong culture and background. Culture includes values, characteristics, behaviors, and operations of members of organization (Phillips and Rupper, 2009). The main components of talent management in this model are: recruiting, selecting, engaging, developing, retaining employees.

4- Altinöz Model

This model was developed by Altinöz, Cakiroglu & Cop et al. (2013). The basis of this model is the use of internal talents. This model tells organizations how to reach goals using organization

internal talents and bridge gap between required talents and existing talents. The eight components of this model are: defining goals and strategies of organization, determining key positions, creating talent profiles, selecting best talents, designing and using development programs of organization's talents, analyzing gap between organization's talents and existing talents, talents performance evaluation and promotion of processes.

5- Armstrong Model

Armstrong (2006) more comprehensively addresses the various dimensions of talent management. In this model, the business process is referred to as the roadmap. Armstrong believes that in relation to the scarcity of talented employees to study a talent treasury can be formed through maintenance and management of recruited from inside and outside the organization including skilled, specialized and committed workforce. The components of this model are: talent recruitment, talent retention and talent development management.

6- Barlow Model

The Barlow model (2006) considers three components of readiness, transition, and development to manage talent. The first step, before reaching the transition point, is to move on to the new role. This happens when a person's potential and talents for the transfer are known. The second step is transition, and before upgrading, there is a need to talk to senior managers about how to get a job and start learning about the needs of the new role. The third step is development of individual in new role. An important issue here is organization's support for development of these talents through creation of appropriate career pathways and planned training.

7- Sweem Model

According to Sweem (2009) model , in order to create high performance in an organization, it is necessary to implement reforms in factors including communication, performance management, reward and appreciation, employee development, and organizational culture. These factors are all focused on the most valuable asset of the organization, the employees, and make up the infrastructure of talent management.

8- Gandz Model

In the Gandz (2006) model, cultural and strategic priorities of organization are first designed based on goals of organization. Having determined the required talents, talent management stage begins, which includes five components of potential identification, readiness assessment, growth acceleration, selection and development, and performance of the focal stimulus.

9- O'Halley Model

O'Halley (2007) found that there is a positive and significant relationship between managers' mindsets and talent management in organizations. This model is based on recruitment, employment, development and retention.

10- Ghaffari et al Model

Ghaffari, Purkiani, Shekari and Sheikhi (2017) developed a model according to the human resource management experts' opinions and introduced four components of discovery, identification and recruitment; evaluation, implementation and application; education, development and improvement and talent retention.

11- Iqbal et al Model

This model was developed by Iqbal, Hoveida, Siadat, Samavatian, and Yarmohammadian, (2016) to design a model of talent management process for faculty members in talent-oriented universities. This model consists of seven distinct components including identifying and determining talent needs, discovering talent resources, recruiting talent, developing potential talents, using strategic talents, retaining talent, evaluating and aligning talent management activities.

12- Barani et al Model

Barani, Khorshidi, Moshabaki Esfahani, and Hajiha (1397) developed talent management model in order to gain competitive advantage in oil industry. The main components include recruit talent, train and develop talent, retaining talent, evaluate talent and talent excellence.

13- Dehghanan et al Model

This model was developed by Dehghanan, Afjeh, Soltani and Javaherizadeh (2018) to determine a suitable talent management model in Iranian public companies, and its components include talent search, talent recruitment, talent placement, talent retaining, and talent development. This model is implemented in three levels: individual, organizational and extra-organizational.

Second: the selected models components similarities and differences

To compare talent management models, we first examine the structures or components that make it up. Table 1 shows the components and their numbers per model:

Table 1.

Distinction of models by name of designer, year of design, number of component and type of component

No.	Designer	Year	Number of component	Components
1	Wellins, Smith & Rogers	2006	5	Identify existing potentials, assess their readiness, develop talents, select and use talents and evaluate performance
2	Louise and Hackman	2006	4	Selection, recruitment, performance management and service compensation
3	Phillips and Rupper	2009	5	recruit, select, engage, develop, retain employees
4	Altinöz, Cakiroglu & Cop et al	2013	8	Defining the goals and strategies of the organization, determining key positions, creating talent profiles, selecting the best talents, designing and using talent development programs, analyzing the gap between the required talents and existing talents, evaluating the talents performance and evaluations.
5	Armstrong	2006	3	Recruit talent, retain talent and manage talent development
6	Barlow	2006	3	Readiness, transition and development
7	Sweem	2009	5	Communication, performance management, rewards and appreciation, employee development and organizational culture
8	Gandz	2006	5	Identifying potentials, measuring readiness, accelerating growth, selection and development, and the focal performance stimulus
9	O'Halley	2007	4	Recruitment and employment, development and talent retention
10	Ghaffari, et al	2017	5	Evaluation, implementation and application; education, development and improvement and talent retention
11	Iqbal, et al	2016	7	Discovering talent resources, recruiting talent, developing potential talents, using strategic talents, retaining talent, evaluating and aligning talent management activities
12	Barani, et al	2018	5	Recruit talent, train and develop talent, retaining talent, evaluate talent and talent excellence
13	Dehghanan, et al	2018	5	Talent search, talent recruitment, talent placement, talent retaining, and talent development

According to Table 1, the attention of management researchers to designing management talent models seems to have increased since the first decade of the new millennium. Out of a total of 13 models of the present study, 4 models have been prepared by Iranian researchers, which

indicate the growth of interest in the phenomenon of talent management in developing countries. Also, as we move away from the first years of the 2000s, the number of components of the models increases, so that it has increased from 3 components (Barlow-2006 model) to 8 components (Altinöz et al.-2013). Table 2 shows the similarities and differences between talent management models in terms of basic components:

Table 2.

Comparison of talent management models in terms of basic components

Model/ Component	Wellins	Louise	Phillips	Altinöz	Armstrong	Barlow	Swee m	Gan dz	O'Hal ley	Ghaff ari	Iqbal	Baran i	Dehghan anan
Identification and recruitment	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Development	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Maintenance	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Strategy	*	*	*	*	-	*	-	*	-	*	*	*	-
Competencies	*	*	*	*	-	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Form a reservoir of talent	-	-	*	*	*	-	-	-	-	-	*	-	*
Identify important jobs	-	-	-	*	-	-	-	*	-	-	*	-	-
Contextual factors	-	-	-	-	-	-	*	-	-	-	-	-	*

Given the components, although the designers have used different and sometimes synonymous terms, all models are seemingly the same in three components of recruitment and employment, development and retaining. Also, the three components of talent treasury formation, key job identification and attention to the underlying factors have caused differences between the models. Of the 13 models examined, only 2 models considered the important component of "attention to underlying factors". Underlying factors refer to the role of non-organizational factors such as culture, religion, language and other factors outside the organization that can have a positive or negative impact on talent management. Despite the great importance of underlying factors, model designers have paid the least attention to this component.

Also, according to the literature of research and analysis of data content, models can be classified into 3 general groups of individualist, organizational, and environmentalist in terms of general orientation and emphasis on the type of component. In individualistic models, the main emphasis of the components is on the personality traits of talented people. In organizational oriented models, in addition to the individual characteristics of employees, the characteristics of the

organization are also considered by model designers. The environmentalist model takes into account the role and influence of factors and components outside the organization on talent management. Accordingly, Table 3 shows the relation of each model to the three groups:

Table 3.

Models grouping based on component importance

General Orientation	Model
Individual	Wellins, Phillips, Armstrong, O'HalleyBarani ,
Organization	Louise, Altinöz, Barlow, Gandz , Ghaffari, Iqbal
Environment	Sweem, Dehghanan

According to the Table 3 most of models have focused on talent management in the organization taking into account the components based on relationship of talented person with organizational dimensions. Also, with the exception of two models addressing role and impact of external factors on talent management, the majority of models have valued organization's relationship with potential individual.

4. Conclusion

Iran's human resources system needs fundamental attention to training of skilled manpower. Historical social evidence shows that elitism killing has been more common in Iran than elitism fostering (Rezagholi, 1998). However, new developments no longer focus on retaining elite, but on identifying, recruiting, supporting, and retaining all elites in public institutions, both public and private. Economic conditions and indicators such as high unemployment rate of educated people and low productivity are a serious warning for the Iranian human resources system, so that as soon as possible, by changing the traditional methods of professional development and using talent management patterns, there is a good opportunity for provide talent acquisition and retention. To achieve this goal, the first step is to identify the optimal model of talent management.

Research findings show that over the past two decades, different models have been developed to determine the main components and explain how talent management works. This analysis also showed that over time the number of components in later models has increased. Perhaps the reason for the increase in number of components of talent management is that more researchers know about it and also the combination of previous models with each other. For example, out of 13 models studied in the present study, 4 models have been prepared and compiled by Iranian researchers, one of which has 7 components. Another finding of the study showed a mismatch

between the components of these models. This reveals that talent management is made up of a variety of components and is likely to be influenced by a number of factors.

Other finding is that most models are result of research by researchers at major international private companies, which makes it difficult for government agencies to generalize the model. In contrast, Iranian models are largely the result of field research in government agencies, which limits the generalizability of model to the private sector of business. In both cases, there is a need for models that can comprehensively consider practical facts and theoretical foundations. This limitation has been cited in other studies as a break in knowledge (Krishnan and Scullion, 2017; McDonnell, Collings, Mellahi & Schuler, 2017; Sabuncu and Karacay, 2016).

Another finding of the study revealed that some components were present in most models and that researchers agreed on their importance. However, most of these models ignore characteristics of social environment in which the organization or company (private or public) operates. In fact, most model developers seem to think that organizations live in a vacuum. Failure to pay attention to the interaction of organization or company with other social systems - especially cultural system, historical past, traditions and behavioral habits of the people - leads to the failure of talent management. Interestingly, of the 4 Iranian models, only one model has taken into account the role of culture in talent management.

The latest findings from this study show the weakness of existing models in addressing challenges facing the realization of talent management. In many Third World societies - including Iran - the risk of elitism is greater than the importance of elitism. For example, many Iranian organizations now have elites who are not influenced by the culture of elitism, their role in organizational decisions, important positions, and professional privileges and rewards, and are often isolated. Politicians, human resource planners, and managers need to focus on preserving existing elites rather than focusing on identifying and recruiting new elites.

Based on the research findings, it is suggested that courses be designed in the educational system, especially in the higher education system of Iran, to explain the concept of talent and the role of elites for all graduates. This helps them to better identify and protect talented people in their future responsibilities. It is also suggested that the human resource management system take into account the environmental factors (non-organizational factors) such as culture, religion, language

that can have a positive or negative impact on talent management in Iranian society. The latest proposal focuses on existing experiences related to talent management in NGOs. Experimental evidence has shown that in many non-government economics, talent management is better than government agencies.

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