

The Role of Talent Management in Promoting Organizational Agility Empirical Study from the Governmental Sector in the United Arab Emirates: A Conceptual Framework

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ABSTRACT

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The research redefined, summarized, categorized, and expanded the current conceptual understanding of the effect of talent management dimensions on organizational agility in the governmental sector in the UAE. The study conceptualizes the relationship between all studied constructs, which enriches the current knowledge for that specific topic. The main contribution of this research is that it is the first attempt to provide a more comprehensive explanation, and scattered literature covers the theories linking broader academic links on how talent management promotes agility through its processes



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(Recruitment and selection - Competence training - Development - Performance management). All affect its components (Strategic orientation towards agility - Agile organizational structures, methods, and process - Agile organizational culture - Facilities supporting agility). Moreover, it is suggested that future research may examine other talent management constructs to reflect a deep understanding of the construct's effect on organizational agility from different perspectives. One of the recommendations for future research is to determine the causal effect between variables by conducting empirical evidence through surveys and correlational analysis of the obtained data.

INTRODUCTION

With the rapid transformation of the work environment and the external environment towards a dynamic environment, globalization are prompted companies and international organizations to compete for the talented people on whom the most important human resource functions depend. This has become one of the most critical challenges for managers in choosing workers (Abeuova & Muratbekova-Touron, 2019; Beechler & Woodward, 2009; Collings et al., 2011; Branham, 2005; Chugh & Bhatnagar, 2006; Lewis & Heckman, 2006; Ruppe, 2006; Yeung & Berman, 1997).

In 1997, McKinsey, a well-known consulting firm, made active efforts to formulate new concepts about the concept of talent and later came up with the term "the war for talent (Hankin, 1998). It received significant attention from the relevant institutions. The practices and processes that work to prepare to start a business are one of the skills of talented people in understanding and applying effective strategies and practices to contribute to customer acquisition in small businesses (Al-Sada et al., 2017; Edwards & Smith, 2009; Gilliot et al., 2002; Lombardi & Schwabe, 2017; Lorange, 2006). The selection and retention of talented people in business organizations have become an enormous responsibility.

Managers in public institutions in the UAE, in particular, and in the Arab region, in general, are responsible for obtaining the required competencies. They represent the largest percentage in the field of work in those institutions where the features of brand practices were previously highlighted in small and medium companies, as well as national or global contexts (Festing et al., 2013; Harsch & Festing, 2019; Vaiman et al., 2018). These examples shed light on the effectiveness of approaches and procedures for obtaining talented people who possess distinctive specifications to contribute to the slimming of institutions while maintaining excellence and quality of work and going through a series of procedures. It differs from other countries due to several internal and external

environmental variables and the nature of the strategy of these institutions (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015).

The UAE government services system has undergone several transformations during the past two decades. From 2003 to 2013, electronic services were enhanced in the country. Between 2013 and 2018, the focus was on achieving excellence in service provision by launching measurement and follow-up programs. The government of the United Arab Emirates is committed to achieving global leadership in providing services with the government services strategy that has been developed for the next five years, consistent with the principles of the UAE Centennial 2071 and the strategy of the national quality of life 2031. Thus, in 2021 the UAE federal authority launched the government strategy for government services (2021-2025) to increase the UAE's competitiveness in the services industry and position it as the world leader in providing government services. Furthermore, this strategy aims to assist the federal government authorities in understanding the strategic priorities of the future government services and the most important strategic directions of the future services system in the government (USGS, 2021).

Over the last few years, talent management practices have made their way into the local and international organizations in UAE. Talent management has been integral to the UAE's development strategy (Al Amiri & Abu Shawali, 2021). It refers to the processes involved in acquiring and managing adequate human resources and implementing comprehensive strategies to hire and develop the right employees for the organization. This is in line with the vision of the Emirates Service Program to improve services provided by the government by focusing on customer and government efficiency (USGS, 2021). This distinctive vision requires managing the talents of the country's workforce and agile organizations to drive the change.

Organizational agility quickly becomes a core competency that can considerably aid a company's growth, differentiation, and competitive advantage. Thus, adaptability is no longer an option in such a large market with embedded uncertainty; it is necessary for corporate survival and continuity (Shakhour et al., 2021). Agile governmental authorities are a must these days because the UAE government is taking a balanced approach towards developing an integrated government services system and flexible to be the best in the world by achieving the following goals, services digitalization, proactive services, workforce development, social partnership and enhancing services quality (Shakhour et al., 2021).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to (1) conceptualize the current understanding of the effect of talent management dimensions on organizational agility and (2) categorize the components of talent management and organizational agility.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Talent Management

TM is considered an important factor and a major determinant of the performance of organizations, creativity, excellence in their work, and caring for them continuously, as this concept has been circulating during the past century. Despite the great interest in TM, there is no concept or definition with clear features among organizations that practice talent management in their public works (Lewis & Heckman, 2006). Even the talent-focused literature did not focus on allocating an integrated theoretical framework for talent management, including general concepts (Cappelli & Keller, 2014; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015; Lewis & Heckman, 2006). Efforts have been made to define TM. Cappelli and Keeler (2014), for example, define TM as a set of practices (such as planning, development, succession, and professional management of a workforce) that aim to train the right people and prepare them for the right job (the right person for the right job). Others define TM as a process through which organizations seek to meet their needs and to qualify and secure talented people in highly specialized professional positions such as strategic planning (Cappelli, 2008; Cascio & Aguinis, 2008; Collings & Mellahi, 2009). In Arab government institutions, the concept of talent is often associated with measures such as excellence, quality, and competition to achieve the highest ranks. All of them were marginally focused. This has increased the desire and interest to follow a more balanced approach towards TM in government institutions to provide the best picture of talent management and its role in achieving competition and better investing resources.

Talent Management Practices

Researchers have made many efforts and initiatives to reach basic concepts that are valuable frameworks to be used to identify the special characteristics of talent management practices. Lewis and Heckman (2006) introduced three basic concepts of Talent Management TM. The first, and the most prevalent among researchers, consider TM a set of human resource management functions that include recruitment and selection, training and development, succession planning, and performance management. At the same time, some see that

talent management is part of the concerns of the organization as a whole. In contrast, the second concept is based mainly on succession planning, focusing on the internal succession of talent and how to supply employees within the organization to ensure the employment of qualified people from within the talent pool (Kessler, 2002).

The third approach is adopting a specific approach to TM as a general concept that applies to everyone and not only to the talented people in specific institutions. From this entry, two different points of view were formed: On the one hand, “talent” is the classification of talented people based on their performance and contribution to change and excellence, and the institutions focus more on individuals who can be considered gifted, and this is what we can call the exclusive approach (Berger & Berger, 2004). On the other hand, the most similar and equal in characteristics strategy is followed, where employees are paid attention away from their performance style and the degree of their abilities, and to emphasize them as a resource that possesses a certain value that the company can retain to achieve the required competitive advantage a general approach (Hankin, 1998).

To reach the required competitive advantage (the general approach), Hankin (1998), Phillips, and Roper (2009) presented an approach to TM that includes five main elements: attracting, selecting, engaging, compensating, developing, and retaining employees. The most likely is attracting talent and the possibility of engaging them, which is the task. Many attempts have been made to search for best practices in talent management and human capital in general. Inkson et al. (2012) based on the framework of Phillips and Roper (2009) for talent management practices. Where they assume that leaving the traditional search and finding new methods of attracting employment are characterized by modernity and are closer to the specifications of the human element and the required workforce, for example, relying on more social networking sites and focusing on internal training programs and job boards via the Internet, therefore, it has become imperative when selecting employees to make more efforts and find objective selection methods to obtain a group of distinguished talents, including psychological assessments, behavioral interviews, personality assessments, as well as job knowledge assessments (Falcão et al., 2018) such methods are vital for assessing applicants’ hidden competencies, such as those the organization requires. However, an examination of previous frameworks for examining models most relevant to SOEs leads us to say that the frameworks presented by, Inkson et al. (2012) are more suitable for those institutions because TM in government organizations has many indicators such as quality, institutional excellence, and customer services that are the most important and comprehensive

relative to the rest of the indicators (Forrester, 2011). Therefore, with the help of HR professionals, balance can be achieved via a range of techniques such as psychological assessment, behavioral interviews, and personality assessments. Allowing more accurate identification and talent management.

Recruitment and Selection

Effective recruitment and selection in the institutions of the government of Ajman face some difficulties, as the strategy of selection and appointment relies on the principle of settlement first (i.e., preference for citizens of the country) and then on residents of the country with an emphasis on the availability of high qualifications. Sometimes the focus is on a very important topic that is interesting in knowing the person applying for work by the entity requesting appointment without regard to the required merit. Saifalislam et al. (2014) confirm that there is a need for more attention regarding the recruitment and selection of employees if these capabilities seek to achieve the organization's competitiveness (Taamneh et al., 2018). Institutions in Ajman are usually subject to formal procedures established by the Executive Council of the Government of Ajman to determine the required jobs and the qualifications for each job, focusing on attracting citizens at a specific percentage according to the central employment plan. However, the selection and appointment procedures in government institutions are more difficult than those existing in private institutions to the rules and regulations in force in the government of Ajman (Melián-Alzola et al., 2020; Teimouri et al., 2017).

Staff Retention

Retaining talented employees has become one of the top priorities for government and private organizations worldwide to stay competitive (Huisman et al., 2002; Kubler & DeLuca, 2006; Lewis & Heckman, 2006; Metcalf et al., 2005). Retention of talented employees remains the biggest challenge for managers in exchange for constant turnover. Accordingly, the market today is characterized by a high degree of competition, which necessitates the availability of highly skilled workers. Thus these workers have lost the main factor of institutional excellence for most companies, and they must be preserved and developed to guarantee the safety of their survival and continuity in these institutions. Recent studies confirm this, so retaining skilled workers has become the biggest challenge for managers when they find more than one skilled person who can occupy the vacant position and how to compare among them. Therefore, organizations try to attract this type of employee or applicant for a particular job by providing many benefits that may satisfy their desires and achieve their demand (Beechler

& Woodward, 2009; Collings et al., 2011). In the governmental and private institutions of the Emirate of Ajman, retaining qualified employees from the public and private sectors has become one of the competitive priorities that the Ajman government seeks to achieve in order to achieve institutional excellence that guarantees its entry into local and international competitions and awards in providing the best services of the highest quality. Therefore, it has become necessary to provide new attractive elements to retain qualified talents for work and limit the transfer to other places. The Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority confirmed this in its annual reports, and the World Bank under the umbrella of the United Nations.

Training and Development

All institutions in the Ajman government, without exception, are interested in developing employees and improving their abilities to perform the job entrusted to them due to its importance in building human capital (Strategic Plan for the Emirate of Ajman).

According to Jayaraman et al. (2018), employee training and development includes an important approach to identifying the skills required for development. When designing the curriculum and developing its strategy, consideration is given to developing an integrated training program that ensures the safety of training and access to developing the skills necessary to achieve the specific work goals in order to reach the required talent pool today and tomorrow.

Talent training and development depends on the extent to which senior management in institutions understands and embraces the importance of this aspect and the possibility of allocating high sums for training and development programs, in addition to the full belief in the importance of talents for institutions and that opportunities for achieving institutional excellence start from human capital.

Performance Management

A performance management system can help organizations identify and retain talented employees by integrating the management-employee relationship with strategic re-planning and strengthening (Muyela & Kamaara, 2021). Performance management is the foundation for guiding managers to improve employee performance. Performance management approaches and attitudes are critical to the high performance of employees (Kagaari et al., 2010). Performance management can challenge the speed of an organization (Appelbaum et al., 2017).

In an increasingly competitive environment, managers must boost employees' performance through objective evaluations and appropriate feedback. Developing an effective performance management strategy is a critical strategic decision that managers must make to effectively manage the performance and development of their employees (Bourne et al., 2003). While a well-designed performance management system can have many advantages, developing a strategy aligned with your employees' needs and tailored to your specific organizational goals is essential. Implementing a performance management system can challenge most organizations (Popescu & Kyriakopoulos, 2021). Before implementing the system, the organization must determine its needs and develop appropriate solutions and results that will be achieved from this performance. It is also essential to ensure the system is easily and properly implemented to avoid unnecessary costs or complications (Biondi & Russo, 2022).

Organizational Agility

Many organizations rely on organizational agility to accomplish work in a dynamic environment, including high competition, innovations, addition to the needs of workers, and social variables that have a significant role in making decisions. Organizational agility is a practical component in a work environment that cares for the workforce (Abdelilah et al., 2018; Tseng & Lin, 2011). To get to know the concept of agility in general, we must distinguish between organizational agility and workforce agility. Determining the opportunities available in the work environment and how to exploit them to achieve efficiency and effectiveness in work, in both cases, the process needs to be followed up effectively whenever possible (Schwartz et al., 2017). When looking at organizations, we can distinguish agile organizations through the degree of response, efficiency, flexibility, and speed.

The factors that achieve these advantages can be identified through cooperation that connects workers, continuous improvement, teamwork, training, and development. Organizations need organizational leadership characterized by transparency, support, and encouragement to achieve what was mentioned. Alavi et al. (2014) used the elements to identify several principles that help to achieve organizational agility. After managing them by highly trained employees, according to Sherehiy and Karwowski (2014), working on taking these results and applying them in other institutions to reach organizational agility, the team works needed to identify a set of competencies represented in the scalable workforce, responsive corporate education, consistency and compatibility with organizational understanding and knowledge and how to create it to help the organization adapt and respond quickly. To obtain better organizational agility,

and as we mentioned earlier, workforce agility depends on rapid dealing and continuous change. The agile workforce can achieve two main goals, interaction and rapid adaptation in accomplishing the tasks assigned to it in a balanced manner (Sharifi & Zhang, 1999; Sherehiy & Karwowski, 2014). Creating this workforce brings about the required changes and achieves organizational agility.

From here, the researchers conclude that the agile workforce creates organizational agility, not the other way around. Here comes the role of effective talent management in controlling and influencing the corporate movement and the degree of agility in the organization (Dyer & Shafer, 2003). This may come through the availability of some characteristics that the researchers see in the workers, including “proactive activity in making decisions that would have a positive impact on the dynamic environment, the ability to adapt and can be achieved by creating a better work environment characterized by the flexibility to reach positive results away from defeat, failure, and fear (Dyer & Ericksen, 2006).

Organizational Agility and Dynamic Capabilities

Today, many organizations have paid great attention to dynamic capabilities and their role in solving many crises and problems that occur inside and outside organizations due to the economic turmoil and global financial crises that have occurred in recent years, which prompted the need to give particular importance to them (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000; Wang & Ahmed, 2007). The dynamic environment and its impact on organizational capabilities have become an essential and primary source for achieving the competitive advantage of these environments (Collings et al., 2019), where the interest in finding a new organizational model does not look at environmental conditioning as a transient activity that occurs once, but as a process or continuous training that depends on the basic concepts of the dynamic capabilities of the environment and the organization at the same time. Sparrow and Makram (2015) found that the capabilities and assets of companies are the primary engines for creating competitiveness and achieving organizational sustainability, as they appear at first glance to be shared goals that achieve competition and progress. Still, they are more significant than what was previously mentioned, as the dynamism, wherever it exists, whether outside or inside organizations, controls Organization and management freely and contributes to making rational decisions that are closely related to the mechanisms of the institution and institutional powers as seen by Thunnissen (2016).

The business environment consists of many external and internal influences, the most important of which is the industrial environment, being

the core of the business environment. An effective environment is defined as the elements that are directly exchanged in an atmosphere of high-impact competition among customers and suppliers. However, institutions play a significant role in building and establishing their internal environments, which may indirectly affect the surrounding environment or directly affect the institutions that work with it in the same field (Stahl et al., 2007, 2012).

Dynamic capabilities refer to capabilities, features, and resources that can be developed, deployed, and protected to become one of the most important sources of competitive advantage (Collings et al., 2019). Dynamic capabilities refer to the tangible and intangible goals within organizations. I consider the existence of three stages or levels towards the transition to the dynamic environment. It is a starting point towards the change to organizational agility, which is to make a qualitative leap in the markets, products, or services that highly desire to enter those markets. The organization has the option to change the boundaries of the organization. The organization can adopt new and strong policies and systems that govern the focus of its parts and the work system adopted (Cappelli & Keller, 2014).

Hypothesis Development

Talent management and the strategic dimension

Many organizations adopt the strategic dimension of talent management to achieve organizational agility, and it can be said that HRM, in general, and talent management, in particular, have a set of strategies to obtain more excellent value for the organization and obtain high-quality performance with a focus on speed in the implementation of the tasks they are assigned (Sparrow et al., 2015), Organizations also have some peculiarities that are reflected in the strategic importance of talent management as an organizational strategic part responsible for maintaining talented workers who will contribute to the organization's acquisition of organizational agility to enable it to survive in this world and to continue and accelerate its organizational success (Collings et al., 2019),

Talent management directly and sometimes indirectly influences organizational flexibility and sustainable competitive advantage. Several studies and a review of previous research on organizational agility (OA) and (HRM) point to different issues, including organizational effectiveness and performance. Some organizations are concerned about entering the topic of agility during organizational learning issues due to the lack of complete readiness for this transformation (Thunnissen, 2016).

Talent Management and Agile Organizational Structure

Organizational design goes beyond physical workspaces. How a company manages its employees, assets, and resources also significantly impacts how it creates value. The organization improving resources or flow (consciously or unconsciously) will have wide-ranging effects throughout the company (Sparrow & Makram, 2015).

This does not mean there is only one «correct» way to structure a company. Depending on the business context in which the company operates, one structure may be more beneficial than another (Linden & Teece, 2014). Hence, knowledge work requires different structures than we might need in environments where we look to reduce variance, lower costs per unit, and better use resources. Some specific organizational styles are more appropriate when embracing uncertainty, delivering with a purpose, and creating an environment characterized by strong communication and collaboration with employees.

We point out some of the most common organizational structures companies deploy and the benefits and challenges associated with each. Some emerging structures have gained traction over the past few years (Thunnissen et al., 2013). To be more consistent with dynamic talent management, the researchers argue that today's organizational structures must be flexible and tend to network structures with no defined form. From here comes the talent management cycle in defining the required patterns of structures commensurate with the type of talent for those talents to work flexibly and be transferable when necessary (Teece et al., 2016).

Talent Management and Agile Organizational Culture

By creating a highly adaptable and agile, regardless of career level. Employees also need to be aware of all developments and be able to express an opinion and allow them to act on this knowledge. Building agile management is not just a strategic framework for business, says Mark Price, one of the company's senior executives. It is a culture that embraces every department in the organization and every employee (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015; Sparrow & Makram, 2015). In agility management, there is no bureaucracy and no hierarchy. Instead, there is a team capable of making decisions and solving problems. Although roles and responsibilities must be defined and clarified to establish healthy boundaries, the agile team decides what opportunities to take advantage of and what to do about them.

Every team member must be empowered with the necessary courses and training. An agile culture requires open communication between all, as no walls separate the departments of an agile organization. Alternatively, information

between employees can flow smoothly, and departments have no knowledge gaps. Likewise, all employees must know market changes and clearly understand dealers’ needs and expectations. Employees can continuously innovate products and services to meet customers’ requirements and benefit from the employees’ ideas to implement initiatives to reduce costs with innovation together so that the management of the same resources can help the employees underestimated (Paisey & Paisey, 2017). They provide an atmosphere of love for learning and generating new ideas. By following a rule: respecting employees’ questions and the value of their ideas and training them to have the courage to express their opinion, they can be given a chance (Aguinis et al., 2012; Black & Wiliam, 1998).

Talent Management and Agility-Supporting Facilities

The organization can use the new technology to improve its workforce. Organizations may differ in terms of the degree and size of their use of technology, but today communication systems and networks have an essential role in supporting work. They need to use these systems as the need for talent management is greater due to the complexity of these systems (Phillips & Roper, 2009). To cater to talent, the Talent Department should design an organization of talents and equipment in cooperation with other departments. This contributes to providing the appropriate atmosphere for agile work, for example, creating common work areas that include all workers. With the right equipment and designated roles, distributing tasks becomes more flexible and feasible, resulting in a quicker achievement rate (Linden & Teece, 2014).

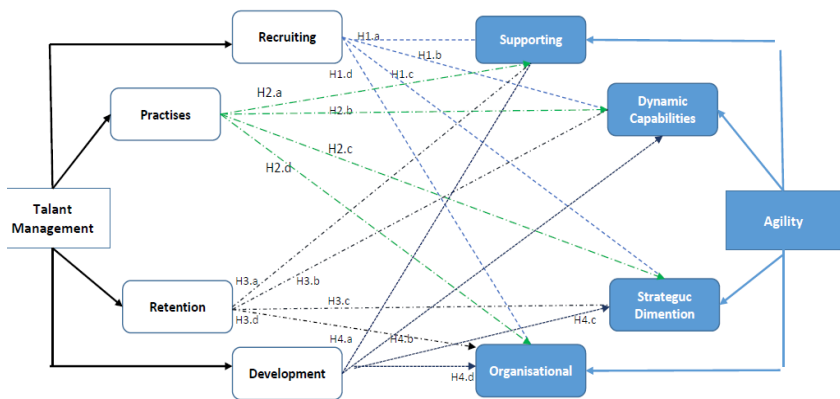


Figure 1
The Conceptual Frame Work of Study Variables

CONCLUSION

The current study examined, summarized, categorized, and expanded the current conceptual understanding of the effect of talent management dimensions on organizational agility. The study conceptualizes the relationship between all studied constructs, which enriches the current knowledge for that specific topic. The main contribution of this research is that it is the first attempt to provide a more comprehensive. Explains and scattered literature covers the theories linking broader academic links between hoarding and further reading on how talent management promotes agility through its processes (Recruitment and selection - Competence training - Development -Performance management). All affect its components (Strategic orientation towards agility - Agile organizational structures, methods, and process - Agile organizational culture - Facilities supporting agility). These relations not only expand the research scope of these two constructs but also promote the practical aspects which affect organizational agility and encourage more researchers to pay attention to the importance of TM and OA.

TRANSLATIONAL OF RESEARCH

To promote better talent management practices and acquire organizational agility, organizations and individuals should employ various strategies to attain both variables. First, agile organizations must define career paths for their personnel. Second, they must provide their talented employees with the required competencies through efficient training to face the future. Third, organizations should design talent reward programs that are flexible to changes according to environmental fluctuations; these programs can be strategic enablers for agility. Also, to retain unique talents, a reward structure should be perceived as fair and relevant, and management must contemplate paying above the talent markets to minimize the chance that competitors can attract these talents away. Fourth, organizations must pay attention to talent training and development because both are essential to increase talent efficiency and capability so that organizations can implement their plans. Fifth, organizations must pay attention to performance management to evaluate and locate their talented personnel, who can be an effective pillar to interact with its dynamic environment. Finally, organizations must constantly analyze their environment to develop their talents to achieve agility, enabling them to interact with all urgent environmental variables, especially those organizations that work in the services field.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

There are several limitations of this research. First, the research focused only on the governmental service sector in Ajman. So, it is proposed that future research may expand the scope to focus on the whole governmental service sector in UAE. Second, in this study, every variable is viewed from the employee's standpoint. The social approval effect may have been at play when employees answered the questionnaire, which may not accurately reflect the situation. Third, the current study studied talent management and its dimensions adapted from (Jayaraman et al., 2018). So, it is suggested that future research may examine other talent management constructs to reflect a deep understanding of the construct's effect on organizational agility from different perspectives. Third, the study also focused only on two dependent and independent variables. So, it is suggested that future research may examine the effect of mediator variables, for instance, psychological empowerment and employee engagement. Another limitation is that this study cannot determine the causal effect between variables. That's why it's highly recommended that Future research conduct empirical evidence through surveys and correlational analysis of the obtained data.

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