

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TALENT MANAGEMENT, EMPLOYEE
ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE QUALITY OF SUPPORT STAFF IN A SOUTH AFRICAN
HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION**

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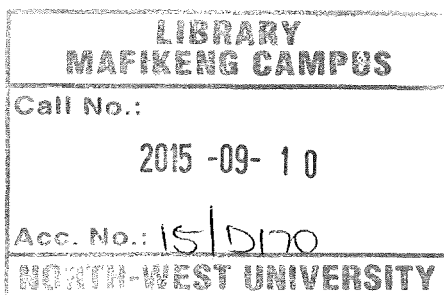
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research report, entitled the relationship between talent management, employee engagement and service quality of support staff in a South African Higher Education Institution, is my own work. All the resources I used for this study are cited and referred to in the reference list. All ethical considerations with regard to research were observed throughout the process. Apart from the normal guidance from my supervisor, I have received no assistance, except as stated in the acknowledgements.

Signature

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ABSTRACT

Background and Aim

South African organisations and other organisations around the world face the challenge of lack of skills and lack of suitable strategies to attract, retain and develop labour force. Issues such as an increasingly varied workforce, demanding baby boomers, emerging competitors, more demanding customers and significant leadership roles are among the issues that have and will continue to have greater impact on the next generation workforce and that create the urgent need for talent management. However, the battle to improve skills should start from the education system, given that it is considered the key to a stronger workforce, the most vital aspect in the national restoration, and thus leads to a better quality of life for the citizens.

The current study seeks to investigate the relationship between the current application of talent management, employee engagement and service quality in a South African Higher Education Institution.

Method:

A descriptive research design was followed with data collected from employees of a South African Higher Education Institution. (N=60). The Human Capital Index (HCI), Utrecht Work Engagement Scale and Service Quality Scale were administered. Factor Matrix, Reliability Analyses, Descriptive Analyses and Correlation Analyses were applied.

Results:

Significant relationships exist between the following variables:

- The results acquired indicated that a relationship exists between the current application of Talent Management Dimensions of Management Commitment, Talent Review Process, Talent Commitment, Talent Development and all dimensions of work engagement
- Performance Management was significantly positively related to Vigour, Dedication and Absorption.

- The results further showed the importance of Talent Review Processes was significantly positively related to vigour.
- Staffing was positively significantly related to the all the dimensions of vigour.
- Talent Retention is positively significantly related to Vigour and Absorption and Dedication.
- The results showed that there is no significant relationship between the current application of talent management and the service quality dimensions.
- The results further showed a significant positive relationship between some of the importance of the Talent Management Practices and service quality dimensions.
- Management Commitment was significantly positively related to reliable, Staffing was positively significantly related to Assurance, Reliable, Tangibles and responsiveness.
- Talent Acquisition is positively significantly related to all the dimensions of service quality.
- Talent Development is positively significantly related to Assurance.
- The results showed that all three dimensions of work engagement are significantly positively related to the Assurance Dimensions of Service Quality.
- Vigour and Absorption was significantly positively related to Responsiveness.
- No significant differences were found between the work engagement dimensions and the service quality dimensions of reliability, tangibles and empathy.

Practice Relevance:

There is currently no study in South Africa that has been conducted on the investigation of the relationship between talent management, employee engagement and service quality of employees. Therefore this study brought forward a new and an important topic that shall be further investigated by other researchers in SA. The study also contributed to the literature that exists on the above three concepts.

Talent Management is considered the most critical factor to every organisation's success, thus the current study further assisted in determining the current application of talent management practices in the organisation and the importance thereof as perceived by the employees. A relationship was found between the three concepts and it shows that the outcomes of talent management, employee engagement and service quality influence one another in certain ways. Recommendations were mentioned at the end of the study and

they intend to help management to find suitable strategies to ensure effective and efficient application of talent management practices, in order to increase the level of employee engagement and the quality of service rendered by the organisation.

KEYWORDS

Talent management, Employee engagement and Service quality

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

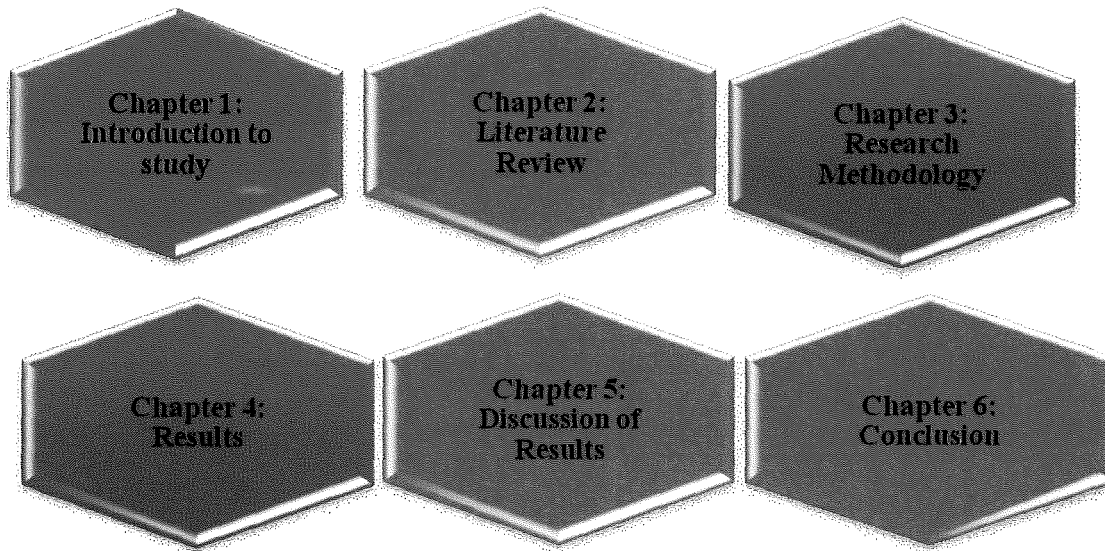


Figure 1-1: Chapter 1 in Context

South Africa continues to be rated amongst those countries that are faced with the challenges of lack of skills and rated poorly in respect of labour market and human resource development (World Competitiveness Report, 2013). The greatest challenge is to find ways to effectively improve skills levels of employees while at the same time attracting, retaining and developing new labour force. However the battle to improve skills should start from the education system, given that it is considered the most vital aspect in the national restoration, the key to a stronger workforce and a better quality of life for the citizens. Meanwhile, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, (2013) mentions that South Africa has accomplished better education standards as compared to other emerging countries, but the quality has been low and very uneven.

According to Zusman, 2005 (cited in Altbach, Berdahl, and Gumport, 2005:115), the 21st century brought many challenges to the nature, values, objectives, processes, policies and management of Higher Education Institutions, these transformations has negatively affected the quality of our education. Zusman, 2005 (cited in Altbach et al, 2005:115) further emphasizes HEI face other challenges which include amongst other things, decline

affected the quality of our education. Zusman, 2005 (cited in Altbach et al, 2005:115) further emphasizes HEI face other challenges which include amongst other things, decline in government funding, the need to align education curriculum with international standards, the increasing number of students as well as increasing demands for institutional accountability. The citizens' expectations for higher education have also been changing from time to time.

Lau (2010) argues that the quality of our education needs to be urgently developed. Innovative ways should be created to monitor and improve education at all levels, and ensure that it meets market demands for a sustainable long-term economic growth. He further states that in order to enhance quality education institutions require employees (both academic & non-academic) with the right talent, knowledge and expertise, employees who have the ability to competently execute their functions and duties, and who are fully engaged and committed to their jobs.

McKinsey and Company (2001) assert that having the right talent in place has always been vital as it is critical in today's competitive world and it determines success in the market place. Beechler & Woodward, Collings & Mellahi (cited in Tarique and Schuler, 2010) mention that in the past, the global economic changes and bad financial conditions led many organisations to cut down their employees, thus many people were left unemployed, and as a result there are too many qualified people chasing too few jobs. While McKinsey and Company (2001) argue that in the 21st century, "attracting and retaining great talent is becoming more difficult, as the demand for highly skilled employees is more than the supply".

Human Capital Institute Africa and Hewitt's Human Capital Consulting (2008) supports the above discussion, and mentions that today all organisations face the challenge of having the resources to maintain a stable supply of critical talent. Issues such as skill shortages, an increasingly varied workforce, the need for knowledge transfer from retiring baby boomers, emerging competitors, new markets, more demanding customers and significant leadership roles are among the issues that have and will continue to have a high impact on the next generation workforce, these create the urgent need for talent management.

The current study seeks to determine the relationship between talent management, employee engagement and service quality of support staff in a South African Higher Education Institution. The first chapter serves as an introduction to the current study and provided the reader with a better understanding of the underlying problem that the study addressed. It also provides the reader with the structure of the research, and is comprised of introduction, background of the study, problem statement, research questions, and hypothesis of the study, aim and objectives of the study, importance of the study, research design and methodology, clarification of concepts as well as plan of the study.

1.2 BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF TALENT MANAGEMENT, EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT & SERVICE QUALITY

Organisations have always hunted for employees they consider to be most suitable for the position they hold. In this respect, the acquisition of talented individuals is not a new fact, the concept became known in 1997 when McKinsey conducted research on the global “war for talent” to review the procedures organisations in the United States were adopting on recruiting the best performing employees. Since the research was published, academic interest in the subject has grown, and many organisations have sought to adopt talent management strategies (McKinsey and Company 2001).

1.3 TALENT MANAGEMENT DEFINED

Lockwood (2006) describes talent management as the process whereby integrated systems are implemented to increase the workplace productivity. It involves the development of enhanced mechanism for attracting, developing, retaining and utilizing people with the required skills and ability to achieve current and future business objectives. According to Paradise, 2009 (cited in Roman, 2011), talent management refers to “a holistic approach to optimizing human capital, which enables an organisation to drive short and long term results by building culture, engagement, capability, and capacity through integrated talent acquisition, development and deployment processes that are aligned to business goals”.

1.4 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT DEFINED

Sarkisian, Pitt-Catsouphe, Bhate, Carapinha, Lee and Minnich (2011) define employee engagement as a positive and fulfilling view towards employees’ work. According to

Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá and Bakker (2002), engagement can be characterised by vigour, dedication (efficacy) and absorption. Vigour is characterised by high levels of energy and mental flexibility while undertaking work, as well as the willingness to devote effort in one's work, and the ability to persevere even in times of difficulties. Dedication is defined as the emotional side of work engagement and the eagerness of employees to apply sufficient time and effort in doing something meaningful. It is characterised by a sense of significance, efficacy, connection, commitment enthusiasm, and inspiration. Absorption refers to the situation where individuals have the ability to be fully focused and can experience a high level of concentration while carrying out a task (Coetzer and Rothmann 2007).

Engaged employees deal well with their job demands, they consider their workload to be manageable, and are always positive about the future of their work, furthermore engaged employees prefer challenging work rather than ordinary routine work. Marcey, Schneider, Barbera and Young (2008) illustrates further that engaged employees take ownership for their personal development not just for their own professional growth, but to also have the ability to contribute effectively to the organisational goals. The Gallup Research Report (2013) found that disengaged employees are more likely to quit their jobs within a year. Their study further estimates that disengaged staff perform poorer, have lower output and cost businesses billions of money a year.

1.5 SERVICE QUALITY DEFINED

1.5.1 Service

According to Agbor (2011) a service depends on the type of product that is offered and it differs from one organisation to another. Service can be defined in many ways depending on which field the term is being used. Service can also be defined as an intangible offer by one party to another, and usually it is in the exchange of money. McDaniel, Lamb and Hair (2006) argue that a service involves an act or an effort that cannot be physically possessed.

1.5.2 Quality

Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders and Wong (2002) define quality as the wholeness of features of a product or service that stand up on its ability to satisfy stated or required needs.

Quality also relates to the worth of an offer, which could cause satisfaction or dissatisfaction on the user.

1.5.3 Service Quality

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1990 (cited in Shelton, 2000) view service quality as the gap created between the customer's expectations or desires and their perceptions.

Sureshchandar, Rajendran and Arantharaman (2002) identified five factors of service quality which are perceived critical by the customers. These factors are:

- Core service;
- Service provider's behaviour, e.g., responsiveness;
- Processes and procedures implemented when providing service;
- Resources needed for service, e.g. Equipment, machinery; and
- Social responsibility.

1.6 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

According to Knapp, Kelly Reid, Ginder and National Centre of education (2009), support staff is employed for the purpose of performing a range of administrative tasks to ensure the organisation functions efficiently. Support staff is regarded by Smerek and Perterson (2007) as the key component in today's higher education institutions, because their responsibility is to take care of the day to day operations of the university. In addition, Rothmann and Essenko (2007) further explain that support staff plays a major role in the creation and improvement of knowledge and modernization in HEI.

Banata and Kuh, 1998 (cited in Rothmann and Essenko, 2007) also add, that it is almost impossible to achieve every organisation goals, the faculty or the school's objectives for the intellectual and personal development without the assistance of support staff. All learning institutions need the cooperation and interpersonal relations of administrators who work closely with the clients, students and facilitators.

However, Pitman (2000) stresses out that administrative staff in HEI have been largely overlooked with regard to the issues that affect service quality. This means that HEI still fail to come up with effective strategies that result in quality service provided by support

staff. Aspects that may negatively affect service quality range from among others, recognising, identifying, attracting, developing and motivating the talent of their support staff. In most cases, support staff are denied opportunities for development, they are denied a chance to study further and enhance their careers, let alone be given time off (study leave) to study. The need for them to grow within their jobs is often neglected, and promotion chances are very slim for them, hence some of them remain stagnant in the same positions for almost their whole lives, and some leave their jobs.

The research report done by the IBM Institute for Business Value (2008), on integrated talent management, found that government departments, education institutions and healthcare organisations fall short in managing talent. They are extensively less likely to effectively implement talent management practices, as a result, they face the most challenges, particularly in motivating and developing their workforce and this drive many people to look for work in private sectors.

In addition, Lynch (2007) identified few Higher Education Institutions which have established formal programs to support the existing talent of their staff. The author found that most organisations that are excelling in delivering training and development to external organisations and to their students usually fail to assist their administrative staff and internal personnel as a whole, with the development of their skills or the advancement of their careers. This problem impacts negatively on HEI. It thus contributes largely to an employee's low morale, job dissatisfaction, disengagement, and as a result leads to poor service delivery and low productivity.

Lynch (2007) further advises that for HEI to be viewed as part of the solution rather than a major cause of the looming crisis, they must re-visits and examine their culture, processes and policies, to align them with the fact that access to knowledge and talent is the key to a future society that possess intelligence. McKinsey and Company (2001) imply that regardless of the size, the type of the industry or the product they serve, many organisations have not yet realized the importance of talent, let alone to develop mechanisms that will make their organisation more attractive to talented people.

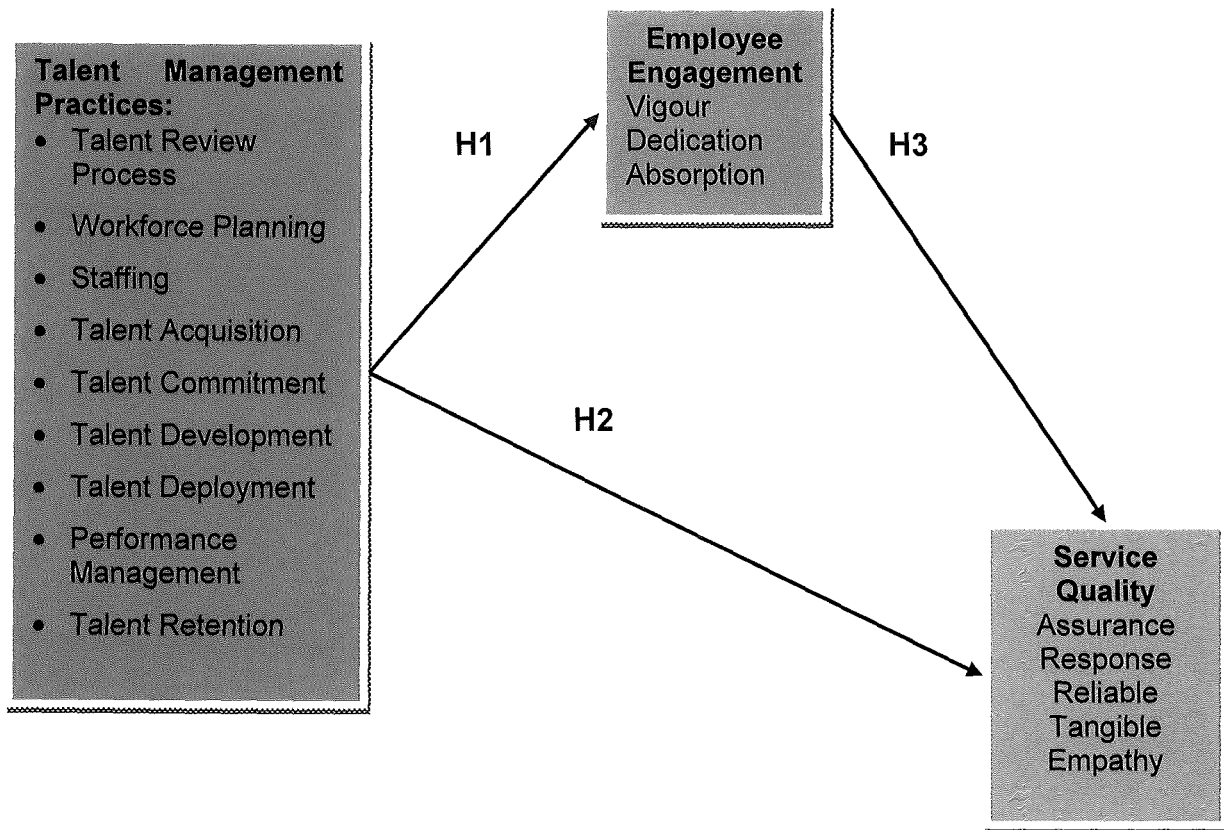


Figure 1-2: Diagrammatical presentation of the relationship between the variables in this study

Figure 1.2 above is a structural illustration of the relationship between talent management, employee engagement and service quality as hypothesised in this current research. The model assumes that talent management leads to employee engagement which ultimately leads to quality service. The assumption is based on hypothesis 1, 2 and 3. Hypothesis 1 assumes that employee engagement is a result of the application of talent management practices, while hypothesis 2 assumes that talent management practices leads to service quality. However hypothesis 3 also assumes that employee engagement leads to high service quality. The rationale of the stated assumptions will be discussed below as stated in the existing literature.

1.8 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

H_{a1}: There is a significant positive relationship between the current application of talent management and employee engagement

Rationale: Bhatnagar (2007) states that effective talent management policies and practices demonstrate commitment to human capital, resulting in more engaged

1.8 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

H_{a1}: There is a significant positive relationship between the current application of talent management and employee engagement

Rationale: Bhatnagar (2007) states that effective talent management policies and practices demonstrate commitment to human capital, resulting in more engaged employees and lower turnover. Consequently work engagement has a substantial impact on employee productivity and talent retention. Roper (2009) contends that, organisations are busy implementing talent practices with the impression that they will achieve employee engagement however they fail to consult empirical data that supports such action. Roper (2009) further argues that, a study conducted by Saks is the only study that comprehensively investigates the link between the two concepts; as such the overall quality of the evidence found within the existing is weak.

H_{a2}: There is a significant relationship between the current application of talent management and service quality

Rationale: Talented employees understand the value of ensuring a positive customer experience and are more likely to demonstrate their commitment by delivering high quality products and services. Glen (2006) believes that work engagement is a crucial and pivotal factor to the retention of talent. As such, the fundamental concerns of talent management programmes are believed to ensure that the most talented employees are acquired and retained in order to continue to add value to the organisation. Research also found that women and men leaders reported more positive views of their job, an organisation, and a greater sense of responsibility for doing a good job when they were satisfied with the talent management practices provided at their jobs (Carter, Galinsky and Families and Work Institute, 2008:32).

H_{a3}: There is a significant positive significant relationship between employee engagement and service quality

Rationale: Many studies have proved that employee engagement leads to service quality. According to, Gracia, Salanova, Grau and Cifre (2012) a qualitative study found that workers with higher levels of engagement provide better customer service, such as giving effective answers and being patient with customers' requests. A study done in almost 8000 business units in 36 companies found positive correlations between employee engagement, customer satisfaction, loyalty, profitability, productivity and employee

turnover. The study found also that business units that had higher levels of employee engagement tend to perform higher than business units with low engagement levels (Beardwell and Claydon 2010).

However, Parker and Griffin (2011) disagree and state that employee engagement does not always lead to high performance. In fact, they suggest that engaged employees who lack appropriate knowledge and skills may not perform effectively. For example employees might show improvement in his/her duties not because he/she is engaged but because they fear that they may be dismissed. Equally, employee might perform poorly not because they are not engaged but because there are other challenges in the work environment that prevent them to be top performers.

1.9 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question of this study is: **What is the interactive relationship between talent management, employee engagement and service quality of support staff in a Higher Education Institution?**

The sub-research questions of this study are:

- What is the current level of talent management practices of support staff?
- What is the level of importance of talent management practices as perceived by the support staff?
- What is the extent to which there is a gap between the current level of talent management practices and the importance thereof as perceived by the support staff?
- What is the current level of employee engagement of support staff?
- What is the current level of service quality provided by support staff?
- What is the interactive relationship between the current application of talent management practices and employee engagement of support staff?
- What is the interactive relationship between current application of talent management practices and service quality of support staff?
- To determine the interactive relationship between current level of employee engagement and service quality of support staff?

1.10 AIM OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to investigate the interactive relationship between the current application of talent management, employee engagement and service quality of support staff in a Higher Education Institution.

1.10.1 SUB RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives of this study are:

- To determine the current level of talent management practices of support staff
- To determine the level of importance of talent management practices as perceived by the support staff
- To determine the extent to which there is a gap between the current level of talent management practices and the importance thereof as perceived by the support staff
- To determine the current level of employee engagement of support staff
- To determine the current level of service quality provided by support staff
- To determine the interactive relationship between the current application of talent management practices and employee engagement of support staff
- To determine the interactive relationship between current application of talent management practices and service quality of support staff
- To determine the interactive relationship between current level of employee engagement and service quality of support staff

1.11 IMPORTANCE/CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

This study will contribute both to the organisations and academic world in three ways, which are theoretical contribution, methodological contribution and practical contribution. For the theoretical point of view, it is important to note that the study will contribute to the literature that exists on the concepts of this study, namely, talent management, employee engagement and service quality. Previous studies have been done on employee engagement, talent management and service quality, but as individual aspects not as a combined topic. Therefore, there is limited research that has been conducted on determining the relationship between the three concepts. With regard to the methodological contribution, a questionnaire was constructed to address the research

objectives of the study and used as a data collection instrument, to gather respondent's attitudes, knowledge and perceptions with regards to their organisation's talent management, employee engagement and service quality.

In a practical perspective, the study is important hence it seeks to:

To determine the relationship between talent management practices and employee engagement and service quality of support staff. To determine the gap between the current application of talent management practices and the importance thereof among support staff in a Higher Education Institution, and to search for suitable solutions to ensure effective and efficient application of talent management practices.

The above three aspects are critical to the success of every organisation. Previous literature by various authors (Bhatnagar (2007), Roper (2009), Glen (2006), Carter, et al (2008), Gracia, Salanova, Grau & Cifre (2012), Beardwell & Claydon (2010) has indicated that effective and efficient application of talent management practices in the organisation has a significant influence on the engagement and commitment of employees to their work and thus increases the quality of service they deliver to the customers. The loyalty of customers depends on the quality of service they receive.

1.12 RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

1.12.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Nkatini (2005:28), a research design is the plan which a researcher draws up when he or she embarks on a research project. Such plan reveals all steps taken from where the project started until it ends. Research design includes the type of research that is being undertaken, the format of the research project, data gathering tools, as well as the statistical analysis method to be used for the research. Maree (2007), states that a research design is a way through which the researcher acquires research participants and collects information from them so as to reach conclusions about the research problem. According to Hair, Money & Samouel (2003), researchers are most likely to choose a design that provides relevant information on the research question and that enable the project to be done most efficiently.

The above definitions imply that the research design chosen for this current study had to provide the researcher with an insight of the organisation in which the research participants shall be obtained. The research design also guides the researcher on how to collect data, and which methods to use for data collection.

1.12.2 RESEARCH APPROACH: QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

The current study utilised quantitative research. Quantitative research focuses on collecting numerical data and generalising it across groups of people, it conceptualizes from particular instances to seek general description or to test casual hypotheses King, Keohane, Verba, 1994, (cited in Murray, 2003). The researcher found it relevant to employ this approach in investigating the topic under study. The descriptive type of quantitative research method, with its ability to explore and describe a phenomenon in real life situations enabled the researcher to generate new knowledge on the relationship between talent management, Work engagement and service quality.

Characteristics of a quantitative research (Sibanda, 2009):

- The researcher has a clearly defined research questions and objective
- All aspects are carefully and accurately designed before data is collected
- Data used is in the form of numbers and statistics
- The research project can be used to generalise concepts more widely, predict future outcomes or investigate key relationships

1.12.3 RESEARCH METHOD

1.12.3.1 Literature Review

Fink (2010:3) describes “a literature review as systematic, explicit, and reproducible method for identifying, evaluating and synthesizing the existing body of the completed and recorded work produced by researchers, scholars and practitioners”. In other words, it is a review of what is known but not the assumptions of the matter or the subject at hand. Its goal is to create a complete and accurate demonstration of the knowledge and research-based theory available on a topic. During this study the researcher utilized information sources such as books, journals, articles, magazines, and other publications, to collect existing literature that is relevant to the topic at hand.

1.12.4 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

1.12.4.1 Population

Research participants or population in the current study are the support staff of a South African Higher Education Institution. Support staff in this study consists of all administrative staff, both male and female of all races, permanent and non-permanent in all faculties and departments. Research population refers to a group of people from which the researcher desires to draw conclusions on a certain problem. Gall, Borg and Gall, (2003:169) define a population as a set of individual units which the research question seeks to find out about. However, Babbie (2008:109) argues that it is not in all occasions where researchers are able to study all members of the population that interest them, but only a certain percentage. The targeted population in this study was estimated to consist of 200 support staff.

1.12.4.2 Sampling technique

Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006:97-100) define a sample as a small part of the whole population which is investigated by a researcher and whose characteristics are generalized to the entire population. However it might be disadvantageous to generalize people's characteristics as this might cause inaccuracy, but it is also not easy to get the whole population to participate in the study.

The sampling technique is also advantageous as it might provide the researcher with the ability to collect data from a small group rather than from a larger group and this reduce the amount of data to be obtained. There are two types of sampling techniques which are probability sampling and non-probability sampling. The sampling technique that was utilized in this present study is non-probability sampling. The sampling technique employed in the current study is purposive convenience sampling. The current researcher found it advantageous to use this type of sampling because it is less costly in time, money and effort. It can also be used when sampling frame is not available, but most importantly it is useful when population or research participants are widely dispersed as it is in the current study (Bless et al, 2006:97-100).

1.12.5 MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

The data collection method utilized in this present study is a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaires used consist of closed questions, and it has four sections. Section A consists of biographical data and questions that relates to the participant's job, Section B, the HCI, Section C, the UWES, and Section D, the SERVQUAL scale. All respondents were treated with confidentiality, respect and anonymity.

Fox and Bayat (2007:88) define a questionnaire as a set of questions used to acquire information from the research participants. It can be administered through several ways which includes among other, telephone, face-to-face interviews, hand-outs, or mail. The advantages of using a questionnaire as a data collection technique is that many participants can be reached, confidentiality can be guaranteed, and it is relatively inexpensive. The results are also more objective.

1.12.5.1 The Human Capital Index

The Human Capital Index (adapted version) of the Human Capital Institute (2008) was used in the current study to measure the perceived talent management practices by the research participants. The Index consist of 41 items and measure nine Talent Management Practices namely Management Commitment, Talent Review Process, Workforce Planning, Staffing, Talent Acquisition, Talent Commitment, Talent Development, Performance Management and Talent Retention. Respondents are required to indicate the extent of their agreement with each statement on a five-point Lickert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). This questionnaire has been validated in several South African studies (see Barkhuizen, 2013; Magolego, Barkhuizen & Lesenyeho, 2013; Mpofu & Barkhuizen, 2013; Mtila, Barkhuizen & Mokgele, 2013).

1.12.5.2 Utrecht Work Engagement Scale

The *Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)* (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzales-Roma, and Barker, 2002) was used to measure the levels of engagement. Three dimensions of engagement can be distinguished, namely Vigour (6 items; i.e., "I am bursting with energy in my work"), Dedication (5 items; i.e., "I find my work full of meaning and purpose") and Absorption (6 items; i.e., "When I am working, I forget everything else around me"). Engaged individuals are characterised by high levels of Vigour and Dedication and also

elevated levels of Absorption. The questionnaire showed acceptable internal consistencies in several South African studies (see Barkhuizen and Rothmann, 2006, Bell and Barkhuizen, 2011).

1.12.5.3 Service quality scale

A SERVQUAL scale was also utilized in the current study to measure service quality in Higher Education Institutions. According to Ngulube, Jayasundara and Minishi-Majanja (2009), the SERVQUAL model also called the “gap model” was developed by Parasuraman, Zeithal and Berry, and they define service quality as a discrepancy found between what the customers expect from service rendered and the performance of the rendered service. The model consists of five dimensions, namely, reliability, tangibles, responsiveness, assurance and empathy, which are depicted by 22 attributes. The SERVQUAL scale consists of two sections, namely, firstly, how customers identify their expectations of the 22 attributes and secondly, how the customers perceive the performance of the same attributes.

The results from a study done by Bick, Abratt and Moller (2010) on the analysis of SERVQUAL attributes shows that customers view “responsiveness” as the most imperative service requirement, followed by reliability of service, tangibles, assurance and empathy. The questionnaire has been validated in the South African context (Barkhuizen and Goosen, 2011).

1.13 RESEARCH PROCEDURE

Permission to conduct research was obtained from the Campus registrar and the Human Resources Manager. A cover letter was submitted. The letter confirms the purpose of the research and the ethical considerations of confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Once permission was granted the researcher produced two hundred questionnaires which were given to supervisors to distribute them among their employees (support staff) to avoid disconcerting them on their duties. However, Bourque and Fielder (2003:23) advice researchers to distribute and collect questionnaires from participants themselves immediately and not leave the questionnaire with the participant.

Bourque and Fielder (2003:23) further add to the above statement that once the surveyor leave the questionnaire with the participant, the surveyor has no control over who fills it out

and whether that person consults with others when completing it. Although, the above fact by Bourque and Filder (2003) may result in participants feeling pressured to fill the questionnaires and they might end up providing dishonest and unsystematic answers. Hence the current researcher decided to collect the questionnaires in three days with the aim of giving the participants enough time to answer the questionnaires with full understanding and honesty.

Taylor, Sinha and Ghoshal (2006:97) imply that during the administration of the questionnaire, it is essential to have preliminary contact with potential respondents before questionnaires are distributed. However in planning the distribution and retrieval it is important to consider how you might keep track of returns and remind non-responders. Therefore the current researcher obtained the contact details of all the participants and emails were used as a communication method to remind the non-respondents to fill and return the questionnaires.

1.14 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Statistical analysis was carried out using the SPSS Program (SPSS, 2009). The reliability and validity of the HCI, UWES and Servqual scale were determined by means of Cronbach alpha coefficients, as well as exploratory factor analysis. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to specify the relationship between barriers-to-change and work engagement. A cut-off point of 0,30 (medium effect, Cohen; 1988) was set for the practical significance of correlation coefficients. In terms of statistical significance, a value at a 95% confidence interval level ($p \leq 0,05$) is set.

1.15 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

The clarification of some of the concepts used in this study is indicated in the Table below.

Table 1-1:Clarification of concepts

Concept	Definition	Author
Employee engagement	An employee's emotional and intellectual commitment to an organisation.	Bhatnagar, 2007
Talent	Employees who utilize their skills, abilities and	Duttagupta, 2005

	knowledge to add extraordinary value to the organisation.	
Talent Management	A process through which an organisation identifies, attracts, develops and manages its people.	Cannon & McGee, 2011
Service Quality	The extent of discrepancy between customer's expectations and their perceptions on service.	Shelton, 2000
Customer Satisfaction	The individual's perception of the performance of the products or services in relation to his or her expectations	Schiffman& LazarKanuk, 2004

1.16 CHAPTER LAYOUT

This research is structured as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

The first chapter provides readers with an introduction to the current study and give the reader a better understanding of the underlying problem that the study addressed. It also provides the reader with the structure of the research, and is comprised of introduction, background of the study, problem statement, research questions, and hypothesis of the study, aim and objectives of the study, importance of the study, research design and methodology, clarification of concepts as well as plan of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature review

In this chapter the theoretical foundation and a literature survey dealing with the research problem are given. It shows what previous researchers have discovered regarding the research topic. The broad guidelines that culminate into the research questions are drawn in this chapter. The key concepts researched in this chapter are:

- Talent management;
- Employee engagement and
- Service quality

Chapter 3: Research design and methodology

Chapter three outlines the research approach and methodology followed in the current study. The measuring instruments and sampling procedure are dealt with and a full account of how the analyses were done is also given.

Chapter 4: Results from the study

This chapter provides a brief discussion on the statistical techniques. The discussions include the processing, analysis, and interpretation of data in figures and tables. The chapter commences with a discussion on the biographical information collected during the data collection (phase 1) of the study. The second phase of the chapter involves discussing the statistical analysis of the different concepts involved in the study. The final phase (phase 3) discusses the different relationships of the study through the hypotheses developed and stated in chapter one.

Chapter 5: Discussion of the results

The results detailed in chapter five are interpreted and discussed in this section. The outcomes of the research are provided to answer the research questions.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

The research paper is concluded with the recommendations for further studies as well as for optimisation of the completed research approach.

1.17 CONCLUSION

This chapter gave an overview of the study that was to be done. It started by giving background to the problem that was to be investigated. It shifted to focus on the questions which were to be investigated in the study as well as the assumptions and delimitations that were to be discussed. The chapter gave an overview of all the main terms used in the study as well as any abbreviations that were used. The chapter closed with a summary of all the chapters in the study.

Chapter two will focus on the literature review.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

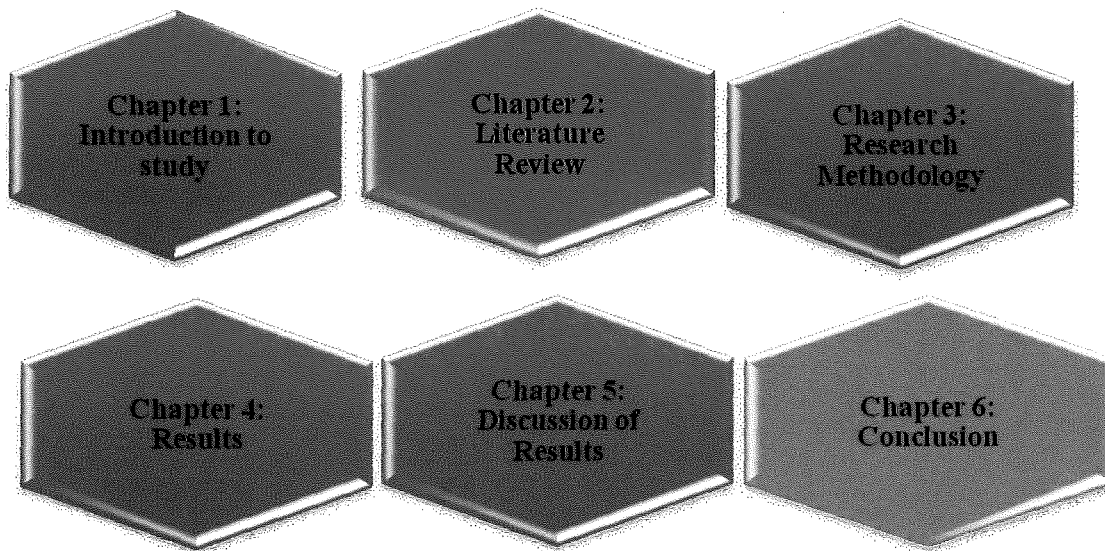


Figure 2-1: Chapter 2 in Context

Fink (2010) describes literature review as “a systematic, explicit, and reproducible method for identifying, evaluating and synthesizing the existing body of the completed and recorded work produced by researchers, scholars and practitioners”. In other words, it is a review of what is known. Its aim is to generate a comprehensive and true version of the facts and research-based theory available on a topic. Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2006) stipulate that it is important for researchers to cautiously draw up a plan for this search to ensure that they find related and current literature on their topic. They further advise that researchers should produce and define the key words or concepts of their research that describe the research questions and objectives, and finally researchers must communicate their study in order to share ideas with others, receive feedback and to obtain new ideas and approaches.

This chapter reveals the literature provided by various researchers, authors and scholars on the three concepts of this study, namely, talent management, employee engagement

and service quality. The definitions, background, processes, practices, strategies, challenges, outcomes and the relationship of the above concepts will be discussed.

2.2 TALENT MANAGEMENT

2.2.1 TALENT MANAGEMENT DEFINED

According to Galagan (2008), recent research by the Institute for Corporate Productivity revealed that more than 75% of the companies that surveyed talent management do not have a particular agreed upon meaning of talent management. However, Cappelli (2008) refers to talent management as the process through which organisations foresee and meet their needs for human resources.

Lockwood (2006) describes talent management as the process through which organisations optimize their human capital and increases their output by implementing incorporated systems. It involves the upgrading of mechanisms used for attracting, developing, retaining and utilizing people with the required skills and ability to achieve current and future business objectives. According to Paradise, 2009 (cited in Roman, 2011), Talent Management enables an organisation to achieve short and long term goals by building culture, engagement, competence, and ability through incorporated talent acquisition, development and deployment processes that are aligned to business goals.

2.2.2 THE EVOLUTION OF TALENT MANAGEMENT

The model below details the evolution of talent management as well as the background of TM is discussed below by various authors:

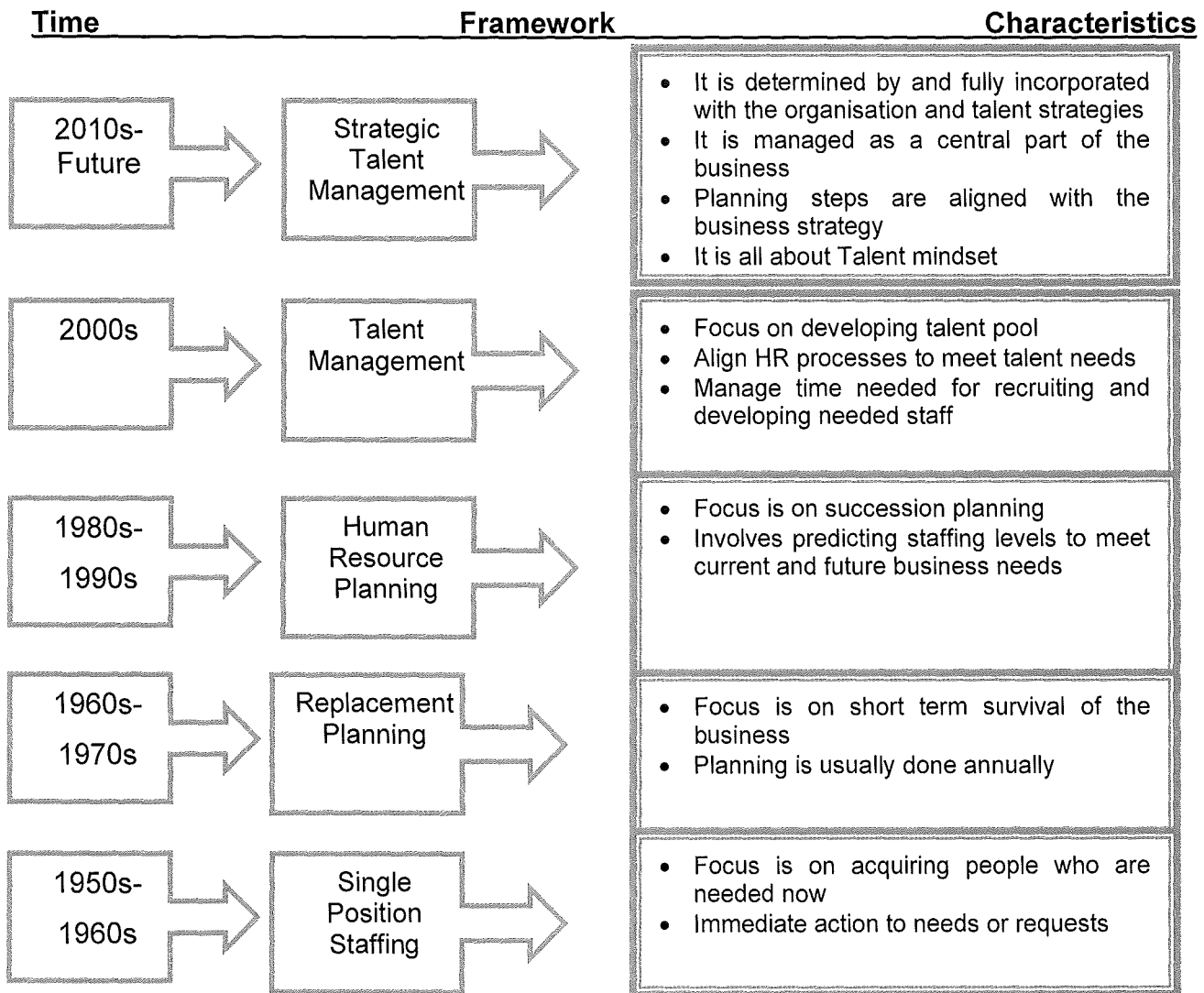


Figure 2-2: The evolution of talent management

As stated in the above figure, Silzer and Dowell (2010:38) explain that in the past senior executives in many organisations did not have talent management programmes and processes in place, most of the time they attended twelve-monthly meetings that focused on discussing upcoming retirements and potential replacements for these positions. In the 1970s and early 1980s, some organisations shifted from employing people they needed at that time to longer term human resource planning. This involved planning clear replacement processes and succession plans that showed not only individuals who were

likely to be employed in future term for specific leadership positions, these plans also demonstrated people might be given an opportunity to be developed over one to three years to be possible future candidates.

In the 1990s and 2000s an evolution of talent management came into existence and it focused on aligning human resource programs and processes with the organisation's strategies and objectives in order to identify, attract and develop talent, both leadership and specialized talent. Organisations are currently using talent management processes as their core business practice driven by business strategy and talent strategy (Silzer and Dowell,2010:38). However, Shukla (2009) suggests that the following questions should be taken into consideration during the management of talent:

- What are the correct talent management initiatives to be utilized?
- Are your talent management processes executed?
- What are your organisation's views on talent management? Have you involved all relevant stakeholders?
- Have you linked your talent initiatives to your organisational mission and capabilities?

Thorne and Pellant (2007) argue that many organisations have a belief that having the right talent is everything they need to have. Organisations can only achieve success when they engage with the hearts and minds of employees and align their vision, goals and values with that of the employee. Employees need to have a sense of being valued, appreciated, recognised and that their contributions make a difference.

Deb (2005) further argues that talent management is emerging as a key business priority, but many organisations around the world still fail to employ or adopt innovative strategies to manage their talented pool. The mayor problem is that talent management process is typically implemented as a set of unplanned individual human resource intervention rather than an integrated continuing process. The increasing focus on talent management is undermined because many organisations are implementing it using the mindset and mechanisms of the past. Organisations are also failing to identify and manage talent in

other aspects such as customer management or key specialists where their competitive value to the business can be increased.

2.2.3 CHALLENGES OF LACK OF TALENT MANAGEMENT

It is important to note that even though all organisations experience the shortage of talent, the challenge differs from continent to continent. The African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) conducted research and found that many organisations in the African continent has been lacking the ability to recruit and retain developed and skilled employees that they need due to several challenges which includes amongst others, poor salaries, poor working conditions, and uncompetitive working environment. These factors lead to low productivity, the migration of skilled workers and poor economy (AAPAM, 2008 cited in Elegbe, 2010).

Talent migration seems to become the biggest challenge faced by the African continent. Anekwe (2003) noted that in Nigeria only, the total number of professionals who left public, industrial and private organisations was estimated to 30 000. Olita, (2007) cited in Elegbe (2010) noted that, in the year 2000, one out of five Ugandans graduates left the country for better opportunities, he also noted that in the same year 64.7 per cent of Gambia graduates left their country too. The problem is almost the same as in other African Countries.

According to the International Council for Science ICSU, 2007 (cited in Elegbe, 2010), the reason for the migration of African talent is that countries like the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada employ programmes that are aimed at attracting highly skilled workforce to become permanent residents in these countries by giving them better offers. The fact it these programmes provide Africans with an opportunity to escape from the harsh conditions of war, poverty and political violence in their home countries, and at the same time use their skills to earn a decent living.

The other cause for the shortage of talent in Africa is the declining quality on our educational system, and this is a result of low funding that is caused by lack of adequate facilities, equipment, tools and highly qualified academic staff. The problem of spatial immobility of labour can also lead to lack of talent in many African countries. Many African

organisations would rather hire people from developed continents like USA than from an African Country even though they may have to pay five times the salary they would pay an African person who has the same skills and capability for the job (Elegbe, 2010).

Mckensey and Company has forecasted a decline in the supply of talent in the next fifteen years, particularly at leadership positions or positions that highly important to organisations. Guthrigde, McPherson and Wolf (2008) further demonstrate the entering of young people into the workforce brought forward challenges, hence their mindset about employment have been shaped by internet, and information overload. The demands of this generation on organisations are very high and often impossible in the SA economic condition.

All the above multiple factors have created a high demand for talent in African countries. Organisations need to conduct thorough investigations that will enable them to realize the various factors that determine the availability of talent and implement such strategies. Otherwise, they may live and get lost under a false idea that the required talent can easily be acquired in Africa because of its large population of unemployed graduates and skilled people (Elegbe, 2010).

Schiemann (2009) also argues that only few organisations have carefully determined which jobs are strategically critical and prepared for the talent gaps that are still to come in the near future. Only few understand and accept the overflow of talent changes that are ahead of them, have adequate plans, measures, or processes in place to reach the higher ladder of talent in time.

Deb (2005) is adamant that it is vital for organisations to understand their business's strategic goals and the role that talent plays in reaching these goals, and he further stipulates that, fruitful future will be reached by organisations that can effectively incorporate talent management and business strategies into an undivided whole, and in the process build an organisation with not only optimized performance but also with a significant competitive advantage.

2.2.4 TALENT MANAGEMENT PROCESS

2.2.4.1 Workforce Planning

Workforce planning is about predicting who will be the key drivers of the organisation's future success. Organisations are operating in increasingly dynamic environments thus to be successful they need to stay one step ahead of the game (Hay Group, 2005). According to Shukla (2009), business forecasting essentially does not work. What customers are buying today is used to predict what they will buy next week. A good idea to ensure successful workforce planning is to realize that the future is uncertain and try to assess how this uncertainty can affect the organisation plans.

Shukla (2009) further implies that today workforce planning is an undeveloped process in most organisations, as they only utilize available information on planning purposes. Fewer organisations use information on current or projected skills gaps in their workforce planning. As a result, organisations are doing an average job of identifying talent gaps.

2.2.4.2 Talent Acquisition

Talent acquisition can be achieved through identifying, nurturing, and resourcing suitable high performers both within the organisation and outside organisations, and placing them into valuable roles for better organisational performance. With the changing economy and competitive marketplace, the challenge of finding, growing and keeping best people has become more imperative for the success of every organisations. Organisations need to become highly strategic and innovative to become talent magnets (Deb, 2005).

Nankervis, Compton, and Baird (2005) mention that poor acquisition decisions can lead to increased recruitment costs, training and orientation costs, burnout, lost opportunity, reduced profit, loss of competitive advantage, impaired image and reputation. An organisation needs to become innovative when developing a recruitment strategy and should avoid using old methods of recruiting such as newspaper adverts especially when trying to attract Generation Y. Recommended strategies for this generation include interactive networking sites, referral programs, internships, graduate programs and online job boards.

2.2.4.3 Talent Development and Talent Commitment

Gilley and Maycunich, 2000 (cited in Rothwell & Kanazas, 2003) define talent development and talent commitment as the process of facilitating employee learning, competencies, performance, and change through organized interventions and initiatives and management actions for improving an organisation's performance capacity, and competitive advantage. Talent development ensures that high-potential people recruited into the organisation are assessed regularly, given the opportunities to develop their talent through being exposed to different situations and environments through their careers, and given the opportunity to advance to ever-increasingly challenging opportunities.

Dychtwald, Erickson and Morison (2006) argue that the opportunity to learn, grow and to try new things was ranked third among ten basic factors in a nationwide survey conducted on workers and their preferences. It ranked even higher than additional compensation, vacation, flexible schedule, and flexible workplace. Wagner and Harter (2006) indicate that currently it is imperative for the organisation over the long run to have employees trained and have supervisors and mentors who are fully committed to discussing performance and giving feedback to employees.

It is also important that organisations when considering developing talent, they should give allocation of resources a priority when it comes to roles, and to people who will make most difference. More consideration should be put on how to create the right environment for talent to thrive. Essentially to this process, it is important to match the way people learn with the needs of talented people and provide a range of varied practices to promote professional learning (Hay Group, 2005).

All processes should work together, for example effective performance management and professional reviews should be a starting point for staff learning and development. It is important to consider the resources available for the development of all staff (Davies and Davies 2010).

2.2.4.4 Performance Management

According to Sahu (2007), the fundamental purpose of performance management is to establish a culture in which employees take responsibility for their development, however it is important for individuals to understand the organisation's set goals and priorities, what is

expected from them, competencies needed to invest in performance management strategies and commitment that is based on meaningful work and rewards linked to business and personal achievement. Benefits of performance management system includes among other things, improved performance, high productivity, improved communication, organisation alignment, reduced management time, increased employee self-management, and increased employee satisfaction (Caldwell, 2000).

According to a study conducted by Watson Wyatt, only 30% of workers felt their organisation's Performance Management System assist them to enhance their performance. Less than 40% said their PMS provides clear performance goals, provide honest feedback, or utilise technology effectively. Performance management is constantly rated the lowest area in employee satisfaction surveys (Pulakos, 2009).

A survey done by Deloitte and Touche HCC Survey (2001) cited in (O'Callaghan, 2005) shows that performance management indicated that, 85% of South African organisations have a Performance Management System. Only 51% of the surveyed organisations believed that employees and managers are adequately educated and trained in PMS. 37% use the Balanced Scorecard methodology. 86% allow employees to jointly set targets and objectives with the manager. 91% have clear PMS policies, procedures and systems in place.

Meanwhile, Nankervis, Compton and Baird (2005) argue that many organisations still regard the performance review as a process that takes place only once a year and that must somehow be tolerated. Many do not see the strategic links between PMS and the bottom line nor do they appreciate this powerful management tool they have at their disposal.

Cardy and Leonard (2011) state that to be able to effectively manage performance in an organisation, one needs to have an understanding of the context in which the process occurs. Most importantly, the performance management system should start with the strategic objectives and core values of the organisation.

2.2.4.5 Talent Retention and Succession planning

Succession Management is a process through which people with high potentials are identified for anticipated future needs. It is a proactive approach to managing talent as it involves a well prepared development plan of these individuals so that talent pool or leadership pipeline is available when needed to meet organisational demands as they arise. Others have argued that succession planning management should be extended to all employees, including those that are below leadership level. The provision of development opportunities to all employees at all levels add to the retention value as well as to the increase in profitability associated with a competent and motivated workforce (Page Up People, 2009).

Organisations with high quality leadership development programs and formal succession management programs are often the one that reach superior business results (Bernthal and Wellins, 2006). In addition, Busine and Watt, (cited in Stone,2002) imply that increasingly uptight labour markets make succession management a business importance and thus put pressure on organisations to identify and accelerate the development of future leaders from within. Given this pressure, organisations need to have a successful succession management policy in place, with a particular focus on the continuity of key specialists and leaders.

2.2.5 BENEFITS OF TALENT MANAGEMENT

Integrated talent management can help organisations to cut costs, enhance productivity and reduce risks. Effectively implemented talent management motivate employees, and a motivated employee will perform better and be more engaged to his/her work and become committed to the organisation. Therefore, absenteeism and workforce turnover become more stable and easier to manage. High performers and key talent are a critical resource and one of the main sources of sustainable competitive advantage. Thus, organisations must be innovative about nurturing, supporting and making sure that their top talent knows they are important. Having a long-term talent management provides employers with an ability to effectively and efficiently predict recruitment, training, succession planning and retention needs (Baublyte, 2010).

Talent management does not only assist organisations in tough times, but it also aid with capabilities to move forward once economy is stable again. The key finding is that organisations which practice integrated approach of talent management tend to achieve better attraction and retention results, and also stronger financial performance. 25% of organisations which implement talent managers are less likely to have problems with attracting and retaining top performers (respectively), and 18% of those organisations are more likely to be high performing organisations (Baublyte, 2010).

2.2.6 STRATEGIES FOR BETTER TALENT MANAGEMENT

Ulrich, 2003 (cited in Koketso, 2011) argues that competencies should focus on what needs to be done not what has been done. Processes like succession planning, increasing talent pools and identifying career paths should be considered here. Employees should have an understanding of what is required from them and receive consistent, measurable feedback on their behaviours and performance, and that can enable them to alter and align their behaviours and performance with what the organisation aims to achieve.

According to Ulrich (2003), organisations should frequently revise their recruitment and selection methods to ensure competencies and capabilities detailed in the job advertisements match organisational goals. It is also relatively important to align recruitment and selection, performance management, training and development, and reward practices to build and reinforce key-valued behaviours.

Meyer and Botha (2004) believe that Ulrich's ways of ensuring that competencies are results-driven can further add value to organisations if they can use an opportunity of identifying key players early and develop them for the long term benefit of their organisations. Meyer and Botha (2004) posit here that organisation's performance management system should give emphasis to the application of talent management in the workplace. They also maintain that high performers should be rewarded accordingly.

2.2.7 STUDIES ON TALENT MANAGEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Talent Management is still an emerging field of empirical research in the South African context. The available research however shows that talent management is poorly applied especially in government institutions (see Barkhuizen, 2013; Magolego, 2013; Mpofu,

2013). These studies also revealed large differences between the current versus the importance of the talent management practices.

Other research also highlighted the outcomes of talent management in organisations. Talent Management has been positively linked with Organisational Energy (Barkhuizen and Stanz, 2010), Productive organisational energy (Mpofu & Barkhuizen, 2013), Job Satisfaction and Performance (Magolego, Barkhuizen & Lesenyeho, 2013), Psychological contract (Mtila, Barkhuizen & Mokgele, 2013) and negatively related to turnover intentions of employees (see Barkhuizen & Veldman, 2012; Mpofu & Barkhuizen, 2013).

2.3 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

2.3.1 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT DEFINED

According to Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá and Bakker (2002), "engagement can be defined as a positive, fulfilling and work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication (efficacy) and absorption. Vigour is involves high levels of energy and mental flexibility while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work, and the ability to persevere even under difficulties. Dedication is characterised by a sense of significance, effectiveness, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge. It refers to the emotional side of work engagement and the willingness of people to apply extensive time and effort in doing something meaningful. Absorption refers to the cognitive aspect where individuals experience a high level of concentration while undertaking a task. This includes being happily engrossed in one's work and having difficulties in detaching oneself from work"

Barclay (2008) (cited in Robertson-Smith and Markwick, 2009) suggests a formal definition of employee engagement might be, the extent to which an employee is committed and attached to the organisation he or she works for, adhere to its policies and processes, and finally believes in its goals and supports its values. Barclays also suggest that it is easier to gain a good sense of someone's engagement by asking a simple question, for example, would you recommend Barclays as a good place to work?

2.3.2 KEY DRIVERS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT/ANTECEDENTS

Below Marcey, Schneider, Barbera and Schneider (2008) discuss the key factors that drive or lead to engagement of employees.

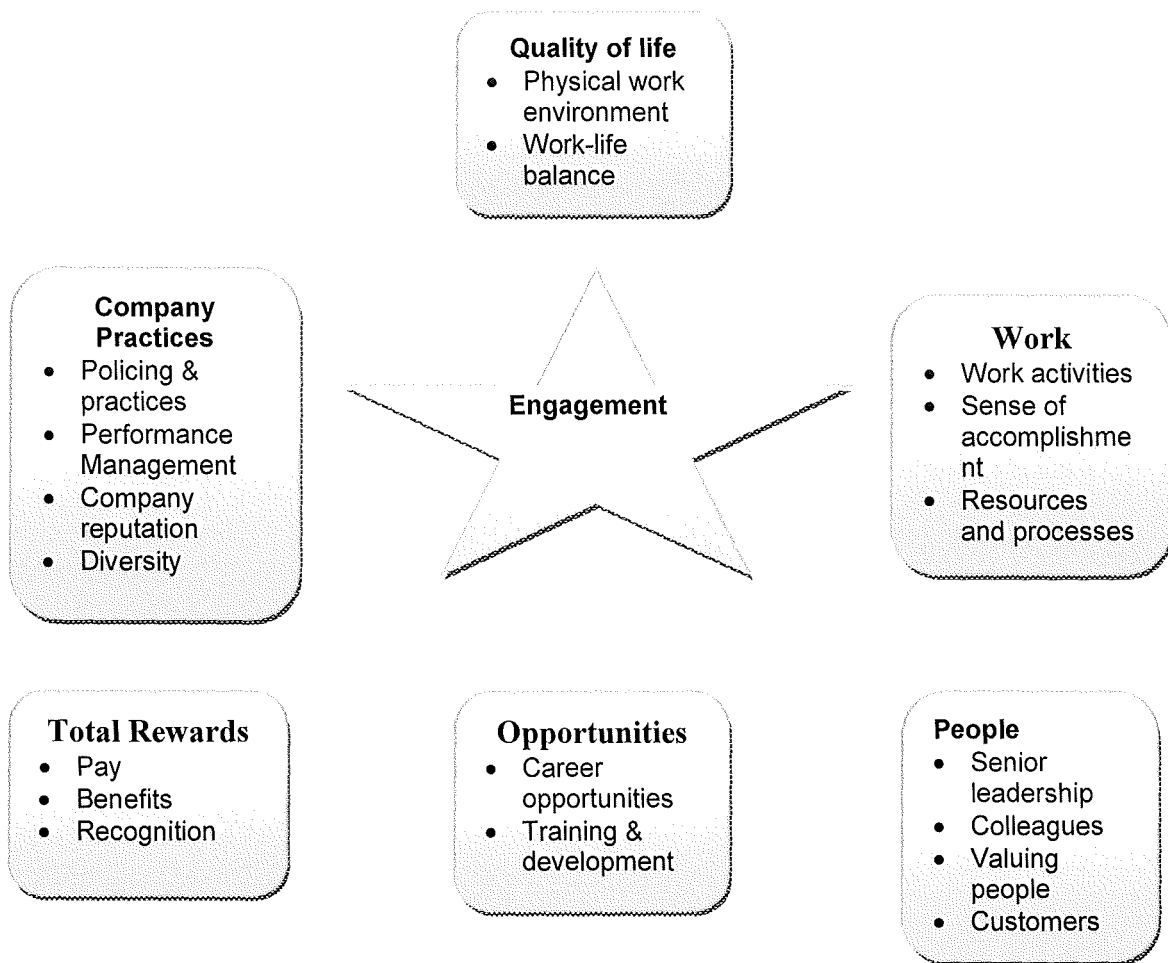


Figure 2-3: Key drivers of employee engagement

Research shows that committed employees perform better. Both pay and benefits can motivate workers to a certain extent, however increasing compensation and offering more benefits are not by themselves effective drivers of work engagement. However, Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001) argue that total lack of rewards and lack of recognition can lead to burnout. Appropriate recognition and reward are both vital to an employee's engagement.

Marcey, Schneider, Barbera and Schneider (2008) imply that the nature of an organisation's leadership and management can have an indirect impact on engagement behaviours displayed by employees. Corporate cultures characterized by teamwork, good working conditions, growth opportunities, and more training opportunities can all contribute to employee engagement. Employees' belief that they have a future with their employer is a leading driver of employee commitment.

Devi (2009) postulates that, organisations that invest in techniques that help their employees to work in a way which best supports them in balancing their work and home environments are more likely to have engaged employees. Companies' efforts to engage workers will increasingly depend on the organisations' ability to meet employees' individual preferences, perhaps even to the extent of creating various options of motivation and retention programs from which employees can choose from.

Kahn (1990) indicated that employees feel more positive about the emotional factors of their work experience such as purpose, fun, trust, and growth. Motivators such as learning, connection, and meaning at work may also increase employee engagement. Supportive organisations enable people to experiment and to try new things and even fail without fear of the consequences.

Results of studies done by (Hakanen et al., 2008, Rothmann & Joubert, 2007, Rothmann & Pieterse, 2007, Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004 cited in Rothmann and Rothmann, 2012), showed that work engagement was strongly related to four categories of job resources, namely, growth opportunities, organisational support and social support. The findings of previous studies also confirms this by indicating that organisations that do not provide sufficient job resources might experience long-term consequences that include withdrawal from work, reduced motivation and commitment as well as dissatisfaction. The results of these studies further showed that indeed strong predictors of employee engagement include amongst others, a mixture of learning opportunities, management commitment and organisational support. It is believed that these factors satisfy employees' needs for competence and autonomy.

2.3.3 CONSEQUENCES OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) concluded that employee satisfaction and engagement are related to meaningful business outcomes. Kahn (1992) also projected that high levels of engagement lead to both positive outcomes for individuals, (e.g. quality of people's work life and their own experiences of doing that work), as well as positive organisational-level outcomes (higher productivity and higher earnings per share).

Research suggests that employee engagement might play a key role in assisting the successful implementation of organisational change (Graen, 2008, cited in Robertson-Smith and Markwick, (2009) and may be particularly important to enabling organisational agility in companies forced to adapt to the changing market. According to Cook (2008) research done by Professional Services Company Towers Perrin shows that organisations with higher levels of employee engagement perform better than their competitors in terms of performance and profitability on aggregate by 17 %.

Gallup Business Journal (2006) found that a critical relationship exist between employee engagement, customer loyalty, business growth and profitability. The International Survey Research (ISR) team has similarly found evidence that organisations can only reach high productivity through engaging employees and customers emotionally. In an extension of the Gallup findings, Ott, Blacksmith and Royal (2007) found that higher employee engagement predicts higher earnings per share (EPS) among publicly-traded businesses. When compared with competitors that trade at the same business level, organisations with more than four engaged employees for every one actively disengaged, experienced 2.6 times more growth in EPS than organisations with a ratio of slightly less than one engaged worker for every one actively disengaged employee.

Furthermore, Gallup's research has shown a connection between employee engagement and customer engagement, and shows that an employee's willingness to change or to learn and be more developed to be able to meet the customers' changing needs can positively influence customer's engagement and loyalty. During the Gallup research, employees were asked to rate the statement "I have grown in my ability to positively affect our customers". The results showed that almost 9 in 10 engaged employees strongly agreed that they have grown in their ability to positively affect their company's customers, while only 2 in 10 actively disengaged employees strongly agreed to the above statement (Gallup Business Journal, 2006).

Research done by Hewitt Associates (2004) shows a strong correlation between employee engagement and financial performance, even in unstable financial times. Organisations with high levels of engagement continue to perform better. Companies with low engagement had a total shareholder return that was 28% lower than average.

Engagement can be utilised as a tool to reduce employees' intentions to leave the organisation (Baskin, 2007). According to Bhatnagar (2007) employee engagement is the most effective way that can be utilised to retain the best talent. Nurses' intention to leave was studied by Karlowicz & Ternus, 2007 (cited in Mendes and Stander, 2011) and it has found that lack of engagement was one of the most important issues contributing to employees' intention to leave. Simpson 2009 (cited in Mendes and Stander, 2011) found very similar results in her research with nurses, where higher turnover was linked directly with low work engagement levels.

2.3.4 FACTORS THAT LEAD TO DISENGAGEMENT

Key factors that limit employee engagement are:

- Job insecurity;
- Unfairness pay systems;
- Repetitive work;
- Highly stressful jobs;
- Poor line management behaviour ;
- Long working hours (Robertson-Smith and Markwick 2009).

Robinson, Perryman and Hayday (2004) identified some of the challenges of engagement and the findings were:

- Engagement levels decline as employees get older
- The higher the length of service increases the more engagement levels decreases
- An accident or an injury at work have a high negative impact on engagement
- Employees who have received a formal performance appraisal have significantly higher engagement levels than those who have not.

2.3.5 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Markos (2010) discussed several employee engagement strategies which are:

- Leadership commitment through establishing clear mission, vision, values and objectives
- The consideration of all employees and show respect to their input
- Provision of job autonomy and flexibility to employees

- Ensuring all the resources such as physical or material, financial and information resources are available in order for employees to effectively do their job
- Provision of relevant development programs to increase employees' knowledge and skills
- Conduct regular survey of employee engagement level and provide feedback
- Provide employees who show more engagement in their jobs with both financial and non-financial benefits.

Lookwood (2007) further suggest that to be better positioned to address barriers to engagement, organisations must determine what works for them and what does not. The Gallup organisation, for example, identified twelve indicators that link employee satisfaction with positive business outcomes and profitability. The initial study considered four key areas, namely, customer satisfaction/loyalty, profitability, productivity and employee turnover. These indicators, known as the Q12, are based on employee involvement topics, such as attitude, feedback, recognition and measurement. Today, many employers base their employee attitude surveys on the Q12.

2.3.6 STUDIES ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Employee engagement scores are higher in sub-Saharan Africa than other regions of the world, according to a recent survey. Hewitt Associates (2011) surveyed 75 organisations across Africa, representing more than 300,000 employees. The survey was based on the following factors: quality of life, work, people, opportunities, total rewards and company practices. Within these factors, perceptions of work, and relationships with management and career opportunities were the most concerning. The results were as follows:

Table 2-1: Table Comparison of Employee Engagement scores

Country	Overall score	Quality of life	Work perceptions	Relationship with Management and Peers	Opportunities	Company Practices
East Africa	74	82	70	71	73	78
South	68	77	67	68	53	75

Africa						
Southern Africa	70	77	51	54	69	69

(Hewitt Associates, 2011).

The results of the above dimensions are briefly discussed below

- **Quality of Life:** Employees rated more freedom and autonomy in their jobs as “extremely important” to enable them to perform better in their jobs. Recognition from management, teambuilding activities and workplace flexibility were also rated as important (Hewitt Associates, 2011).
- **Relationships at Work:** 72% of participants are satisfied or extremely satisfied with their relationships at work. Employees who are free and comfortable in their work environment typically perform better in their jobs (Hewitt Associates, 2011).
- **Career Opportunities:** 29% of respondents implies that that they are not being adequately equipped to effectively perform what is required of them in their current roles. Without proper career growth, employees become less engaged and more likely to look for new opportunities outside of their organisations (Hewitt Associates, 2011).
- **Total Rewards:** 21% of respondents rated their organisations poor on rewarding high performers. Rewards and recognition are recognised to be essential in building an engaged and productive workforce (Hewitt Associates, 2011).
- **Company Practices:** The good news for employers in Africa is that 89% of respondents said they were either totally committed or very committed to furthering their organisations’ goals (Hewitt Associates, 2011).

2.4 SERVICE QUALITY

2.4.1 SERVICE QUALITY DEFINED

2.4.1.1 Service

According to (Agbor, 2011), a service depends on the type of product that is being offered and it differs from one organisation to another. Service can be defined in many ways depending on which field the term is being used. Service can also be defined as an indescribable offer by one person to another, and usually it takes place in the exchange of

money. Hair, et al (2006) implies that a service involves an act or an effort that cannot be physically possessed.

2.4.1.2 Quality

Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders and Wong (2002) define quality as the wholeness of features of a product or service that stand out on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs. Quality also relates to the worth of an offer, and such worth can result in satisfaction or dissatisfaction on the user. According to Angelova and Zekiri (2011), quality has been recognised as a strategic tool for achieving effectiveness and business performance. With service quality organisations does not only keep their existing customers but also increases their chances of getting and attracting new customers

2.4.1.3 Service Quality

Service quality has been identified as one of the most effective ways of constructing a competitive position and improving organisational performance. It is influenced by perceptions of customers on service quality, product quality, and price as well as situational factors and personal factors (Ghimire, 2012). According to Kumar (2008), service quality should not only be involved in the final product and service, but also in the production phase and delivery process.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry (cited in Shelton, 2000) view service quality as the gap created between the customer's expectations or desires and their perceptions. They list 10 factors of service quality:

Table 2-2: Dimensions of Service Quality

Tangibles	Appearance of Physical facilities, equipment, personal and communication materials
Reliability	Capacity to perform the promised service consistently and accurately
Responsiveness	Keenness to assist customer and provide prompt service
Courtesy	Politeness, respect and friendliness of contact personnel
Empathy	Helpful and having undivided attention
Competence	Having the relevant skills and knowledge to perform
Security	Free from danger, risk or doubt

Access	Approachability and ease of control
Communication	Keeping the customers informed in language they understand
Understanding the customer	Making the effort to know customers and their needs

(Shelton, 2000)

According to Gronroos (1994), there are three dimensions of service quality, the technical quality, the function quality and the corporate image and they are explained below:

- The technical quality involves what the customer receives from the rendered service.
- Functional quality, which involves the manner in which the service is delivered. It concerns the interaction between the buyer and the seller and, and it include elements such as:
 - Attitudes and behaviour of employees
 - Approachability of service providers
 - Accessibility of service
 - Appearance and personality of personnel
 - Relationship between employees, and
 - Interrelationships between employees and customers
- Corporate image dimension of quality is the perception of customers on the organisation, and it is expected to be built up mainly by the technical and functional quality of its services (Angelova and Zekiri, 2011).

2.4.2 THE SERVICE QUALITY GAP MODEL

The service quality gap model was developed by Parasuraman et al, (1990), it includes the following 5 gaps:

- Gap 1: The knowledge gap is the difference between what the customer expect and service provider's perceptions of those expectations, for example, being uncertain of what the consumers expect (Stromgren, 2007). Malla (2012) points out that, the reasons for the gaps may be the lack of marketing orientation. Most organisations

lack the ability to provide their customers with clear details of the services they provide. In order to reduce this gap, organisations should conduct research so that they can observe and recognize the customers' needs and wants.

- Gap 2: The standards Gap is the difference between the service provider's perceptions of the customer's expectations and service quality specifications, for example, inappropriate service quality standards (Stromgren, 2007). The reason for this gap is the inadequate commitment by the organisation towards the quality of the service they provide. The organisation may be poor in planning and lacking in goal setting. The management of the organisation should create constant contact with the service provider when making plans so that the plans that they make can relate and be smoothly implemented (Malla, 2012).
- Gap 3: The delivery gap is the difference that exist between service quality delivered and service quality specifications. That is the gap of service performance (Stromgren, 2007). Malla (2012) argues that the reason behind this gap could be lack of technology, lack of good planning and control techniques. Lack of team work also affects the service provided by the organisation. The improvements can be made through changing the methods utilised in planning and controlling, and training employees and enhance good team work.
- Gap 4: The communications gap is the inconsistency found between service delivery and the communications to customers about service delivery. For example, the promised service not matching the delivered service (Stromgren, 2007). According to Brown, Gummesson, Edvardsson and Gustavsson (1991) media, advertising and other communications may add to this gap by increasing customers' expectations to levels beyond an organisation's capabilities. Malla (2012) suggests that external marketing communication campaigns must be implemented with service production and service delivery in order to overcome this gap. Organisations should refrain from over promising in order to narrow the gap. Non consideration of this gap can lead to negative customer perception.
- Gap 5: The overall gap explains the difference between customer's expectation and perceived service. This depends on size and directions of the four previous mentioned gaps associated with the delivery of service quality on the marketer's side (Stromgren, 2007). Malla (2012) implies that customers' expectations are influenced by personal needs, word of mouth communication and past experiences.

This gap in organisations can bring negative influences on the image and reputation of the company.

2.4.3 BENEFITS OF SERVICE QUALITY

Service quality rendered results in different benefits or outcomes such as the following:

- **Increased revenue:** Quality service helps to increase the revenues and hence it increases customer sales. Customers' confidence level towards the company's abilities increases when they meet their desires from the goods or services rendered by the company. This accomplishment encourages them to buy more goods or services from the same organisation and thus results in being loyal customers (Parasuraman et al, 1990).
- **Enhanced company reputation:** On the contrary, when the customers' desires are met, they view the company positively, and therefore spread the information through blogs, website and social media. This will help the company to gain more new customers and also gain the good reputation of the company (Parasuraman et al, 1990).
- **Increased customer satisfaction:** Customers approach organisations with their need of solutions for their needs, demands or difficulties. When the products or services provided meet these needs, then customer satisfaction will occur. Customer satisfaction is viewed as the future for the return of the customers as well as customer relationship management or company reputation mentioned above. Customer satisfaction also increases an organisation's customer base. Thus, service companies' are improving their quality service to increase customer satisfaction which will bring back many benefits for the companies. Normally, one method utilised to know about the level of customers satisfaction is survey (Parasuraman et al, 1990).
- **Customer Loyalty:** Excellent service pays off because it creates true customers who are glad and proud they selected a specific company after the service experience, customers who are likely to use the company again and sing the firm's praises to others (Parasuraman et al, 1990).
- **Competitive advantage:** the provision of service quality is a more effective way for a business to grow. Growth volumes award an organisation with a higher competitive advantage over other competitors. As a result, even when there are short-run costs

connected with improving quality, over a period of time these costs are usually compensated by scale economies. Evidence of this is the fact that, an average business with superior quality products cost about equal to those of their leading competitors. As long as their selling prices are not out of line, they continue to grow while still earning higher profit margins. Quality increases both market expansion and increases in the market share. (Parasuraman et al, 1990).

2.4.4 RESULTS OF OTHER RESEARCHERS ON SERVQUAL

A study conducted by Kabir and Carlsson (2010) explored the service quality at a certain organisation, 58 customers of the company were selected randomly in order to measure their expectations and perceptions of service. They were provided with a questionnaire which followed the SERVQUAL model. Their comparison of the result from expectations and perceptions showed that an organisation's ability to perform the promised service is ranked as number one.

The results showed the willingness to help and give prompt service in the second place when it comes to expectations. The perceived quality about these factors is only ranked as number three. This means that the expectations about an organisation's willingness to help customers and give prompt service are ranked higher than the perceived quality. The customers have less expectation about the knowledge and courtesy of personnel and their ability to convey trust and confidence, and this is ranked as number four (Kabir & Carlsson 2010).



The appearance of the business such as physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication techniques is ranked as number four. The caring, and undivided attention that personnel provide to its customers was rated the lowest priority when it comes to both expectations and perceptions. Overall these results show that there is a gap between the expectations and perceptions about the service quality which means that the customers are not fully satisfied with the service quality (Kabir and Carlsson 2010).

The results may differ from one organisation to the other, for example, a study conducted by Jensen (2009) explores the service quality of a flight company, and the results showed that in assessing the expected service, personal interactive aspects are of greater

importance to the passengers, whereas the non-personal aspects such as design, equipment and product variety are considered less important to the customers' satisfaction. Consequently, the dimensions of reliability and assurance are considered the most important for the customer's satisfaction whereas the dimension of tangibles is considered the least important dimension.

2.5 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TALENT MANAGEMENT, EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE QUALITY

This research employed the following conceptual model:

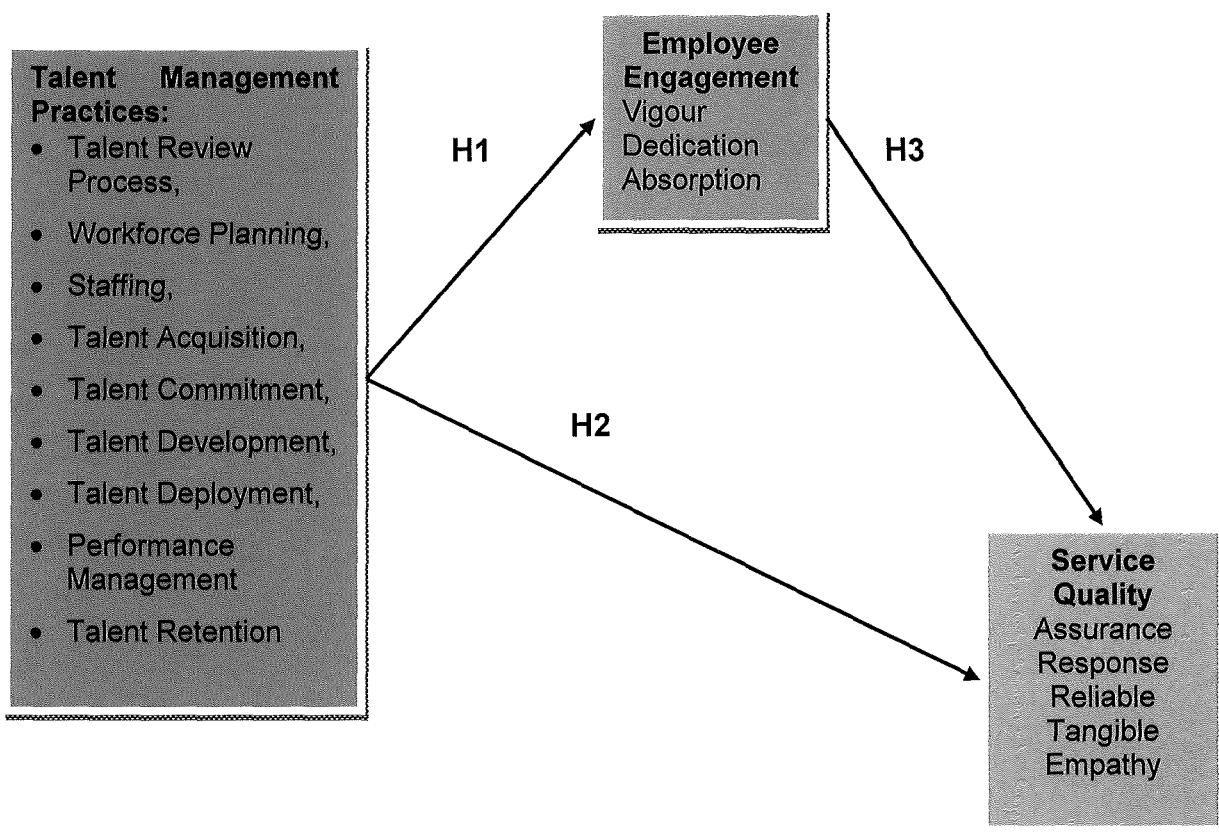


Figure 2-4: Diagrammatical presentation of the relationship between the variables in this study

2.5.1 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TALENT MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Glen (2006) believes that employee engagement should be considered crucial and pivotal factor when it comes to the retention of talent.

According to Carter, Galinsky & Families and Work Institute (2008), talent management practices are associated with higher engagement of both women and men leaders. Research found that women and men leaders viewed both their jobs and the companies they work for positively, and they reported to have a greater sense of responsibility for doing a good job when they were satisfied with the talent management practices provided at their jobs. Furthermore, Carter, Galinsky & Families and Work Institute (2008) imply that talent management practices are mostly effective reasons for reducing career limiting barriers. Organisations interested in building effective workplaces in which all employees feel respected and involved should pay more attention to these practices as they enhance work environments.

According to Carter et al (2008), findings from Leaders in a Global Economy demonstrated that when workplaces are effective, all employees, women and men, senior and pipeline leaders, and leaders of various ages become more committed to their jobs, report positive views of their jobs and employers, and this result in lower turnover intentions. The significance of frequent career development discussions with supervisors became less important to employee engagement when managers were taking part on other talent management practices.

2.5.2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SERVICE QUALITY AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

A qualitative study found that service-oriented workers who are highly engaged on their jobs provide better customer service, such as giving effective answers and being patient with customers' requests (Engelbrecht, 2006). There is a belief that employees who experience high levels of engagement can positively influence the quality of their organisation's products and services as well as impact positively on the customer's experience and loyalty (Cook, 2008). A study conducted by Heskett, Sasser and Schleginger of the Harvard Business School (cited in Evans, 2008) found that when the employee's satisfaction increases so does customer satisfaction and loyalty to the organisation. If employees were satisfied with their working conditions, they are likely to stay with the company, and thus become familiar with customers and their needs, have the opportunity to rectify mistakes because the customers know and trust them, and produce higher productivity and high service quality

However, Parker and Griffin (2011) disagrees and argues that engagement and competency must be considered as individual aspects because employee engagement does not always result in high performance. They suggest that engaged employees who does not have the relevant skills, knowledge and competencies may not perform effectively. Indeed, some scholars have argued that perceived competence or certainty about having the ability to perform a task plays a key role in today's changeable and challenging workplace (Stajkovic, 2006).

2.5.3 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SERVICE QUALITY AND TALENT MANAGEMENT

Training and development is one of the practices of talent management, thus Lee-Ross & Pryce (2010) mention that there is a link between service quality and training of employees. Hall 1975 (cited in Lashley, 2002) emphasizes that in many organisations an impact on the quality of service rendered is often caused by low skilled and untrained staff hence they usually have low staff morale. Employees who are not skilled and trained to serve customers can be badly prepared for the changing and tiring demands of customers such that this can add stress and dissatisfaction to employees.

Today successful organisations are defined not only by their ability to develop innovative products and services but mostly by service quality they provide to their customers. For example, the value of a service is determined at the point of delivery during the relationship between the employee and the customer. In this environment, discretionary endeavour on the part of employees determines the satisfaction of the customer. Thus getting the right people becomes even more important on delivering quality service (CCH Australia Limited, 2010).

2.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter demonstrated a detailed review of the literature of the three key concepts of the current study, namely, Talent Management, Work Engagement, and Service quality. A broad definition of each concept was given as well as the processes, models, causes, and strategies amongst others. The relationship between the above concepts was also discussed.

The following chapter will outline the empirical methods of research employed in this study. It broadly explains how the current research is conducted and what methods and measures were employed to collect data, and which statistical analysis methods will be used to analyse data.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

3. 1 INTRODUCTION

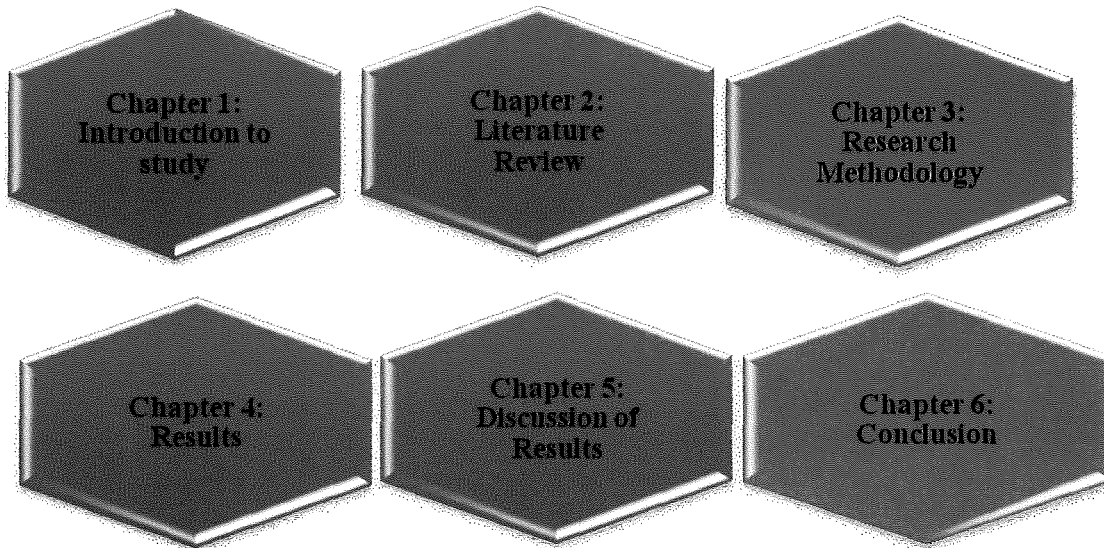


Figure 3-1: Chapter 3 in Context

This chapter focuses on how the research problem was investigated by discussing the sampling technique, data gathering instruments, and the statistical techniques that were used to test the hypotheses for the present study. The researcher elaborates further in this chapter by using key terms such as the population of the present study, sampling technique, data collection methods, and data analysing techniques, measuring instruments and other research methodology mechanisms that shall be utilized in this present study.

3.2 GENERAL RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study is to investigate the interactive relationship between the current application of Talent Management, employee engagement and service quality of support staff in a South African Higher Education Institution.

3.2.1 SUB RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The sub-research objectives of this study are:

- To determine the current level of talent management practices of support staff

- To determine the level of importance of talent management practices as perceived by the support staff
- To determine the extent to which there is a gap between the current level of talent management practices and the importance thereof as perceived by the support staff
- To determine the current level of employee engagement of support staff
- To determine the current level of Service Quality provided by support staff
- To determine the interactive relationship between the current application of talent management practices and employee engagement of support staff
- To determine the interactive relationship between current application of talent management practices and service quality of support staff
- To determine the interactive relationship between current level of employee engagement and service quality of support staff

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGMS/PHILOSOPHIES

Lincoln & Guba (1985) and Denzin & Lincoln (1994) cited in (Esteves, 2010) define a paradigm as a systematic set of beliefs based on ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions. Paradigms present a clearer image of the nature of the reality. Epistemology involves the nature of knowledge itself, its scope and the weight and consistency of claims to knowledge. Thus, Esteves (2010) states that the researcher must examine the nature of realism before embarking on a study. Methodology deals with how we know and understand the world, or acquire knowledge of the world.

The two main research paradigms are as follows:

3.3.1 POSITIVISM

According to Swanson and Holton (2009), positivism assumes that the world is objective. Therefore, positivist researchers generally seek out facts in terms of relationships among variables. They focus on quantitative methods used to test and verify hypotheses. The objective is to assess all essential variables to verify that a relationship is consistent in resembling conditions. Effort is made to establish the generalisation of findings based on careful sampling.

3.3.2 INTERPRETIVISM

Interpretivism research is concerned with meaning, it seeks to understand an individual's meaning of a certain situation. Interpretive researchers presume that knowledge and meaning are individual interpretations. Thus, there is no objective knowledge apart from individual interpretivism by reasoning humans. Although there are various interpretivist perspectives, they all are focused on subjective meanings as to how individuals apprehend, understand, and make sense of events and settings and how this produces features of the very settings to which sense making is responsive (Esteves, 2010).

However, the paradigm to be utilised during the current study is positivism due to it being quantitative in nature and it involves hypotheses, as Lincoln & Guba (1985) and Denzin & Lincoln (1994) cited in Esteves (2010), argues that positivism can be identified by scientific research that involves hypotheses, active observation of occurrences and thus the testing of hypotheses.

3.4 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHOD

The current study utilized quantitative research. Quantitative research focuses on collecting numerical data and generalising it across sets of people, it conceptualizes from certain incidences to search for general description or to test hypotheses (King, Keohane & Verba, 1994, cited in Murray (2003). The researcher found it relevant to employ this approach in investigating the topic under study. The descriptive type of quantitative research method will enable the researcher to create new knowledge on the relationship between talent management, work engagement and service quality.

3.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is an orderly way to come up with solutions to a problem. It is a process that details how research is to be carried out, and during this process, researchers' gets an opportunity to describe, explain and predict the phenomena. It is also defined as the study of methods by which knowledge is gained. It intends to provide the researcher with the work plan. It is important to note that even if the method considered in two different problems is the same, the methodology may be different, thus it is vital for the researcher to know and understand not only the research techniques that are relevant for

the research undertaken but also the methodology (Rajasekar, Philominathan and Chinnathamb, 2006).

For this study, a descriptive research method is utilised. The purpose of employing this method was to investigate the nature of a problem as it exists at the time of the study. The aim of this method is also to come up with applicable findings and to provide realistic recommendations. This study utilized two sources of research, primary and secondary data. On the one hand, primary research data was obtained through this new research study using a questionnaire survey. On the other hand, the secondary research data were obtained from previous studies on books, journals, articles and internet.

3.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Nkatini (2005:28), a research design is the plan which a researcher draws up when he or she undertakes a research project. Such plan reveals all steps taken from where the project begins until it ends and it involves the type of research that is being undertaken, the layout of the research project, data collection methods, as well as the statistical analysis method to be used for the research.

Maree (2007) states that a research may use the research design to acquire the research participants from whom he or she will collect information, in order to reach conclusions about the research problem. According to Hair, Money, and Samouel (2003), researchers are most likely to choose a plan that provides relevant information on the research question and that enable the project to be done most efficiently.

The above definitions imply that the research design chosen for this current study provided the researcher with an insight of the organisation he or she is interested in and from which the research participants shall be obtained. The research design also guides the researcher on how to collect data, and which methods to use for data collection (Maree, 2007).

3.7 UNIT OF ANALYSIS/POPULATION

Research participants or population in the current study are the support staff of a South African Higher Education Institution. Support staff in this study consists of all administrative

staff, both male and female of all races, permanent and non-permanent in all faculties and departments. Research population refers to a group of people from which the researcher desires to obtain information about a certain problem. Gall, Borg and Gall (2003:169) define a population as a group of people which the research questions seeks to find out about. However, Babbie (2008) argues that it is not in all occasions where the researcher manages to study all members of the population that interest them, but only a certain percentage. The targeted population in this study is estimated to consist of 200 administrative employees.

3.7.1 SAMPLING

3.7.1.1 Sampling techniques

Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee (2006:98) define a sample as a small part of the whole population which is investigated by a researcher and whose characteristics are generalized to the entire population. However it might be disadvantageous to generalize people's characteristics as this might cause inaccuracy, but it is also not easy to get the whole population to participate in the study.

There are two types of sampling techniques which are probability sampling and non-probability sampling. The sampling technique that is utilized in this present study is non-probability sampling. According to Zikmund, Babin, Carr and Griffin (2012) it is referred to as a sampling technique in which the selection of units from the sample rely mostly on personal judgement or convenience, the chances of any particular member of the population being chosen is unknown. The sampling technique to be employed in the current study is purposive convenience sampling. The current researcher found it advantageous to use this type of sampling because it is less costly in time, money and effort. It can also be used when sampling frame is not available, but most importantly it is useful when population or research participants cannot be found on the same place. The sampling technique chosen is also advantageous as it might provide the researcher with the ability to collect data from a small group rather than from a larger group and this reduce the amount of data to be obtained (Paler-Calmorin & Calmorin, 2008).

3.7.1.2 Sampling Size

The sample size of this present study consists of support staff of South African Higher Education Institution Support staff in this study consists of all administrative staff, both male and female of all races, permanent and non-permanent in all faculties and departments. (N=200) of the support staff was drawn from the population to be used to draw conclusions about the entire population of the university. 200 questionnaires were sent out, (N=65) were returned and only (N=60) was usable for data analysis.

The choice of sample size within this present study is governed below by (Welman, Kruger and Mitchell, 2005:70):

- The level of certainty that the characteristics of the data collected will represent the characteristics of the total population.
- The accuracy required for any estimates made for the sample
- The types of analyses that the researcher is going to undertake
- The size of the total population

3.8 DATA COLLECTION

Kumar (2011) suggests that when the researcher chooses a method of data collection, it is important to consider factors such as the nature in which the problem is being investigated, the geographical distribution of the study populations and the type of the study population, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of data collection techniques because all these may have greater impact on the validity of the findings. Thus the current researcher has chosen to employ a questionnaire to collect data. The questionnaires to be used consists of closed questions, and has four sections, namely, Section A consists of biographical data and questions that relates to the participant's job, Section B, the HCI, Section C, the UWES, and Section D, the SERVQUAL scale. All respondents were treated with confidentiality, respect and anonymity.

3.8.1 QUESTIONNAIRE

Fox and Bayat (2007:88) define a questionnaire as a set of questions used to obtain information from the respondents. It can be carried out by the use of telephone, hand-outs, mail, or electronically. The advantages of using a questionnaire are that many participants

can be reached, confidentiality can be guaranteed, and it is relatively inexpensive. The results are also more objective.

3.8.1.1 Advantages of a questionnaire

The advantages of utilising a questionnaire are discussed below:

- **It offers greater anonymity:** There is no face to face interaction between respondents and the interviewer, thus greater secrecy is assured. It also increases the opportunity to obtain accurate and honest answers (Tahir & Hussain, 2011).
- **Cost effective:** The researcher can obtain data from a large group of people at a minimum expense of both money and effort. (Tahir & Hussain, 2011).
- **Ensures Uniformity:** Questionnaires are administered in a written form therefore they enable the respondent to put attention on all the important items. Also, its standardised instructions for recording responses ensure uniformity (Tahir & Hussain, 2011).

3.8.1.2 Disadvantages of a questionnaire

The shortcomings of utilising a questionnaire are discussed below:

- **Response rate is limited:** Questionnaires are known for their low response rates, often people fail to return them and that might reduce the sample size. The response rate may depend on the interest of the participants on the topic that is being investigated, and the method used to distribute the questionnaire (Kumar, 2011).
- **Opportunity to clarify issues is lacking:** Respondents who do not understand questions are rarely awarded with the opportunity to ask for clarity unless they can be able to get hold with the researcher, which does not happen often. And wrong answers may affect the quality of the information provided (Kumar, 2011).

3.8.2 MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

The data collection method utilised in this present study is self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaires used consists of closed questions, and it has four sections, namely, section A consists of biographical data and questions that relates to the participant's job,

Section B, the HCI, Section C, the UWES, and Section D, the SERVQUAL scale. The measuring instruments utilized in this study are discussed below:

3.8.2.1 The Human Capital Index

The Human Capital Index (adapted version) of the Human Capital Institute (2008), will be used in the current study to measure the perceived talent management practices by the research participants. The Index consist of 41 items and measure nine Talent Management Practices namely Management Commitment, Talent Review Process, Workforce Planning, Staffing, Talent Acquisition, Talent Commitment, Talent Development, Performance Management and Talent Retention. Respondents are required to indicate the extent of their agreement with each statement on a five-point Lickert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). This questionnaire has been validates in several South African studies (see Barkhuizen, 2013; Magolego, Barkhuizen & Lesenyeho, 2013; Mpofu & Barkhuizen, 2013; Mtila, Barkhuizen & Mokgele, 2013).

3.8.2.3 Utrecht Work Engagement Scale

The *Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)* (Schaufeli et al., 2002) was used to measure the levels of engagement. Three dimensions of engagement can be distinguished, namely Vigour (6 items; i.e., "I am bursting with energy in my work"), Dedication (5 items; i.e., "I find my work full of meaning and purpose") and Absorption (6 items; i.e., "When I am working, I forget everything else around me"). Engaged individuals are characterised by high levels of Vigour and Dedication and Absorption. The questionnaire showed acceptable internal consistencies in several South African studies (see Barkhuizen & Rothmann, 2006; Bell & Barkhuizen, 2011).

3.8.2.4 Service quality scale

A SERVQUAL scale will also be utilized in the current study to measure service quality in Higher Education Institutions. According to Ngulube, Jayasundara and Minishi-Majanja (2009), the SERVQUAL model also called the "gap model" was developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, (1990) and they define service quality as a gap that exists between the customer's expectations of service and the performance of service rendered. The model consists of five dimensions, namely, reliability, tangibles, responsiveness, assurance and empathy, which are depicted by 22 attributes.

The SERVQUAL scale consists of two sections, namely, one for the identification of customers' expectations of the 22 attributes and two, the customer's perception of the performance of the same attributes. The results from a study done by Bick, Abratt and Moller, (2010) on the analysis of SERVQUAL dimensions shows that "responsiveness" is the most important service requirement for customers, followed by reliability of service, tangibles, assurance and empathy. The questionnaire has been validated in the South African context (Barkhuizen and Goosen, 2011).

3.9 RESEARCH PROCESS

3.9.1 QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTRATION

Permission to conduct research was obtained from the campus registrar and the Human Resources Manager. A cover letter was submitted, the letter confirms the purpose of the research and the ethical considerations of confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Once permission was granted the researcher produced two hundred questionnaires which were given to supervisors to distribute them among their employees (support staff) to avoid disturbing them on their duties. However, Bourque and Fielder (2003:23) advice that it is wise for researchers to distribute and collect questionnaires from participants themselves immediately.

Bourque & Fielder (2003:23) further add to the above statement that once the questionnaire leaves the surveyor's office, he or she has no control over who fills it out and whether that person consults with others when completing it. Although, the above fact by Bourque & Filder (2003) may result in participants feeling pressured to fill the questionnaires and they might end up providing dishonest and unsystematic answers. Hence the current researcher decided to collect the questionnaires in three days with the aim of giving the participants enough time to answer the questionnaires with full understanding and honesty.

Taylor, Sinha and Ghoshal (2006) imply that during the administration of the questionnaire, it is imperative to have preliminary contact with potential respondents before giving them the questionnaires. However in planning the distribution and retrieval it is important for

researchers to consider how they might keep track of returns and remind those who do not respond. Thus, the current researcher obtained the contact details of all the participants and emails were used as a communication method to remind the non-respondents to fill and return the questionnaires.

3.10 STATISTICAL ANALYSES

Maree (2007) describes statistical analysis as “the collection, examination, summarization, manipulation, and interpretation of quantitative data to discover its underlying causes, patterns, relationships, and trends”. Statistical analysis was carried out using the SPSS Program (SPSS, 2009). The reliability and validity of the HCI, UWES and Servqual scale were determined by means of Cronbach alpha coefficients, as well as exploratory factor analysis. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to specify the relationship three key concepts of this study. A cut-off point of 0,30 (medium effect, Cohen, 1988) was set for the practical significance of correlation coefficients. In terms of statistical significance, a value at a 95% confidence interval level ($p \leq 0,05$) is set.

3.10.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse and summarise the data during this study. Descriptive statistics involves a number of statistical methods that are used to organise and summarise data in a meaningful way and it enhances the understanding of the data (Maree, 2007:183).

Descriptive statistics are recommended when the intention is to describe and discuss a data set more generally and expediently than it would be possible using only raw data. They are regularly utilised in reports which consist of significant amount of qualitative or quantitative data. Descriptive statistics help summarize and support assertions of fact (Maree, 2007:183).

3.11 DEVELOPING OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis is defined as an assumption considered in order studying the facts and check how applicable is the theory used. It is a suggested answer to a problem that can be tested and it is also a testable relationship between two or more variables. The author implies that a hypothesis must provide an answer to the problem and it must be formulated

in a way that can be tested and verified directly. It is significant because it gives the researcher a clear and adequate explanation of the facts related with the hypothesis. It is also useful because it enables the research to proceed on the right track (Kahn, 2008).

For purposes of this research three hypotheses were formulated below. These are briefly discussed below

3.11.1 HYPOTHESIS 1: TALENT MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

H 1: There is a significant positive relationship between talent management and employee engagement

Rationale: Bhatnagar (2007) states that effective talent management policies and practices demonstrate commitment to human capital, resulting in more engaged employees and lower turnover. Consequently employee engagement has a substantial impact on employee productivity and talent retention. Roper (2009) contends that, organisations are busy implementing talent practices with the impression that they will achieve employee engagement however they fail to consult empirical data that supports such action. Roper (2009) further argues that, a study conducted by Saks is the only study that methodically investigates the link between the two concepts, as such the overall quality of the evidence found within the existing is weak.

3.11.2 HYPOTHESES 2: TALENT MANAGEMENT AND SERVICE QUALITY

H 2: There is a relationship between talent management and service quality

Rationale: Talented employees understand the value of ensuring a positive customer experience and are more likely to demonstrate their commitment by delivering high quality products and services. Value of a service is determined at the point of delivery during the relationship between the employee and the customer. In this environment, discretionary effort on the part of employees is a vital factor in customer satisfaction. Thus getting the right people becomes even more important delivering quality service (CCH Australia Limited, 2010).

3.11.3 HYPOTHESIS 3: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE QUALITY

H 3: There is a relationship between employee engagement and service quality

Rationale: There is currently no study that shows a significant relationship between employee engagement and service quality of support staff, however many studies have

proved that employee engagement leads to service quality. According to Gracia, Salanova, Grau and Cifre (2012), a qualitative study found that workers with higher levels of engagement provide better customer service, such as giving effective answers and being patient with customers' requests. "A study done in almost 8000 business units in 36 companies found positive correlations between employee engagement, customer satisfaction, loyalty, profitability, productivity and employee turnover. The study found also that business units that had higher levels of employee engagement tend to perform higher than business units with low engagement levels" (Beardwell and Claydon 2010).

However, Parker and Griffin (2011) disagree and state that employee engagement does not always lead to high performance. In fact, they suggest that engaged employees who lack appropriate knowledge and skills may not perform effectively. For example an employee might show improvement in his/her duties not because he/she is engaged but because he/she fears to be dismissed. Equally an employee might perform poorly but not because he is not engaged but because there are other challenges in the work environment that prevent him/her to be a top performer.

3.12 STRATEGIES TO ENSURE QUALITY AND RIGOUR OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Cargan (2007) mentions that the tests for validity and reliability are important because they measure outcomes, and they be tested after the fact. Thus, if the instruments used to collect data are not valid and reliable, then the results obtained will be in uncertain and unfortunately it will be too late to save the study. Thus the best strategy for selecting measures of validity and reliability is to use measures that have been established in other contexts.

3.12.1 RELIABILITY

Maree (2007:215) defines reliability as the extent to which a measuring instrument can be used repeatedly and still be measurable. Sam and Daniel (2011) further explain that reliability can be tested by finding out who collected the data, what were the sources of data, were they collected by using suitable methods, at what time were they collected, was there any bias of the compiler, what level of accuracy was desired and was is achieved?

3.12.2 VALIDITY

According to Welman et al, (2005:215), the validity of an instrument refers to the extent to which the research findings accurately represent what is actually happening in the situation, and the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. Three approaches are used in order to test the validity of the instrument, and they are as follows:

- **Construct validity:** This means that if an old instrument that measures something that is known to be closely related to the thing that needs to be measured, the results obtained by the new instrument must be compared with that of the old and the relationship between the two results must be checked (Goddard and Melville, 2001).
- **Content validity:** In this situation, the aim is to know whether the sample items reflect the entire range of meanings: Are they clear and definite? (Cargan, 2007).
- **Criterion validity:** Gray (2009) states that criterion validity is where comparison between how people have answered a new measure of a concept and the widely accepted measures of concept takes place. If answers on the new and established measures are highly correlated, then it is usually assumed that the new measure possesses criterion validity. However, as De Vos (2002) suggest, a low correlation may simply mean that the old measure was invalid.
- **Predictive Validity:** This shows how well a test can anticipate a future trait such as job performance or attainment. There is no use if a test has both construct and content validity but fails to identify those who are likely to be high performers in a key work role (Gray, 2009).

3.13 RESEARCH ETHICS

Research ethics provides the moral framework within which the researcher operates when conducting research (Cresswell, 2009). Welman et al (2005) imply that ethical behaviour is important in research, as in any other nature of human activity. They further points out that failure of the researcher to adhere to the appropriate code of ethics might result in legal action against the researcher. Ethical considerations which are relevant to the study are discussed in more detail below:

3.13.1 RISK OF HARM

The researcher must investigate and predict the potential of the chosen research methods and their outcomes for causing harm or gain. When conducting research, if there are issues which the researcher is not sure of, experts who specialise on that field must be consulted. The researcher should also find out how to avoid risk to participants by investigating what the risks might be, and choosing methods that minimise these risks. The types of risks might include psychological risks, risk on privacy, dignity and reputation (Walliman, 2005).

3.13.2 INFORMED CONSENT

Participants should be provided with adequate information about the research, hence this will enable them to conduct a fair assessment of the project so that they can give informed consent. When working within an organisation all stakeholders which includes amongst others, the managers and individual participants need to be consulted. It must be made clear that and agreed at all levels how the survey will be conducted, how confidentiality will be maintained, and what issues are to be discussed (Walliman, 2005).

3.13.3 CONFIDENTIALITY

Information obtained about a participant during the course of an investigation is confidential unless otherwise agreed upon in advance. When the possibility exists that others can obtain access to such information, this possibility, together with the plans for protecting confidentiality, is explained to the participant as part of the procedure for obtaining informed consent (Gast, 2010).

3.13.4 HONESTY

Honesty is essential, not only to enable straightforward, above board communication, but to instil a level of trust and credibility to promote development of knowledge. Honesty include avoiding to use the thoughts, ideas and works of others without acknowledging their source, even if you paraphrased into your own words, is unethical (Walliman, 2005).

3.13.5 PRIVACY AND ANONYMITY

The respondents should be assured of their right of privacy. For example, they should be informed that their identity will remain anonymous (Welman, et al, 2005). Neither names

nor any identifiable demographic information on participants shall be disclosed (Sales and Folkman, 2000).

3.14 CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the rationale behind the methodology employed during this study. It broadly explained how the research was conducted and what steps were actually taken to collect data. This chapter began with an overview of the research paradigm of the study, before a description of the strategy of inquiry and broad research design was given. Subsequently a detailed discussion of the sampling strategies and techniques utilised in the study was then given, and this was followed by a discussion of the data collection methodology. After that there was a brief discussion on the data analysis. Issues which might be impacting on the reliability and validity of the research were considered before ethical concerns related to the study were finally contemplated. The next chapter will present the outcomes of the survey conducted.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

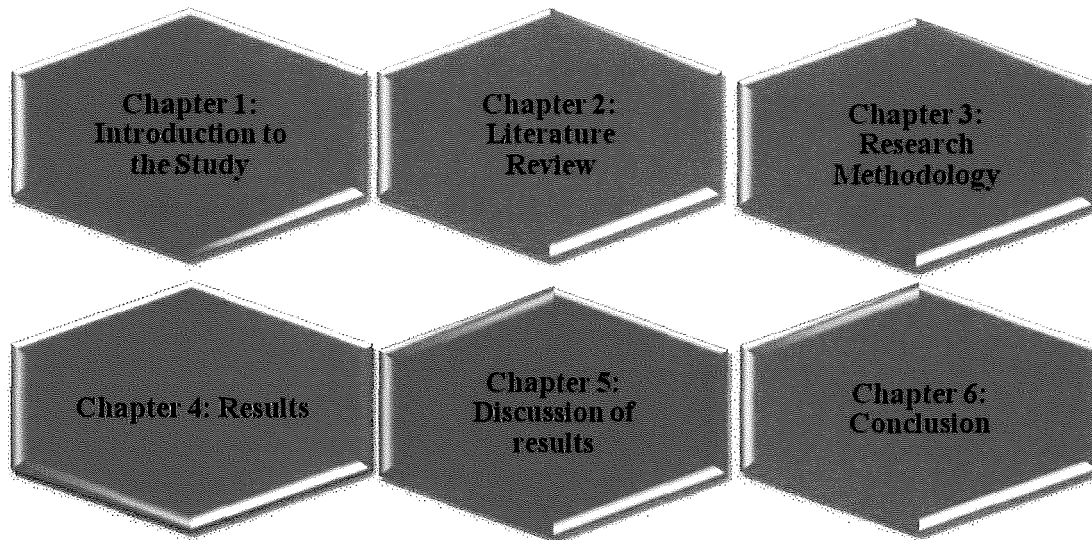


Figure 4-1: Chapter 4 in Context

This chapter presents the results obtained from the data analysis done by means of SPSS as per the research design and methodology discussed in Chapter 3. This chapter includes all results obtained from the empirical statistical tests run on the data with regards to the objectives set for the study together with the applicable hypotheses.

This chapter is structured in three distinct phases:

- **Phase 1:** The presentation of the sample demographics and descriptive
- **Phase 2:** Analysis of the data measurement instruments, Talent Management Practices, Work Engagement and Service quality
- **Phase 3:** Hypotheses testing

Following is the presentation on the demographics of the sample used in this research study presented as phase one of data analysis.

4.2 PHASE 1: SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

The following section shows the demographics of the sample group used in this study with regards to the biographical information supplied by the respondents. Support staff was identified as the units of analysis for this study. The specific characteristics and attributes of the units of analysis that were collected through primary data collection are firstly the functions support staff work for (e.g. Human Resources, Supply Chain Management, Finance, Safety, Health, Maintenance Information Technology, different faculties, etc.) and then their department within the specific function (Payroll, Creditors, Human Resource, Procurement, etc.). By stating one of these, the researcher was able to determine which function had the highest levels of Talent Management, Work engagement and Service Quality and which department in that function has the highest level.

The sampling techniques utilised in the study resulted in a diverse group of respondents. Two hundred (200) questionnaires were sent out to all support personnel in the University. (65) Questionnaires were originally received, but only sixty were useable (60), giving a final response rate of 33%. The following section provides more insight into the biographical composition of the sample group.

4.2.1 GENDER

Table 4-1 represents the gender distribution of the sample group. It is apparent that female respondents are the minority 48.3%, with male respondents accounting for 51.7% of the sample group.

Table 4-1: Frequency Distribution for Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	31	51.7	51.7	51.7
	Female	29	48.3	48.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

4.2.2 HOME LANGUAGE

It is clearly demonstrated from Table 4-2 below that 55% of respondents speak indigenous languages as their home language, 20% speak English and the remaining 25% speak other languages that were not listed in the questionnaire.

Table 4-2: Frequency Distribution for Home Language

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Setswana	33	55.0	55.0	55.0
	English	12	20.0	20.0	75.0
	Other	15	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

4.2.3 ETHNICITY

Table 4-3 below shows the various ethnicities were represented by respondents in the present study, with the largest proportions of respondents being African (71.7%) and (28.3%) were other respondents which represented Indians, Coloured and whites.

Table 4-3: Frequency Distribution for Ethnicity

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	African	43	71.7	71.7	71.7
	Other	17	28.3	28.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

4.2.4 AGE

Table 4-4 below indicated that 30% of the respondents in this study were aged between 20-29 years old. This was followed by 26.7% of the respondents being between the ages of 30 years and 39 years old. The results further showed that 23.3% of the respondents were between the ages of 40 and 49 years, with the minority of the respondents between the ages of 50 years and above (12%).

Table 4-4: Frequency Distribution for Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20-29	18	30.0	30.0	30.0
	30-39	16	26.7	26.7	56.7
	40-49	14	23.3	23.3	80.0
	50 and more	12	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

4.2.5 EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION

As Table 4-5 indicates, it is with no doubt to say that 35% of the respondents have diploma as their highest qualification. This is followed by 26.7% of the employees having obtained a Bachelor degree and 25% have Post-graduate degrees which includes Honours, Master and Doctorate degrees in different fields of study, and 13.3% of the respondents only acquired matric certificates. This shows that the majority of the respondents have diploma, which further shows an improved literacy rate of the respondents.

Table 4-5: Frequency Distribution for Educational Qualification

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Grade 12	8	13.3	13.3	13.3
	Diploma	21	35.0	35.0	48.3
	Bachelor	16	26.7	26.7	75.0
	Post-graduate	15	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

4.2.6 YEARS OF WORK EXPERIENCE

The biographical information also took into consideration the number of years of work experience the respondents had. It is clearly shown from Table 4-6 above that 56.7 % of the respondents have been working for a period of between zero and ten years, while the remaining 43.3% have a period between eleven years and more in the working environment.

Table 4-6: Frequency Distribution for Years of Work Experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-10 years	34	56.7	56.7	56.7
	11 years and more	26	43.3	43.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

4.2.7 YEARS OF WORK EXPERIENCE WITH CURRENT EMPLOYER

According to Table 4-7 below, the majority of the respondents (81.7%) had zero to ten years of work experience with their current employer, while to lesser extent 18.3% of the respondents have work been with the current organisation for 11 years and more.

Table 4-7: Frequency Distribution for Years of Work Experience with Current Employer

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-10 years	49	81.7	81.7	81.7
	11 years and more	11	18.3	18.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

4.2.8 CHANCES OF PROMOTION

Table 4-8 above shows that 66.7% of the respondents had zero chance of promotion during their period of employment with the current employer. Furthermore the above table indicated that 16.7% of the respondents had two chances of promotion during their period of employment with the current employer. 10% of the respondents had got three chances of promotion while 6.7% of the respondents had one chance of getting promoted within the current organisation.

Table 4-8: Frequency Distribution for chances of Promotion

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	40	66.7	66.7	66.7
	1	4	6.7	6.7	73.3
	2	10	16.7	16.7	90.0
	3	6	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

4.2.9 HOURS WORKED PER WEEK

The biographical information also considered the number of hours the respondents worked per week. Table 4-10 indicates that 60% of the respondents worked between 0 to 40 hours per week, while 40% of the respondents worked between 40 hours and more per week.

Table 4-9: Frequency Distribution of the Hours worked Per Week

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	0-40 hours	36	60.0	60.0	63.3
	40 hours and more	24	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

4.2.10 FULL ANNUAL LEVEL ENTITLED USED

The final biographical question enquired about the participants annual leave entitlement used. Table 4.10 above shows that the majority of the respondents, 53.3%, stated that they sometimes use all of their annual leave entitlement, while 26.7% of the participants stated that they always use their full entitlement of annual leave while 20% of the respondents mentioned that they never use their full entitlement of annual leave.

Table 4-10: Frequency Distribution of Full Annual Level Entitled Used

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	12	20.0	20.0	20.0

	2	32	53.3	53.3	73.3
	3	16	26.7	26.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

4.3 PHASE 2: RESULTS PERTAINING TO THE MEASUREMENTS

The following section reports on the results obtained from the measuring instruments used in this study: Human capital measure of Talent Management Practices, Work Engagement and Service Quality. Each measure is discussed in terms of its adequacy for analysis, factor analyses, reliability and descriptive statistics.

4.3.1 RESULTS: HUMAN CAPITAL MEASURE OF TALENT MANAGEMENT-CURRENT STATUS

The emphasis in this section is placed on the statistical analysis of talent management practices data to determine the level at which the organisation values talent management practices. This is also used to determine the reliability of the instrument and data received from using the instrument. To achieve this outcome the following statistical techniques were implemented:

4.3.1.1 Sample adequacy and Sphericity

The Sampling Adequacy and Sphericity of the inter-item correlation matrix was determined by applying the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for the Human Capital Index – Current Status. Due to the low number of responses, the researcher did a factor analyses for each individual factor as measured by the Human Capital Index. The results of the KMO for the Dimensions of the Human Capital Index are presented in Table 4-11 below.

Table 4-11: KMO and Bartlett's test of inter-item correlation

	KMO	Approx. Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
Management Commitment	.801	238.790	10	.000
Talent Review Process	.874	174.398	10	.000

Workforce Planning	.769	218.389	10	.000
Staffing	.707	96.326	6	.000
Talent Acquisition	.768	121.390	6	.000
Talent Commitment	.733	119.326	6	.000
Talent Development	.873	291.875	10	.000
Performance Management	.861	190.134	10	.000
Retention Strategies	.762	105.098	6	.000

As evidenced in Table 4-11 above, the KMO measure verified the sampling adequacy for factor analysis for each of the individual factors, since the value of KMO is 0.801 which is above the 0.6 cut off point set by Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson (2010). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($p < 0.05$), indicating correlations between items were sufficiently large for a factor analysis. Thus the sample is suitable for further analysis by means of factor analysis.

4.3.1.2 Factor Analysis

An exploratory factor analysis using the Principle Component Factoring extraction method was performed on all the individual factors of the Human Capital Index which measures the current application of talent management practices. The results showed adequate variance explained for each individual factor. The item loadings were acceptable for the factors. The reliabilities for each factor ranged from acceptable to very good. The results are reported in Table 4.12 and Table 4.13 below:

Table 4-12: Total Variance Explained for HCI-Current

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings	
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	Cumulative %
Management Commitment	3.776	75.511	75.511	3.776	75.511
	.659	13.184	88.696		
	.244	4.889	93.584		
	.202	4.037	97.621		

	.119	2.379	100.000		
Talent Review Process	3.601	72.018	72.018	3.601	72.018
	.496	9.927	81.945		
	.391	7.829	89.775		
	.266	5.317	95.091		
	.245	4.909	100.000		
Workforce Planning	3.600	72.003	72.003	3.600	72.003
	.749	14.985	86.988		
	.341	6.821	93.809		
	.189	3.782	97.591		
	.120	2.409	100.000		
Staffing	2.614	65.360	65.360	2.614	65.360
	.654	16.339	81.699		
	.529	13.220	94.920		
	.203	5.080	100.000		
Talent Acquisition	2.890	72.254	72.254	2.890	72.254
	.545	13.630	85.884		
	.351	8.778	94.661		
	.214	5.339	100.000		
Talent Commitment	2.870	71.747	71.747	2.870	71.747
	.553	13.814	85.561		
	.367	9.178	94.739		
	.210	5.261	100.000		
Talent Development	4.157	83.132	83.132	4.157	83.132
	.311	6.212	89.344		
	.257	5.148	94.492		
	.180	3.598	98.091		
	.095	1.909	100.000		
Performance Management	3.679	73.575	73.575	3.679	73.575
	.538	10.769	84.343		
	.282	5.637	89.980		
	.280	5.594	95.574		
	.221	4.426	100.000		
Retention Strategies	2.737	68.434	68.434	2.737	68.434

	.672	16.793	85.227		
	.337	8.421	93.649		
	.254	6.351	100.000		

Table 4-13: Factor Matrix

	Factor Matrix	Cronbach Alpha
Management Commitment		.917
HCC1	.804	
HCC2	.914	
HCC3	.914	
HCC4	.874	
HCC5	.833	
Talent Review Process		.902
HCC6	.782	
HCC7	.861	
HCC8	.841	
HCC9	.894	
HCC10	.861	
Workforce Planning		.901
HCC11	.823	
HCC12	.909	
HCC13	.831	
HCC14	.884	
HCC15	.790	
Staffing		.822
HCC16	.692	
HCC17	.778	
HCC18	.873	
HCC19	.877	
Talent Acquisition		.871
HCC20	.851	
HCC21	.887	
HCC22	.841	

HCC23	.819	
Talent Commitment		.868
HCC24	.833	
HCC25	.851	
HCC26	.837	
HCC27	.867	
Talent Development		.948
HCC28	.892	
HCC29	.930	
HCC30	.891	
HCC31	.942	
HCC32	.902	
Performance Management		.910
HCC29	.869	
HCC30	.848	
HCC31	.885	
HCC32	.886	
HCC33	.798	
Retention Strategies		.842
HCC34	.824	
HCC35	.879	
HCC36	.877	
HCC37	.719	

4.3.2 RESULTS: HUMAN CAPITAL MEASURE OF TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES – IMPORTANCE

This section deals with talent management practices. Respondents were requested to indicate to the extent to which they perceived the importance of Talent Management Practices. The results are reported in the ensuing section. This is also used to determine the reliability of the instrument and data received from using the instrument. To achieve this outcome the following statistical techniques were implemented:

4.3.2.1 Sample adequacy and Sphericity

The Sampling Adequacy and Sphericity of the inter-item correlation matrix was determined by applying the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to the inter-item correlation matrix of the talent management practices. The results of the KMO for the talent management practices are presented in Table 4-14 below.

Table 4-14: KMO and Bartlett's test of inter-item correlation

	KMO	Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Management Commitment	.858	300.924	10	.000
Talent Review Process	.858	236.772	10	.000
Workforce Planning	.840	193.224	10	.000
Staffing	.801	110.891	6	.000
Talent Acquisition	.829	166.984	6	.000
Talent Commitment	.682	145.957	6	.000
Talent Development	.854	246.109	10	.000
Performance Management	.875	317.362	10	.000
Retention Strategies	.714	167.363	6	.000

As evidenced in Table 4-14 above, the KMO measure verified the sampling adequacy for factor analysis for each of the individual factors, since the value of KMO is 0.821 which is above the 0.6 cut off point set by Hair *et al.* (2010). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($p < 0.05$), indicating correlations between items were sufficiently large for a factor analysis. Thus the sample is suitable for further analysis by means of factor analysis.

4.3.2.2 Factor Analysis

An exploratory factor analysis using the Principle Component Factoring extraction method was performed on all the individual factors of the Human Capital Index which measures the current application of Talent Management Practices. The results showed adequate variance explained for each individual factor. The item loadings were acceptable for the factors. The reliabilities for each factor ranged from acceptable to very good. The results are reported in Table 4-15 and 4-16 below:

Table 4-15: Total Variance Explained for HCI-Importance

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings	
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	Cumulative %
Management Commitment	3.763	75.255	75.255	3.763	75.255
	.689	13.772	89.026		
	.221	4.410	93.437		
	.185	3.697	97.133		
	.143	2.867	100.000		
Talent Review Process	3.763	75.255	75.255	3.763	75.255
	.689	13.772	89.026		
	.221	4.410	93.437		
	.185	3.697	97.133		
	.143	2.867	100.000		
Workforce Planning	3.644	72.887	72.887	3.644	72.887
	.583	11.660	84.547		
	.356	7.112	91.659		
	.222	4.440	96.099		
	.195	3.901	100.000		
Staffing	2.851	71.278	71.278	2.851	71.278
	.521	13.015	84.293		
	.368	9.210	93.503		
	.260	6.497	100.000		
Talent Acquisition	3.169	79.226	79.226	3.169	79.226
	.408	10.192	89.418		
	.273	6.832	96.249		
	.150	3.751	100.000		
Talent Commitment	2.923	73.068	73.068	2.923	73.068
	.622	15.552	88.620		
	.326	8.144	96.763		
	.129	3.237	100.000		
Talent Development	3.945	78.906	78.906	3.945	78.906
	.452	9.048	87.954		

	.266	5.323	93.278		
	.203	4.064	97.342		
	.133	2.658	100.000		
Performance Management	4.201	84.022	84.022	4.201	84.022
	.360	7.207	91.228		
	.224	4.485	95.713		
	.135	2.701	98.414		
	.079	1.586	100.000		
Retention Strategies	3.101	77.517	77.517	3.101	77.517
	.505	12.635	90.152		
	.269	6.730	96.882		
	.125	3.118	100.000		

Table 4-16: Factor Matrix for HCI-Importance

	Factor Matrix	Cronbach Alpha
Management Commitment		.952
HCI1	.915	
HCI2	.917	
HCI3	.906	
HCI4	.937	
HCI5	.912	
Talent Review Process		.916
HCI6	.671	
HCI7	.907	
HCI8	.916	
HCI9	.934	
HCI10	.881	
Workforce Planning		.905
HCI11	.804	
HCI12	.900	
HCI13	.849	
HCI14	.860	

HCI15	.853	
Staffing		.862
HCI16	.876	
HCI17	.858	
HCI18	.793	
HCI19	.847	
Talent Acquisition		.907
HCI20	.907	
HCI21	.938	
HCI22	.880	
HCI23	.832	
Talent Commitment		.875
HCI24	.743	
HCI25	.891	
HCI26	.902	
HCI27	.873	
Talent Development		.948
HCI28	.858	
HCI29	.897	
HCI30	.893	
HCI31	.923	
HCI32	.870	
Performance Management		.910
HCI29	.907	
HCI30	.936	
HCI31	.952	
HCI32	.937	
HCI33	.848	
Retention Strategies		.842
HCI34	.899	
HCI35	.892	
HCI36	.900	
HCI37	.829	

4.3.2.3 Descriptive statistics and reliabilities of talent management practices

The descriptive statistics of talent management practices are reported in Table 4-17 below. Standard Deviation values for group range between 0.449 and 0.937, indicating a relatively small degree of dispersion. A five-point scale ranging from “Poor (1) to Excellent (5)” was used. The mean values for the respondents ranged between 1.7477 and 2.9327. The results in Table 4-17 clearly show that the respondents perceive that talent management practices are applied below average. The Talent Management practices that seemed most problematic included a lack of retention strategies, talent review processes, management commitment towards talent management and poor performance management systems. The respondents view that all talent management practices as important. The most important talent management practices were highlighted as talent acquisition and retention strategies.

The largest gaps between current applications were observed between Talent Review Process, Retention Practices, Talent Development, and Management Commitment. The results further also showed that significant differences exist between current Management Commitment towards talent management practices as well as the importance thereof. Significant differences were also found between the current application and importance of Talent Review Processes and Retention Strategies.

Table 4-17: Descriptive Statistics for HCI

	Mean		Mean	<i>p</i>
	Current	Importance	Difference	
Management Commitment	2.0528	4.2500	-2.1972	0.000**
Talent Review Process	1.8385	4.3688	-2.5303	0.029**
Workforce Planning	2.1944	4.3505	-2.1560	0.668
Staffing	2.9327	4.2840	-1.3512	0.201
Talent Acquisition	2.5324	4.4174	-1.8850	0.340
Talent Development	2.1147	4.4236	-2.3089	0.919
Performance Management	2.0789	4.3431	-2.2642	0.263
Retention Strategies	1.7477	4.4051	-2.6574	0.005**

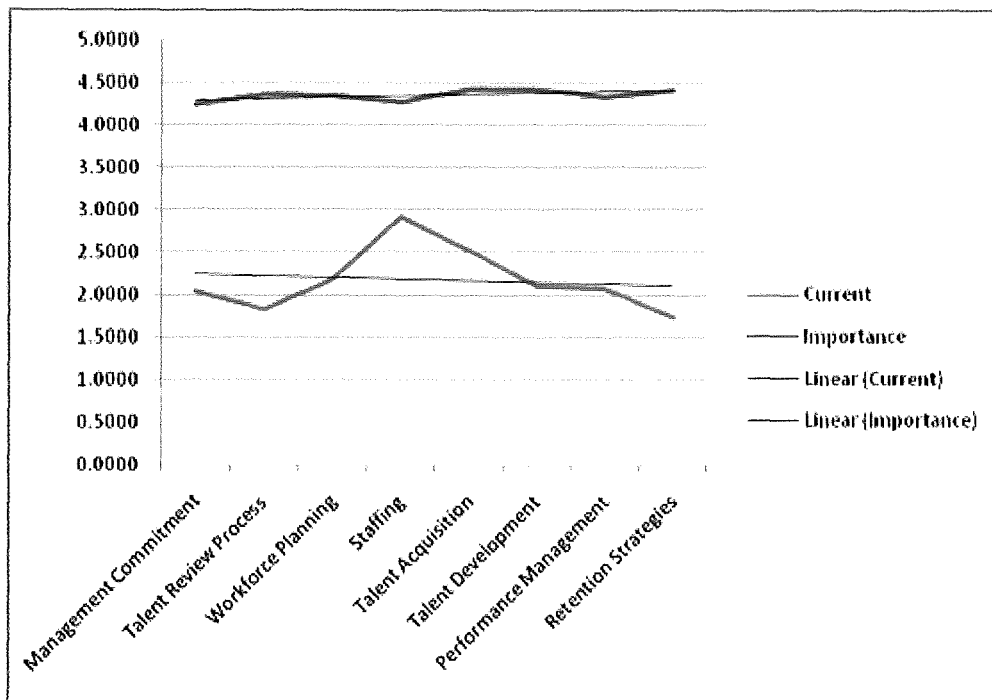


Figure 4-2: Current versus importance of talent management practices

4.3.2.4 Summary of Results

To conclude the information presented in the preceding section, the results of the statistical analysis of the talent management Items can be summarised as follows:

- The KMO of the Sampling Adequacy and Sphericity inter-item correlation was at a great level and there was a significant correlation between the items according to the Bartlett's test.
- The variance for each factor and item loadings were acceptable
- The reliabilities ranged between acceptable and excellent.
- The current application of talent management practices are below average
- All talent management practices were viewed as highly important as perceived by the respondents
- The results indicate that there was a large gap between the current application of talent management practices and level of importance with regards to talent management practices.
- The largest gaps between current applications were observed between Talent Review Process, Retention Practices, Talent Development, and Management Commitment

- Significant gaps existed between the current application and importance of Management Commitment, Talent Review Processes and Talent Retention Strategies.

4.3.3 RESULTS: UTRECHT WORK ENGAGEMENT SCALE

This section deals with the employee/work engagement. Respondents were requested to indicate to the extent to which they personally evaluate how they feel about their jobs. The results are reported in the ensuring section. This is also used to determine the reliability of the instrument and data received from using the instrument. To achieve this outcome the following statistical techniques were implemented:

4.3.3.1 Sample adequacy and Sphericity

The Sampling Adequacy and Sphericity of the inter-item correlation matrix was determined by applying the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to the inter-item correlation matrix of work engagement. The results of the KMO for work engagement are presented in Table 4-13 below.

Table 4-18: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Work Engagement

	KMO	Approx. Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
Vigour	.868	185.292	10	.000
Dedication	.871	280.700	15	.000
Absorption	.883	343.636	15	.000

As evidenced in Table 4-19 above, the KMO measure verified the sampling adequacy for factor analysis for each of the individual factors, since the value of KMO is 0.627 which is above the 0.6 cut off point set by Hair *et al.* (2010). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($p < 0.05$), indicating correlations between items were sufficiently large for a factor analysis. Thus the sample is suitable for further analysis by means of factor analysis.

4.3.3.2 Factor Analysis

An exploratory factor analysis using the Principle Component Factoring extraction method was performed on all the individual factors of the work engagement which includes Vigour, Dedication and Absorption. The results showed adequate variance explained for each individual factor. The item loadings were acceptable for the factors. The reliabilities for each factor ranged from acceptable to very good. The results are reported in Table 4.19 and 4-20 below.

Table 4-19: Total Variance Explained for Work Engagement Scale

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings	
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	Cumulative %
Vigour	3.556	71.127	71.127	3.556	71.127
	.690	13.800	84.927		
	.305	6.104	91.032		
	.226	4.524	95.556		
	.222	4.444	100.000		
Dedication	4.364	72.738	72.738	4.364	72.738
	.682	11.366	84.104		
	.413	6.878	90.982		
	.234	3.892	94.874		
	.164	2.729	97.603		
	.144	2.397	100.000		
Absorption	4.726	78.762	78.762	4.726	78.762
	.504	8.401	87.162		
	.348	5.802	92.964		
	.169	2.818	95.783		
	.144	2.397	98.180		
	.109	1.820	100.000		

Table 4-20: Factor Matrix

	Factor Matrix	Cronbach Alpha
Vigour		.895
WE1	.642	
WE2	.902	
WE3	.869	
WE4	.887	
WE5	.889	
Dedication		.923
WE6	.873	
WE7	.924	
WE8	.898	
WE9	.811	
WE10	.861	
WE11	.737	
Absorption		.946
WE12	.907	
WE13	.798	
WE14	.923	
WE15	.887	
WE16	.919	
WE17	.885	

4.3.3.3 Descriptive Statistics of Employee/Work Engagement

The descriptive statistics for employee engagement are reported in Table 4-22 below. Standard Deviation values for group range between 1.58488 and 1.69785, indicating a relatively small degree of dispersion. A seven-point scale ranging from “Never (0) to Everyday (6)” was used. The mean values for the respondents ranged between 3.4917 and 3.5806. This indicates that respondents tended to have answers which fell on the middle of the range. This indicates that the respondents only displayed average levels of work engagement.

Table 4-21: Descriptive Statistics for Work Engagement

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Vigour	3.5033	1.58488	-.198	-.594
Dedication	3.5806	1.56663	-.194	-.925
Absorption	3.4917	1.69785	-.406	-.740

4.3.3.4 Summary of Results

To conclude the information presented in the preceding section, the results of the statistical analysis of the Work/Employee Engagement Scale can be summarised as follows:

- The KMO of the Sampling Adequacy and Sphericity inter-item correlation was at a great level and there was a significant correlation between the items according to the Bartlett's test.
- The variance explained for each individual factor and item loadings were acceptable.
- The overall value of Cronbach's Alpha indicates an acceptable reliability for the Work Engagement Scale.

4.3.4 RESULTS: SERVQUAL

This section deals with the 22 items of service quality. Respondents were requested to indicate to the extent to which they personally evaluate the individual factors of service quality which consists of Assurance, Responsiveness, Reliability, Tangibles and Empathy. The results are reported in the ensuing section. This is also used to determine the reliability of the instrument and data received from using the instrument. To achieve this outcome the following statistical techniques were implemented:

4.3.4.1 Sample adequacy and Sphericity

The Sampling Adequacy and Sphericity of the inter-item correlation matrix was determined by applying the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to the inter-item correlation matrix of the

SERVQUAL. The results of the KMO for Service Quality aspects are presented in Table 4-22 below.

Table 4-22: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Service Quality

	KMO	Approx. Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
Assurance	.803	114.843	6	.000
Responsiveness	.831	250.751	10	.000
Reliability	.767	188.220	10	.000
Tangibles	.809	110.039	6	.000
Empathy	.652	169.572	6	.000

As evidenced in Table 4-23 above, the KMO measure verified the sampling adequacy for factor analysis for each of the individual factors, since the value of KMO is 0.824 which is above the 0.6 cut off point set by Hair *et al.* (2010). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($p < 0.05$), indicating correlations between items were sufficiently large for a factor analysis. Thus the sample is suitable for further analysis by means of factor analysis.

4.3.4.2 Factor Analysis

An exploratory factor analysis using the Principle Component Factoring extraction method was performed on all the individual factors of Servqual. The results showed adequate variance explained for each individual factor. The item loadings were acceptable for the factors. The reliabilities for each factor ranged from acceptable to very good. The results are reported in Tables 4-23 and 4-24 below

Table 4-23: Total Variance Explained for Service Quality

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings	
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	Cumulative %
Assurance	2.861	71.528	71.528	2.861	71.528
	.491	12.271	83.799		

	.427	10.674	94.473		
	.221	5.527	100.000		
Responsiveness	3.933	78.666	78.666	3.933	78.666
	.490	9.794	88.460		
	.256	5.115	93.575		
	.203	4.063	97.638		
	.118	2.362	100.000		
Reliability	3.469	69.373	69.373	3.469	69.373
	.704	14.073	83.446		
	.415	8.297	91.744		
	.292	5.837	97.581		
	.121	2.419	100.000		
Tangibles	2.841	71.030	71.030	2.841	71.030
	.527	13.179	84.210		
	.374	9.358	93.568		
	.257	6.432	100.000		
Empathy	3.015	75.368	75.368	3.015	75.368
	.566	14.141	89.509		
	.330	8.239	97.749		
	.090	2.251	100.000		

Table 4-24: Factor Matrix for Service Quality

	Factor Matrix	Cronbach Alpha
Assurance		.856
SO1	.789	
SO2	.899	
SO3	.876	
SO4	.813	
Responsiveness		.929
SO5	.906	
SO6	.902	
SO7	.890	
SO8	.890	
SO9	.846	

Reliability		.887
SO10	.832	
SO11	.747	
SO12	.822	
SO13	.852	
SO14	.902	
Tangibles		.852
SO15	.777	
SO16	.899	
SO17	.834	
SO18	.856	
Empathy		.885
SO19	.750	
SO20	.915	
SO21	.917	
SO22	.880	

4.3.4.3 Descriptive Statistics and Reliabilities of Service Quality

The descriptive statistics of Service Quality are reported in Table 4-26 below. Standard Deviation value was between 5.1300 and 5.2593. The skewness value was between 1.104 and 1.432. The kurtosis value was between 1.100 and 2.661. A six-point response scale ranging from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree” was utilised. The mean value for the respondents was between 5.1300 and 5.2583. On average the respondents agreed with most of the 22 statements of Service Quality.

Table 4-25: Descriptive Statistics of Service Quality

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Assurance	5.1917	.74981	-1.432	2.661
Responsiveness	5.1300	.71575	-1.104	1.863
Reliability	5.2000	.71781	-1.149	1.306
Tangibles	5.2333	.75193	-1.140	1.100
Empathy	5.2583	.75628	-1.260	1.648

4.3.4.4 Summary of Results

To conclude the information presented in the preceding section (section 4.3), the results of the statistical analysis of service quality can be summarised as follows:

- The KMO of the Sampling Adequacy and Sphericity inter-item correlation was at a great level and there was a significant correlation between the items according to the Bartlett's test.
- The overall value of Cronbach's Alpha indicates a very good reliability for the service quality.
- The mean value for the respondents was between 5.1300 and 5.2583.

4.4 PHASE 3 TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

This section reports on the results of the hypotheses. Three main hypotheses were set for this research. The results are reported in the section that follows.

4.4.1 HYPOTHESIS 1

H_a1: There is a significant positive relationship between the current application of talent management and employee engagement

The results of the correlation analyses between talent management and employee engagement are reported in Table 4-26 below.

Table 4-26: Correlation Analyses between Talent Management and Employee Engagement

	Current Application			Importance		
	Vigour	Dedication	Absorption	Vigour	Dedication	Absorption
Management Commitment	.429**	.362**	.397**	.108	.074	.076
Talent Review Process	.333**	.303*	.326*	.327*	.210	.254
Workforce Planning	.201	.217	.223	.137	.101	.116
Staffing	.091	.116	.153	.423**	.355**	.414**
Talent Acquisition	.143	.225	.245	.222	.219	.222

Talent Commitment	.328*	.341**	.378**	.193	.168	.150
Talent Development	.344**	.354**	.381**	.227	.135	.199
Performance Management	.268*	.294*	.332**	.169	.036	.122
Talent Retention	.116	.155	.166	.364**	.273*	.328*

The results in Table 4-26 show that the current application of Talent Management Dimensions of Management Commitment, Talent Review Process, Talent Commitment, Talent Development were positively significantly related to all dimensions of employee engagement (all medium effects). Performance Management was significantly positively related to Vigour and Dedication (small effects) and Absorption (medium effects). The results further showed the importance of Talent Review Processes was significantly positively related to vigour (medium effect). Staffing was positively significantly related to the all the dimensions of vigour (all medium effects). Talent Retention is positively significantly related to Vigour and Absorption (medium effects) and Dedication (small effect).

Based on the above results Hypothesis 1 is partially accepted.

4.4.2 HYPOTHESIS 2

There is a significant relationship between the current application of Talent Management and Service quality

The results of the correlation analyses between talent management and service quality are reported in Table 4-27 below.

Table 4-27: Correlation Analyses between Talent Management and Service Quality

	Current					Importance				
	Assurance	Response	Reliability	Tangibility	Empathy	Assurance	Response	Reliability	Tangibility	Empathy

Management Commitment	.057	-.001	.055	-.050	-.053	.286*	.251	.260*	.237	.04
Talent Review Process	-.017	-.069	-.029	-.051	-.059	.222	.161	.188	.175	.02
Workforce Planning	-.006	-.061	-.001	.012	-.021	.220	.141	.165	.126	.08
Staffing	.099	.063	.108	.081	.054	.399**	.293*	.324*	.383**	.23
Talent Acquisition	.170	.139	.160	.089	.111	.488**	.400**	.420**	.444**	.32
Talent Development	.194	.109	.105	.107	.105	.274*	.210	.228	.230	.14
Performance Management	.141	.098	.107	.110	.109	.183	.219	.219	.220	-.02
Retention Strategies	.102	.036	.035	.086	.010	.113	.191	.168	.172	-.03

The results in Table 4-27 show no significant relationship between the current application of talent management and the service quality dimensions. The results further showed a significant positive relationship between some of the importance of the talent management practices and service quality dimensions. Management Commitment was significantly positively related to reliable (small effect). Staffing was positively significantly related to Assurance, Reliable and Tangibles (medium effects) and responsiveness (small effect). Talent Acquisition is positively significantly related to all the dimensions of service quality (all medium effects). Talent Development is positively significantly related to Assurance (small effect).

Based on the above results Hypothesis 2 is partially accepted.

4.4.3 HYPOTHESIS 3

H_{a3}: There is a significant positive significant relationship between employee engagement and service quality

The results of the correlation analyses between the employee engagement and service quality dimensions are reported in Table 4-28 below.

Table 4-28: Correlation Analyses between Employee/Work Engagement and Service Quality

	Assurance	Responsiveness	Reliability	Tangibles	Empathy
Vigour	.272*	.272*	.231	.231	.155
Dedication	.284*	.240	.234	.232	.190
Absorption	.282*	.262*	.235	.251	.167

The results in Table 4-28 shows that all three dimensions of work engagement are significantly positively related to the Assurance Dimensions of Service Quality. The effects were small. Vigour and Absorption was significantly positively related to Responsiveness (small effects). No significant differences were found between the work engagement dimensions and the service quality dimensions of reliability, tangibles and empathy.

Based on the above results Hypothesis 3 is partially accepted.

4.4.4 Summary of Results

To conclude the information presented in the preceding section, the results of the statistical analysis of the relationship between Talent Management, Work Engagement and Service Quality can be summarised as follows:

- There is a statistically significant relationship between the Talent Management Dimensions of Management Commitment, Talent Review Process, Talent Commitment, Talent Development and all dimensions of work engagement based on the results of a Correlation analysis. Thus the more an organisation focuses on talent management practices the more employees become more engaged to their jobs.
- According to the results of a Correlation Analysis it has been determined that there is no significant relationship between the current application of talent management and the service quality dimensions. The results further showed a significant positive relationship between some of the importance of the Talent Management Practices and service quality dimensions.

- Based on the results of a Correlation Analysis there is a statistically significant relationship between all three dimensions of work engagement and the Assurance Dimensions of Service Quality

4.4.5 CONCLUSION

This section presented the results of the statistical analysis carried out on measures of the relationship between talent management, employee engagement and the service quality. The presentation on the demographics of the sample used in this research study was presented as phase one of data analysis. This was followed by a presentation of the statistical findings for the relationships between the different concepts which were explored in this study.

The next chapter will encompass a discussion of the implications of the statistical results presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

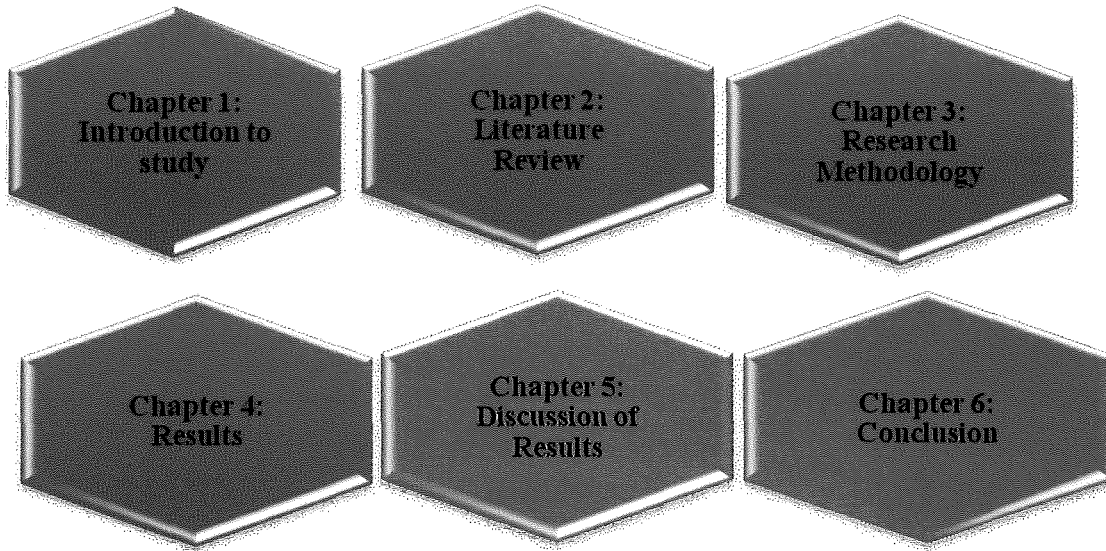


Figure 5-1: Chapter 5 in Context

This chapter presents the discussion and interpretation of the results presented in chapter 4. As stated in the purpose statement of this study, this quantitative study has the purpose of investigating the relationship between talent management, employee engagement and service quality of support staff in a Higher Education Institution. The statistical methods of data analysis were applied, and results thereof were reported in the previous chapter. This chapter focuses on the discussion of the obtained results per each research objective achieved. From the main research objective the following specific research objectives were added based on the measurements in this study:

- To determine the current level of talent management practices of support staff
- To determine the level of importance of talent management practices as perceived by the support staff
- To determine the extent to which there is a gap between the current level of talent management practices and the importance thereof as perceived by the support staff
- To determine the current level of employee engagement of support staff

- To determine the current level of service quality provided by support staff
- To determine the interactive relationship between the current application of talent management practices and employee engagement of support staff
- To determine the interactive relationship between current application of talent management practices and service quality of support staff
- To determine the interactive relationship between current level of employee engagement and service quality of support staff

In what follows next, the results of the research are discussed per research objective.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.2.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 1: TO DETERMINE THE CURRENT APPLICATION OF TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF SUPPORT STAFF

The results showed that employees perceived that in general talent management practices are only moderately applied in the organisation. The talent management practices that seemed most problematic included Talent Review Process, Retention Strategies, Performance Management and Management Commitment. The results are in line with previous research that suggests that Talent Management practices are only fairly to moderately applied in South African organisations (Barkhuizen & Stanz, 2010; Du Plessis et al. 2010; Pienaar & Barkhuizen, 2012; Stanz, Barkhuizen & Welby-Cooke, 2012; Barkhuizen & Veldtman, 2012).

Human Capital Institute (2008) supports the above statement and states that, the majority of companies report having essential processes for talent management in place, such as basic workforce planning, development programs for high potential employees, and succession planning. However, few consistently execute these programs across the entire organisation. While (69%) of companies say they conduct workforce planning across all divisions and business units, fewer than (15%) do so consistently. Furthermore, only 21% of companies consistently integrate talent practices across the organisation (Human Capital Institute, 2008).

The results of shown on Talent Review Process, Retention Strategies, Performance Management and Management Commitment are all very concerning and have a critical impact in the organisation success. As previous researchers indicate below:

5.2.1.1 Talent Review process

The results showed that the organisation poorly conduct meetings in which they plan the business needs of the organisation, they also fail to identify potential and to develop career needs of employees in order to develop a comprehensive Talent Management Plan. Talent Review meetings are conducted for the purpose of developing a clear talent management strategy and to increase awareness of available talent and successors (Du Plessis, 2010).

5.2.1.2 Retention Strategies

Succession management is a proactive approach to managing talent as it involves identification of high potentials for anticipated future needs and the tailored development of these people so that there is a talent pool or leadership pipeline available to meet organisational demands as they arise. Others have argued that succession planning management should be extended to all employees, including those at or below team leader level, given the retention value of offering development opportunities as well as the increase in profitability associated with a competent and motivated workforce (Page Up People , 2009). It has been shown that organisations with high quality leadership development programs and formal succession management programs have superior business results (Bernthal & Wellins, 2006)

5.2.1.3 Performance Management

The results showed that the organisation fails in the assessment of individual contribution, assessment of individual competency, assessment of individual ability and the identification of individual aspirations in order to channel their energy to where they are most likely to be focused. This means that the organisation has no credible assessment of employee contribution to organisational performance. Caldwell (2000) states that the low levels of performance management will lead to among other things, poor performance, high turnover, employee absenteeism, poor communication between employees and management, less employee self-

management, and increased employee dissatisfaction. However, according to a study conducted by Watson Wyatt, Only 30% of workers felt their company's performance management system helps them improve their performance. Performance management is consistently one of the lowest rated areas in employee satisfaction surveys conducted around the world (Pulakos, 2009).

5.2.1.4 Management Commitment

Talent management is considered a collective business that requires the engagement, commitment, and accountability from managers. No strategy can be successful without the support of senior leadership. In the past, HR struggled to convince business leaders to invest their time and money in talent management (Human Capital Institute, 2008).

Senior management plays a key role in creating a culture that supports talent development. During the survey conducted by Human Capital Institute survey 92% of respondents agreed that their senior leaders see superior talent as providing a vital competitive advantage (Human Capital Institute, 2008). The process should be supported by all employees within the organisation including management at all levels (Schweyer, 2004). Without the support, the talent management process will result in failure.

5.2.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 2: TO DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE OF TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AS PERCEIVED BY THE SUPPORT STAFF

The results from chapter four showed that the levels of importance of Talent management practices are high as perceived by the employees in the organisation. The Talent Management Practices that seemed the highest in terms of importance included Retention Strategies, Talent Development, Talent Acquisition and Talent Review Process. The results of this study are in line with previous research studies that the level of importance of Talent Management Practices is either high or critical in South African organisations (Barkhuizen, 2013; Barkhuizen & Veldtman, 2012).

5.2.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 3: TO DETERMINE THE EXTENT TO WHICH THERE IS A GAP BETWEEN THE CURRENT LEVEL OF TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND THE IMPORTANCE THEREOF AS PERCEIVED BY THE SUPPORT STAFF

The results showed that there is a large gap between the current applications of talent management practices within the organisation compared to the employee's perceptions of the importance of the talent management practices. The largest gaps were observed between Talent Retention Strategies, Talent Review Process, Talent Development, Performance Management and Workforce Planning. The results confirm the results of previous studies where large gaps were also perceived between the current application of talent management practices and the importance thereof (Barkhuizen & Veldtman, 2012).

The reasons for the gaps may be that the strategies that organisations are adopting to manage their talented people remain uneven and lack innovation. The major problem is that talent management process is typically delivered as a set of uneven individual human resource intervention rather than an integrated continuous process. The increasing focus on talent management is undermined because many organisations are delivering it using the mindset and tools of the past. Organisations are also failing to identify and manage talent in other areas such as customer management or key specialists where their competitive value to the business can be major (Deb, 2005).

5.2.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 4: TO DETERMINE THE CURRENT LEVEL OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF

The results were acquired on each of the three individual factors of employee engagement, namely, vigour, dedication, and absorption, and the results showed that the respondents mostly agreed with all the statements of the above factors, therefore this shows that the current level of employees' engagement to their jobs is good.

Aon Hewitt, surveyed 75 organizations across sub-Saharan Africa, using an engagement model and found that Employee engagement scores are higher in sub-Saharan Africa than other regions of the world. The survey was based on the following dimensions: quality of life, work, people, opportunities, total rewards and

company practices. Within these dimensions, perceptions of work, and relationships with management and career opportunities were the most concerning (Hewitt Associates, 2004).

Gallup Business Journal (2006) found a critical relationship between employee engagement, customer loyalty, business growth and profitability. The International Survey Research (ISR) team has similarly found evidence that organisations can only reach success through emotionally engaging employees and customers. In an extension of the Gallup findings, Ott, Blacksmith and Royal (2007) cites Gallup research, which found that higher employee engagement predicts higher earnings per share (EPS) among publicly-traded businesses. When compared with competitors at the same business level, organisations with more than four engaged employees for every one actively disengaged, experienced 2.6 times more growth in EPS than organisations with a ratio of slightly less than one engaged worker for every one actively disengaged employee.

5.2.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 5: TO DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF SERVICE QUALITY PROVIDED BY SUPPORT STAFF

The results from chapter four showed the extent to which employees in the organisation agree with the 22 statements which falls under 6 categories of service quality, and those categories includes Assurance, Responsiveness, Reliability, Tangibles and Empathy. The results showed that respondents mostly agreed with the statements of being keen to assist customers and provide prompt service, being helpful and having undivided attention, and having the ability to assure clients good quality.

As compared to a study conducted by Kabir & Carlsson, (2010) which explored the service quality at a certain organisation, the results showed that the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately was rated as number one. The results showed the willingness to help and provide prompt service came second. The knowledge and courtesy of personnel and their ability to express trust and confidence, was rated as number three and the appearance of the company such as physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication material was rated as number four.

5.2.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 6: TO DETERMINE THE INTERACTIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CURRENT APPLICATION OF TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF

The results show that the current application of Talent Management Dimensions of Management Commitment, Talent Review Process, Talent Commitment, Talent Development were positively significantly related to all dimensions of work engagement (all medium effects). Performance Management was significantly positively related to Vigour and Dedication (small effects) and Absorption (medium effects). The results further showed the importance of Talent Review Processes was significantly positively related to vigour (medium effect). Staffing was positively significantly related to the all the dimensions of vigour (all medium effects). Talent Retention is positively significantly related to Vigour and Absorption (medium effects) and Dedication (small effect).

Previous research by Carter, Galinsky & Families and Work Institute (2008) also found that employees reported more positive views of their job, company, and a greater sense of responsibility for doing a good job when they were satisfied with the talent management practices provided at their company. Furthermore Carter, Galinsky et al (2008) and Glen (2006) also believes that employee engagement is a crucial and pivotal factor to the retention of talent.

These results confirmed Hypothesis 1.

5.2.7 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 7: TO DETERMINE THE INTERACTIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CURRENT APPLICATION OF TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND SERVICE QUALITY OF SUPPORT STAFF

The results of the above objective indicated that there is no significant relationship between the current application of talent management and the service quality dimensions. The results further showed a significant positive relationship between some of the importance of the Talent Management Practices and service quality dimensions. Management Commitment was significantly positively related to reliable (small effect). Staffing was positively significantly related to Assurance, Reliable and Tangibles (medium effects) and responsiveness (small effect). Talent Acquisition is

positively significantly related to all the dimensions of service quality (all medium effects). Talent Development is positively significantly related to Assurance (small effect).

However, Lee-Ross & Pryce (2010) implies, that there is a link between service quality and talent development of employees, hence, Hall (1975) cited in (Lashley 2002), emphasize employees who are not trained to serve customers usually have low staff morale and this can have a direct impact on the delivery of service quality.

5.2.8 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 8: TO DETERMINE THE INTERACTIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CURRENT LEVEL OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE QUALITY OF SUPPORT STAFF

The results for the above objective showed that all three dimensions of work engagement are significantly positively related to the Assurance Dimensions of Service Quality. Vigour and Absorption was significantly positively related to Responsiveness. No significant differences were found between the work engagement dimensions and the service quality dimensions of reliability, tangibles and empathy.

A qualitative study found that service-oriented workers who experienced higher levels of engagement provide better customer service, such as giving effective answers and being patient with customers' constantly changing requests (Engelbrecht, 2006). Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, (2002) further indicate that a study of 7939 business units found that, employees whose engagement level was above the median had a 70% higher rate of success than those whose engagement was below the median). However, Parker and Griffin (2011) disagree and argues that engagement and behavior must be considered as individual aspects because engagement does not always lead to high performance. In fact, they suggest that engaged employees who does not have the necessary knowledge and skills may not perform effectively.

5.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided a detailed discussion of the results of the research based on the research objectives that were formulated. The results in short showed that talent

management practices are only moderately applied in the organisation and that a large gap exists between current application and perceived importance of the practices. The results also showed that the current level of employees' engagement to their jobs is good, and a high percentage of them agreed to provide quality service. Significant relationships were found between talent management, employee engagement, and service quality.

The following chapter provides an overview of the research study in its entirety, and will discuss the conclusions, limitations and possible future research areas associated with the study.

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CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

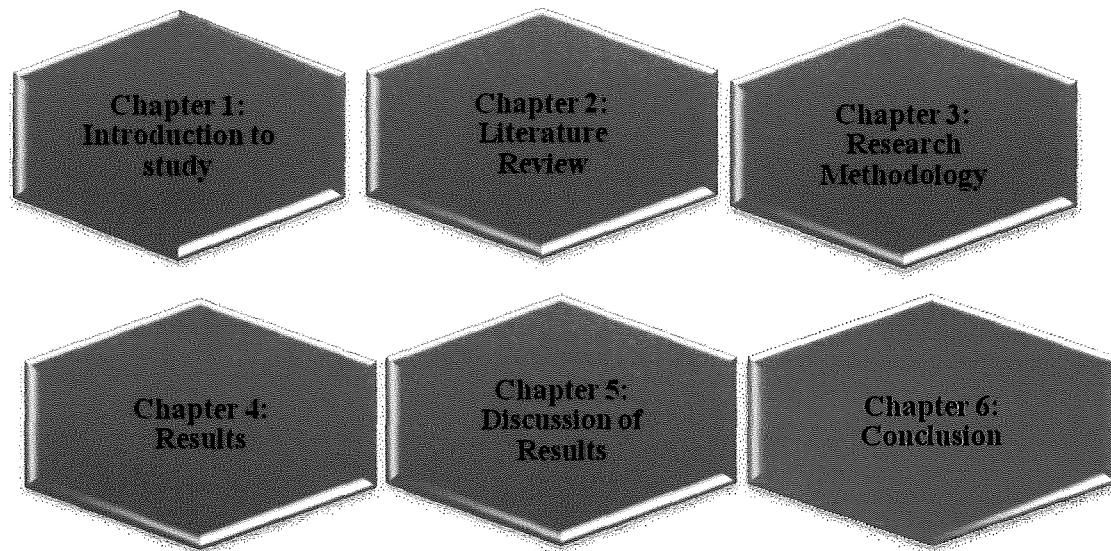


Figure 6-1: Chapter 6 in Context

This final chapter presents a summary of the whole study. The discussion of the significance of the study, findings gathered from the literature as well as empirical results is offered. The limitations of the study are also discussed and recommendations are made for further study on the topic.

6.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The following section discusses the purpose of the study, the main research objectives in the study and finally it will give an overview of the contents of the study.

6.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between talent management, employee engagement and service quality of support staff in a SA Higher Education Institution

6.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study were:

- To determine the current level of talent management practices in the organisation
- To determine the level of importance of talent management practices as perceived by the employees
- To determine the extent to which there is a gap between the current level of talent management practices and the importance thereof as perceived by the employees
- To determine the current level of employee engagement of employees
- To determine the level of service quality provided by employees
- To determine the interactive relationship between the current application of talent management practices and employee engagement in the organisation
- To determine the interactive relationship between current application of talent management practices and service quality
- To determine the interactive relationship between current level of employee engagement and service quality of employees

6.5 CONTENT OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter served the purpose of introducing the relationship between talent management, employee engagement and service quality of support staff in a SA Higher Education Institution. This chapter also provided the reader with the structure of the research, and is comprised of the motivation for the research study by highlighting the research problem statement and research objectives. An indication of the importance and benefits of the research study was given, before the chapter concluded with a list of definitions and abbreviations frequently used in the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter the theoretical foundation and a literature survey dealing with the research problem are given. It shows what previous researchers have discovered regarding the research topic. The broad guidelines that culminate into the research

questions are drawn in this chapter. The key concepts researched in this chapter will be:

- Talent management;
- Employee engagement and
- Service quality

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter comprised of the applicable research paradigm, a detailed discussion of the research design and methods which were selected as the framework through which the research questions of the study were answered. A discussion of the sampling strategies and techniques employed in the study was then given and the data collection methodology was presented. Reliability and validity of the research were considered and thereafter ethical considerations related to the study were contemplated.

Chapter 4: Data Analyses

The focus of this chapter was on the discussion of the results and findings of the entire study pertaining to statistical analysis presented. The chapter was then divided into three sections namely; Biographical information, Statistical analyses and Hypothesis testing.

The chapter began with a discussion on the biographical information that was collected during the data collection phase of the study. The next phase of the chapter involved discussing the statistical analysis of the different concepts involved in the study. The final section of the chapter (phase 3) discussed the different relationships of the study through the hypotheses developed and stated in chapter one.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Results

The results detailed in chapter five were interpreted and discussed in this section. The outcomes of the research were provided to answer the research questions of the study. The main findings, based on the research results of the statistical analysis, revealed the existence of the relationships of the concepts and the type of relationships, either positive or negative.

Chapter 6: Conclusion, Limitations and Recommendations

The focus of this chapter was to draw final conclusions with regards to this study and it concluded with discussion of significance, limitations, and recommendations for further studies as well as for optimisation of the completed research approach.

6.6 CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM THE STUDY

The section that follows provides summaries which can be drawn from the study, with emphasis on conclusions drawn from literature review and conclusions drawn from the empirical results.

6.6.1 CONCLUSIONS FROM THE LITERATURE

Many organisations across the world face the challenge of recruiting the right talent. The African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) states that the African continent has not been able to recruit and retain needed well trained and skilled personnel due to several challenges which includes amongst others, poor compensation, poor working conditions, and uncompetitive working environment (Elegbe, 2010). Elegbe (2010) implies that these factors lead to low productivity, the migration of skilled workers and poor economy.

Meanwhile, Mckensey and Company (2001) have forecasted a decline in the supply of talent in the next fifteen years, particularly at higher skills and executive positions. However Deb, (2005) is adamant, that an understanding of the business's strategic goals and of the role that talent plays in reaching them is required, and he further stipulates that, success will be achieved by organisations that can turn talent management and business strategies into an integrated whole, and in the process build an organisation with not only high performance but also with a significant competitive advantage.

However, Shukla (2009) suggests that the following questions should be taken into consideration: What does getting it right mean when it comes to the organisation's talent management initiatives? Are your talent management processes working? Have you engaged all stakeholders in clarifying your organisation's views on talent

management? Have you linked your talent initiatives to building mission-critical to organisational capabilities?

Ulrich (2003) cited in Koketso (2011) argue that competencies should focus on what needs to be done not on the past and what has been done. Processes like succession planning and management, acceleration pools and career pathing should be taken into consideration. Employees should understand what they need to do and receive consistent, measurable feedback on their behaviours and performance, and that will enable them to change and align behaviours with the goals of the organisation. It is important, according to Ulrich, for organisations to constantly revise their recruitment and selection techniques so that the competencies specified in the job advertisements can match organisational goals. It is also relatively important to align recruiting, performance management, training and development, and reward practices to build and reinforce key-valued behaviours.

Meyer and Botha, (2004:426) believe that Ulrich's ways of ensuring that competencies are results-driven can further add value to organisations if they can identify key players early and develop them for the long term benefit of their organisations. Meyer and Botha (2004) posit here that organisation's performance management system should highlight the application of talent management in the workplace. They also maintain that key performers should be rewarded accordingly.

Employee engagement was also discussed in the current study, According to Robinson, Perryman and Hayday (2004) NHS case study data revealed that engagement levels can vary, in association with a variety of personal and job characteristics and with experiences at work. Some key findings were indicating that engagement levels decline as employees get older and as the length of service increases. Employees who have received a formal performance appraisal within the past year, have significantly higher engagement levels than those who have not.

Research shows that committed employees perform better. Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001) argue that lack of rewards and recognition can lead to burnout, appropriate recognition and reward is important for engagement. Macey and

Schneider (2008), recommend that the nature of an organisation's leadership can have an indirect impact on employee engagement through leaders building trust in their staff. While Devi, (2009), further postulates that, organisations that help their employees to work in a way which best supports them in balancing their work and home environments are more likely to have engaged employees. Kahn (1990), insist that, employees do feel more positive about the emotional elements of the work experience such as purpose, fun, trust, and growth.

Lookwood (2007) insists that to be better positioned to address barriers to engagement, organisations must determine what is working and what is not. The Gallup Organization, for example, identified 12 indicators that link employee satisfaction with positive business outcomes and profitability. The initial study considered four key areas: customer satisfaction/loyalty, profitability, productivity and employee turnover. These indicators, known as the Q12, are based on employee involvement topics, such as attitude, feedback, recognition and measurement. Today, many employers base their employee attitude surveys on the Q12.

Markos (2010) discussed several employee engagement strategies below:

Employee engagement requires leadership commitment through establishing clear mission, vision and values. Managers should promote two-way communication and always involve their people and always show respect to their input. Managers are expected to make sure that employees have all the relevant resources such as physical or material, financial and information resources in order to effectively do their jobs. Employees should be assisted with updating themselves to increase their knowledge and skills through giving appropriate trainings. Managers should work out both financial and non-financial rewards for employees who show more engagement in their jobs.

Service quality was discussed by Parasuraman, et al cited (in Shelton, 2000), as the gap created between the customer's expectations or desires and their perceptions. Linton, 1995 cited in (Naidoo, 2004) proposed five goals to improve the quality of service as a means of building long-term customer content and satisfaction:

- Expand levels of customer satisfaction.

- Ensure that individual outlets deliver a consistent standard of service that meets and even exceeds customer expectations.
- Ensure that customer focus is built into all training activities and business processes.
- Ensure that customer care activities are tangible and measurable

The relationship between Talent Management and Work engagement and Service Quality was also discussed and the summary is as follows:

Glen (2006) states that employee engagement is a crucial and fundamental factor to the retention of talent. According to Carter, Galinsky & Families and Work Institute, 2008, research found that women and men leaders reported more positive views about their jobs, company, and reported to have greater sense of responsibility for doing a good job when they were satisfied with the talent management practices provided at their company.

Engelbrecht (2006) states that a qualitative study found that service-oriented workers who had higher levels of engagement provide better customer service, such as giving effective answers and being patient with customers' changing requests. (Cook, 2008) further argues that highly engaged employees has an ability to positively impact the quality of their company's products and services as well as positively the customer experience.

Today successful organisations are defined not only by their ability to develop innovative products and services but also by service quality they provide. The value of a service is often determined at the point of delivery during the relationship between the employee and the customer. In this environment, discretionary effort on the part of the employee is a vital factor in customer satisfaction. Thus getting the right people becomes even more important in delivering quality service (CCH Australia Limited, 2010).

6.6.2 CONCLUSIONS FROM THE RESULTS

From the statistical analysis conducted in the study the following conclusions can be drawn:

The results showed that employees perceived that in general Talent Management practices are only moderately applied in the organisation. The Talent Management Practices that seemed most problematic included Talent Review Process, Retention Strategies, Performance Management and Management Commitment. The results of the low Talent Review Process, Retention Strategies, Performance Management and Management Commitment are all very concerning, hence they have a critical impact in the organisation success.

The results pointed out that the levels of importance of Talent Management Practices are high as perceived by the employees in the organisation. The Talent Management Practices that seemed the highest in terms of importance included Retention Strategies, Talent Development, Talent Acquisition and Talent Review Process.

The results further showed that a large gap exists between the current application of Talent Management Practices within the organisation as compared to the employee's perceptions of the importance of the Talent Management practices. The largest gaps were observed between Talent Retention Strategies, Talent Review Process, Talent Development, Performance Management and Workforce Planning.

The results on the current level of Work Engagement were acquired on each of the three individual factors of work engagement, namely, vigour, dedication, and absorption, and the results showed that the respondents mostly agreed with all the statements of the above factors, therefore this shows that employees perceive their current level of work engagement as being good.

The results obtained on Service Quality showed the extent to which employees in the organisation agree with the 22 statements which falls under 6 categories of Service Quality, and those categories includes Assurance,

Responsiveness, Reliability, Tangibles and Empathy. The results showed that respondents mostly agreed with the statements of being keen to assist customers and provide prompt service, being helpful and having undivided attention, and having the ability to assure customers good quality.

The results acquired indicated that the current application of Talent Management Dimensions of Management Commitment, Talent Review Process, Talent Commitment, and Talent Development were positively significantly related to all dimensions of work engagement (all medium effects). Performance Management was significantly positively related to Vigour and Dedication (small effects) and Absorption (medium effects). The results further showed the importance of Talent Review Processes was significantly positively related to vigour (medium effect). Staffing was positively significantly related to the all the dimensions of vigour (all medium effects). Talent Retention is positively significantly related to Vigour and Absorption (medium effects) and Dedication (small effect).

The relationship is positive which means the better talent management practices are applied in the organisation the more engaged people will be on their jobs.

The results of the above objective indicated that there is no significant relationship between the current application of talent management and the service quality dimensions. The results further showed a significant positive relationship between some of the importance of the Talent Management Practices and service quality dimensions. Management Commitment was significantly positively related to reliable (small effect). Staffing was positively significantly related to Assurance, Reliable and Tangibles (medium effects) and responsiveness (small effect). Talent Acquisition is positively significantly related to all the dimensions of service quality (all medium effects). Talent Development is positively significantly related to Assurance (small effect).

The results for the above objective showed that all three dimensions of work engagement are significantly positively related to the Assurance Dimensions

of Service Quality. The effects were small. Vigour and Absorption was significantly positively related to Responsiveness (small effects). No significant differences were found between the work engagement dimensions and the service quality dimensions of reliability, tangibles and empathy

6.7 LIMITATIONS

The following are the limitations that were experienced during the undertaking of this present study:

- **Sampling Technique:** First a purposive convenience sampling method was used in this research. The findings in this study could not be generalized, because the sample size used was limited only to those respondents available. A bigger sample should be considered in the future in order for the findings to be representative.
- **Negativity towards the data collection method:** Negative reactions were portrayed by most of the respondents as they indicated that the questionnaire is too long to complete. Thus only 65 questionnaires were completed and returned out of the 200 questionnaires that were distributed. The researcher believes that the reason behind this reluctance was lack of understanding of the questions or the topic at hand, therefore in future, respondents should be educated about the topic before they can be asked to fill the questionnaires.
- **Scarcity of Literature:** The researcher was unable to obtain more books, journals, articles that contain information or the literature that is relevant for this present study as the topic have never been researched before.

6.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.8.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PRACTICE

It is clear that there is currently no specific literature that exists on the topic at hand, many researchers have put their focus solely on talent management, therefore there is a need for scholars to investigate the relationship of the three concepts, namely, talent management, employee engagement and service quality especially among support staff of a SA Higher Education Institution. Data collected, analysed and

interpreted for the purpose of this research study provided for the following recommendations:

Based on the results, it is evident that management at the South African Higher Education Institutions do not effectively implement talent management practices as effective as they should to retain their organisational talent. The results also show that, HEI lacks mostly on talent review process, retention strategies, management commitment and performance management. The researcher recommends that both management and the human resource department be provided with training on how to attract, develop, retain and manage talent within the organisation to enhance work engagement and service quality. The relevant strategies should be put in place to obtain feedback from employees on the implementation of the talent management process.

South African Higher Education Institutions needs to liaise together with other organisations around the world to find ways that may assist in improving the current level of talent management practices, this may result in more employees being fully engaged to their work and providing the best quality service and education to the world.

6.8.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study was limited only to South African Higher Education Institutions. The same study can be extended to other Universities and Colleges around the worlds both on support and academic staff. Furthermore the study can be extended to other organisations in the country (South Africa), both public and private sectors as it will assist in attracting, retaining, develop talent within their organisations and eventually enhance their service delivery. It will further assist managers to realise the importance of talent management practices, employee engagement, and service quality to the organisation and to employees, and the relationship thereof.

6.9 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between talent management, employee engagement and service quality. The level of talent management practices is relatively fair but way below the expected level as

perceived by employees within the organisation. However employees' level of engagement and service quality seems to be higher. It has been demonstrated by the study that talent management, employee engagement and service quality are critical for the success of every organisation. To maximise their profits, it is essential that organisations manage their talented workforce address the problem of skills shortages, talent migration and to gain competitive advantage over their competitors and thus increase economic levels of the country.

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