

Factor Analysis of Talented University Support Staff Attributes

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Abstract

This mixed method research study aimed to examine the attributes of talented university support staff. In-depth interviews and focus groups were conducted to obtain data from university executives and human resource management experts. Questionnaires were distributed to collect the data from the support staff of autonomous universities. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was employed to analyze the data using a smaller set of summary variables. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was then employed to verify the factor structure of the set of observed variables. The findings revealed that there were three dimensions of attributes related to talented university support staff, namely: (1) change promoter and future creator, (2) participation creator, and (3) organizational competency builder. These findings are not in line with what was expected, but are consistent with some previous studies. Hence, the researchers have proposed guidelines for applying the results in theory and practice in order to expand the knowledge of talent management.

Keywords

Talented people, Support staff, Talent attributes

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Introduction

In an organization, a good management policy is to define a clear vision and anticipate the internal and external situations that may potentially arise. This benefits organizational planning by formulating a strategic plan and management vision, so that the organization can have clear guidelines to attain its goal. However, developing policies in line with the context and needs of an organization, such as organizational development, problem-solving, and responding to the needs of its members, are a considerable challenge for executives. Since there is increased competition, employees are seen as crucial assets to drive the organization forward to keep up with competitive market conditions. Hence, an organization must retain and develop its personnel's potential to be in line with the organization's strategy and mission. When employees are not given priority, the organization is inevitably affected and cannot grow with external changes. Therefore, it is recommended that the organization begin with the effective management of human assets to enhance and strengthen the organizational capacity to succeed (Lockwood, 1999; Malee, 2006).

A survey conducted among 4,288 executives, from over 100 countries in 6 continents, indicated that talent management was a top priority compared with other human resource management issues (The Boston Consulting Group, 2012). This has led to many organizations turning their attention towards talent management to develop the potential of their personnel in line with their set visions. Previous studies on this issue have focused on various perspectives, such as the success of talent management (Anurot, 2011; Langenegger et al., 2011), implementation of talent management (Davies & Davies, 2010; Downs, et al., 2013; Van Zyl, 2017; Wattanaboonyongjareon, 2005), talent management and competitive advantage (Auearreesooksakul & Jantik, 2015; Ritbumrung, 2005), factors affecting efficient employees (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 1994), concepts of talent management (Auearreesooksakul & Jantik, 2015), talent management and employee retention (Lockwood & Ansari, 1999; Oladapo, 2014), and talent management and leadership development (Singh et al., 2017). However, only a few studies have examined the talent attributes of employees (Juhdi, 2012; Nunthawattananukul et al., 2015; Prasongtan, 2015), with most studies being conducted in public and private organizations. Despite Rudhumbu (2014) studying the implementation of strategic management in higher education institutions, no emphasis was placed on examining talent attributes.

Accordingly, we searched for the attributes of talented individuals, particularly university support staff, as indicators in the recruitment, selection, maintaining, training and development, of employees. These types of attributes are also used in relation to challenge job assignment, i.e., the provision of a stimulating and interesting role within the organization.

Importantly, the identification of effective talent attributes, allows an organization to employ suitable people to generate a high level of organizational performance and success.

Objectives

1. To study the attributes of talented support staff working within an autonomous university.
2. To perform a factor analysis of talented peoples' attributes.

Advantages of the Study

The findings of this study will contribute to the understanding of the key attributes related to university support staff, assisting universities to recruit and select suitable personnel to work within their organization. In addition, various organizations, both public and private, which have similar operations, can use the study findings to improve their recruitment systems, and enhance personal development, to gain a competitive advantage in the future. Hence, universities and other organizations will not only develop suitable recruitment strategies to attract suitable applicants, but it will also develop existing employees to possess such attributes; allowing the organization to achieve its goals and objectives in a time efficient manner. Moreover, academics and researchers will be able to apply the findings from this study to create a new body of knowledge related to the key attributes of university support staff or other related issues.

Literature Review

In the next two decades, business and technology will have more complexity resulting in flexibility in global operations, leading to human resources becoming increasingly valuable to an organization. Therefore, recent attention has focused on the recruitment and maintaining of personnel with outstanding performance. However, in order to undertake this process, it is clear that an organization must first be able to correctly identify the attributes of talented people (Levin & Rosse, 2001).

The first steps in identifying talented people, start from the goal, or the strategy, set by the organization. The talented individual's qualifications are then determined to help identify the talented employees within the organization. The selected employees should be fully qualified in accordance with pre-set criteria. This assessment process enables the organization to identify any person that may still be lacking qualifications and provides information on the well-qualified and most desirable employees to the organization (Levin & Rosses, 2001). Staff employees may also be categorized in accordance with their performance and potential (Rothwell, 2005). According to this perspective, performance is determined via performance appraisal; a process to assess employee performance and quality of work that meets the standard set by the organization. Alternatively, employee potential refers to

the assessment and examination of the ability of employees to change and transfer jobs. It is classified as an existing capability that the employee may currently not present, with the expression of non-specific abilities, or only abilities that are available for current job positions.

Björkman (2013) stated that talented people should have communication ability, good job performance, and outstanding skills and attributes. They should also create outstanding work, and be able to respond to the organizational strategy in accordance with expectations. These attributes are consistent with Michaels et al. (2001), who defined a talented person as an individual who is innovative, has initiative, cognitive, intellectual, pessimistic, and gifted. Furthermore, the talented person should have ability, potential, a good personality, and be able to learn for continued personal development. According to Berger & Berger (2004) and Daft (2008), a talented individual should create excellent performance, or be part of a group of people who are successful in their job. Indeed, a talented individual should also be able to inspire other employees to perform their work successfully. In addition, they are able to fully express the organization's core competencies and organizational values. This perspective is consistent with Robertson & Abby (2003) and Walker (2002), who viewed a talented person as someone expected to achieve better performance compared with others. This performance attainment may result from behaviors and skills that can be naturally spontaneous without using any effort. Additional attributes of talented people include their creativity and willingness to improve and grow, which enables them to create good job performance, with or without support from their organization.

Berger & Berger (2004) and Gubman (1998) suggested that good talent management should have 3 key attributes; (1) job performance that is consistent with the organization's strategy, (2) job assignment and informing of the work that the person must perform to contribute to the success of the organization, and (3) performance appraisal. McKinsey (2011) and Ulrich (2008) added that talent management should also place importance on special talent and expertise needs to enhance innovation. Two autonomous universities identified talented individuals as having some common attributes, namely, outstanding performance, good job advancement, a doctorate degree, and behavior in accordance with the organizational culture. Another university claimed that talented individuals should pass the English language proficiency test and have been promoted to a higher level.

In conclusion, the attributes of talented people consist of high job performance, creativity, innovation to create value for the organization, communication skills, enthusiasm to learn, and continuous self-improvement.

Conceptual Framework

In this study, the definition of talented people follows the concept introduced by several researchers (Berger and Berger, 2004; Cappelli, 2009; Davies, 2011; Gubman, 1998; Industrial Relations Counselors, 2003; Lunn, 1992; Milkovich and Newman, 2005; Robertson and Abbey, 2003; Rudhumbu, 2014). These authors identified that talented people should have certain attributes, including high potential in performing work, an ability to perform difficult and challenging tasks, cleverness and intelligence, a balance between IQ and EQ, be innovative and enthusiastic in performing work, and an ability to perform work systematically. Previous research indicated that talented individuals should possess suitable abilities, skills, behaviors and attitudes, and should be able to analyze a situation, which requires team members to help each other to achieve a goal. In the present study, the authors used the theories and concepts of scholars to classify the dimensions of talented university support staff attributes, namely (1) being an expert in their work and having high job performance, (2) possessing creativity, (3) having a good attitude, skills and an ability to work in a team, (4) systematic planning, and (5) high potential in performing a job. The proposed conceptual framework is illustrated in Figure 1.

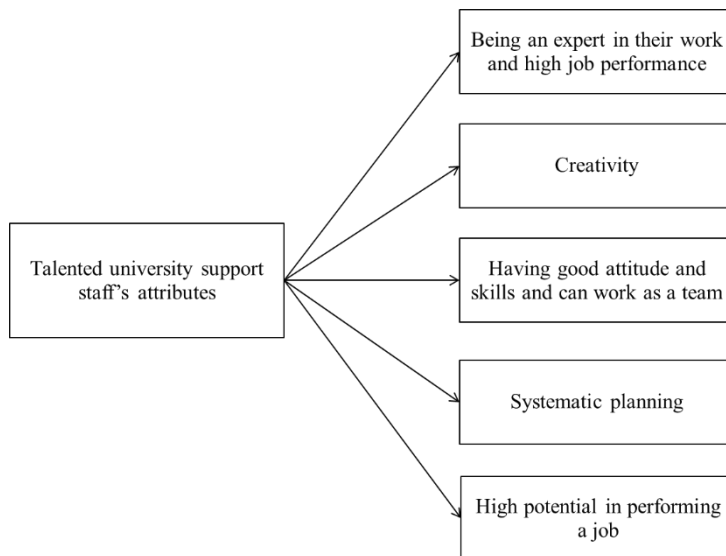


Figure 1 Conceptual framework

Methodology

This study used a mixed research method combining elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches for the broad purpose of providing breadth and depth of

understanding and corroboration (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017). Qualitative data were collected from relevant documents, in-depth interviews, and focus groups. The in-depth interviews were conducted to gather the data from policymakers and executives from the universities. This technique is useful to obtain detailed information about a person's thoughts and behaviors or to explore new issues in depth (Boyce & Neale, 2006). The key informants of the focus group were university employees who worked in association with human resource management. This technique provides a more natural environment than that of an individual interview because participants are influencing and influenced by others; just as they are in real life (Casey and Krueger, 2000). The quantitative data were collected using questionnaires, enabling the researchers to collect quantitative data in a standardized way; therefore the data was internally consistent and coherent for analysis (WHO, 2001). The samples of this research survey included support staff working in autonomous universities with their tenures being at least 2 years or longer.

Criteria for Selection of Participants

Qualitative Research

For the in-depth interview, key informants were policymakers and executives purposively selected from 13 universities. The positions of the interviewees included: president, vice president, dean, deputy dean, and director. The authors contacted 36 universities to obtain permission to participate in this study, however only 13 responded, accounting for 36.11% of the total originally approached. In regards to the focus group, 7 key informants who worked in association with human resource management were derived from purposive sampling.

Quantitative Research

The sample size was determined according to Hair et al. (2014), who reported an appropriate sample size of at least 300 people. Respondents were support staff working in autonomous universities derived from multi-stage sampling;

1. Selection of the university; this stage was performed using simple random sampling. If the agency did not consent to the collection of data, the researchers continued to use random methods with other agencies.
2. Questionnaires were sent to the responding universities, with instructions to randomly distribute between the support staff whose tenure was at least 2 years or longer.

Upon the researchers receiving the returned questionnaires, the completeness of the data were examined; 395 questionnaires were subsequently employed in the data analysis. Quantitative research was conducted alongside qualitative research and the data were linked

together (Terrell, 2012). The findings obtained from the statistical analysis were employed to support the qualitative discovery. This resulted in the identification of key attributes of talented individuals, which the organization could then use to develop efficiency in human resource management, especially in recruitment and selection processes.

Data Analysis

Qualitative Research

To obtain the most accurate and reliable information, the data were classified and organized systematically to obtain talented peoples attributes. This was analyzed together with content analysis to assess the attributes of talented people, and to determine the interaction between data obtained from documents, in-depth interviews, and focus groups.

Quantitative Research

The exploratory factor analysis (EFA) technique was employed in this study. The main objective of this factor analysis was to explore or search for the latent variables hidden under observed or measured variables. It is essential to determine underlying factors or constructs for a set of measured variables. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was subsequently conducted to test the hypothesis that a relationship between the observed variables and their underlying latent factor(s) or construct(s) existed.

Results and Discussion

Searching for the Attributes of Talented People

The attributes of talented people were categorized based upon the suggestions and opinions of key informants. The attributes obtained from the documentary analysis, literature review, in-depth interviews, and focus groups, were as follows:

Documentary Analysis and Literature Review: The documentary analysis and literature review indicated that there were three categories of talented people in universities, namely; high potential, high performance, and highly professional. The high potential individuals consisted of academic personnel and support staff holding a bachelor's degree or higher, as well as holding a management position, such as president, vice president, dean, associate dean, or director. In addition, this category included individuals that may have previously participated in a talent management program. High performance individuals included staff who had attained outstanding performance for at least two consecutive years, and had received an award or an honor. High performance individuals perform their work to benefit his/ her department, university, nation, and/or international arena, in their own professional and relevant area. High performance individuals had also passed an English

proficiency test and examination to participate in the competency evaluation program set by the university. Finally, someone considered highly professional referred to university staff who held an academic position and whose research had consistently obtained a high level of citation. These individuals held an advanced support staff position due to conducting many pieces of research and being innovative.

In-depth Interviews and Focus Groups: Key informant No. 10 said that “a talented person is an individual who is gifted in his/her work.” Talented people are ready to express their abilities, which are different from others. They can employ the tools and technology surrounding them, resulting in a high level of performance and positive outcomes. Key informant No. 1 added that besides being a good and talented person, support staff should have an ability to cooperate with the university’s executives in order to have a smooth and continued work operation. Hence, the support staff should have good communication skills. Whenever there is a new administration team, the support staff must be responsible for reporting the results of the successful and ongoing operations along with systematic planning, which is the ability to develop and improve operational processes and make them more efficient. This key informant also expressed his opinion about the ability of support staff to analyze the data associated with his/her work, as well as the ability to find ways to reduce unimportant working processes by planning every operation. Talented support staff should be creative and observant, and be able to summarize important issues efficiently. In addition, they should have the ability to set up a strategic plan together with the organization, since they are the people who deeply understand the required performance and work processes. They should be “able to adapt to changes.” In conclusion, this key informant identified talented people as individuals who have desirable skills, a positive attitude towards their jobs, are flexible, and enjoy and cherish their employment. Key informant No.9 indicated that a “talented person has to perform his/her tasks, which are consistent with the organizational vision and mission, as well as make useful contributions to society.” Talented people should be able to link the working system to the organization's strategy and make a decision in any crisis or emergency situation. Therefore, organizations require not only talented people but also people who can contribute to society. Key informant No. 5 provided different ideas. He said, “a talented person must perform his/her work carefully since his/her performance outcomes may affect others in the future. Hence, he/she must pay attention and be aware of mistakes at every working step.”

The results obtained from the focus groups indicated that “talented support staff must have language proficiency in at least 3 languages since universities have focused on being a global-leading university. Hence, support staff need to have more foreign language abilities” (Focus group participant).

According to the documentary analysis, literature review, in-depth interviews, and focus groups, the authors could identify the appropriate attributes and behaviors of talented support staff. The obtained results were employed to create a questionnaire to collect data from the support staff whose tenure was at least 2 years or longer. The gathered data were subsequently analyzed using exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis in order to find the key attributes of talented people, in the context of autonomous universities. The results indicate the following are behaviors and attributes of talented support staff:

1. A talented person must be gifted in performing his/her tasks and be ready to perform to the best of his/her ability (which are different from others). In addition, a talented person should have the ability to use various tools in performing his/her tasks, which will result in high and efficient outcomes.

2. A talented person must have a high potential in performing any tasks. He/she must be able to link the working system with the organization's strategy as well as be able to make a decision in any crisis or emergency situation.

3. A talented person should be creative and observant as well as be able to summarize important issues quickly and completely.

4. A talented person should have skills and a positive attitude towards their job, be flexible, and enjoy and cherish the benefits of the organization. In addition, they must be able to create internal and external communication processes.

5. A talented person should be able to perform systematic planning, and be able to develop and improve operational processes. This person should have an ability to analyze the data associated with his/her work and find ways to reduce unimportant working processes by planning every operation.

6. A talented person must be able to perform difficult tasks, and be ready to start new things.

7. A talented person should be able to work with others, to listen to other suggestions and comments, and be service minded.

Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Attributes of Talented People

Using qualitative research, indicators of talented peoples' attributes were extracted from documentary analysis, literature review, in-depth interviews, and focus groups. These indicators were employed to create a questionnaire, which was examined by experts to test validity. Reliability was tested by distributing the questionnaire to a university's support staff, which had some similarities with the actual samples. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) was tested in order to examine how suited the data were for factor analysis. In addition, the authors performed the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity in order to test the hypothesis that the correlation matrix was an identity matrix. This would indicate that the variables were unrelated and therefore unsuitable for structure detection. A significance value of < 0.05

indicated that the factor analysis may be useful with the data. The results of the KMO and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1 Appropriate values for factor analysis

Kaiser-Meyer - Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		
	Approx. Chi-Square (χ^2)	df	Sig.
.960	16556.391	1225	.000

In Table 1, the KMO value of 0.960 is greater than 0.900, indicating a good relationship between each variable (Pinyo, 2012). Therefore, the data could be analyzed using the exploratory factor analysis. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity provided a chi-square of 16556.391 ($p < 0.05$) indicating that the correlation matrix of each variable was related. Therefore, the correlation matrix was suitable for factor analysis. The authors employed the varimax rotation method and set up the number of factors having a factor loading of 0.4 or greater (Plubplueng et al., 2016). The results indicated that 50 factors could be reduced into 3 components; 27 factors illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2 Factor analysis of talented people

Attributes of talent people	Component		
	1	2	3
1. Gifted in performing tasks	0.548		
2. Able to link the working system with the organization's strategy	0.527		
3. Providing suggestions to consistently improve job performance	0.647		
4. Able to analyze data associated with the ongoing job	0.715		
5. Able to make a decision in any crisis incidents	0.722		
6. Able to reduce unimportant working processes	0.703		
7. Able to analyze work situation/problem which might cause a negative impact on the organization	0.716		
8. Being an observant person and able to summarize important issues quickly and completely	0.706		
9. Able to use various tools around to be employed in performing tasks and to seek new knowledge regularly	0.667		
10. Able to create the organizational future	0.670		
11. Able to lead the organization to achieve its vision	0.693		

Attributes of talent people	Component		
	1	2	3
12. Able to work with others		0.645	
13. Able to convince people in the team to work together		0.624	
14. Having good interpersonal skills with colleagues		0.787	
15. Able to work as a team		0.792	
16. Being generous to other colleagues		0.797	
17. Being flexible and able to work at any times required by the organization		0.741	
18. Being a person who cares about the customers and is ready to provide services quickly with the willingness		0.675	
19. Being a person who is cherished and maintains the interests of the organization		0.722	
20. Listening to the opinions of others and does not judge biasedly		0.683	
21. Having a higher level of responsibility for performing tasks than others			0.646
22. Able to perform difficult tasks			0.641
23. Having a high level of working skills			0.655
24. Having working skills for performing assigned tasks			0.737
25. Dare to perform challenge tasks and start doing new things			0.663
26. Being enthusiastic, active, and fluent in performing tasks			0.640
27. Able to create a good working plan for each operation			0.624

The first component “Able to make a decision in any crisis incident” had a factor loading of 0.722, followed by “able to analyze work situation/problem which might cause a negative impact on the organization” (0.716), “able to analyze data associated with the ongoing job” (0.715), “being an observant person and able to summarize important issues quickly and completely” (0.706), “able to reduce unimportant working processes” (0.703), “able to lead the organization to achieve its vision” (0.693), “able to create the organizational future” (0.670), “able to use various tools around to be employed in performing tasks and to seek new knowledge regularly” (0.667), “providing suggestions to consistently improve job performance” (0.647), “gifted in performing tasks” (0.548), and “able to link the working system with the organization's strategy” (0.527).

The second component “being generous to other colleagues” had a factor loading of 0.797, followed by “able to work as a team” (0.792), “having a good interpersonal skills with

colleagues" (0.787), "being flexible and able to work at any time required by the organization" (0.741), "being a person who is cherished and maintains the interests of the organization" (0.722), "listening to the opinions of others and does not judge biasedly" (0.683), "being a person who cares about the customers and is ready to provide services quickly with willingness" (0.675), "able to work with others" (0.645), and "able to convince people in the team to work together" (0.624).

The third component "having working skills for performing assigned tasks" had a factor loading of 0.737, and was followed by "dare to perform challenge tasks and doing new things" (0.663), "having high level of working skills" (0.655), "having higher level of responsibility for performing tasks than others" (0.646), "able to perform difficult tasks" (0.641), "being enthusiastic, active, and fluent in performing tasks" (0.640), and "able to create a good working plan for each operation" (0.624).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Attributes of Talented People

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to examine the construct validity of the measurement model of the three components. The results are as shown in Figure 2.

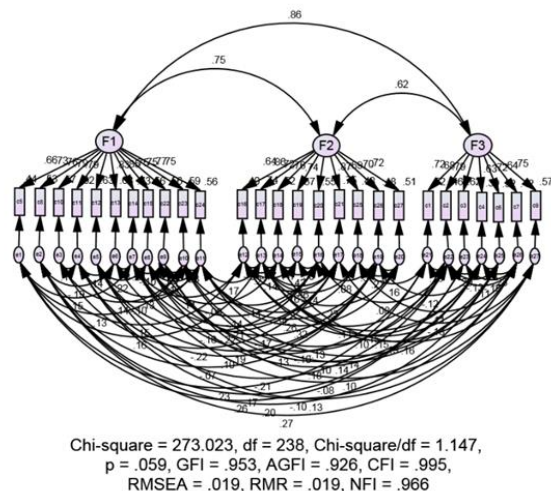


Figure 2 Confirmatory factor analysis of talented people attributes

In Figure 1, the results of the confirmatory factor analysis related to the attributes of talented people are illustrated. The Chi-square of the model was 273.023 with a degrees of freedom of 238 (p -value = .059), indicating the model fitted with the empirical data. However, Hair et al. (2013) stated that Chi-square may be statistically significant if there is a big sample size. The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .019 indicating the goodness of fit between the model and empirical data (Angsuchoti et al., 2009). The normed Chi-square was 1.147 indicating an acceptable fit. This analysis provided the goodness of fit index (GFI)

and comparative fit index (CFI) of .926 and .995, respectively, indicating the model fits with the empirical data.

Table 3 Goodness of fit index

Goodness of fit index	Acceptable value	CFA results
Chi-square (χ^2)	$p > .05$	$p = .059$
Absolute fit indices		
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	>.90	.953
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	<.07	.019
Root mean square residual (RMR)	Low	.019
Normed chi-square (χ^2/df)	Between 2-5	1.147
Incremental Fit Indices		
Normed fit index (NFI)	Close to 1	.966
Comparative fit index (CFI)	> .92	.995
Parsimony fit indices		
Adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI)	Close to 1	.926

Source: Hair et al. (2014)

Once all components were identified, the authors consulted with HRM experts, universities' executives, and scholars, to give the names for the following three components.

Component 1: Change promoters and future creators, this name is related to, and consistent with, the perspectives of Davies and Davies (2011) and Kruger (as cited in Phu Wittayapan, 2007) who stated that organizations need talented people to increase their potential. A talented person is not going to tell the team members to do what he or she wants. However, the talented person will tell the team about their own ideas in analyzing the situation that will allow the team members to work together in order to allow everyone to participate in the planning and operations assigned by the organization. These include the expression of a new working concept and the reduction of unimportant working procedures. The organization needs talented people who are ready to become leaders; hence talented people should have suitable skills, attitudes, and behaviors. A good organization will predict the ability of employees, have good management so that talented people can improve their analytical thinking, and use various tools to achieve the organizational goals. Our results from exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis confirmed the above-mentioned statement. The authors found that the change promoters and future creators are the people that are gifted perform their work, are able to analyze the data related to their current job,

able to reduce the work processes, and are ready to correct situations or to solve working problems that may happen.

The exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis provided results that were consistent with the findings from the in-depth interviews. The findings indicated that the support staff must support the new management team that may change at any time. They should be able to express full opinions as the support staff are the persons linking the management team, organizational performance, and organizational strategies. They are able to respond to the organizational vision and act as an intermediary to link every unit of the organization, and they can help to create the organization's strategic plan. They are the people responsible for reporting the progress of the work they performed, have profound abilities and expertise in their positions, and are ready to drive their own departments to achieve the organizational vision and missions.

Component 2: Participation creator, this component is consistent with the findings of the research conducted by Garr (2016). The author found that the gift of a talented person can only be achieved when the organization has a focus on fair and clear performance management. This attracts talented people to take part in being part of a team, providing clarity in the talent management process. This is good for creating participation in the organization so that the talented person can see the direction that must be taken. According to the confirmatory factor analysis results, the talented person should be able to work with others, have good interpersonal skills, be flexible and able to work at any time required by the organization, and not judge others biasedly. These results are consistent with the findings obtained from interviewing universities' executives. A person to be recruited to work for a university should have the knowledge and abilities mostly required by the university. Importantly, they should be able to work well with others as a team member, perform their task, which meets the organizational values, and have sportsmanship characteristics so they can be the role model for the other employees.

Component 3: Organizational competency builder, this component is similar to the component found by Nunthawattananukul *et al.* (2015). Their study entitled "the talent management model in electrical and electronics industry companies" highlighted the attributes of talented people. The authors suggested some attributes were related to having a high job performance, having high potential, holding qualifications and capabilities that meet the needs of the organization, and holding a management position. The results of their study were also consistent with Prasongtan (2015) who found that there are three components of talented people, namely: high performance, high potential, and conscientiousness. Having talented people in the organization can help increase the market value of the organization in an alternative way. According to the confirmatory factor analysis, talented people should have certain attributes, such as: having a higher level of responsibility for performing tasks

compared to others, an ability to perform difficult tasks, having a high level of working skills for performing assigned tasks, willingness to perform challenging tasks and start new things, enthusiasm, be active, fluent in performing tasks, and able to create a good working plan for each operation. These results were consistent with the findings obtained from the in-depth interviews and focus groups, which indicated that when an organization wants to move forward at a higher level, all personnel must work together to support the universities' advancement and growth to achieve the set vision. The organizations should have talented people who are ready to move forward with the organization, be ready to learn new things, able to perform challenging and difficult tasks, and have working skills and be able to create a working plan. Finally, they should be able to collect and summarize the data in a short and compact format so that the executives can use the information to make decisions immediately.

According to study related to the attributes of talented people, the authors conclude that the attributes to be employed for recruiting talented people are consistent with Chorkaew (2016). She suggested that the guidelines for talent management in Thai public and Singapore organizations share some similarities. For example, both Thai and Singapore public organizations focus mainly on the key people, by emphasizing the linkage between recruitment, selection, and employee development, without limiting the scope of work. Indeed, the guidelines for talent management is based on a specific perspective emphasizing the individual, and recruitment and selection processes, which focus on establishing the qualifications of the candidates; resulting in many steps in recruitment and selection. The organization places importance on intensive employees' development. These guidelines are in line with the perspectives of Kulpheng (2009) who stated that identifying talented people needs to be scrutinized so that the person has distinctive abilities, consisting of (1) Good work, referring to having knowledge, ability, and skills in their work, (2) Smart, referring to being intelligent, a fast learner, witty and creative, (3) Nice, referring to having a good conscience and behavior, working well with others, and (4) Active, referring to being self-motivated to accomplish difficult tasks. The Industrial Relation Counselors (2003) also suggested that talented people have these similar attributes. They proposed that since there is a need for talented people in the next 1-4 years, there should be an effective means to identify talented people. There should be ways to develop talented people through meetings, participation in special projects, cross-department job assignments, working with a cross-functional team, or assigning overseas work. The techniques to retain talented people should focus on giving periodical job assignments as well as paying more compensation and bonuses compared to general employees.

Conclusion

The attributes of talented people are considered a matter that benefits all organizations, whether public or private. The employees with high capabilities, and high potential goals and success, will reciprocally enhance an organization to achieve its goals and success. Educational institutions need people, especially support staff, with a high degree of knowledge and the ability to lead the organization forwards. Hence, this study examined the attributes of talented university support staff, in order to encourage the management to focus on the recruitment and human resource development of the organization. Recruiting talented staff and developing existing employees to have higher potential will improve organizational performance, and create a competitive advantage for the organization in the future. The findings of this study revealed three major attributes, which are suitable for support staff to work in a university: (1) Change promoters and future creators (2) Participation creator, and (3) Organizational competency builder. These three attributes can be employed to recruit support staff to a talent pool. During the process of recruiting talented support staff, the individuals should be notified to acknowledge the policies of the organization. They should also be informed why the organization has given them importance and praise as a talented person. In addition, the clear organizational needs should be communicated so that the staff can orientate their work appropriately. Therefore, the organization must create short and compact communication processes so talented people can become quickly and clearly informed. Acknowledging talented individuals enables the organization to create work planning and prioritize their work to be performed, since they are generally more important than other groups. Hence, the recruitment and selection processes of talented people will be very important for organizations to achieve their goals.

Recommendations

Implications

The research findings show that the 3 attributes of talented people clearly define their characteristics. Therefore, universities or other agencies can apply these research results in human resource development in order to define the criteria or guidelines for recruiting and selecting talented people into their talent pool. The organizations will subsequently be able to effectively lay down the system of human resource management. This may help organizations to allocate people in relation to their abilities and individual aptitudes. It also facilitates employees to perform their jobs and innovate effectively.

Operational recommendations

Future research should study academic groups in order to acquire the needs of the academic staff, as they are also classified according to the main mission of the university.

Therefore, the talented people in each group may require different self-development needs associated with employee retention. Finally, in order to find the appropriate information and requirements of talented people, future studies should focus on separating the support staff in each professional group, for example, into an academic support group and/or general support group.

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