




The future of talent management in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality



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Orientation: The workplace is changing at a rapid pace, and human resource (HR) professionals should become acquainted with the future of talent management to offer value to their organisations.

Research purpose: The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of the future of talent management at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality from a qualitative perspective.

Motivation for the study: Human resource practitioners play a major role in the future of talent management at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality and those roles need to be explored.

Research approach/design and method: The study used a qualitative research approach, involving in-depth interviews with 13 HR personnel and other relevant stakeholders at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. Thematic analysis was applied.

Main findings: The following themes were identified and emerged from the study: training and development; retention management; and recruitment and selection.

Practical/managerial implications: South African HR professionals should be prepared for the future of talent management. If these HR practitioners are not open to using technology, they may struggle to offer value to the organisation.

Contribution/value-add: This study highlighted the importance of talent management for future work at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality and the limited scope of current talent management practices. It contributed to the development of a new theory in talent management, emphasised the significance of diversity and inclusion in the workplace, and identified future areas for research.

Keywords: future talent management; public sector; HR management; training and development; recruitment; retention.

Introduction

In an era defined by the relentless march of progress, strategic talent management emerges as the linchpin for organisational success, promising a cadre of skilled, dependable human resources (HR) poised for professional excellence (Al Jawali et al., 2022). As industries advance at breakneck speed, talent management, once primarily a recruitment enhancement, has evolved into a strategic imperative, propelling organisations towards their coveted strategic objectives (Maurya & Agarwal, 2018). Yet, a critical dichotomy persists, with talent management practices in the public sector trailing their private sector counterparts, notably in agility, innovation and attracting top-tier talent, impeding their stride amidst a rapidly evolving technological landscape (Rust & Koketso, 2012). In this context, a holistic approach to talent management encompassing training and development emerges as the key to future-proofing the workforce (Ojo et al., 2022). However, despite its criticality, effective talent management practices often elude the public sector, emphasising the pressing need for tailored strategies in this domain (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020). Hence, an exploration of talent management within varied organisational contexts, as advocated by Sehatpour et al. (2022), offers a promising avenue to discern the multifaceted dimensions of future talent management and address the widening gap between sectors. This study delves into this pressing issue, aiming to shed light on the disparities, potentials and imperatives in talent management, ultimately charting a course towards a more equitable and prosperous organisational landscape.

Research gap statement and purpose

Research gap

A research gap, according to Creswell and Creswell (2018:13), points to the need for research arising from theory, relevant literature, current social and political problems, realistic circumstances or personal experiences. The future of talent management in the municipality requires further study to address the changing challenges and opportunities in effectively overseeing HRs in the organisation. Municipalities and the broader public sector grapple with a variety of challenges. Financial constraints are a significant hurdle, limiting their ability to fund essential infrastructure and deliver quality services (Eadie et al., 2017). Moreover, bureaucratic inefficiencies and slow decision-making processes hinder streamlined operations and timely service delivery (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017).

Workforce management and talent retention present ongoing concerns, as stiff competition from the private sector and difficulties in offering competitive compensation and benefits make it challenging to attract and retain skilled professionals (Kim et al., 2019). Lastly, the increasing demand for services, especially in rapidly growing urban areas, strains municipalities' capacity to meet the needs of their communities (Grimsey & Lewis, 2007). Addressing these challenges is vital for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector, particularly at the local level, and ultimately improving the well-being of the communities they serve. Although several studies have explored ways to manage talent in the municipal sector (Clarke & Scurry, 2020), there is still a research gap in terms of the specific needs and strategies required for talent management in the future (Kobedi et al., 2022). First and foremost, we must improve future plans that direct our efforts towards selecting the best candidates for a rapidly evolving world. To find out what works best for our communities, we also need to be aware of the gaps in how talent is handled in the public sector. Last but not least, we need to figure out how to maintain our talented employees and support their career growth so they may continue to provide excellent services to the community. These are some of the gaps that this study aims to fill.

Research purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the future of talent management at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality from a qualitative perspective and, furthermore, to identify the issues that the municipality faced in managing talent and to offer practical solutions to these challenges. The study also aimed to add to the current body of knowledge on talent management in the public sector, notably in South Africa; one of the questions solicited participants' views on what the future of talent management at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality entailed.

Literature review

In recent years there has been a growing body of literature on the future of talent management, highlighting its importance for organisational success (Collings et al., 2019). The future of talent management refers to a set of practices and processes aimed at attracting, developing and retaining talented employees within an organisation (Collings et al., 2018). Effective talent management can assist organisations in achieving their strategic goals, improving employee engagement and retention, and enhancing overall organisational performance (Pandita & Ray, 2018). Future talent management entails proactive talent acquisition, development programmes, agile workforce planning and integrating technology to enhance talent strategies in an ever-changing business context (McIver et al., 2018).

The future of talent management has a direct connection to the ongoing Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), which is defined by the confluence of digital, physical and biological technology, which is revolutionising the way people live and work (Schwab, 2017). Advances in artificial intelligence (AI), automation, big data analytics, internet of things (IoT) and robotics, among other things, characterise the 4IR. These technologies are altering sectors, providing new employment opportunities and displacing others (Brynjolfsson, 2022).

To adapt to the shifting landscape of skills and abilities expected by emerging technologies, talent management in the context of the 4IR necessitates a proactive strategy. Organisations must identify and develop personnel capable of navigating this changing digital ecosystem, emphasising not only technical talents but also critical thinking, flexibility, creativity and emotional intelligence (Manyika et al., 2017). Furthermore, continual upskilling and reskilling activities will be critical in this new era of industrial change to keep the workforce nimble and capable of fulfilling the needs of a fast-developing labour market.

The future of talent management

The future of talent management is at a crossroad, propelled by a confluence of emerging trends, shifting paradigms and groundbreaking research in organisational dynamics. A proactive strategy, using technology developments, revolutionary leadership tactics and an ever-deeper understanding of human behaviour in the workplace, is steering this key transition. As organisations prepare for the difficulties and possibilities that lie ahead, they attempt to grasp the mysterious trajectory of talent management, guided by a variety of literature and empirical research (Acosta & Reynolds, 2020; Bersin, 2017). We go into the future horizons in this inquiry, lighting the road with collective insights collected from scholarly discourse and industrial foresight (Gallup, 2017; McKinsey, 2020). This article attempts to untangle the complex fabric of the future of talent management, providing a compass for organisations to navigate this dynamic landscape with wisdom and acumen.

Changing labour dynamics have lent prominence to the future of talent management (Pandita & Ray, 2018). The literature study explored recent qualitative perspectives on this issue, with an emphasis on developing trends and solutions for effective personnel management. It entails gathering comprehensive and nuanced data to gain insights into talent attraction, development and retention tactics. Almajali et al. (2022) stress the need for a proactive approach to talent management. In an era of rapid technological evolution and dynamic market landscapes, proactive talent management strategies have become imperative for organisational success (Martens et al., 2018). Firms that anticipate future skill requirements and proactively engage in targeted development programmes to bridge skill gaps are better positioned to navigate the complexities of a continuously changing business environment (Martens et al., 2018). By doing so, organisations not only fulfil immediate talent needs but also lay a strong foundation for sustained competitiveness, staying ahead of the competition.

Diversity and inclusion have emerged as crucial facets of contemporary talent management methods, carrying significant weight in organisational success (Latukha et al., 2022). Establishing inclusive environments that attract and retain a diverse talent pool is key to enhancing innovation, creativity and overall performance within an organisation (Gomez & Bernet, 2019). Moreover, diverse perspectives and backgrounds foster a rich tapestry of ideas, propelling the organisation towards novel approaches and solutions. Therefore, integrating diversity and inclusion into talent management strategies is no longer a choice but a strategic necessity.

Simultaneously, technology is fundamentally reshaping talent management practices, leading to a paradigm shift in how organisations attract, develop and retain their workforce (Harsch & Festing, 2020). Digital platforms are now instrumental in various aspects of talent management, including recruitment, onboarding, performance management and career development (Harsch & Festing, 2020). Furthermore, technology necessitates a culture of continual upskilling, enabling employees to adapt to these rapid technological advancements and remain competent in their roles. Hence, a forward-looking talent management approach involves embracing technology as an enabler of growth and efficiency. This convergence of proactive skill development, fostering diversity and inclusion, and integrating technology underscores the transformative trajectory of talent management. Organisations that align their strategies with these principles are likely to emerge as industry leaders, equipped to navigate the future landscape of talent management effectively.

Anlesinya and Amponsah-Tawiah (2020) conducted a qualitative study to investigate the role of employee well-being in talent management. The authors emphasise the importance of work-life balance, mental health support and flexible work arrangements for organisations. Factors negatively impacting the future of talent management are explored by way of the following themes: training and

development, recruitment and selection, and retention management.

Numerous studies on the future of talent management have been conducted in recent years, all of which point to a few major trends that will impact how organisations manage their employees in the future (Tsiligiris & Bowyer, 2021). According to Kravariti et al. (2022), the future of talent management will most likely be defined by a stronger emphasis on continuous learning and development. From AI-powered recruiting and hiring tools to digital learning platforms and virtual collaboration tools, technology will play an increasingly important role in how organisations attract, develop and retain talent (Gethe, 2022).

Training and development

In the public sector, talent management practices often lag behind those of the private sector because of diverse factors such as bureaucratic structures, limited budgets and political interference (Munzhedzi, 2021). This can lead to a lack of investment in training and development, ineffective recruitment and retention strategies and high staff turnover rates (McIver et al., 2018). Despite these challenges, there have been some successful initiatives in talent management in the public sector, particularly in developed countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia (Munzhedzi, 2021). Training and development refer to educational activities in an organisation designed to improve employees' knowledge and skills while also providing information and instruction on how to perform specific tasks more effectively (Milon & Islam, 2019). Staff development entails planned activities within organisations that are meant to assist employees in attaining knowledge, new skills, attitudes and values. It also helps employees to gain increased levels of professional competence for the organisation's effectiveness (Phiri, 2020). Previous research on the future of talent management primarily investigated talent management in developed countries (Tsiligiris & Bowyer, 2021). It was also identified that most of their training is conducted digitally and they emphasise employees' career development. Career development is a process of increasing individual employability to achieve the desired career (Niati et al., 2021). Career development is expected by employees and serves to motivate them to work well (Bondarchuk et al., 2022). In times like these, when trends are constantly changing as a result of online evolution, it makes sense to keep teams prepared (Rigby & Ryan, 2018).

Recruitment and selection

Metro municipalities must adapt their talent management strategies to reflect changes in the labour market or movements in the economy in their recruitment and selection processes or new training and development opportunities for staff (Dandalt, 2021). In the area of talent management, recruitment and selection are basic procedures required for finding and hiring people with the appropriate skills and ability to contribute successfully to an organisation's goals

(Tsai et al., 2023). Selection entails assessing and picking the most qualified candidates from this pool based on factors such as skills, experience and alignment with the organisation's culture and goals (Murphy et al., 2023). Recruitment entails the strategic identification and attraction of a qualified candidate pool. Together, these procedures make sure that the business has a bright and diverse workforce that is in line with its long-term goals and talent management strategy (Hadijah, 2023). Talent identification is considered to be the process of identifying individuals who have the potential to excel in a particular field or role (Tyskbo, 2021); these people have the necessary skills and abilities, as well as the right personality and attitudes, to succeed in a particular job or industry.

Retention management

Retention management was another factor identified as impacting the future of talent management. Organisations may establish a healthy work environment and improve talent retention by putting employee well-being first (Guerci et al., 2022). Retention management refers to the strategies and practices that organisations use to retain their employees over the long term. It involves identifying the factors that contribute to employee satisfaction and engagement and implementing strategies to address those factors and improve retention rates (Ensslin et al., 2020). Talent retention is simply defined as the organisation's ability to retain its skilled staff (Ahmed et al., 2022). This definition encompasses all methods and systems created to attract, develop, retain and make use of skilled people to increase workplace productivity. It is hoped that allowances in the form of remuneration will encourage more fun and improve employee performance (Permana & Bharoto, 2021). Remuneration is the attempt to increase financial welfare beyond the main salary given by the organisation and is expected to motivate employees and build spirit at work (Sardjana et al., 2019).

Overall, the literature highlights the importance of effective talent management practices for organisational success, particularly in the public sector where such practices are often lacking. However, there is a need for more research on talent management in the public sector in developing countries, such as South Africa. Public sector organisations operate under different conditions and are subject to divergent interests and motives, with particular rules, logic and norms (Kozjek & Franca, 2020).

To capture the complexity of different perceptions of talent management policy and practice, a contextual approach was adopted, which specifically addressed the perspectives on talent management in the public sector. Furthermore, to substantiate the findings of Rust and Koketso (2012), various studies have been conducted on the future of talent management (Hooi, 2022), but there has been limited research on the contributing factors. Therefore, this study sought to explore the future of talent management at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality from a qualitative perspective.

Research approach

The study followed a qualitative research approach to explore the future of talent management at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. This approach aimed to gain a deep understanding of the subject within its specific context without making broad generalisations. It used in-depth interviews as the main method for gathering information. The study also adopted an interpretative perspective, which helps researchers to understand the complexities of the phenomenon under investigation. This approach aligns with phenomenology, which delves into people's personal experiences with the subject (Lindseth & Norberg, 2022). The study's research philosophy is rooted in the belief that individual and organisational interpretations significantly influence talent management practices. From an ontological standpoint, the research considers reality to be subjective and socially constructed, emphasising the impact of these interpretations on talent management (Jantjies, 2022). In addition, from an epistemological perspective (Gardiner et al., 2023), the study acknowledges that knowledge is context-dependent and seeks to investigate the meaning and understanding of talent management from the participants' viewpoint through direct interaction and involvement. This approach ensures a comprehensive exploration of the participants' experiences and perspectives on the future of talent management in the municipality. Lastly, axiology provided a philosophical foundation to evaluate the significance and worth of talent management practices and prospective changes within the municipality (Pulungan et al., 2023).

Research strategy

The research approach of the study was qualitative in nature, as it aimed to explore the future of talent management at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. For this study, an interpretive, phenomenological perspective was applied. According to Almajali et al. (2022), a qualitative perspective is a study approach that investigates individuals' subjective experiences, perceptions and behaviours in talent management processes. With the interpretivist perspective, researchers gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and its complexity in its unique context and do not generalise the base of understanding to the whole population (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). An exploratory research design was used.

Research design

Research method

In this study, a qualitative technique comprising in-depth interviews is used to investigate the future of talent management at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, particularly in the context of the 4IR. The study strategy uses an interpretative, phenomenological approach trying to comprehend this phenomena in its specific context without making sweeping generalisations.

Thematic analysis is used to extract main themes, which provide insights into talent management practices and prospective changes in this municipal environment. The core research instrument is a semi-structured interview, reinforced by email interview guidelines and carried out via Microsoft Teams offering a full insight of participants' opinions on the future of talent management in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.

Research setting

The research setting included 4 HR officers, 1 HR consultant, 5 functional heads and 3 directors among the 13 participants in this study. The majority of the participants were heading the HR departments at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. They were all interviewed through a digital platform unlike a traditional setting where people are interviewed face-to-face in their offices.

Entrée and establishing researcher roles

Permission was requested from the Director of Knowledge Management at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality to conduct a study with the HR practitioners at the municipality. The permission letter was then provided later on by the Director of Knowledge Management at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. The ethical approval was obtained from Tshwane University of Technology Ethics Committee prior to the execution of the research. The ethical letter ensured that confidentiality and anonymity were maintained at all times.

Research participants and sampling methods

The target population of the study consisted of 800 employees working within the HR department in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. The sample size was 13 HR practitioners from the HR department at the municipality and they were selected through a purposive sampling technique based on specific inclusion criteria: a formal 3 year qualification and at least 3 years of experience in HR, with a preference for those with at least 5 years of talent management experience. The researcher reached data saturation with the 13th participant and concluded data collection. Therefore, the sample was chosen deliberately based on the participants' qualities, and it was not necessary to have a set number of participants or underlying theories for this non-random technique.

Data collection methods

The research instrument used in this qualitative study was a semi-structured interview. Data were collected through audio and video recordings of interviews with the participants, which afforded insights into the state of talent management practices, challenges and areas for improvement. Microsoft Teams provided a platform for collaboration, enabling participants to share their experiences and viewpoints. An open-ended interview guide was used to supplement the data collected through the interviews. Overall, the combination of audio and video recordings of

interviews guides provided a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences and perspectives on talent management practices in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.

Data recording

Data were recorded because qualitative research generates a large amount of data; it became critical to enable data retrieval for further detailed analysis. As a result of data being collected through Microsoft Teams, it allowed me an option of recording and transcribing all the data being collected from the participants with their knowledge and consent. In addition, during the interviews, notes were made to offer information about the participants' non-verbal communication. Transcripts of the data were made verbatim.

Strategies employed to ensure data quality and integrity

The trustworthiness of the qualitative study was ensured through various techniques. The credibility of the findings was established by reviewing the data from different perspectives and having an independent coder critique the analysis findings (Little & Green, 2022). Transferability was addressed by providing a comprehensive description of the study setting, enabling readers to determine if the results could be applied to their contexts (Korstjens & Moser, 2022). Dependability was ensured by thoroughly documenting participants' responses and methodology to enable replication (Flake et al., 2022). Confirmability was addressed by including examples of the coding process and a comprehensive discussion of data collection and analysis to ensure that the findings were derived from participants' experiences rather than the researcher's qualities or preferences (Tabudlo et al., 2022).

Data analysis

The data analysis for this study involved thematic analysis. The process included several steps, as outlined by Alharahsheh and Pius (2020). The first step was to read all the data collected, providing a general sense of the information and an opportunity to reflect on its overall meaning. The second step involved coding all the data by organising it into categories. The third step entailed generating descriptions and themes from the coded data. Themes appeared as major findings and were often used as headings in the findings section. The fourth step was to present the description and themes in a narrative passage, which conveyed the findings of the analysis (Fathi et al., 2022).

The researcher used computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software, ATLAS.ti, for data analysis. This software enhanced the research quality by providing a platform for organising and analysing the data collected. Overall, the use of thematic analysis and ATLAS.ti allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences and viewpoints on the future of talent management in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.

Ethical considerations

The study followed ethical principles by obtaining clearance and permission from the Faculty of Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee at Tshwane University of Technology (FCRE2022/FR/02/001-MS). The participants were given information about the study and provided with consent forms to ensure their voluntary participation. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained in data collection and reporting, and measures were taken to ensure credibility and trustworthiness. The study did not cause any harm to the participants.

In this study, issues pertaining to trustworthiness and credibility were addressed through the use of multiple avenues in the data collection process: the interview guide was emailed to participants for completion, follow-up emails on Microsoft Teams interviews were sent for clarification, and the interview notes or recordings were emailed back to the participants for rectification and further comments.

Results

The participants' responses and their opinions about the future of talent management are presented here. For better comprehension and analysis, the responses were thematically categorised and further subdivided into subthemes. Based on the themes and subthemes, the findings offered a better and more detailed understanding of the future of talent management at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.

Table 1 provides a summary of the key biographical information of the study participants. The information

TABLE 1: Summary of the biographical information of the participants.

Participant number	Age	Length of service	Highest qualification	Designation
P1	39 years	18 years	Degree in Human Resource Management	Functional head
P2	49 years	17 years	National Diploma in Human Resource Management	HR officer
P3	47 years	9 years	Master's Degree in Information Studies and MSc in Information and Knowledge Management	Director
P4	50 years	15 years	Master's Degree in Human Resource Management	Director
P5	48 years	28 years	B Admin in Public Management	Functional head
P6	47 years	9 years	B Tech in Human Resource Management	Director
P7	34 years	10 years	B Com Accounting	Functional head
P8	43 years	13 years	Honours Degree in Public Administration	Functional head
P9	45 years	15 years	Honours Degree in Psychology	Functional head
P10	53 years	8 years	Diploma in Education	HR officer
P11	40 years	17 years	National Diploma in HR and Finance	HR consultant
P12	45 years	16 years	B Tech in Human Resource Development	HR officer
P13	48 years	15 years	B Com in Psychology	Human capital officer

HR, human resource.

includes participants' number, age, length of service (in years), highest qualification attained and their respective designations within the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. The participants' ages range from 34 years to 53 years, reflecting a diverse age demographic. The length of service spans from 8 years to 28 years, illustrating the participants' extensive experience within the municipality. Their highest qualifications encompass a range of educational achievements, from diplomas to master's degrees, reflecting a varied academic background. In addition, Table 1 includes the specific designation or role held by each participant within the organisational structure. This information provides valuable insights into the participants' professional profiles and positions within the municipality, which will be further analysed in subsequent sections to understand their perspectives on talent management.

One of the findings of the study was that training and development were crucial for employees to remain updated. Other findings were that employee retention was essential in talent management; supporting staff and communities could help increase motivation in the workplace; identifying and recruiting young talent was necessary for the sustainability of talent management; a lack of talent management policies was a challenge for the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality; and performance management was important in achieving organisational success. Table 2 depicts the themes and subthemes. This information was utilised to generate the findings on the future of talent management.

Theme 1: Training and development

The theme of training and development describes the experiences that participants commented on, based on the future of talent management at the City of Tshwane workplace. Through this theme, a subtheme was identified, which was the training and development programme.

Subtheme 1.1: Next-Gen training and development programme

'Next-Gen' is an abbreviation for 'Next Generation'. It is often used to refer to the next iteration or evolution of a particular technology, system, product or approach. This subtheme indicates how the employees at the municipality were exposed to this programme, which was good for the motivation of the employees. Training and development is not just stepping

TABLE 2: The future of talent management.

Theme	Subtheme
Training and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Next-Gen training and development programme Agile staff development Futuristic career development Future work skills plan
Advanced talent retention management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dynamic staff motivation Talent retention 2.0 Remuneration: allowances Remuneration: salaries
Innovative recruitment and selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talent identification 2.0 Talent recruitment 4.0 Next-Gen young talent recruit

away from traditional paradigms, like formal classroom lectures; it is rather sprinting away at a record pace. By embracing technology, staff can be provided with training and development options that fit their preferences and overall lifestyle. Participant P2's experience of the training and development programme was described as follows:

'I make sure that at least I remember to indicate that we have a leadership and academy where we take our employees for training purpose and its career-related training.' (Participant 2, 49 years, HR officer)

Subtheme 1.2: Agile staff development

The term agile staff development in this study refers to the processes used to develop the knowledge, skills and competencies of staff to improve effectiveness and efficiency in the workplace. Agile staff development seeks to meet workplace challenges by applying the principles of cross-functionality and self-organisation. The participants made it clear that the development of the staff was crucial for the future of talent management in the City of Tshwane. Participant P4's verbatim statement on staff development was:

'So we have seen that there's now this focus of developing employees.' (Participant 4, 50 years, Director)

Subtheme 1.3: Futuristic career development

Some participants identified futuristic career development under training and development. Employees can advance in their careers by gaining experience, obtaining career-specific training and education and taking on additional responsibilities. Future career development opportunities allow individuals to reach new levels of professionalism through areas such as networking, continued education or skills advancement. The participants stated that career development was crucial for the advancement of the employees' careers through training and work skills plans. This shows the importance of training and development for the future of talent management in the City of Tshwane. Participant P12 was clear in his statement:

'Making sure that they develop the careers that they have or professionalism that they have within the city.' (Participant 12, 45 years, HR Officer)

Human resource practitioners also need to develop the careers of employees to maintain professionalism; motivating staff involves balancing the needs and goals of multiple stakeholders. Human resource practitioners play a critical role in managing organisational change; trustworthiness and fairness are essential attributes for HR practitioners to create a positive work culture; and identifying critical talent is vital in any strategic talent management system.

Subtheme 1.4: Future work skills plan

Most participants considered the work skills plan as a form of help for employees to identify the specific skills and knowledge required to be successful in their roles and to make progress in their careers. These plans also helped team

leaders to identify the training and development needs of their team and to allocate resources accordingly:

'Well currently we do work skills planning, so we send out as soon as the talent management section sends out the prospectus of which courses are available, human capital or HR is requested to compile a work skills plan and then according to that people pre-booked to attend the courses as and when they are available.' (Participant 5, 48 years, Functional Head)

The participants made it clear that a work skills plan could help employees understand the specific skills and knowledge expected of them in their roles and identify areas where they might need to improve or update their skills. Participant 5 stated that the work skills plan could also provide a roadmap for career development, as employees could use their work skills plan to set goals and track their progress towards achieving them.

Theme 2: Advanced talent retention management

Many of the study participants held similar views of advanced retention management at the workplace. They considered it as the strategies and practices that organisations use to retain their employees over the long term. Furthermore, they believed that it involved identifying the factors that contributed to employee satisfaction and engagement and implementing strategies to address those factors and improve retention rates.

Subtheme 2.1: Dynamic staff motivation

Having dynamic staff motivation as a talent retention management strategy was an important factor for almost all the participants. In this study, dynamic staff motivation was the action that the City took to encourage and energise participants to be productive and engaged in their work. Participant P2 was clear on how they sustained employee motivation:

'I also ensure that everyone is happy at the end of the day and we talking about HR administration where you have to ensure that people are aware of their lives and are aware of their conditions of service in the employment.' (Participant 2, 49 years, HR Officer)

For some participants, staff motivation should be ongoing:

'You need to motivate your staff because some of your staff might not be motivated; you see people might come to work just because they need to come to work and need to get paid, you know, but more motivating your staff.' (Participant 9, 45 years, Functional Head)

It is very important to make sure that your staff is motivated because if you do not motivate them they will just come to work. After all, they have to be there and need to be paid.

Subtheme 2.2: Talent retention 2.0

Talent retention 2.0 is thinking about employees as long-term assets of the company versus simply filling an existing position. The participants' views on how to retain talent included offering competitive compensation and benefits

packages and regularly communicating with and listening to the concerns and ideas of staff to foster trust and engagement and make employees feel valued and supported in their roles. Participant P4 explained how retention management was implemented:

‘So one of that is the talent management strategy on that and retention and stuff like that because the whole idea is to make sure that you know if you optimise, people are happy and it’s their employer of choice, you’ll be able to retain the employees.’ (Participant 4, 50 years, Director)

Participant P9 declared:

‘Staff retention or employee retention, how we do or how we go about ensuring that we keep staff in the City of Tshwane from leaving the City.’ (P9, 45 years, Functional Head)

The participants also observed that providing opportunities for professional development and involving employees in retention strategies were key to retaining staff.

Subtheme 2.3: Remuneration – allowances

In this context, allowances refer to payments made to employees in addition to their regular salary or wages. This is one of the positive aspects of retention management. Below is the verbatim statement by Participant P6:

‘... [B]ut we can add some allowances to make sure that look they are happy in terms of the work that they’ve been doing so ...’ (P6, 47 years, Director)

The participants also stated that allowances ensured that employees remained happy in performing their jobs in the organisation and that they remained with the organisation.

Subtheme 2.4: Remuneration – salaries

Participants stated that retaining employees would require paying good salaries. At this point the importance of retention management for the future of talent management at the municipality is clear. Below is the verbatim quotation of Participant P7:

‘... [T]hen we’ll be able to say look these guys how do we keep them within the City and how do we remunerate them in terms of the salaries that they need to get even if we are not paying them well enough.’ (P7, 34 years, Functional Head)

Based on the earlier findings, employees need to be paid well to remain in the organisation. A detailed discussion is provided below to substantiate the findings of the literature review.

Theme 3: Innovative recruitment and selection

According to the participants, recruitment and selection help organisations identify and hire the best candidates for job openings. By following a structured and systematic process, the organisation selects the most qualified candidates who are well suited for the job and fit into the organisation’s culture.

Subtheme 3.1: Talent identification 2.0

Talent identification 2.0 in this research refers to the process of identifying individuals who have the potential to excel in a particular field or role. Talent identification is the act of discovering, approaching and acknowledging the best employees before the competitors do. Participants P4 and P5 responded:

‘And obviously to identify talent, to optimise talent and to review and assist the city, to see how they can. Where there is talent what are they expecting because sometimes you may be an exception.’ (Participant 4, 50 years, Director)

‘How I understand talent management is to identify the employee’s talent ...’ (Participant 5, 48 years, Functional Head)

The participants highlighted that talent identification meant identifying young talent in the workplace, which would also help to sustain talent management. The participants further stated that the optimisation of talent would assist the municipality to excel.

Subtheme 3.2: Talent recruitment 4.0

The participants considered talent recruitment 4.0 as the process of hiring qualified candidates for job openings within an organisation. Participants P2 and P12 elaborated as set out below:

‘My role as the HR officer in the city is to ensure that I recruit young talent ...’ (Participant 2, 49 years, HR Officer)

‘I think the role of HR practitioners in the City of Tshwane will be... when it comes to talent management would be hiring the right people.’ (Participant 12, 45 years, HR Officer)

Subtheme 3.3: Next-Gen young talent recruit

As companies continue to compete for new talent, it is critical to remember that every generation’s wants and needs are different. ‘Next Generation’ is often used to refer to the next iteration or evolution of a particular technology, system, product or approach. Participants were appointing young talent because they believed they brought new and fresh ideas to the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality and that they were the future work pioneers. Participant P2 said the following:

‘We are now actually appointing or recruiting young employees. And then employing young employees with qualifications, it also assists the City of Tshwane in terms of new developmental talent and more young brains and people like you, Mr Mmatlabane.’ (Participant 2, 49 years, HR Officer)

These findings show how much the organisation was investing in the recruitment of young talent. Moreover, the organisation followed the proper recruitment process while hiring young employees.

Discussion

Some of the themes that emerged were training and development; advanced retention management; and innovative recruitment and selection. There were several subthemes under the heading of each theme. Table 2

summarises the themes and subthemes that emerged from the Microsoft Teams interview data. The literature review emphasised the importance of talent management in achieving organisational success and highlighted various aspects such as training and development, retention management, recruitment and the selection and the role of technology (Al Jawali et al., 2022; Ensslin et al., 2020; Ojo et al., 2022); the findings of the study conducted at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality provided a more specific and localised perspective on the future of talent management.

Theme 1: Training and development

In the literature review, training and development were identified as crucial elements of talent management (Milon & Islam, 2019; Ojo et al., 2022). The study's findings supported this, with participants highlighting the importance of training and development programmes, staff development, career development, coaching and mentoring, career planning and work skills plans. However, the findings offered a more focused understanding of how these training and development initiatives were implemented within the specific context of the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. Participants who were exposed to training and development programmes always remained motivated to work for the organisation. When staff development was sustained, it improved the level of effectiveness and efficiency in the workplace. The development of staff was crucial for the future of talent management. Furthermore, when training and development were provided, it helped to equip employees with current crucial skills and to advance in their careers. Work skills plans helped the participants to identify the skills and knowledge needed to be successful in their careers. The literature related to what the participants experienced in their workplace in terms of training and development, which allowed them to grow in their careers and motivated them to be successful in what they were doing for the organisation.

Subtheme 1.1: Next-Gen training and development programme

Implementing a Next-Gen training and development programme is critical for employee motivation and professional advancement. Organisations may guarantee that their staff remain engaged and au fait with essential skills by adopting technology and providing training alternatives that correspond with employees' tastes and lifestyles. This subtheme emphasises the significance of introducing novel techniques to training and development.

Subtheme 1.2: Agile staff development

Agile staff development focuses on continuously developing employees' knowledge, skills and competencies to increase their effectiveness and efficiency in the workplace. Organisations can handle workplace difficulties and cultivate a learning culture by implementing cross-functionality and self-organisation concepts. The findings emphasise the importance of staff development for the future of talent

management and the role it plays in organisational performance.

Subtheme 1.3: Futuristic career development

Futuristic career development refers to allowing employees to improve by gaining experience, obtaining extra training and education and taking on greater responsibilities. This subtheme emphasises the significance of career development in personnel management and how it affects employee happiness and professional advancement. Organisations should provide opportunities for employees to broaden their abilities and advance to higher levels of professionalism.

Subtheme 1.4: Future work skills plan

The future work skills plan assists employees in identifying the specific skills and knowledge required to succeed in their professions and advance in their careers. It also assists team leaders in identifying and allocating resources for training and development. This subtheme emphasises the importance of work skills planning in aligning individual and organisational goals, promoting career development and ensuring employees have the skills they need to succeed in their roles.

Theme 2: Advanced retention management

The literature review emphasised the significance of retention management in talent management practices (Bondarchuk et al., 2022; Ensslin et al., 2020), while Siripipatthanakul et al. (2022) accentuated advanced retention management. The study's findings aligned with this perspective, as participants identified staff motivation, talent retention and remuneration as important factors for retaining employees at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. These findings offered a practical understanding of how retention management strategies were implemented and perceived within the organisation. When employees are motivated, their productivity level remains high. They also keep working for the organisation because they feel motivated to come to work. This shows that money is not the only compelling factor in staff retention; motivation is also important. If employees are not motivated they will just come to work for the sake of getting paid. However, some employees are retained in the organisation by being paid a good salary. The findings also highlighted that employees who received allowances remained working for the organisation because they felt valued. This was also substantiated in the review of the literature.

Subtheme 2.1: Dynamic staff motivation

Dynamic employee motivation focuses on the measures by the organisation to motivate and energise people, resulting in increased productivity and engagement. This subtheme emphasises the need to keep employees engaged and pleased by attending to their requirements and working environment. It underlines the importance of HR professionals in fostering a positive work culture and making employees feel valued and supported.

Subtheme 2.2: Talent retention 2.0

Talent retention 2.0 entails viewing employees as long-term assets and applying retention tactics. Offering competitive remuneration and benefits, establishing trust and engagement through regular contact and providing opportunities for professional development are all examples of this. The term '2.0' signifies an upgraded version that embraces innovation, interactivity and user engagement, typically seen in technology or broader paradigms. This subtheme emphasises the importance of retaining talented individuals as well as the role of HR professionals in designing and implementing successful retention strategies.

Subtheme 2.3: Remuneration – allowances

Additional payments offered to employees to increase their pleasure and motivation are referred to as allowances. This subtheme emphasises the beneficial effects of allowances on employee retention and satisfaction. It recognises the significance of fair and competitive pay practices in keeping employees and ensuring their happiness and dedication to the organisation.

Subtheme 2.4: Remuneration – salaries

This subtheme emphasises the significance of offering competitive compensation to retain staff. It recognises that sufficient compensation plays an important role in employee retention and highlights the importance of organisations prioritising fair and competitive compensation practices.

Theme 3: Innovative recruitment and selection

The literature covered the importance of recruitment and selection processes in talent management, including talent identification and the recruitment of young talent (Tyskbo, 2021). The study's findings from the municipality echoed these concepts, with participants emphasising the significance of talent identification and recruitment (City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, 2023). The findings offered specific insights into how talent identification and recruitment strategies were implemented in the context of the municipality. A good recruitment and selection system means that the organisation is able to identify individuals who can succeed in their roles. Previous research also highlighted the importance of innovative recruitment and selection (Aslam et al., 2023; Shah & Soomro, 2023). Furthermore, in alignment with the literature, the findings showed that it was important to hire suitably qualified individuals. Organisations that hire young talent ensure a supply of fresh ideas.

Subtheme 3.1: Talent identification 2.0

Talent identification 2.0 entails finding individuals who have a high potential to excel in specific roles. This subtheme emphasises the necessity of proactively discovering and cultivating talent within the organisation. It underlines the importance of talent identification in optimising talent utilisation and ensuring organisational success.

Subtheme 3.2: Talent recruitment 4.0

Identification of individuals with great potential to perform in specific roles is part of talent recruitment 4.0. The term '4.0' represents the current era of advanced technologies, including fundamentally reshaping various aspects of work. This subtheme emphasises the necessity of proactive talent identification and development inside the organisation. It underlines the significance of talent identification in improving talent utilisation.

Subtheme 3.3: Next-Gen young talent recruit

Bringing in new perspectives, ideas and energy require the recruitment of young talent. This subtheme emphasises the significance of attracting and hiring young individuals with qualifications and growth potential. It underlines the importance of young talent in generating innovation and guaranteeing talent management's future.

Practical implications

This study added to the body of knowledge on how employees at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality ensured the implementation of future talent management. It showed that the future of talent management should be aligned with the organisation's mandate. Furthermore, the study contributed to a more general understanding of the causes of employee perceptions and recommended ways of addressing this negativity. Certain crucial practical implications were recognised in order to improve organisational practices. To begin, focusing on policy refinement, a specific goal would be to eliminate age-related biases in promotion rules and promote fairness across all age groups. This includes a thorough assessment and probable change of existing regulations, with the criteria that emphasise skills and performance rather than age being prioritised. Furthermore, it is critical to educate decision-makers and HR employees on the execution of non-discriminatory promotion policies.

Lastly, within the training sector, the goal is to enhance training practices through the incorporation of digital approaches within the municipal environment. This means identifying areas that would benefit the most from digital training and then investing in appropriate digital training platforms and materials that are catered to varied learning needs. It is critical to have a complete digital training strategy that includes assessments and feedback tools to track progress and effectiveness. This approach will be strengthened further by encouraging a culture of continual learning and digital skill development among employees. Organisations may develop a more equal and talented workforce by meticulously incorporating these practical consequences, laying the road for long-term growth and success.

Limitations

A limitation of this study was that some participants were not responsive because of fear that the information they provided would become known, even though confidentiality was

emphasised. Another limitation was that the population size was limited to 13 participants owing to the available number of participants. The researcher chose the method of gathering data through Microsoft Teams meetings, which delayed the researcher's period of collecting data, as employees from the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality were reluctant to respond to the interview invitation by email. Another limitation of this study is that the study was conducted in one municipality; therefore, there results may not be generalised to other municipalities in South Africa.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study and the existing literature, the following recommendations were identified for the future of talent management at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. Practically, this study developed a framework that HR practitioners could use to implement talent management effectively.

Leadership and managerial training

Management should introduce leadership and managerial training for low-level employees to create a pool of skilled in-house employees available for managerial positions. This would save the municipality recruitment costs and also help in promoting talent from within.

Digital training platforms

Section heads or team leaders should make training available through digital platforms. This would be cost-effective for the municipality and ensure employee safety, particularly for female employees who may have to travel late for face-to-face training sessions.

Increased departmental budgets

The municipality needs to increase departmental budgets to ensure that employees have access to the necessary resources and equipment to work effectively.

Future research

The following future research opportunities were identified for the future of talent management at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.

Conduct face-to-face interviews

Face-to-face interviews should be conducted as remote interviews can be time-consuming and require extreme effort to enlist participants in the study. Face-to-face interviews also allow for better observation of non-verbal cues and body language, leading to more accurate data.

Similar studies in other South African metro municipalities

Similar studies should be carried out in other South African metro municipalities to compare and contrast talent management practices, identify best practices and explore the unique challenges faced by each municipality.

The evolving nature of talent management

The future of talent management is always evolving and has many interesting aspects. Research can focus on emerging trends and practices in talent management, such as the use of AI and big data analytics in talent acquisition and management.

The recommendations and future research opportunities identified in this study provide a roadmap for the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality to improve its talent management practices and remain competitive in the ever-changing landscape of talent management. By investing in the development of employees, providing access to resources and embracing emerging trends and practices, the municipality can attract and retain top talent and position itself as a leader in talent management.

Conclusion

Overall, the findings of the study conducted at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality provided a perspective on the future of talent management, supporting and expanding upon the concepts discussed in the literature review. By examining the specific practices and experiences within the organisation, the findings offered practical insights into the implementation and effectiveness of talent management strategies. In terms of training and development, the study's findings supported the literature's emphasis on its importance. Participants in the study identified training and development programmes, staff development and career development as crucial elements within the municipality.

Retention management was another area that both the literature review and the study highlighted. The literature review emphasised the significance of retention strategies, and the study findings confirmed this by identifying staff motivation, talent retention and remuneration as important factors for retaining employees within the municipality. Recruitment and selection processes were also addressed in both the literature review and the study. The literature review discussed talent identification and recruitment of young talent, while the study's findings indicated the importance of talent identification and recruitment within the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.

In closing it is clear that the municipality was not fully prepared for the future of work. It is evident that few technology initiatives were put in place to enhance talent management.

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