THE IDENTIFICATION OF TALENT: CASE STUDIES

FROM UK PUBLIC & PRIVATE SECTORS

BY

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Copyright statement

Abstract

Talent identification (TID) has implications for practice and theory in light of the increasing popularity of talent management (TM). However, because of the diverse ways and settings in which it occurs, the field of TM lacks conceptual and theoretical boundaries concerning what it means and how it is practiced. Most research takes place in large profit-seeking firms and the main focus of this thesis is to explore how talent and TM are conceptualised in public sector organizations. A qualitative case study methodology was used to gain insights from three public sector organizations and one large retail organization in the UK.

The theoretical framework is pitched on multi-levels drawing largely on Institutional Theory with sub-levels being organisational justice, Resource Base View and Human Capital Theories.

Key findings include a more inclusive TM philosophy operating in the retail company in contrast to relatively exclusive approaches in two public organizations and a hybrid approach pursued in a third public organization. A second contribution comprises two new aspects of the definition of 'talent' namely people who are 'inclusive' in their management approach and the idea of 'talent' as the 'art of the conversation'. Both aspects expand the concept of 'talent as object' and are useful to practice and policy by driving knowledge of equality and diversity as well as promoting managerial responsibility and competence in conducting career conversations and in driving talent development which is a generic challenge for managers.

A third contribution to debates around clarifying the boundaries of the meaning of 'exclusive' and 'inclusive' talent in relation to inclusion and exclusion is typified by local government's 'inclusion' add-on to its 'exclusive' talent approach, which enabled identification of talent from everyone in specified targeted grades as well as those from diverse backgrounds who were under-represented in its leadership team. This finding from local government is important to the TM field as other findings suggest that 'exclusive' talent implies 'exclusion'. A fourth contribution from the health sector highlights the importance of evaluating TM programmes in order to drive continuous organisational support and manage the challenges of poor leadership whilst tracking the progression of talent cohorts.

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Dedications

To my father God, thank you, for your grace is always sufficient.

To my dear husband, Oromena and children, Efezino and Ewoma, you are my priceless treasure and I thank you for your prayers, for always being there for me and helping me complete this journey, strong.

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List of abbreviations

1	Civico	Civil Service
2	FLS	Future Leaders Scheme
3	GTM	Global Talent Management
4	HPDS	High Potential Development Scheme
5	HQ	Head Quarters
6	HRBP	Human Resource Business Partner
7	HRM	Human Resource Manager
8	IHRM	International Human Resource Manager
9	IPDM	Interim People Development Manager
10	LDP	Leadership Development Partner
11	Locgov	Local Government
12	NE	North East
13	NPM	New Public Management
14	ODM	Organisational Development Manager
15	PHServ	Public Health Service
16	PSM	People Service Manager
17	RBV	Resource Base View of the firm
18	Retco	Retail Company
19	Rgn. Mgr.	Regional Manager
20	ROM	Regional Operations Manager
21	RPSM	Regional People Service Manager
22	SE	South East
23	SHRM	Strategic Human Resource Management
24	TID	Talent Identification
25	TM	Talent Management

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of this PhD research project, which focuses on the identification of talent in UK public and private sectors. The research comprised multiple case studies of organisations in the UK. Three case studies were in the public sector and one in the private sector. Data collection was conducted between August 2013 and January 2015. Section 1.2 provides a research background which highlights some of the critical issues and research gaps about talent identification (TID) in the empirical literature which this research attempts to address and by so doing contribute to the knowledge gaps in these areas. Section 1.3 gives a conceptual framework comprising the aims, objectives of the research and research questions. Section 1.4 explains the structure of the thesis and research design while section 1.5 summarises this chapter.

1.2 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Talent Management (TM) as a management practice has established its presence in organisations globally and has been described as a requisite for an organisation's success, survival and competitive advantage because of the important role it plays in the attraction, identification, development, engagement and retention of employees with the greatest impact on a firm's overall corporate goals (Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Boudreau & Ramstad, 2007). Further to increased emphasis on a 'war for talent' promoted most notably through Michaels et al.'s (2001) publication and more recently reinforced through reviews of current workforce trends (McDonnell, 2011; Meister & Willyerd, 2010), there has been greater awareness in organisations concerning talent resourcing to fill future leadership gaps which in turn has led to a rising focus on TM strategies and frameworks in organisations such as high-potential identification in corporations (Campbell & Smith, 2010; Silzer & Church, 2009, 2010; Thornton, Hollenbeck, & Johnson, 2013). The identification, development and retention of talent have become a major aspect of strategic activity with the current uncertainties created by the growing gaps between supply and demand for skilled labour, an aging workforce, increases in job mobility(Keller & Cappelli, 2014; McDonnell, 2015) coupled with current research showing company tenure averaging about five years amongst other factors (BCG, 2013). In light of the

above, most studies resonate the emergence of TM as a distinct strategic business activity heralding focus and investment in employees and positions that have the greatest differential impact on business strategy (Morton, 2011; Boudreau and Ramstad, 2007) and contributes to successful acquisition and retention of essential talent.

However, a review of literature on TM indicates that despite its apparent connection with organizational performance (Ernst & Young, 2010; Somaya & Williamson, 2011), it is plagued with inconsistencies and ambiguity in the definitions of talent and talent management with several indicating that 'people are rarely precise about what they mean by the term 'talent' in organizations and the implications of defining talent for TM practice" (Tansley, 2011, p. 266) as most times these definitions were organization-specific and determined by the organization's nature of work as well as its mission and culture (CIPD, 2007; Iles et al., 2010). Further arguments revolve around whether 'talent refers to people (subject), the characteristics of people (object) or if talent is more about performance, potential, competence, or commitment' or about natural ability and /or mastery through experience (Gallardo-Gallardo et al, 2013). A final debate remains about how inclusive or exclusive are an organisation's TM practices.

These debates highlight why a generic organisational definition of talent is essential to effective TM practices particularly for talent identification purposes. There are calls in the literature for the development of more 'collective perspectives' on talent (Iles, 2013, p. 302 & 303) particularly in contextualizing the criteria used for high potential and high performance (Dries & Pepermans, 2008; Tansley et al., 2013). Contributing to the development of knowledge in these areas of talent definitions is a primary objective of this research particularly investigating how inclusive or exclusive TM can be in organisations and the outcomes for organisations choosing either talent approaches (McDonnell, 2011; 2015; Meyers & Woerkom, 2014).
According to extant literature, the focus of most studies on talent identification are about 'leadership potential' and exclusive TM practices (Dries & Pepermans, 2012; McDonnell & Collings, 2010) and are based on literature reviews. There appears to be limited research focusing primarily on comparing organisational approaches to or processes of talent in the UK public and private sectors in particular as most would discuss talent from either a European or global talent perspective (Stahl et al., 2007; 2012; Cook et al., 2014) primarily using secondary data (Gallardo- Gallardo et al., 2015). It is with this intention that this thesis aims to contribute to knowledge gaps while extending knowledge of TM practices and challenges encountered in implementing talent identification which can be transferable for future research within and outside these domains for theory, policy and practice, particularly in the light of the increasing interest in identifying and segmenting various categories of talent (Silzer & Church, 2009) which is also implied by the propagation of diverse assessment methods at professional conferences.

Furthermore, this research is and differentiates itself through providing insights on TM practice from empirical qualitative data from primary research conducted with HR professionals, line managers and talent pool employees as various studies (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015; Thunnissen et al. 2013) claim that most papers on TM are conceptual and there are still limited amount of empirical research on TM. It therefore responds to calls for more empirical research on talent identification (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2007; Lewis & Heckman, 2006; Makela et al., 2010; McDonnell, 2011) which has been described by McDonnell & Collings (2010, p. 66), as an area of 'empirical paucity' and one of the most under-explored' and under researched (Makela et al., 2010).

1.3 RATIONALE FOR COMPARING PUBLIC & PRIVATE SECTORS

Researching TM in both public and private sectors was important for this study to identify the contrasts which appear are assumed to be more similar than different. This assumption stems from the new public management (NPM) entrepreneurial and enterprising practices in the public sector during the Thatcher years advocating new public sector bias towards practices in the private sector which narrowed the HRM practice differences between the two sectors over the years (Boyne, 2002; 1999; 1995). Notwithstanding, research has consistently found differences between the private and the public sector management processes (Cooper, 2004; Boyne et al., 2002; Farnham and Horton, 1996). For example, private firms are very much about profit making, and shareholders but the public sector is much more complex (Harel & Tzafrir, 2001). Multiple stakeholders are interested in it including the media. Political leaders are often changed every few years, impacting changes in public sector management practices (Moore, 1995). Public sector managers are often much more collective in the way they think adopting practices of uniformity and standardization' for example, the 'job for life', pay scales which were affected by job grade' and also promotion based on tenure. They tend not to adopt tougher performance 'flexibility and differentiation' approaches used in a private sector and are more sensitive about saying one person is more talented than the other because this is openly differentiating (Boyne et al. 1999).Therefore, it was important to study both sectors to understand similarities and differences in the ways both approach TM. This contrast is important for understanding the talent scene better than if one looked only into the public sector.

Furthermore, Collings et al.(2011, p. 455), allege that apart from the a few papers (Vance & Vaiman, 2008; Collings & Mellahi, 2009;Farndale et al., 2010; Makela et al., 2010; McDonnell et al., 2010), the majority of the theoretical and empirical work on which talent management sits, has been influenced by research from the US and particularly multinational organizations

(MNCs). They (Collings et al., 2011; McDonnell, 2015, Thunnissen et al., 2013) therefore emphasize the need for empirical research outside of these contexts as the field of TM progresses from infancy to adolescence, in order to provide different 'perspectives' and traditions, as the current concepts and traditions from US based, private and MNC organizations are becoming less adequate for describing and studying TM in organizations'. Additionally, these authors also draw attention to the limited research on TM practices in other contexts such as the public sector, non-profit and small and medium sized sectors with others (Tansley et al., 2013) specifically, advocating research in these sectors which demonstrate the similarities and differences in TM practices. This research project responds to these gaps in two ways. Firstly by conducting case study research focusing on the UK public and private sector contexts and secondly, by providing a comparison through cross case analysis of talent approaches adopted by organizations in the two sectors for identifying high potential, This is an area that has not been explored previously as the focus of much of the research that exists in this area is about validating specific assessment tool or models and not on providing comprehensive comparison of approaches to identifying high potentials (Silzer and Church, 2009, p. 385).

1.4 RESEARCH AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Having discussed the importance of this study with reference to areas requiring further research concerning TM practices within the extant literature in sections 1.2 and 1.3, the aim of this research is firstly to investigate how UK public and private sector organisations identify talent, specifically looking at how talent is constructed for this purpose as well as factors that affect the identification processes which may pose challenges and barriers to reliable and valid talent identification. This study also examines similarities and differences in the identification practices and explains why they exist.

The research objectives are:

1) To examine how case study organisations construct the notion of talent for identification purposes.
2) To investigate factors that affect the processes of identification and criteria for employee differentiation across these organisations.
3) To identify the challenges/barriers to reliable talent identification and how they are managed across the organisations.

4) To compare similarities and differences in identification practices across the organisations and why they exist.

To understand talent identification practices in the public and private sector, the following research questions shaped the investigation:

1) How do organisations in the public and private sectors define talent?
   The focus will be on understanding how talent and TM are imagined in organizations by management and employees including the approaches adopted i.e. inclusive or exclusive or both and their outcomes.
2) What factors affect the processes of identification and employee differentiation?
   Talent identification processes and techniques/criteria used for differentiation and talent identification and the factors affecting these processes are examined.
3) What challenges and barriers to reliable talent identification occur and how are they managed?
   The aim is here is to verify the internal and external challenges to talent identification provided in the data and to clarify how organisations manage them to promote reliability of their TM processes.
4) How similar or different are the talent identification practices and why do these differences occur?
   The purpose is to understand why there are similarities and differences across the case studies through a cross-case analysis.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN & STRUCTURE

This thesis is made up seven chapters as follows:

Chapter one explains the purpose of this research and its contribution to the literature while chapter two provides a detailed literature review of talent, and talent identification, also looking at the literature on public and private sector differences to understand how these differences between the two sectors might affect implementation of TM programs in the case studies. Knowledge gaps are identified for this research. Chapter three focuses on a review of TM and how it fits into Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) and associated theories such as the Resource Based View (RBV), Human Capital theory and Institutional theory and how these have influenced the practice of TM. Chapter four explains the research methodology adopted for this study and theoretical positioning including a justification for choosing the case

study research design and methods for analysing data. Chapters five, six, seven and eight present the findings and within case analysis of the four case studies while chapter nine provides a cross-case analysis and detailed discussion of the findings across the cases in comparison to the TM Literature. The final chapter, chapter 10 concludes the thesis through presenting contributions of this study and its limitations and directions for future research.

1.6 SUMMARY

This chapter has provided an introduction to this thesis showing its importance and expected contribution to the extension and enhancement of knowledge to the TM field through a brief literature review that identified some of the tensions/debates requiring further research in this subject area. It has also briefly summarised the research design and structure of the study. The next chapter provides a detailed literature review on 'talent' which is a central focus of this study.

CHAPTER 2: WHAT / WHO IS TALENT?

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a review of the literature on the meaning of 'talent' looking at the various theoretical developments, challenges and suggestions for future research. It also explores the literature on 'talent identification' and theories on institutional differences between the public and private sector in their behaviours, structures and challenges in people management.

2.2 WHAT / WHO IS TALENT?

The results of Mckinsey's 1997 'war on talent' study indicate a 22% profit for businesses with more talent in comparison to a 13% profit by those who have less talent on their payroll as 'talent' has become a "key differentiator between two equally competitive high performance organisations" (Chugh & Bhatnagar, 2006, p. 229). The identification of talent has become a central focus for businesses to remain competitive but in spite of this growing search for talent, TM can be seen as academically lacking 'conceptual and intellectual foundation, definition and rigour' (Collings et al., 2011, p. 455; Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Scullion et al., 2010). One potential underlying reason for the poor conceptualisation of TM is because of the very varied view of what talent is as it remains unclear what the constitution of talent is and what is being managed (Brown & Tannock, 2009). This non-clarity according to Staffan & Ellstrom (2012, p. 39) rests on how and to what extent talent can be described as being about individuals, requirements of specific jobs and organisations, or "processes that are related to the relationship between these components as well as the varying degrees of value and difficulty in terms of replacement in a specific organisation". It therefore follows that "organisations must clarify how they define talent, who they regard as the talented and what their typical background might be" (CIPD, 2007a, p2).

Further insights by Staffan & Ellstrom, (2012, p. 30, 39) are that talent can be context bound as what is defined as talent or the degree to which an individual is assessed as talent in one organisation may differ from another and that the meaning of talent cannot be defined explicitly. According to these authors, ''talent is related to factors that include the different demands, expectations, rules or standards in an organisation that determinte the appropriate ways of handling a task or solving a problem''. They also propose that the criteria for defining the

constitution of talent in an organisation are constructed at 'an institutional level' or at 'the organisational-social level' arguing that while 'the institutional criteria' arise from processes linked with formal education and professionalism in a particular area, the organisational-social criteria are associated with changes in the system of production, social relations, the culture or work environment. However, they explain that there may be contradictions and inconsistencies between the different criterias. For example between institutional and organisational criteria and between organisatinal and social criteria.

In terms of organisational talent, Silzer and Church (2009) classify talent under three perspectives. The first being an individual's knowledge, skills and abilities comprising what the person has done or is capable of doing or contributing to the organisation in the future. The second perspective refers to a specific person who has specific talent while the third perspective comprises group level talent e.g. in a pool with exceptional skills either in a technical area such as finance or marketing or specific competency e.g. innovative ranking or more general area e.g. general management or leadership potential. Similar debates about talent are presented by Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2013, p. 291) who claim that discussions about the definitions of talent border on whether talent refers to people (subject), the characteristics of people (object) or whether talent is more about performance, potential, competence, or commitment. Furthermore, they question whether talent is a natural ability or if it relate more to mastery through experience? Also if and to what extent TM practices are inclusive or exclusive. They provide a detailed analysis in response to each of the above questions which are presented in the next section.

2.2.1 Talent as object

The following commonly used terms for describing talent characteristics based on a review of literature are presented by Gallardo-Gallardo et al., (2013 p. 293). These terms include ability, capacity, capability, commitment, competence, contribution, Experience, knowledge, performance, potential, patterns of thought, feelings or behaviour and skills. These terms reflect characteristics displayed by employees and symbolise a perspective of talent. These definitions of characteristics of talent are extended further in Tansley's (2011) assertions that perceptions of talent in organisations are defined from different standpoints e.g. behavioural aspects i.e. having a 'can-do attitude', knowledge, skills i.e. having enough creative flair to create new realities and experiences from this new knowledge and finally, competencies and cognitive capability which is (having diversity of thought or flexibility in producing a particular state of mind which matches organisational requirements irrelevant of job role). She further asserts that some see organisational talent as complex 'amalgam of employees skills, knowledge, cognitive ability

and potential and that talent in an individual needs to be recognised as a complex and dynamic mix of such key characteristics (Tansley, 2011 p. 271).

2.2.2 Talent as Subject

Under the definition of talent as subject, two major approaches are constant in the TM literature which are the Inclusive and exclusive approaches.

2.2.2.1 Exclusive People as High Performance & High Potential (non-position-related)

The first is the 'exclusive perspective', which is a perception of viewing key people with high performance and potential as talent (non-position-related understanding). According to Morton (2006) this first strand takes a relatively narrow sense of the definition of talent as individuals who have the capability to make a significant difference to the current and future performance of the company. Research indicates that in most large organisations, talent is linked with individuals who display the most potential to progress to more senior roles predominantly leadership positions. Usually, the high potential employee is someone with the "ability, engagement and aspiration to rise to and succeed in more senior, more critical positions" while the most frequently associated characteristics of high performance in talented individuals are that they have "high levels of expertise, demonstrate leadership behaviours, creativity and initiative stemming from a 'can-do attitude' based on self-belief" (Tansley, 2011 p.172). A number of practitioners and academics support these view as evidenced in their definitions summarised in Table 1 below.

The proposed and commonly accepted argument by scholars with reference to the above definitions of talent, is that it is not possible for everyone in an organisation to be considered as a talent; because what differentiates the 'talented' from the others is measured in terms of their current and past performance as well as their assessed potential and competence. These perceptions support the elitist view derived from Pareto's 80/20 rule that 20% of the workforce contribute 80% of the value. It is therefore safe to assume that this first perception of' talent' is essentially based on segmentation of the workforce into parts that will be treated differently. Concurring with the above proposition, Chuai (2008, p.12) asserts that TM will be impractical without segmentation, arguing that without segmentation, managers will treat all employees as equally valuable, regardless of performance, competence, potential or other characteristics that distinguish one employee from the other.

Table 1: Definitions of Talent in TM literature.

…"talent are those who are highly educated and (have the ability to be) high achievers/performers in the organization" (Cook et al. (2014, p. 234)
"We build on Collings and Mellahi's (2009) definition and conceptualize talent in terms of the specific behaviours and/or qualities the organization defines as essential for the achievement of its current and future goals" (Hoglund, 2012)
"..talented employees are often referred to as high potential individuals who currently outperform their peer groups while reflecting their company's culture and values and who show a strong capacity to grow and succeed within their organisations" (Ready et al., 2010, p. 52)
"those employees with highest potential who also demonstrate a capacity for high performance" (Cappelli, 2009)
" those individuals who can make a positive impact on organisational performance either through their immediate contribution or in the longer term by demonstrating the highest level of potential" (CIPD, 2007, p. 3)
"… employees who are particularly valuable to an organisation...either in view of their 'high potential' for the future or because they are fulfilling business/operation –critical roles" (Iles, 2008, p. 215)
"…a code for the most effective leaders and managers at all levels who can help a company fulfil its aspirations and drive its performance. Managerial talent is some combination of a sharp strategic mind, leadership ability, emotional maturity, communications, skills, the ability to attract and inspire other talented people, entrepreneurial instincts, functional skills and the ability to deliver results" (Michaels et al., 2001, p. xiii)

Smart (2005, p. 5-6) argues that "high performers are the single most important driver of organisational performance since they contribute more, innovate more, work smarter, earn more trust, display more resourcefulness, take more initiative, develop better business strategies, articulate their visions more passionately, implement change more effectively, deliver highly quality work, demonstrate greater teamwork and find ways to get the job done in less time and less cost". Others argue that the term potential is used to describe "individuals with qualities (motivation, skills abilities, and experiences) to effectively perform (Gallardo-Gallardo et al. 2013, p. 296) and contribute in broader or different roles in the organisation at some point in the future" (Silzer & Church, 2009, p. 379).

2.2.2.2 Talent as Exclusive positions

The second exclusive perspective is a perception of viewing the right people in key positions as talent (position-related understanding). This perspective is central to Collings and Mellahi (2009, p. 305) definition of TM as:

…"activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions which differentially contribute to the organization's sustainable competitive advantage, the development of a talent pool of high potential and high performing incumbents to fill these roles, and the development of a differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling these positions with competent incumbents and to ensure their continued commitment to the organization".

Though this second strand also adopts a narrow sense of the definition of talent, it is examined from a different perspective which is based on workforce differentiation (Huselid & Becker, 2011) which is a disproportionate investment on a small percentage (5-20%) of the workforce from whom a high return on investment is expected. Again in this second strand, just like the first, the principle of employee differentiation is paramount for defining 'talent'. Huselid et al. (2005) claim that talent are by no means non-position-related, as proposed in the first perspective. Here, it is only the right people (A players) occupying those positions, that are considered talent and get a disproportionate level of financial and managerial investment, guaranteeing the maximum opportunities for their development. A perfect match of 'A' players' and 'A' positions' is expected to contribute to 'A' performance'. Huselid et al (2005) also propose placing the very best employees in strategic positions, good performers in support positions, and eliminate non performing jobs and employees that do not add value.

Existing criticisms about the exclusive approach to talent border firstly on ethics. Swailes (2013, p. 37) describes the exclusive "practice of regarding a small group of employees as having special powers can be seen as a dehumanising act in relation to others" (Swailes, 2013, p.37) as it denies individual agency, which is a distinct aspect of being human (Haslam 2006). Secondly, the evaluation of performance and potential do not have objective indicators and are prone to bias with the process of talent identification also being subjective as decisions are taken by top and line management (Silzer & Church, 2010; Pepermans et al., 2003). The argument here is that there is no difference between 'A' and 'B' players as the former could look like the latter under different conditions and vice versa (Netessine & Yakubovich, 2012; Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006) whilst the third criticism highlights the flaw and controversy in assuming that past performance predicts future performance (Martin & Schmidt, 2010) and fourthly, authors highlight the dangers in identifying an elite subset of an organisation as 'talent' can lead to self-

fulfilling prophecies such as the Pygmalion effect (Swailes & Blackburn, 2016). Additionally, while the exclusive talent approach arguably facilitates talent identification for succession planning for future leadership development and enables development opportunities for talent pool members and the ability to evaluate the outcomes of programs; employee engagement with non- talent pool members who might be overlooked for development, is deterred with possibility of high turnover as a result of non-inclusive practice. There is a risk of overlooking talent in other job grades when the focus is only on specific targeted grades are high (CIPD 2007, p. 21) as evidenced within this research.

2.2.3 Inclusive Talent

The third perspective is the 'Inclusive perspective' in which organizations perceive all or most of their workforce as talent (Swailes et al., 2014). Cooke et al. (2014, p. 226) describes this approach as a "newer fashion of human resource management''. This perspective assumes that everyone can potentially contribute to the overall competitive advantage of the organisation and perceives that everyone has talent and talent is seen as an absolute characteristics of an employee not something that is relative to others. Although the inclusive approach offers the best of intentions, it seems rare in practice with some authors claiming that this approach is most affiliated with public sector organisations and aligned with the innovation perspective of talent (Christensen et al. 2010). However, the justification for this approach in the literature is that it is a 'strength-based' approach to talent which according to Bothner, Podolny & Smith (2011) creates a more pleasant, collegiate and motivating work environment. Potential benefits of an inclusive talent practice include improved employee engagement due to having an open access to the talent pool and having succession management for key roles and not just management grades as well as potential dividends for organisational performance through the contribution from all talent (CIPD, 2007, P.21-22).

Critics of this approach argue that it makes differentiating TM and Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) difficult (Chuai, 2008; Garrow & Hirsh, 2008) and that it incurs unnecessary expenses for HR investments (Lin, 2006). The latter criticism negates the notion of inclusive talent approach being a strength-based approach providing a 'win-win' for both the individual and organisation as it implies that the exclusive approach to talent is more cost effective (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013, p. 295). Supporting the above criticisms, the CIPD, (2007, p. 21-22) asserts that an inclusive TM practice may create difficulties in the management of progression because of high competition, and that investment in individuals with organisation's core skills may be overlooked thereby jeopardising corporate strategic goals.

The above perspectives of talent provide a variety of choices of approaches to talent management practices for organisations and probably a variety of outcomes which would have diverse effects on the overall health of an organisation (Huang & Tansley, 2012). Supporting this last point through their introduction of four talent philosophies presented in figure 1, below, (exclusive/developable; exclusive stable; inclusive developable and inclusive stable), Meyers and Woerkom (2014) argue that the outcomes of TM practices are determined by an organisation's talent philosophy and their propositions are instructive to talent decision making, employee wellbeing and organisational performance. Evidence from the empirical literature suggests a mixture of approaches in organisations (McDonnell & Collings, 2011; Collings & Mellahi, 2009) with Ford et al. (2010) advocating a hybrid approach to talent being most suitable for ensuring fairness and employee motivation whilst enabling organisations benefit from both approaches. Though the McKinsey Consulting Group initially favoured an exclusive approach to talent, they presently advise a more inclusive approach to development of not just 'A' players but also 'B' players (Ernst & Young, 2010). A CIPD study (2011), however, found that many organisations have adopted an exclusive approach that focuses on developing senior managers.
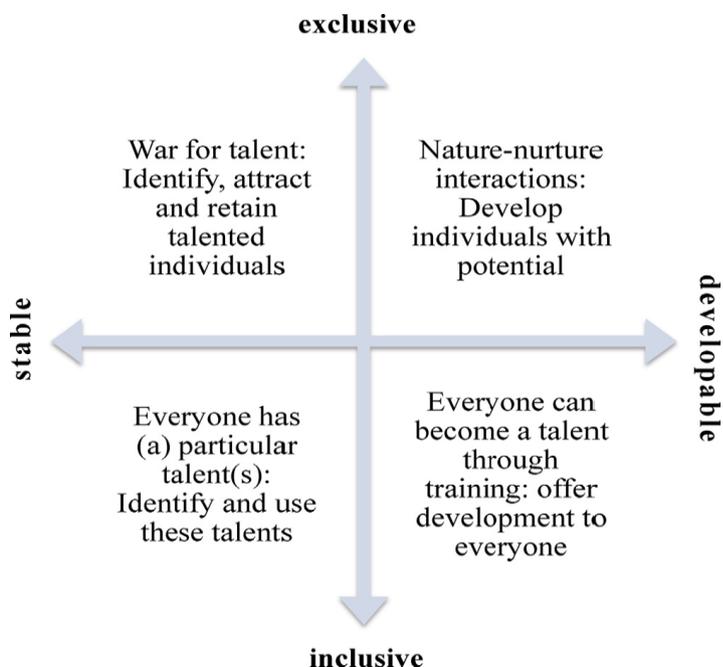
Fig. 2.1: Talent Management Philosophies, Meyers & Woerkom, (2014, p. 194)

A critical question that arises given the viewpoints discussed in the paragraphs above exposing the inconsistencies and contradictions associated with the definitions of talent is: 'How do

organisations make sense of who and what talent is to enable reliable talent identification processes that will promote good judgement and decision making by managers and HR practitioners'?. For example, the terms 'exclusive' and 'inclusive' talent may be misleading and promote confusion in implementation as they can be interpreted as 'exclusion' and 'inclusion' and therefore require further clarification to enable better implementation of TM programs. Furthermore, it would appear that a common pattern for organisations is to associate 'talent' only with those in leadership and leadership development and this philosophy intensifies the dangers of having a universal generic definition of talent as talent can be diverse for example taking the diverse types of talent in a hospital as reflected in the PHServ case study.

2.3 INNATE TALENT VS. LEARNT

Debates about talent have focused on whether talent is innate i.e. inborn or if it can be learned. From their philological research, Holden & Tansley (2008) discovered that the word 'talent' has a high degree of common meaning in various European languages and holds innate characteristics i.e. talent is a gift or quality that one is born with. It is only in the Japanese language that 'talent' does not connote the notion of innateness but emphasis is on talent as an accomplishment, acquired and seen as the product often of years of striving to attain perfection (Holden & Tansley, 2008).

Those who argue that talent is innate usually identify talented individuals with sporting or musical talent. According to Tansley's (2011) research in etymology on this topic, throughout the ages, talent which started as a unit of weight, then a unit of money, acquired new meanings in Europe and changed to mean special ability or aptitude with those seen as talented being able to demonstrate outstanding accomplishments in oriental and physical domains. Gagne (2000, p.67) argues against this notion by suggesting that talent exists in the few individuals, the top 10% by group who have the necessary capabilities to make a difference in given field of human endeavour, whether it is academia, sport, arts, leisure, social action, technology or business. He argues that talent emerges from ability as a consequence of an individual's learning experience. Similarly, Sizer and Church (2009, p. 379) see talent as a mix of both natural abilities and learned skills and that natural ability flows and flourishes through learning and when opportunities are given for these abilities to be expressed.

Another view is expressed by Tansley (2011) for promoting the need for balance in perceptions of talent as both innate and learned with the introduction of 'creativity' as a specific element of talent and the importance of the environment influencing the development of talent. She is of

the view that organisations should value 'domain expertise' and identifies this as a gap. In other words, there is a need for organisations to recognise and appreciate the importance of those with deep knowledge in their specific field as talent the organisation can utilise. There also needs to be a suitable appreciation of the 'raw' amount of time required for people to attain mastery of a topic as it has been estimated that those who attained mastery in their field take around ten years to develop. (Tansley, 2011 p. 273). Similar thoughts are portrayed by McDonnell et al. (2010) who contend that TM tends to focus on leaders and while these are strategically important, there is a fear that they are treated in isolation and that other positions are not appraised in terms of their value to achieving corporate objectives. There may also be more functional and technical type of roles which have a sizeable strategic impact on organisational performance (Cappelli, 2009).

2.4 MAKING OR BUYING TALENT

This topic is linked with an organisation's strategy and perceptions on whether "the most valuable and firm-specific capabilities, to which talent contributes, are more easily built rather than bought" (Scullion, Vaiman & Collings, 2016). Most literature support a focus on identifying talent from the internal labour market but some authors (McDonnell and Collings, 2011; Stahl et al.(2007; 2012) recommend a balanced approach as they argue that new talent from an external labour market may bring new ideas. Collings and Mellahi (2009) supported by the CIPD (2007), argue against full reliance on an internal labour market, stressing needs for organisations to observe their internal and external environment and needs in implementing TM. In this vein, Cappelli (2008) developed a 'talent on demand' framework to control the demand-supply gap based on supply chain management while Ulrich and Ulrich (2010) came up with six strategies to invest in talent. They include the 'buy and borrowing' strategies which refer to the recruitment of talent on the external labour market; the 'building-bounding' process which is about promoting the right people to the right place; 'bouncing', which is about removing poor performers; and 'binding' of top talent concerns the development of internal talent.

 In contrast, Pfeffer (2001) sees some shortcomings with buying talent and warns about the glorification of the talent of those outside the company while playing down the talent of insiders. He argues that though outsiders have the advantage of mystery and scarcity value and an organisation has to put effort in catching the so called 'big fish'; it is uncertain however, if they are able to meet the high demand expectations (Groysberg, 2004). Nevertheless, most studies promote the benefits of recruiting internally which are improved morale, commitment and job security for employees including provision of greater opportunity to assess an individual's ability and potential (Stahl et al., 2007; 2012). This study supports suggestions that organisations be

conversant with their internal and external environmental needs in implementing their TM strategies to enable holistic outcomes for all.

2.5 TALENT IDENTIFICATION

Talent identification has attracted growing organisational interest in the past three decades with Golik and Blanco (2014) asserting the process of talent identification is the starting point for all talent management systems with an aim of positioning the right people strategically (McDonnell, 2011) and growing long term talent comprising high potential employees who are effective in a wide range of roles "at least several career steps into the future beyond the next promotion" as well as "identifying individuals earlier in their career who might have long term potential for the business" (Silzer & Church, 2009, p. 390). A major challenge is that these future roles are often not defined or known at the present time (Silzer & Church, 2009). McDonnell & Collings (2010, p. 66) profess an 'empirical paucity' in the area of talent identification and that it is one of the most under-explored' and recommend that is it not done in isolation but aligned to other TM management systems such as talent development as talent identified require development to meet the challenges of the future roles and that TM systems are most effective when integrated. Continuing this argument, Golik and Blanco (2014) describe performance management being one of several practices involved in the identification process but attest to its weakness of providing information about past performance or the task at hand without identifying an employee's potential to take on senior roles (Silzer & Dowell, 2010) and concur that the make-up of a robust talent management process would require both performance management and potential identification. Additionally, McDonnel and Collings (2009) state that the process of talent identification not only facilitates identifying 'specific' talent required by the organisation, the skills and competencies required for the role but also addresses issues of talent 'fit' with the organisation's culture (Stahl et al., 2007) and social capital which signifies the ability to maintain networks across the organisation for maximal organisational success. It is, however, questionable how efficient the talent identification processes are in organisations considering the tensions around the meaning of talent discussed in section 2.2 above.

To ensure the effectiveness of the identification processes, some authors argue that organisations must ensure their approach is the best fit for the organisation and not just an imitation of current industry trends (et al., 2006; Yarnall, 2011), following the institutional theory that organisations are under pressure to adopt practices that are recognised as successful to maintain their legitimacy (Scott, 2001). Some considerations recommended by Burke et al.

(2006) include having a 2-5 year strategy that examines the main challenges facing the organisation including effects of an economic recession or technological problems, concerns with business strategy implementation such as internal resistance and organisation behavioural concerns arising from mergers and acquisitions i.e. culture changes. According to Burke et al. (2006), this is because these challenges are indicative of individual and organisational capabilities and competencies requiring development and enhancement which would then initiate talent identification criteria and ascertain the population of individuals for future development.

Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2015) claim that knowledge about talent identification is drawn from the Industrial organisation psychology literature and that studies on TM are conducted from an employee assessments perspective in order to identify talent in a valid and reliable manner with the use of standardised tools for evaluating talent being common place in organisations (Nijs et al., 2014) as this study shows. Likewise, McDonnell & Collings (2010) recommended using a range of tests or tools that evaluate knowledge, skills, abilities, personality traits, experience and judgements as having just an annual appraisal is not enough. These authors emphasis linking assessment tools to company strategy and a pro-active anticipation of challenges that talented employees may face in higher roles and developing competences required to resolves them. Some of the tools they identified for evaluating talent include 360 degrees assessments, assessment centres, psychometric tests, user friendly TM information systems to enhance speed in identifying talent with the required skills to occupy particular roles as these systems enable tracking and monitoring of talent across operations. More recently however, one study reveals that talent identification practices are conducted using unscientific tools and they advocate talent management strategies that involve a multi-trail-multi-method matrix talent assessment approach in combination with other methods such as the 360 degree feed-back, personality measurements and face to face interviews as best practices (Church & Rotolo, 2013).

That is all very well but major concerns surround the competency of the decision making team in using these tools and this is where the problem arises as poor assessments are made due to lack of training of these personnel and / or their individual biases and organisational politics (see Civico and Locgov cases) comprising impression management, upward influence etc. This is because recent studies allude to the subjectivity of and biases in TM decisions and TM discussions which are influenced by rater –ratee characteristics and argue that these biases are also heightened by the type of instruments used in making the decisions; considering that the quality of the instrument and its measurements may differ from one organisation to another (Church & Rotolo, 2013; Nijs et al, 2014; Swailes, 2013). These authors also contend that one

of the ways in which the identification and development of talent occurs in most organisations is through appraisal systems. This provides a means for competency measurement and ranking/rating of employees for career progression and entrance into talent pools or being labelled as 'high potential'.

Some of the biases associated with the performance appraisal system which has been described as the main method for evaluating talent (Swailes, 2013, p. 35) include 'impression management' (Wayne & Liden, 1995), likeability of ratee by rater (Lefkowitz, 2000), organisational politics associated with the appraisal processes (Buckley et al., 2001), the inflation of individuals' ratings by the rater to portray these individuals better than they are in reality to 'avoid conflicts and confrontation' as well as gender biases. More so since the identification processes and reviews usually involve senior management input, McDonnell (2011) suggest the possibility of 'cloning' in the processes due to organisational politics which lead to senior management assessment of high potential in overly positive terms, leaving those with true potential being suppressed in their bid to protect particular individuals for identification. It explains why people do not have to be talented to be deemed talented in compliance with today's celebrity culture.

Therefore, the importance of having a fair and objective system for the formal measurement of talent and one which focuses on how potential is measured as against previous performance cannot be overstated. McDonnel & Collings (2010) suggest the specification of the types of behaviours, skills and competences requiring development in the performance appraisal which may be based on the measurement of present competencies against those expected for senior roles will promote identifying employees capable of filling these roles as typified in organisational values of Locgov, PHserv and Retco but only fully implemented, monitored, evaluated against employees performance and aligned to organisational strategy in Retco.

Furthering research in this area, Dries & Pepermans (2012) developed a model of leadership potential consisting of four Quadrants and 13 factors for use by organisations to identify employees with leadership potential which are summarised below:

1) Analytic skills: (factors: Intellectual curiosity, strategic insight, decision making & problem solving)
2) Learning Agility: (factors: Willingness to learn, Emotional Intelligence & Adaptability)
3) Drive: (Factors include: Results orientation, Perseverance and Dedication)
4) Emergent Leadership: (Factors include: Motivation to lead, Self-Promotion, Stakeholder Sensitivity

Some studies estimate that only between 31% & 55% of large US corporations have specific frameworks in place for the systematic identification of leadership potential (Slan & Hausdorf, 2004; Wells 2003). There is therefore a pressing need for more research into the criteria organisations are or should be using for assessing leadership potential in staff (Silzer, 2010) and one of the aims of this study is to contribute to knowledge in this area.

Some of the benefits of talent identification provided in the TM literature include examining and remedying performance related problems and therefore improving individual job performance and organisational productivity (DeNisi & Pritchard, 2006). Additionally, authors argue that talent identification increases an organisation's ability to predict, anticipate talent shortages and the identification of specific talent as well as the skills and competencies required for their roles whilst managing talent in conjunction with other aspects of TM systems such as talent development (Ready & Conger et al., 2010). Other benefits include the identification of high potential employees who can be developed with generic competencies to promote a more varied choice for roles and identifying issues of 'fit' with the organisation's culture (Stahl, 2007) as well as the importance of social capital (McDonnell & Collings (2010).

2.5.1 Challenges and Barriers to Talent Identification

One of the contentions in the identification of talent or potential which is related to the issue of talent definition, is adequately separating performance from potential ratings and this has been identified as one of the misuses of potential (Balzer & Sulsky, 1992; Silzer & Church, 2009) with these authors stating that the lines are often vague in practice as perceptions of potential fluctuate in relation to an individual's performance due to linking these two components too closely particularly with reference to the 9 box assessment grid. They suggest that a reason for this challenge is having the same line manager conducting both assessments for performance and potential as their ability to do both competently is in doubt.

Another challenge concerns moving away from "gut feelings" and informal or subjective assessments carried out by untrained management staff and toward the deliberate development of valid frameworks of leadership potential (Silzer & Church, 2010) to promote understanding, a shared mind-set and consistency in implementation amongst managers regarding talent identification processes to guarantee organisational success. Further challenges which deter maximal organisational impact include difficulties in aligning talent identification processes to organisational strategy and other ongoing programs such as succession planning, line manager

accountability, as opposed to assuming a short-term, ad-hoc approach (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2007) and also getting line management fully engaged in the process, taking into account that they often feel burdened by tasks they are obliged to fulfil on top of their regular managerial responsibilities (Dries & Pepermans, 2008). Linked to the previous challenge is the issue of conflicting interests of the different parties (Dries & Pepermans, 2008) i.e. line managers, HR managers and senior managers on reaching a consensus on which criteria are most relevant in the identification of leadership potential and why. This is because of their individual perceptions on this matter. For example, due to differential access to information, it is assumed that line managers will rely primarily on employee performance, achievements and effort displayed on a daily basis for their assessment of leadership potential (Balzer & Sulsky, 1992).

Some scholars also contend that line managers are often reluctant to identify their best people as "high potential" for fear of losing them to another department (McDonnell & Collings, 2010; McCall, 1998). HR managers on the other hand may focus more on career aspirations, strengths and weaknesses, development goals as it is their responsibility to collect this type of data (Silzer & Church, 2010). The focus of senior managers, who are not present in the immediate environment of junior employees may focus more on visibility, assertiveness, networking and charisma as employees possessing these qualities are most likely to draw their attention (Makela et al., 2010; Ruderman & Ohlott,1990).This last point is reflective of findings in two of the case study organisations (Civico and Retco) where employees have to demonstrate visibility by working across departmental boundaries to be identified. This is counterproductive for the talent process, exemplifying organisational justice practices in organisations and suggesting that being good at what one does is not enough.

Challenges identified by the CIPD (2007 p 43) relate to difficulties in implementing individual career development programs and career conversations which are required to understand talented employees' aspirations to enable alignment with organisational goals as well as initiating better innovative approaches to performance management including what level of management involvement is required in assessments and if continuous assessments for potential is essential. In the same vein, Gelens et al.(2014) and Silzer and Church (2009) highlight challenges associated with the impact of organisational processes on individuals and their relationship to the organisation around issues of disclosure to both talented and non-talented employees about their status and what this means in order to prevent divisions among them. This division if un-averted, according to these authors, may result in the disengagement of the non-talented who make up the majority of the employee population of organisations which would have disastrous consequences for organisations.

Morton (2004) state that challenges of talent identification and TM generally centre on definitions of talent, i.e., whether or not it is perceived as being synonymous with HRM practices or workforce planning and the extent to which TM is associated with technology and enterprise level systems and finally if talent identification and TM is focused on all employees or just a few as this affects the resourcing levels and types of TM programs echoing Meyers & Woerkom's (2014) recent call for organisations to consider the implications for adopting an inclusive or exclusive TM as their choices will have a profound effect on its implementation.

From an ethical standpoint, Swailes (2013) exposes the dangers and unfairness of gender biases in identifying talent particularly in the search for leadership potential which is central to TM evidencing these biases firstly in reference to the masculine terminologies linked with the description of leadership values and characteristics suggesting toughness, competitiveness, being analytical, unemotional and task oriented, supporting earlier suggestions of McCracken (2000) for a review of this 'entrenched culture' which is costing organisations the contribution of creativity and innovation offered by women . Another ethical challenge with talent identification concerns personal factor influences on individual success above relative performance (Swailes, 2013, p. 34) such as subtle biases including personal attractiveness which has been said to influence a range of occupations (Hamermesh & Biddle 1994, Biddle & Hamermesh, 1999) coupled with having an attractive personality (charisma) and personal grooming making a difference to being or not being identified as talent and demands organisational intervention in minimising these unethical unfair practices.

2.5.2 Management of Challenges to Talent Identification

There is general consensus in the extant literature that a first step to effectively managing the challenges of talent identification and TM requires defining what talent and TM is within any organisation along with what it is meant to achieve and an expansion of these perceptions are presented in the recommendations below.

Some of the recommendations for managing talent identification challenges discussed in previous section according to Burke et al. (2006) and Yarnall, (2011) include firstly, identifying what organisational capabilities and individual competencies must be developed or enhanced and secondly, determining the targeted population for development by identifying the skill levels to be developed as not everyone can become proficient in a particular competency. Thirdly, these authors advise prioritization of the development of targeted groups to determine who goes first and why and to verify if the development outcomes would be evaluated before another

group participates in a development process. They argue that this would involve decisions about the methodologies that will be used to build organisational capability and individual competency which must facilitate closing the gap between current and desired levels of skill and capability and that defining the gap is important to guide the design and evaluation of an organisation's initiative.

Other writers argue that "in a labour market where talent is in short supply employng responding and anticipating the tactics of the competiton such as 'talent raiding' and 'talent poaching' has become the norm" (Chugh & Bhatnagar, 2006, p. 231). These authors explain further that the changing work patterns of Gen X and Y have to be taken into consideration rather than coercing these employees to conform to organisational whims using strategy such as job sculpting which is about aligning people's jobs to their areas of interests and offering employees choicest locations for purposes of retetntion. Chugh & Bhatnagar (2006) further contend that having a functional technology system in place enables effective and efficient decision making. This is because the data allows tracking and monitoring of an organisation's talent and their capability and promotes opportunity for thier development and support. They argue that such decision making minimises the costs of managing talent as less resources are required, better planning is in place and this further promotes efficiency in the TM processes. Complying with recommendations from McKinsey's model for managing talent they suggest that organisations should be talent oriented, develop a practice of continuous recruitment of talent and imbibe a culture of development for their management of talent. These practice reflect the findings from their case study research on organisations in India where they observed that though the content of the TM processes were similar, the focus and direction differed between organisations.

Additional propositions by Makela et al. (2010) on managing talent identification challenges comprised using performance records as well as talent review meetings involving managers at various levels in the organisation to support the process. Considering that talent is not fixed, Boudreau & Woodward (2009) advocate having regular reviews as having just one performance appraisal a year is insufficient and risky bearing in mind the traits of the new generation of employees who require constant feedback to enable improvements in performance. They also claim that support from top management is essential to a successful identification process and fulfilment of corporate goals. Their argument complies with a best practices study (Krupp, 2008) which recommended CEO and senior leadership ownership/sponsorship of the talent identification process and not just acting as a support for it as otherwise, TM becomes just another 'HR fad' (Chuai, 2008). Consistent with the previous point, since TM is viewed as an enterprise wide integrated activity, having a clear organisation structure that shows the responsibility for TM leadership, its effective implementation by managers is a driver for

successful TM as Hughes and Rog (2008) contend that a successful TM program needs to ensure that managers at all levels have the requisite skills to retain and engage valued employee talent.

Other studies (Dell & Hickey, 2002, p. 24) allege that in highly competitive markets where there is high demand for talented individuals, having a strong brand is vital for effective TM as being labelled as an employer of choice differentiates organisations who can attract and retain high potential employees from those who do not. They argue that an employer brand, "encompasses the firm's value systems, policies and behaviour toward the objectives of attracting, motivating, and retaining employees and establishes the identity of a company as an employer" (p. 24). It therefore follows that effective employer branding keeps current and potential employees constantly and actively aware of the company's employee value proposition and the benefits of committing to it.

As a contribution to managing challenges in talent identification, the CIPD (2007 p. 21) states that organisations must identify "the internal and external factors triggering interest in TM and take this into account in the formulation of TM strategies as the organisational context affects/influences most of these factors". They contend that an acknowledgment of these factors impacts "the availability of talented individuals to meet the corporate long and short term goals" and advise that an "environmental audit is the first step in the conceptualisation of TM". This is because the drivers for TM are industry specific and linked with the nature of work.
Aligning TM with strategic business goals is consistent with what was suggested in the 'war for talent' as TM needs to be seen as essential for achieving the organization's goals if it is going to get the attention and resources it requires (Hughes & Rog, 2008). Some organisations are better at this than others as evidenced in the outcomes of their talent strategies. These authors recommend that in addition to the above, data management systems for workforce planning and feedback system as well as having competent HR staff to analyse and measure success of these systems are paramount to the success of TM.

2.6 TALENT POOLS / TALENT RETENTION

One of the arguments for establishing talent pools is the need to improve succession planning processes by moving away from rigid replacement strategies towards creating a pipeline for future roles (Bryham et al, 2002). Findings from McDonnell et al.'s (2011) research on Irish MNCs subsidiaries, indicate that companies typically distinguished between three types of 'talent pools'—i.e., technical talent, leadership talent, and executive (top-level leadership) talent.

Other reasons for talent pools comprised focusing training and development resources more clearly on existing gaps, reducing turnover and retention of top talent (Pepe, 2007; Nottingham Business School, 2007). Findings by the corporate Leadership Council (2003) and Accenture (2006) show that 40% of external recruits at a senior level are deemed to fail in their first 18 months by not performing at the expected level. With such evidence, it is not surprising that the trend towards establishing talent pools is increasing, with the CIPD (2006) referring to the development of high potential managers as the main objective for 67% of companies TM in the UK. Some of the recommendations from the CIPD (2007 p. 46) comprised role modelling as a retention intervention which clarifies to high potential employees the expectation and requirement for filling senior roles and promotes the development of an organisational preferred behaviour and characteristics. While this may be so on the one hand and increase the probability of identified talent remaining in the talent pool and therefore provide resources to fill vacant senior roles if they arise, it does not, however, guarantee the talented employee being retained in the pool due to the various biases and organisational politics discussed in section 2.5.

Learning and development are seen as one of the strategies for retaining talent in the pool as well as having an improved process for identifying / selecting employees and their induction. This also involved measuring the fit between employee values and those of the organisation. Coaching of talented employees was high on the list of retention strategy as Tansley et al. (2007, p.50) found that this was important for senior level respondents in assessing development of potential and improved performance.

Tansley et al. (2007) claim that two reasons for talent leaving organisations include the 'Push factor' which comprises the attraction of new jobs or having the opportunity to work away from present environment and the second being the 'Pull factor'. This second factor relates to the relocation of a partner or an employee being dissatisfied with current job. They argue that the push factors are less influential because if talented employee is happy on their job, they would not consider moving elsewhere even if there was a higher remuneration being offered.

2.7 TALENT DEVELOPMENT

One of the purposes of identifying talent is to develop the competences required to enable performance and development of potential in present and future roles referencing the above section on talent pools. So TM and talent development must be closely aligned to achieve the overall vision for talent identification. According to Garavan et al (2012 p.11) "many organisations use a systematic formal talent review process which focuses on assessing talent

development potential. Many tend to be complex and aim to strategically align talent with critical organisational capabilities". Since this usually involves senior management input, McDonnell (2011) suggests that such processes may lead to 'cloning' and also highlights the issue of organisational politics such that senior management characterise high potential candidates in overly positive terms. Continuing the argument, Mellahi and Collings (2010) state that there may be a lack of candour concerning other people's strengths and development needs and information about the best performers and those with most potential may be suppressed in an effort to protect particular individuals who they do wish to choose.

The TM literature highlights the significant advantages of the development of talent to organisations and recommends internal approaches to develop skills and knowledge that are industry and firm-specific to remain competitive (Garavan et al., 2012 p. 5). This recommendation align with those of the CIPD's (2007) recommendations of developing talent for retention purposes so that there are 'zero talent outage' and also to guarantee planned succession rather than replacement strategies. Consistent with this flow of thought, studies reveal that the Mckinsey Consulting Group who initially advocated an exclusive approach to talent, currently advocate a more inclusive approach to development of not just 'A' players but also 'B' players (Ernst & Young, 2010) with some authors now arguing that inclusive approaches to talent are consistent with an innovation perspective on talent but are more likely to be found in public sector organisations (Christensen et al. 2010).

Ulrich (2008) explained that having processes that support the identification, evaluation and development of talent are important to achieving corporate goals. For talent development, these processes include HR planning, effective talent identification process, performance management, career management processes and succession planning (Dickmann et al., 2011; McDonnell and Collings, 2011). These authors also highlight the importance of cultural fit and stakeholder involvement in TM processes. Garavan et al. (2012) state that the responsibility to plan and effect development activities is shifting to the individual making informed choices about their future. Supporting this last point, Stahl et al. (2007) contend that a 'talent oriented development culture' makes employees aware of their own responsibility for their development including seeking out challenging assignments and cross-functional projects or new jobs within the corporation. Stahl et al. (2007) argue based on findings from their research which this study supports, that job rotations across functions or business units are underutilised and firms seem to lack the ability to implement these practices despite belief in their effectiveness, a reason being the 'silo thinking' of managers which focus on their own units (as found in Civico) rather than the whole organisation and therefore hindering talent mobility within the company and the effectiveness of job rotation as a development tool.

Having discussed the issues around talent identification, a recurring theme is the importance of an organisation's behaviour, environment and culture in enabling the success or failure of its talent processes. Understanding sectoral differences may be an indicator for understanding why TM programs might be similar or different and provide better outcomes in one than the other and addressed in the following sections.

2.8 PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR SIMILARITIES / DIFFERENCES

The drive by the UK government of the 1980 and 90s for public sector managers to emulate their private sector counterparts was prominent and various studies indicate that this imitation of the private sector by the public organisations replaced traditional practices of public administration. (Dugay, 1994; Hood, 1991; Rhodes, 1994). This led to a bias for private HRM practices in the public sector (Farnham & Giles, 1996; Storey, 1992, Winchester and Back, 1995). There was a strong view that adopting private sector practices would result in major performance improvement in the public sector organisations. (Rhodes, 1992; Audit Commission, 1985).

Following some comparisons between the then HRM practices in the public sector and private sector, it was observed that the practice in the private sector was 'hard' rather than 'soft' as can be found in the public sector (Truss et al.1997, p. 66). Traditionally according to the empirical literature on this subject, the people management pattern in the public sector adopted a ''paternalistic style of management' which promoted and protected the well-being of the workforce'' (Boyne et al, p. 409). Promotion of a 'standardised employment practice' across all public sector organisations such as the civil service, local government and health services was the norm and this standardisation according to Farnham & Horton (1995, p.85) 'provided full time employment and job security and life time employment for large numbers of workers'. Trade union involvement in pay negotiations and industrial relations practices including staff participation comprised people management strategies in the public sector (Daniel & Millward, 1983; Millward & Stevens, 1989).

Fourthly, public sector organisations aspired to be role model employers to private sectors particularly in staff training and equal opportunities in the workplace. This fourth aspect was typical of the 'softer practices' in contrast with the more 'thrusting and sometimes anti-union values of the private sector' (Farnham and Horton, 1996 p. 83).

However, due to economic constraints and demand for improved organisational performance, the above traditional features were modified and made public services more 'business-like'. (Boyne et al., 2002, p. 409). Therefore the resulting changes included a move from the traditional 'paternal' to a 'rational management style' which according to Farnham & Horton (1996, p. 331) is a style driven by the 'need to maintain good relations with the union and the demands of those leading public organisations for effective job performance, high quality output service to customer and value for money' and no longer about concepts of fairness, nor welfare needs of employees. Another change involved the empowering of line managers instead of HRM specialists to reinforce the focus on customer needs and financial performance. This change led to the reprioritisation of issues such as 'equal opportunities and staff training' (Boyne et al. 1999, p. 410).

Further changes included the move from HRM practices of 'uniformity and standardization' to 'flexibility and differentiation'. This process eradicated practices like the 'job for life', pay scales which were affected by job grade' and also promotion based on seniority. As a result of the changes, part time and temporary contracts were offered to employees and performance management processes via line management assessments were employed in determining staff salary and career prospects (ibid.).
Other changes involved the introduction of the 'performance pay' in some parts of the public sector which reflected the reduction in the role played by trade unions in the negotiation of employment conditions in the public sector. (ibid.)

Various studies assert that public services are different to private sector when it comes to 'product' although some authors (Cooper, 2004) argue that all organisations manage in the same way. Cooper further states that what differentiates the private from the public sector is that the private sector operates from "a single motive of economic efficiency 'while the public sector operates on consensus and compromise" (Cooper, 2004, p. 476). While the private sector views profit and cost reduction and efficiency as important for growth and survival, the government also share these concerns (ibid).

He further contends that the private sector depended strongly on "business/ financial indicators in the operationalization of their organisations but poor budgetary control in the public sector results in an overload on public expenditure, increase in national debt and interest payable by the government. Therefore the public sector have been forced into tightening controls on expenditure in order to operate like the private sector. However, while the private sector operates a tight budget control to satisfy shareholders profit and return on investment, the public

sector is more concerned about ensuing the right allocation of funds to activities in order to meet the public's /people's needs (476).

There are further debates that this lack of 'bottom line' focus in public sector organisations accounts for the difficulties in managing public sector environments. This is because specialised skills such as understanding public behaviours and working in and understanding the political context are required to relate with members of the public. The environments of the two sectors differ and likewise employee and management behaviours and techniques. For example, Cooper (2004, p. 479) argues that ''the motivations of people who give priority to serve and care for others will differ from those who are urged to focus on productivity and the bottom-line''.

In conducting their research in differences and similarities between the public and private sectors, Harel & Tzafrir (2001) focused on best practices in both sectors using this as the tool for comparison. They first gave detailed universal HRM practices such as acquisition, development, motivation, and probity and employee involvement and then looked at implementation of these practices and made their comparisons. They identified three environmental factors controlling the differences in practices between both sectors. The most important being 'the profit motive' (p. 321). This is because, while in the private sector the profit margins and bottom line performance is of primary concern, what is most important for the public sector is about how well services have been provided and resolved problems. As a result, the public sector did not have high incentives to control labour costs (Moore, 1995). A second differentiator is the legalistic and constitutional framework under which both sectors operate are different (Lee, 1992, p. 283). For example, the federal and state institutions in the United States strongly differentiate the employment relationship in the public sector from that of the private sector (Shafritz et al., 1992, p. 283) while a third differentiator is what they describe as ''the diffusion of authority in the public sector as opposed to a single formal line or chain of command in the private sector (Moore, 1995). There appeared to be not just the executive but also legislative political authorities who employees respond to. This is different to the private sector where reporting relationships can be simpler. Due to this 'diffusion of authority' in the public sector, its employees are concerned not just with achieving corporate goals but also with supporting other political agendas. Harel & Tzafrir (2001) conclude that these three differences between the two sectors have defined their HRM practices.

Another argument they put across is that of compensation in both sectors. While it is a requirement of private sector firms to pay for performance, it is difficult to administer 'merit pay for performance' in public organisations. According to Moore (1995) due to difficulties associated with performance measurements, public organisations determine employee

compensation by seniority level. This argument is further supported by Farnham & Horton (1997 p. 18) who observed that "human resources flexibilities in the UK's public services have been driven by political factors rather than by strictly economic ones ". In the private sector, in contrast, the search for flexibility is technologically and market oriented. Notwithstanding, the pressures to improve performance and effectiveness is common to both sectors

Recent research shows that environmentally, there are internal and external differences that public and private sector managers must pay attention to and not just duplicate practices. One distinct difference is the political appointments, archaic organisational structure (Ponak & Thompson, 1995, p. 323) and pressures from unions which according to Harel & Tzafrir (2001) ''create different environment contexts for managing employees" (p. 323).

These authors also investigated perceptions of organisational performance in the two sectors. They reference Farnham & Horton's observation that is generally accepted that the private sector is more efficient than the public sector. Supporting this view by Farnham and Horton are Holzer and Rabin (1987) who argue that public sector organisations are less profitable and efficient than the private sector because they are solving societal problems which requires equity consideration and compassion which private organisations do not. These authors found that irrespective of the sector, investment in training and employee participation levels were determined by the environment created by the organisations (p. 345). Findings from their research show that the environment in which private sector firms operate are more hostile and competitive with fast market growth and short product cycle (Harel & Tzafrir, 2001). They suggest that this may be the reason why private sector organisations emphasize HRM practices that promote employee motivation, skill development and participation as organisational practices are impacted by the environment in which they operate and the competition (Porter, 1980).

Since the early 1980s, new public management (NPM) entrepreneurial and enterprising practices such as 'value for money' and performance measurement, replaced the bureaucratic traditions of the public sector organisations. And this new public sector bias towards practices in the private sector has narrowed the HRM practice differences between the two sectors over the years. (ibid., p. 417). The principles of NPM, according to Hood (1991) comprised the employment of professional managers, explicit standard and measures of performance, greater emphasis on consistency of services, decentralisation, increased competition between organisations and subunits, emphasis on private sector management styles and increased accountability (Fryer et al., 2009, p. 479). One of the key features of NPM is 'performance measurement'.

2.7.1 Performance Management in the Public Sector

Studies describe key features of performance management systems as being ''an alignment of the performance management system and the existing systems and strategies of the organisation, leadership commitment, a culture where good performance is identified and improved and not used for chastisement of bad performance, stakeholder involvement and a system of monitoring continuously,, providing feedback, dissemination and learning from results'' (Fryer et al., 2009, p. 480). An important aspect of performance management is performance measurement. According to Lemieux-Charles et al. (2003), it is a monitoring system that shows where change is required in order to produce the desired behaviour that will lead to improved performance. Various authors argue that while performance measurement reflects the past, performance management uses the data from performance measurement to give information concerning the future (Lebas, 1995; Radnor & Barnes, 2007). Wang and Berman (2001) describe performance measurement as a tool for specifying diverse goals to facilitate evaluation and that this system should have a purpose which is integrating, unifying and fluid (Tarr, 2004).

Four features of performance measurement are to clarify 'what to measure', 'how to measure it', 'interpretation of the data' and 'communication of the results' (Fryer et al., 2009, p. 481). Knowing 'what' to measure is also described as 'performance indicators'. Studies reveal that it is more challenging to develop measures in public sector organisations due to the 'multifaceted nature of the public sector' (Ehrenberg & Stopak, 1994; Peng et al., 2007; Fryer et al., 2009 p. 482). Various proposals have been made to promote frameworks such as the 'performance prism' (Neely et al., 2001), or the Balanced scorecard (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). The balanced scorecard has been the most utilised by the majority of organisations across sectors. Fryer et al. (2009) claim that a framework of performance indicators was developed by the UK central government in 2007 for England and Wales which are focused on the delivery of outcomes through partnership working so that the same indicators can be used across local government, police, fire and health services. Having identified 'what' to measure, the next important aspect of performance measurement is to know 'how and when' the organisational behaviour should be measured. Challenges deterring this measurement as suggested in the literature include the fact that indicators are biased towards short rather than long term results which ultimately prevent long term investments. Secondly, the relevance of the results from the data is lost when this is communicated because of the amount of time it takes to collect and analyse this data. It is therefore perceived useful only for purposes of accountability (Neely, 1999).

The problems of data collation and communication of the results so that it can be used as a framework for decision making hinders performance management in the public sector (Vakkuri & Meklin (2003). Unless they can be analysed and used to forecast data and costs, having good data indicators is useless. According to Brown (2005) a major challenge is the lack of statistical rigour carried out on performance indicators data and the frequent reorganisations which hinders longitudinal assessments of performance and prevent the good practice at a local level, being transmitted across the organisation and nation (Johnson, 2005). These challenges characterise global challenges as Fryer et al (2009 p. 488) contend that there are common issues associated with performance management systems arising from conflicts between different interest groups. These include ''conflicts between politicians and professionals, pressures from special interest groups, conflicts between central agencies wanting control and department/local bodies and professionals all wanting autonomy''.

Three problems resulting from the above challenges are technical, problems relating to the systems and people involvement problems. Technical problems encompass issues about their collection, interpretation and analysis as well as data quality and choice of indicators. Pollanen (2005) and Adcroft and Willis (2005) describe these technical problems are described as 'hard' problems. The systems problems comprised challenges of ''merging performance management systems with the systems in existence, a lack of strategic focus which encouraged of 'short-termism, (Neely et al., 1995), ambiguity of performance objectives and the cost of performance management'' (Fryer et al., 2009 p. 489). The 'involvement' problem referred to a combination of the lack of involvement and lack of support of the organisation, its customers, employees, and the senior management and decision makers in the performance management systems. A possible reason for this, is that public sector managers are forced to use performance management systems provided by the hierarchy (Zigan et al., 2008) and other studies suggest that this was because of the leadership and culture (Audit Commission, 2002; De Waal, 2007) while others support the view that having a better understanding of the importance of performance indicators and aligning them to achieving strategic objective is important for employees of the organisation (Black et al., 2001).

Recent studies show that there is a shortage of research on the effects of culture but according to Pollitt (2005), having a successful performance management system is largely dependent on the relationship between 'institutional pattern, norms and specific task characteristics' (Fryer et al., 2009). Additionally, setting targets can be a challenge due to the large size of public sector organisations and therefore the tendency is for decreased levels of performance (Verbeeten, 2008). Fryer et al. (2009) conclude that despite 25 years of performance, the public sector still experiences major challenges with performance management particularly in the areas of

performance, accountability, transparency, quality of service. Constant re-organisations have threatened the sustainability of successful performance management and these issues reflect the 'changing culture' of the public sector and the culture of performance management. This accounts for the current drive for reform in the public sector with TM being central as an agent of change, where TM is seen as a change agent and strategy used for organisational change as well as change as a result of corporate change (Devine & Powell, 2008) and for promoting direction through the identification and development of leadership potential and development of performance management strategies.

2.7.2 Definitions of Publicness

The main traditional difference between the public and private sector is their ownership (Rainey et al, 1976). While public firms and agencies in the public sector are owned by members of political communities, private firms are owned by entrepreneurs and shareholders. Public firms are therefore funded by taxation rather than fees paid by customers as in the private sector (Niskanen, 1971; Walmsley & Zald, 1973)

Public sector businesses are controlled by political and not market forces and these constraints are politically determined rather than economically as in the private sector.

While private sector firms control managerial behaviours through monetary incentives as remuneration is aligned with business financial success, managers in the public sector do not benefit financially from improved organisation efficiency (p. 99). Boyne (2002) contends that they are less likely to be influenced or motivated by financial rewards and therefore less committed to their organisations and that while public managers have a stronger desire to serve the public, their private counterparts focus on meeting the demands of individual customers (p.102). They attribute lower organisational commitment to the weak link between performance and rewards as the large size of public service organisations makes it difficult to clarify performance indicators and norms (p. 102).

Further differences between the two sectors include the complexity of public sector as they cater for larger volume of stakeholders operating though different networks of interdependent organisations and not through independent organisations pursuing their own objectives as can be found in private firms. Therefore balancing and reconciling conflicting objectives is paramount for public sector managers as they must satisfy their stakeholders in contrast with private sector managers whose focus is on profit making.

The permeability of public sector organisations allows them to operate open systems that are influenced by external events to enable them respond to public needs but this is not the case

with private sector firms. Public firms are prone to instability due to the unpredictable political environment which triggers frequent policy changes at very short notice and places pressure on management to ''achieve quick results'' (Bozeman, 1987 p. 20) that may facilitate a larger allocation in the next round of elections.

There is a lack of competition in the provision of services in the public sector as collaborative working with other organisation offering the same types of services is the preferred practice.

The goal of public agencies which comprise 'equity' and 'accountability' cannot be found in private sector organisations (Ferlie et al. 1996; Flynn, 1997). These goals are as a result of the 'public ownership' of public firms which control the behaviour of organisations and drive individual management processes and values in the public sector (Ranson & Stewart, 1994).There is a lack of clarity of organisational goals in the public sector as political processes are imposed on management by politicians seeking support from various groups for their policies to be adopted. According to Boyne (2002), this ambiguity of organisational goals has led to both a vagueness in performance targets and hindrance to incorporating private sector techniques of management by objectives. The public sector is said to be more risk averse and bureaucratic in practice due the formal decision making processes. There is more focus on rules and processes rather that results and outcomes as the case is, with the private sector. The hierarchical structures including rules and regulations of the public sector lower managerial autonomy in contrast to private sector managers.

2. 9 SUMMARY

This chapter presented a literature review of current research on various perspectives of talent including Gallardo-Gallardo et al.'s (2013) definitions of talent as object and talent as subject in line with the inclusive and exclusive talent philosophies, highlighting the tensions surrounding these definitions in response to whether talent is innate or learned. Recent definitions of talent by individuals were also presented. Discussions also focused on the relationships between talent and talent development, talent retention and talent pools as well as reasons for identifying talent, the challenges encountered with talent identifications and suggestions for managing them within the extant literature. The final sections explored the similarities and differences between HRM practices in the public and private sector and why these differences exist, providing background knowledge and theoretical lenses for understanding the case studies. The next chapter presents the literature on TM including discussions on the most dominant theoretical frameworks associated with it in order to position this study.

CHAPTER 3: TALENT MANAGEMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a literature review on talent management and the tensions surrounding its definitions/meanings and legitimisation as an intellectual area of study. It also examines the relationship between TM and Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) and finally ends with discussions about some of the dominant frameworks applied within the TM literature such as the Resource Based View of the firm (RBV), Human Capital Theory, Global Talent Management (GTM) which comes under the International Human Resource and the Institutional Theory.

3.2 TALENT MANAGEMENT

3.2.1 The Growth of TM

The following quotes from studies on TM reflect the rapid growth and proven importance of TM in organisations.

"In a competitive environment, talent management is a driver for organisational success" (Golik & Blanco, 2014, p. 23).

"Superior talent management correlates strongly with enhanced business performance" (Ernst & Young, 2010 p. 4).

"TM has become one of the top priorities for companies" (Chugh & Bhatnagar, 2006, p. 228). Talent Management has been championed as being, "more critical than ever to "organisational strategic success" (Hartman et al, 2010, p. 170).

Some authors however claim that TM as a process has been practiced by organisations for a considerable amount of time, albeit in various ramifications (Galagan, 2008). Patton (1967) predicted that by the year 1975 the competition for talent would reach its zenith. Similarly, Cappelli (2008a) contends that various forms of TM practices, such as trainee management schemes, forced–ranking systems, 360 feedback, executive coaching or assessment centres had been developed in the 1940s and 1950s to create large pools of organisational talent. Thus it may be argued that the re-emergence of TM is in fact part of a cyclical process (Cappelli, 2008a).

Within the TM literature however, there is consensus about common reasons for the growth of TM comprising increased competition, changing demographics, skills shortages, generational challenges, and global labour movements as depicted in the Figure 3.1 by McDonnell (2015).
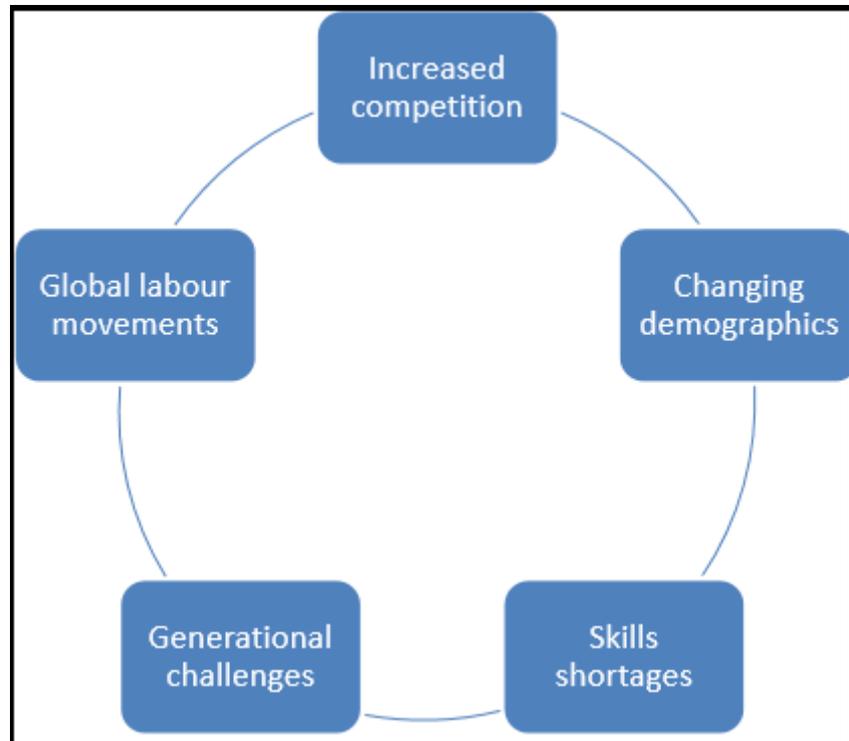
Fig 3.1: Reasons for the growth of TM, adapted from McDonnell, (2015)

Further concerns surround the shortage of managerial talent due to changing demographics i.e. falling birth rates in developed economies, globalisation and the rise of knowledge workers (Rappaport et al., 2003; Guthridge et al., 2008). With the rise in global mobility and an agile workforce due to globalisation and technological advancements, emigration of a highly skilled labour force is at its height and affecting the profile and uncertainties of the external labour market which continues to change (Cappelli, 2014). Furthermore research indicates that the past decade has also seen the diversity of the workforce population on the increase across the developed countries more than ever before, intensifying the challenges and prospects for organisations for attracting managing, motivating and retaining diverse individuals. Also, contentions exist about significant differences across different generations in the work place as a driver in the emergence of TM, particularly generation Y (those born between 1980 and 2000) who have been the main focus of the discourse due to their being a large segment of the working population with current research showing that many are now moving into senior strategic roles. More important are concerns over their commitment to an organisation even though it is argued that they show a stronger learning orientation than older generations (D'amato & Herzfeldt, 2008). There is however a scarcity of evidence confirming the last

argument considering the demand for retaining talent from older generations particularly in the public sector as findings from this research (Locgov) reveals. More so, since certain studies (Gander, 2003; Becker, 1996) reveal that the younger generation receive more on-the-job training than older workers because they are more likely to change jobs more frequently and training is used as a retention strategy. The importance of TM is therefore pronounced in the light of doubts over whether traditional approaches to workforce management will continue to prove effective as the makeup of the workplace changes. The accelerated growth of small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) across many countries and the rise of emerging markets have furthered the competition for talent especially in terms of individuals with global business acumen (Tarique & Schuler, 2010).

3.2.2 Strengths and Weaknesses of TM

Various authors report debates about TM as a topical issue for HRM theory and practice in the past two decades (Thunnissen et al., 2013). Talent Management is perceived as a key HRM concern and challenge after leadership development, value-based recruitment and performance management, in multinational organisations such as IBM and Shell (Paauwe, 2007). Further discussions about TM assert that business leaders expect that the intensifying competition for talent will have a major effect on their companies in spite of the economic recession and regard the search for talented people as the single most important managerial preoccupation for this decade (Deloitte, 2010; Guthridge, Komm, & Lawson, 2008). Similarly, some academics confirm that articles published in the popular and practitioner press, as well as consulting companies, pay a great deal of attention to talent management and how to win the 'war for talent' (Iles, Preece, & Chuai, 2010; Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012) with the growth of TM being signified by the considerable amount of publication by academics on talent management as well. Progressing this view, McDonnell (2015) argues that TM as a phenomenon is presently a topical agenda of importance globally with the increase in talent challenges facing the emerging markets and also evidenced in the steady but accelerated growth of academic literature in the field (Thunnissen, Boselie, & Fruytier, 2013a).This, however, does not imply that all TM scholars speak the same language as consensus on the meaning and underlying principles of TM remains lacking.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) revealed that only 6% of organisations have effective TM systems in place (CIPD, 2012) with the literature stating that despite the hype about TM, in practice, many organisations fail to manage their talented employees effectively and measures of performance in this area remain underdeveloped

(Scullion and Collings, 2011). And also that the lack of integration of key elements of the TM systems has been identified as a major weakness of TM systems and many firms rarely conduct TM in an integrated way (Farndale et al., 2010). While other studies indicate that theoretical development in the field has been limited (Dries, 2013) to the few publications on the concepts of TM by Collings & Mellahi (2009), Lewis & Heckman (2006) and Iles et al. (2010), drawing on knowledge from the strategic human resource literature (SHRM), the resource based view of the firm (RBV) and differentiated HR architecture (Lepak & Snell; Wright et al, 2001).

More scholars (Iles et al., 2010; Preece et al., 2011; Swailes, 2016; Thunnissen, 2013) attribute this poor theoretical foundation to the fact that most of the TM literature is 'practitioner or consultancy-based' and hence the literature's focus on the practices (the 'how') as opposed to 'who' is considered talent and 'why'. Hence an important element of this study is to contribute to knowledge gaps in this area by researching reasons organisations in public and private sectors implement their TM programs and who they consider talented employees and why. Responding to these debates, McDonnell (2015, p. 16) in support of Dries' (2013, p. 269) claims that TM is a novel topic academically speaking, argues that these concerns are common with research areas or fields which are still in their infancy and early development and gaining acceptance and an agreement of conceptual boundaries take time. These authors agree that any accelerated speed in constructing conceptual boundaries of TM may become counterproductive as outcomes may be narrowly focused and stifle innovation while restricting the multidisciplinary nature of TM. Furthermore, Dries, (2013b) disputes issues of TM lacking theoretical foundation by categorizing TM as phenomenon driven as opposed to a theoretically driven field. Nevertheless, McDonnell (2015) emphasises the necessity for some boundaries to attain credibility in mainstream management writing and publication and in adding value to academic knowledge and organisation and management practice.

Following their review of the TM field in 2006, Lewis and Heckman argued the need for a consistent definition of TM and a defined scope as the field was still in its infancy and lacking conceptual framework. In 2009, Collings and Mellahi came to the same conclusion. Other researchers recorded some progression within the TM field concerning its definitions and conceptual boundaries and claimed there was movement from infancy to adolescence (Collings, Scullion, and Vaiman, 2011). Collings et al. (2011) state that many, mainly US-based, scholars have contributed to this advance and therefore report a biased approach to talent management in their review of the literature as most understanding of TM has emerged from Multinational enterprises (Farndale et al., 2010; Makela et al., 2010; McDonnell et al., 2010; Mellahi & Collings, 2010). These authors advocate more insights from novel organizations and industrial contexts to expand the understanding of TM from a conceptual and theoretical perspective as

well as provide important counterbalances to these research on MNEs and professional services firms which have dominated the TM research field till date.

Suffice to say, the TM field is progressing its theoretical boundaries albeit slowly, and its growth from infancy to adolescence and still striving for maturity through recent publications drawing on knowledge from organisational justice (Gelens et al, 2013; 2014), conceptualisation of talent as a meme (Swailes, 2016), Pygmalion effects (Swailes & Blackburn, 2016), social exchange (Khoreva, Vaiman & Zalk, 2017) amongst others. This is in addition to attempts at clarifying definitional boundaries as outlined in the following paragraphs and an area to which this study also makes a contribution.

3.2.3 Definitions of TM

Concerning definitions of TM, there are many with the most cited being the perspectives provided by Lewis & Heckman (2006). They argue that definitions of TM fall within the following three groups:

 Firstly, Lewis and Heckman argue that TM is used as a substitute label for HRM practices such as recruitment, leadership development, succession planning' and that this is one of its limitations. Their second construct of TM is that it is a "general classification of employees into different talent pools" whose emphasis is on projecting employee needs and managing the progression of employees through positions (Lewis and Heckman, 2006, p.140). Authors argue that though this second definition builds on previous research on succession planning, it portrays the difference between TM and HRM (Barlow, 2006; Jackson & Schuler, 1990). Furthermore, the focus of the second definition is on internal rather than an external labour market with the identification and mobilization of internal talent pools as a primary objective (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005; Bryan, Joyce & Weiss, 2006). Lewis & Heckman's third definition encapsulates TM's 'focus on talented employees'. The argument by researchers in this area is that all roles within the organisation should be filled with 'A' performers, a system known as 'top-grading' (Smart, 1999) and emphasises management of 'C' players and poor performers out of the organisation (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod, 2001). This perspective on TM argues that "an organisation is only as strong as its top talent" (Walker & LaRocco, 2002, p.12). According to Hartman et al. (2010), though this approach has received and attracted global attention in practice, its applicability should be questioned as it is not desirable or necessary to fill all positions with top performers (Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Huselid et al., 2005).

Collings and Mellahi therefore proposed a fourth definition which emphasises 'the identification of 'key' positions' that have a 'significant impact on a company's competitive advantage'

(Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005; Huselid et al., 2005). They argue that the priority is first to identify the key positions following which the talented employee can then be developed to fill in this 'pivotal position'. This argument is in line with their definition of TM as "activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions which differentially contribute to the organisation's sustainable competitive advantage" and supports the view of talent being exclusive to key positions. Yarnall (2008) explains that current trends in TM suggest a move back to a more planned approach to career development with case study research (CIPD, 2012) indicating companies are taking back control over the careers of high potential employees and developing smaller groups in line with the business strategy (Yarnall, 2008). She argues that these trends in TM frequently involve identifying, selecting and developing discrete pools of talent from people within the organization. These groups of people are seen as valuable resources for future senior roles and have been categorized by Garrow & Hirsh (2008) as leadership pipelines, professional groups, and critical role approaches.

In addition to the four streams above, Iles et al. (2010) proposed four perspectives on TM. They claim that TM is not essentially different from HRM as both are about 'getting the right job at the right time' and 'managing the supply, demand and flow of people through the organisation'. TM also 'involves typical HR activities such as 'recruitment, selection, training and appraisals' and so it might just be a rebranding or re-labelling of HRM by replacing the word 'people' with 'talent' to improve HR credibility as with the earlier transition from 'personnel to HRM'. However if this is all TM means then according to Lewis and Heckman (2006) it adds little or no value to our understanding of how to manage talent strategically and might as well be seen as just another label for HRM/D for many managers (Barlow, 2006). Secondly, Iles et al. (2010, p.181), argue that TM is "integrated HRM with a 'selective focus' on a 'relatively small segment of the workforce', defined as 'talented' by virtue of their 'current performance' or 'future potential'". The focus is on 'selected', 'critically valuable employees' and the key challenges are thus to attract, recruit, develop and retain such individuals (e.g. CIPD 2007b). The focus here is on 'talent pools', both internal and external to the organisation borrowing concepts adopted from theories in marketing such as employer branding and workforce segmentation in order to attract and retain key individuals.

Their third definition is that TM is an "organisationally focussed competence development' through 'managing flows of talent' through the organisation" (ibid). The focus here is on talent pipelines rather than talent pools. Iles et al (2010) assert that this strand is more closely related to succession planning. Following Schweyer (2004), Duttagupta (2005) and others, Iles et al. (2010) state that TM is the strategic management of the flow of talented employees through a variety of roles and jobs in an organisation often supported by software systems. These

systems are used to design TM programmes which create talent pools that feed particular job classifications which capture and develop individual skills, competencies, and behaviours that make jobs and employees successful in the future. The fourth perspective is associated with social capital theory which emphasises a consideration for the impact of the work environment on teams and leadership in the identification of talent. The argument of this perspective is that an organisation's performance is not only affected by human capital but also the organisation's context, social capital and organisation's capital and that teams, cultures divisions of labour, leadership, an organisation's processes and networks all have an effect on their talent practices. Supporting this argument, Sidani & Al Ariss, (2014) also contend that the way TM is interpreted and implemented will be biased towards contextual factors particularly around the culture or organisational behaviour. This fourth perspective confirms Ulrich's (2008 p. x) argument that it is not always that organisations with talented employees outperform organisations with less talent, but that "while talent is necessary, it is not sufficient" because having a successful management would require a combination of talent and teamwork as well as individual ability and organisation capability in modern organisations.

Ulrich's argument dispels the theory that organisation's performance is dependent on having 'A' players filling up 'A' positions. He asserts that organisational capability refers to "the processes that create manage and organise talent" (Ulrich, 2008, p. xi) and not just only about the individual with talent. Furthermore he asserts that 'leadership' as an organisational capability is more important than gifted individual leaders because according to him, focus of leadership is to create future leaders. Continuing his argument, he alleges that "sustainable long term success is not just a matter of having the leaders but of having the processes that reliably creates them" (Ulrich, 2008, p. xi). Therefore TM is not only about the identification and management of talent but also the identification of processes that would mould the individual talent into a "collective organisation capability" (xi). In compliance with Ulrich's line of thought, a concern for this study is to examine organisational processes for identifying talent as this is important to a successful TM strategy. Figures 3.2 and 3.3. in Section 3.3 below describe the talent management process and more specifically talent identification processes which is the primary focus of this study.

Considering the varied definitions of TM above alongside several other definitions (see Table 2 below), various studies recommend the practice of TM on multiple levels rather than using a 'one size fits all' approach (Chuai, 2008). On this matter, Stahl et al. (2012 p. 26) propose a three tier approach, the first being the 'internal-fit' which promotes the alignment of TM practices and HR practices; The second approach is 'the strategic fit' which relates to linking TM to the

business strategy and the third approach is 'the cultural fit' which is about TM being embedded in the leadership philosophy and value.

Following research on TM in the public sector, Devine & Powell (2008) contend that an organisation's approach to TM can be shaped by six strategic perspectives. The first is the 'competitive perspective' which is about organisations identifying talent without formal processes and this involves giving talented employees whatever they request in order not to lose them to the competition. The second perspective is the 'process perspective'. Organisations operating under this perspective have processes for developing employee performance and hold the view that the firm's future success is directly linked with having the right talent. Organisations operating this process focus on nurturing and managing its talent on a daily basis. The third perspective is the 'HR planning perspective' which focuses on matching the right people to the right jobs at the right time and doing the right things. The TM processes are managed by the HR team in this type of organisation. Their fourth perspective is the 'development perspective'. The aim of this perspective is to fast track development of high potentials in comparison to others. The fifth perspective is the cultural perspective where TM is viewed as a 'mind-set' and is essential to the organisation's success. The sixth perspective is the 'change management perspective' where TM is seen as a change agent and strategy used for organisational change as well as change as a result of corporate change. For example, change of ownership or reforms by the government. TM can influence in the organisation's culture, leadership style and specialist management capabilities.

Devine and Powell (2008) claim that TM practice within the public sector is the developmental perspective embedded in a competitive perspective. They further explain that under this model, public sector employees 'play the game' by advertising their talent and getting themselves noticed by more senior staff in their organisation or by government leaders and key public sector leaders(p. 4). Operationally, the TM definition was not clear and so being labelled 'talent' was difficult because of the inconsistencies in definition which most times were under the control of top management and also the structures and systems were implicit so employees did not know how to get onto development schemes (p. 5). They conclude by stating that public sector organisations needed to align their TM strategy with their organisation core values around inclusivity and public services (p. 6).

Table 2 Definitions of TM in the TM literature

"Talent Management is an integrated set of processes, programs and cultural norms in an organisation designed and implemented to attract develop deploy and retain talent to achieve strategic objectives and meet future business needs" (Silzer & Dowell, 2010, p. 18)
…"activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions which differentially contribute to the organization's sustainable competitive advantage, the development of a talent pool of high potential and high performing incumbents to fill these roles, and the development of a differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling these positions with competent incumbents and to ensure their continued commitment to the organization" (Collings & Mellahi, 2009, p. 305)
"TM can be understood as referring to the identification, development, engagement /retention and deployment of those employees who are particularly valuable to an organisation....either in view of their 'high potential' for the future or because they are fulfilling business/operation-critical roles" (Iles, 2007, p. 215)
"the systematic attraction, identification, development, engagement, retention and deployment of those individuals with high potential and who are of particular value to the organisation" (CIPD, 2007)
"..the strategic management of the flow of talent though an organisation. Its purpose is to assure that supply of talent is available to align the right people with the right jobs at the right time based on strategic business objectives" (Duttagupta, 2005, p.2)
"TM is encompassing all HR processes, administration and technologies. It commonly refers to the sourcing (finding talent), screening (sorting of qualified and unqualified applicants), selection (assessment/testing, interviewing, reference/background checking, etc., of applicants), on-boarding (offer generation/acceptance, badging/security, payroll, facilities, etc.) deployment (optimal assignment of staff to projects, lateral opportunities, promotions, etc.) and renewal of the workforce with analysis and planning as the adhesive, overarching ingredient. In other words, talent management processes and can be described alternatively as talent optimization" (Schweyer, 2004, p.38)

3.3 MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

Figures 3.2 displays a typical TM process cycle, the starting point being the attraction of talent which could be both within and external to the organisation, following which the identification process takes place and which is a primary focus of this study and detailed explanation of this process is provided below (see figure 3.3) below. Training and development of identified talent

is the next step in the talent cycle (please see discussions below) after which are retention strategies (please see section 2.6 on Talent pools/ rentention, above) which are linked to talent development plans. The final process before the cycle resumes is the evaluation of the talent process which ideally measures the success and failure of talent programs vis-a-vis their impact on participants' learning, career development and behaviours as well as on the organisation and return on investment both on long and short term basis.Though evaluation is a vital aspect of the training process within the HRD literature, it is mostly overlooked (Lewis and Thornhill, 1994; Phillips, 2003) as evidenced with reference to all of the definitions discussed in secton 3.2.3 above. This study attempts to contribute to knowledge gaps in this area.
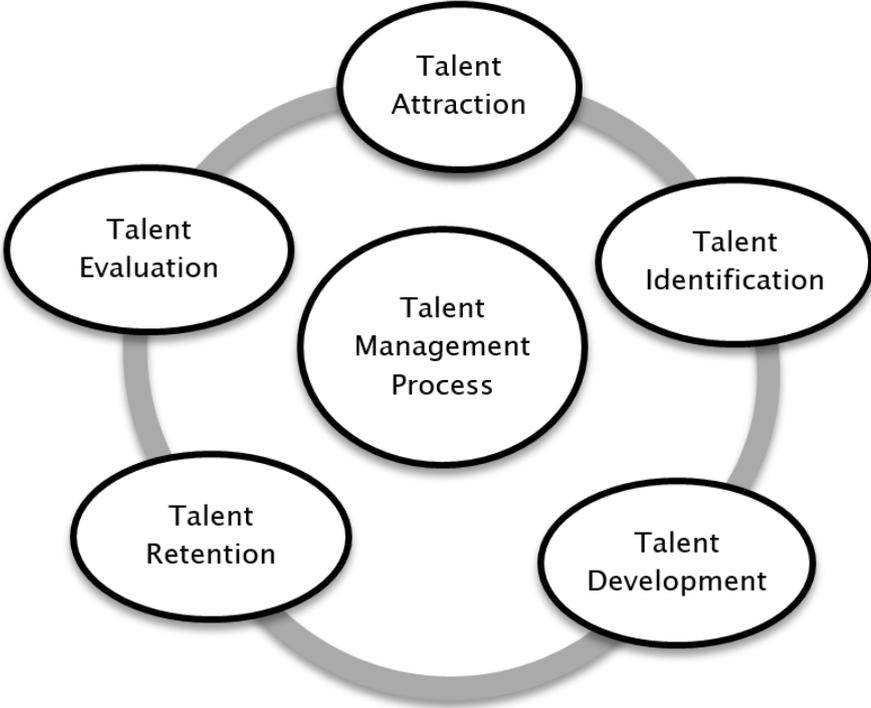
Figure 3.2: The Emerging Talent Management Process Cycle

Figure 3.3 below depicts the talent identification process which is the main focus of this study.
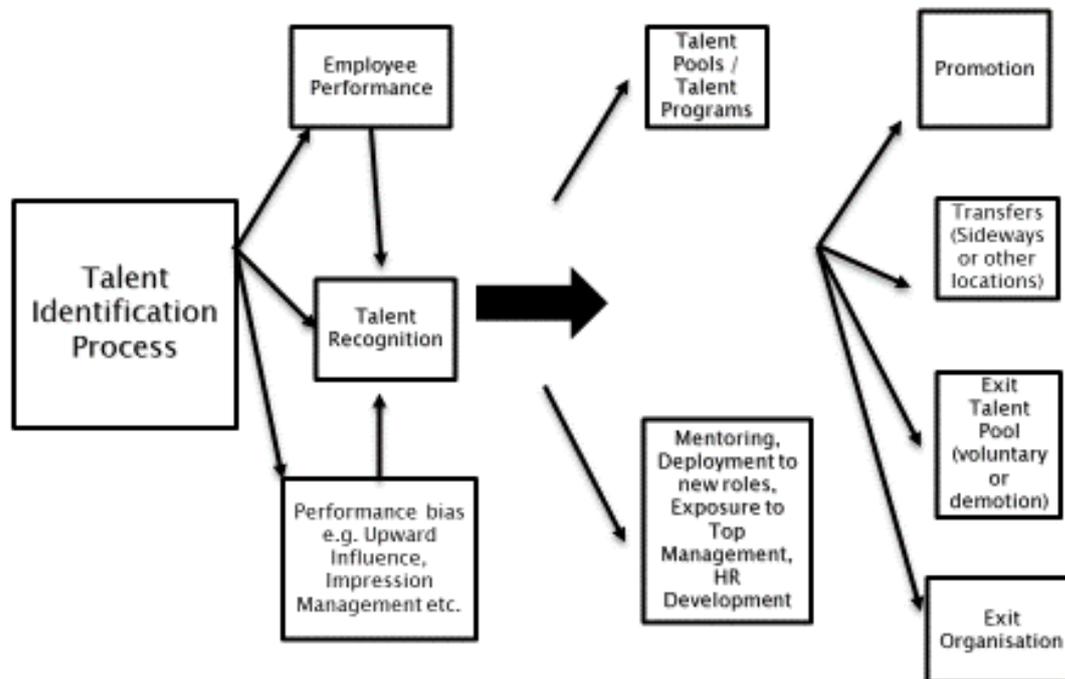
Figure 3.3 : Emerging Picture of Talent Identification Process in Organisations.

At the start of the TM process is talent identification processes where decisions are made regarding buying or developing talent. Sections 2.5 and 2.6 describes in detail what the process entails. Closely linked with the identification process is talent recognition, at which stage organisations confirm who they recognise as talent. Feeding into that, are all the discussions about performance bias and upward influence (see sections 2.6 and 2.6.1 above). Some people are very good at convincing others that they are good and that is their talent even when they are not good, they just convince people that they are. There is also impression management which involves not only upward influence but the ability to convince colleagues that one is good. There is then the actual performance i.e., a person's actual true performance which findings from this study reveal may not be enough no matter how good a person might be due to the surrounding biases and organisation politics. Anything can happen following the talent recognition process whereby identified talent can be assigned to talent pools but not necessarily; or talent development programs and what is done in them differ in each organisatinn (see section 2.6.3). Mentoring is also another possibility and possibly deployment to or secondment to new roles. Also, exposure or greater exposure to top management. So it's obvious that the likelihood of being promoted is greater for employees who can easily access top management more regularly as compared to those who do not. Following participation in talent pools, people are

tested and found wanting and leave the pool or succeed in some way Talented employees may also either move to other organisations or exit the pool voluntarily to return to previous roles without the added responsibilities or status or sometimes accept demotions.

3.4 DOMINANT THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS IN TM

Four dominant theoretical frameworks are applied within the TM literature according to recent research by Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2015), based on their detailed analysis of TM literature in the past two decades. These are the Resource Based View of the firm (RBV)/ Human Capital Theory, International Human Resource Management (IHRM) or Global Talent Management (GTM), and Institutional Theory. They argue that most studies utilised multiple frameworks including those which they described as 'alternative frameworks' because they were less prevalent but still featured in the TM literature. These alternative frameworks included Knowledge Management, Career Management, Strength-based- Approach and Social Exchange Theory. As theoretical frameworks are important lenses for data analysis and which aids positioning of the research and elimination of biases to promote its reliability, the following section discusses each of the four main dominant theoretical frameworks as well Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) which is constantly linked to the origins of TM.

3.4.1 Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM)

SHRM is defined as the pattern of planned human resource deployments and activities intended to enable an organisation to achieve its goals. Distinguishing it from HRM, firstly and vertically, it entails the linking of HRM practices with the strategic management process of the organisation (Schuler, 1992). Secondly and horizontally, it emphasizes the co-ordination or congruence among the various HRM practices through a pattern of planned action with the strategic goals of the organisation. (Wright & McMahan, 1999). Hence most studies in the TM field advocate an integrated TM strategy aligned to an organisation's overall strategy and attribute one of the weaknesses of TM to falling short in this area. Some authors would argue that "TM is grounded in SHRM and that it is the only key function which HRM is playing strategically" (Chugh & Bhatnagar, 2006, p. 230) and that an organisation's perfomance is directly impacted through the management of talent. Other studies claim that it is through TM that HR profession has achieved credibility and legitimacy and status within and outside the organisation and one of the ways of influencing the centralisation and strategic role of HR as a valued part of the business strategy in the daily processes of an organisation (Alvesson & Karreman; Chuai et al., 2008; 2007; Lewis & Heckman, 2006, Barney & Wright, 1998). Supporting these viewpoints is the

current rise of the Human Resource Business Partner roles (HRBP) in organisations as depicted in the case studies. Common to all the articles is the general conceptualization of SHRM as being about systematically linking people with the firm. The firm includes all the internal aspects of the organisation i.e. its structure, culture, vision, mission, values, strategies, products and technology, investors and suppliers. Scholars agree that business related capabilities enabled members of the HR staff to understand how business considerations unique to a firm can create firm specific HRM needs. Therefore the HRM activities in turn, can be linked with the firm's strategic position.

Looking at the above definitions of TM in section 3.1 above, the strategic role of HR is implied, particularly in the first definition of TM as 'collection of HR practices or functions'. So here one sees a definition of TM as just another way of practising traditional HRM activities of selecting/ recruiting, developing and retaining talent. The second perspective which focuses on talent pools also alludes to HR practices of workforce planning and development (Jackson & Schuler, 1990; Rothwell, 2010) as the purpose of talent pools is to create a supply of employees across the organisation to meet job demands. Successful SHRM "involves designing and implementing a set of internally consistent policies and practices that ensure that employees' collective knowledge, skills and abilities contribute to the achievement of its business objectives" (Huselid et al., 1997 p. 172). This statement is symbolic of the role of TM in organisations and explicitly portrays its roots in SHRM. Huselid et al. (1997) also claims that SHRM is about HR personnel who help create organisational cultures based on normatively virtuous principles which can increase the ability of their companies to earn the high trust and employee commitment which leads to better equality improved customer service and increased profitability.

3.4.2 RBV

The RBV theory of the firm (Barney, 1986,1991,1995) buttresses the need for a firm's internal resources to develop and sustain competitive advantage and various authors such as Pfeffer,1994; Blackwell et al.,1994 and Kauffman,1992 advocate using a firm's human resources through HR practices to improve an organisation's competitiveness and performance. Employees can therefore be the most important source of competitive advantage by reason of being the company's sole reason for using its other resources (Maital, 1994).

From the TM empirical literature, definitions of talent and TM emphasize the need for organisations to identify, develop and retain their high potential/high performing employees in order to maintain 'a competitive advantage'. For example Collings and Mellahi (2009) stress on

the identification of 'key' positions that have a significant impact on a company's competitive advantage (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005; Huselid et al., 2005) and contend that the birthing of TM arose from SHRM literature which indicated that the knowledge, skills and abilities of talented employees are directly linked with/to a firm's competitive advantage (Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Lewis & Heckman, 2006). The term 'competitive advantage' is synonymous with the theories of RBV which forms part of the theoretical models of SHRM which TM is associated with. RBV has its roots in the organisational economics and strategic management literature and has been developed by several scholars (Barney, 1991; Conner, 1991; Penrose, 1959; Wernerfelt, 1984). According to RBV (Wright & McMahan, 1992, p. 301), "competitive advantage can only occur when firstly, there is firm resource heterogeneity (firm resources are physical capital, human capital, organisational capital) and how these resources are differentiated in comparison to other firms; and secondly, firm resource immobility i.e. inability of competing firms to obtain resources from other firms".

To sustain competitive advantage, the following four criteria are important. The resource must add positive value to the firm, be unique or rare among current and potential competitors, hard to replace and finally cannot be substituted and if organisations can identify talented people and develop their skills such that they are valuable and rare, immutable and well organised, then it fits the theory. Hence talented employees are mostly labelled as 'high potentials' because of the anticipated value they bring either through contribution to overall organisational goals, role specific goals and through their areas of expertise, knowledge and abilities or skills which are rare or in shortage and high demand in sectors they operate in and so therefore unique and hard to replace.

The exclusive perspective of talent is clearly linked to the RBV theory as it advocates workforce differentiation and appropriating higher investment on a small proportion of either those who hold key positions (executive board and those in managerial positions) or deemed high potentials from whom organisations expect a higher return from their investments to sustain their competitive advantage and organization performance. In support of Huselid and Becker's (2011) arguments that some positions impact on the success of a firm's strategy more than others, these employees are mostly in managerial positions and /or targeted grades sometimes next-in-line to director grades who make up either the top 10% or sometimes less than 1% of the organisation and are exclusively treated to fast track training and developments as successors to future leadership roles as evidenced from findings in this study. In line with RBV theory of developing firm specific expertise, there is a practice of growing a leadership pipeline with firm specific skills and this accounts for why there is a deterioration in performance when these 'high potentials' or 'high-flyers' move to other organisations (Groysberg, 2010).

Not surprisingly, since research shows that the exclusive approach to talent is the most commonly adopted practice in organisations, current research findings (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015) reveal that RBV is the most dominant theoretical framework applied within the TM literature particularly the use of human capital theory (see section 3.4.3 below) and workforce differentiation. Scholars contend that the practice of workforce differentiation is mostly found in profit-seeking organizations and not in the public sector who are more prone to thinking collectively and where such thinking may be hard to implement (Perry & Rainey, 1988; Rainey & Chun, 2005).

3.4.3 Human Capital Theory

The underlying principles of Human Capital Theory (HCT) are that people's learning capacities are of comparable value to other resources involved in the production of goods and services" (Lucas, 1988; 1990 cited in Nafukho et al., 2004, p. 545) with people being equated as a form of capital for development (Aliaga, 2001, Becker, 1993; Hendericks, 2002). The logic being that talent does equate to human capital so the more talent an organization has, the more human capital it has. Likewise, the more skills an organization has, the more talent it has. Boudreau and Ramstad's (2005), epitomise this principle when they describe TM being about the positioning of people in 'pivotal' positions that are strategically of high value to the organisation. Arguably, the fundamental assumption of the benefits of HCT is that the results of organisational investments in the education of employees who are unique and of high value (Lepak & Snell, 1999) include the improved performance at the individual level, improved productivity, profitability and performance at the organisational level which in turn benefits society at large (Nafukho et al, 2004, p. 549). This assumption accounts for the drive for talent development and implementation of diverse talent development schemes in organisations.

Worth exposing however is that economic growth, productivity, profitability and performance at any level become possible when the investments are made in the right people. The reason being that most organisations identify talent to develop skills, potential and ability to enhance on the job performance and ultimately organisational performance through performance appraisals. Studies however show that performance evaluations hardly offer an "objective, rational, and systematic way for organizations to manage workforce performance" (Chiang & Birtch, 2010, p. 3) because of the institutional pressures (see section 3.4.4) on managers that presents bias in the relationship between human capital and performance objectives (Parboteeah & Cullen, 2003). Furthermore, when skills are developed and not utilised over a period of time, the results are a loss of human capital as talented employees exit organizations for greener pasture.

Therefore human capital investments do not always deliver individual or organisational performance.

HCT provides a theoretical framework for this thesis as an aspect of this study is to investigate the processes through which talent is identified and the purpose of identification, whether it is to develop human capital i.e. skills (various types of skills), knowledge (capture and develop), potential and ability, in addition to the training/educational programs and why it is important for these organizations studied. This study also examines the challenges including the biases that may affect the processes of developing human capital to provide insights and knowledge on how companies can proactively manage these biases to ensure reliability and desired results/outcomes that promote individual and organisational performance in accordance with HCT.

3.4.4 Institutional Theory

In their description of organizational determinants of selection and hiring practices, Cohen and Pfeffer (1986) described four perspectives for explaining inter-organizational differences in HRM practices: technical, control, institutional and political perspective. While the technical perspectives comprises research about matching employee knowledge, skills and abilities with the demands of the jobs (Schneider, 1991) for organisational effectiveness for both employee and organisation, the control perspective contributes to ensuring behaviours reflecting good citizenship from employees in line with organisational approved norms and values (Noland and Bakke, 1949; Collins, 1979). The political perspective argues that HRM practices reflect the distribution of power in organisations typified by having an extensive set of HRM practices and personnel department, upon which employees must depend when making employee related decisions (Pfeffer and Cohen, 1984). This includes other powerful existing groups such as trade unions.

Institutional theory contends two major explanations as to why organisations use particular HRM practices to gain legitimacy and acceptance (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Zucker 1977; Meyer, 1980). The institutional perspective assumes that legitimacy and acceptance are important objectives for most organisations because constituencies have the power to offer and withhold resources which in the long run may determine the firm's economic performance. Institutionalisation refers to the processes by which societal expectations of appropriate organisational action influence the structuring and actions of organisations (Scott and Meyer,

1994).Therefore institutionalism, represents "how social values affect organisations and /or organisations adopt structures in order to legitimise themselves" (Greenwood et al, 2013, p. 7).

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) identified three processes of institutionalisation which are coercive, mimetic and normative. These three tend to intermingle and can be cross-cutting and lead to conflict (Nicholson et al., 1995).

Coercive isomorphism results from pressures on organisations by other organisations upon which they are dependent and by cultural expectations in society, resulting in organisations becoming more alike (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) such as the influence of social partners (i.e. trade unions and work councils), labour and government legislations in HRM (Paauwe and Boselie, 2003).

Mimetic isomorphism occurs when the environment creates uncertainty. Organisations then tend to model themselves after similar organisations in their field that they perceive to be legitimate or successful such as imitations of HRM strategies and practices of competitors (Paauwe, and Boselie, 2003).

Normative isomorphism is where professional organisations act as the disseminators of appropriate organisational patterns which are then adopted by organisations that are under the influence of professional organisations. Two aspects of professionalism are particularly relevant. Universities and professional training institutions are important centres for the development of organizational norms among professional managers and staff (Nicholson et al., 1995). Bjorkman et al. (2007) argue that a major influence on the growth of TM to date is the publication by the McKinsey consultants (1998) about the 'war for talent' amongst other professional bodies such as the CIPD driving certifications of organisational training and development programs for legitimacy as is evident in the training and development schemes of the four cases in this study.

Figure 3.4 below shows three modes of institutional isomorphism of DiMaggio and Powell (1983) and how these influence the HR policies, strategies and goals in organisations.
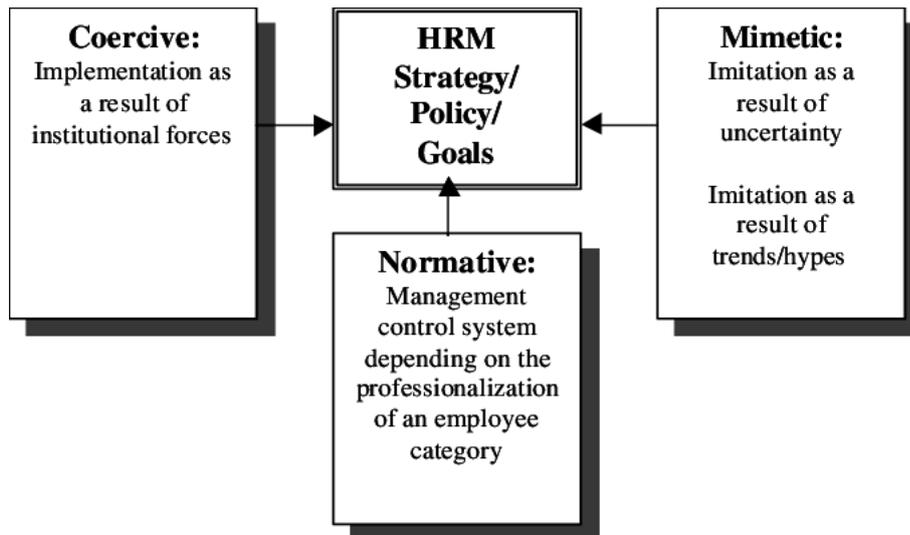
Figure 3.4 HRM and New Institutionalism (Source: Boselie & Janseen, 2001)

Institutional theory forms another theoretical framework for this research in particular isomorphism which may explain why there are institutional differences and similarities between the public and private sector organisations in their TM practices considering that research (section 2.8) already sheds light on some of these differences in HRM practices. For example, TM practices in the public sector must comply with government legislation and changes in political power and interests sometimes as a result of societal and environmental pressures (e.g. pressures from an aging population, budget cuts, and change of power) for legitimacy. The assumption is that through coercive isomorphism, TM practices may experience rapid changes and processes will be highly politicised because of the environment and political pressures. Similarly, mimetic isomorphism will be evident with public sector case study organisations copying the private sector TM practices which they deem successful as already implied in the attempted transfer of NPM practices in the 1980s and 1990s. Normative isomorphism is shown in the professional development schemes adopted by organisations and closely links to HCT as development is in order to equip personnel in the public sector to be as competent and qualified as their counterparts in the private sector or similar organisations.

3.4.5 Global Talent Management (GTM)

GTM is defined as an organization's efforts to attract select, develop and retain key talented employees on a global scale (Stahl et al., 2007). Key to this definition is the focus on a key group of core employees, rather than the multinational's entire human capital pool (Collings & Mellahi, 2009) and this definition emphasizes an international focus and highlights the role of multinational enterprises' internal systems in ensuring key strategic employees are attracted,

retained and deployed, including the management of expatriates (Farndale, Pai, Sparrow & Scullion, 2014) to best meet the organization's strategic priorities. GTM includes all organisational activities for the purpose of attracting selecting, developing and retaining the best employees in the most strategic roles, (those roles necessary to achieve organisational strategic priorities) on a global scale. GTM takes into consideration the differences in both organisations global strategic priorities as well as the differences across national contexts for how talent should be managed in the countries where they operate.

GTM refers to

the systematic use of specific HR policies and practices to manage the several global talent challenges that a firm confronts. These include relocation management, planning and forecasting, staffing (including attracting, selecting, retaining, reducing, removing, training, developing and evaluating employees consistent with a firm's strategic directions) while taking into account the evolving concerns of the workforce and regulatory requirement (Schuler et al, 2001 p. 509).

The context of this study is not on multinational organizations but primarily in the UK public and private sector and therefore, GTM is not an appropriate theoretical framework.

3.5 SUMMARY

This chapter summarized current debates in the HRM literature on TM concerning the growth of TM and its current status as a maturing field moving from infancy to adolescence. The diverse definitions of TM are discussed including the drive for legitimacy of TM within the scholarly community and the need to establish and identify its theoretical boundaries with some authors, (Collings et al., 2015) advocating RBV as the main theoretical framework for the field. The chapter ended discussing the most dominant theoretical frameworks found in TM by research which are RBV, HCT and Institutional theory and the positioning of this study within RBV, Human Capital and Institutional theories. The next chapter describes the research methods used for this study.

Chapter 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOTY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes how this research was conducted outlining research philosophies chosen and justification for these and the choice of research design and methods used in data collection and analysis. Quality control issues about the reliability and validity of research and how they have been addressed in this research project will be discussed as well as ethical procedures that guided this study.

4. 2 PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNING

The choice of any research methodology is associated with an underpinning research philosophy which directly influences procedures for data collection, sampling and data analysis (Yin, 2009). Considerations for conducting research therefore involve the appropriateness of research design used to study the phenomena and whether the methodology and research methods employed are suitable for solving the research problem or questions. Having a good understanding of the research philosophies underpinning the field of study and the fit between both is an important justification for choice of methodology

According to Burrell and Morgan (1979, pp. 1-4) four sets of philosophical assumptions conceptualise social science research which are ontology, epistemology, human nature and methodology. Under the ontological assumption debates concern whether what is being investigated is external to the individual, if it is objective in nature o the product of one's mind' or individual cognition'. The 'epistemological' assumption focuses on how the world is understood and the dissemination of this knowledge to others. These debates surround how true or false knowledge is and if it can be dispatched tangibly or whether it is individually experienced. Assumptions about human nature entail 'relationship between human beings and their environment' (p. 4) as Burrell and Morgan (1979) claim that "human beings and their experiences are regarded as products of their environment" without freewill "where man is a creator of his environment, the controller as opposed to the controlled". The above three assumptions impact choice of research methodology within social sciences as "each one has important consequences for the way in which one attempts to investigate and obtain knowledge about the social world' (p. 4).

More recently, Bryman & Bell (2007 p. 22) claim "questions of ontology are concerned with the nature of social entities i.e. whether social entities can and should be considered 'objective' entities that have a reality external to social actors or whether they can and should be considered 'social constructions' built up from the perceptions and actions of social". These debates concern research logic of 'Objectivism' and 'Constructionism'. Whilst objectivism support views that social phenomena and their meanings exist independently of social actors", 'constructionism' argues that '"social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors" (p. 22). Concerning epistemology, Bryman and Bell argue that this concerns the description of knowledge and if it should be "studied according to the same principles, procedures and ethos of natural sciences" (Bryman & Bell, 2007 p. 16). The focus of these debates ae on two types of knowledge which are 'positivism' and 'interpretivism'. Research under the positivist' approach "will use existing theory to develop hypotheses which will be tested and confirmed' and emphasizes 'quantifiable observations by use of statistical analysis" (Saunders et al., 2009 p. 6). In contrast, research using the interpretivist paradigm promote "the necessity for researchers to understand differences between humans in our role as social actors" (Saunders et al., 2009 p. 116). The differences between the positivists and interpretivists is that the positivists accept universal laws, the focus of interpretivists is about understanding a concept within its context and making meanings of one's "social environment and people within it through one's interactions" (p.116).

Positioning and clarifying the ontological and epistemological stance of this study requires response to the following questions by Mason (1996 pp. 10-18):

1) What is the nature of the phenomena or entities, or social reality which I wish to investigate?
2) What might represent knowledge or evidence of the entities or social reality which I wish to investigate?
3) What topic or broad substantive area is the research concerned with?
4) What is the intellectual puzzle? What are my research questions?
5) What is the purpose of my research?

The focus of this study is on talent management particularly how talented employees are identified in public and private sector organisations and the researcher will be engaging management and employees in these contexts (social entities) in discussions about their talent identification practices. Research questions examined how management and employees' defined talent and the factors affecting talent identification practices including the challenges encountered with these processes and how organisations managed them for reliability. The

purpose of this research is to extend theoretical and contextual knowledge about talent perspectives and philosophies in organisations in order to contribute to the TM debates in this area. It also contributes to knowledge about the role of organisation behaviour and culture in determining outcomes of HRM practices in organisations through analysing similarities and differences in practices or talent architectures of organisations studied. The researcher was not an objective observer as the case is in positivist ontology but directly involved in the study according to the interpretivist approach.

Since the nature of this study concerns people in an organisational setting and their views about the practice of TM my ontological assumption is that the world is socially constructed as TM is constructed by managers. My worldview is subjective and not objective or a product of my mind as it involves social interactions between me and participants from organisations. As a result, my epistemological assumptions would require that I communicate the knowledge subjectively and not objectively but as an insider in direct interactions with respondents about TM practices and using extracts from discussions to answer research questions. Since acquired knowledge from participants was through personal experience, the validity of this knowledge appears credible. This study is anti-positivist since it adopts a subjective ontological and epistemological stance and therefore adopts a non-scientific methodology, using qualitative methods of data collection. The case study methodology was utilised in alignment with Denzin and Lincoln's, (2005) claim that the qualitative data permits a deeper and richer understanding of individual experiences particularly the quality of the processes under examination. The researcher has chosen to contextually study the concept of TM subjectively rather than objectively because TM as a phenomenon is socially constructed and allegedly known to be inundated with diverse interpretations which are relative to the type of organisation and their chosen approach.

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

This section describes the case study method and its appropriateness for this research and also describes the various steps taken in conducting this project following the case study research design recommendations of Yin (2009; 2014) and Eisenhardt (1989; 2007).

4.3.1 Defining the Case

According to Yin, R.K. (2009, p. 18) "A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in-depth and within its real life context especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident".

Cresswell, (2002, p. 61) describes the case study as "a problem to be studied, which will reveal an in-depth understanding of a "case" or bounded system, which involves understanding an event, activity, process, or one or more individuals".

The lack of clarity between the boundaries of phenomenon and the context maximises the need for clarifying what the 'case' is and emphasizes need of defining the 'unit of analysis' which according to Yin (2009) involves defining the "case" i.e. the topic of study or phenomenon being studied and who and why a specific group of case or cases (can be individuals or and organisations) have been chosen to provide answers to the 'case' problem or research questions. Part of this process involves setting the case boundaries. Referencing this study's research question whose focus is on identification of talent in settings (organisations) in the UK Public and Private sector, the units of analysis are public and private sector organisations that already have TM practices in place, specifically examining the conceptualization and operationalization of their identification practices i.e. how and why they do it, criteria for identification, challenges and their management of them for ensuring reliability of the process. Furthermore, to understand if these practices are similar or different and why these differences or similarities exist which is important for theory and transferability of these practices to other organizations. This was also the reason for choice of multiple case studies rather than the single case to enable this transferability (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015; Yin, 2009; 2014).

For this study the public sector cases are Civico, Locgov, PHServ and the private, Retco. In order to get in-depth understanding of talent identification practice, the targeted group for interview were decision makers e.g. line managers who implemented the processes and can explain the assessment procedures of identifying/selecting talent, secondly, also in this decision making group are those who drew up the policies e.g. the HR/TM managers, Organisation and or Learning development managers and directors. The final group of cases were those employees who were identified as talent (Hipo),(see section 4.3.2 below for further discussions about sample choice). Choice of these participants follows previous research on TM within the public sector (Ford et al., 2010; Powell et al., 2012) which has mostly focused on TM practices from participants in managerial positions but an aim of this study was to go beyond this boundary to include views of participants from the talent pool to further support or contradict those views of management for a richer understanding of the TM processes. It was not always possible to access participants with same titles in all four organisations but each participant in decision making and Hipos 'cases' were asked the same questions presented in the interview schedule (see appendices 1.6 – 1.8, pp. 293 -295). To support analysis of data collected from the interviews, documentary evidence was also sought from company manuals and communication e,g, emails between HR/TM mangers or Directors and targeted potential

employees (Locgov), Talent assessment manuals (Retco), organisation policy manuals (Civico and PHServ), and also through the internet/worldwide web. Further details of the unit of analysis for this study are depicted in Table 3 below showing the case, number of employees in each organisation, the number of participants interviewed and their designation and TM responsibility (i.e. whether management or talent pool members) including the location of organisations in UK. Each case uniquely promotes understanding and prescription of real-life talent identification practices.

Case boundaries: The cases were all located within the different regions in the UK and though there were challenges in accessing enough participants from the different regions and various departments or specialisms in each organisaton particularly, PHserv which had a varied set of talent groups, the main focus was on understanding the phenomenom of talent identification process through the eyes of the decision making team and from those in the talent pool and the similarities and differences in practice between the two sectors. The researcher did not cross this boundary by looking at the differences in views of TM practices between participants from the different departments, regions or specialisms e.g. between talent pool members from accounting deparments vs medical consultants and /or Nurses in PHserv or between participants in the different regions of the UK. For example, in the Health service case (PHserv), where no part is representative of the other, the researcher's focus was on those organisations in the different regions that had a TM program running (which had been piloted by the central TM body i.e. the Leadership Academy) and who could provide answers to my research questions based on their experience of the TM practice. The leadership academy was the central place driving the talent program so I started interviewing the Lead TM personnel who provided information on organisations within the regions that the TM programs had been piloted. However, while maintaining ethical practice around confidentiality, the researcher provided information about the regions in which participants were accessed particularly in PHserv, while also providing detailed information about the geographical settings of this organisation (see Table 3 below). The timing of this research was between September 2013 and February 2015. Further details about the case boundaries are also provided in the case setting sections for each case study at the beginning of chapters five, (pp. 101 – 2) six, (p. 136) seven (pp. 158- 160) and eight, (pp. 194 - 5).

4.3.2 Justification for Case Study Research

The case study method is mostly used to research phenomena that little is known about and was chosen as a preferred method for studying TM in public and private sector organisations

because it allowed the researcher explore this phenomenon in real life settings which give first hand access to behaviours of the social actors which according to Yin (2009, p. 4) "cannot be manipulated by experimental research". This was done in order to gain an in-depth knowledge and explanation to answer the research questions concerning 'how and why' the understudied organisations practice TM (Yin, 2009, p.4; Eisenhardt, 1989). Additionally, most research on TM adopt a qualitative approach using the case study method (Iles, Chuai, et al., 2010; Iles, Preece, et al., 2010; Jones et al.; 2012; McDonnell et al., 2010). This is because TM is still a growing field and some studies (Collings, 2015; McDonnell, 2015) argue that it is still in its infancy and call for more empirical research in this area in order to develop theory and practice. The case study approach is therefore most appropriate as it employs an inductive logical approach which promotes theory building. According to Eisenhardt (1989, p. 538), the case study method promotes theory generation as it allows use of multiple sources of evidence such as documents, interviews, archival records, participant observations, physical artefacts for data triangulation to promote reliability of findings. The practice of TM can only be understood through contextual research and the case study enables investigations within "real life context especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin 2009, p. 18). There is scarcity of research on TM in the UK public and private sectorss and the case study method was important for understandig practices in these sectors.

Therefore, the case study research method which is not focused on testing theory or providing generalisation of theory to a specified population, is important to this study as it enabled the development of an in-depth understanding of TM identification practices within the contexts of this study, allowed choice of multiple case designs for promoting relliabilty in findings as well as flexibility in alteration of design and data collection which are vital fo promoting theory development. Issues associated with the case study method and how they have been addressed within this research project are discussed in the section about reliability and validity (see sections 4.4.1 – 4.4.4, pp. 94 -98 below).

4.3.3 Sample Selection

As indicated from the research title, purposive sampling was used as organisations for this research were located in the UK. The selection of cases was conceptually driven (Curtis et al., 2000) as the focus was on the public and private sectors. The researcher obtained the participation of four organisations for in-depth case studies from the Civil Service, Local Government, Public (Health Services) and Retail sectors. Twenty-eight interviews with HR/

Talent & Leadership development managers as well as managers on talent schemes were conducted across these organisations.

Organisations were targeted for the following reasons:

1) The assumption that because of their size they were expected to have the necessary capability and resources to run TM programs successfully as some studies suggested that "full blown HRM is mostly associated with large sized firm whether blue chip or red chip" (Warner, 2008 p. 783).
2) Recognised as good employers
3) Supported access to managers and sources of necessary data for research use
4) They had TM experience and activities

To obtain a broader view on talent identification practises, targeted participants were HR/TM professionals, line managers and talent pool/high potential (HiPo) employees in all organisations except PHServ where it wasn't possible to access employees. One of the problems researchers encounter is whether the data is reliable and representative of the phenomena being investigated. This cross-selection of people in decision making positioned alongside those who were affected by their decisions was to ensure richness of data that is representative of the TM practices in these organisations studied as the expectation is that all participants would have had knowledge, awareness and exposure to this phenomena being explored to convey their experiences.

Secondly, this sample choice was to promote reliability of the data for triangulation, as data from both sides could be cross-checked for consistency and conflicts for the theory building aspect of this study. A total of twenty eight interviews were conducted between September 2013 and January 2015 through face to face and telephone interviews. Ten interviews were conducted face to face while the others were by telephone as this was the most convenient route for the respondents. Access into each organisation was through a dedicated gate-keeper in the HR and Talent Resourcing departments. The researcher sent applications to conduct research within each organisation to these gate-keepers who were identified through online media (LinkedIn) and social networks. Following their consent to be interviewed, appointments for interviews were scheduled, following which further referrals were given to the other respondents as it was otherwise difficult to gain consent from individuals within these organisations. To maintain anonymity and confidentiality, the case study organisations were coded as 'Civico' for the Civil Service, 'Locgov' for the Local government, and 'PHServ' for the Public Health Service and 'Retco' for the Retail organisation. Details of the organisations studied and the interview schedule undertaken in each one are presented in Table 3 below. The tenure of TM programs

in all organisations were between two and five years and were still evolving. The Public Health Services had a centralised program which was set up three years ago but various TM programs specific to each individual organisations in the various locations had been running for between four to seven years.

4.3.3 Data Collection

The primary source of data was semi-structured interviews and secondary data collected through organisational documents (see appendix 1.13).

4.3.3.1 Pre-Data Collection

This pre-data collection procedures comprised a pilot study and data collection protocol presented in the following sections.

4.3.3.1.1 Pilot Study.

The pilot case study was an important aspect of data collection for this research, which ensured thoroughness and informed the actual data collection process including field procedures so that irregularities (for example with question constructions), and mistakes (e.g. maybe with choice of cases, sources etc.) encountered during this pilot study can be corrected and averted (Yin, 2009, p. 92). A pilot study was conducted with two HR professionals in two organisations which have been anonymised as HEServ and PBServ, in the public sector. These were different to the ones researched for this study. From the feedback received (including non-response due to lack of clarity in part of the questions), final interview questions were expanded and written with more clarity. For example, one of the findings from this pilot study was that the term 'Talent Management' was understood as 'Leadership development' in organisations as this is what was used to describe their talent programs. Therefore the author rephrased the 'header' for application letters sent out to potential organisations, from 'Request to participate in PhD research on Talent Management' to 'Request to participate in research on Leadership & Talent development'. This change attracted more responses from organisations and likelihood of participation. The interview conducted for the Pilot study was transcribed and coded and analysed. This activity enabled proper structuring of the interview questions used for this research to facilitate the coding and analysis of data presently collected and also highlighted areas of importance for inclusion to promote reliability of findings e.g. requesting participants to explain their job roles at the start of each interview for authenticity.

Table 3: Case Study Companies and Informants

Case	No. of Employees	Informant Position	TM Role	Total no. of Interviews
Civico Public Sector Civil Service: one of biggest bodies responsible for social and welfare issues	105,000 200 Hipos in Talent Schemes	Snr. Manager Talent Resourcing Snr. HRBP (Deputy Director) Mgr. Planning Mgr. Business Strategy Deputy Director Credit Policy Mgr.	Policy owner Across Govt. Resourcing Line Mgr./ HiPo Line Mgr./HiPo Line Mgr./HiPo Line Mgr./ HiPo	6
Locgov Public Sector One of the Largest Local Governments in UK	33,000	Org. Dev. Mgr. HR& Recruitment Mgr. Team Leader Engineer Snr. Performance Improvement Mgr. Project Manager Principal Srvs. Mgr. Young People Progression Mgr.	Policy Owner Line Mgr./HiPo HiPo HiPo Line Mgr./HiPo Line Mgr. /HiPo Line Mgr./HiPo Line Mgr./HiPo	8
Retco Private Sector One of the four biggest Retailers in UK	180,000	L&D Mgr. Talent Advisor Payroll Manager People Serv. Mgr. & Rgn. Ops Mgr. Team Leader Stores Graduate Resourcing Specialist People Serv. Mgr.	Talent Development Talent Records/ Policy HiPo / Line Mgr. HiPo /Line Mgrs. HiPo Talent Resourcing Senior Mgr.	7
PHServ Public Sector Biggest UK Public Health Services in various Locations		Asst. Director of Org. Dev.(NE1) Head of Org. Dev.(NE3) Ass. Director of Org. Dev. (NE2) Rgn. LDP (NE3) Program Lead TM (HQ) Interim People Dev. Mgr. (SE 1) Lead HR Specialist (SE 1)	In charge of TM In charge of TM In charge of TM Stakeholder Partnership In charge of TM Processes In charge of TM Talent Resourcing	7

4.3.3.1.2 Case Study Data Collection Protocol

To enhance reliability of case study research, the case study protocol (Yin 2009, p.79) which involved providing an overview of this research and field procedures to all targeted organisations was prepared and dispatched accordingly. The protocol comprised construction of application letters to potential case study organisations providing an overview of this research including details of how data will be collected and boundaries of usage and disposal and also stating benefits for organisations opting to participate (See Appendix 1). Ethical/confidentiality issues were addressed and consent forms also attached to letters. The targeted organisations amongst others who declined participation, included Civico, Locgov, PHServ and Retco as listed in section 4.2.2.

- Case study questions: Three sets of semi-structured interviews were designed for different levels of employees (HR/TM managers, Line managers and talent pool candidates) using open ended questioning techniques (see appendix1.6, 1.7 and 1.8).
- Targeted Participants were HR/TM professionals, line managers, talent pool employees.

4.3.3.2 Semi-structured Interviews

The use of interviews for data collection has been described as "the most important source of case study information" because "most case studies are about human affairs or behavioural events….and case studies provide important insights into such affairs or events" (Yin, 2009 p. 108). The researcher conducted Twenty eight in-depth semi-structured face to face and telephone interviews with respondents from the case study organisations detailed in section 4.3.2 above. Interview guides/schedules were developed for the different categories of respondents i.e. HR/Talent professionals, line managers and talent pool participants. However, questioning techniques varied from one interviewee to another based on their responses. Interview questions were open ended to allow flexibility and "better access to interviewees' views, interpretation of events, understandings, experiences and opinions. Also "qualitative interviewing when done well is able to achieve a level of depth and complexity that is not available to other, particularly survey-based approach" (Bryne, 2004 p. 182) and "contribute details that enable the evolution of a more solid theory" (Al Ariss, 2014, p. 177). This is one of the reasons that this data collection method was chosen as it enabled the collection of rich data from respondents' views, opinions and interpretations

of events in social entities in alignment with the overall aims of this project. Another reason was that it allowed the collection of raw data captured directly from the interviewees which was very important in addressing issues of reliability of this study.

The duration of interviews varied between 30 to 90 minutes depending on the time allowance given by each interviewee. Ethical considerations observed included obtaining consent from respondents to record interviews and following the procedures outlined in the case study protocol section 4.3.3.1 which involved showing a research brief outlining details and purpose of research to respondents and allegiance to maintaining confidentiality. Details of these documents can be found in Appendix 1. All but one of the participants (Locgov team leader) agreed to digital recording of the interviews. These recordings were then transcribed for further analysis. Face to face interviews were conducted at the designated location of the respondent and all appointments for both telephone interviews and face to face interviews were confirmed by email correspondence.

4.3.3.3 Field notes

After each interview, brief field notes were made concerning any side talks after or before the formal interview which proved useful for the data analysis phase. If the notes captured or insinuated something of interest, these were expanded further to aid discussion of findings. For example while transcribing a particular talent pool member in Locgov, her lowering tone when talking about issues surrounding nominations by line managers was noted in parenthesis as a reminder that this was something to comment on later during data analysis. Similarly, in Retco, the Talent Advisor's side remark about one of the talent pool members being in a relationship with someone in HR was also noted and reflected upon when transcribing that particular respondent's interview and referenced in the discussions of findings.

4.3.3.4 Organisational Documents

Organisational documents were used as a data collection method for "corroborating and augmenting evidence from other sources' e.g. for verifying correct spellings of names of organisations that might have been mentioned in the interview and also for "making inferences which can be further investigated" (Yin 2009, pp. 101 -3). For this project, gatekeepers from the case study organisations provided relevant company documentation by email. These comprised HR policy documents, talent scheme program documents and

application procedures, management briefings and webpage references. Other documents were personally sourced from individual respondents or from the company website and also via the worldwide web.

4.3.4 Data Analysis

The data analysis phase of the case study method is alleged to be the most difficult process for researchers because, according to Yin, it is the least developed and because the technique for analysing case studies has not been well defined (Yin, 2009; Eisenhardt 1989). Eisenhardt (1989 p. 539) asserts that there is usually an "overlap of data analysis with data collection with theory building research for while data collection is ongoing, researchers take field notes containing impressions that occur therefore involving both observation and analysis. The Data analysis involved comparisons across cases to identify similarities and difference in TM practices between public and private sector organisations in order to discover new or extend knowledge about this area. This overlap provides the researcher with a 'head start' in the analysis process.

4.3.4.1 Interpretation of data

Data analysis in qualitative research involves the preparation and organisation of data (Cresswell, 2013). Holloway (1997 p. 44) identified several steps for consideration during the data analysis phase which are:
1) Ordering and organising collected data
2) Rereading the data
3) Breaking the material into manageable sections
4) Identifying and highlighting meaningful phrases
5) Building, comparing and contrasting categories
6) Looking for consistent patterns of meanings
7) Searching for relationships and grouping categories together
8) Recognizing and describing patterns themes and typologies
9) Interpreting and searching for meanings.

The above processes were observed in the interpretation of data as follows:
Firstly all collected data were transcribed on a case by case basis and the author made notes about observations from each respondent interview about expressions or

terminologies used to describe processes and the way opinions were made to aid coding process

Secondly themes were identified using a deductive and inductive approach. The deductive approach involved collating themes emerging from the literature (particularly from the definitions of TM and talent) which studies define as theoretical and the inductive approach involved identifying emerging themes from the data as is done in grounded theory. (See Appendix 2). Thirdly, meanings from phrases, imagery and metaphors used in addition to notes made about each interview were sourced to discuss findings.

Following manual coding of the data, further confirmation and verification of codes was done using QSR Nvivo. The author uploaded these codes onto the CAQDAS software alongside data from Civico and ran text enquiry to observe frequency of certain words associated with the themes emerging from the data in order to check consistency only. The following four themes were identified as consistent across all cases, leadership or lack of it, capability building / performance management, culture and decision making. Each of these themes also had sub-themes which are presented with the findings. Initial themes explored for the interview schedule are provided in the table below whilst the emerging themes and sub-themes are presented with the findings from each case.

Table 4 Key Themes used for interviews for each group of respondents

Category of Respondents	Themes explored
Senior Managers	- The meaning of Talent - Talent Identification process and strategies - Factors that influence or affect talent identification - Challenges and barriers encountered in talent identification process - Reliability of the TM processes
Line Managers	- Understanding of Talent - Challenges with talent identification - Reliability of the TM processes
High Potential employees	- Why they think they were identified as talent - Explain the process of identification and its impact on them - Their experiences in the talent pool and views about the reliability of the processes of identification

For theory building case study research, Eisenhardt identified three key features for data analysis which have been utilised in this research. They are described below: `

4.3.4.2 Within-case analysis

Within case analysis (Eisenhardt, 1989) involving detailed write-ups for each organisation Civico, Locgov, Retco and PHServ which are presented individually in chapters five, six, seven and eight. This analysis also comprised comparing findings about TM practices within these organisations within the theoretical framework of the extant literature to further explore and describe/discuss and position these practices appropriately (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana 2014). This enabled familiarity with each of the cases and ability to identify emerging patterns from the cases to facilitate cross-case analysis in chapter nine. Furthermore, this analysis assisted with the management of the volume of data generated from the cases which was quite daunting at the onset (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 540)

4.3.4.3 Cross-Case Patterns

This is linked to within -case analysis and is used to avert the danger of researchers making 'premature/false conclusions due to information processing biases' (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 540). A cross-case analysis of all four cases is presented in Table 15 (see Appendix 5, pp. 301-308) which was done through categorization of the research questions, summarising each organisation's TM practices before showing within group similarities and differences across the four cases.

4.3.4.4 Dividing Data by data source

Thirdly, researchers can divide the data by data source i.e. reviewing for example, interview data, observation and documentation evidence separately. The purpose of this technique is for corroboration to 'exploit the unique insights generated from different data types'. When the pattern from one data source corroborates with evidence from another, the findings are stronger and better grounded (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 540). But where there is conflicting data, reconciliation can be obtained by deeper probing. These data analysis prescriptions were followed by reviewing interview data with those collected from organisation documents to corroborate patterns of similarity and differences within and across cases. Where there was

conflicting data, this was highlighted but where this was not explainable, it was only mentioned. This was another way of improving the reliability of the research.

4.4 RELIABILITY & VALIDITY

Criticisms of the case study methodology surround issues of its 'lacking rigor' and the systematic procedures employed by scientific research methods such as experiments and survey research methods and that outcomes are 'prone to bias (Yin 2009, p. 108). Yin continues this argument concerning 'problems associated with generalization from single case studies which poses issues of reliability'; as well as the general perception that 'case studies take a long time to conduct and produce gross documentation. This issue was addressed in this study through adopting a multiple case study design with sample size of 28 participants which is more than the general 4-10 sample size recommended by both Miles et al. (2014) and Eisenhardt, (1989) and which is big enough to enable "inferences to other contexts" (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). Yin's (2009) recommendation for addressing issues about reliability and construct validity, is to follow the three principles of data collection described below.

4.4.1 Construct Validity

This has to do with ''identifying correct operational measures for the concepts being studied'' (Yin 2009 p.40). To address this problem, Yin recommends using "multiple sources of evidence, establishing a chain of evidence during the data collection phase and to have key informants review the draft case study report at the final phase of composing the case study report "(Yin 2009, p.41). This problem was addressed in this study by using both semi-structured interviews and documents for data collection as well as the multiple case studies to enable research rigor through triangulation of the findings from these multi-method approaches. Another approach was by evidencing the data collection protocol (see appendix 1) in form of interview transcripts, summary of research questions, thematic coding hierarchy/activity, interview guide, PhD research procedure brief, consent letters and email correspondences. These documents provided a 'chain of evidence' of the research process undertaken for replication. The review of transcribed interviews by respondents, proved difficult as some respondents had moved on to other jobs and others did not respond to further communications after the interviews. Research questions were also summarised to show their relevance to solving the research problem. (See appendix 1.1).

4.4.2 Internal Validity

This seeks to ''establish causal relationships as relating to explanatory or causal studies' but not to exploratory or descriptive studies'' (Yin 2009, p. 42). Since this study is exploratory and not explanatory, the researcher did not address this issue.

4.4.3 External Validity

This is about ''defining the domain to which a study's findings can be generalised'' (Yin (2009, p. 43). Since this quality check is about "comparing the validity of case studies to the survey research method where generalization from a small sample is made to the universe" (Yin, 2009 p.43), 'generalisation' is not applicable to this study because this study is positioned under the constructionist paradigm which is not focused on statistical generalisation as would be in the case of the positivist paradigm (survey research method) but about 'analytical generalization' from a "particular set of results to some broader theory" (Yin, 2009 p.43).

4.4.4 Reliability

This has to do with proving that the ''operations of a study e.g. data collection procedures can be repeated with the same results'' (Yin, 2009, p. 40). This issue was addressed by utilising the case study protocol and developing a case study database during the data collection phase. Section 4.3.3.1.2 described the case study protocol adopted for this research and a case study database (see Appendix 1) was developed comprising summary of research questions, citations from case study data that answers research questions, notes compiled from interviews, a bibliography of documents obtained from organisations and interview transcripts to enable tracking of research process. The database included information on circumstances under which data was collected e.g. emails showing time and place of interviews as well as what procedures were followed during the data collection protocol for this thesis.

4.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Authorization to conduct this research was obtained from the Business School Ethical committee before the data collection began. Applications for consent to access the cases and other organisations were then dispatched with content explaining what the research was

about, the purpose of researching the topic, how long interviews will last, and how the organisation will benefit from participating in the research. Confidentiality issues were also addressed as well as what will be done with the data collected on completion of the thesis. The above procedures also formed the briefing for respondents at the start of each interview and then permission was obtained to digitally record the research giving reasons of the importance for the recording before recording began. Code names were issued for the organisations investigated for anonymity in line with confidentiality and during the transcription process anonymity was also maintained for names of respondents and organisation.

4.5 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the underpinning research philosophy and research methods adopted for this study as well as justification for using them. The overall research design and procedures for data collection were also explained including how research quality control was maintained. The next chapter presents the findings from the study.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS AND WITHIN CASE ANALYSIS OF CIVICO

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a within case analysis of the first public sector organisation, Civico. The analysis includes both the discussion of and presentation of the findings from this case study following the structure of the research questions presented in section 1.3. This chapter is sub divided into the following sections. Section 5.1 introduces the chapter and section 5.2 presents the case setting while section 5.3 introduces the empirical findings section with section 5.4 discussing the findings on the meaning of talent. Section 5.5 presents and discusses the findings on Civico's talent identification processes while section 5.5 and 5.6 focus on the factors and challenges affecting talent identification and the reliability of its processes respectively. Section 5.7 presents findings on the management of challenges to talent identification and section 5.8 presents the emerging themes from the findings while section 5.9 summarises the chapter.

5.2 CASE SETTING

Civico is one of the biggest organisations within the UK Civil Service with over 108, 000 employees. Part of their role is to implement governmental policies and the delivery of services to the public. The UK Civil Service serves three governments which include the national government in Westminster as well as the governments of Scotland and Wales. There are three functions carried out by civil servants nationally and internationally. These include operational delivery which involves working at borders, administering pensions and benefit systems and running prisons and courts. Seven out ten civil servants work within this function. A second function is providing advice on policy and supporting ministers including parliamentary roles but only a small portion of civil servants work in this role. The third function concerns the implementation of programs and projects.

At the time of the research Civico was involved in the Civil Service Reform plan aimed at promoting efficiency in the delivery of public services, improve capability and professionalism across the whole of the service through a focus on identifying their top talent and skill gaps, developing professional skills and improving employee performances to enhance productivity in Civico. Company documentation on the reform plan reflected the drive to match productivity in Civico with that of the best private sector organisations through

partnerships with private sectors. Leadership development programs have been running in Civico for over ten years but a talent program had only been implemented for just over 4 years. Civico had five TM programs comprising the High Potential Development Scheme for developing Directors and Deputy Directors for Director General Positions. The second was the Senior Leaders scheme for development of senior leaders in SCS1 and SCS2 grades for Deputy Director and Director Positions. Third was the Future Leaders scheme for development of Grade 6 civil service employees for the senior leaders SCS1 and SCS2 positions. The fourth was the Emerging Leaders scheme for employees in Grade 7 for development into senior civil service positions. The fifth was the Graduate scheme called Fast Stream (see section 5.4.3, Table 6, pg. 97 for more detailed description). Participants for this study comprised employees in each of the talent schemes except the Fast Stream who could talk about their experience of the talent identification process and recruitment into the talent pool. Other participants included TM and HR managers (see next paragraph below) who could provide detailed information about Civico's construction of talent and identification process. This was in addition to consulting company documents to obtain a deeper understanding for answering to the research questions.

Interviews were held between December 2013 and March, 2014 first with the Head of Talent Resourcing who was the gate keeper and who referred the other respondents; the senior HR Business Partner who was also in an acting role of deputy director of Finance, and four talent pool participants in senior Civico positions who were members of different talent programs and working in different functions within Civico (see Table 3, section 4.3.3, p. 88). One of these talent participants had just been promoted to a deputy director position. The location of the interviews has not been disclosed in line with ethical considerations of confidentiality.

5.3 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

This section presents findings from the data collected from Civico. To aid analysis the information is presented in line with the interview questions and themes and sub themes acquired from the data.

5.4 THE MEANING OF TALENT IN CIVICO

In Civico, people in talent pools were classified into four levels as follows: emerging talent, the talented, super talented and the professionals. Those classified as 'emerging talent' were middle managers in grades 6 and 7. Whilst grade 7 was just below the Civil Service grade,

grade 6 was Civil service grade (CS). 'The talented' were the Senior Civil Service grades (SCS) these were on the Deputy Director (SS1) and Director (SS2) grades while the Director Generals and Permanent Secretaries were classified as 'the super talented'. The reasoning behind this as described by the Deputy Director of Finance who was also a senior Human Resource Business Partner (HRBP) was *"in (Civico), they are actually looking for talent in terms of director level… but also looking for the super talented to get to the Director General level".* The fourth level of talent, referred to technical talent (professionals), as one of the aims of the Civico reform plan was about professionalism and so the Head of talent explained that they now have organisations *"to collect 9 box grid information on the likes of HR, finance, IT, operations delivery, analyst professions etc."* From these quotes, it would appear firstly, that organisationally, Civico had an understanding of who their talent were in terms of positions, people and professions. This organisational understanding, contradicts the general portrayal of organisations being oblivious of who their talent were and responds to the 'talent for what' questions (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Silzer & Church, 2009, 2010) within the TM literature and is indicative of positive progress in the practice of TM in organisations which is beneficial to the advancement of the TM field.

Secondly, positioning the Civico interviewees' definitions of talent within the three perspectives of talent from the TM literature (talent as object, talent as subject: exclusive positions, exclusive people) would locate Civico's talent strategy as being exclusive to key leadership positions of directors, Director Generals (DGs) and professionals and the alignment of key individuals to these positions,. Though there was development for the 'emerging talent' group, the primary focus for Civico's TM was on elite groups of employees as there was scarcity of leaders with leadership skills and due to the bureaucratic nature of the civil service which increased inefficiencies in service delivery, professionalism and leaders from these professions, was required to curb these deficiencies. Civico's talent strategy was primarily to resolve the need for great leaders and leadership development to enable organisational performance and efficiency as would be revealed in the following sections on the factors affecting talent identification and challenges encountered with the process.

There was not only an organisational but also a shared understanding amongst respondents about who talent is in Civico and their alignment to the Civico change / reform plan. For example, all respondents associated definitions of talent with being rated as a high potential and star performer on the 9 box grid, which was used for measuring potential. The Head of Talent Resourcing described talent as *"those who sit on the top line of the 9 box grid"* and a talent pool member (19) also explained that to be identified as potential 'you have to be in

that top line of potential' referring to the 9 box grid. In relation to the Civico reforms, another talent pool member (23) who was also a line manager explained that:

"In Civico, we are looking for qualities that leaders possess and potential to reap very senior leaders' … 'those qualities might be ability to work across boundaries…innovate and lead change and lead change is a huge amount of that''

Furthermore a recently identified talent and deputy director described talent as:

"…the ability to work across boundaries, more likely to take on things that were not immediately only beneficial to their work group, had a wider way of thinking that would benefit the organisation 'they are inclusive' ".

The Head of Talent Resourcing stated that:

"it is about the strength of the profession in the Civico reform plan'… and 'people who have a wider potential to perform at senior level and various roles across departments. Not necessarily only within the department".

What we are seeing here is definitions of talent as object, (Gallardo- Gallardo et al., 2013) and characteristics being sought in talented employees in Civico. Implied in these characteristics are social capital themes of the ability of talent to build networks by 'working across boundaries' in order to succeed in future roles and be identified for future roles. This process of working across boundaries is to proactively minimise failure in performance in senior positions by new recruits as current research alludes reasons for these failures to incompatibility of team heterogeneity (Collings, 2015). Secondly and interestingly, a new perspective on talent as object (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013) is initiated by the deputy director pool member describing talent as 'people who are inclusive'. This idea of inclusivity is not about inclusive talent but depicts a new characteristic of talent which could be used as a 'competency measure' and included as part of the criteria for talent identification which reflects a potential candidate's knowledge and practice of inclusion in the workplace. This new perspective advances knowledge in the talent definition debates and criteria for decision making in the area of talent identification.

Some other interesting definitions had to do with clichés used to refer to people identified as talented which came up as interviewees narrated experiences. These included phrases like: ''spoken of in high regards" and "seems to be going places"; the labelling of talent by the talent program they were currently involved in or have been on e.g. He is a "Fast streamer", "Emerging Talent" or "(FLS) Future Leader Scheme", "HPDS (High potential Scheme)". One of the talent pool members explained that it's like a badge you wear that "opens doors". These phrases not only connote images of prestige and an 'air of preference' for those whom they referred to but also symbolise a differentiation and superiority of these individuals

from those who were not so- labelled which can be interpreted as discriminatory and lacking justice in the work world (Gelens et al., 2014) or 'dehumanising in relation to others" (Swailes, 2013). Though this study does not feature sampling from non-talented employees as in Gelens et al.'s (2014) study, findings reveal unethical practices by managers in the identification process amongst those individuals who have been identified as talent from within the targeted grade. Those identified as potential not being informed of this status and therefore were not put forward for nomination to enable applying for development and as a result losing their place in a talent pool for future leadership roles. So while Gelens et al. focused only on employees not identified as talent as victims of injustices, this study revealed that these issues of unfairness and injustices do not only apply to those outside talent pools but also amongst the identified talented employees. These issues are presented in the section on challenges below.

In Civico, the general perception of talent is that they are those who have been assessed as high potential and star performers using the 9 box grid and who were nominated by their line managers for talent development programs and were successful in the application processes for these programs in addition to having an ability to work across different departments.

5.4.1 Civico: 9 box grid definitions of talent

The 9 box grid was used for evaluating and differentiating talent from non-talented employees within the targeted job grades. In order to do this, it had its own unique definitions of potential and competency framework to guide the assessment process. These definitions are presented in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Civico 9 Box grid definitions

9 box Grid	Civico
Definition of Potential	**Aspiration**: Being ambitious, motivated and flexible and committed and passionate and goes the extra mile **Value**: Which are honesty, integrity and impartiality and objectivity **Ability**: This is setting direction and engaging people and delivering results
Competency Framework	Star performer, high potential, early promise, strong performer, solid contributor, future achiever, good performer, satisfactory contributor and underperforming

Information in the Civico reform plan documents indicate that the above definitions of talent are based on Civico's organisational values in order to educate, empower demonstration of these values in both management and staff.

5.4.2 TM Definition

In Civico, TM was about sourcing potential leaders who could become future directors, director generals and permanent secretaries as well as developing technical capability in professionals. Referencing the perspectives of TM in the literature, Civico's program aligned with Collings & Mellahi (2009) fourth stream which stressed the identification of key positions that have a significant impact on a company's competitive advantage and definition of TM as "activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions which differentially contribute to the organisation's sustainable competitive advantage". Civico's reform plan manual states that:

"The Civico Reform plan set out an intention to develop a corporate approach in managing the career and development of those employees with the highest potential. The Civico High Potential Stream (CHPS) is central to our talent approach and is also a vital part of preparing for our future, by preparing people at director and deputy director level for the most senior jobs in the Civico. For the first time the CSHPS establishes a corporate talent pool for the Civico – bridging the gap between the Fast Stream and the 'Top 200' Director General and Permanent Secretary Roles".

As indicated in the above quote and discussed in section 5.2.1 above, TM was targeted at director and director general positions as the Civico High Potential Scheme (CHPS) which was referenced as being 'central' to Civico's talent approach was a leadership development program for these groups. As a result, assessments were based on high performance and leadership potential using the 9 box grid and identifying skills gaps for development amongst these groups and those classified as professionals. Building capability was very much about job rotation across Civico and central government departments as explained by the Head of talent resourcing:

"It is not about promoting people…but getting them set up and progressing them along their desire and aspiration alongside their potential and want to go onto another department then hopefully fill the gap with another talented person from another government department".

In essence, TM was not about promoting people to the next job grade but about developing leadership potential and social capital through job rotations. Though the above statement portrays the intention of Civico's TM, this was not the reality in as the same interviewee expressed frustration about challenges encountered by both managers and individuals concerning the direction of progression for identified talent due to internal (departmental) and external (governmental) pressures and demands for talent. This struggle between

organisational intentions versus organisational practice or rhetoric versus reality epitomises Ulrich's argument that "sustainable long term success" of building an organisational leadership capability is not just a "matter of having the leaders but of having the processes that reliably creates them "(Ulrich, 2008, p. xi) as these pressures hindered the internalisation of TM by both management and talented employees as findings from this study reveal.

TM was however an important aspect of the Civico reforms and appeared to be high profile as members of the board were involved in their talent identification processes with participants describing decisions being taken as only being discussed in 'talent management circles'. Since the main focus of TM was to identify, develop and retain leadership potential for key positions of Directors and Director Generals, leadership development was central to Civico's TM agenda which comprised several leadership development programs for the various senior Civico staff levels of talent. A summary of these development programs is provided in Table 6 and details of talent development architecture for the Directors' talent scheme including the eligibility / criteria for selection are presented in Table 7. Descriptions of the scheme in Civico's High potential development scheme report showed that it provided leaders the opportunity for learning and working together and to addressing challenges collectively faced. It was a highly competitive selection process and there have been four cohorts totalling 162 participants comprising lawyers, ambassadors, communication professionals, scientists and accountants as well as corporate, policy and operational delivery experts since its inception in 2004. Participants' development included secondments to charities, local government, the PHSERV and international institutions. The Civico Capability Group (CSCG) in the Cabinet Office was responsible for the corporate development while the Civico Human Resource Capability (SCHRC) & Talent Team supported the Head of HR with the recruitment and management of talent.

Other TM initiatives included a Senior Women's Network forum for senior women Leaders which was created to meet the diversity targets of women making up 37% of the senior Civico (SCS) and filling 30% of top management posts. This was in order to ensure that the representation of women at senior level in the Civico compared favourably with the private sector. This constant comparison with the private sector makes one question the essence of this initiative. Is it just being done for the sake of it, or following a fashion adopted by the private sector in order to belong and compete to gain legitimacy as typified under the lenses of institutional theory or is it genuinely to improve fairness in equality, equal opportunities and diversity, that would be beneficial to Civico's creativity and innovation? These questions arise firstly, as the literature on TM ethics (Swailes, 2013) portrays the nature of

organisational leadership as being very masculine with leadership theory being traditionally described in masculine terms and secondly because of the understanding that public sector organisations are highly institutionalised and regulated through governmental legislative pressures concerning issues of equality and diversity which may force organisational compliance on the surface but show a lack of depth or substance in implementation.

This feeling is expressed by the deputy director respondent concerning the initiation of one of the Civico development programs:

"The first one (the deputy directors' scheme) was set up in response to the civil service reform plan and for the department to be able to say in response to the service reform plan particularly in the capability section that they are taking action so that on paper it would look as though they are taking action".

The above resonates Boyne's (2002) views that due to political processes imposed on public sector management there is vagueness in performance targets and focus on more rules and processes than outcomes.

5.4.3 Table 6: Talent Development Schemes in Civico

Name of Scheme	Purpose	Duration
High Potential Development Scheme (HPDS)	To get people from Director to Director General position & higher	3 years
Senior Leaders Scheme	To get people from SCS1 to SCS2 to Deputy Director General / Director position	1 to 2 years
Future leaders scheme	To Get people from Grade 6 to Senior Civil Service (SCVS) (Pg. Cert)	6 months
Emerging Leaders	To develop people below Civil Service grade i.e. Grade 7	1- 2 years
Fast Stream	Graduate Fast tracked Trainee Management Scheme for both external & internal applicants to progress to Civil Service grade 6	1 year

5.4.4 Table 7: Eligibility Criteria for Civico High Potential Development Scheme

Eligibility	Competencies
Director level applicants who have been identified as successors in departmental talent pipelines or feature in departmental succession plans; and Deputy Director level applicants will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. They must be very talented individuals who are about to step up to Director level or are named on departmental succession plans as successors to key Director level posts. Those who have much to offer as leaders in specialist roles will be considered as well as those who are excellent across a wide range of roles. For more information please see: https://civilservicelearning.civilservice.gov.uk/Talent (viewed January 2014)	The Scheme looks for participants who are able to demonstrate the potential to be a visible leader who: inspires trust; takes personal responsibility for delivering results effectively and swiftly; builds teams that are more than the sum of their parts; works collaboratively across traditional boundaries; remains focused on strategic outcomes whatever the difficulties to be overcome; matches resources to business priorities; is honest, courageous and realistic with staff, colleagues, partners and Ministers; and is constantly learning.

5.4.5 Civico TM Drivers

A major influence driving TM in Civico was a government reform plan focussed on developing future leaders for tomorrow's challenges, on strengthening skills, deploying talent and improving organisational performance. Achievement of this vision from information provide in Civico's manual about the reform plan, was through identifying skills gaps, identifying senior managers with leadership potential for development for future leadership, identifying critical professions in order to develop professionalism and improve efficiency in service delivery. The aim was to bridge the skill gaps between private and public sector to enable performance in Civico and efficiency in delivery of services to the public. A critical ambition was to brand Civico as a modern age organisation to attract new people and retain talent who could easily move on to the private sector. The drive to improve organisational performance through closing gaps between the public and private was not new and is embedded in the principles of NPM, institutionalised by the UK government from the 1990s which emphasised private sector management styles and increased accountability and performance measurement (Fryer et al., 2009, p. 47).

5.5 CIVICO TALENT IDENTIFICATION PROCESSES

This section summarise Civico's talent identification processes in a visual flow chart presentation in figure 5.1 below. Detailed discussions of the different processes are provided in the below subsections.
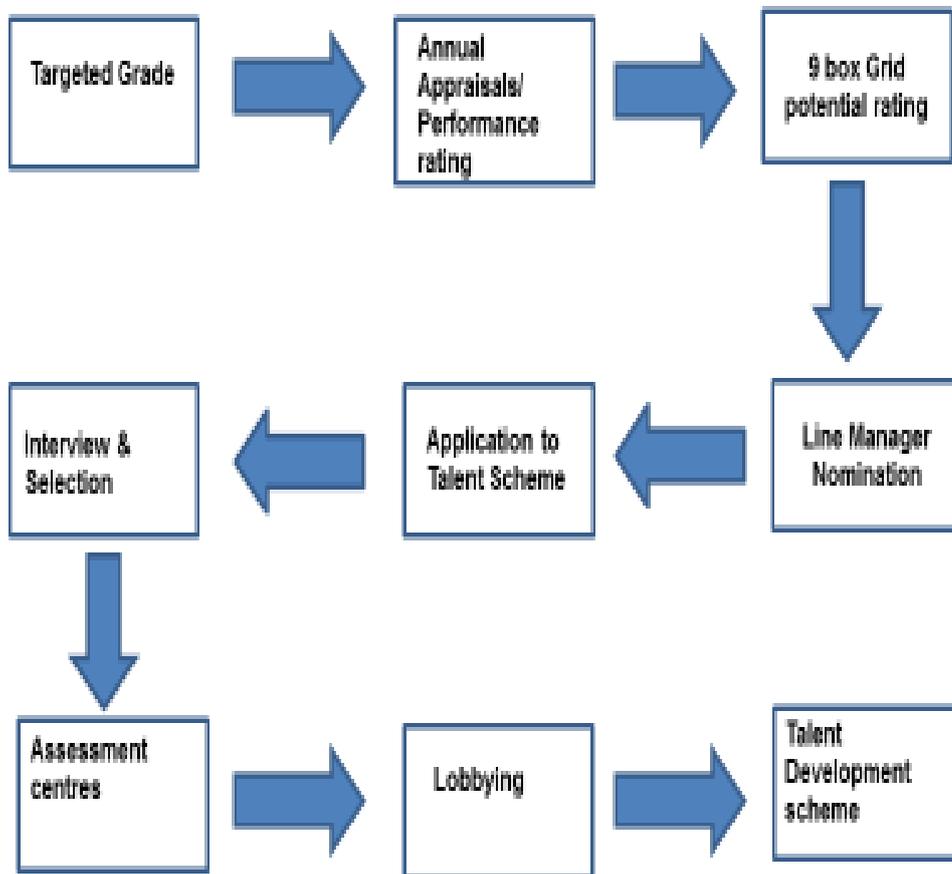
Figure 5.1: Civico Talent Identification Processes

5.5.1 Targeted Grade

As previously stated, talent development programs were targeted at Senior Civico employees in grades from grade 7 upwards and the grading structure for Civico is presented below with targeted grades in bold:

1. AO (Admin Officer), EO (officer grade), HO (Higher Officer), SO (Senior officer)

2. **Grade 7** (Emerged grade), **Grade 6** (Civil Service grade (CSV)),
3. Senior Civil Service (SCS) Grades: **SS1** (Deputy Director), **SS2** (Director Level), SS3 is Director General
4. Above SCS: CEO, Heads of Government departments.

All interviewees were on talent schemes, and based on interview questions to verify reliability of process and consistency of selection of talent from within the targeted job grades, they confirmed being within the highlighted targeted job grades.

5.5.2 Appraisals

According to interviewees, there was an organisational expectation for employee performance management assessments to be conducted annually by line managers prior to assessment of potential. The reason was that only those employees in the targeted job grades described in section 5.4.1 who were classified as 'star performers' qualified for assessment for potential. It appeared however that the appraisals were not quite functional and not so much in use based on the comments made by participants provided below and did not impact employees' career progression.

"There are 2 things. There is the performance management system which everybody uses and there is the 9 box talent management grid. It was the 9 box TM grid that enabled me apply for the last 2 schemes and what was fed into it and not the normal appraisal system" (Talent pool member 23).

"There is a clear difference between the actual appraisal system which is used in this department and the TM system. They are actually quite separate. The appraisal system isn't particularly useful. We only have 3 boxes which are either: underperforming, must improve achieved or outstanding then we have a guided curve where we have to pick numbers of people to go into those particular boxes. They are very gross kind of classifications not particularly useful" (Talent pool member 19).

"The 9 box grid on the other hand is very very useful in identifying talent and high potential and that is what it is used for and not as an appraisal system" (Talent pool member 024).

Apart from supporting views from the HRM literature about the inefficiencies of appraisal measurements, the above extracts clarify the following. Firstly, the shared understanding by interviewees that performance and potential measurements are not one and the same thing as indicated by their differentiating systems used for measuring both in Civico. It also shows that employees associate TM practices only with the 9 box grid which they see as the system for identifying individuals for talent schemes and not the appraisal. This linking of the 9 box with TM indicates the authority of a convincing TM practice in Civico with evidence of cohorts from different schemes and indicative of interviewees' confidence in the 9 box grid

for identifying potential which is an enabler for their development into schemes, connoting images of credibility and reliability of this system for measuring potential. Further details about the 9 box grid presented in the following section expand on these views but raise issues which undermine the portrayal of its strengths in this section.

5.5.3 The 9 Box Grid

The 9 box grid was used for assessing the potential of employees who have been appraised as 'star performers'. Those employees who were positioned on the top line were classified as high potential employees and were the ones eligible for leadership development. The X axis represented performance and the Y axis displayed potential attributes and again there seem to be a shared understanding of the structure of 9 box grid amongst the talent pool members who explained that managers talked them through the processes of measurement which made them understand its workability. However some of their statements indicated some dissatisfaction with the tool contradicting what was said in the last section and these views are presented below:

 "...and so they kind of focus on those people who might be high potential and then still very subjective measure in that sense and my observation will be that it relies on strong leadership from team leaders from managers and good relationship between the individual and their manager…, I think it works quite well, like everything, it is very rough and ready a little bit subjective. It is something that is relatively straight forward to get a group of managers around the table and they try as objectively as possible to plot where people are who they think is got potential and who they think is performing really well. I think it kind of works reasonable well. I think it requires real honesty from people around the table and one thing it lacks at times is real consistency in what we mean by each of the 9 boxes and what we are looking for because you produce reams and reams of guidance and people can have different understandings of what that means so for some people to be at the top line it means that you must have capability to progress two grades and for some people it might be that you want to progress two grades so quite some difference really but it is quite significant. And if you do not want to progress but you are capable of progress then you might be at the bottom line, you might not be at the bottom line. It is nothing that you can pass round in the policy strategy area about how we use the 9 box metric effectively. And what they have come up with is there a consistent understanding of what it means to be high or low or medium within the structure. And within this structure there is an element of has everyone got the full understanding of what we need and are we able to come to the table and honestly appraise individuals who work for them as opposed to set opinions" (Talent pool member, 19).

The above issues raised by the interviewee suggest that efficient and effective assessments of potential using the 9 box grid would depend on strong leadership and managers, a good relationship between individual and their manager, objectivity of assessors in assessments, consistency in the interpretation of the 9 boxes by managers, simple but clear guidance on metrics for assessors, honesty and assessments free of individual biases. It appeared that these success factors were absent from Civico's assessments of potential as implied by the repetition of contrasting statements by this interviewee as he appeared to struggle to speak

positively about it but was unable to deny the inconsistencies and apparent dishonesty of the system stating how this cannot be corrected through policy or strategy. These points raised by the interviews buttress the need for organisations to be aware of sources of biases in rating and assessments of employees and to initiate systems and process that will reduce them to the barest minimum as recommended in the ethics literature (Swailes, 2013, p. 36) as these biases undermine the otherwise potential reliability of the programs and systems used for identification. Another area of concern is raised by another talent pool member concerning the lack of transparency in the assessment process whereby in some cases line managers only have conversations with those ratees' on the top right hand of the 9 box grid about their position to the exclusion of others not so rated and in other cases only some of those on the top right hand are informed and progressed on to development schemes and others not progressed. This issue again emphasises the inconsistencies referenced in the above extract including poor leadership behaviours and connotes rater-ratee likeability biases (Lefkowitz, 2000). Some of these issues are discussed further in the sections on the management of challenges.

5.5.4 Nominations

Line manager nominations for leadership development programs, was the next step after being identified as talent on the 9 box grid. However not everyone who was identified as talent received a nomination and it was unclear as to what criteria were used for nominations to enable application for talent schemes. Sometimes these nominations were made by the department or top executives but again there was non-clarity as to criteria as expressed by a talent pool member:

 "…the nominations come from the line manager, it is the line management who put people through to that point and it is just their judgement" (talent pool member 019).

Having a nomination process after using a systematic process for measuring potential appeared counterproductive as this process was highly subjective and demotivating to identified talent who could not understand how differentiation between talented employees was performed. It would appear that the practices become more political than systematic as is presented in the following section.

5.5.5 Applications & Interviews

Identified talented employees who were nominated for development schemes had to go through a rigorous application process and only those whose applications were successful were invited for interviews and then assessment centres before they were allowed into the designated talent pool for development. For the High Potential Development Schemes for Directors and Deputy Directors, the Head of Professions were required to lobby Permanent Secretaries to support their individual nominated talent to ensure successful acceptance into the talent pool. This was because the permanent secretaries were known to override recommendations from the departmental heads and heads of professions if the candidates were unknown to them and maybe if from they perceived nominees as unqualified or had previous issues with them. The HRBP portrayed these sentiments in her three quotes below:

"I get my head of profession to write to all the perm sec to say we have these people we think they should be on the high potential scheme please support them and it is not a done deal because in one case might not go through obviously but we lobby basically to make sure it happens"

"I am nominated to the finance leaders group which is the governance group and they approved it and once it has been approved we wrote to the perm sec to say this person has been approved from us the executive we are quite happy for them going forward please can you back them but it is still not guaranteed as the perm sec can override it."

"…when I get into departmental assessment other finance leaders sort of say huh, I have had him work for me before and he wasn't in great shape. So there is an element of that. That won't change the marking but it will flag up the possibility of there being an issue".

The process of lobbying supports the literature on the public sector that processes are political (Boyne, 2002) and there is a lack of clarity of organisational goals in the public sector as political processes are imposed on management by politicians to promote individual propaganda. The literature also attribute some of this vagueness to bureaucratic hierarchies of the public sector and a very formal decision making processes which are presented in the following section.

5.5.6 Talent decision making

The reform plan manual as well as two interviewees (the Head of talent resourcing and the HRBP) mentioned different managers, boards or senior government officers in charge of finalising decisions about talent and is important to understand the roles of these decision makers in the process.

Line Managers: The line managers were the first level decision makes who assessed employees for potential and performance and nominated those identified for development

and membership of the talent pool. This first level of decision making was necessary without which the other levels of decisions cannot take place.

Departmental Heads: Company documents explain that the Secretary of State and the Permanent Secretary who reports to him are heads of departments. They moderate scorings of potential and performance and by so doing, check for inflated ratings before the reports are sent to the Heads of Professions. The HRBP described it this way:

"The moderation will happen at departmental level so if the line manager is ranking somebody very high then usually at the senior Civico (SCS 1 level) they will be known by other people"

The Heads of Professions (HoP): The HoP is the most senior person in a particular profession and appointed to lead the profession. Their TM responsibilities involve putting forward the nominated talent to Permanent secretaries for approval into the HPDS schemes. Their role comprised operating as cross-government leaders and maintaining professional standards for succession planning and TM.

Talent Review board: They make decisions about the make-up of the talent pool through monitoring identified and checking status of talent pool members, conducting capability reviews and succession planning. For example identifying job vacancies for talent pool members, performance and development of talent pool members and who should remain in the pool.

Senior Leadership Committee (SLC): They identify corporate development needs & make recommendations.

Considering the number decision makers in the TM structure, their effectiveness is questionable considering the ensuing issues of dishonesty biases and poor leadership behaviours surrounding the assessment of talent in Civico and highlights again the lopsided management focus of public sector firms on tasks, processes rather than outcomes as already stated in other sections of the study. One of the recently identified deputy director respondents inferred this from his statement below concerning a deputy director's talent scheme he attended in the past:

"The first one was set up in response to the civil service reform plan and for the department to be able to say in response to the service reform plan particularly in the capability section that they are taking action so that on paper it would look as though they are taking action".

Referencing the above quote, one questions whether these appointments of decision makers was just a way to 'show on paper' that there was an 'apparent' rigorous TM process in place.

5.5.7 Talent Pools

In Civico, the purpose of the talent pool was to facilitate deployment of talent across departments to develop broader skills and for social capital as this was a critical factor for making themselves visible to very senior leaders in positions to support their future career progression as this was an essential factor in being identified. Aside from deployment, talent were also selected for secondments to the private sector for development. The pool was made up of different categories of employees including deputy directors, directors who were being developed for future Director General Positions, the senior Civico servants who were being developed for deputy director and director positions if they remained consistent with their performance and agreed to be deployed to central government departments.

5.6 CHALLENGES TO TALENT IDENTIFICATION & RELIABILITY

Factors affecting talent identification were both internal (micro) and external (macro) pressures. Details of these pressures are presented below:

5.6.1 Internal Pressures

5.6.1.1 Poor leadership:

5.6.1.1.1 Managing and leading change:

According to Civico's reform plan report, there was a general consensus amongst staff that managers were not strong enough in managing and leading change. This was from feedback of staff surveys. There seemed to be a strong resistance to change particularly relating to TM and talent identification such that one talent pool member remarked that some managers do not participate in TM activities and avoided supporting their talented employees onto development programs because they did not believe in TM as they feel that there are other better options for managing talent. This meant that potential talent were mostly ignorant of TM and opportunities for career development open to them. The Head of Talent Resourcing described it this way:

"It is a leadership issue… underlying strong leadership… is about honesty to people about their potential. Actually line managers being able to connect in and inspiring and being strong and confident and not shy away from it. They are not refined enough about their leadership and not brave enough nor confident enough about their judgement".

This statement shows concerns about poor leadership by both management and staff as it echoes that of the talent pool member concerning the 9 box grid assessment in section 5.5.3. Since leadership is meant to provide direction and it's evident from these statements that direction is unclear due to weak leadership, the assumption is that process of identification is jeopardised and requires improvement organisationally in its internalisation and levels of implementation of practices to encourage trust by employees, line managers and decision makers for successful TM (Makela et al., 2010).

5.6.1.1.2 Assessments of Potential

Linked to point 1, all interviewees made comments about line managers' incompetence in the use of the 9 box grid for with interviewees describing the assessments as quite 'subjective' and prone to diverse interpretations and secretive. This view of management did not promote credibility in the system which some talent pool members described as 'standardised' and 'useful'. The Head of talent resourcing explained that managers were more interested about 'popping people into boxes' than thinking through their assessments to first of all identify those they would immediately choose as potential talent and why, before going on to rate them on the 9 box grid. This had a negative effect on the process of identification as the likelihood of rating non-high-potential employee as a high potential was inevitable and would have its overall effect on the immediate department and organisational performance. The following quotation reflects this:

 "….one of the things we think is that people get so hung up putting people in boxes but it will be much better concentrating on the real talent and that might be how we get better data and better interaction" (HRBP).

This issue of not thinking things through before implementing at the team level mirrored practice at the organisational level. Information in Civico reform plan manual indicated that the reason for past failures of projects was due the announcement of policies before they had been thought through and so it might be that if this issue is not checked, could lead to failure of the TM architecture which appeared quite structured but very unstable at the same time as a result of these challenges.

5.6.1.1.3 Career Management

Career conversations were lacking between line managers and high potentials and this gap was very pronounced throughout the interviews such that the Head of talent resourcing

defined talent as the "art of the conversation". This definition contributes another perspective to the talent as object debate and could be used as a criteria for identifying talent at management levels. The career conversations were meant to hold alongside the assessment of potential in order to make the assessment process more cordial and initiate a way of engaging with employees about their future aspirations as "good quality dialogue is an essential basis for effective TM" (Tansley et al., 2007, p. 46) but also energy tasking in its execution by line mangers (Berger et al., 2011) as typified by this study. However, it was common that managers would speak highly of the high potential of a particular employee in talent forums and yet not have informed the same employee of their rating as high potential because they have not had the career conversations. So the result was that high potential employees were unsure of their development plan and in one of the narratives, a high potential employee had not had a careers conversation for three years and was on the verge of resigning her job but for her discussions with the Head of Talent Resourcing who then recommended her for secondment to the private sector. Additionally, some managers would rather promote their star performers and high potential in order for them to remain within their department instead of informing them about an accelerated career progression route through 'across departmental or government moves'. They do this for fear of underperformance of their departments through losing a high potential. These unethical practices align with issues of openness and transparency.

5.6.1.1.4 Lack of transparency

Organisationally, the Head of Civico expressed the plan to be a more open and flexible organisation, implying present issues in this area. Talent pool members would affirm that there was some secrecy in disclosing ratings of the 9 box and information about the talent schemes and how to apply for it in order to be identified as high potential. This lack of disclosure sometimes made it impossible for talent to get onto development schemes and resonated again the biases and unfairness in the identification processes. Organisationally, it appeared there was also poor publicity about the internal talent programs as indicated in the extract below and representative of the exclusive nature of Civico's TM processes.

"There is information on the intranet that everybody has access to kind of very passive access if you go hunting for it you may probably find but it is not necessarily publicised. Other than the FAST Stream, the others are not publicised as much"…" (Talent Pool member, 023).

Some authors (Dries, 2013; Gelens et al, 2014) argue that secrecy or lack of transparency is synonymous with the exclusive approach to TM and another one of the negative sides of this approach.

5.6.1.1.5 Lack of support for talent

Being visible was a strong criteria for being identified as talent both from information provided by interviewees and manual on the reform plan as referenced above on the criteria for the HPDS scheme. However, as a couple of the interviewees reported, this can prove difficult for most employees with potential, without the support of line managers demonstrating this aspect of good leadership by recommending high potentials to more senior managers for recognition and exposing them to forums/cross departmental work experiences through which they can liaise with senior leaders and be known. Learning how to put themselves forward created other complexities for potential talent who would sometimes not bother due to 'being too humble'. Some of these 'talent dilemmas' included finding ways to impress senior management in order to be identified without undermining their immediate managers, and the impending fears arising as a result, due to poor employee engagement and not having career conversations between line manager and talent. The following extracts from interviewees depict these findings:

"Genuinely talented people are usually quite humble at what they do, which is a good thing but it does mean they don't often put themselves forward so it depends on managers to really support people who can move up the organisation. It is very difficult. And there is where you get difficulties in finding talent where you have got poor leadership and line managers. Ultimately you either can't do it or you have to work very hard to build a relationship with someone more senior and you have to balance trying not to undermine your current manager. It is a difficult one. Majority of people do not have the time to invest in doing that and so that opportunity is potentially switched off" (talent pool member 0024).

The above extract reflects the effects of the politicised public sector environment and institutional pressures on talented employees to be visible which again can undermine effective TM as lack of support could lead to lack of retention of talent, buttressing the calls in the literature for balancing organisational and individual goals and expectations for talent retention (Collings et al., 2013; 2015).

5.6.1.2 Performance Management/skills and Capability building

Information from Civico's reform plan report indicated a need for 'rigorous' performance management as tools were inadequate and managers required 'enhanced skills' as evidenced in section 5.5.1.1.1. The reform plan comprised plans to identify the top and bottom performers with an SCS appraisal system which will identify the top 25% and the bottom 10%, where the bottom 10% will undertake coaching and improvement strategies.

But these were not in practice and one interviewee described the appraisal system as more about the 'set opinions' of those conducting appraisals rather than a real appraisal of people as referenced in previous sections of this study. Managing talent and capability across Civico particularly high potential, senior officials and specialist professionals was a prime factor for talent identification in Civico which also included the capability of departments and Civico as a whole. There was a realisation that projects could only succeed when there was proper planning concerning implementation and the assignment of these projects to employees who have been provided the right resources, skills and training to ensure good project management. Improvement required working across departments which were currently siloes with the HRBP pointing out that:

"The problem is each department does its own thing on TM and imbibe their own scheme on TM so we do not talk to each other about TM".

The Civico performance management plan included building capability through developing people in post through more active career management as well as through training primarily directed at the development of leadership talent at all levels. But this wasn't the reality due to inconsistencies in talent development opportunities between departments as findings from the next section 5.6.1.3 reveal.

5.6.1.3 Balancing inconsistencies and irregularities in staff recognition

Information provided in the reform plan manual was that there was a need to balance the recognition of staff in operational delivery roles equal to those working in policy. Ironically, company literature indicated that 7 out of 10 staff work in operations so it's quite surprising that they do not receive the most recognition. This may be because those working in policy were fewer and worked closely with very senior policy makers who had access to upcoming changes for implementation and so were more aware and had powers to position their employees for applying for talent schemes in comparison to other departments like operations delivery. As one talent pool member explained:

"I think there are people who aspire to enter the Fast Stream in the operational areas who wouldn't necessarily get the support of their line managers to apply for it because mainly I think because people in the operations do not know how the fast stream works and what people get out of it so you tend to find more people from the corporate centre get accepted onto the fast stream than you do in operations which I think is probably a deficiency" (Talent pool 023).

Again these imbalances are attributed to lack of support of management, raising questions about the reliability of TM processes as these issues should have been identified during

calibration by the talent review board and other decision makers to sustain organisational capability across board.

5.6.1.4 Retention/ High Turnover

There was a high turnover in critical roles at the centre of the government which created a *'lack of collective corporate memory and tendency for orthodoxy' (corporate manual on reform plan*) as project disruption and discontinuity occurred due to high attrition of senior managers leaving too soon before project completion. There were also pressures to monitor staff who could easily seek promotion by speedily gaining a range of experiences which led to short tenure with some ambitious groups of employees. These issues necessitated implementation of TM to facilitate identification, retention and management of these critical employees and to reverse the dishonest practices with reliable ones.

5.6.1.5 Culture
Culturally, Civico had bureaucratic and hierarchical structures which were slow paced and were described in the reform plan report as being 'more about the process rather than the outcome'. There was however a realisation for a cultural change in order to provide an empowering environment and a 'flexible' and 'pacier' structure which would enable speedy governmental adaptation to environmental changes. Rather than focusing on whether people are in the right job grade as the tradition was in Civico, there was an institutional pressure to have the 'right people in the right jobs' in alignment with the business needs. The Head of Talent resourcing to buttress this point, stated that he would "rather make it easier and straightforward for the right people to apply and dissuade the wrong people from applying. I am introducing a lot of the TM related activity into the resourcing".

Corporate documents on the reform plan indicated that Civico's complex processes as implied by their long talent identification processes, hindered efficient implementation which created inefficiencies and hence a strong demand for a reduction in bureaucratic practices as reflected in the following statement by the Head of Talent Resourcing, "I am trying very hard that when it comes to resourcing that people do not fall into the bad old ways". 'The 'bad old ways' refers to bureaucratic traditions that were unproductive. It would appear that achieving cultural change proved difficult in Civico because of its size which was made up of diverse departments and agencies who according to the HRBP "*they don't talk to each other*" and operated in silos as already stated above.

5.6.1.6 Digitisation

Civico's company documents emphasized its need to improve its policy skills and fill serious gaps in digital and project management capability. This was because having better data management information not only enabled efficiency, transparency and speed in decision making but also facilitated the talent resourcing process which appeared very cluttered, unclear and unreliable. This picture was expressed in extracts from interview data:

"We do not have a sophisticated system on TM. Everything is all in my hands i.e. spreadsheets and so on…so I am building a picture of the SCVSs'. We have 160 SS 1 and 40 SS2 so I have got 200 people to work my way through... so each department has its own talent management. And they identify talent in the department and they are 'supposed' to feed that information through to the professions and the central TM group at the centre" (HRBP).

From the above extract, lapses in the talent identification process occurred and the process was not standardised since each department did its own thing. In addition, not having a systematic digital collation of data which was completed by one person raises questions about reliability.

5.6.2 External Pressures
This section presents findings on external pressures affecting talent identification in Civico.

5.6.2.1 Environmental:

Company document on reform plans report the need for change in Civico due to the uncertainties of environmental challenges. One of these challenges included the effects of the economic downturn from 2008 on the UK economy resulting in current high consumer expectations and huge demographic change due to an aging and growing population which has highly impacted government spending and led to reform in public services such as health, education and welfare. These challenges are synonymous with those accounting for the speedy growth of TM whereby organisations realised the need to be environmentally aware and respond strategically, in order to survive, achieve organisational goals and remain relevant (Cappelli & Keller, 2014; CIPD, 2007). Some authors contend that TM also accounts for the growing demand for change in the public sector (Devine & Powell, 2008, p. 2) as TM is seen as a change agent and strategy used for organisational. For example, change of reforms by the government. TM can influence an organisation's culture, leadership style and specialist/ management capabilities as evidenced in findings from this case study.

5.6.2.2 Service delivery to public:

Secondly, there was a need for better efficiency in service delivery to the public as well as improved productivity as assessments conducted by Civico detailed in the reform plan manual revealed that Civico's productivity with the private sector was 30% less than that of the private sector. Company documents articulated the need for Civico to catch up with the age of technology as government bodies lagged far behind which placed some major demands on Civico.

5.6.2.3 Public vs Private Sector competition

Further information from the reform plan manual revealed Civico's interest in closing up the barriers between itself and the private sector to "encourage learning between the two and greater interchange of people and ideas to narrow the cultural gap". Civico therefore sought to adapt HRM processes which were thought to be successful in the private sector through partnerships and exchanging high potential employees on secondments and training programs where Civico employees could be trained alongside private sector employees. This process of imitating practices and culture in the private sector has been in the public sector agenda since the 1980s (Rhodes, 1992; Audit Commission, 1985) and enunciates the ever (r)evolving but seemingly inconclusive drive for change in the public sector till date as referenced in the next section. It is also representative of the institutional process of legitimization and competition which according to Nicholson et al. (1995, p. 240) shape organisational behaviour.

5.6.2.4 Governmental Pressures:

The Civico reform plan was initiated by the UK government as referenced in this quote:

"Change must start at the top. Successful reform will require firm political and corporate leadership across the Civico. The Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister have signalled their strong support for the modernisation and reform of the Civico and the Minister for the Cabinet Office has direct Ministerial responsibility for the program" (reform plan manual).

This was the purpose for leadership development and ensuing governmental pressures on Civico departments and professions to identify talent for deployment across professions and central government departments but at the same time, retain talent in departments to prevent departmental underperformance whilst trying to figure who was most suitable for deployment and for the department. This governmental pressure on Civico TM processes

appeared to create barriers and 'confusion' in the talent identification process as inferred in the following extract:

"We are now creating new talent pools and new talent schemes which will involve deploying them to work in different pieces of work in diff government departments... what I am finding at the moment is a tricky situation, which is trying to identify the best of the most talented, to try to help line managers, but in a land where you have individual department needing to look at its own talent and what it does for them, professions who want to look across departments and then a central government scheme which is looking at taking people away and giving them roles across the government. That is a lot of work and it can be confusing for either individual or management to work out what is the best thing for someone who might be sat on a top line of potential that is where do they want their career to go? Do they want to stay in their profession and therefore more suited to do talent activity in their profession or do they want to stay in Civico which means they might want to be involved in talent activity across departments or do they want to have 'true potential' to go far and wide and so more likely that one of the cross government schemes may be better for them. So it seems a little bit confusing now since a lot of interests from various angles in the talent schemes" (Head of Talent Resourcing).

The confusion presented in the above extract is symbolic of the outcomes of coercive institutional pressures which 'can be cross-cutting and result in conflicts" (Nicholson et al., 1995, p. 240) as depicted here. Having 'true potential' suggests accelerated career progression for employees on deployment across central government implying again organisational politics at work in this process. More so since it does appear that decision making for talented employees was effected without their involvement as no mention is made about conversing with them on this matter, confirming Thunnissen et al.'s (2013) findings that TM approaches mainly represent a classic top-bottom management approach with little leeway for employee involvement or employee agency.

5.7 MANAGEMENT OF CHALLENGES TO PROMOTE RELIABILITY

This section shown how Civico managed the challenges highlighted in section 5.6.

5.7.1 Leadership Accountability

For the management of poor leadership, the reform plan emphasised holding leadership more accountable. For example, the information from Civico company documents made reference to the roles of departmental heads such as Permanent Secretaries and reporting lines being made clearer to facilitate and sharpen accountability for implementation. Other plans included creating a dynamic and flexible career path. The co-ordination of staff surveys was indicative of Civico's measure to engage more with staff and provide a forum for them to 'challenge the status quo' while suggesting ways to improve services which by implication will include resolving employees' issues with line management. The Human Resource Business Partner explained that she was trying to put together a guide on what

success means to guide assessments and many interviewees talked about guidelines being provided to managers to clarify assessment ratings.

5.7.2 Standardized Processes

Balancing out recognition of staff in operations delivery with those in policy to improve capability across departments and professions was introduced through criteria and common standards for promotion. The standards stated firstly that senior roles can only be attained through working across departments or central government or in more than one type of role as evidenced in the eligibility criteria for entry into the High Potential Development Scheme for Deputy Directors and Directors in section 5.3. Secondly all departmental senior leaders were expected to have exposure and experience outside policy development and policy implementation. Finally, evidence of broader work experience was required as part of promotion to director level and above.   Additionally, there was a new competency framework which focused on behaviours and skills to support innovation and outcome based culture to promote continuous high standards in recruitment, promotion and performance management across Civico.
Actively managing the FAST Stream and other high performers and the Senior Civil Service (SCS) as a government wide corporate talent pool by expanding accelerated development programs and introducing a single common standard for promotion into the SCS, was another way of managing performance and capability.

5.7.3 Culture and behaviours

To organisational culture and behaviours, Civico focused on creating an environment that encourages innovation and where employees were able to challenge the status quo by suggesting ways to improve productivity and reduce costs. The expectation was that having such an environment would enable talent to position themselves for recognition through their recommendations to senior management. This was made possible through the creation of a website for employee feedback called 'TELL US HOW'. Another important aspect included Civico's partnering with private sector organisations to enable talent exchanges between the two sectors for Civico talent to learn how they manage change and improve efficiency. However, company documents showed that eligible employees had to source their own placements as there was a fear in Civico that high potentials who go on secondment and exchanges would not want to return to Civico. So it would appear this strategy was prone to failure as a result since it is implied that there is lack of managerial support as evidenced

from the findings. For the management of the hierarchical structures there was also the plan to change the hierarchical structure to be flatter and no more than eight management tiers and less focus on whether people are the right grade for the job and more on whether they are the right people to do it.

5.7.4 Proactive Talent Planning

Civico's management of challenges with capability building, performance management was to identify key posts that would benefit from greater stability and tenure in order to retain a more stable cohort so as to balance and prioritise the needs of the organisation. This process comprised a five year capability plan which included identifying the skills Civico would need in this period to face its' future challenges, and plans on how skill gaps will be filled both through external and internal recruitment and development. Some of the key skills identified as a result of this process was commercial and contracting skills, leading and managing change, financial, programme and project management, digital skills, skills in managing risk and drive continuous improvement. This plan also included boosting the importance of the role of the Heads of Professions in raising standards, departmental appointments, succession planning and TM. The HRBP mentioned how she set up a 'tax profession' in line with this plan to enable the identification of professionals for this specialist area.

A statement indicating Civico's mind-set of building capability and doing away with the 'anything goes' mentality from the corporate document is

"The whole idea of a Civico "generalist" is dead – everyone needs the right combination of professionalism, expert skills and subject matter expertise, are used for recruitment, promotion and performance management across Civico"… Capability and talent will need to be managed and deployed corporately across the Civico especially high potential and senior officials including specialist professionals" (reform plan manual).

This process was however still in its birthing phase and still required more development and time for implementation.

Another approach to managing capability and performance required talented employees being more proactive and self-driven regarding their development as this was one of the recommendations to a demotivated talent pool member from the Head of Talent resourcing. He recommended that high potential employees needed to initiate career conversations rather than waiting for their managers to call for one as this was the best way to prevent underperformance and removal in the talent pool. This recommendation aligns with the

recent practices in talent development of self –directed learning where individuals make informed choice concerning their development (Garavan et al., 2012).

5.8 EMERGING THEMES

Line management power: Though this theme is addressed broadly in the HRM literature it was still a surprising find as the researcher expected to find a fairer and collaborative decision making process in a public sector organisation based on issues raised in the literature about line managers being often reluctant to identify their best people as "high potential" for fear of losing them to another department (McDonnell & Collings, 2010; McCall, 1998).

Talent pool members' reactions to Exclusive Talent Approach: This was another surprising find as the expectation was that talent pool members would be elated and highly motivated at being identified as talent with reference to Gelens (2013; 2014) research on organisational justice. The reverse was the case except in the case of the deputy director who appeared quite content. Other talent pool members expressed frustration at the process of identification stating it was biased, subjective, dishonest and unfair amongst others and this point is of importance because while the TM literature only discusses the injustice and unfairness of an exclusive talent approach in relation to non-talented employees, the reverse is the case here as there appeared to be discriminatory practices amongst the identified pool of talent due to organisational politics due to long complex identification processes and secrecy in selection.

Balance & Stability: It would appear as if there was a silent appeal for balance and stability in Civico as this was a recurring theme verbalised by both management and talent pool and implied through the inconsistencies in practices, lopsided talent pool membership, diverse interpretations of talent by managers not to talk of the many changes and pressures running through the organisation at the same time as well as balancing organisational and individual goals for talent retention. The Head of Talent Resource and two talent pool members used words like 'struggle', 'difficult' 'tricky', 'confusing' to describe the talent processes meaning that TM processes were disorganised and required order and stability for it to make meaning and achieve its outcomes.

Timing of employee identification: The seniority of the four participants ranged between 6 years to 30 years. This meant that timing of identification was not based on seniority but

could be as a result of many factors including being in the required targeted job grade and successfully assessed as high potential and performer, meeting eligibility criteria such as being visible and having good networks of relationships with very senior managers as well as with the line manager in addition to having an element of luck.

TM as a change agent: It appeared that TM was instituted as a change agent in Civico as it was central to Civico's reform plan for building organisational capability, efficiency and leadership and branding. TM's recognition here is indicative of its progress and development in the strategic management field and its' contribution to business management and organisational strategy which is essential to legitimizing TM's credibility both academically and in practice (Collings et al., 2015).

5.9 SUMMARY

This chapter presented and discussed the findings from Civico and emerging themes from the case study. Findings reveal that Civico adopted an exclusive talent approach focused on targeted grades talented employees being classified as 'emerging talent', 'talented' super talented' and the professionals. However, exclusivity was biased towards deputy director and director positions. Of importance was the use of 9 box grid standardised assessment tool for the measurement of potential and for identifying talent. Challenges ensuing from its use were found to be more with the implementation processes which were highly politicized and undermined the reliability of the 9 box grid, than with the tool itself. Factors and management of challenges affecting talent identification were mostly supportive of themes found in the TM literature with the challenges being more institutional. Some emerging themes were presented which extend TM knowledge in these areas. Key findings include contribution of new perspectives of talent (talent as object) defining talent as 'people who are inclusive' and talent being the 'art of the conversation'. The next chapter presents the findings and discussion of TM in Local government.

CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS AND WITHIN CASE ANALYSIS OF LOCGOV

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a within case analysis of the second public sector organisation, Locgov. The analysis includes both the discussion of and presentation of the findings from this case study following the structure of the research questions presented in chapter 1, section 1.3. This chapter is sub divided into the following sections. Section 6.1 introduces the chapter while section 6.2 presents the case setting. Section 6.3 introduces the empirical findings section with section, discussing the findings on the meaning of talent in Locgov. Section 6.4 presents the findings of the TM driver in Locgov while section 6.5 focuses on the meaning of TM in Locgov while section 6.6 describes Locgov's talent development schemes. Section 6.7 presents and discusses the findings on Locgov's criteria for talent identification, looking at talent identification processes, while section and 6.8 focused on the factors and challenges affecting talent identification and the reliability of its processes respectively. Section 6.9 presents the management of challenges with talent identification and section 6.10 presents the emerging themes from the findings while section 6.11 summarises the chapter.

6.2 CASE STUDY SETTING

Founded in 1974, Locgov is one of the biggest city councils in the UK which has existed for over five decades and with an employee population of about 33,000. Its responsibilities include the management of education, highways, transport planning, passenger transport, social care, housing, libraries, leisure and recreation, environmental health, waste collection, waste disposal, planning applications, strategic planning and local taxation collection.

One of the major influences on the development in the city council was the appointment of its CEO whose vision was to position Locgov as the best UK city after London. A major part of this vision entailed the diversification of Locgov's workforce so that it was representative of the communities at senior management level. Due to national budget cuts and reviews and the impact of reducing costs on staffing in Locgov, there was a drive for forward planning including workforce planning as 31% of the workforce were aged 50 and above. As a result, a talent management program was initiated for the purpose of leadership development and succession planning. Locgov had been running its main talent

management program called 'Step up to Leadership' for about two years at the time of this study though there was an 'Emerging Leaders' program and Graduate scheme. This study's focus and discussions were primarily about the 'Step up to Leadership' talent program (see sections 6.6 -7 below, pg. 139 - 144) and its cohorts, though references were made to the other two talent programs (Emerging Talent program and the Graduate scheme) and their alignment with the talent program. Locgov adopted traditional processes of identification and selection which involved applications by potential talent employees in targeted Senior and Principal Officer Grades. These employees had to be nominated and sponsored by their line managers, then had to be successful in interviews before progression into Locgov's talent pool. Targeted grades were senior and Principal Officers.

The eight interviews for this case study were held between November 2014 and January 2015, firstly with the Organisational Development Manager (ODM) who was in charge of their TM process and who acted as a gate keeper and referred the seven other participants from the talent pool. These members comprised a team leader from the legal department (TML), an engineer from transportation department (talent pool member 077), senior service performance manager (talent pool member 076), HR & Recruitment Administrative manager (talent pool member 072), Principal Service Manager (talent pool member 075), Young People's progress manager (talent pool member 074), and a project manager (talent pool member 071) (see Table 3, section 4.3.3 pg. 88). Disclosure of the location of this case study is witheld in line with participant confidentiality.

6.3 THE MEANING OF TALENT IN LOCGOV

In Locgov, talent referred to identified employees with potential to fill senior roles on targeted senior officer (SO2) and Principal Officer (PO6) job grades with an additional focus on identifying talent from underrepresented employees in these job grades. Only employees in these job groups were eligible for applying for leadership development programs and made up the talent pool. Excerpts from the leadership development program documentation expressed this in the following way:

"The target audience is anyone at SO2 up to PO6 grades, in particular those individuals who demonstrate potential for future senior roles…in particular those with equality characteristics who are underrepresented at senior levels and above..."

Other descriptions of talent in Locgov as portrayed by the ODM are:

"First and foremost it is about somebody demonstrating that they live the behaviours that we want and the values. This is the most important thing for our chief exec and that our managers live the values. The second thing is that we are looking for people who have in some way demonstrated to what they are doing currently a real commitment to the organisation and to lead. It doesn't mean somebody who's got long service necessarily. I suppose how you can classify it is people who have gone above and beyond the day job. So they might have a day job and they might be a school governor, they might have a day job and might be volunteer in a day centre, they might have a day job and they might support somebody with their reading in school, or they mentor a school leaver, they do something other than just turning up for work and doing a 9 to 5"…

"Our chief executive is interested in the council being smaller in size but bigger in influence. And he wants senior leaders of the future to be able to build relationships and build networks and be influential. So we are looking for people to demonstrate those skills …"

While the first quote conforms to the normal exclusive talent approach focus regarding potential employees to occupy senior roles, the other quotes convey other themes emphasizing the involvement and influence of Locgov's CEO on the TM programs to drive its success and someone who symbolises change in Locgov through TM initiatives. This supports opinions in the literature about the need for top leaders' involvement in ensuring success of TM initiatives in their role in building and sustaining talent is critical ((Hughes & Rog, 2008; Joyce and Slocum, 2012). Secondly, aligning criteria for selection as talent with those employees who are involved in service to their community, inferring CSR initiatives, shows Locgov's recognition of responding to pressures to be seen as a responsible business that serves its communities and supporting arguments in the TM field for organisations to strive for societal goal of sustainability (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2005).

6.4 LOCGOV TM DRIVER

Information from the manger's brief about Locgov's step up to leadership development program explained that governmental budget cuts demanded creative and forward thinking in Locgov's approach to funding projects as they had to use less to achieve same or better efficient services to the public over a 3-5 year period. This created the need to develop future leaders who

"…understand civic entrepreneurship, can work and build effective relationships with partners and who have the ability to fully engage and motivate staff in times of change" (Locgov 'Step-up to leadership' manager's brief).

Additionally, having a mature workforce which authors concur is consistent with that of most public sector organisations (Devine & Powell, 2008) with 31 % aged over 50, and a workforce profile that was neither diverse nor representative of the local community including the underrepresentation of women, BME and disabled employees at the senior level in addition to a mass exit of very senior management, was a challenge for Locgov and placed pressure on having a TM program as they required to fill up these roles. These drivers were indicative of TM's role in Locgov as a problem solving strategy for driving its performance and survival.

6.5 TALAENT MANAGEMENT IN LOCGOV

Talent Management was specifically about identifying key positions and leadership potential including leadership potential from diverse backgrounds within the targeted job grades (senior officers) i.e. SO2 up to PO6 grades. It also encompassed developing and retaining senior leadership potential in a talent pool for succession planning as there was a mass exit of very senior leaders from Locgov at the time of this study. Workforce planning also formed part of the TM strategy, a result being that the demand for successors for the positions of these senior leadership was high and a critical factor for Locgov's TM initiatives. Information in Locgov's step up to leadership manager's brief report describes it this way:

"Although the focus of succession planning and TM tends to be on key positions, all employees should be encouraged to have learning and development. However, detailed analysis of key positions and target areas may suggest tailored developmental programs for certain areas".

Additionally, Locgov's TM included identifying skills gaps to enable proper workforce planning and the skill gaps identified included understanding civic entrepreneurship, building effective relationships with partners, and employee engagement and motivation and leading change.

Considering that the purpose for identifying talent was about leadership development, the following sections describe Locgov's talent development programs and criteria for selection.

6.6 Table 8: LOCGOV TALENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Name of Scheme	Purpose	Duration
Step Up to Leadership	To develop an internal pool of talent to fill senior roles	Not specified
Emerging Leaders	Networking Program for identified and potential Leaders	Ongoing
Graduate	To attract Young talent into Locgov to create a more diverse rather than mature workforce	2 years

6.7 CRITERIA FOR TALENT IDENTIFICATION IN LOCGOV

Apart from having a strong 300 word statement of support from their line managers, the following criteria for selection and eligibility to apply for talent programmes applied:

1) A demonstration of genuine interest in their career advancement with Locgov.
2) Participation in Locgov's management development opportunities such as the emerging Leaders network.
3) Presently a leader of a team or project either within or in an outside Locgov setting e.g. with a voluntary organisation.
4) Ability to demonstrate appropriate behaviours in the workplace and successfully meeting both work and development objectives.

6.7.1 Talent Identification Process

Locgov's talent identification process is presented in Figure 6.1 below and detailed discussions of the processes are presented in the subsections below..
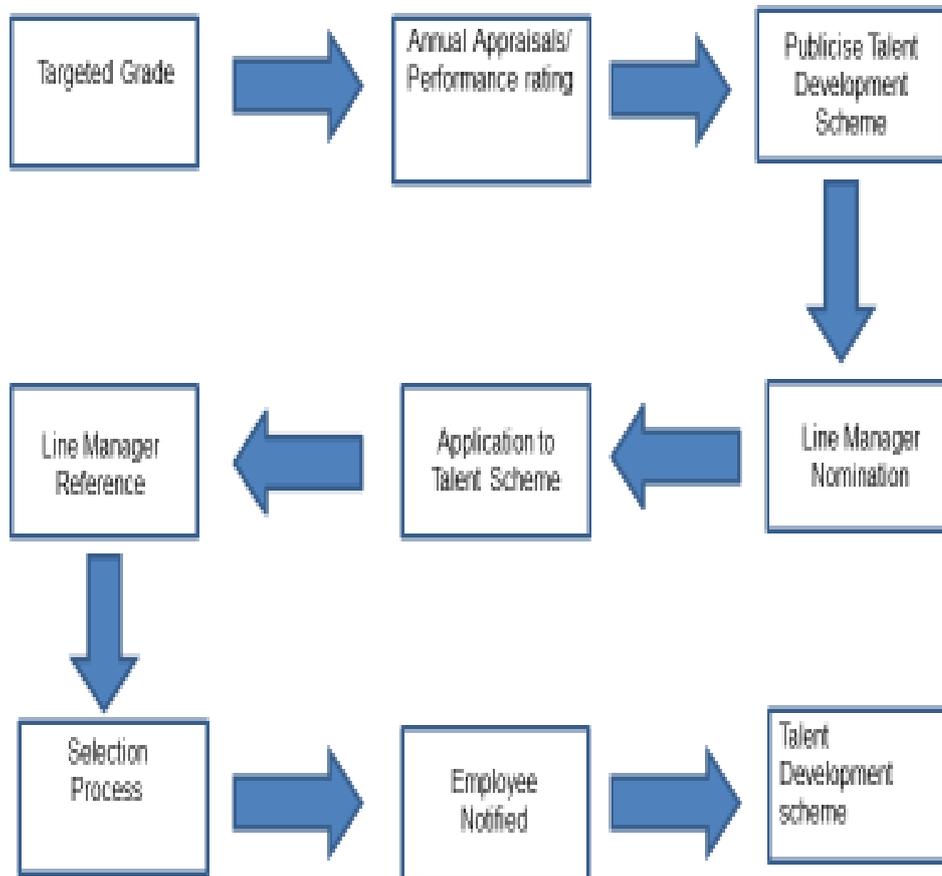
Figure 6.1: Locgov Talent Identification Processes

6.7.2 Grading Structure

The grading structure of Locgov is presented below with targeted grades for talent identification in bold:

AO (Admin Officer) entry level →EO (officer grade) →HO (Higher Officer) →**SO (Senior officer)** →**PO(Principal Officer)** → Civil Service grading & above.

Interviewees from Locgov's talent pool were within job grades SO2 to PO6.

6.7.3 Appraisals

These were ad-hoc in practice and appeared not to be favourable with employees as reflected in their comments below:

''It has no impact, no teeth, it has no money attached to it no promotion attached to it and no credit. If you have a good or bad appraisal, it makes no difference and there's no change so what's the point… but the adverse effect is that it does not encourage those who are good at their job to recognise them'….(talent pool member 076).

''We use sort of the appraisal process, we are not fully there with our performance management but we do know you know people who are getting through''… (Talent pool member, 072).

''Appraisals are more about conformance than performance'' (Talent pool member, Team Leader).

As inferred from the above extracts, the purpose of performance was unclear as was its effect on employee progression, and referencing the criteria for selection (section 6.7), there was no mention of performance rating being part of the requirement for identification. Thus supporting views in the HRM literature about the ineffectiveness of the performance appraisals for organisational or individual performance improvement (Kondrasuk, 2012; Swailes, 2013).

6.7.4 Publication of Talent Schemes

According to the step up to leadership HRLT tools report, Locgov's talent schemes were published by email through the emerging leaders' network channels and also through BME groups and were also emailed to management cadre employees for dissemination to their staff. Some of the interviewees confirmed awareness of the programs through these networks but others only got to know through their line managers and expressed dissatisfaction with the process as many of their colleagues in other directorates were not aware and so could not apply to the schemes as indicated below:

"My line manager found out about it. And I have to say I owe it to her because I have met other people asked how on earth did you get on that? And I have to say my line manager nominated me and they hadn't heard about it at all. So I think it was a bit random how people got to know about it and I think I was lucky that my manager was alert to it. And as a person, I think she has got, we have got a very strong commitment to developing the staff. Immediately she saw it she thought, this will suit me and I think she was right… (Talent pool member, 0074)"

"The application form was sent out through the email box …" (Talent pool member, 0076)... "They advertised on the council intranet so I applied for it"… (0073).

"There was the usual communication system GRO which is our internal communication mechanism and it was cascaded to the management team with a brief. We used the normal communication method and cascading through the teams and promoting directly to the staff networks" (OD, 0078).

All interviewees were able to provide copies to the researcher of all the application documents and the detailed written brief about the development scheme sent by the HR leadership team (HRLT) which they received from their line managers in order to apply to the researcher. These documents clearly exemplified the purpose, process and outcomes for a talent program, its boundaries i.e. what it does not guarantee (e.g. automatic promotion into senior roles) but clearly stated the criteria for selection and provided detailed descriptions of expected leadership behaviours in alignment with the values of Locgov (See Appendix 1.10). As a result, interviewees communicated this in their responses as to why they were selected:

"Well I have been selected for the step up to leadership which is how you got my name this time that program in itself is about identifying leaders. That program is specifically about to address the imbalances in our senior management team to reflect the population of the city so that we've got all women in there, the younger people in there and ethnic minorities in there and so on because at the moment I think it is pretty unrepresented in those areas. As far as I am concerned, I was identified by my manager as somebody that would be eligible and considered for that because I am in my 50s and a woman. I suppose that was where she I thought I fit and because she thought I had the qualities to take forward to senior management" (Talent pool member 0075).

While the dissemination of information through managers and diverse networks was good as it indicated an organisational attempt to reach as many employees as possible, it was not effective for reaching all employees with potential due to managers' biases as stated by the interviewees and as a result, created barriers to effective talent identification as it portrays identification being based on luck and not merit.

6.7.4.1 The Emerging Leaders Network

It is important to present findings about this network since it was one of the channels for communicating with employees about talent programs. The Emerging Leaders' network was different to the leadership development program and was set up before it. However one of the criteria for applying for leadership scheme was that employees had to be a member of this network. Findings indicated prominent issues about the difference between this network

and the Step up program which demanded organisational clarification as both management and staff expressed this when talking about this network and its processes.

"Yes it is completely different and I think having that is not helpful and if I am being absolutely honest, it should be somebody's pet's project. And I do not think it helps with succession planning because it is open to anybody and the evidence is that actually there is limited evidence that a lot of people attending the emerging leaders program have the ability or potential to be a senior leader. Cos we have quite a few emerging leaders applying last year who didn't get through and they were quite annoyed about that but they didn't evidence it or demonstrate what we were looking for even at the first stage of the process. So it is not helpful at all having the two... There is no process to it there's no thinking to it as to whether this person is delivering as to the appraisal objective or has potential"… We are being careful about raising people's hopes which is why I am concerned about the emerging leaders' program" (ODM, 0078).

"Yes I am in the Emerging Leaders Network and also in the emerging leaders working group. What happened is in May 2012, the council developed this emerging leaders network so what they did was to ask for managers to nominate their staff whom they felt were demonstrating any leadership qualities. There was an event in May, there was a criteria as well. I think we had to fill in a form and asked to nominate staff and then they got selected to attend. And then for some staff they got their through some of the networks because I am part of the BME or was previously part of the BME network group. And we got the email through that process you see to be part of that group. So everybody who attended that session and then following that session, they said that these emerging leaders there was going to be a network and they said that then these identified people will get access to corporate information or some sort of information for people who could potentially be emerging leaders. As part of that process they asked for staff to develop like a mentoring scheme so that staff could put themselves forward to be mentored or to indicate if they want to be a mentor (talent pool member 0071)".

Further observations indicated that the Emerging Leaders network was a preliminary program set up to create awareness of Locgov's drive to develop leaders and a forum for the CEO and similar top leaders to engage with potential organisational leaders on topical matters about the council as well as organising networking events to empower senior officers and management about decision making and general information about Locgov. Other emergent themes arising from the purpose of this network include Locgov's focus on a diverse leadership team which is an area where research is still scarce in TM (Festing et al., 2015) though many initiatives are said to be prevalent in TM practices globally (Stahl, 2007).

6.7.5 Nomination & Applications.

All interviewees reported being nominated by their line managers for the 'step up to leadership' program as was the requirement given in the policy document and there was a unified understanding of the process and requirement for applying. However this apparent positivity was impaired by some of the issues highlighted in some of their comments about the process below. There also appeared to be some issues about the emerging leaders' network which appeared to be a grey area for both management and talent pool members.

…" but the only problem I can foresee with the program is that the step up one, you have to put up an application and your manager has to support it. What if they are not willing to, where does that leave you. I am lucky but just think,that would be awful. So it shouldn't be down to them. You should be able to send an application in and the panel should sort it. Just imagine if you do not have a good relationship with your manager, it could stunt your growth (talent pool member 0077)"

"What we are obliged to do before the file is submitted to myself was that each leadership team reviewed all the applications individually. But I am not sure they all did that if I am absolutely honest and there was a bit of manager's promoting their favourites" … "Or if we kind or you know our HR colleagues usually know what's going on if somebody is not performing. You know if we had a feeling that we are not sure about that person, then we could do some checking. Now the other way round is what if somebody got 'logged'' blocked? Em, I don't know if I would necessary know about that because it would have been blocked before it got into our inbox. But One of the way we tried to get as wide or broaden the pool of applicants was to actually target our diversity forums we have a women's forum, a disabled staff network so we promoted it to them so that went really well. In that there is the view that when somebody has a disability I think there is sometime a view from their manager that they are not able to or don't want to do a more senior job and that's not the case and in the end we did have two people with a disability on the program this time round". (ODM, 0078).

The above quotes illustrate some of the biases associated with selection processes and which inhibit reliability of the talent identification processes. Recognition of these challenges by the ODM, however, implies the possibility of these issues being addressed and will be discussed in the management of challenges section of this study.

6.7.6 Selection Process/ Decision Making

The selection process was conducted by a group of senior colleagues and external agents. Information provided in the step-up to leadership manager's brief, stated that "*applications will be considered by an appropriate group which will consist of senior colleagues i.e. Chief Officers, Senior HR colleagues from across directorates and members of the HR Strategy team*". However, the ODM mentioned that they had to work with external agents for shortlisting some of the applications to promote credibility of the process:

"we then took about 97 applications to an independent group and by independent we had a chief officer of HR, two external people from outside the council, one from the private sector and the other from the voluntary sector and the Head of Service from the council supported by myself and a colleague to sift that 90 and kind of pick out the stand out people from that" (ODM 0078).

6.8 FACTORS AFFECTING TALENT IDENTIFICATION IN LOCGOV

6.8.1 Internal Pressures

Factors/challenges affecting the identification of talent have been classified into internal and external pressures and presented below.

6.8.1.1 Poor leadership

<u>Managing and Leading change</u>: Just as in Civico, potential talent pool members in Locgov were unaware of talent programs because their managers either did not respond to communication about briefings on talent programs or 'buy in' to the changes concerning talent identification within Locgov and so did not inform their staff about these programs or the application processes. A talent pool participant explained that there seemed to be a 'disconnect' between those at the top and those in the talent pool as his manager wouldn't allow him attend development events. The OD manager explained this aspect of leadership as one of Locgov's greatest challenges.

"it is because we are trying to do something different and whenever you are trying to do something different you meet with challenges don't you".... among that 2 and half thousand managers, there are some very good people in that group and as I say I think we need to use people who are on the 'right wave length', to actually promote what we are doing rather than them coming out of HR, so use people who are good 'to sell the message' on our behalf... Our chief executive is actually a product of the civil service Fast track program. He gets it. Not everybody does (ODM, 0078).

6.8.1.2 Lack of support for talent

There was evidence of poor support for talent as interviewees stated that there was a cultural reluctance to say that one employee was more talented than the other and one talent pool participant stated that being identified was based on whether you have been noticed by management and that it all depends on the belief of the manager. The ODM explained that managers were culturally focused on seniority or long service rather than potential or performance:

"So it doesn't matter if you have been any good sometimes it feels like if you have been here long enough then it is your turn".

A talent pool member expressed similar sentiments which not only buttressed this lack of managerial support and its impact on talented employees but also emphasised need for organisational action in this area:

"...the fact that there are many people in the organisation who feel they need that opportunity to get ahead demands some internal management response. Because how come so many people feel they need that kind of program to progress. I felt the same as well because I applied because I thought I was not going to get anywhere in this organisation through normal succession planning or performance management. It's okay doing a great job but actually what does it translate into? You get great managers, you get good managers and you have to deal with the hand that you are played that

you are dealt really. And if the hand isn't ideal, then you have to look for other ways to make your mark and raise your profile".

The last sentence infers that poor managerial support drives the use of impression management tactics by talented employees for career progression as portrayed in the case of the talent pool member in Civico (see section 5.6.1.1.5).

6.8.1.3 Career Management

There appeared to be challenges in this area as the ODM talked about the need to develop managers on how to have conversations to encourage discussions with employees about their future prospects and a talent pool member explained that the management needed to do more in this area as there was no concrete process.

"For the managers, we are about to start a comprehensive manager development program for the two and half thousand managers across the council. A big bit about that is what we call, I don't know what we are calling it but it is about the conversations, conversations can be in a formal way, in form of an appraisal, a one-to one or a coaching conversation. I think it is about trying to encourage managers to have a conversation at appraisal time to find out where an individual sees themselves in the future" (ODM).

"A few years ago, I think you had to push yourself and find opportunities. I went to one seminar and a director turned round and said that sometimes the best way to develop yourself is to leave and come back. I think with the step up program coming up, the last three years have been better than 4 years before. I think it is a mix of both, as an employee has to recognise that they want a bit more and aspire for more and management have to do more to encourage us to do more" (Talent pool member 0073).

While the first quote shows the need for managerial competence and responsibility on managing the careers of talented employees, the second supports views in the literature (Garavan, 2012) about the responsibility to plan and effect development activities shifting to the individual making informed choices about their future.

6.8.1.4 Lack of Transparency

Since most of the information about talent schemes were dispatched through line managers, the tendency for this information not to reach relevant employees was high where managers were either ignorant or not alert to on goings in the organisation and/or not present at meetings or did not internalise the changes regarding talent identification as previously touched upon in other sections of this study (see quote below). There was inefficiency however in the mode of disseminating this information as it could have been sent to all

employees within the targeted job grades for more reachability with proper planning. Again this last point references the issues raised in Civico about the organisation being more focused on processes and not outcomes, suggesting that this may be a generic behaviour in public sector organisations.

"My line manager found out about it. And I have to say I owe it to her because I have met other people asked how on earth did you get on that? And I have to say my line manager nominated me and they hadn't heard about it at all. So I think it was a bit random how people got to know about it and I think I was lucky that my manager was alert to it" (talent pool member, 0074).

6.8.1.5 Performance Management / Capability building

The step-up to leadership manager's brief reported a need to identify skills gaps and anticipate movement of retirees in the next few years to plan for filling up these targeted positions in order to sustain individual and organisational performance. Some of the skills identified as already indicated were civic entrepreneurship, working in and building effective relationships with partners, staff engagement and motivations and leading change. As previously stated, there was mass exit but senior leaders were exiting at different times. It was important for managers to be aware and workforce planning was vital for optimum performance but this was still a challenge as expressed by the ODM:

"The biggest challenge is managers not engaging in proper workforce planning. It's a bit of a hit and miss. So you'll get a good manager who does it and for everyone one who does, you will get 3, 4, 5, that don't. It's not consistent that's probably what I am saying… And where we know there's going to be gaps because of people going on an early leavers program and that sort of thing, so I think we might just look at that again and really encourage managers to think about it within the context of their own workforce planning..."

There was also the need for better employee performance management as appraisals lacked credibility as discussed in other sections.

6.8.1.6 Balance: Inconsistencies and Irregularities in staff recognition

As in Civico, the make- up of Locgov's talent pool was not balanced as there appeared to be more employees from directorates whose managers were more enlightened and who responded to invitations from the TM team to make presentations to their team. "There was an invite where everyone was asked to put time on their agendas for myself and my colleague to come and talk to them but not everybody took that up but those two senior leadership teams where I did go and explained what we were trying to achieve etcetera etcetera we had more applications" (ODM 0078).

6.8.1.7 Retention/High Turnover

There was and about to be a high turnover of senior leaders in Locgov as reflected in the statement below.

"...but as I speak, we have about 1100 people who are in quite senior positions who have indicated that they want to use our early leavers' program as a way of exiting the organisation….(ODM).

This event marked a turning point for Locgov's talent identification strategy in diverse ways such as initiating the Step-up to leadership program to enable identification of successors from within the organisation rather than having a replacement strategy and this was a way of also retaining Locgov's best talent. The Early Leavers' program also enabled Locgov identify key positions and future roles to be filled to enable planning to minimise high turnover.

6.8.1.8 Culture

Referencing the challenges discussed above and similar to Civico, what is obvious is that the challenges to talent identification and its reliability were linked with Locgov's culture. From a resistance to change mind-set among managers, their incompetence in career and performance management to prejudices concerning a diverse workforce as well as bureaucratic processes all equate to culture and organisational behaviour. This is reflected in the following remarks from the OD manager:

"The second thing I will say is there is a bit of a cultural reluctance to suggest that one person has potential and somebody else doesn't. So that is a bit of a blocker. But that is not to say that is every manager in every service. It does seem to be a stronger culture in some areas than others…There's Again, I think this is a cultural thing, I think there is a view that you have to have served lots of years in the authority to get to some position. So it doesn't matter if you have been any good sometimes it feels like if you have been here long enough then it is your turn…In that there is the view that when somebody has a disability I think there is sometime a view from their manager that they are not able to or don't want to do a more senior job and that's not the case and in the end we did have two people with a disability on the program this time round. I think we are quite clear on what we want to do but we just can't make it happen at the minute and about why it has been stalled about allowing people to leave, I don't know. That bit of the process seems to be ridiculously bureaucratic and everything seems to just stall. So once that start going a bit which I think should be from this march onward because a lot of people are going this march, then I think we should see some movement".

6.8.1.9 Digitisation

Though this was not an apparent challenge as not much emphasis was given to this area in Locgov's step up to leadership manager's brief or application pack, there were still issues of inefficiency of the processes due to manual operations. For example, one of the talent pool members (0075) explained a delayed feedback for applicants after their submission as it took the decision making team time to collate all applications and manually shortlist while having to check and cross check ad-hoc historical appraisal of employees. The ODM also talked about difficulties with workforce planning as it was difficult to know who was exiting the organisation in order to plan for successors. One can relate the ineffective/inefficient publishing of the talent programs and workforce planning amongst others to this digitisation deficiency.

6.8.2 External Pressures

Similarly to Civico, there were environmental pressures to identify talent. External pressures included governmental budget cuts which demanded having talented employees to manage and appropriate funds skilfully to serve the public, while driving change in line with Locgov's policies for remaining competitive. Additionally there were environmental / societal pressures for restructuring the makeup of senior leadership in Locgov to reflect the multicultural community it served and to be a more socially responsible organisation. This was in addition to Locgov's CEO vision of branding Locgov as the best council outside London of which TM initiatives including the setting up of the graduate scheme and inclusion of underrepresented talent from a diverse group were all plans for achieving this vision and for attracting young talent.

6.9 MANAGEMENT OF CHALLENGES TO PROMOTE RELIABILITY

6.9.1 Managing external Pressures

One of the ways Locgov managed its external pressures was by initiating their Step up to Leadership development program and identifying talent for this program who could become successors to the exiting senior leaders of Locgov. Locgov also incorporated a policy of inclusion and diversity in its talent identification process to ensure that the talent pool was diverse and representative demonstrating corporate citizenship and social responsible organisation. These initiatives were symbolic for achieving competitive advantage and making it one of the best councils outside London in line with its corporate vision.

6.9.2 Internal Pressures

6.9.2.1 Management of Poor leadership

For leading change, Locgov appointed managers who understood the vision of the TM policy and what Locgov was trying to achieve by it to promote its message to other management teams rather than having the HR team do this. The expectation was that having likeminded employees communicating the message would have more impact. In addition, the ODM stated that she had a 'PR' campaign where she met directly with several directorates for briefings about the leadership program and many of the talent pool members voiced credibility in the program because they felt she was authentic in her approach in addition to having the CEO's backing. Also, the inclusion of a well written publication on the leadership program for all applicants which conveyed details of the selection processes, development, procedure for assessments, its expectations and boundaries as well as expected leadership behaviours and finally a description of Locgov's values defining everyone and managerial roles in achieving this sent a clear message of fairness and transparency in Locgov's approach to TM even though this message could only be seen by employees that were nominated in the targeted job grades. To manage challenges of biases regarding favouritism in the identification process, the ODM said the selection process was done outside Locgov in combination with independent assessors for more reliability.

6.9.2.2 Performance Management and Building Capability

Locgov managed this problem innovatively by firstly creating an Early Leavers Incentive' (ELI) program which encouraged senior leaders wishing to exit the organisation to indicate their intentions formally and enable proper planning for their exit. This program involved the development of formal and informal methods of capturing knowledge from senior leaders exiting the organisation by staggering timing of exit for retirees to allow time for knowledge transfer in essence capturing tacit knowledge i.e. 'talent'. Through this proactive program they were able to avoid a 'talent crash' which would have had a negative impact on organisational performance that could have led to crisis management.

Secondly, Locgov developed an infrastructure to support long-term succession and workforce planning by initiating activities to support formal performance appraisals and career conversations, sharing information and data about the workforce profile and ELI with HRBPs and line managers, aligning workforce planning to budgeting tools and service reviews to facilitate the identification of future roles. They also developed HR personnel specifically to run the development centres and provide feedback to the organisation and

individuals. Recognising the need for diverse workforce comprising both young and mature staff, Locgov initiated a graduate scheme which has also enhanced performance as reflected in the interview except below:

"We started a graduate program two years ago and so the graduates are employed in a two year fixed contract program but my expectation is that well before the end of that they would have gotten a promotion....But it has made other people sit up and take notice. And that has added another dimension to the TM program but it is bringing young people in who are energetic and hungry for quick promotion which is adding a different bit to it".

6.9.2.3 Management of organisational culture

One of the plans for managing Locgov's culture was through educating talent pool members about Locgov values and expected behaviours as described in each application package given to potential talent pool members in the targeted grade. Training and development for talent pool members also focused on these values and behaviours for creating awareness and to enable communication to their teams. The concern with this approach however relates to the level of impact on the organisation since information is only exclusive to this group of people rather than to the whole organisation. Visibility of the CEO and senior leaders was another approach for driving cultural change as they constantly engaged with employees about the leadership development program and decision makers to drive credibility in the programs and this also communicated assurance of stability. Referencing the importance of this last point, one talent pool member who was also a manager, expressed that most employees only wanted to be sure that their jobs were stable due to numerous similar changes that have happened in the recent past that achieved nothing and as a result were not interested in participating in any new initiatives. Recent studies (Stahl et al., 2007, 2012) highlight the importance of multiple owners not just HR but also CEO and managers for ensuring successful TM systems.

6.9.2.4 Management of other challenges.

Though there were no comments as to how Locgov managed the challenges of a lack of transparency, digitisation and also inconsistencies in recognising talent, the importance of having effective technology for efficiency in employee engagement, records management and decision making cannot be overemphasized in organisations. Supporting this view, Chugh & Bhatnagar (2006) contend that having a functional technology system in place enables effective and efficient decision making. This is because the data allows tracking and monitoring of an organisation's talent and their capability and promotes opportunity for thier

development and support. Another possible reason accounting for inadequate management of the challenges of inconsistencies in the make up of the talent pool, talent retention and turnover were as a result of governmental pressures through budget cuts which hindered progression of talented employees in certain departments whose services were at risk as indicated in the quote below:

"I think there is a lack of opportunity at the moment because there is a financial cut back. So there is a lack of progression. There might still be lots more opportunity to go into senior roles in the council but in the field that I am in, we provide services to people and it's likely that going forward that the council might relinquish those services and it could be that we might end up working as a co-operative or a social firm or we could be placed in the voluntary sector. Maybe if I was in Legal or if I was in commissioning or something like that, then that might not be the case" (talent pool member, 0075).

However, Locgov displayed transparency in its management of talent retention and turnover through proactive management of talented employees' expectations by formally clarifying to applicants that being chosen for talent development programs did not automatically guarantee promotion to senior roles in its leadership development application package.

6.10 EMERGENT THEMES

6.10.1 Prescriptive Proactive management of talent
Prescriptive and key findings concerning proactive TM practices identified from this case study are discussed below.

6.10.1.1 Management of risks from 'talent crash' though capturing "tacit knowledge" from exiting leaders

Locgov's proactiveness was demonstrated in their innovative management of a high turnover of senior leaders through tapping into and capturing tacit knowledge (McDonnell et al., 2007) from these resources for transfer to potential successors in order to promote the success of their TM initiatives. This approach was a divergence from the common/usual practice and response to employee turnover of resourcing talent pipelines/pools for succession planning to fill vacancies. Locgov's approach firstly, exemplifies concerns raised in the literature that 'knowledge loss resulting from employee turnover – whether through competitor headhunting, redundancies or retirements - exposes organisations to considerable risk" (Whelan & Carcary, 2011, pp. 682 -3). Secondly, Locgov's approach supports arguments for organisations to implement plans that position key knowledge workers to enhance knowledge retention and knowledge sharing alongside their TM initiatives to maximize organisational performance and competitiveness. This approach

contributes to knowledge gaps in this area as this practice has not been identified in findings from other research in the TM field even though there are calls for this type of practice in organisations in the extant literature.

6.10.2 Innovative 'Exclusive Talent' with "Inclusion add-on"

Locgov also demonstrated a prescriptive and innovative approach to TM practice concerning the exclusive talent approach with an "inclusion add-on" policy that ensured talent were sourced from amongst diverse groups such as women, the disabled and people of BME ethnicity who were underrepresented in their senior leadership team. This is an innovative approach which contributes to knowledge gaps firstly, because this is a new prescriptive approach for counteracting the negativity associated with an exclusive talent practice which some authors describe as promoting organisational injustice (Gelens et al, 2013, 2014) and also secondly because it contributes to and advances the debates about providing further meanings of inclusive and exclusive talent as 'exclusive talent' could also infer 'exclusion' of diversity (Festing et al., 2015).

6.11 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the findings from the second public sector organisation, Locgov which indicated their definitions of talent as high performance and high potential and their adoption of an exclusive talent approach focused on targeted senior officer grades for succession planning due to high turnover of exiting senior leaders as a result of both internal and external (economical and environment) pressures on the Locgov. Traditional strategies of nomination, application and interview selection were adopted for identifying talent with criteria comprising a strong application, being in an emerging leaders' network and success at interviews being criteria for selection. Challenges and their management supported the findings from the literature. Key findings which are prescriptive for practice and advance and contribute to knowledge gaps include firstly, a proactive management of employee expectations through a well-articulated application package of the intents and boundaries of Locgov's talent program for all potential talent applicants. Secondly, an innovative approach to managing employee turnover by tapping into 'tacit knowledge' of exiting leaders through combining knowledge management with TM initiatives for supporting success of Locgov's TM program. Thirdly, an innovative 'exclusive talent approach with an 'inclusion add-on' that exemplified fairness and 'organisational justice' through sourcing talent from a diverse group which were underrepresented in Locgov's senior leadership team. Fourthly, this innovative

exclusive talent approach exposes the debates about the need for clarifying the meaning of 'inclusive' and 'exclusive' talent because 'exclusive talent' could infer 'exclusion' but on the other hand, does 'inclusive talent' mean 'inclusion'. Therefore policy makers need to clarify what they mean in their conceptualisation and operationalisation of talent. The next chapter presents the findings from the health sector.

CHAPTER 7: FINDINGS AND WITHIN-CASE ANALYSIS OF PHSERV

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a within case analysis of the third public sector organisation, PHServ. The analysis includes both the discussion of and presentation of the findings from this case study following the structure of the research questions presented in chapter 1, section 1.3. Section 7.2 presents the case setting while section 7.3 presents the findings on the meaning of talent and TM. Section 7.4 presents and discusses the findings on Civico's talent identification processes while section 7.5 and 7.6 focused on the factors and challenges affecting talent identification and the reliability of its processes respectively. Section 7.7 presents the emerging themes from the findings while section 7.8 summarises the chapter.

7.2 CASE SETTING

PHServ was founded in 1948 and is a publicly funded organisation with one of the world's largest workforces, providing healthcare services across the UK. Services provided include emergency and urgent care, general practitioners and dental services, pharmacy services mental health services, hospital services amongst others. PHServ values included promoting respect and dignity of patients, a commitment to quality care, compassion and improving lives. The organisational structure within England spans 27 Area Teams across four regions which are the North of England (NE), Midlands and the East of England (ME), London(L) and the South of England (SE). Respondents were sourced from two Area teams including the PHServ Headquarters within the North of England (NE) and one Area team in the South of England (SE) regions. Within the organisational structure of PHServ, TM was under the HR Directorate with the TM team reporting through the Leadership Development Academy team to the Director of organisational development who in turn reported to the National Director of Human Resources. Interviews were mostly with the directors of organisational development who were the policy owners. Location NE1 was an Acute Hospital, Locations NE3 and SE1 were Mental Health Hospitals while location NE2 was Foundation Trust and final location was in NE in PHServ Headquarters (HQ).

TM programs that focused on leadership development in PHServ had been in operation in individual Area teams within each region for over five years. But at the time of this research, PHServ had initiated a centralised TM program as a way of managing organisational behaviour due to current crisis in PHServ from a rise in bad practices in healthcare arising

out of poor leadership behaviours. TM process guidelines were developed and driven by the Leadership Academy from PHServ Headquarters. This program had been running for about two years and was still being piloted within different Area teams in the different UK regions. According to the TM Lead, the Leadership Academy only provided a guide for running TM programs in PHServ but conceptualization and operationalization of TM practices in individual Area Teams did not necessarily follow this guide so it was not unified (a major difference between PHServ and the other three cases of this research). This promoted vagueness and confusion in defining talent and the TM process itself. For example, centralised TM development programs differed from the regional ones, resulting in counterproductive costly outcomes. The PHServ Leadership academy-led training programs were numerous, mostly targeted at the executive board and their next in line in job bands 8a and above except one which was open to everyone. While those of the different regions participating in this research where more inclusive of lower bands (3 and above) in NE1 and NE2 than in SE1 (bands 8a and above). Descriptions of these talent programs are presented in Tables 9, 10 and 11 in section 7.5 below (see pp. 171 - 172). Some of these Area teams e.g. NE 1, NE 2 and NE3 had only just started implementing the central TM program which was aligned to their leadership development programs and formed the basis of the interviews for this research. Location SE1 had already started running a TM program for a year, though this was still evolving.

Interviews with the seven participants in PHServ were between September 2014 and January 2015. Interview respondents were: Assistant Director of Organisational Development (North of England, Location **NE1**), Head of Organisational Development, (North of England, Location **NE2**), Assistant Director of Organisational Development(North of England, Location **NE3**), Regional Leadership Development Partner Consultant (LDP) (North of England, Location **NE3**), Program Lead TM (Head Quarters, North of England **HQ**), Interim People Development Manager (IDPM) (South of England, location **SE**1), Lead HR Manager (South of England, location **SE1**). Accessing participants in PHServ talent pool was not possible as there was no gatekeeper and access to participants was sometimes through LinkedIn referral (TM Lead of Leadership Academy) and a sourced participant from this social media, recommending another colleague in the same region. For example, the TM Lead from Headquarters in NE3 recommended the Regional LDP, the IDPM in SE1 recommended the Lead HR Manager in SE1. The TM Lead of the Leadership Academy provided information about the Area Teams in the regions where TM had been piloted and the researcher's focus was sourcing respondents from these particular Area teams that had TM programs running which included the ones used in this study.

7.3 THE MEANING OF TALENT IN PHSERV

There were two approaches to defining talent in PHServ due to having a central national TM program versus regional or local leadership development programs. While national talent definition operationalized a more inclusive talent approach going by its TM objectives expressed in the TM Conversations guide

"talent management should consider the whole of the workforce. This is consistent with evidence from other global organisations where inclusivity is becoming the predominant talent philosophy. The challenge is then to put in place effective talent management systems and processes".

Whilst the national development programs catered for all levels of staff had bold statements about operating an inclusive talent approach concerning TM, the regional approach was both inclusive and exclusive. For example whilst organisations in locations NE1, NE3 and SE4 operationalized an exclusive talent approach that focused on targeted job grades 8a and above, medical consultants and the executive board, the talent approach in location NE2 was more inclusive of bands 3 up to the executive board using a strengths based approach as the assistant director of organisational development explained:

" And it's actually recognising at everybody's appraisal of a minimum once a year, what is this person's strengths, what are they good at where else in the organisation can we utilise those sorts of skills. That's why we brought in the bands 3 to 4 programs because there was a growing awareness particularly sadly to say for graduates who were having to take quite low paid jobs even when they had a degree. They might have come into PHSERV at a band 3 or 4 but actually capable of being a director at some point in the future. So it's kind of giving them the right development to keep them engaged and wanting to stay here" … some of them don't have line manager responsibility but are potentially going to be a manager in a year or so and are potentially getting the skills ahead of becoming a manager rather than once they have been in the job for five years then doing it afterwards. (Assistant Director of Organisational Development, NE2).

This statement raises the importance for organisations to operate a more inclusive approach as it iterates the fact that talent can be found in all levels of employees and not just top senior management or specific professionals particularly under the present UK climate of high unemployment and competition for skilled workers and skilled jobs, organisations are doing both themselves and the unidentified talented employees within non-managerial positions an injustice by not tapping into these human resources and risk losing potential talent to the competition (CIPD, 2007). Interestingly, interviewees from organisations in NE1, NE3 and SE4 seemed uncomfortable about expressing an exclusive talent approach, stammering when expressing how the talent approaches were conceptualised towards the senior management grades, executives and medical team and trying to justify having an inclusive practice but with an exclusive approach because of what they wanted to achieve;

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which was about creating a talent pipeline for development into future senior roles to safeguard against the huge financial costs of replacement of these positions to PHServ. This exclusive talent approach was preferred as there had been recent high turnover in these organisations demanding immediate successors and/or replacement for senior management roles which was why there was need for identifying talent from within the organisation from targeted grades that were capable of stepping into these roles. The following interviewee extracts from these organisations in locations NE1, NE3 and SE 1 indicate these findings:

"…it's actually everyone who is an 8a and above. So if you think about it, that is everyone who is an 8a up to the executive team have come through for that…We are not excluding people form the process so I suppose talent is everyone but going back to what we are trying achieve it is really trying to see where our potential lies and also where our gaps are because some of our senior posts are very difficult to recruit to you know the nature of the business that we are in … we are constrained by some of those variables" (HR Specialist, location SE 1).

"We are looking at Execs and next in lines and possibly the next to them as well. No they are PHServ's board of directors. So our executive team is our chief exec, our finance director, HR and communication Director, medical director, director of mental health, chief finance officer. COO, director of integrated care" (Interim People Development Manager, IPDM, SE1).

"In an acute hospital firm like ours, it is the medical consultants, it is the medical consultants whom patients are referred to" (Assistant Director, Organisational Development, NE1).

Examining the quotes further, what is obvious is that there is justification for each talent approach which is significant for the TM field as it shows PHServ sees the importance of adopting a TM strategy for survival, cost reduction, employee motivation and as a driver for organisational change and not just only adopting TM for the sake of it or because it is fashionable.

However what remained ambiguous was PHServ's idea of an inclusive talent approach nationally. Because, examining the philosophy behind the talent approach, it appeared the focus was about developing leadership behaviours in all levels of employees that improves care for patients as this was critical for PHServ's reputation and practice in the light of recent public scandals about patient care. But examining the targeted job bands and focus on healthcare leaders building alliances with a wide range of professionals across boundaries in other private and public systems, it is questionable who or what the focus of talent is. This is not surprising as it mirrors scholarly contentions concerning the definitions of talent in the literature (Cappelli, 2009; CIPD, 2007; Iles, Chuai, et al., 2010; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2011) as also typified in the quote below:

'The healthcare model is typical of what talent is and how TM should be practiced…So people who do more of those behaviours is what we will imagine as talent'. Definition is not systematic across board… (LDP, PHServ).

7.3.1 9 box grid definitions of talent

The 9 box grid was the national assessment system for identifying talented from non-talented employees and was also called the 'Talent Grid Conversation Tool' as PHServ's talent strategy with this system was also organisationally focused on development of employee career conversations as expressed by the PHServ leadership academy lead:

"It is used with the conversation guide and leads the conversations around if somebody is exceeding expectations and role modelling the right behaviours in terms of their performance and behaviours and if they are ready to go on our leadership program".

The 9 box grid measured both performance (X axis) while the Y axis represents the different definitions of who and what potential means in PHServ. Figures 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 display the 9 box grid, performance ratings table of explanations as well as an evidenced based behaviour review template, while figure 7.4 displays the expected healthcare model behaviours. Information about the 9 box grid within PHServ talent grid conversation tool kit guidelines is that:

"This tool helps staff and managers to measure 'performance' (what you achieve) and 'behaviours' (how you achieve it) of individuals against their demonstrated 'potential' (capacity, ambition, motivation, readiness) to move on in their career path in the immediate, short or longer term on their journey to reach their full potential".

These templates were provided to line managers to guide interpretations of potential and performance for efficiency in assessments and the 9 segments of the grid had colours with different meanings. For example, employees in the green section on the top right hand corner of the grid are classified as 'ready now' and require support to reach their full potential (see quote below). They were also eligible for exposure to the national leadership programs.

" So those on the top right hand of the 9 box grid are fast-tracked for development I think for the people who are in the top right hand corner there's probably a more immediate need to find very specific intervention to develop them because they are seen as the sort of future leaders" (HR Specialist, SE 1).

"The 9 box grid is essentially about potential" (IPDM, SE1).

Similarly, employees classified as Generalist and Future emergent potential also qualified for the national leadership program but their progression would be at a slower pace. Those in the purple boxes were to be recognised for their performance and given stretch opportunities

to make them experts in their field while those in the blue boxes were to be informed about the need for either targeted development or reassignment to other roles that may be more suitable to improve performance. New employees are also assigned to the blue boxes. A new initiative from the national TM program required the alignment of behavioural ratings to the conversations because there was a need for employees to know the behaviours expected of them. These behaviours were drawn out of PHServ's organisational values, constitution and their leadership compact which included nine dimensions of leadership behaviours based on PHServ's healthcare leadership model presented in 7.4 below. Similarly, interviewees from the different locations also spoke about the importance of displaying the values of PHServ as this was a criteria for being identified as talent even though they couldn't actually specify what these behaviours were apart from an attempt from one interviewee who explained it this way:

"The other thing that we are looking for which is both national and local which has become fashionable of late in PHServ but we've been working on this for several years is people that possess certain values. So we are looking for talent that is caring i.e. people with a warm disposition, people that respect others, colleagues, patients obviously in the public sector there is a statutory duty to respect all the protected characteristics that is legislated for now like race and gender etc. etc. The other thing that we are looking for in talent are people that display a sense of high standards. So we are interested in people with high moral standards, standards of professionalism, personal standards of (appearance), people that are certainly not contented with low standards. We are actually looking for people who are innovative and interested in implementing changes so we really looking for non-traditionalist as it is so easy to be traditional in PHServ. So in a nutshell those are out four values, Caring, Respect, High standards, Innovative… And there is a directive policy since all the scandals of recent times that all PHServ firms will look towards value based recruitment" (assistant director, ODM NE1).

Further findings reveal that other regional definitions of potential existed as depicted in text below from the HR specialist in SE1 location:

"We've looked at potential on three levels. That's interpersonal agility if you like, mental agility and functional agility so within the role of what they are working as. I suppose their ability to deal with change and challenges. I suppose the environment we're working in … we have little control over how things change quite quickly in our business. So I suppose that's how you measure the agility and that is a reflection of their potential. So in effect I think that has really helped managers and individuals to think about themselves from that perspective about being agile and em to have that link to potential".

The interim people development manager also explained that some line managers associated having a charismatic personality as a criteria for identification which was different to what was provided centrally. This finding supports views in the literature about managers wanting to maintain personal rather than adopt organisational definitions of talent (Silzer & Church, 2009). Silzer and Church (2009) argue that this challenge is common to organisations and is one of the challenges this study addressed. The definitions of talent as different types of agility, charisma and descriptions of the nine PHServ values, support the

'talent as object' definitions within the TM literature which represent the attributes associated with talented individuals. These characteristics are mostly found in competency frameworks in organisations and define the cultural fit between employees and the organisation. Inferred in the above quote are coercive institutional influences due to environmental pressures on organisational and individual behaviours within public sector organisations since this sector is highly regulated through statutory and legal systems and affected their TM practices.

7.4 TALENT MANAGEMENT IN PHServ

The following definition found in PHServ's TM conversation tool manual (p. 4) describes what TM is in PHServ based on the national program:

"TM represents organisation's efforts to attract develop and retain skilled and valuable employees. Its goal is to have people with the capabilities commitment and behaviours needed for current and future organisational success. This means making sure we have the right people, in the right roles, with the right values, with access to the right opportunities, exposure, stretch and development to reach their potential whether this be in their current role, or for a future role".

This definition conforms to concepts found in the scholarly definitions of TM. However, the main focus for having national TM in PHServ apart from leadership development was about driving the careers' conversation between managers and staff as this was a major challenge in PHServ. The understanding being that an employee can only be supported to attain their true potential through constructive conversations about their present and future aspirations. Secondly, according to statements on PHServ's intranet site their TM philosophy was founded upon the belief that:

"…great leadership development improved leadership behaviours and skills and better leadership leads to better patient care, experience and outcomes. Our purpose is to work with our partners to deliver excellent leadership across the PHServ to have a direct impact on patient care by offering a range of tools, models, programmes and expertise to support individuals, organisations and local academies to develop leaders, celebrating and sharing where outstanding leadership makes a real difference".

Talent Management was basically about identifying potential leaders from the senior management grades 8a and above up to the exec for leadership development both at the national and regional level even though there was a lot of rhetoric about talent being everybody. The focus was on these targeted job grades but there was a national drive for the 9 box grid to be used for career conversations across all levels of staff, but implementation was a struggle and still in its infancy. The TM development programs reflected an attempt at being inclusive with the inclusion of one development program for all

employees and another for band 5 and above but the majority were biased towards senior manager grades as displayed in the Tables 9, 10 and 11 which present the different national and regional talent development programs. The PHServ organisation in SE 1 had only one leadership development program which focused on bands 8a, same as the targeted groups for TM programs. Even though the HR specialist stated that the development program was more about roles rather than job bands to infer that they operated a more inclusive practice with this scheme, findings indicated that the last cohorts were from the executive teams and senior job groups. Details about the operationalisation of these development programs are presented in the section on talent identification strategies.

Fig 7. 1: PHServ 9 box grid

Figure 7. 2: PHServ Performance ratings descriptions.

Performance rating	What does it look like?
Partially meets expectations	Employees can evidence that they have met some of the objectives / tasks / on-going work responsibilities set for them, but not all of them. This can be for a variety of reasons that need to be explored further with the individual. Employees here often need to have the objectives / tasks / on-going work responsibilities and expectations associated with these clearly described and broken down for them, and often need extra supervision and support to achieve them.
Meets expectations	Employees are clearly and unambiguously able to evidence how they are meeting their objectives / tasks / on-going work responsibilities set out for them and the demands within their role (e.g. completed a project, providing a service etc.) Employees here will be given objectives / tasks / on-going work responsibilities and simply deliver them with little, if any supervision. They sometimes go unnoticed in doing this, but you know who they are as they are often the 'go to' people as they are known as reliable to get things done.
Exceeds expectations	Employees not only evidence how they have met the expectations of the work objectives / tasks / on-going work responsibilities that they have been set, they show how they take them all to the next level with their own individual flavours. Employees here only need to be given the vision/high level expectations of what needs to be achieved, and they do the rest, making it all into a reality, bringing their own flare and added value. They are the high impact people you go to when you need something achieved with creative flare and added value.

Figure 7.3 PHServ Behaviour scoring sheet.

Organisational behaviours	Rating 1 - Partially meets, 2 - Meets, 3 - Exceeds	Comments and examples (Individual, peers, reports, manager, others)
e.g. Treating colleagues with respect	2	Demonstrates consistent behaviour in treating colleagues in team with respect and support

Figure 7. 4 Health care Model behaviours.

Leading with care
(p6)

Sharing the vision
(p9)

Evaluating information
(p7)

Connecting our service
(p8)

Influencing for results
(p13)

Engaging the team
(p10)

Inspiring shared purpose
(p5)

Holding to account
(p11)

Developing capability
(p12)
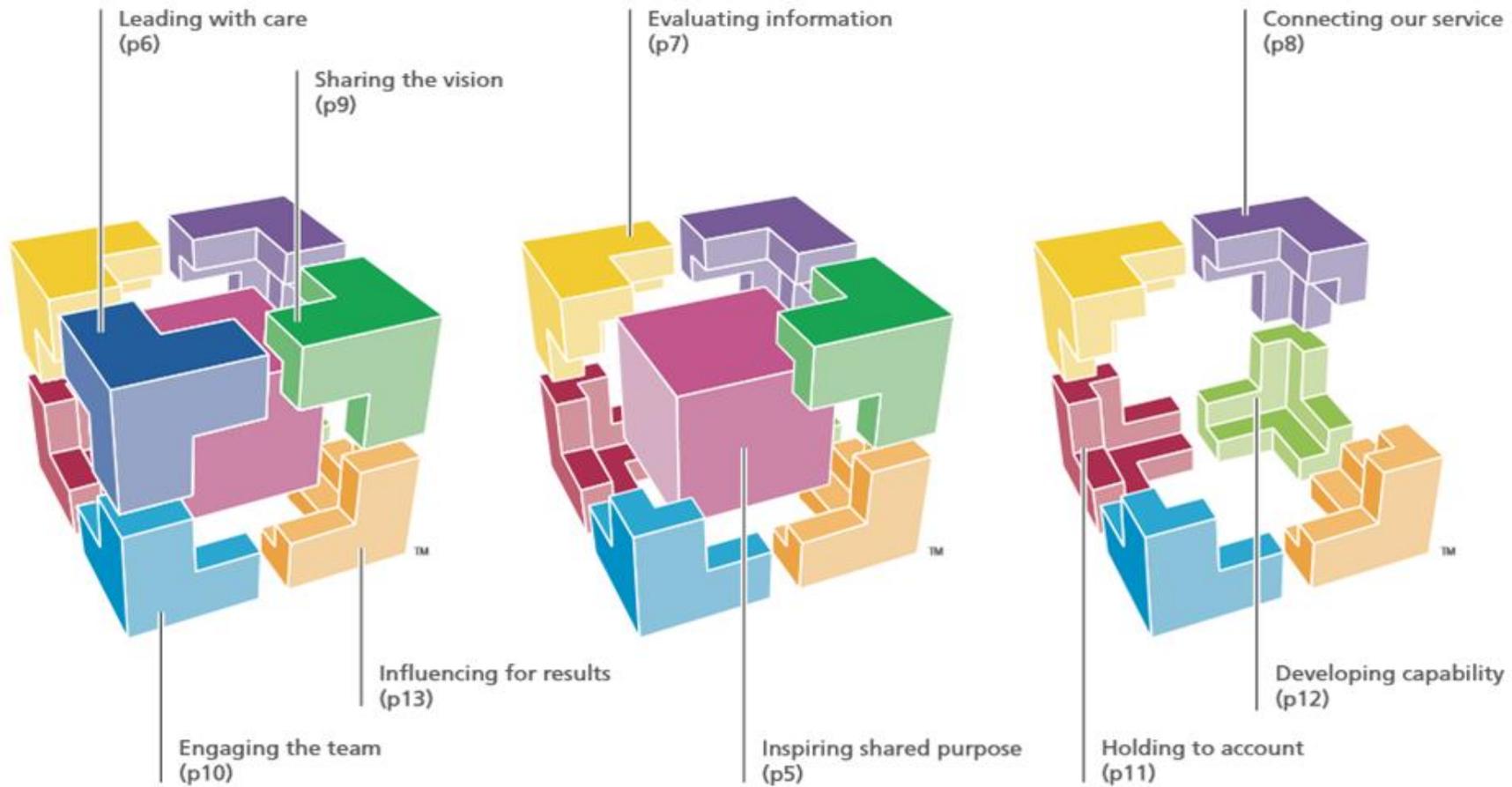
Figure 3 : The nine dimensions of the Healthcare Leadership Model

7.5 TALENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN PHServ

Table 9 PHServ National Talent Development Programs in Head Quarters.

Name of Scheme	Purpose	Duration
Edward Jenner Program	Designed for newly qualified clinicians to develop leadership skills but open to everyone online	6 months
Mary Seacole program	Leadership development for aspiring and new leaders (PgCert.)	12 months
Elizabeth Gareth program	Team Leadership Development (MSc. Cert)	24 months
Nye Bevan	Senior Leadership Development	12 months
Top Leaders	Executive Development	All year
Ready Now	Leaders grade (8a & above) from under-represented Groups for inclusive future leadership	All year
Frontline Nursing & Midwifery Program	Develop skills to perform and lead within role	6 months
Senior Operational Leaders program	Senior Nurse or Midwife Development in role	
Intersect System Leadership program	For Senior Leaders to develop skills for tackling issues facing public services by networking with Leaders from other public sector organisations and government	12 months
Executive Fast Track Program	Developing aspiring senior clinicians and leaders for executive roles	
Graduate Management Training Program	Development into management roles for successful selected graduates (Msc. MA certs)	24 months

Table 10 Leadership Development Programs in NE1

Name of Scheme	Purpose	Duration
Consultants development program	3 tier consultants program for new consultants, existing consultants and medical leadership on clinical governance	24 months
Medical leadership development program	To develop leadership and management skills for management career in roles like clinical manger, Head of clinical services, Division director of surgery and medical director	12 months
Top 100 senior management leadership program	Leadership development program from level 5 to senior management for developing leadership and networking skills for visibility of lower level before more senior staff	12 months

Table 11 Leadership Development Programs in local Organisation NE2

Name of Scheme	Purpose	Duration
Learning to Lead	To develop leadership skills for Bands 3 & 4	6 months
Becoming a manager	Leadership program for Bands 5 and 6	12 months
Managers moving on	Leadership development program for Bands 7 and above (ILM Certified)	12 months
Medicals Leader Program	Leadership development program for senior clinicians (ILM certified)	24 months

7.6 TM DRIVERS IN PHServ

The development and implementation of a national central TM program in PHServ was a deliberate message to the entire organisation of its recognition of past failures in patient care due to failures in leadership practice and a drive to develop an internal leadership pipeline and leadership skills through a central healthcare model of expected behaviour framework. Adoption of a TM program was also as a result of high turn-over of valued employees from senior job grades and the executive board as reported by interviewees from the regional organisations. Alongside this drive for effective leadership was also recognition of the need for an efficient career management and progression system that would promote career conversations in order to identify employee potential and provide support to enable them to attain their aspirations through a talent management conversation tool and the nine box grid for measuring performance and potential as the performance appraisals had no credibility. The next section presents details of the talent identification strategies adopted to achieve their TM vision.

7.7 TALENT IDENTIFICATION PROCESS IN PHSERV

PHServ's talent identification strategies is presented Figures 7.5 and 7.6 below. Figure 7.5 presents a picture of the central TID process while figure 7.6 presents the local TID picture. Details of the processes are discussed in the subsections that follow.
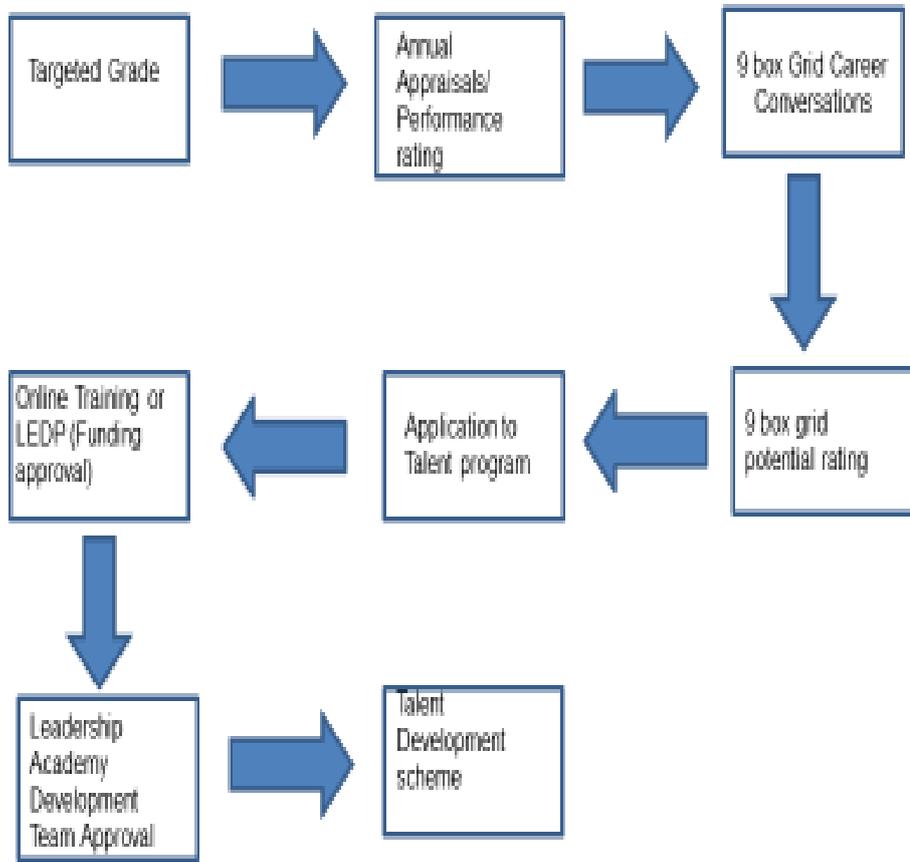
Figure 7.5 : PHServ (Central) Talent Identification Processes
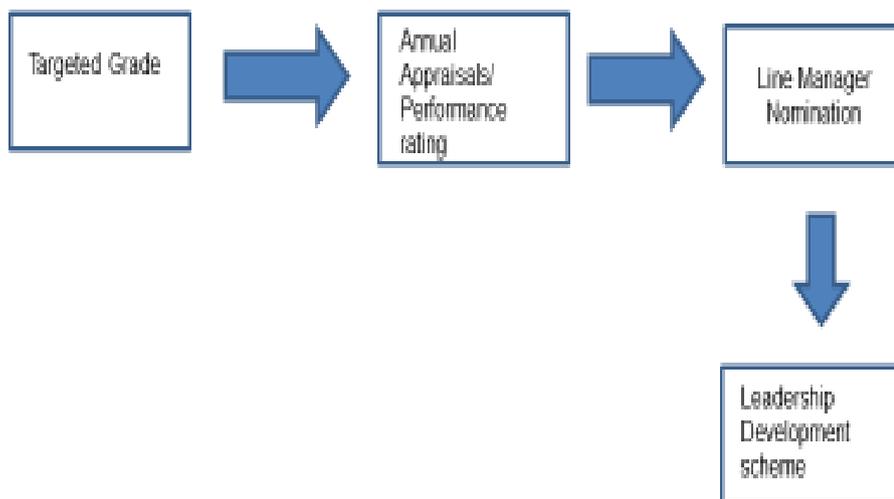
Figure 7.6: PHServ (Local) Talent Identification Processes

7.7.1 Job grading in PHServ

Bands 1-4 comprised support staff,

Bands 5-7 comprised staff at supervisory level e.g. graduates,

Band 8 and above are senior management grades.

Unclassified job grades comprised the executive board and medical consultants in positions above the senior management grades.

Targeted grades for leadership development in three out of the four organisations was Band 8a and above but one of the participating organisations in this study (NE2 location) targeted employees from band 3 upwards and had specific leadership development programs for the different cadres of employees (see appendix 3.1)

7.7.2 Performance Appraisals

Appraisals in PHServ according to interviewees were conducted once a year but there wasn't much confidence in this practice which was not systematic from descriptions given by interviewees below:

"Obviously, we know that people have an appraisal at the moment in PHServ but there is a massive drive in the PHServ to improve and update appraisal in the last five years but the quality of appraisals is rubbish still. 50% of people are saying, yes I have had an appraisal but it wasn't good quality and I do not feel like it met my work objective or I didn't get anything out of it. So what we are saying is that our talent management and maximise potential conversation guide will enhance the appraisal process upfront. So you can do it as a stand- alone, or you can use the tools for the conversation in a separate appraisal process but many of the organisations are asking why on earth would we do that because that is an extra hour to have a conversation with staff so they are actually merging existing appraisal process with or replacing it entirely with our tools. We are not telling people that is what they should or shouldn't do but that is what they are doing (Program Lead, TM HQ)"

One question that the above quote raises is how one can effectively evaluate the improvement to the appraisal system by using the TM conversations tool when there is no structure to its use and also by implication no proof of its use. There is concern that this 'any-how' approach may be futile to the TM process since there is no direction considering the surrounding resistance to this additional process by line managers as expressed in the following statement by the regional leadership development partner:

"The problem is because organisations tend to confuse conversations with appraisal. So because it is not very systematic, it is ad-hoc practice in each organisation".

Other statements from interviewees express lack of confidence with the appraisal and buttress/warrant the need for better arrangements for improvement:

"There is an annual appraisal where you would set your objectives for the rest of the year and they should be reviewed through line manager's supervision but I couldn't put my hand on my heart to say that it always is but it should be" (IPDM, SE 1).

"The appraisal system within PHServ I think will be fair to say is not mature enough as an institutional trusted way of spotting talent…I find that we do very well around asking line managers and staff to comply with have an appraisal but I think the quality of what goes off is suspect and it's certainly not something we can rely on that as being an objective process" (assistant director, NE1).

7.7.3 9 box grid and conversation tool

Information in the TM guide for Conversations booklet (also called the maximising potential tool) was about its use for measuring performance and high potential for all individuals in the organisation. The plan was that as a conversation tool, conversations between managers and employees should cover the development employees require, the value they bring, and the position(s) that best suit their skills currently and into the future within an organisation and/or elsewhere in their career journey. Furthermore, the guidelines stated that this tool was designed by both the PHServ Leadership Academy in collaboration with their local delivery partners (LDPs) to bring together good practice around PHServ TM practice and can be used to complement wider TM tools available within each organisation. Detailed guidelines on its use as a careers conversation tool, performance measurement and behavioural assessment tool could be found on PHServ webpages including details about the meaning and importance of TM in PHServ. This evidenced a very transparent approach to implementation but just as with the ambiguity in definitions of talent and TM, there was ambiguity in practice due to information overload, rigours of applying for funding to implement these tools in organisations regionally as this was a requirement, as well as role modelling of best practices from those organisations who had implemented a system in place as depicted in the statement below:

"If you want to use these tools we will help you with funding to implement them, maybe coaching. If you are interested in using these tools we will help you with it and so if one organisation succeeds, then it becomes an example to others to encourage them to take on the tools" (LDP, PHServ, NE3).

A possible reason for these ambiguities was because PHServ's TM program was still evolving and experiencing the teething problems that come with birthing new concepts or programs. What was instructive was that there was a drive to maximise the use of this one system for achieving efficiency in the identification of talent and talent development processes with promise for less or eradication of bureaucratic future practices.

7.7.4 Employee application, nomination and selection processes

Findings indicated that employees identified with potential had to be put forward for development either through the regional educational development process from where funding for their training was sourced or if they were nominated by their managers for the leadership academy training, then they had to go through an application and selection process which was quite competitive as the leadership academy talent lead (HQ) expressed below:

"And then obviously, there is an application process. So they are identified and been told that they are the right person, then they then have to apply. And then obviously, not everybody will get a place because not everybody is right for the program. You know that is another part of 'sifting' through the talent".

These complex bureaucratic talent development processes may also explain why there was much resistance from line managers to the new changes in PHServ and changes in public sector organisations generally, because implied outcomes from the above procedures after having gone through a performance and potential identification, career conversation and behavioural assessments, is frustration and demotivation for both manager and identified talented employee, when nothing comes out of it and possibly turnover of talented employees as a result. Hence one of the reasons provided by the assistant director at NE1 for having and maintaining regional or local leadership development in-house programs was because they were more easily accessible to employees:

"We are not saying to our people to do one or the other it's just that the local stuff for some people is a bit more accessible"…

Questions arise however considering the above scenario on how the intentions of a centralised TM process can become a reality across board, having both national and regional leadership programs. Also, considering organisational costs and human resource 'burnout' implications, exemplified in the quote below, it is questionable if both programs are not counterproductive and generating conflicting and confusing messages to the organisation. The above arguments, emphasize the need for organisations to aim to cultivate work motivation, organisational commitment among employees to achieve the best from their talent and to avoid turn over Al Ariss et al. (2014, p. 174).

"…we were given a national support team to show us how to do this talent work, on the back of that, we implemented it and at the time it was really a standardized thing for all the doctors and all senior managers and you wouldn't get anybody promoted or recruited without an assessment happening but as the years have ticked by and the money has gotten harder and harder to find, it's an expensive

thing to do and em (pause), there's a lot of admin support, there's quite a lot of heavy use of rooms, it's a big thing to set up, particularly in an operation this size, I mean alright you can draw up on people in an operation this size …it's quite draining and resource exhaustive" (assistant director, NE1).

7.7.5 Talent Decision Making

Talent decision making included line managers, the talent review board, the local regional development partners/consultants and the leadership development team within the leadership academy. While the line managers conducted the potential, performance and behavioural assessments as well as the conversations, the talent review board met to calibrate talent assessment and supported management of difficult conversations due to manager/employee conflicts in ratings. The local/regional development partners supported with funding for talent development programs and with the compilation of talent programs alongside the HR team assigned to TM. The leadership development team received, processed and approved the applications from talented employees to the leadership academy. The following statements by different interviewees exemplify the above roles of decision makers:

"…so these applications come into the central academy team, not to me but to the professional development team and they look (pause) But no, it actually goes to the local regional delivery partner first and they have their own part to play in identifying people to go through onto the program" (PHServ leadership academy lead (HQ).

"So the discussion at the review board is about the individual. There's a summary of their leadership performance and their leadership potential then the decision is discussed with the individual and if there hasn't been agreement between the individual and the manager, the board will have more of a debate I suppose more of a robust conversation and they can bring in much more perspective that either supports where the manager thinks they are on the grid or where the individual thinks they are on the grid and that's the whole purpose of having a talent review board. There's more objectivity there's that calibration where they are able to talk about different perspective" (HR Specialist, SE 1).

According to the TM lead in the leadership academy, the academy works with the regional local delivery partners i.e. the north east leadership academy or the London leadership academy and they have their own programs which they deliver workshops for leadership development on their patch. The role of this local delivery partner include encouraging the organisations to use the tools (maximising potential & conversation tools), nominating people to get into the leadership program and providing support for and funding to organisations implement them which may also including coaching.

"So the regional level role is to encourage the organisations to use the tolls, invest in their line managers to invest in talent in their organisation" (LDP, NE3).

While the decision making role of the talent review board apparently improved PHServ TM process, the role of the local delivery partners appeared to create bottlenecks rather than efficiency as their positon in the TM process exemplified bureaucratic, duplicated processes which were costly in terms of time, human resources and finances and therefore probably compounded problems around support from top management who instead of seeing the value in TM for promoting organisation performance, may be distracted by the financial impact on the organisation.

7.7.6 Talent Pools

The purpose of talent pools was to enable speed in accessing talented employees when there were vacancies applicable to them and for easy identification of their suitability for roles. PHServ had an electronic system which enabled records management of talented employees for easy access as expressed by an interviewee:

"…so all our talent if you want to keep the language, have an electronic record which has their training to date, their qualification to date and development to date. They can also be analysed as different staff groups. So we can get all the medical consultants off the computer system and contact them directly based on all sorts of criteria e.g. those who have been in PHServ for 5 years to ask them if they wanted access to this program. We have been known to do that and we can do that but I won't say we do that as a routine" (Assistant Director of ODM, NE1).

Another purpose for PHServ's talent pool was for identifying successors for roles requiring immediate cover due to high turnover of senior employees. The talent pool comprised talented employees from different functions and having this pool enabled targeted employee engagement (communication) with these individuals and to promote networking to guard against silos.

7.8 FACTORS AFFECTING TALENT IDENTIFICATION & RELIABILITY IN PHSERV

Factors including challenges affecting TID processes in PHServ are presented according to the internal and external pressures.

7.8.1 Internal Pressures

7.8.1.1 Poor leadership

7.8.1.1.1 Leadership skills and behaviours

Both corporate manuals on TM matters on PHServ's intranet and interviewees described failures regarding patient care being due to poor leadership practice. There was a recognition that better patient care and practice was ultimately about having better leaders which led to an organisational drive for leadership development and development of the PHServ leadership behaviours through the implementation of TM. The TM lead of PHServ's leadership academy explained that one of the purpose of TM was to:

"…to professionalise leadership across PHServ and have some of the best leaders in their roles and to be able to deliver and take PHServ forward in the future with the complexities that we are going to have going forward" (Lead, Leadership Academy, HQ).

7.8.1.1.2 Leading change

Secondly, there was also resistance from management to changes about performance and potential management due to leaders having set traditions in professions particularly the clinical professions as expressed in the following statements:

"When we first introduced it, particularly to the medics, there was extreme resistance. The medics are quite resistant to any kind of change, It is still in spite of what we do, it is still very much an "all-boys" tight network the medical profession, it's got hundreds and hundreds of years of ingrained ways of doing things and relinquishing any kind of decision making power outside of that to a kind of like a third party helping process, there was nervousness" (assistant director, NE1, location).

"I got a huge amount of push back and predominantly from nurses who don't want to give people a performance rating at their appraisal" (Assistant director, NE2).

7.8.1.1.3 Lack of support for talent and their Career development

Whilst a lack of support for talent was not a pronounced issue, it was implied in statements made by interviewees. The visibility of talented employees was only possible when there was deliberate leadership interventions that permitted this to happen. This was evidenced in the approaches taken in case NE2 where they sought for talent in bands 3 & 4 rather than from bands 8a and above alone. Similarly, in NE1 leadership development was open to all employees in addition to planned interventions involving project execution by teams comprising different cadres of employees from lower bands right up to the executive board. These themes are portrayed in the following quotes:

"That's why we brought in the bands 3 to 4 programs because there was a growing awareness particularly sadly to say for graduates who were having to take quite low paid jobs.. They might have come into the PHSERV at a band 3 or 4 but actually capable of being a director at some point in the future" (assistant director, NE2).

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"So it's (TM) got a horizontal interventional aim as well as it has got a skills escalated agenda as well. It is as much an organisational development tool as well as it is a leadership development tool. But it certainly puts people from way down the organisational hierarchy in the spotlight because we've got the projects that people are working on they've got a project sponsor who happens to be a PHServ board member. So we're getting people who would be largely very much invisible for years providing patient care working very very closely with PHServ board members on projects. It was always our intention to have TM as it's largely a hidden agenda behind the whole thing (comments about top 100 leadership development program by assistant director, NE1).

Furthermore the HR specialist signalled this problem as a reason for the high turn-over of senior officers as PHServ didn't know how to make talented employees feel valued. The following narrative demonstrated this:

"In PHServ, they are not very em … I use this term very broadly they are not very possessive of the staff at an organisational level, they will develop people (pause) I'm trying to choose my words very carefully here em it's expected and it's a huge element of challenge to us and I think sometimes that can be to the detriment of individual organisations because they don't guess and people get to a point and they either, the opportunity isn't there for them to move on internally and certain frustrations and that can be a big loss for the organisation I think that's the difference between working within a PHServ context and a private sector context because I think the private sector really sees those people as somebody to invest in and actually put what I would say an actual value on it but we don't do that in PHServ".

Additionally, the above quote buttresses poor career planning for talented employees. There was poor practice in place concerning employee career development partly due to poor organisational culture and inadequate training of line managers as reflected in the statement below:

"Like in many organisations, I guess, managers are promoted on end to roles without any leadership or development to support them in those roles. That's why we need to change the whole culture and actually going forward have a completely different approach where managers are equipped to have those conversations" (Leadership Academy, Lead, HQ)".

Another dimension appeared to be the lack of support from top management for the program as the local regional partner expressed concerns about financial pressures and having to provide strong arguments supporting the benefits of TM to the board to enable more informed decision about investing in TM as the executives were concerned about the returns on investment. A lack of funding could lead to the failure of their TM programs and research on change in the public sector reveals that 'resources' is one of the important factors for improving public services and hence, bringing about change (Boyne, 2003).

7.8.1.2 Solving financial problems:

Another reason for formalising TM was to support the special measures plan to ensure the right talent was being recruited. This was because past experience had shown that while recruitment costs were high, the long-term costs of recruiting the wrong talent were higher particularly the recruitment of consultants who had about the highest remuneration. This was a critical issue because it was difficult to release any member of this profession unless it was due to professional misconduct and scandalous behaviour as reflected in these statements from the assistant director in NE1:

"I mean we implemented all the assessment stuff after a very dark period in our history in this county, as the first PHServ firm to put in place what we call special measures … but as it's happened time and time again here, the finances really went terribly badly wrong and it's mostly because of that that we were putting special measures … A typical medical consultant even back then would be earning 80 to 100000 pounds per annum, until they retire, get that appointment wrong and you would have wasted an awful amount of money until they retire and you don't often see medical consultants once appointed losing their jobs and if they do, it tends to be a high profile case like cheating or something like that".

This role of TM in PHServ, aligns with Cappelli's (2008; 2012) recommendations for organisations to build processes that supply 'talent on demand' in recognition of the need for organisations to provide a constant source of talented people to create and deliver strategy. He argues that the objectives of TM (including identifying and developing future generations of leaders, planning for the succession of key positions) reduced executive recruiting and training costs through the ability to staff the right person in the right position at the right time for smooth leadership transition and minimal organisational disruption.

7.8.1.4 Performance Management and capability building

Most of the interviewees described the performance appraisals in PHServ as inefficient and requiring an 'overhaul' according to the leader of the leadership academy. Managing performance through the appraisal process was one of the main aims for implementing TM in PHServ in order to facilitate the appraisal process through the maximising potential grid (9 box grid) and through conversations as expressed below:

"So we had to decide what the foundation of any talent management approach is and it is about having a really effective conversation isn't it? If we can get that right across the PHSERV then we can enhance the appraisal process and we can get people having the conversations" (TM lead, leadership academy, HQ).

7.8.1.5 Retention / High turnover

The need for leadership continuity and stability raising particular challenges in the public sector because of the frequent and rapid turnover of many executives in government

agencies compared to their private business executives has been highlighted by authors (Fernandez and Rainey, 2006), TM was an important step in PHServ for retention of and managing high turnover of senior management employees/clinicians and leaders through identifying and developing and retaining them, after a history of high turnover within these groups. This was because HR professionals realised that filling up vacant roles was difficult and therefore demanding urgency in growing own talent pool for succession planning for the future. The following extract exemplifies the above point:

"So it's something about growing and developing our own who can step into these roles if and when the time comes. That's probably a context as to why we adopted TM to address some of these things that we are valuing those people who are coming up to the rank but also that we are addressing some of the need strategically that we have and making sure we have the right people with the right knowledge to step into these roles at some point in the future" (HR specialist, SE1).

"There has been a shrinkage in senior posts in PHSERV and if you look at a TM process which aim to look at how we develop talented individuals and retain their services and find opportunities for them to develop and gain promotions and that sort of thing if you have a shrinking pool of staff at these levels then that poses challenges" (IPDM, SE1).

7.8.1.6 Balancing inconsistencies in TM, staff training and development

The leadership academy lead, stated that one of the purposes of establishing the TM program was to "support development online which will be accessible on the hub to anyone whether you are a board member, manager or employee so that all the resources will be there for talent management" and by implication create balanced investment in development for everyone as opposed to a selected few. Another intention for TM programs was to enable fairness in career management and ease in talent identification and development. One of the outcomes was to check current imbalances in the promotion process but its progress was slowed down by PHServ's bureaucratic structures. Thirdly there were implied inconsistencies in the job banding structure which was institutionally created through the 'agenda for change' program and there appeared to be frustrations about the imbalances within the system as some job groups weren't 'banded'. This feeling is inferred in the following statement from the interim people development manager:

"So all staff (pause)… well, most staff under the PHSERV are employed under what you call the agenda for change terms and conditions and that's banded from band 2 to band 9. But then you then have posts above that who are not under the agenda for change (frustration in her voice). The other people who are not under the agenda for change are the medics and the dentists. You've then got band 8a b c and d and then band 9. I don't know why we didn't go 9, 10, 11, 12 but that's the way they did it. And that's very interesting because I remember when mine came through I was given a band two bands down from what mine was so someone who was 6 months qualified was banded the same band or above as me when I was 10 years qualified and in a more senior posts. It just struck me that they hadn't read my job description" So all sorts of interesting things there. So, anyway. So

when you look at the different roles, so I will use one of our facilities staff…they kind of work in the corporate facility staff. I think they were about band 5 but within that area of work she occupies a relatively senior post whereas band 5 would be a nurse recently qualified staff nurse so they were premised different levels of things so some people at band 5 could be quite senior whereas other people ….psychologists qualify under band 7 but as a nurse you will have to be a ward manager to be a band 7. So there's a lot of fluidity in the system".

7.8.1.7 PHServ Culture:

There is consensus within scholarly discourse of hierarchical and bureaucratic structures predominantly associated with public sector organisations and the structure found in PHServ was no different as job grouping was from level 1 up to 9 and then unclassified grades of the executive board and consultants and higher level medical practitioners (see section 7.6.1). There were also complex systems and processes in decision making (see section 7.6.5) which required change as studies indicate that any transformational process could only take effect through minimizing the complex decision-making elements of the organization in order to build momentum for other changes to occur (Amis, Slack, and Hinings, 2004). As a result there were ingrained traditions which were obstructive to TM programs some of which included poor appraisal practices, resistance to change by managers and clinicians alike and at the same time, challenges with continuity due to constant ongoing internal pressures from many changes as demonstrated in the following statement by the local regional partner:*"…but there is a lot of noise going on" (*changes about other policies as if drowning and contending with the changes being brought in by TM *) as this awareness is being promoted but we are trying to do a bottom up approach to employees not just to managers*".

There were also statements about having an 'old-boys' network (referring to the medical profession) and similar groups (by implication) that created biases in talent resourcing including lack of accountability across board. Hence the leadership academy lead expressed a need for TM to "*change the whole culture and actually going forward have a completely different approach… role modelling the right behaviours in terms of their performance and behaviours*". Therefore, TM was one way of holding people accountable and having a systematic standardised process that could contribute to the elimination of biases in resourcing and performance measurements. Another common cultural feature was the tendency to operate in silos. The interim development manager (SE1) said an objective of TM was looking at things about networking across the organisation probably through the talent pools to guard against silos. This approach to minimising silos was similar to those found in Civico and Locgov who encountered the same challenge.

7.8.2 External Pressures

7.8.2.1 Budget cuts:

A statement from PHServ's internal online communications on TM expresses the necessity for TM as a result of cuts in public spending in public sector organisations which placed restrain on talent resourcing budget and demand for talent planning.

"Talent management is taking place in an environment with a sharp focus on public sector spending. This has manifested itself in the call for more integrated services. The emphasis in PHServ is on outcomes, delivery and strong commissioning".

UK governmental budget cuts pressurised changes in PHServ's approach to resourcing talented employees particularly for their senior leaders and members of the board with the implementation of the central TM program and creation of an internal resourcing team ('Executive Search'). The main focus for the team was to identify and respond to the board's talent development needs through empowering leadership development and thereby contribute to the achievement of internal recruitment targets (rather than external recruitment) for upcoming board vacancies which had incurred high costs previously. This has enabled a cost reduction of £35,000 according to the leadership academy TM lead. PHServ's response to governmental pressures supports views in the literature about 'organisational practices being direct reflections of or responses to rules and structures built into their larger environments' (Nicholson et al, 1995, p. 239).

7.8.2.2 Future Survival with global uncertainties

The TM lead of the leadership academy said the purpose for TM in PHServ was to have "the best leaders in their roles and to be able to deliver and take PHServ forward in the future with the complexities that we are going to have going forward". This need for preparing for future survival was also expressed in PHServ's online communications on TM as follows:

"In the light of significant external factors caused by demographic and labour market change, and the internal requirement to create a new strategic narrative, there is a need to ensure that talent strategy is aligned to organisational objectives as the organisation goes through transformation and change".

The above quote fits with scholarly discussions around the reasons for organisations adopting TM and supports perceptions of TM as an important survival strategy for businesses while also supporting institutional theories of organisational changes being shaped largely by changes in the environment (Nicholson et al., 1995, p.239)

7.8.2.3 Convergence towards Private Sector practices

Similar to Civico, PHServ's talent approach progressed towards approaches in a private sector organisation as expressed by PHServ's leadership academy TM lead:

"We are trying to tackle TM in a different way. We are trying to do it similar to Tesco. I have been in contact with Martin Jenkins who is Head of Talent and resourcing in Tesco. And they have an approach essentially from the day you start the job whether you are a driver or stacking shelves or on the till you know you are on a talent management journey. This is what we are trying to achieve across PHServ which is massive".

This approach confirms views that organisations are under pressure to adapt to and be consistent with their institutional environment in order to acquire legitimacy and recognition by adopting structures and practices viewed as appropriate in their environment (Scott, 1987, 2001; DiMaggio & Powell, 1991).

7.9 MANAGEMENT OF CHALLENGES TO PROMOTE RELIABILITY

This section describes how PHServ managed the challenges presented in section 7.8 to promote reliability of its identification processes.

7.9.1 Managing Poor leadership

The following measures were applied to managing poor leadership skills and behaviours, leading change and lack of support for talent.

7.9.1.1 Healthcare Leadership Model:

A major strategy adopted for managing the challenges concerning poor leadership was the development of a health care model providing guidance, direction and a driver for expected organisational and individual behaviours through the nine dimensions of leadership behaviours. The nine behaviours are: Inspiring shared purpose, Leading with care, Evaluating information, Connecting our service, Sharing the vision, Engaging the team, Holding to account, Developing capability, Influencing for results. Online communications about the nine dimensions was that:

"All nine dimensions of the model are important in an individual's leadership role. However, the type of job they have, the needs of the people they work with, and the context of their role within their organisation will all affect which dimensions are most important for them to use and develop. It is also important to realise that areas identified for development within the model may be as much about how individuals manage themselves, their behaviours and relate to other people".

The healthcare model because it was applicable to everyone was one way of showing an inclusive TM approach. Monitoring demonstration of these behaviours was through a self-assessment tool available on the PHServ intranet alongside a 360 degree feedback peer review all of which were to be held at the time of the career conversations using the 9 box grid conversation tool. Though this method for addressing poor leadership was still in its infancy, the expectation was that through identifying areas for development using the tools, employees could access the online development available to them and be identified for leadership programs available on the leadership academy. Regionally, there were diverse leadership development programs catering for the different levels of employees even though this was more specific to some organisations than others.

7.9.1.2 Piloting the Conversation Tools

One reason for resistance to change brought about by the TM programs and the conversation tools was because of the ambiguities associated with its use and definitions of talent as discussed in section 7.5. One of the strategies for managing this challenge and for enabling managers lead change in this area, included piloting how to use the tools. Organisations who successfully implemented their TM programs within a six month period, using the Conversation tools were asked to support the leadership academy with piloting the tools to other organisations. The leadership academy used these organisations as case studies firstly for researching areas for further improvements in the use of the conversations tools and secondly as role models to other organisations, to promote implementation of the tools across PHServ. Locations NE2 and SE1 are two organisations involved with the piloting program and confirm their implementation as a result of it as reflected below:

"We were lucky to be part of the pilot working with ~Miss X and we started with one of our clinical divisions two years ago and we piloted that approach and we had also done and put inline the next to our executive team those senior managers who had gone through a TM process those senior managers about 20 of them and again that was probably two years ago. The pilot was part of a national pilot and the one of the executive we had to do that ourselves and then within the past year probably June/July last year we started everybody underneath them up to band 8a so over the past 6 months we have gone through the process with the others".

7.9.1.3 TM Evaluation grid

Another outcome from piloting the tools which addressed concerns about lack of support from top management was the development of an evaluation grid which demonstrated the

value TM brought to the piloted organisations in terms of explaining 'what good looks like' from their TM approaches. This grid also included analytical assessments of return on investment for talented employees as well as organisational success stories. This evaluation process not only made possible, strong support from PHServ MD and HR Directors for continuous investment in TM, but also provided exemplary models for presentation to other organisations to follow in their TM implementation. Similarly, evaluation of leadership development program in regional organisations evidenced promotions of participants to managerial positions within a three year radius as reflected in the statement below:

"But what we know from running the other programs is when we go back to people to ask them about 'where are you now'? I can't remember the figure but when we did it, something like 385 of the people who attended the program had gone on to be promoted or seconded into a more senior role…So we keep track of them for a few years after they complete the program" (assistant director, NE2).

Appendix 3.1 provides details about the leadership development programs and questionnaire used for tracking progression of talented employees who have completed leadership programs. There is knowledge gap within the TM field about how talent programs are evaluated and PHServ's approach contributes to this gap for encouraging businesses to absorb evaluation strategies in conceptualising and operations of their TM practice.

7.9.1.4 Bottom-top approach

Another strategy for minimising poor leadership practice and to improve transparency and awareness of TM programs was by promoting the tools to employees and not just managers. The intent was to make it easy for employees to approach their line managers about their developments with this back-up knowledge as expressed in the statement below:

"… but we are trying to do a bottom up approach to employees not just to managers. Getting the employees aware so that they can ask their managers for the conversation meeting. So if managers are hearing this from their staff then it's different" (local development partner).

One is however concerned as to whether this approach will make much difference going by the managerial power dynamics which operate in organisations (Shetty, 1978). But this approach which deviates from the usual 'top-bottom' practices in organisations (Thunnissen et al., 2013) opens up possibilities for further research and indicates efforts by the leadership academy for TM programs to succeed.

7.9.1.5 Appointment of Internal HR Consultant & local regional partners

In order to manage financial problems/pressures of running the TM program, including topical issues around public spending, PHServ through the leadership academy appointed

internal HR consultants for recruiting cover for exiting board executive. These consultants were responsible for implementing succession planning and internal talent pipelines through leadership development for those identified talent within the senior management positions, rather than through external recruitments which was the previous practice. By partnering with the local regional education boards who were responsible for regional trainings for bands 8a and above, more funding could be obtained for TM programs.

7.9.1.6 Culture

Having a TM program in place through the use of the conversations and the 9 box gird assisted with management of some of the imbalances created through the agenda for change banding system as it contributed to the possibility of talented employees being identified and developed despite the hierarchical structures in place. Assessment centres were also incorporated for recruiting medical consultants to minimise biases and subjectivity in the identification processes and for some regional organisations such as SE1, senior clinicians were held accountable by the executive board who monitored staff appraisals and development through annual board reviews of the amount of staff undergoing training from each division. The expectation being that this intervention will make senior clinicians more responsible in this area.

7.10 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the findings from PHServ showing that it operated a national and regional approach to talent and while conceptualisation of the former was more inclusive, the latter comprised both inclusive and exclusive practices. Similar to the challenges identified in the literature, definitions were varied and confusing but having the central TM program indicated attempts at bridging these ambiguities through piloting the central approach in various regional organisations and partnering with local development consultants from the local regional education board with the implementation of TM. The central approach for talent identification and development comprised the use of a 9 box grid conversation tool and performance appraisals but regionally, traditional processes were still in practice which included nominations, application and interview processes and the use of assessment centres.

Talent Management was about succession planning due to high turnover of and shrinkage in senior leaders' positions. Furthermore, its implementation was in response to challenges of deficiency in leadership skills and leadership behaviours in practice which were essential

for better patient care. Challenges with the TM program were similar to those in Civico and Locgov and comprised bureaucratic practices, poor leadership in the areas of supporting change and talent/TM initiatives from managers and leaders, pressures arising from public spending cuts and environmental pressures to plan for future survival and performance. An interesting management of challenges of poor leadership, (though still in its infancy), was PHServ's adoption of a 'bottom-top' approach of driving change (support for TM programs) through employees. This approach was taken in addition to the normal 'top-bottom' approaches found in organisations is instructive for processes of leading change in organisations A key finding contributing to both knowledge of TM and TM practice is the evaluation of the success of TM programs both nationally and regionally in order to assess the contributions of TM to organisational performance. Further discussions about TM in PHServ's in comparison with those of the other organisations will be presented in chapter 9 after presenting findings from the private sector organisation, Retco in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 8: FINDINGS AND WITHIN CASE ANALYSIS OF RETCO

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a within case analysis of the private sector organisation, Retco. The analysis includes both the discussion of and presentation of the findings from this case study following the structure of the research questions presented in section 1.3. Section 8.1 introduces the chapter while section 8.2 presents the case setting. Section 8.3 presents the findings on the meaning of talent while section 8.4 presents findings on the meaning of TM in Retco. Section 8.5 presents talent development processes while section 8.6 presents the findings on Retco's talent identification processes. Section 8.7 focused on the factors and challenges affecting talent identification and the reliability of its processes respectively. Section 8.8 presents and discusses challenges to talent identification (TID) and management of these for promoting reliability, while section 8.9 presents emerging themes from the findings. Section 8.10 summarises the chapter.

8.2 CASE STUDY SETTING

Retco is one of the biggest retailers in the UK with over 170,000 employees and a mission to become Britain's most trusted retailer through its core beliefs of providing quality goods at low and affordable prices, its strive for excellence and service to customers, a respect for individuals and acting with integrity. The organisation had an administrative headquarters and numerous stores where majority of the employees worked. At the time of the research they had been operating in the UK for close to 50 years and the largest subsidiary of their parent organisation. One of their aims was to represent and understand the communities they serve with the understanding being that a blend of different personalities, genders and ages produces better results and gives them the competitive advantage. Company documents obtained via their website and the Talent Advisor reflect their claim of being inclusive, valuing difference and a desire for every employee to enjoy every minute of their career by making everyday a development opportunity. This vision was exemplified in a more inclusive TM process which sought potential from all job grades rather than just targeted grades as found in the other three case studies.

Retco had been running its talent management program for about five years at the time of the research and three participants (TM Advisor, Leadership and Development manager and a talent pool member) were from Retco's headquarters while the other four, comprised three line managers and a talent pool member from different stores across UK regions. TM

programs (see Table 14 of section 8.5.1) included the 'step-on' (development within role and for new starters), the 'step-up' (promotion program for identified talent moving from one level to the next), a Graduate program for recruiting external candidates and an Internal Graduate program for development of internal candidates as Retco had a policy of recruiting 80% internal to 20% external and of recruiting for attitude and train for skill. This study's focus was not on the graduate recruitment processes but about internal talent identification process.

Interviews in Retco were from October 2013 to March 2014. The researcher interviewed the Talent Advisor who worked with the Head of Talent Management and managed the TM records of employees. She was the gate keeper who introduced 6 other participants comprising the Learning and Development Manager (Headquarters), Peoples Manager stores (Manchester), Regional Manager & Peoples Manager (Scotland) and two talent pool members: a Trading manager (talent pool member 1, stores) and Payroll Manager (talent pool member 2, Headquarters).

8.3 THE MEANING OF TALENT IN RETCO

In Retco, talented employees were classified as those who demonstrated capability and potential to progress or be promoted to the next level through their performance in their roles ('What') and who also demonstrated the Retco leadership behaviours ('How'), at all levels.

"So our role as talent spotters is to look for people coming through at all levels. So it's how do you identify at colleague level, talent for the future. But then equally as people do start progressing, how do we continue to spot talent for each level?" (Regional People Service Manager (RPSM), stores).

"The potential grade is based on a 50/50 split of the 'what' and 'how'. So by 'how', we mean 'behaviours'. So we have RETCO leadership behaviours. We've got …and every colleague is asked to do a bit of a self-assessment as to where they see themselves with regards to those 9 behaviours. And another 50% is the KRAs (key result areas), that is the 'what'. It is really important to us that people are behaving in the right way. Rather than just doing a fantastic job, you have to be doing it the right way" (Talent Advisor).

Demonstrating the right attitude and behaviours was a critical aspect of Retco talent assessments as this was important for building an organisational culture of respect for customers and external stakeholders as well as for fellow colleagues and for promoting trust amongst all of these people. As a result, their recruitment motto was 'to recruit for attitude and train for skill'. Retco developed a '3 pillar' leadership framework which was communicated to every employee and formed part of the assessment criteria as demonstration of these behaviours were indicators for spotting employees who wanted to

develop as indicated in the following statement from a talent pool member (01) in Retco stores:

"But we have a 3 tier system in RETCO which is called the leadership Framework. We have 3 sections. The First one is 'Leading our People', underneath that first heading comes 'I am at my best', 'I coach everyday' and 'I inspire and energize'. So that is one attribute that we are looking for from people that want to develop. The second one is 'Leading to win'. So you need to show that you can 'create the right plan', 'engage in delivery' and 'implement well'. So again if you are showing that then you are willing to develop. The third one is 'Leading with vision'. I 'think ahead' and 'show good judgement' and I spot an eye for good business opportunities'. So if colleagues are demonstrating that and show that they have a good understanding then that's how we would highlight them as potential to move on. But I would say that a lot of it does come from how they do on their department…"

The L& D manager also confirmed this:

..."so we separate our technical skills training versus our leadership training which is generic to everybody because there's one leadership framework for the whole business"…

Details of this framework are provided in the following sections below alongside the 9 box criteria descriptions (see tables 12 & 13). The expected demonstration of leadership behaviours differed at the various employee grades depending on the employee's level of responsibility e.g. senior management vs junior or non-management employees. Secondly talented employees were also those who exhibited the potential to become successors for 'critical roles' particularly in stores where there has to be cover for these roles in case of long term illness or employees exiting the roles. The L& D manager explained it below:

"… L&D would design a program of development that would support them. The programs were different by level, the more senior appointments the program was, more specialised and more intensive. Because the numbers were very different as the numbers decrease as you go up the hierarchy as you would imagine. And there had to be different programs or different focuses for whether you were in HO or retail stores. Cos in retail stores, there were a lot of middle management progression. there was probably a bigger balance of program technical job specific development whereas the more senior you got, it was more on leadership and how you lead the organisation , lead your function, lead your department because the tech skills you had already got so it was more on leadership. So the balance of the program L&D designed was very different I guess by level".

Potential as defined by the Retco 9 box grid, is an employee's learning agility, aspirations and attitude to commit (see table 11 below). Company manual on 'talent matters' explained that potential is about "being able to do a '"bigger" and "more complex" job and also "indicates likelihood of future growth into roles of much greater scope, scale and level of responsibility based on the presence of key defining qualities demonstrated in role". These "defining qualities" and associated behaviours are provided in Table 12 & 13 below.

Retco assessments of potential was through the use of a 9 box grid but interestingly while there was exceptional focus on those with the highest potential who were described as those 'ready now' for promotion to the next level, there was also focus on those who had potential to be promoted but who were 'not ready now' but could be promoted within 6 months to one year or in the future. Additionally, development and coaching programs also existed for underperformers', subject experts whom they did not want to lose and for those whom were assessed as being in a wrong role and needed change. So there appeared to be a very broad approach to identifying talent in comparison to the exclusive focus and development of only very high potential and senior management cadres of staff for future leadership. Reasons for Retco's approach to talent was firstly in alignment with their overall corporate talent strategy of building organisational capability at all levels to deliver their business objective and secondly in fulfilment of their organisational ethos of fairness at work and opportunity for all. So what is evident in company documents and interviewees was the development of technical skills at all levels to ensure every employee was an expert in their job function. Retco's practices here, depicts an innovative structure that provides employees with a sense of cohesion that deepens their understanding and practice of the norms /ideals of their organisation whilst driving an enabling organisational behaviour and culture and framework for effective operations of their talent identification strategies (Joyce & Slocum, 2012).

8.3.1. Retco 9 box Grid definition of talent.

According to information from Retco's corporate document on 'talent matters', the 9 box grid was not only used to identify potential but was useful for informing them on what support was required by employees to enable them know "what was coming from the internal pipeline versus what was needed externally". The 9 box grid was in the words of Retco 'pivotal' to how they managed talent and all talent identification processes which are described below were aligned to it. The grid was used to assess both performance and potential of all cadres of employees. Table 12 below shows what the Retco 9 box grid looks like including the different scoring per box and what they mean. Table 13 presents the format for scoring employee potential including details of the 9 box grid criteria for measuring potential, its definitions as well as corresponding behaviours to enable efficiency in scoring.

8.3.1.1 Table 12: 9 Box Grid Classifications

		Low	Medium	High
3- years Performance Trend Results	Exceeds	Q6 Exceeds on Results/Low on Potential	Q3 Exceeds on Results/Medium on Potential	Q1 Exceeds on Results/High on Potential
	Meets	Q8 Meets on Results/Low on Potential	Q5 Meets on Results/Medium on Potential	Q2 Meets on Results/High on Potential
	Below	Q9 Below on Results/Low on Potential	Q7 Below on Results/Medium on Potential	Q4 Too New To Rate Colleagues who joined the company within the past 6 months only

Table 13 Retco Criterial for Identifying Talent, definitions of potential and expected associated behaviours and scoring plan

Potential Criteria	Definition	Behavioral Examples	Rating
AGILITY to learn	Can learn new things quickly and gain mastery in situations that are new, different, and highly challenging.	• Shows strong self-confidence without being "arrogant." • Learns and recovers quickly from mistakes and negative experiences – shows resilience • Out in front of key change initiatives; often an early adopter of new technologies and processes • Understands people's concerns and sensitivities • Masters new areas of expertise quickly • Shows poise in the most difficult situations	
ASPIRATION to achieve	Shows strong desire for higher levels of responsibility and leadership.	• Steps up to take on additional leadership responsibility whenever possible • Actively seeks to influence and motivate others • Seeks out leadership roles of increasing scope and scale • Demonstrates courage at higher levels – unafraid to disagree or push back appropriately • Takes on ambitious challenges without hesitation	
ATTITUDE to commit	Demonstrates high levels of engagement and ownership in the role and in the company.	• Willing to go "above and beyond" what's needed to get the job done • Remains laser-focused on results and purpose • Takes ownership and accountability in their role • Enjoys and appreciates working for the company • Desires to stay with the company	
Total			

Low (Total = 3-5)	Medium (Total = 6-8)	High (Total = 9)
Little indication that the associate has the ability or desire to grow into roles of much greater scope, scale, and level of responsibility. Develop for depth in current role or to prepare for lateral move.	Some indication that the associate has the ability and desire to grow into roles of much greater scope, scale, and level of responsibility. Develop for next role (level of investment at discretion of manager)	Strong indication that the associate has the ability and desire to grow into roles of much greater scope, scale, and level of responsibility. Invest significantly in development for long-term future responsibilities (5%-10% of associates with this rating)

8.4 DEFINING TALENT MANAGEMENT IN RETCO

In Retco, TM was about identifying, developing and retaining high performing employees who exhibited the Retco leadership behaviours and who had the potential to move to the next job grade. TM also included identifying successors for critical roles from this pool of employees. Retco's staffing structure comprised the 'salaried' and 'hourly paid' staff and the TM process differed between these two categories of staff. This was because the latter was an entry grade and comprised permanent, temporary and seasonal workers. So while TM processes for salaried staff involved the use of performance appraisals to measure performance, the 9 box grid for assessing potential, leadership behavioural assessments and career conversations for career development and planning, the hourly paid employees only had formal career conversations about their aspirations and career development.

The reason for this was that the majority of the hourly paid employees worked on the shop floor and the L& D manager explained that the impact on the bottom line of taking a colleague off the floor for half an hour was not cost efficient, meaning that Retco will be at risk of not reaching its aim of providing everyday low price. However, through Retco's transparent approach of talent identification, every new vacancy was published verbally and formally in stores for which interested hourly staff could apply. Through this process, hourly paid employees were identified to make up the talent pipeline for future management roles in stores. This identification was through daily observations of performance and behaviours, through daily /weekly 1-2-1 discussions with management and then, formally during the career conversations where they were formally appointed as successors to section managers. Those identified as successors to section managers were appointed and developed as section leaders with higher responsibilities of management in preparation for their next management role.

Progression to the next level was through a formal performance appraisal and leadership behavioural assessment. Details about talent development in corporate documents on Retco's talent development strategy stated that:

"Retco operates a tailored and personalised approach to training and development which provides a strong foundation to meet its current and future leadership needs. The company plays to individuals' strengths and offers various channels through which they can develop and by promoting and supporting progression at all levels, Retco enables its colleagues to focus on 'being at their best' and growing within the company. As a result, "everyone in the company delivers the highest standards of service to meet Retco's objectives and help the business to reach its goals" (extracted from Retco employee communication on intranet website).

Details of Retco development programs comprised internal accredited graduate programs, development for promotion to the next job grade and development within role for new salaried employees (Table 14). All TM activities were driven via employee positioning on the 9 box grid which was used for talent identification and also for identifying skills gaps, talent/workforce planning including succession and career planning in order to align them with how they globally measure talent from their parent company. Using the 9 box grid ensured consistent, efficient and systematic TM processes.

8.5. TALENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN RETCO

8.5.1 Table 14 Retco Talent Development Programs:

Name of Scheme	Purpose	Duration
Step on	Development within role & for new salaried staff	6 months
Step Up	Promotion - Moving from one level to another	2 – 3 years
Graduate	Trainee management external recruitment	2 years
Internal Graduate	Develop internal qualified employees (Stores)	1 - 2 years

The 'step on' program was an accessible development for all and also for new employees (e.g. those who just 'stepped-in' from hourly paid roles in stores and preparing for management role) that focused around 'in role' opportunities that could be tailored depending on where a colleague currently was positioned on the 9 box vs where they wanted to get to. Employees on this role are classified as 'well placed in role and develop in role'. These employees were not yet ready for promotion and received development opportunities specific to their roles which involved completing certain required training modules in order to move to the next level as described by a talent pool member in stores:

"The step on meeting involves doing certain modules, I can't remember what they are but they all based around management paths e.g. planning. So they'll come up and talk about planning and things and state why they think planning is important and how they plan. There is time management and there are other different factors but I can't remember what they are but that is where we identify people who understand what we are looking for. As they demonstrate the right behaviours because it is all around behaviours and attitude. Retco it is about the highest attitude and behaviour and strength of skill..." (Talent pool member 1).

The 'step up' program focused on employees on Q1, Q2 and Q3 on the 9 box at all levels. The organisational plan of action for these employees is a 'ready to move plan to next role'. This meant they could be moved to another role as part of career progression which might

be a promotion or lateral move and this transition would be within 12 months including plans to backfill roles (succession planning).

The 'Internal Graduate scheme' was set up to enable fast tracked management development for Retco employees with 2.2 degree in comparison to the normal Graduate scheme which had a 2.1 requirement for applicants. This was in line with corporate policy of 80% internal recruitment and 20% external.

8.6 TALENT IDENTIFICATION PROCESS IN RETCO

A summary of Retco's Talent Identification processes are presented below in Figure 8.1. Detailed discussions of the processes are provided in the subsections following.
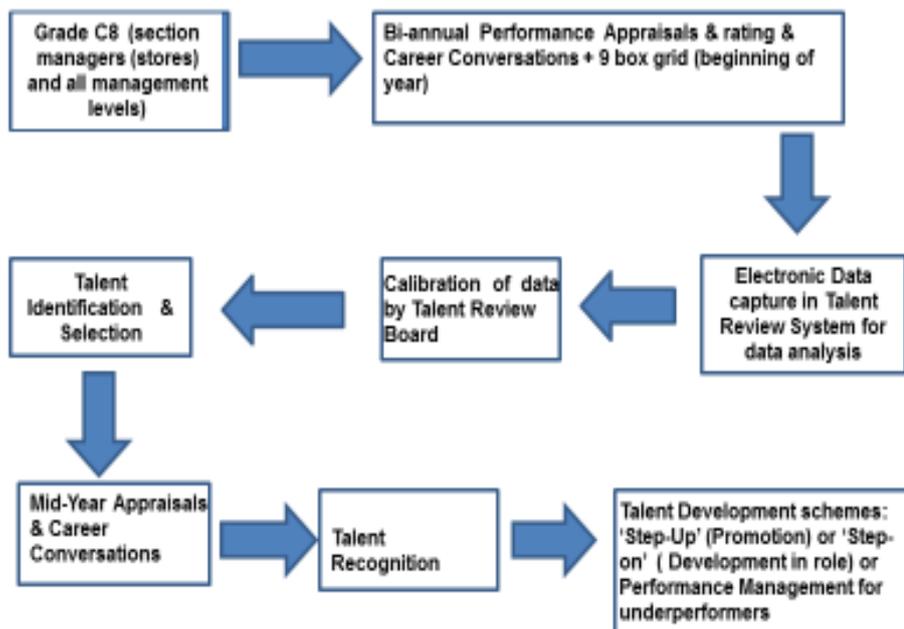
Figure 8.1: Retco Talent Identification Processes

8.6.1 Retco Talent Grading Structure

A first place to begin understanding the talent identification processes in Retco is understanding their employment structure which is split between employees working in stores and those in the Head Office (HO) which is their headquarters. Retco's employee structure is split between those who are described as 'hourly' paid who make up the entry roles (zone D, see below) and 'salaried' employees who make up the management roles.

Hourly paid employees do not occupy permanent roles as they comprised temporary, seasonal workers amongst other roles, but they have the opportunity to apply to become 'salaried' employees through a process called 'step in' which means stepping into the first rung of management in stores or entry level in the Home Office C8. Talent identification occurred for hourly paid employees through career conversations and identified employees made up the talent pipeline for future section manager roles as expressed in the statement by the regional operations manager (ROM):

"So we are always proactively working with our colleagues to ensure that we get them on development programs. Once a colleague progress from an hourly paid position to a section leader position, that's when they then get swept into an appraisal process and maybe then formally capture, literally their potential. But the talent pipeline that Miss X talked about earlier on, will capture people that don't get an appraisal but are still part of a pipeline. So we will still consider them within a succession planning".

The expected tenure in any given 'salaried' level was between two to three years but there were opportunities to move sideways on job rotations for career development purposes. A summary of the different job grades/levels in Retco at HO and stores are provided and expanded below:

Zone D (entry level) →**C8** (non-manager (HO) Section Manager (Stores)) →**C10** (middle manager (HO) Trading Manager (Stores)) →**Zone B** (senior manager (HO) Store Manager (Stores) →**Zone A** (Head of Department (HO) Regional Operations Manager (Stores)) →**Director** →**Executive Board**.

Three of the interviewees were talent pool members. One was in the HO and progressing from C8 to C10 and undergoing promotion development for the new role, the other was progressing from a C10 to a Zone B role and the final employee just moved from a General Store Manager (GSM) Zone B to Zone A Regional Operations Manager (ROM).

8.6.2 Performance & Behaviour Appraisals & 9 box Grid Assessment of Potential

Employee Performance appraisals and 9 box grid assessment for potential held bi-annually, at the end of the year which is January to February and then a mid-year review from mid-July to August. Performance appraisals were based around measuring employees' performance against Key Results Areas (KRAs) which were about the extent of achieving job role objectives. Company communication about TM describes this process as: "An

opportunity for reflection, performance, conversation and calibration of talent with focus on performance and behaviours".

8.6.2.1 Scoring of Retco definitions of performance were ("What")

4: Outperforms, 3: Consistent delivery, 2: delivered key KRAs and behaviours but some improvements required, 1: Not delivered. These were also aligned to their parent company's 5 point scale rating of: Role model, Exceeds, Solid, and Development needed, Below Expectations.

8.6.2.2 Assessment of Behaviours ("How")

Part of the measurement of performance involved appraising Retco employee behaviours. This has to do with exhibiting leadership behaviours and Retco values. The Regional Manager describes the process below:

"We do have what we call our leadership framework. So basically, we would expect our managers to behave and this, to drive their performance based on the leadership framework. So the leadership framework is made up of 3 different pillars. And within that is 'Leading our people, leading to win and leading with vision'. Now with each of those pillars, they all have behaviours identified with each of those pillars. A combination of where they sit is agreed from 1 to 4 across each of those behaviours will drive their performance…or their measurement of those behaviours. So that grading of 1to 4 if someone is either not demonstrating those behaviour, they are 1, if they demonstrate some of those behaviour they are 2 and if they demonstrate those behaviours successfully they are 3 and if they outperform on those behaviours they are 4. And because they measure their performance against those 3 pillars, if someone does 4, 4, 4, and then they are outstanding".

8.6.2.3 9 box Potential assessments (Potential)

Organisational documents describe scoring of potential as follows:
To be in Q6, Q3 or Q1 employees must have at least scored 1 grad 4 in performance.
To be placed in Q2, Q5, or Q8 'Meets', employees must score at least a grade 3 in performance
If scored only 2s or a mix of 1 & 2 then placed in 'Below'
In order to be placed in Q1 or Q2, the potential rating must be 9 (see table 12) above showing rating and scoring)
Q4 is for the new starters

8.6.3 Career conversations

These conversations occurred during the mid-year reviews of employee potential and performance and were times when colleagues could discuss their aspirations, mobility and share where they see their future career going to enable a talent plan for them and the business. The People service manager explained it this way:

"So basically we have a mid-year once a year and have an appraisal once a year. But we always have the careers conversation at one point and the purpose of that conversation is to capture, previous education for example, previous roles to verify whether the individual needs to move either sideways or upwards, also it tracks mobility to be able to identify which roles the individual will be mobile to as well as pitch this against the 9 box position. It is a worthwhile document and we always do that once a year".

Although the mid-year review was a designated time for these conversations to happen, informal 1-2-1 weekly/daily conversations between line managers and employees were ongoing throughout the year both in the stores and head office as a talent pool member and regional people service manager (RPSM) explained:

"Development in Retco is what we talk about on a daily basis. People know that if they want to develop, they can go to the people service manager or their manager and they could get the information" (talent pool member 1).

"But then it isn't just about mid-year reviews and appraisals that's where you would sit down and do that formal process but it is throughout every working day, you are coaching people to get to another level if they want to. We have a famous saying in Retco that says 'be the best that you can be every single day'. So that is what we are trying to coach. So if you want to be a colleague that stays a colleague then that is fine. We'll continue to try and coach you to be the best that you can be. But if you want to get better then throughout a working day and week, you would hope that your line manager will continue to support and coach. So therefore the review process might be, 'let's have a quick 10 minutes over a cup of tea to see how is this week is going' do you know what I mean" (RPSM).

8.6.4 Talent Review Digital management System

After appraisals, both managers and employees enter their ratings onto a talent review electronic system and this data is downloaded by the Talent team for the calibration and talent review board meetings.

8.6.5 Calibration & Talent Review Board (Talent Decision making team)

Functional Talent Reviews took place twice a year between March and April after the end of year talent review and again, in September and October after the mid-year review. The objective of these meetings was to calibrate talent ahead of and after the mid-year reviews and to agree on talent priorities, 9 box positions, succession and development planning. These meetings were co-ordinated by Senior Executives, Line managers and the HRBP.

Similarly, separate review meetings for Executive talent held in May and November each year. These were co-ordinated by Global and Regional Heads around achieving the same objective as those of the Functional talent review boards. These meetings are more about confirming identified talent.

8.6.6 Talent Pool & Talent Sharing

The talent pool comprised all employees who had been identified at all levels as high performers and high potential and purpose was firstly to enable development of these employees for their next role or lateral move. Secondly, employees were identified as successors for critical roles across the business and this is linked to the third purpose of the talent pools which was to enable talent sharing across the business, locally, regionally and globally. Mobility and lateral moves were critical aspects of talent development and a determinant and requirement for being promoted into new roles across the business as managers needed to be versatile and have social capital. Talent pool members were also used as role models for aspiring talent and for promoting awareness of talent programs in Retco. Talent pools were also classified into Executive Talent, functional talent and subject specialists. Amongst the Functional talent, there were different levels comprising those who were ready for immediate promotion and those who would be ready in 6 months or more.

"So through the succession management process, we used to grade people and rate are they ready now? Ready one year, ready two years or further up. So the whole purpose of the tm program was to get people ready ahead of the curve, so that when the position arises, we would have a pool of people to choose from. And internal. There were quite a lot of matrices around internal vs external succession. So the company target was like 80% internal succession and 20% external appointments".

8.7 FACTORS AFFECTING TID

8.7.1 Culture

A main factor central to Retco's talent identification practice and the organisation as a whole was its culture engraved in its leadership framework and organisational values of fairness at work, opportunity for all, respect for each other and pride in Retco. As a result employees were not addressed as staff but 'colleagues' and they had an open environment where all managers had open offices on the floor and directors also had their space on the floor and would only use offices for meetings and no one had privileged parking just to promote this open and empowering environment. All job adverts stressed the importance of "being a role model in Retco 'Way of Working' and living the Retco beliefs.

8.7.2 Leadership behaviours & development

In Retco being a great leader was important at all employee levels in order to achieve their purpose of "doing the right thing in the right way". This was important in their talent identification process through employees demonstrating the Retco leadership behaviours detailed in their leadership framework. This framework was communicated to all levels of employees including the executive board at regular intervals and at induction for new employees. As already presented above, only those employees displaying the Retco leadership behaviours were deemed suitable for promotion and by so doing Retco had a way of holding managers accountable and discouraging poor leadership and instead encouraging leadership role modelling and setting high standards of conduct.

8.7.3 Culture Fit

Recruiting the right people with the right attitude was important in Retco and the corporate slogan was about recruiting for attitude and training for skill. It was important that the personality and attitude of new and internal employees' fitted with the Retco culture. Assessments of an employee's cultural fit were through psychometric tests for external applicants and through performance management for internal employees.

8.7.4 Performance management and building capability

Retco was a fast paced organisation with everything needing to be done at "110mph" according to information about Retco on the intranet site. Employee development was core to achieving optimum performance and achievement of departmental and corporate goals. Retco had internal regional training academies attached to its stores where employees received modular trainings aligned to their roles to enable competency on the job and performance required for promotion. In stores, performance was monitored daily and encouraged also through individual and store performance bonuses. A training needs analysis practice was in place for all employees which identified skill gaps and each employee had their own individual development plan (IDP) that enabled them track their performance and development on the job. Retco's culture of managing underperformers was seen as high risk for the organisation, and this indicated their desire and concern for improving performance of all employees and not just those seen as high potential and high performers. Their policy of recruiting internally and establishing its own Internal Graduate Scheme as well as a BA Hons degree program in Retail in addition to celebrating and

recognising employee achievements propelled employee and organisational performance and capability. Furthermore, having an electronic system for monitoring and tracking employee performance and enabling talent sharing regionally and globally enabled organisational efficiency in its talent identification process. However performance was not just about achieving targets but also included how these targets were achieved; so it was always aligned with the Retco behaviours to ensure things were being done in the right way according to the Retco values.

8.7.5 Managing Risks

In the stores, Retco had a system of identifying their top three and their bottom three performers which not only enabled thorough management of performance to ensure all-round improvement but also alerted management firstly of people whose poor performance was due to being assigned the wrong role; so for these employees they were re-assigned. Secondly, management were also alerted of the need to coach those underperformers who did not fall into the first category to see how they can improve.

"The other end of the spectrum is underperformance as well which we are very careful about managing so if somebody is not performing and they haven't got potential then they will go into the q9 box which would generally mean that the performance management procedure would be instigated for that person. Occasionally we have had people who have low performance but have potential because they are in a wrong role. So they would go along the box in Q7.So as for identifying high potentials, identifying performance risks, risks as in somebody isn't performing and then 'gaps' such a as stating that there is actually nobody that can fit into this role and it is a critical" (Talent Advisor).

8.7.6 Transparency through employee engagement

Retco promoted its culture through its HR engagement team who informed employees about new initiatives and supported managers with managing and leading change. This was done through employee surveys called "Your Voice" engagement survey whose aim was to investigate how to improve employee experience and refine their training & development. They also ensured that employees knew how much they were appreciated for the work they do and feel valued for a job well done, through their recognition schemes, 'Bright Ideas' suggestion scheme and exciting recognition events. Having planned career conversations during the mid-year review was another way Retco demonstrated its culture of transparency and openness. Interviewees confirmed that every employee was made aware of their position on the 9 box grid and informed about their development plans while discussing aspirations and managing employee expectations with a talent pool member expressing

what he appreciated the most in Retco was the honest feedback on having realistic expectations when employees aspirations did not measure up with their appraised performance and potential. Employees were also made aware of vacancies through the intranet and encouraged and supported to apply for their immediate manager's role if it became vacant as was the case of one of the interviewees.

"…I know it will be different with every organisation in different industries probably in private sector and in big retailers like ourselves, we are more transparent in letting people know where they sit" (L&D).

"…she just put me forward. So she wrote like an email. The way I applied was that I sent her an email saying that this is why I want it, this is why I think I am suitable for it, you know like selling myself basically. And then she wrote an email on the back of that as her commendation, agreeing and like supporting my email and giving her reasons why she thought I would be suitable for the position… they believed I could do the job and they pushed that belief that I could do the job to people who could give me the role. I desperately wanted it and their belief in me helped me get the role. So it wasn't just my desperation that got me the job" (talent pool member 02).

8.7.7 Succession planning

Retco's intranet communications about succession planning emphasised the need for "identifying skills and development opportunities for senior roles" being necessary for maintain leadership succession. To do this, Retco required identifying and creating a 'robust' internal succession plan for the development of internal talent. Achieving this lead to their creation of a structured career path for its GSMs alongside role specified and organisational behavioural trainings. In the stores, Retco operated a two deep succession planning strategy such that all critical roles had two successors being developed who could step into that role in stores in any region if there was an exit for any reason through the talent sharing process. The L&D manager explained it this way:

"So some of the targets like having two deep successors was challenging…we used to call them hot jobs or critical jobs, these are the jobs that are absolutely key to our organisation whether that be the legal implication if we don't have somebody in this role, or it is a real specialism for us. So they would be the ones we would essentially focus on".

8.7.8 Job Mobility/Lateral Moves

Job mobility was an essential aspect of developing potential in Retco particularly in stores where any identified talent may be positioned as a successor for critical roles at any of the Retco stores and in any region and sometimes this could be global for executive roles. It was expressed in company manual in the following way:

"Careers don't have to run on straight lines. After all, talented, innovative people tend to be lateral thinkers. So it follows they can be lateral movers too, capable of adapting their abilities and applying their intellect to completely new challenges".

Findings suggest that lateral moves were a requirement for remaining relevant in the talent pool as portrayed in the ROM's remarks below:

"A potential appointment for us probably averages two years. I think sometimes, we can have somebody do something for three years but it is unusual and so you tend to get two years and maybe get a lateral move. At regional level, at my level, if I don't have potential to move beyond the role that I am in right now then I have got a life cycle on me. There's a sell by date on me. So let's say I do this region and then travel to another region and maybe then travel to another region. But then there are no other regions I can move to so basically that means I have either got five years left of doing what I am doing or I need to be good enough to be promoted or mobile enough to realise other lateral moves. So that's why mobility is absolutely crucial so I think mobility and agility to be able to get your head around the different roles are really important because we in the business that have people doing the job for years and years we appreciating in value of freshness and new talent to come through".

8.7.2 External Pressures

8.7.2.1 Alignment with global TID practice

It was important for Retco to align its TID practice with that of its parent body and so the use of the 9 box grid was driven by this pressure and company literature indicated the need for a refreshed 9 box grid whose definitions of potential, rating and decision making were same as that of their parent company to promote consistency in use and a common language for discussing talent matters.

8.7.2. 2 Environment (Meeting the demands of a competitive market)

Being one of the top retailers in UK meant Retco had to maintain its position and to remain competitive meant consistency in fulfilling its promise of being Britain's best value retailer exceeding customer needs everyday through providing everyday low prices. To achieve this Retco had to retain its talented employees and ensure employees were energized to be the best they can be every day through its training and development promise of ''unstoppable development and unlimited opportunities''. And also fostering a culture and empowering environment that would enable employees live its values and induce employee loyalty and therefore retention.

8.8 CHALLENGES & MANAGEMENT OF TID PROCESS FOR RELIABILITY

8.8.1 Succession planning

The L&D manager explained that finding two successors was a challenge for the critical roles and how they managed this challenge was through firstly making this aspect of TID one of the KRAs for the HRBPs such that they monitored and tracked this process to ensure it happened. Secondly, they also did this proactively during the talent review board's calibration process to backfill positions of those in Q1, Q2, and Q3.

"…if I relate to being a HRBP, and that was part of my core role, my KRAs was how I made sure for the core roles there were successors in place… Could I say that it is absolutely 2 deep succession for the positon, no, but the process happens. So when it comes to appraisal time, data gets sent out to all heads of departments stating that you have only got 80% entered onto the system so you need to be 100%.so it was mandatory. The process happened without fail. In return there was a great culture of if you say it will happen, it happens and it will happen" (L & D manager).

"…then there will be a talent review meeting post all the conversations having taken place. So we talk about what's happening with the function, who is going to back fill all of the various roles, management positions, specialists, we'll identify if there are any gaps" (Talent Advisor).

8.8.2 Careers Conversations / Transparency

Even though the career conversations happened during the mid-year reviews, the L & D manager expressed concerns about their quality. ''It might happen but is there really the quality of the conversation in every case''? She explained that this challenged was managed by training managers and designing a sample conversation template:

"The line managers will be trained to have a conversation with you about your position in the 9 box and what that means. So actually if I am in Q8 and in Q8 meant that I was doing a good job and at working at the right level, there is a risk there of asking well 'what does that mean for me, am I not getting on'? so the conversation should be then about how to motivate and continue to engage colleagues no matter the box they are in. so the talent team would design a 'talk it' to say this is the kind of conversation you could be having with someone in Q1, Q2, Q3, Q6. And giving some development solutions" (L&D manager).

There were also concerns about ensuring expectations were managed properly during the career conversations to prevent demotivation and these concerns were expressed by the Talent Advisor, the RPSM and a talent pool member. Management of these challenges is also inferred in the RPSM's response.

''Yes it is really about managing expectations. They do not want to give them false hope. We are very transparent. We do tell people. It is good. Again if this is not applied properly, it can lead to people perhaps losing their motivation because they are expecting that well, I am in this box so I should be promoted but there is nowhere to go or there is no vacancy and so problems like that…'' (Talent Advisor).

''And then the career conversation is really important. We actually, a) capture what an individual wants to do as opposed to what we think they want to do. But at the same time, how we help them to achieve their aspirations but then also to help people manage their expectations. For example if a colleague comes along and says 'I am a colleague and I would like to be a GSM in 12 months' for example. How we have a very honest conversation that says, that is not going to happen. You may want to be a GSM of the future and we will help you to get to that but your timescales are unrealistic. And I am exaggerating the point for the purpose of explanation as you can imagine. But on the flip side how do we really help people that we can see can absolutely see can make GSM but lacking in confidence. How do we put our arms around them and let them know that they can absolutely do this and we will help you to do that and give them that push that they need'' (RPSM).

Organisationally, there were plans underway to refocus the midyear review more on career conversations and less on performance and potential assessment in alignment with the Retco global practice to facilitate the process.

8.8.3 Quality of Assessments

Manager Misinterpretations/ Inflated ratings: There were some challenges with managers choosing their own interpretations of the meaning of potential and 9 box positions by line managers and some inflated appraisal ratings for fear of the impact of scoring an employee low on the team and also fear of push back and having an honest conversation with employees. The calibration process discussed above, allowed the re-assessments of employees where there doubts to enable credibility of assessments and the Talent Advisor talked about regular briefings with different levels of managers to further support them with the assessment processes as described below:

"We are currently going through a series of briefings for all heads of department level and directors so that they understand how it applies to them and how they apply it to the teams. And then when we go to roll it out next year, we will do further cascades via senior managers and then roll it out. So it is a very personal way of doing it rather than doing it by e-learning".

8.8.4 Technological challenges

The Talent Advisor mentioned how the talent review system had malfunctions at some point which resulted in some manual collation of records and report but that this problem was resolved through purchase of new technology.

8.8.5 Inconsistencies

8.8.5.1 Appraisals

Interviewees commented about the hourly paid employees not being included in the appraisal process in stores but not so with those at Headquarters. Retco as a start managed this challenge by including all hourly paid staff in career conversations process for capturing career aspirations for individual development plans. The regional operations manager (ROM) also explained that the hourly paid staff still make up the talent pipeline in store as successors for next role and deputise for section managers. Information on training and development in Retco's intranet website also confirm that opportunities exist for any hourly paid employee to become salaried based on their interests, performance and behaviours and the career path existed for section Leaders to become managers once they were identified as potential.

8.8.5.2 Career paths

Some interviewees raised challenges concerning the higher earnings of employees in stores who were on the same career grade as those in Headquarters and sometimes these irregularities also occurred amongst employees on same career grade but working in different stores as the RPSM explained below:

"...another thing is career path. So you get to a level and ask what opportunity is there that I can move into. What job should I go into that will get me the best of my potential we have just launched a career path with clear mapping recently. The grades in the fields they have in the store are sometimes different from what they have in the head office for example. So there's a bit of sometimes, opportunities where salaries could be different and grades are different because the grades actually mean different things. They could be for example at a store level, running a small shop and doing a similar grade in Retco house, that actually your salary could be a lot less because your position isn't clear as agreed to roles as it is in retail out in the field.... So yes, there are grading and inconsistencies in terms of the compensation for those. This creates a bit of a barrier because why would you go into a different role, with less incentives. Because you may be earning less to do a bigger job. Higher risk for the same package".

8.8.5.3 Promotion Process

A talent pool member expressed frustration with this process as it appeared demotivating due to inconsistencies mentioned in their remark below about the transparency of the process and the length of time it takes to be assigned the promotional grade even after being identified as a successor for a role. The step up or 'unlocking potential' process could take between 6 to 9 months.

"And I don't think we are consistent about the way we offer our opportunities. We don't know because no-one ever explains it. So if they can justify why so and so's got this position is about TM and thinking of who is gonna go in there, succession planning and that's what it's about rather than just giving someone that job. I think if you are identified as being talented and ready for the next move then start your unlocking potential program and start working towards it so if a job comes up then you are ready for it rather than having to wait even longer and getting frustrated… It's basically a promotions so you won't ever get promoted straightaway. You go into this development program called unlocking potential. The majority of colleagues would apply for a role that is above them and get offered the role and then do unlocking potential whereas some others would first do unlocking potential program and then get found a role..." (Talent pool member 2).

8.8.6 Job Mobility or lateral Moves

The Regional People service manager (RPSM) expressed this challenge as 'hitting a brick wall' and another People Service Manager (PSM) of a store expressed this challenge as a 'barrier'. Sometimes identified talent pool members/successors resist job moves due to the likelihood of earning lower wages and / or incentives as well as having to travel without compensation and be away from home on regular basis. All of these, plus having a higher responsibility that could endanger performance and initiate foreseeable demotion. The manager expressed that they proactively managed this challenge during career conversations and though this resolved the issue but sometimes it remained a persistent challenge as expressed in the anecdote from the ROM:

"So I will give you an example from Miss X's point, 'I ran a store well ran 7 stores actually at different points as a store manager, somebody offered me a role which basically meant that I was in charge of looking after a part of a business's agenda for facilities management and cleaning for half a company as well as writing the statutory and clear working and that for the business I was also in charge of ensuring that I was coaching the individuals that I looked after at a regional level and I was spending time away from home at the same package I was on with maybe just a little more than an entry salary. For a lot of people they would say 'no, I don't fancy spending two nights a week away from home, be writing all these and coaching all these people when I can just run a shop, be home every night and do the small roles that I am responsible for. Actually that's something a lot of people wouldn't have fancied. It was a risk but it was one worth taking because it was a bigger potential profile and exposure it gave me. And I think that's the point. When you take on a bigger role, there's higher profile and exposure and if you aren't cut for it, you will be found out quicker. So it's a risk".

"…Sometimes we do hit brick walls. The main brick wall is more to do with travel. So where people don't want to travel to the stores that we have asked people to go to. And that's not necessarily at GSM but middle management level. Where cost of fuel is so much where if we can't cover that cost of fuel for travel, people are reluctant to move and travel to further distances. So travel will be one that we come up against and could be a brick wall. And sometimes people may be saying that yes they want to do something next but actually when it comes along, will say 'I am quite safe where I am, I don't want to move'. So it doesn't always go swimmingly well but it is a good process that does work but naturally there is always going to be the odd flying… (RPSM).

8.8.7 Managing Subject Specialists

An unresolved challenge is how subject specialist were managed. They were according to the talent team very important in the business and formed part of the potential talent but there appeared to be a challenge on how to progress them if they were not willing to step up into management positions.

"…the business partners will then work with the function to say what the balance of our 9 box matrix is. Who have we got in the top talent boxes, who are our experts and how can we retain them because they don't want to progress but how can we retain them that's the big issue… So if someone in Q6, have you thought about how they could mentor others because they are an expert ..." (L& D manager).

The Talent Advisor also expressed same:

"The other side of the spectrum is that we have subject matter experts. So those are the people that are performing really high and are absolute experts in what they do. And the next level would be for them to manage people or a team but that's not necessarily the right step for those people. So it's about how also we retain and motivate that population and they fit into the Q6 box on the grid. So we have particularly in head office an awful load of roles. So we have Legal people, we have property and construction department. So we have some real specialists. We have like a town planning department, construction managers, we have a lot of specialist in our IT. We have some real specialists in HR, e.g. reward specialists and we wouldn't particularly want to move them into a different area of the business or lose them. So there are lots of areas in the business that have technical expertise. All of them would go into Q6 unless there is potential for them to grasp upwards".

8.9 EMERGING THEMES

8.9.1. Challenges of diversity

Both the RPSM and the ROM inferred about the need for having a diverse talent pool and 'fishing from the wider pool' (RSPM) and though this was already happening at the executive level, the ROM said there was still deficiency in this area.

"So it's not just about having the right program but having a really good diverse team and right program as well. So it is really important. We know statistically that we do not have enough women except in role. Actually on the exec, we have been doing pretty well. We have a few women on our exec team. But as store managers, regional managers, we do not have enough women" (ROM).

"And we do then monitor that as we have a target that we should meet for development as we have a percentage of people that we should be spotting through and we should be working through that and then that gets recorded monthly so we track that monthly to see how people are doing against that target but then also how people are progressing and we also look at that down to ethnicity and gender. So we break down to see if we are truly fishing from the wider pool which is really important to us" (RPSM).

8.9.2 Proactiveness

Organisationally, Retco demonstrated instructive proactiveness in the conceptualisation and operationalization of their TM practice which also impacted individual proactiveness in career management. For example they had formal and informal career conversations all year round which promoted excellent employee engagement and motivation while also minimising challenges and crisis management as these could be resolved as they arose. This proactiveness was also evidenced in a bi-annual (rather than annual as found in the other three cases) appraisal of employee performance and assessments of potential which drove employee and organisational performance. Provision of individual development plan to talent pool members facilitated individual proactivity in driving career progress. Retco also responded to problems such as the challenges of excluding hourly paid staff from appraisals by introducing careers conversations for them to minimise antagonisms amongst staff.

8.10 SUMMARY

This chapter presented findings from a case study of a private sector retailer. A key but surprising finding was Retco's adoption of an inclusive talent approach, which going by scholarly discussions about talent practices in private sector organisations, contradicts the assumed shareholder profit making approach of TM associated with private sector organisations. As some authors (Christensen et al., 2010; Ford et al, 2010) argue that the inclusive talent approach is found in public sector organisations. Another key finding which is prescriptive for successful TM programs was Retco's alignment of their organisational values to their performance management processes through a comprehensive 'leadership framework' tailored to fit different categories of employees and which assessed demonstration of leadership behaviours (the 'HOW') alongside employee performance (the 'WHAT'). This innovative practice, enabled organisational awareness of Retco's corporate ethos and demonstration of expected behaviours whilst promoting employee accountability and driving a positive organisation behaviour and culture/environment for the success of TM initiatives.

TM in Retco was therefore focused on succession planning, seeking high potential and high performance from employees at all levels while developing organisational competence through competency development of all employees whether classified as high potential or not to ensure maximum performance in their roles. Innovative practices firstly comprised proactive management of underperformance through identifying their top three and bottom three performers so that there were always successors for critical roles, whilst managing

risks from underperforming employees through coaching for those struggling in their roles or re-assignment to other roles that were most suitable to them to ensure optimum performance alongside development. Another innovative practice included talent sharing processes which facilitated speedy coverage of vacancies across regions through hi-tech digitalised systems. There were challenges with succession planning, careers conversation job rotations and having quality assessments. Having hi-tech digitised functional systems for monitoring and tracking employee progress, managing employee engagement and providing speedy response to problems enabled a more reliable TM process in comparison to Civico, Locgov and PHServ whose technology was not as advanced or functional. Retco's inclusive talent approach advances the debates for shifting approaches from exclusive to more inclusive talent and also indicates that an innovative inclusive talent practice as found in Retco, negates scholarly perceptions of inclusive talent as just another label for HRM. Further discussions of Retco's contribution to advancing knowledge and practice of the TM field are addressed in the next chapter which provides a cross-case discussion of findings and cross-case analysis.

CHAPTER 9: DISCUSSION AND CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapters' five to eight presented a within-case analysis of the four case studies. This chapter presents a discussion and cross-case analysis of the findings in comparison to arguments within the extant literature and dominant theoretical frameworks on TM. A cross-case summary of the findings showing similarities and differences in findings is presented in Tables 15 (see Appendix 5, pp. 301-308). Discussions and cross-case analysis will be based on the research questions (see section 1.4):

- How do organisations define talent and TM in public and private sectors?
- What factors affect the processes of identification and employee differentiation?
- What challenges and barriers to reliable talent occur and how are they managed?
- How similar or different are the talent identification practices and why do these differences exist?

9.2 HOW DO ORGANISATIONS DEFINE TALENT?

This question is important and response is required to facilitate organisational ability to recognise and easily identify talent as some authors (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013) depict, talent as an identity which is either in the 'subject' or 'object' realm and while the former refers to talent as people or the 'who' of talent, the latter refers to the characteristics or attributes found in these people or the 'what' of talent. Therefore organisations must be clear in what they mean by talent and why they have adopted a particular definition or philosophy. Secondly, defining talent is critical to the identification process since definitions are domain or industry specific and therefore diverse definitions are prevalent which can be misleading for organisations without direction in this area (CIPD, 2007) more so when there is general consensus in the literature that organisations rarely know what they mean by talent or who their talented employees are (Larson et al., 1998; Ulrich, 2010; Warren, 2006). Thirdly, clarity in defining who and what talent is, is essential to having a shared understanding of talent which arguably is vital for a successful and effective TM practice (McDonnell, 2015; Wright & Nishil, 2012) and also important for differentiating between who is and who is not talent as different perspectives may exist amongst HR managers, top managers and line

managers on the sources of competitive advantage for their firms (Dries and Pepermans, 2012).

There is general belief that most organisations adopt the exclusive approaches to talent (Swailes, 2013) although recent research (CIPD, 2012) shows inclusive approaches becoming more common. Additionally, hybrid approaches which adopt both exclusive and inclusive talent philosophies are also becoming a normal practice according to Stahl et al., (2012) and as evidenced in the talent approach by PHServ. Discussions of the findings concerning the definitions of talent will be based on the inclusive and exclusive talent perspectives and primarily on the 'talent as object and subject' perspective and not 'innate' talent which is more about giftedness or natural talent as the focus of this study is on 'organisational' talent.

Three perspectives dominate the 'talent as subject' viewpoint, the first being the exclusive talent as 'High potential and high performance' where high potential employees are classified as those being capable of filling senior roles and high performance employees are those who have demonstrated proficiency and excelled /exceeded performance expectations in their roles. The second perspective is the exclusive talent as 'key positions' where only strategic positions ('A' or pivotal positions) and those who occupy these positions ('A' players of 'pivotal people') are seen as talent. The third perspective is 'inclusive talent' where every employee is seen as possessing talent with a key aim being to nurture and harness the 'individual strengths of each employee to enable maximum firm contribution (McDonnell, 2015; Meyers & Woerkom, 2014). The first two exclusive perspectives adopt work force differentiation strategies (Huselid & Becker, 2011) where employees are differentiated based on their past and current performance and confine talent to a small group of employees in support of elitist views (Gagne, 2000, p. 67) that talent consists of the top 10% of employees as represented in talent definitions by the CIPD who state that talent is made up of personnel that "can make a difference to organisational performance either through their immediate contribution or in the longer –term by demonstrating highest levels of potential" (CIPD, 2007, p. 7).

9.2.1 Exclusive Talent Approaches

All four cases predominantly subscribed to the understanding of talent as high potential and high performance as demonstrated firstly in three cases Civico, PHServ and Retco in their use of the 9 box grid assessment system which classified talented employees as high performers on the X' axis or high potential 'on the Y' axis grids (see appendix4). And

secondly, through definitions of talent presented by interviewees from all four organisations presented below:

"….people who have a wider potential to perform at senior level and various roles across departments (Head, Talent Resourcing, Civico).

''talent is about spotting potential and realising that potential, it's about being eloquent and learning new opportunities.. (Talent pool member, Locgov). "It is proposed that managers support individuals who in their view demonstrate potential for future senior roles" (HRLT succession report, Locgov).

'Our definition of somebody with high potential, they would know that it's the 9 box grid' (Talent Advisor, Retco).

…"those people who are performing above expectation and those who are displaying high levels of potential. In the pure definition of talent that is what we would see talent" (HR Specialist, PHServ).

In these organisations being classified as high potential and high performer was necessary for identification as talent either for promotion to the next level, development in role or to be successor to a critical role in store, as was the case in Retco; or for leadership development and promotion to future leadership positions as was the case in Civico, Locgov and PHServ. The operationalisation of talent as high performance and potential is consistent with scholarly views that organisations within the 'war for talent' climate and under the uncertainties of evolving labour markets, are concerned with personnel with excellent performance that can improve achievement of corporate goals and their competitive positions (Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Lepak & Snell, 1999). Also adopting the second exclusive perspective viewpoint were Civico, Locgov and PHServ who defined talent based on 'key positons' as depicted in the following quotes:

"Although the focus of succession planning and talent management tends to be on key positions, development initiatives should occur alongside more broad based learning initiatives. However detailed analysis of key positions and target areas may suggest tailored developmental programmes and activities for certain areas "(HRLT report succession planning document, Locgov).

"…it's actually everyone who is an 8a and above. So if you think about it, that is everyone who is an 8a up to the executive team" (HR Specialist, PHServ). "...the key group that you would want to try and ensure is talented is the medical consultants... So in so far as what a hospital does, saves lives makes people better, the key group will be the medical consultants" (Asst. Director of Organisational Development, NE1, PHServ).

'in Civico, they are actually looking for talent in terms of director level… but also looking for the super talented to get to the Director General level (HRBP, Civico).

In Civico these positions were primarily that of the director general and directors as there was recognition of talent shortage in these areas for future development and progression to the Cabinet. In PHServ these key positions were the medical consultants, the executive board and senior management as these positions were difficult and costly to replace and due to current governmental budget cuts, PHServ had to re-strategize its resourcing for these position through building internal pipelines and talent pools of successors for development and retention. In Locgov, the key positions referred to all exiting senior leaders' positions which had to be filled speedily due to high redundancies offered to senior leaders in these positions as a result of budget cuts and re-structuring. Civico, PHServ and Locgov therefore continued talent searches to these targeted job grades.

The adoption of the exclusive talent approaches are consistent with traditional opinions of TM being about recruitment of senior management and the most capable intelligent employees with managerial capabilities (Al Ariss et al., 2014 p. 174) but the difference here is that amongst these targeted groups, talented employees identified were those classified through assessments as high performers and high potential as opposed to all employees in these targeted grades being seen as talent just because they were in managerial positions or job grades. What is also evident is that definitions of talent were contextual and also affected the talent identification processes of each organisation as well as why individual talent were more likely to be selected as talent in comparison to others (Bailey & Morley, 2006). For example, it is not surprising that in a hospital setting, medical consultants were amongst the classified talented employees as without this group, it would be impossible for hospitals and the community to manage health conditions. Hence definitions of performance and potential differed between all four cases as definitions were organisationally driven even when the same 9 box grid assessment system was used by three cases, Civico, PHServ and Retco.

For example definitions of high performance in organisations included star performer, strong performer, good performer and underperforming in relation to meeting deadlines and delivery in Civico as this was vital to completion of national projects and project management was an important skill in Civico. In PHServ, performance had a national classification of exceeding expectation, meets expectation and partially meets development but diverse local definitions within its different regional organisations because each location had its own specialism and challenges. An interviewee from one of PHServ's regional locations

expressed that it was difficult to measure performance of the consultants as their work involved decisions about issues of life and death which cannot be measured as their work was more about goodwill and diligence to duty. Similarly, a difference in definitions of 'performance' was found in Retco whose definition .comprised the 'what' which referred to employee performance in their roles and the 'how' which comprised their demonstration of organisational leadership behaviours within their roles which was co-ordinated through a generic leadership framework matrix.

For Retco, performance was not just about achievements but also importantly about each individual demonstrating leadership behaviours in the way they achieved things. As a talent pool member stated, performance is about ." people who demonstrate the right behaviours and attitude, good work ethic, understand what we do as a business and want to achieve…" (Talent pool member, M01). Retco's approach depicts instructive ethical undertones which are critical for leadership skills development, promoting fairness, cordiality amongst employees and a pleasant work environment and holding all employees accountable (both management and staff) for contrary behaviours even in a competitive environment; but at the same time, enabling the TM process to flow, promoting ethical behaviours minimising lost time and costs that would have been incurred from having a separate way of holding the different cadres of employees accountable and promoting organisational efficiency. Therefore contradicting criticisms about the inclusive approach which Retco adopted (discussed in detail in the next section) as incurring unnecessary expenses for HR investments (Lin, 2006) and not being as cost effective as the exclusive talent approach.

Retco's process contributes to the 'best practice' (Stahl et al., 2007) TM approach and is a recommended business strategy with promise for enhancing positive organisational culture/behaviour and competitive advantage. Locgov's definition of performance was unclear as most talent pool members attested to the appraisal system being non-functional with most relating performance to previous achievements in their roles in addition to putting up a strong application for the leadership development program. However, an interesting aspect of Locgov's talent approach which advances very limited scholarly discussions in TM about diversity and benefits of a diverse workforce and concepts of inclusion (Al Ariss, 2014; McDonnell et al., 2012; Roberson, 2006), is their inclusion 'add-on' by seeking talent from under-represented minority and diversity groups in the targeted job grades. This talent approach contributes a new 'dimension' of equity to the exclusive talent approach which not only adds to best practice approaches for business to adopt since most tend to adopt the exclusive talent approach but could also contribute to their CSR initiatives as this was one the reasons for Locgov's implementation of this talent approach. Locgov's talent approach

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not only contributes to knowledge about positioning the TM field within CSR (Vaiman et al., 2012) but also raises further debates about whether exclusive talent means 'exclusion' as it relates to diversity issues while raising questions about what inclusive talent really means and whether it extends to the inclusion of diversity as resonated in Festing et al.'s (2015) research and therefore extends the debates for further clarity and extensions in organisational talent definitions(Al Ariss, 2014, p. 177).

The use of the 9 box grid in Civico, PHServ and Locgov, was important for providing generic as opposed to individual definitions of potential and performance to aid efficiency in ratings of performance and potential to minimise inconsistencies with interpreting the meanings of these two concepts even though definitions were more detailed and aligned to behavioural descriptions as was the case in Retco and Locgov than in the other organisations. It was also useful for promoting a shared understanding of what talent is amongst employees and also for differentiating the practice of appraising performance from measurements of 'potential' amongst them (employees) as findings from Civico, Retco and PHServ indicated that the 9 box grid was equated with TM by employees.

"The 9 box grid is essentially about potential. So when we do the talent management stuff it is about reviewing potential not performance because the performance review should be done through the appraisal process" (IPDM, PHServ, SE1).

"For the pure TM process we use a 9 box grid and we basically engage with our talent pool within each division and explained why we were going to take this approach" (HR Specialist, PHServ, SE1).

The 9 box grid was therefore symbolic not only for differentiating performance appraisal (all employees had appraisals but only those selected for TM programs were rated with the 9 box grid) from TM but also for differentiating talented employees from the non-talented. The separation of HRM from TM practice by this assessment system is not only instructive for TM practice but also important at the organisational and employee levels for validating TM practices and TM strategy in these organisations and for supporting its implementation in line with arguments of the importance of the role of TM in differentiating the needs of high potential form average employees (Dries, 2013, p. 274; Ledford & Kochanski, 2004) while also advancing the TM field about the effective development of performance measures for managing talent as well as confirming that TM as not just another management fad of 'old wine in new bottles' (Tansley, 2011; Iles et al., 2010). Also supporting 'potential' discourse in the literature (Silzer & Church, 2009), the purpose of potential assessments in the cases was either for leadership development and succession planning.

Scholarly concerns about the exclusive talent philosophy are firstly about the current persistent environment of a war for talent (Farndale et al., 2010; Schuler et al., 2011). This suggests that focusing on a small percentage of a workforce, puts organisations at risk of being in this vicious warring cycle for talent due to high turnover as evidenced in PHServ, Civico and Locgov or 'firm poaching' evidenced in Civico leaders' fears of losing their high potential employees to the private sector. A second challenge is about the volatile unpredictable environment of organisations due to influences of environmental uncertainties which can make ineffective organisational investments in a selected group of employees since talent requirements might change in consonance with environmental changes and therefore recommending more inclusive talent approaches (Buckingham, 2005) such as the hybrid talent approach that ensure access to various forms of talent as a way of overcoming these challenges (Meyer & Woerkom, 2014). Contrasting this argument, Sonnnberg, Zijderveld and Brinks (2014) however depicted exclusive TM strategies as more successful in generating talent –perception congruence than inclusive TM strategies. Further outcomes of the exclusive approaches will be discussed in the sections on challenges and their management (see sections 9.4 and 9.5).

9.2.2 Inclusive Talent Approaches

The inclusive talent approach was incorporated by PHServ (on its national framework) and by Retco. Definitions of TM in PHServ talent conversations booklet describe TM as an 'inclusive' practice and overtly it would appear so from the organisational intentions depicted towards development of all employees and interviewees' statements about talent being everyone in the organisation. However further examination of the training and development schemes revealed that only one (The Edward Jenner program) out of the eleven programs was open to every level of staff. All the others were mostly biased towards senior staff and the executive board. Interviewees clarified this from their statements such that even when they presented an inclusive practice initially while talking about the national talent program, they progressively described an exclusive talent approach either knowingly or unknowingly when they discussed the practice and targeted job groups for TM programs. The exclusive practice was also confirmed by PHServ regional local development partner who explained that funding was only available for senior management grades 8a and above in the following extract.

"'Regionally, TM is more 'elitist' but we have tried to look at band 5 and above in our region" (LDP, PHServ).

It appeared that there was confusion in differentiating between inclusive TM and an organisational policy of inclusion as company documents on TM depicted wide publicity about having an inclusive practice as it relates to diversity with programs targeted at underrepresented minorities at leadership level but again this was for those in bands 8a and above, confirming the statement about an elitist TM practice not just regionally but nationally. Interviewees sounded very careful about not talking contrarily as reflected in this statement by the HR specialist:

"We are not excluding people from the process so I suppose talent is everyone but going back to what we are trying achieve it is really trying to see where our potential lies and also where our gaps are because some of our senior posts are very difficult to recruit to you know the nature of the business".

How we've approached it is to be an inclusive process and the nature of I suppose doesn't make it that inclusive as it could be but |I wouldn't want you to get the idea that we don't see everybody as having talent but it's just the high potential that would probably have a fast track"...

This confusion brings to the forefront again, the need for clarifying further the boundaries of an exclusive and inclusive talent approach to minimise these ambiguities and to prevent TM being labelled alongside discriminatory practices. The conflicts between a national and regional talent approach are symbolic of coercive institutional pressures from a central team to regional organisations to conform to their stipulated TM practices which was still at its infancy nationally in comparison to the regional programs which had been running for several years. It was therefore a challenge regionally, to conform to a national central program as this coercion for change takes time regardless of the institutional pressures. Further issues are addressed in the section on the challenges and management of talent identification (see sections 9.4 and 9.5).

Retco on the other hand, demonstrated its inclusive talent approach by seeking high performance and potential in all employee cadres including seasonal temporary and hourly paid workers. This was evidenced in their use of the 9 box grid for assessing all salaried employees in addition to building talent pipelines from amongst the hourly paid employees such that at every level of the workforce talented employees were found for development and promotion to the next level. Retco's approach was different from top grading (Smart, 2005) where assessment of high performance is sought from all levels and functions in organisations because while 'top grading' only focused on developing the top performers to the exclusion of all other employees, Retco's practice included optimum development of not only the top performers in all levels and functions but also every other employee according to their strengths and aspirations. Therefore in comparison to Civico, Locgov and PHServ whose talent focus was on targeted job grades, Retco operated a more inclusive approach

to talent identification which was clearly articulated by interviewees and also in company documentation as presented below:

'So we would be looking at talent from colleague level up… So our role as talent spotters is to look for people coming through at all levels…. we do have a robust development program at all of those levels'. (People manager stores).

"The company plays to individuals' strengths and offers various channels through which you can develop …There's no pressure to get promoted if you're happy where you are and just doing a great job. But there is every opportunity to progress very quickly if you're right for it and up for it. Training means a lot to us at Retco. No matter what you do, we'll make sure you're trained to do it really well. Then we'll give you all the coaching you need to keep developing new skills (employee communications on intranet)"

"Remember, some of the senior people in our business started out stacking shelves, so anything is possible! Set yourself some goals and we'll do everything we can to help you achieve them" (Retco employee induction document).

Discussing these extracts within 'the inclusive/developable talent philosophy' framework of Meyers & Woerkom (2014, p.198) which closest to the talent philosophy guiding Retco's inclusive practice, it is apparent that Retco's TM practice "aspires to yield enhanced performance among all levels in the workforce, thus allowing everyone to reach his/her potential, no matter what that might be" (Ashton & Morton, 2005, p. 30) and with the recognition that individual performance is an outcome of accumulated access to training and development opportunities (Gladwell, 2008). Meyers and Woerkom assert also that since TM practices under this developable talent philosophy emphasize development of all employees as opposed to a selected few, the operation of a transparent policy for creating awareness of this talent approach for promoting an organisational mind-set for development through strategies that portray desired behaviours (Ruvolo et al., 2004) is essential. These concepts are reflected in Retco's transparency approach in engaging with employees about organisational changes and also in their implementation of a generic leadership framework that was customised to each staff grade for informing and motivating expected organisational behaviours, as well as a transparent process for monitoring performance and promotion through bi-annual assessments and conversations.

Since Retco uses the 9 box grid which differentiates high performance and high potential employees from others and is mostly associated with concepts of work force differentiation which are synonymous with the exclusive talent approaches, possible doubts may arise against Retco's practice being inclusive. However, Retco's use of a 9 box grid depicts firstly the versatility of the system for use according to individual organisational achievement of their goals and it also shows or suggests innovation and flexibility required for success of TM practices as opposed to a 'one size fits all' approach (Stahl et al., 2012) and as Al Ariss

(2014, p. 174) pointed out, "firms need to adopt their own best practices in the light of their own particular contexts". An outcome of the inclusive approach is that it promotes learning success and improved performance which again buttresses the utility and the advantage it provides and studies further reveals that all employees and not just those in positions of leadership as it is the assumption with the exclusive talent philosophy, are pivotal to achieving longitudinal success of an organisation (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005; 2007). Supporting this last statement, Huselid et al., (2005, p. 2) asserts that "the effective management of 'A' positions requires intelligent management of your B and C positions as well".

9.2.4 Definitions of Talent Management in organisations

Definitions of TM as pointed out by Lewis & Heckman (2006) comprise three streams, the first, seeing TM as a just another name for HRM practices equating TM with human capital and therefore seeing TM as no different from HRM. None of the practices in the four case reflect this perception.

Lewis & Heckman's (2006) second stream of thought which aligns also with Iles et al.'s (2010) second perception of TM, as HRM with a selective focus, portrays TM's focus on talent pools which is essential to the flow of employees through the organisation for succession planning and/or HR planning mainly for filling senior management roles. Locgov's approach to talent mostly falls within this perspective of TM as the primary purpose for TM was for succession planning for filling senior roles soon becoming vacant due to mass exit of senior leaders. This was also the case with PHServ who through demand for an internal supply of talented employee as a result of high turnover needed to recruit talent internally for succession planning.

Lewis and Heckman's third definition viewed TM as management of talented employees also known as the 'A' performers who should be recruited to fill all positions in the organisation. None of the cases adopted this approach.

Iles et al.'s third definition of TM as "organisationally focussed competence development' through 'managing flows of talent' through the organisation", the focus here being about development of talent pipelines rather than talent pools" (Ils et al., 2010, p. 180) best describes Retco's TM's approach as they state that TM is the strategic management of the flow of talented employees through a variety of roles and jobs in an organisation often supported by software systems which are used to design TM programmes which create talent pools that feed particular job classifications which capture and develop individual

skills, competencies, and behaviours that make jobs and employees successful in the future. Retco's TM strategy was about developing both organisational and employee capability and competence as reflected in the extract below from the management brief on 'talent matters':

"We need to strengthen our capability at all levels to ensure we are world class in managing and developing our Talent" (Retco's 'talent matters' document).

Hence their talent development strategy encompassed all levels of employees whether they were identified as talent or not, to limit skill gaps within roles whether senior or junior which was important for achieving organisational competence across board while at the same time recognising high performers and potential who were capable of becoming successors for critical positions in their stores with their three tier succession planning. Similarly, Retco operated an efficient computerised process which facilitated operationalisation of their TM programs for records management of their talent pool, for speedy and easy resourcing and recruitment of talent across national and regional locations when there was shortage through their talent sharing process such that organisational efficiency and productivity was enhanced as a result in addition to a leadership framework that enabled desired behaviours from employees for contributing to organisational performance.

The TM approach adopted by Civico aligns best within Collings & Mellahi's (2009) perspective of TM which emphasises 'the identification of 'key' positions' that have a 'significant impact on a company's competitive advantage as a first priority following which the talented employee can then be developed to fill in this 'pivotal position. This is because Civico identified the positions of deputy directors and directors as key positions and those who occupy these positions as the talented who could be developed to occupy the super talented posts of director general in the future.

Scholarly discussions about talent management approaches suggest diversity in phases of implementation but without clarity in the sequence of execution or how each process relates to each other (Berger & Berger; 2011; Stahl et al., 2007; Silzer & Dowell, 2010). Relating this perception to the four cases in this study, the processes in Civico, Locgov and PHServ are most relevant. For example in Civico it was unclear why there was need for extra assessments after using the 9 box grid and similarly why PHServ maintained both regional and national training academies and diverse regional and national leadership programs which could all have been consolidated to save costs and promote efficiency in their TM processes. Likewise, the combination of both the leadership development and emerging

leaders network brought about confusion concerning the difference with both and undermined the TM initiative as a result because of the non-clarity in the sequence.

Retco did not experience this challenge. One reason provided for this type of challenge within the TM literature which supports findings from this study is the impact of context on the interpretations of TM with studies showing that the "mix of differentiating competencies and abilities varies according to the organisational environment (e.g. sector, labour market customer orientation), the type of work, the internal and external circumstances of an organisation and across time (Ashton & Morton, 2005;Tansley, 2011; Thunnissen et al., 2013, p. 1752). While Civico, Locgov and PHServ were saddled with diverse institutional pressures and long standing political, bureaucratic, highly regulated and rigid traditions and environment, this was not the case with Retco. Again while Retco's inclusive TM strategy was necessary for achieving their overall low-cost corporate strategy which required "state-of-the-art logistics, information systems and a relentless managerial focus on efficiency and cost reduction" (Retco employee information manual), Civico's, Locgov's and PHServ's exclusive approach to targeted grades was essential for averting crisis due to high turnovers which as previously explained is common in public sector organisations. Further factors are addressed in the next section.

9.3 WHAT FACTORS AFFECT THE PROCESSES OF TALENT IDENTIFICATION & EMPLOYEE DIFFERENTIATION

This question is important firstly for understanding reasons for talent identification, addressing the 'talent for what' issues of TM. Secondly it explores the 'How' talent is done in organisations by looking at the processes used for identifying talented employees and criteria for differentiating between who is and who isn't talent and finally this section also compares the findings from this study to the TM literature.

9.3.1 Talent for What? Factors affecting talent identification processes

According to Beechler and Woodward (2009, p. 275) in consensus with other studies, four main factors influence the war for talent and characteristics of talent which are 'global demographic and economic trends'; 'increasing mobility of people and organisations'; 'transformational changes to business environments, skills and cultures'; and 'growing levels of workforce diversity'. Supporting these views, a recent study of TM in the public sector (Devine & Powell, 2008) indicated that the growing demand for TM in both public sectors

was as a result of the skill shortages arising from several factors such as the changing demographics of the UK population, international competition for skilled workers, the changing composition of the workforce where previously there was a bias for mostly white males, there's now a shift of having more women and persons from ethnic minorities filling positions in addition to the emigration of talent to other countries, referred to as the 'brain drain' (Devine & Powell, 2008, p. 2). These authors state that over 31% of public sector employees are over 50 and express the growing concern of a potential loss of important skills and experience as retirement closes in for these age groups. These concerns were also heightened by the diminishing young population in the UK which is estimated to be falling by about 60,000 annually.

These arguments are actualised in this study as demographically and internally within Civico there was pressure to maintain a quota of talented female senior leaders equivalent to that found in the private sector through a women leaders forum and similarly Locgov's approach for identifying talent from a younger population through setting up a graduate scheme which they operated also exemplified this need. Demographic trends of an aging population in addition to the effects of the 2008 economic downturn also affected the economic trends in the UK government, resulting in governmental focus on public spending and budget cuts for public sector organisations such as Civico, Locgov and PHServ which also escalated redundancies and high turnover of employees, depletion in funding for training and development and other services to the public but at the same time intensified the need and recognition for TM programs for prioritising identification of talented and knowledgeable employees who were commercially aware and could provide efficient service delivery to stakeholders. According to statements from Civico's reform plan manual, challenges included the economic downturn from 2008 on the UK economy, high consumer expectations and huge demographic change due to an aging and growing population which was "placing demands on public spending leading to reform in public services such as health education and welfare".

All four cases commented on the need for transformational changes to their business environments through professionalism and identifying talented employees, important specific business skills and gaps for transforming and maintaining organisational growth and competence and effected this through setting up TM structures for an enabling environment that could be attractive for talent retention and development. This last point is consonant with several studies which assert that central to TM is the thinking that talented employees are critical for a firm's competitive advantage and overall performance (Bethke-Langenegger et al., 2011; Groves, 2011; Mellahi & Collings; 2011; Schuller et al., 2011) and so must be

sourced, and differentiated from others, nurtured and placed in pivotal positions (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005; Mellahi & Collings, 2009). Though there is popular acceptance of this thinking, that firm performance is mostly narrowed down to meeting shareholder and financial need (Cappelli, 2008), other authors whilst in agreement with the former perception, contend that to enhance organisational performance, an organization should focus on individual performance by means of increasing motivation, commitment and extra-role behaviour (Collings & Mellahi, 2010; Hoglund, 2012). Whilst the issue of shareholder value and profit appears most applicable to Retco, being a private sector business requiring profits and financial capital for survival, their inclusive approach shows that profit making wasn't just a sole purpose for implementing TM (considering the high investments in intensive development for all employees (not just a selected group) and corresponding and financial implications), but also about promoting employee wellbeing and retention, and therefore negates the assumption of TM being just only for profit.

This idea of TM as a profit making practice, is not also transferrable to public sector organisations which are not for profit and exposes once more the inadequacies of the understanding of TM practices from US private sector practices and MNCs and therefore the importance of this study for showing knowledge of TM practice in public sector organisations.

Common to all four cases as reasons for adopting TM were institutional influences (governmental, head quarter organisation, economic and environmental), followed by the need to improve organisational efficiency, capability and performance through development of most needed organisation skills. More common to Civico, Locgov is the use of TM for employer branding, firstly for attracting young talent as was the case in Locgov, and secondly in Civico remaining competitive due to fears of and threat from losing talented employees to the private sector. Mostly TM was implemented for succession planning in all four cases and leadership development for senior roles and senior leaders in Civico, Locgov and PHServ. Now, while there was no apparent or immediate threat to organisational survival with the other three cases, the adoption of TM was critical to Locgov's survival due to the mass exit of senior leaders, whose departure would have created a 'knowledge drain' or as Devine and Powell(2008) described it 'brain-drain' and 'talent crash' within Locgov with diverse outcomes.

Locgov, (even though interviewees from other cases made mention of a plan for seeking diversity in their talent approach), was the only one that explicitly exemplified recognition of the 'growing levels of workforce diversity as a factor for their TM approach through policy

and focus on identifying talent from minority and underrepresented diversity groups within the targeted job group. Therefore adding a different perspective for TM practice consistent with Boudreau & Ramstad's (2005, p. 294) argument that organisations should strive for a societal goal of sustainability apart from financial viability by inclusion goals such as diversity, social responsibility, supporting human and employee rights, protecting the environment and contributing to the economy pointing out that these ideologies are rarely part of TM in consonance with other authors perceptions that reputation enables organisations to attract better employees (Stahl et al., 2012; Ulrich & Ulrich, 2010).

Culturally, the implementation of TM programs and talent identification indicated the possibility for checks and balances with negative ingrained traditions and cultures predominantly found in Civico, Locgov and PHServ which hindered organisational performance. These traditions included hierarchical decision making structures, organisational politics in recruiting, assessing and promoting talented employees, poor career and performance management and general inconsistencies and imbalances in processes. For example, talent identification enabled identifying internal successors from different divisions for both senior management and senior leadership positions which prevented 'fire-fighting'/crisis management high cost replacement strategies and enabled identifying skill gaps for leadership development and efficiency in talent resourcing and workforce integration (not silos). Secondly, the implementation of the 9 box grid or the 'conversation tool' as it is described in PHServ for talent assessments provided opportunity for simplifying and consolidating both talent and careers management/development and promotions with less decision making (proven in the case of Retco) even though achieving this simplicity in both Civico and PHServ was still in the pipeline in comparison to Retco who maximised the use of this tool for all their talent agenda. In spite of this flaw, interviewees for example felt the changes brought by TM processes in Civico, Locgov and PHServ symbolised stability and standardisation of HRM practices in comparison with the way things were done in the past.

9.3.2 Talent identification processes

The importance of investigating the processes for identifying talent in the four cases is firstly because an organisation's processes and networks all have an effect on their talent practices (Iles et al, 2010). More so, considering that one of the most cited definitions of TM by Collings and Mellahi (2009, p. 304) describe TM as the "activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions", justifies examining these activities and

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process which are important for evaluating their effectiveness for talent identification in organisations. Secondly, according to Ulrich, (2008, p. xi) an organisation's performance is not dependent on having 'A' players filling up 'A' positions but organisational capability which consists of "the processes that create, manage and organise talent" and not just only about the individual with talent. Ulrich argues that "sustainable long term success is not just a matter of having the leaders but having the processes that reliably creates them". Therefore TM is not only about the identification and management of talent but also the identification of processes that would mould the individual talent into a "collective organisation capability" (p. xi). But how has the TM literature described current practice in organisations for achieving their TM strategy? Stahl et al provide the talent wheel and a list of TM best practices based on their research which are presented in figures 9.1 and 9.2 below and will be used as part of the discussions of the talent identification processes from this research.
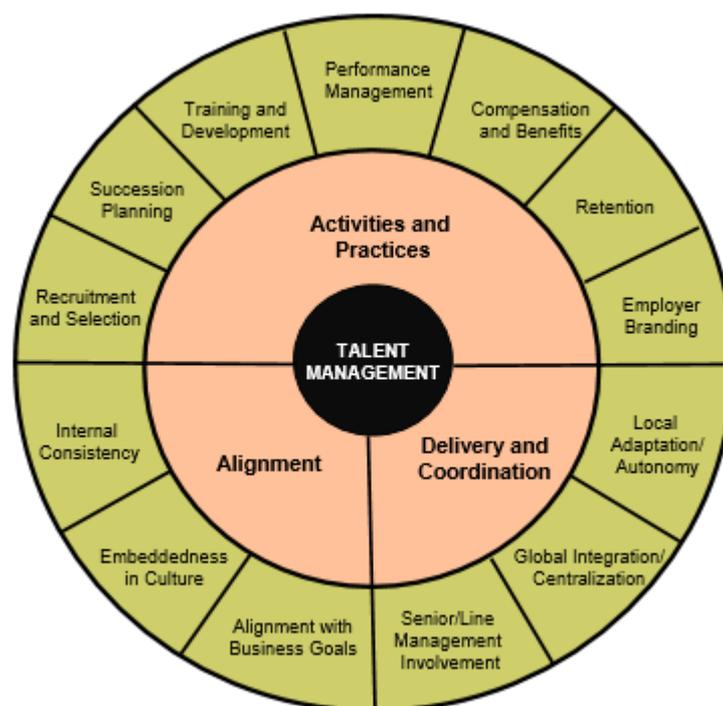
Fig. 9.1 Talent Management Wheel, adapted from Stahl et al, 2007, p. 8

Recruitment and Staffing

- Talent pool strategy rather than hiring for specific positions
- Close relationships with leading business schools and universities
- Highly selective hiring
- Compelling "employee value proposition" and strong emphasis on global branding
- Focus on values and cultural fit, not just job-related skills and experience
- Continuous assessment of both performance and potential, using multiple inputs
- Grading against competency profile of successful leaders
- Use of talent inventories for selection and succession purposes
- Different talent pools (executive, specialist, etc.) with different career paths

Training and Development

- Leadership development is top priority and deeply ingrained in culture
- Promotion-from-within policy
- Continuous assessment of training needs and feedback (360-degree reviews)
- Individual development plans linked to succession planning process
- Job rotations and international transfers as career development tools
- Line manager involvement (coaching, mentoring, job shadowing, etc.)
- Use of open job posting system and internal talent marketplaces

Retention Management

- Continuous monitoring of attrition rates by performance level
- Highly competitive compensation, particularly long-term wealth accumulation
- Personalized career plans and broadening assignments
- Senior management attention
- Flexible working arrangements and other work-life balance practices
- Diversity programs designed to develop, retain, and promote diverse talent

Fig. 9.2 TM Best Practices Recommendations, adapted from Stahl et al., 2007, p. 21.

Following reviews of TM literature, Stahl et al. (2007, 2012) and Thunnissen et al., (2013) contend that the focus of TM practices and activities comprise firstly, recruitment, staffing and succession planning and secondly focus on training and development and finally, retention management. These findings are consistent with findings from this study. Evaluating these activities against findings from Stahl et al. (2007, 2012) on TM practices within some global firms, Thunnissen et al (2013) found that companies adopted a talent pool strategy for staffing and succession planning through which talented employees received accelerated development to enhance performance and succession was channelled towards particular career paths or within a broader organisational context (Stahl et al. 2007: Collings & Mellahi, 2009). This recommended practice (McDonnell and Collings, 2011; Cappelli, 2008) symbolised a move from the traditional vacancy-led-recruitments to pro-active talent planning with emphasis from Stahl et al. (2007) for organisations to see their recruits as customers and apply sophisticated marketing models and tools for the recruitment of talent. Furthermore, Stahl et al. (2007) recommend a 'cultural fit' between organisation and the recruited talent and alongside other authors (Hughes and Rog, 2008; Martin and Groen-In't-Woud, 2011) identify branding as an essential element in TM. Findings from this study align with these points on succession planning, talent recruitment and employee cultural fit as the purpose for TM in all four cases was for succession planning

with three out of the four cases using sophisticated tools such as the 9 box grid for recruiting talented employees alongside this Locgov, PHServ and Retco developed a behavioural values framework for determining the cultural fit between talented employees and the organisation as a criteria for being selected into the talent pool even though this was more in practice in Retco than the other two whose practice in this area was still evolving.

Concerning training and development, Stahl et.(2007, 2012), found that leadership development is consistent with the 'promote from within' policy and has been adopted by many companies (including the four cases in this study) but they as well as other academics (Burkus & Osula, 2011; McDonnell and Collings, 2011; Ulrich & Ulrich, 2010) address the dangers of focusing only on internal labour market as this results in inertia and insularity but recommended a balance between making and buying talent. Stahl et al. (2007) also expose the importance of line management stating that they act as coaches and mentors to provide opportunities for development and job rotation but not for holding their best talent. The contrasting poor leadership practices of line managers' in Civico, Locgov, and PHServ challenges this view as these managers appeared to hold back their best talent to promote departmental performance and rating as is the case in Civico or didn't support talent with applications and sometimes didn't even inform them about these opportunities so they can participate because they did not believe in TM initiatives. Stahl et al.'s research therefore aligned talent development practices to talent retention as they argue that the encouragement of skill development enables retention of talent due to promotion opportunities being made available which in turn promotes a bond between employees and the organisation. The last point confirms findings from this study as it relates to this area but the study also highlights the challenges with talent retention particularly when opportunities for promotion are scarce due to turn over as a result of failures on the part of the organisation to create the opportunities for talented employees or due to poor leadership of line managers in not exposing talented employees to development opportunities that can escalate their chances for promotion.

Similarities in processes in the four cases include the use of appraisals, line manager's rating of potential and performance and the use of talent pools or talent pipelines for succession planning but Civico and PHServ in addition used traditional approaches of line manager nominations, employee applications, interviews and selection processes for further differentiation of talent for entry into the talent pool and for development opportunities. Locgov's talent identification processes only comprised traditional approaches. Civico, PHServ and Retco used the talent review boards for calibrating 9 box grid scores to promote reliability in the talent identification process primarily because there was a belief that since

reviewers were from more senior roles to the line manager there would be less bias and less subjectivity and be they would be in a position to also identify errors in ratings when there were conflicts between line manager and employee assessment of potential. The power of line managers was prominent in all four cases and the use of career conversations career management processes common to Civico, PHServ and Retco. Locgov's processes were still being formulated.

Further details concerning each of these systems and challenges encountered in their use are discussed in section 9.4 following the discussions on the criteria for selection in the next section.

9.3.3 Talent as object: Cultural fit

Within the talent as object definitions, one of the areas that concerns this study is about 'talent as fit' which the literature describes as the "fit between an individual's talent and the context within which he or she works" (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013 p. 294). This is because an individual's cultural fit with that of the organisation was an important criteria for identification in all four cases based on the interviews. But this practice was only evidenced formally through written descriptions of how behaviours are assessed in Retco via Retco's leadership framework. In Locgov evidence of this criteria was through inclusion of a list of expected behaviours and organisational values in one of the sections of leadership development program's application pack. Whereas in Locgov, information about organisational values and expected leadership was only communicated to applicants, this was not the case in Retco. In PHServ, the health care model pack presented the 9 dimensions of leadership behaviours which was a requirement for evidencing the 'caring' values of the organisation during external selection programs but was available for access on the PHServ intranet for all employees for self-assessment. In Civico one of the definitions of potential reflected their organisational values but again this was only accessible to those employees identified as talent and not to all employees. The term 'we operate a 'value based recruitment' practice was common phrase used by a couple of the interviewees in PHServ and definition of potential as people 'who live the values' by a couple of interviewees from Locgov, also implied this concept of talent as object.

Further definitions of some talent pool members also encompassed attributes of talent commonly found in the literature as provided by Gallardo-Gallardo et al.(2013, p. 293) which include talent as "ability, capacity, capability, commitment, competency, contribution

experience, knowledge, experience, performance and potential, skills". But more importantly, new perspectives and definitions of talent as object were provided by two interviewees which add to the knowledge of talent as object and provide additions to competency frameworks for organisations for assessing employees and managers. The first one is the definition of talent as "people who are inclusive" by a Civico deputy director interviewee and the second definition is of TM as "the art of the conversation" by the Head of Talent Resourcing in Civico. While the first definition which again relates to debates on the talent and diversity issue, can be applicable to all cadres of employees regarding their behavioural measurements about inclusion, the second definition is more about competency assessment of line management employees who conduct the career conversations considering that this aspect of TM was found to be a major challenge across all four cases in support of scholarly discussions about this matter. There is consensus within the extant literature that both the inclusive and exclusive talent approaches achieve positive outcomes in organisations as the choice of either is dependent on their individual characteristics and of most importance for organisations is ensuring the right choice in meeting strategic goals (De Vos & Dries, 2013).

9.3.4 Criteria for Identifying Talent (Who and Why?)

9.3.3.1 Visible Criteria

Most studies agree that the existing literature on TM focuses more on TM practices (the 'how') rather than the question of 'who' and 'why' someone is or is not identified as talent. This section summarises who was classified as talent and why in addition to previous inferences in section 9.2. This section is different to section 9.3.1 in that its focus is about determinants for being identified as talent as opposed to organisational determinants for implementing TM. Some suggestions from the literature include focusing on employees with high-value added skills who are difficult to replace (Lewis & Heckman, 2006). Cappelli (2008) recommends balancing of internal development and external hiring while Tarique, et al. (2006) examine the fit between individual characteristics and the requirements of different tasks.

In Civico, factors affecting the likelihood of being identified as talent included being primarily in a director or deputy director job grade and being identified as successors in departmental succession plans or also being a specialist or professional with a diverse experience in a range of roles. Having the potential of being a visible leader was an important criteria for identification. Reasons for targeting directorship group was in order to develop them to occupy the director general roles in the future as company document on the reform plan identified a shortage of leaders in this role and required a leadership pipeline as there are

arguments (Ready and Conger, 2007) that companies struggle to fill key strategic roles from within their organisations because of an insufficient pipeline of high potential employees. Part of the reform plan was to have professional leaders hence the inclusion of the specialist group and a common criteria for both professionals and directors was demonstration of visibility mainly through experience in diverse roles as this was necessary firstly for survival in future positions where they may be placed in unknown environments which required speedy adaptation and secondly, because of the politicised system of the public sector, having a diverse work knowledge and experience also created a possibility of being known to the top decision makers who were more likely to select those known to them. This is implied through the practice of lobbying permanent secretaries for selection of identified talented employees into the High potential development schemes. This practice being known as a criteria for selection aligns with Makela et al.'s (2010, p. 139) findings that candidates with a more centralised network position had a higher likelihood of being included in a talent pool. Visibility including self-promotion was also one of the dimensions for being identified as talent in the models developed by Dries and Pepermans (2012).

This second criteria of demonstrating versatility of experience and visibility through job rotations in various roles was also an important criteria for progressing into and surviving in senior roles in Retco, particularly in the stores divisions where vacancies for different levels of managers opened up in the different regions and locations. A regional manager explained that without job rotations, talented employees are likened to products with a 'shelf-life' or 'use by' date where their value expires in the organisation. Though not as politicised as Civico, a similar reason for versatility is also for visibility amongst decision makers who are the regional people service managers and talent development teams who hold employee records electronically.

A generic criteria in Civico, Retco, and PHServ who used the 9 box grid as the standardised system for identification was being rated as a high or strong performer as well as a high potential. For Retco, this high performance and high potential rating was enough for qualifying talent for succession planning and development within the specified career path. However in PHServ and Civico, this rating only qualified identified employees for the next phases of assessment (including line manager nomination, employee application and interview and in Civico, lobbying of permanent secretaries) to qualify for leadership development and entry into a talent pool for succession planning. However everyone was classified as talent and developed accordingly to manage risks from underperformance because their corporate strategy demanded providing everyday products at lowest prices

and for this to happen all employees had to be competent in their roles to minimise loss time and productivity as a result and positioned to offer excellent services to their customers.

In Locgov, criteria for selection into its talent pool for succession planning and leadership development was based on being in the targeted job groups and part of an emerging leaders network in addition to receiving line manager nomination and being successful in the application, interview and selection processes. The targeted group were senior officer roles who were assumed to be capable to occupy the senior leader roles many of which were soon becoming vacant due to mass exit of leaders as a result of budget cuts, redundancies and offers of early retirement packages. Retco's high performance criteria included the demonstration of leadership behaviours which were aligned to their organisational values. Though Civico, Locgov and PHServ also articulated the importance of demonstrating organisational values none of their systems were yet as functional as that of Retco.

9.3.3.2 Invisible criteria

While section 9.3.3.1 described the visible criteria, invisible elements for being selected into the talent pool were suggested by interviewees. Some suggested references include the mention of an 'old-boys-network in PHServ which implied that consultants within this network were more likely to be nominated for identification and selection as the make of the decision makers would most likely be part of these groups. The imbalances of talent pool membership in Civico with most being identified from the policy making team rather than the corporate team which made up 70% of the employee population of Civico, as well as the talent membership of Locgov mostly coming from two departments, insinuates some 'organisational political' undertones in addition to the practice of lobbying for talent selection in Civico. This invisible element also came up in Retco from a statement made by a talent advisor offline when I asked for a possible referral to an employee that was recommended by one of the interviewees who was recently promoted and a talent pool member. She declined the referral stating that the employee who worked with the HR team was currently engaged to the talent pool member. While this disclosure may not necessarily suggest that promotion of the talent pool member was as a result of this relationship, it however raised some questions about ethics and biases in implementing TM practices and TM policies as the talent advisor also stated that the organisation was considering ways of tackling this challenge in their policies. Some of these challenges in the identification processes are discussed in the next section.

9.4 CHALLENGES WITH TID & THEIR MANAGEMENT

There are arguments in the HRM literature pointing out that the way actual practices are implemented may differ from intended practices (Nishi et al., 2008; Wright & Nishi, 2007) and therefore posing challenges to TM programs. Challenges identified in all four cases were classified under internal and external pressures and are compared with challenges identified in the literature. The internal/micro challenges are discussed under these two headings: organisational, individual and then macro or external challenges will be discussed separately.

9.4.1 Internal challenges

9.4.1.1 Organisational

Scholarly discussions concerning challenges with implementation of TM programs entail organisational interventions with definitions of talent and differentiating definition of potential from performance and therefore TM from HRM practices (Silzer & Church, 2009), reaching consensus between line and HR management and top management on most relevant criteria for talent identification. Further challenges include internalisation of TM by management and staff particularly line managers and also getting line management fully engaged in the TM process, (Dries and Pepermans, 2008). A common challenge found in the literature is the alignment of TM processes to organisational strategy (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2007), also, the impact of an inclusive or exclusive talent approach on employees and transparency in disclosure of ratings in order to prevent divisions between employees selected and those not selected in addition to the challenges of the different biases linked with assessment processes e.g. appraisals and finally the challenges of having or not having technology.

Applying the above listed challenges to findings from this study, what appears striking is the uniformity across the four cases of the alignment of their TM practices to overall strategy. TM was implemented as a change agent for managing and solving organisational problems such as high senior employee turnover and salaries in PHServ and Locgov through using TM as a strategy for succession planning, for internal recruitment for these senior roles as well as for the creation of leadership pipelines in all four organisations for promoting organisational efficiency and capability that contributes to organisational performance as opposed to just setting up ad-hoc TM programs for the sake of it. This alignment was apparent even when the TM programs were still in infant phase as in PHServ and Locgov. This is a key finding in

this study that contradicts findings from other studies which highlight the failure of firms to manage talent effectively due to lack of a talent pipeline and the mis-alignment between talent and business strategies (e.g. Al Ariss, Vassilopoulou, Ozbilgin & Game, 2013; Chadee & Raman, 2012, Mellahi & Collings, 2010) and therefore, depicts progress in TM practice in both public and private sectors.

A common challenge supporting the literature, found in Civico, PHServ and Retco was the diverse interpretations of the definitions of potential which impacted on the ratings for potential. The composition of this challenge also involved line managers seeing potential and performance as meaning the same thing, making it difficult as a result for employees' understanding of the difference between the two as well as differentiating between HRM practices of appraisal from TM practices. Related to this last point is the challenge of reaching consensus between line and HR management and top management on the most relevant criteria for talent identification. Challenges found in this study relating to this point appeared minimal as all four cases had formalised TM programs describing targeted job grades from which talent can be recruited but this was compromised by the diverse interpretations of the meaning of potential which as one Civico interviewee explained could mean "someone with capability to become a future leader" for one manager and for another, it meant "someone who aspired to become a future leader". In agreement with some scholars, this challenge concerning consensus about criteria, was evidenced also in some line managers' reluctance to identify their best people as "high potential" for fear of losing them to another department (McDonnell & Collings, 2010; McCall, 1998) as in the case of Civico. Since being rated as high potential was an important criteria for being identified as talent, these problems with definition required attention for better reliability of the process.

Challenges with transparency were common to all four cases but for different reasons and outcomes also differed. For example, findings from Civico, Locgov and PHServ concerned challenges with adopting an exclusive TM practice which posed difficulties in engaging with all employees as only those targeted were aware of development programs and rather than publishing programs universally, talent messages were communicated through line managers, and disclosure to high potential employees was at will as a result of this selective practice. This created barriers to talent identification and demotivation for those who aspired to be part of the talent program and met the criteria but were not informed. Also even amongst the identified talent, disclosure of their ratings was also in some cases not provided which again resulted in frustrations for employees. Another outcome of the exclusive talent approach due to lack of transparency resulted in imbalances in selected talent pool which in Civico and Locgov were mainly from particular departments as opposed to a varied selection

across board. This challenge was not found in Retco who adopted a more inclusive talent approach, rather what was a challenge was managing disclosure in ways that do not exploit expectations which sometimes meant managers had to provide different possibilities or outcomes of progression from being chosen as talent, rather than a fixed career path.

There were also challenges concerning poor leadership comprising both the internalisation of TM programs by line management and their engagement with it. These challenges were mostly found in Civico, Locgov and PHServ. This was portrayed in line management reluctance in conducting appraisals as in Locgov and PHServ and in Civico, this included non-disclosure of ratings to high potential employees and in some cases not informing them about the programs or supporting their development. There were biases in the interpretation of potential and ratings showing subjectivity in assessments. In addition to this in Civico, the head of talent resourcing reported some dishonest and hypocritical practices whereby line managers would appear to support talented employees progress by speaking well of them in talent review meetings, while in reality would not have had a careers conversation with the person or disclosed ratings of the potential to the employee concerned. This closed system of disclosure has been criticised in the literature as 'procedural injustice' (Swailes, 2013). In PHServ, there was also report of a lack of support from top leaders who required strong evidence of TM's value to organisations in order to support TM initiatives and investments in programs. These behaviour exemplified poor leadership in leading change which according to the extant literature on change management in the public sector has been a recurring challenge, therefore raising questions as to whether change is possible in governmental organisations going by the reform initiatives that have swept through governments globally, bringing news about efforts to reinvent, transform, or reform government agencies (Barzelay 2001; Pollitt and Bouckaert 2000). These poor leadership behaviors created barriers for reliability in TM programs and ultimately retaining talented employees which was a major challenge encountered again, in Locgov and PHServ who pursued a TM program purposely for managing succession planning for vacant senior leaders' positions as a result of high turnover.

Comparatively, Retco did not encounter challenges with poor leadership as they appeared more proactive, innovative, and strategic in their talent management than their counterparts through the development of a leadership framework specific to each employee cadre, which from interviewees' reports formed part of the daily routine to ensure awareness of the expected behaviours and compliance at all levels. This created an informed, enabling environment for co-operation from both management and staff for the success of TM initiatives and processes.

Other challenges which are commonly associated with criticisms of the culture of public sector organisations included bureaucratic decision making processes reflected in the complex assessments processes in Civico, PHServ and Locgov, as well as the rigidity in responding to challenges e.g. top leaders requiring proof of value of TM, in addition to the challenges of operating in silos due to the size of organisations and lack of digitisation or poor maximisation of technology. Further challenges included poor leadership in the areas of leading change, managing employee and organisational performance, career management of employees, lack of transparency and employee engagement and support.

Ethical challenges with talent identification from this study concerned the invisible criteria elements for selection discussed in section 9.3.3.2 such as belonging to a particular network that forms the make-up of the decision making team, being in a relationship with someone that influences recruitment decisions, or exhibiting personal factor influences on individual success above relative performance (Swailes, 2013, p34). For example in PHServ, one of the interviewees (IPDM) reported that some of the senior leaders equated definitions of talent with charisma and clarifying definitions of potential was a challenge as reflected in this extract:

 "…and one of the executives said that one of the things he didn't like about it or that one of the difficulties about it is that actually leaders and talent come in many different guises and I think we actually end up placing a value on the charismatic leader above people who really have good qualities but are maybe more reserved and then how do you draw the value out of those different personal styles and talent that actually then how do you equate the value of a charismatic leader against somebody who is technically very skilled and abled in a particular technical area but quieter".

Other biases referenced in Civico and Locgov, concerned favouritism which refers to the likability of the ratee by the rater in this study, between manager and high potential employee. The organisational development manager in Locgov stated this was a problem that she was aware of and being looked into. Similarly, talent pool members in both Locgov and Civico, referenced this bias and unfairness by organisations giving autonomy to line managers to nominate high potential employees as this puts those employees with whom the managers did not have a good relationship at risk of not being identified as indicated in the statement below:

"…just imagine if you do not have a good relationship with your manager, it could stunt your growth… I am a bit lucky… (Talent pool member Org. Performance manager, Locgov).

I think I would open applications and have the line managers view as part of that rather than excluding people from applying unless their manager approves it'…it is unfair…and that doesn't sit very well with fair and open competition… "(Civico talent pool member, 04).

These statements characterise the general notion that line managers having absolute power results in corruptive practices (Moseley & James, 2014). Gender bias is inferred through the story of the line manager in Civico who spoke highly of a female high potential employee in his team but who didn't disclose this to her and had not had a careers conversation with her for two years. This assumption is only on the basis of the employee involved being female as this study already depicts line management challenges with conducting conversations and also through comments from the Retco regional people services manager and regional operations manager who both said that that there was need to fish from a 'wider talent pool'. While the above challenges are organisational in nature, another type of barrier to talent identification is when high potential individuals are not agile enough to put themselves forward for nomination as a result of them being too 'humble' (as one talent pool member described them) and therefore not willing to go through the rigours of impression management which is another ethical challenge, before more senior leaders in order to be visible to promote chances of selection for development. Another challenge posed by individuals is when they quit the talent pool due to the demands of higher responsibility on job rotations or requirements of talent development schemes which are sometimes very academic in nature as reflected in the statement below.

"…we aspire to having 100 academy members at a time, we are half way through the first academy year we started off with 51 and we are down to 34 because it is a tough thing for people to sign up to... the local stuff for some people is a bit more accessible and with the national program there sometimes comes with it an academic assessment component which not everybody wants" (assist. director, PHServ, NE1).

Finally, barriers to TID also arose when talented employees are content with their current positions and unwilling to participate in any career progression initiatives.

9.4.2 Macro/External Challenges

These pressures will be discussed under the framework of institutional theory which explains why organisations behave in a particular way. This behaviour according to Institutional theory is because organisations strive for legitimacy and acceptance from constituencies which have the power to offer and withhold resources which may determine their economic performance and therefore influence actions and structures. Three processes of

institutionalism identified in the literature are the coercive, mimetic and normative (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Further discussions are presented in section 9.6 below.

9.5 MANAGEMENT OF CHALLENGES

9.5.1 Managing challenges with definition of potential

Managing the ambiguity in definitions of potential and talent in Civico, PHServ and Retco was made possible by the use of the 9 box grid (Conversation grid tool in PHServ) which had an organisational definition that promoted consistency and shared understanding amongst managers and employees of what talent was.

9.5.2 Management of Poor leadership

A common tactic used by all four cases for managing challenges of poor leadership and conflicts in definitions of potential and performance (in Civico, PHServ and Retco who used the 9 box grid) discussed in the last section was the continuous training of line managers on how to manage career/difficult conversations. Managing this challenge was important for improving reliability of the 9 box grid assessment processes. The establishment of a talent review board for calibrating discrepancies in ratings of employee potential, was one method used to check line manager assessment biases in rating an employee's potential as well as managing conflicts between line manager rating and employee's,. However, in Civico, this talent review calibration process was only done "as required" rather than a formal planned process and therefore appear unreliable. Additionally, while PHServ's TID processes were an annual event, Retco's formalised talent review of potential, performance appraisals, 9 box grid assessments and conversations which held bi-annual alongside traditions of weekly 1-2-1 meetings between managers and employees, commanded more reliability as well as a prescriptive TM practice. In Civico, for example, leadership accountability was improved through clarifying reporting lines of departmental heads to facilitate and sharpen accountability for implementation. They also initiated employee feedback surveys and forums where employees could challenge the 'status quo' to foster understanding of and response to employee needs. Retco had proactive informal and formalised engagement with employees all year round and held all employees accountable through its leadership framework.

9.5.3 Managing capability and organisational performance

To manage skills gaps and improved organisational capability, Civico, Locgov and PHServ adopted proactive workforce planning and identified skills and key posts necessary for organisational performance to enhance a more specific talent identification process (which in Locgov, were articulated in the Leadership scheme application pack). These approaches aligned with Burke et al. (2006) and Yarnall's, (2011) recommendation to identify what organisational capabilities and individual competencies must be developed or enhanced and secondly, determining the targeted population for development by identifying the skill levels to be developed. Civico and PHServ initiated staff intranet webpages to improve employee engagement.

Civico, PHServ and Locgov also subscribed to regular employee engagement strategies to promote awareness of TM such as employee feedback surveys in Civico, roadshows and talks in PHServ and regular PR meetings with the HR team and management in Locgov for supporting literature recommendations in this area of promoting openness and transparency by communicating clearly the process and criteria for selection and plans for employees not selected into the talent pool in order to eradicate feelings of unfairness (Gelens et al., 2014). In Civico and Locgov, they also introduced a new competency framework that focused on behaviours and skills to support innovation and outcome based culture in addition to standardised processes for recruitment, promotion and performance management for all cadres of employees. To manage the high exit of senior leaders and in order to nurture knowledge transfer from these exiting talented employees, Locgov instituted an early leavers (ELI) program which encouraged retirees to indicate their intentions formally to enable proper exit plans and to enable time to capture their knowledge through formal and informal methods by staggering timing of exit. This was in addition to the initiation of a graduate scheme which the ODM said made "other people sit up and take notice".

9.5.4 Managing turnover/retention

For the management of employee turnover and retention, Civico, PHServ and Locgov instituted various leadership development schemes to maximise talent retention, including the initiation of a graduate scheme for recruiting young talent into Locgov due to aging population of staff. In Retco, due to an inclusive talent approach, every employee received development that affected high competence in their role and also had individual career plans that enabled individual skill monitoring and management. Civico set up a 'tax professions' talent scheme as a start for identifying professionals in Finance departments but nothing was

established in Retco to address challenges with managing subject specialists. Both Retco & PHServ set up a leadership framework to guide behaviours but while this was ingrained in Retco culture and processes for holding all levels of employees accountable, it was not the case in PHServ due to lack of top management support and challenges with implementation. Similarly Civico & PHServ & Retco used the 9 box grid but while Retco maximised process efficiency and success through this resource, Civico experienced challenges using additional resources and long decision making processes. In the same vein, Retco and PHServ were also digitalised but while PHServ had challenges with implementing TM processes due to cultural biases and funding. Retco's successful TM process was maximally due to its digitalized process which enabled transparency and monitoring of its processes. Retco managed succession through top 3 and bottom 3 program and talent sharing process.

9.5.5 Management of Culture

In Civico, approaches to managing bureaucratic hierarchical structures as stated in the reform plan program included plans for having a flatter hierarchical structure of no more than eight tiers. They also created interventions for exchange placements in private sector organisations which they partnered with to enable transfer of knowledge on how to manage change and improve efficiency. The effectiveness of this intervention was threatened by making eligible employees source their placements due to fear of losing high potential employees to the private sector. Retco enabled a viable organisation culture and behaviour though their leadership framework process that held all employees accountable while PHServ initiated their leadership model framework which was still in its infancy so not yet implemented. Locgov through their drive for a balanced diverse workforce at senior levels demonstrated drive for a fairer environment and culture.

9.6 SIMILARITIES & DIFFERERENCES BETWEEN THE PUBLIC & PRIVATE SECTOR CASES (See Appendix 5: Table 15, pp. 301-308): Cross-case analysis and empirical summary of findings).

The following sections provide empirical and theoretical discussions about the similarities and differences between the public and private sector cases used for this study with reference to Table 15 presented in Appendix 5.

9.6.1 Empirical analysis of similarities and differences of TID practices in Public and Private Sector cases

An empirical cross-case analysis of similarities and differences in TID practices in public and private sector organisations is presented in Table 15 (see Appendix 5, pp. 301-308). Criteria used for analysis and the summary of findings including similarities and differences are based on the research questions (see section 1.4). Findings indicate more similarities than difference in practices concerning the organisational definitions of talent as high potential and high performance even though individual talent approaches differed with the key differences being adoption of an inclusive talent approach in the private sector firm, Retco, while an exclusive talent approach was adopted by the public sector firms, Civico, Locgov and PHServ that focused on targeted grades; even though PHServ's talent approach tendered towards a hybrid talent approach. A key difference between Civico's, PHServ's and Locgov's exclusive talent approach was an innovative and prescriptive exclusive talent approach adopted by Locgov concerning diversity in recognition of their diverse stakeholders and the community they operate in. In line with these, the criteria for identifying talent in the four cases, aligned with the choice of talent approaches (i.e. exclusive, inclusive TM or combination of both (hybrid)) adopted by each organisation. For example, while two public sector organisations (Civico and Locgov) opted for resourcing talent from targeted grades, the third public sector organisation, PHServ, adopted a hybrid approach which was inclusive of all employees nationally but regionally, operationalisation of TM comprised both an inclusive and exclusive approach.

Challenges experienced by the four cases and how they were managed were also more similar than different and though some key differences are discussed in section 10.2, a major differentiator comprised the conformance to the coercive and mimetic isomorphism pressures on public sector organisations Civico, Locgov and PHServ, a challenge that was not much evident in Retco. For example, challenges for Civico, PHServ and Locgov included government institutionalized salary scales that did not promote their competitive advantage in comparison to private sector organizations (see section 9.6.2 below). Another key difference in their management of challenges was the use of a TM evaluation strategy in PHServ for managing challenges with poor leadership from top leaders and for driving organizational awareness and support for their TM initiatives. Retco's technological acumen also served as an enabler for effective TM (Al Ariss et al, 2014, p. 178) by consolidating all of their TM processes for easy monitoring and tracking and use and this differentiated them from the other three organizations. A major similarity was that, though a focus on development needs was the single-most cited reason for engaging in assessments of talented employees, another clear reason for talent assessments was to aid decision-making.

Worth noting and a major challenge to reliable TID process across the four cases was the delegation of power of line managers in deciding who is and isn't talent in the first instance, prior to further calibrations. Findings also revealed that either due to incompetence, lack of internalisation or lack of training, this power was misused to some extent as a result. Therefore in support of other studies (Thunnissen et al., 2013), this research advocates that organizations consider and recognize that the needs and interests of multiple stakeholders may conflict with organizational goals and warn against the delegation of talent development to line managers only, to avoid failures in TM (Martin and Schmidt, 2010). Martin and Schmidt (2010) argue that while talented employees are a long term corporate asset and should be treated like one, line managers are short term focused and not willing to share their talent as findings from this study and others (Mellahi & Collings, 2010) have revealed.

9.6.2 Theoretical analysis of similarities and differences using Institutional Theory

Institutional theory explains why organisations become increasingly similar through the process of isomorphism (change processes) brought on them by rational actors (Dimaggio & Powell, 1983). Three forms of isomorphism affect organisations, as they strive for legitimacy, recognition and survival by adopting rules, structures and practices viewed as appropriate in their environment (Dimaggio & Powell, 1991; Scott, 2001). The three forms are presented below and used to explain why there are differences and similarities in TID practices between the public and private sector organizations in this study.

Coercive Isomorphism

Coercive Isomorphism occurs as result of organizations experiencing pressures from government regulators, other organizations on whom they depend, societal expectations / norms and competition from competitors which force similarities in their practices and approaches in response to these pressures (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Dimaggio & Powell, 1983). Coercive isomorphism may explain why organisations adopt TM practices and why there are similarities in their reasons for doing this. Findings from this study however show that coercive isomorphism is more familiar in the public sector organizations than the private sector because of certain public sector characteristics including their ownership by political communities rather than by entrepreneurs and shareholders, making them susceptible to frequent policy changes and constant pressure to achieve quick results. As a result, public sector HRM processes were highly politicised (Rainey et al., 1976) and subject to frequent changes and instability of their systems. This is expressed in Civico's TID processes which

involved lobbying of very senior officers and pursuance of organisational justice practices in TID processes as well as in Locgov where participants expressed frustrations concerning the numerous changes and failures of TID processes of the past and fears of this happening with the present TM programs. Secondly, public sector organisations are more complex as they cater for a high volume of stakeholders operating through different networks of independent organisations (Boyne et al., 2002). There was much talk about individual departments in Civico, PHServ and Locgov operating in silos and this making it difficult to integrate TID process.

Coercive isomorphism was more pronounced in the public sector cases, Civico, Locgov and PHServ than in Retco. For example, common to Civico, Locgov and PHServ are governmental and regulatory pressures comprising the use of TM firstly, as one of the ways of implementing change for better performance, improved organisational capability and efficiency in a) services to the public (Civico), to patients (PHServ) and to local communities (Locgov) and b) succession planning in Locgov and PHServ and for the development of leaders and leadership development in Civico.

Secondly, for managing environmental economic pressures from governmental budget cuts (through promoting professionalism of employees to manage finances better and for maximising use of less resources), for managing societal pressures including recognition as an employer of choice and of good reputation (involving use of TM as branding in Civico to attract and retain talent, and in Locgov for attracting young talent and identifying senior leaders from a diverse talent pool that was representative of their local community, to show good CSR initiatives which is important for their positioning as the best council outside of London).

Thirdly, for managing high turnover (through succession planning in PHServ and more so in Locgov who had a mass exit of senior leaders requiring immediate replacement in order to survive the adverse results of these high redundancies brought on by cuts in public spending, and to avoid crisis).

And fourthly for remaining competitive in the labour market (e.g. Civico had fears of losing their talented employees to the private sector and had to establish partnerships with some private sector organisations to train Civico staff).

In contrast, coercive pressure on Retco on the other hand was minimal and more about aligning their TM practices to fit those of the headquarters on whom they were dependent. However findings do not show that this pressure from headquarters was a determinant for implementing TM practices in Retco as compared to those placed upon Civico, Locgov and PHServ who were directly under the control of the government and public scrutiny, hence

the similarities in the drive for implementing TM in their organisations. This is because the environments of both sectors differ for while in the private sector, the profit margins and bottom line performance is of primary concern, what is most important for the public sector is about how well problems are resolved and services have been provided (Harel & Tzafrir, 2001). In addition there is a diffusion of authority in the public sector as opposed to a single formal line or chain of command in the private sector (Moore, 1995). Though coercive isomorphism may not be the most appropriate for studying similarities and differences in organisational practices, it provides a picture of the organisational environment / behaviour of both sectors and its importance in driving the success or failure of adopted HRM practices discussed below.

Mimetic Isomorphism

Mimetic isomorphism occurs in response to environmental uncertainty whereby organisations begin imitating/modelling themselves after other organisations in their field which are deemed legitimate and successful (Dimaggio & Powell, 1983) including trends and fashions in the HRM strategies and practices of their competitors (Boselie et al., 2001, pg. 1120; Paauwe & Boselie, 2003). Mimetic isomorphism is most appropriate for discussing the reasons why organisations adopt TM practices which are very similar. TM has been hyped as an important HRM practice for contributing to a firm's competitive advantage and performance. In line with mimetic isomorphism, if "a certain set of HRM practices actually produce positive performance effects in different contexts, the expectation is that of a strong global convergence towards the use of this set of HRM practices across different environments through the influence of institutional processes" (Scott, 2001, p.452). Therefore considering various debates and research concerning links between TM and an organisation's competitive advantage and the environmental uncertainties (demography of the labour market and its volatility, economic downturns etc.) which pressurize organisations to remain competitive, similarities in HRM practices are bound to occur as organisations adopt and imitate practices that are perceived successful and or fashionable (Bjorkman et al., 2007). This viewpoint is supported by findings from this study.

Referencing Table 15 (see Appendix 5, pp.301-308), what is noticeable is that practices in the four cases were more similar than different even though Locgov had the least sophisticated process. The similarities in practices concerning the organisational definitions of talent as high potential and high performance, the across-board use of performance appraisal for measuring performance supports mimetic isomorphism and the extant literature that alleges that companies integrate their talent review processes closely with the more

established practices of performance management. This observation aligns with Stahl et al.'s (2007, p. 9) research which found that companies are becoming more similar with "considerable global convergence in TM practices". They claim that factors driving this convergence are due to competition for the same talent pool by organisations globally and therefore organisations structure their talent approaches according to more established performance management practices (as reflected in Civico and PHServ trying to be more like the private sector) likened to the success of companies like GE which is widely recognised and hyped as the best practice leaders and therefore generating widespread imitation (Paauwe & Boselie, 2003).

For example, some authors claim that an organisation's perfomance is directly impacted through the management of talent particularly through the use of the 9 box tool which came into practice through GE (Bartlett & Mclean, 2003). Three cases Civico, PHServ and Retco used of the 9 box grid for managing talent showing again another similarity in TM practices between the public and private sector. This is further supported by statements from participants and company documents in Civico that describe how they created interventions for exchange placements in private sector organisations with whom they partnered, for transfer of knowledge on how to manage change and improve efficiency, how they maintained a quota of talented female leaders equivalent to those found in the private sector and ensuring training and development of their talented employees alongside those of the private sector in order to be at par with private sector practices . Similarly, the TM Lead of the Leadership Academy in PHServ explained their TM approach was an imitation of a private retailer, Tesco, who operated an inclusive TM strategy that was successful. So there is as strong convergence of public sector organisations towards successful TM practices of the private sector.

What was different and questionable is why the 9 box grid was more successful in achieving prescriptive practice and results in Retco, the private sector but not in the two public sector organizations, PHServ and Civico who used the same assessment grid. This question is important for this study as the 9 box grid symbolised TM in the three organisation from the regular performance appraisal process which was seen as a normal HRM process. Responding to this question requires close examination of the TID processes and challenges encountered in both sectors.

While Retco pursued a more inclusive and simple TID process that used the 9 box grid only, for all processes of identification and for monitoring employee talent profiles with the help of technology and all this with minimal challenges, this was not the case in public sector organisations, Civico and PHServ whose approach to talent was mostly exclusive. Civico and PHServ utilised the 9 box grid as an initial assessment tool but in addition, had complex

traditional politicised and bureaucraticTID processes (line manager nomination, application, interviews lobbying permanent secretaries, further approval and sponsorship by leadership development partners and leadership academy development team etc.) that created bottlenecks, such that that at the end, the transparency, usefulness, purpose of and credibility in the process was lost to both the assessor and the assessed.

Three reasons account for this difference between the public and private sector in achieving successful practices with the 9 box grid when examined under the following theoretical frameworks. Firstly, looking at organisational justice practices of the public sector identification process at the inclusive and exclusive level, what is apparent is that while having a more inclusive approach to talent in Retco promoted transparency and communicated equity in the process which in turn created an enabling environment for a successful TID process. The exclusive approach in Civico and PHServ prevented this flow. Secondly, most studies associate the philosophy of the exclusive talent practice of Civico, PHServ to RBV theories which promote practices of work force differentiation of which scholars argue are mostly found in profit-seeking organizations and not in the public sector, who are more prone to thinking collectively and where such thinking may be hard to implement (Perry and Rainey, 1988; Rainey and Chun, 2005). Therefore Civico and PHServ's exclusive talent practices were more likely to fail than succeed. A third reason which is closely linked to the last statement and which follows institutional theory is that failure of the public sector talent practices in the use of the 9 box grid was because of their failure to understand the institutional differences between public and private sectors and how best to implement TM practices within their individual environment.

While mimetic isomorphism may be important for survival in times of uncertainties, the culture, environment and behavior of the organization i.e. the rules and structures that hold in this environment (Paauwe, 2004; Powell, 1998), are important drivers for the success of adopted practices. Therefore public sector imitation of HRM practices of the private sector whose environment is less prone to diverse political interests and policy changes, bureaucratic, hierarchical structures and conformance to diverse environmental pressures, without addressing these issues upfront, may result in the failure of adopted practices. An interesting illustration of the above argument is evidenced in two public sector cases: Civico and PHServ. These are bureaucratic organisations trying to be less bureaucratic (like the private sector) by creating even more levels of bureaucracy in the TID process because this is what is familiar to them. What is important here is the impact of context on the interpretations of TM, as studies indicate that a "mix of differentiating competencies and abilities varies according to the organisational environment (e.g. sector, labour market

customer orientation), the type of work, the internal and external circumstances of an organisation and across time (Ashton & Morton, 2005; Tansley, 2011; Thunnissen et al., 2013, p. 1752). While the environment of Civico, Locgov and PHServ were saddled with diverse institutional pressures and long standing political, bureaucratic, highly regulated and rigid traditions that hindered success of the TM programs, this was not the case with Retco. Understanding the important role a healthy culture and organisation's behaviour played in creating the environment for driving successful TM practices / outcomes, Retco proactively aligned its TM practices to a leadership framework that measured employee performance. Retco's approach encouraged a unified leadership behaviour across all cadres of employees. The leadership framework promoted awareness of organisational values and held all employees accountable for their performance and ultimately organisational performance. This accounted for the relative success of TM in Retco.

Normative Isomorphism

Normative isomorphism refers to the degree to which the professionalization of employees impacts the management control system and how Universities and professional training institutions are important centres for the development of organizational norms among professional managers and staff (Nicholson et al., 1995). Though there are references to professionalization of employees within the cases and most cases subscribed to certification programs through their graduate talent schemes and others, this study did not focus on the subject of professionalization and the role of training providers in developing identified talented employees.

9.7 SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the findings from the four case studies under the headings of the research questions, i.e. their definitions of talent, TM and the outcomes for each organisation, challenges they encountered with the TID processes and how they were managed. Similarities and differences of TID practices between public and private sector cases and why they exist were discussed, using both empirical and theoretical with reference to the cross-case analysis summarising empirical findings presented in Table 15 (see Appendix 5, pp. 301-308).

CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSION

10.1 INTRODUCTION

One interesting thing about the TM literature is that there are both academic and practitioner voices. Having provided a cross-case analysis (see Table 15, Appendix 5 pp. 301-308) and discussions of the findings in chapter nine, this chapter concludes by combining discussions of the findings in the contexts of their contributions. Section 10.2 discusses contributions to knowledge gaps particularly in research on TM in public and private sector organisations as most studies recognise a scarcity of empirical research in this area in addition to the comparisons of similarities and differences of TM practices in both sectors, provided in section 9.6. And importantly, section 10.3 discusses contributions to theory and practice of TM. These discussions will be made within the framework of the aims of this study (see 1.4). The chapter concludes with limitations of the research and areas for future research.

10.2 CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE GAPS & PRACTICE

10.2.1 Definitions of Talent

The first objective of this study focuses on definitions of talent which resonates the major debates in the TM literature as to whether talent is inclusive or exclusive and if it is about being high potential and high performance or key positions and also if it is about attributes of talent (talent as object).

10.2.1.1 Talent as Object

This study firstly contributes to debates of the definitions of talent in the area of talent as object by providing two new perspectives of talent which also contribute to TM practices in organisations. The first definition describes an aspect of people labelled in talent as "people who are inclusive" and the second definition describes talent as the "art of the conversation". While the first definition has a universal application to all employees at all levels for investing in awareness of the importance of inclusion and equal opportunities in organisational operations since authors (Stahl et al., 2007, p. 20) argue that "commitment to diversity issues varies significantly in organisations", the second is more specific to assessing managerial capabilities in conducting career conversations, which is one of the biggest challenges of the TM practices

identified in this study in support of the literature. These contributions are an interesting find that aligns with organisational justice theory (a sub-level theoretical framework for this study see section 10.3 below) that addresses inclusivity and exclusivity issues which are a main focus of this study and which initiated the following propositions that can be tested for future research.

Proposition 1: Including the definition of talent as "people who are inclusive" as part of the competency framework for all employees in talent assessments contributes to promoting organisational ethos of inclusion and fairness as well as behavioural demonstration which will impact organisational reputation and corporate citizenship and social and economic performance metrics.

Proposition 2: A second proposition is for the inclusion of definition of talent as the "art of the conversation" in competency frameworks for line managers to hold managers accountable for conducting the career conversations. The purpose for this is to drive awareness of the importance of this practice for motivating employees and organisational performance and as an indicator that TM can solve this global challenge.

10.2.1.2 Talent as Subject: Inclusive Talent

1) Four important contributions to knowledge that advances debates on inclusive and exclusive TM approach/practices concerns findings firstly of a more inclusive practice in Retco, a private sector organisation which focused on identifying talent from all job grades, using the same 9 box grid for assessments in contrast to exclusive practices in Civico and Locgov which were public sector organisations that focused only on targeted grades. Even when it was not possible to use the 9 box grid for their temporary, part-time hourly paid staff due to their work on the shop floor, Retco's inclusive TM practice encompassed seeking talent pipelines for section manager roles in stores, from these group of staff through career conversations and induction in Retco's leadership framework. This is an important finding as authors contend that an inclusive practice which is seen as an innovative approach to talent, is mostly found in the public sector organisations (Christensen, Johnson, & Horn, 2010), being 'not-for profit' organisations in contrast to private sector organisations' focus on shareholder financial obligations. Retco's inclusive talent approach therefore defies arguments that equates TM initiatives solely for meeting the shareholder approach (Cappelli, 2008, Ulrich & Ulrich, 2010; Bethke-Langenegger et al., 2011) in the private sector and also exposes stereo-type assumption that inclusive talent approaches are only applicable to public sector organisations.

2) Another contribution in this area which is consistent with the view of inclusive TM being an innovative practice, is portrayed in Retco's innovative TM initiatives and practices which are prescriptive for driving organisational behaviour and culture and also contribute to knowledge of 'best practices in TM' (Stahl et al., 2007, p. 21). These innovative practices included the management of talent through using the 9 box grid which reflects a work force differentiating system (theoretically aligned to RBV and exclusive talent approach) to fit into their inclusive practice for achieving organisational objectives and therefore showing innovation and flexibility in its use for practitioners. This was in addition to a proactive and generic development and management of leadership behaviours and leadership skills of all employees through a universal leadership framework that held all employees including managers and top leaders accountable for their performance and ultimately organisational performance. This practice promoted an enabling environment that directed organisational behaviour, efficiency, culture and performance. This find was important and raised a third proposition for future research in advancing the TM field which scholars assert there is more bias for exclusive practices in organisations:

Proposition 3: An inclusive talent approach can differentiate itself from just being another label for HRM (Lewis & Heckman, 2006; Iles et al, 2010) through innovative practices that show fairness in recognising that all employees have potential to contribute to an organisation's overall competitive advantage and performance through development of competencies and strengths in all, yet recognising that it would be unfair not to reward and identify the high performers and high potential employees (Swailes, 2014) who can become successors for critical roles.

10.2.1.3 Exclusive / Inclusive Talent as Object (What are the boundaries?)

The third contribution to the inclusive/ exclusive talent debate provokes further questions and calls for broader definitions of exclusive and inclusive talent by policy makers in organisations (Al Ariss et al., 2014, p. 177; Forster, p. 425, 2010). This is because findings from this study revealed that interviewees sometimes confused inclusive TM with having a policy of 'inclusion' which is about having an equal opportunities policy as it relates to diversity and therefore contend that they are inclusive in their TM practice while evidence shows a contrary practice which is targeted mostly at the executive board and senior management cadres of employees as in PHServ and Civico. Various studies claim that "most noticeably in the area of inclusion of a diverse workforce, conceptual as well as empirical knowledge in the context of TM is scarce" (Festing et al., 2015, p. 207; McCartney & Worman, 2010; Shepherd & Betof, 2011). These

authors and others (Tatli, Vassilopoulou, and O¨ zbilgin, 2012) argue that current perspectives of exclusive talent as high potential and high performance or key positions versus inclusive talent meaning everybody, are too generalist and restrictive particularly in the light of current gender biases and other discriminatory practices which suggest that 'gender inclusiveness' is not assured and potential of female managers or other diverse groups may not be explored fully in talent pools.

10.2.1.4 Talent as Subject: Exclusive Talent

Fourthly, this study provides a response to the challenge identified in the last section and contributes theoretically to the TM field through findings from the talent approach found in Locgov who though adopting an exclusive talent approach, defined and clarified its boundaries with an 'inclusion add-on' where search for talent amongst the targeted grade also focused on talent from under-represented diversity groups within the targeted grades. This therefore provides another 'best-practice' prescription for policy makers and practitioners and also provide an equilibrium to the organisational justice arguments against an exclusive talent practice, leading to a fourth proposition for future research:

Proposition 4: An exclusive talent approach with an 'inclusion add-on' alleviates the organisational justice arguments stigmatising the exclusive talent approach in the TM literature and offers an optional 'best practice approach' for exclusive talent practices in organisations that demonstrates that the term 'exclusive' doesn't mean 'exclusion' of diversity. This in turn, signalling an organisational environment and culture of equal opportunities and good corporate citizenship where according to Stahl et al. (2007, p.21), "everyone feels comfortable and confident to contribute".

10.3 MANAGERIAL CONTRIBUTIONS: MANAGING CHALLENGES OF (TID)

An objective of this study was to investigate the challenges encountered with TID and how they were managed for reliability. While most findings reveal that challenges and their management across the four cases mostly supported those evident in the TM literature, five key findings which contribute to practice for managing the challenges of TM are discussed below.

1) The first refers to findings discussed in paragraph one, section 10.2 above, where the researcher recommended the inclusion of the definition of talent as the 'art of the conversation' as one of the competencies for assessing managerial ability for conducting careers

conversation as a way of managing poor leadership in this area and for also holding managers accountable.

2)The second key finding for managing challenges of reliable TID which has also been discussed above (see no. 2 of section 10.2.1.2), refers to Retco's leadership framework which was important for managing challenges of poor leadership by holding not just managers but everyone accountable and created an enabling environment for the success of TM programs and initiatives. This was because their practice of assessing demonstration of expected organisational leadership behaviours as part of their performance management process enabled a shared understanding of organisational values and ethos for driving ethical behaviours and minimisation of the biases in assessments which are critical for reliability of TM processes while impacting business performance which is an ultimate goal for TM.

3) The third key finding in managing TM challenges was Locgov's strategy for managing high employee turnover which advances knowledge of the necessity and workability of TM with other expert areas such as knowledge management. While adopting succession planning as a measure for managing this challenge, they also subscribed to TM by capturing talent i.e. tacit knowledge in exiting leaders through creating an early leavers program that firstly informed management of the numbers opting for retirement and redundancy to enable workforce planning, and then also staggered exit times amongst them and set up development programs that enabled the exiting leaders mentor newly identified talent and potential successors to avert a possible 'talent crash'. These measures enabled a reliable and supportive environment for the newly set up TM leadership development program for success in addition to their institutionalising a graduate scheme for attracting young talent. Locgov's approach supports Somaya and Williamson's (2011) argument that organisations should embrace turnover and use it for their own benefits. This led to a fifth proposition:

Proposition 5: An innovative practice of TM which aligns TM processes with knowledge management concepts for retaining 'tacit knowledge' and knowledge sharing/transfer contributes to successful TM programs.

 Secondly, Locgov's strategy depicts views of having a balanced approach to TM as new talent (in Locgov, this was young talent) from an external labour market may bring new ideas in contrast to just full reliance on an internal labour market, stressing needs for organisations to observe their internal and external environment and needs in implementing TM (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Stahl et al., 2007; 2012).

4) There is consensus within the TM field of a knowledge gap in the evaluation of TM practices and this study contributes to this gap through the TM evaluation practices found in PHServ. This concerns how PHServ responded to and managed poor leadership demonstrated in the resistance to TM initiatives from top management. By evaluating the successes of TM initiatives in PHServ to demonstrate the value of TM in organisations for promoting efficiency, organisational performance through their development of an evaluation grid showing the value TM brought to the organisations (used for piloting TM) in terms of explaining 'what good looks like' from their TM approaches as well as through analytical assessments on return on investment for talented employees in addition to organisational success stories provided exemplary models for other organisations both within PHServ and externally, to follow concerning their TM conceptualisation and operationalisation. Similarly, evaluation of leadership development programs in regional organisations which evidenced promotions of participants to managerial positions within a three year radius as reflected in this study is also instructive for TM practice.

10.3 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Talent management attracts a range of theory and deciding a theoretical positioning for this study was therefore no easy task and required being pitched on multi-levels to gain extensive understanding of the concept of talent. Therefore, the theoretical contributions in the context of the findings could be aligned to institutional theory because the primary issue determining the outcomes of talent identification is the nature of the sector particularly mimetic isomorphism and to a lesser degree, coercive isomorphism. On sub levels, further theoretical contributions concern organisational justice when examining inclusive and exclusive talent issues which run throughout the thesis. While another set of contributions could be aligned to RBV and HCT. Having said that, following conclusions arise from the findings in explaining the contributions of this thesis. The nature of the sector is a determining factor for understanding TM practice and why one sector may differ from other. The inclusivity and exclusivity of talent is another determinant (organisational justice) and the processes are a reflection of RBV and HCT.

Finally, isomorphism shows what organisations will do to conform. However, the findings show that isomorphism may only work when there is an organisational behaviour aligned to values of the organisation as it cannot work when it is all about copying other organisations' practices without understanding the reasons why it is working. In the light of the success of Retco, it is about having a culture that holds everyone accountable and is not political. This is the cross-case summary link it to the differences in public and private sector organisations. Any talent

program effort has to fit with the organisation's culture. Therefore managers should not attempt implementing something that doesn't fit as the system will react to it as exemplified in why the 9 box works in one and not the other (i.e. Retco vs Civico and PHServ).

10.4 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH

The major focus of this study is on organisations within the UK and therefore opens up opportunities for extending this research to international contexts for a more global comparison and picture of the similarities and differences of TID practices in similar organisations or in the third sector and SMEs.

Another limitation is that it doesn't include non-talent pool participants who may have provided a broader perspective and assessment of the TID practices in the four cases and inclusion of these groups of individuals for future research is recommended.

Due to challenges with accessing private organisations for this study, a better balance of private sector and public sector organisations, is recommended for future research.

Future research can examine how organisations apply definitions of talent as "people who are inclusive" and talent being "the art of the conversation" to their competency frameworks.

Research testing the five propositions arising from the contributions to knowledge gaps and practice (sections 10.2.1.1, 10.2.1.2, 10.2.1.4, 10.3) will also be important aspect for future study.

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Appendices

Appendix 1.1: Summary of Research Questions:

1. How do organisations in the public and private sectors define talent?
   a. This question is important and response is required to facilitate organisational ability to recognise and easily identify talent. The focus will be on understanding how talent and TM are imagined in organizations by management and employees including the approaches adopted i.e. inclusive or exclusive or both and their outcomes.

2. What factors affect the processes of identification and employee differentiation?
   a. This question is important firstly for understanding reasons for talent identification, addressing the 'talent for what' issues of TM. Secondly it explores the 'How' talent is done in organisations by looking at the processes used for identifying talented employees and criteria for differentiating between who is and who isn't talent.

3. What challenges and barriers to reliable talent identification occur and how are they managed?
   a. There are arguments in the HRM literature pointing out that the way actual practices are implemented may differ from intended practices (Nishi et al., 2008; Wright & Nishi, 2007) and therefore posing challenges to TM programs. The aim is here is to verify the internal and external challenges to talent identification provided in the data and to clarify how organisations manage them to promote reliability of their TM processes.

4. How similar or different are the talent identification practices and why do these differences occur?
   a. The purpose is to understand why there are similarities and differences across the case studies through a cross-case analysis.

Appendix 1.2: Letters to access organisations.

First Draft:

Dear Sir,
Re: Invitation to participate in a research project.

The purpose of this letter is to invite you to participate in a research study. The participant information sheet enclosed provides details of the purpose of the study, which you need to consider before deciding whether you would be willing to take part.

I am a PhD student with the Business School at the University of Huddersfield specifically in the department of Leadership and Management. I am currently conducting research in the area of Talent Management under the supervision of Professor Xxxxxxxxxx.

The research aims to investigate how organisations in the Public and Private sectors in the UK identify and select their key talents. My goal is that this will amount to an increased understanding of the problems surrounding Talent Management, which has been identified as one of the future challenges for all firms. The research will involve conducting face to face interviews with senior management, line managers and your key employees on the above research topic . To ensure the accuracy of your input, I will ask your permission to audio record the interviews.

Participation in the interview is entirely voluntary and there are no known or anticipated risks to participation in this research. You may decline to answer any of the questions you do not wish to answer. Further you may decide to withdraw from this research at any time, without any negative consequences, simply by letting me know your decision. All information you provide will be considered confidential unless otherwise agreed to, and the data collected will be kept in a secure location and confidentially disposed of on completion of the thesis.

In keeping with confidentiality, the name of your organisation and names of personnel participating in the research will not appear in any thesis or publication resulting from this study unless you provide express consent to be identified. After the data have been analyzed, you will receive a copy of the executive summary and if you would be interested, a copy of the entire thesis can be made available to you.

If you would like additional information about participation please do not hesitate to contact either me on email address: XXXXXXXXXX@hud.ac.uk or contact phone 07852665420 or my supervisor, Professor Swailes on email : Xxxxxxxxxx@hud.ac.uk.

As an initial phase it would help my work tremendously if you would take a minute and answer this short Yes or No questionnaire in a returning email at: XXXXXXXXXX@hud.ac.uk

1. Are you familiar with the term 'Talent Management'?
2. Does your organisation use "Talent Management" or other process for managing 'key talent'?
3. Do you have a plan for the future supply of key talent?
4. Do you handle your own recruiting (as opposed to hiring recruiting firms) when it comes to key talents?
5. Would you be willing to participate in an hour long interview concerning HR and Management questions?
6. If no, would you recommend us to contact anyone else?
7. Regardless of your prior answers, do you wish to receive this research upon completion?

2nd draft (modified)
Dear Miss X,
Thank you so much for our discussions on the phone a few minutes ago. As I explained when we spoke, I am writing to invite your organisation's kind participation in a PhD research project on Leadership and Talent development for the department of Leadership and management, University of Huddersfield.

The research aims to investigate how organisations in the Public and Private sectors in the UK identify and select their high potential employees in order to increase understanding of the problems surrounding Talent Management, which has been identified as one of the future challenges for all firms.

The research will involve conducting telephone and/or face to face interviews with senior managers in HR & Talent Management/Training, line managers and a sample of other high/leadership potential employees.

All individuals participating in the research project will remain anonymous and confidentiality is assured. Please find attached a participant information sheet which provides details of the purpose of the study for your kind consideration.

I will be grateful for an appointment to discuss further with you and I'm available anytime next week or at your earliest convenience.

 For further information about participation, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or my supervisor, Professor Xxxxxxxxxx with contact details below.

Thank you and looking forward to hearing from you.

 Yours Sincerely,

Oghale Ayetuoma

Appendix 1.3: PhD Brief about procedures of research:

Information Sheet for Participating Organisation.

Principal Researcher:
Oghale Ayetuoma (Mrs.)
The Business School
University of Huddersfield
Leadership & Development Dept.
Huddersfield HD1 3DH.
Email: oghale.ayetuoma@hud.ac.uk

Consent to participate in a research study

The purpose of this document is to provide you with further information about my research project to facilitate your consenting to participate in this study.

Project title:

The Identification of Talent: Case studies of UK Public & Private sector organisations.

Project description:

The identification and retention of employees with leadership potential has been an ongoing challenge for organisations globally, as they struggle to fill strategic positions with skilled employees. The cause of this problem has been attributed partly to technological advances and globalisation which has made highly skilled employees mobile and therefore increased competition amongst organisations globally for talented and skilled employees within a tight labour market. This problem became more critical with the recessionary climate which brought about the collapse of many organisations and threatened the sustainability of others around the globe in the latter part of the start of the 21st century and also presently with the current global economic recession.

Finding a solution to this problem resulted in various researches within the Human Resource Management (HRM) and more recently the Talent Management (TM) fields which have produced various outcomes. Most notably, a significant body of' strategic' HRM literature has indicated that the knowledge, skills and abilities of talented employees are directly linked with to a firm's competitive advantage, because the right people are there to succeed in the business future landscape.

Research Aim:

My research will therefore investigate strategies used by employers to identify talented employees within various sectors/industries; looking at areas such as:

a) their perceptions about who/what talent is
b) leadership & talent development structure,
c) processes used for identification e.g. performance systems used
d) challenges and or constraints with running a talent program.

What is required from participating organisations?

I will request your approval to conduct a semi-structured telephone and/or face to face interview with you and / or other personnel you recommend.
The interviews will be about 30 minutes. To ensure the accuracy of your input, I will ask your permission to audio record the interviews.

Will the task pose any risks to me?

No risks. You are not obliged to answer any questions you are uncomfortable with.

Confidentiality of the data.

All information obtained as part of this project will be treated in confidence and will not be made available to anyone else. All of the data that you provide will be coded to safeguard your anonymity. All data will be stored securely and accessed solely by the university research team. Once the project has been completed, all data collected will be destroyed. You are free to ask for your data to be withdrawn from the study and to be destroyed at any time.

Location of research project.

This will be at your discretion either by phone or / and face to face interview at your prescribed location in your organisation.

Benefits for the participating organisation:

1) Provision of an executive report (on request) on the findings from the research alongside recommendations to aid 1) management decision making on the identification and retention of talent and 2) the practice of Talent management in the organisation, 3) agreed outcomes between organisation and researcher.

Disclaimer
Your organisation is not obliged to take part in this study, and is free to withdraw at any time during the tasks. Should you choose to withdraw from the study you may do so without disadvantage to yourself and without obligation to give a reason. Please find attached participant authorization form.

Appendix 1.4: Consent Letter

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Project title: The Identification of Talent: Case studies from UK Public and Private sectors.
I have read the participant information sheet relating to the above research study in which I have been asked to participate and have been given a copy for my own records. The nature and purpose of the research has been explained to me, and I have been given the opportunity to discuss the details and ask questions about this information. I understand what is being proposed and the nature of the procedures in which I will be involved.

I understand that my involvement in this study and any data that I provide will remain strictly confidential. Only the researchers involved in the study will have access to the data, which will be coded to ensure anonymity. It has been explained to me what will happen to the data once the research study has been completed.

I hereby fully and freely consent to participate in the study, which has been fully explained to me. Having given this consent, I understand that I retain the right to withdraw from the research study at any time without disadvantage to myself and without being obliged to give any reason.

Participant's name (BLOCK CAPITALS): _____

Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's name: Oghale Ayetuoma

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 1.5: Email correspondences showing time and place of interviews:

-----Original Message-----
From: Mr. A
Sent: 19 November 2013 16:53
To: Miss B
Subject: RE: A request for help

Hi Miss B, the weather has well and truly hit. Snowing up North. I have got some car journeys planned. Best time is en route back from Aberdeen on Friday evening around 6.30pm - 8pm. Not fantastic timing I know, but this is the best time this week.

Thank you
Mr. A.
 -----Original Message-----
From: Miss B
Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2013 08:48 AM GMT Standard Time
To: Mr. A
Subject: RE: A request for help

Hi Mr. A,

Sorry it's taken me a while to get back to you. Hope you had a good holiday? Have you any long drives scheduled this week? The call with Oghale should take no more than 30 mins.

Has the wintry weather hit yet in bonny Scotland?

Thanks
Miss B

-----Original Message-----
From: Mr. A.
Sent: 31 October 2013 16:44
To: Miss B
Subject: RE: A request for help

Is the student keen enough to call me this Saturday? I could be available at 3pm on C. I'll be in the car for a couple of hours at that point travelling from Aberdeen to Perth store.

Failing that, it could be over a week as I am on holiday from Tuesday night until the following Monday and really busy.

Hope that is ok?

Sent with Good (www.good.com)
Regards
Mr. A

 -----Original Message-----
From: Miss B.
Sent: Thursday, October 31, 2013 04:38 PM GMT Standard Time
To: Mr. A
Subject: RE: A request for help

Hi Mr. A.,

I'm really good thanks! That would be great - let me know what sort of times suit you and I'll ask the

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student to give you a bell. You must be racking up loads of miles these days!

Her name is Oghale and I'll ping you over some info on what the study entails.

Thanks
Miss B

From: Mr. A
Sent: 31 October 2013 16:34
To: Mis B
Subject: Re: A request for help

Hi Miss B - I'm good thanks, you ok too?
Can support - will combine with a long car trip to maximise my time.
Thanks
Regards

Mr.A, ROM
East Coast Scotland

From: Miss B
Sent: Thursday, October 31, 2013 04:18 PM GMT Standard Time
To: Mr.A; Mr. N.; Miss K. - ROM
Subject: A request for help

Hi Mr. A, Mr N & Miss K,

Hope you're all well and settling into life as ROM?

The reason for my email is that I have agreed to support a local PHD student with her study on Talent Management as I think the final research will be really interesting.

As part of this, she's asked to speak to 4 individuals that have recently been through our promotions process & I wondered if any of you could spare 30 mins to have a phone conversation with her? I do appreciate you'll all be busier than ever - but please let me know if you can help.

Many thanks

Miss B, Talent Advisor
Talent Team

From: Mrs. P, O. [O..Mrs. P@Locgov.gov.uk]
Sent: 24 January 2014 14:26
To: Oghale Ayetuoma XXXXXXXXX
Subject: RE: Research support

Hi Oghale
The following people have indicated they are available for a telephone conversation next week as follows:
Mrs R. - pm on 29 Jaunary - xxxxxxxxx Mrs DB - Thursday 30 January – mob no. Miss MM -pm 31 January – mob no. xxxx Miss RR - pm 29 January – mob. xxxxx

I am still chasing a few others on your behalf!
Kind regards
O.

_____
From: Mrs. P, O. [O..Mrs. P@Locgov.gov.uk]

Sent: 15 January 2014 08:28
To: Oghale Ayetuoma
Subject: RE: Research support

Great - I can arrange to book a room for you - will get back to you asap with names etc! Likely to be next week and after rather than this due to diary commitments.Some people may be best by phone but most actually like a face to face discussion!
Kind regards
O.

-----Original Message-----
From: Oghale Ayetuoma]
Sent: 14 January 2014 21:53
To: Mrs. P, O.
Subject: RE: Research support

Hi O.,

Thanks for your mail and for getting me participants. I am available during the following days this week and till the end of the month:

This week:

16th Jan Thursday : 9am - 6pm

17th Jan Friday : 1>30pm - 6pm

Next Week

20 Jan. Monday: 9am - 6pm

23 Jan Thursday : 9am - 6pm

Last week of January

27 Jan Mon : 9am - 6pm
28 Jan Tues: 9am - 6pm
29 Jan Wed: 9am - 6pm
30 Jan Thursday: 9am - 6pm.

I am open to whatever preferred method is convenient for the participants as I know it can be busy for in the office. I can either do a phone or face to face interview. Duration of the interview is usually about 30 - 40 minutes.

Thank you again and hoping to hear from you.

Kind regards,

Oghale.

_____
From: Mrs. P, O. [O..Mrs. P@Locgov.gov.uk]
Sent: 10 January 2014 13:41
To: Oghale Ayetuoma XXXXXXXXX
Subject: RE: Research support

Happy new year to you too!
I have had some feedback from people I contacted to support your research - most people would

welcome it if you could provide specific dates when you would want to meet with them ?This would be helpful as we are about to launch a new programme of management development linked to behaviours which is going to take a lot of commitment .

If you could let me have some dates /times when you might want to talk with people that would be great - also would your preference be for 1-2-1's on the phone or face to face ,or for focus groups ?

I think you did mention this when we met - but I'm sorry to say I have forgotten what you said!

Look forward to hearing from you soon!

Kind regards

O.

Appendix 1.6: Semi-structured interview guideline for HR/TM Managers

Item	Research Question	Semi-structured Interview Questions
1	How do organisations in different sectors define talent?	1. What is your understanding of the meaning of 'Talent' (in your organisation)? 2. How do you understand the meaning of TM in your organisation?
2	Factors affecting Talent Identification (How is talent identified)?	3. Please explain the process for identifying Talent? E.g. - What devises do you use for identifying talent? - What criteria are used to identify talent? 4. Is identification internal, external or/and by appointment? Why? 5. How does your organisation find out what skills to look out for when filling important positions? 6. Do you have a plan for future key competences? e.g. have you identified possible future successors? How? Maybe through: Planned e.g. recruitment & selection for key talent/niche? • Through assigned projects or tasks? • Via competency mapping e.g. skills pool, qualifications, abilities, experience, achievements • Succession planning/talent pipelines/secondments • Talent Pool 7. Do they know this? 8. What interactions take place within the organisation for talent to be recognised?
3	When is Talent identified i.e. How early in an employee's career, is talent identified?	9. How early in an employee's career is talent identified? 10. Does the employee have any part to play in this? 11. How do management deal with aspirations of staff who may want to be selected for a TM program /Talent Pool?
4	Challenges encountered with TID. How reliable is the identification process?	12. Please tell me about your TM program .e.g. • How do you develop it? • What's the purpose or your TM program? • What role does TM play in your organisation/operations? 13. Are all employees/management made aware of your TM program, maybe at induction or when? 14. What role does performance management play in your TM program /identification process? 15. How reliable do you think your identification processes are? E.g. • How many cohorts/people have gone through this system and • How many selections have been made from these Cohorts to fill key positions? • Organisation culture influence(negative or positive) 16. What challenges do you face in making TM program a success? 17. From your experience what major constraints do you face in enacting effective TM initiatives? Financial constraints (budget), lack of time for follow-through, lack of management commitment, UK laws or social norms?

Words highlighted in red are for my personal use and will not form part of the original interview form/schedule.

Appendix1.7: Interview Schedule for employees in the leadership/talent program**.**

Item	Research Question	Semi-structured Interview Questions
1	How do organisations in different sectors define talent?	18. What is your understanding of the meaning of 'Talent/ What does TM mean in your organisation?
2	Factors affecting How is Talent Identified?	19. How would you describe the process for identifying talented employees for the Talent program? E.g. - What devices are used for identifying talent? - What criteria are used to identify talent? 20. Are there interactions that take place within the organisation for talent to be recognised?
3	When is Talent identified i.e. How early in an employee's career, is talent identified?	21. Why do you think you were selected into the leadership/ talent program? 22. Prior to this time did you know or have any inclination as to whether you will be selected or not? Why? 23. Did you apply to join or were you approached? 24. How do management deal with aspirations of staff who may want to be selected for a TM program /Talent Pool?
4	Challenges of TM and How reliable is the identification process?	25. Please tell me about how you were selected into the Talent Pool program. 26. How did you become aware of the TM program in your organisation (maybe at induction or when)? 27. Would you say that you were selected into the Talent pool because you were classified higher than other employees at your level? (Or is there a method of differentiating one employee from another? e.g.'A', B' & C performers? 28. How reliable do you think the identification processes are? 29. What do you think are the challenges in identifying/selecting high performers? 30. From your experience what are the major constraints in the identification/ selection process?

Appendix 1.8: Semi-structured interview guideline for Line Managers

Item	Research Question	Semi-structured Interview Questions
1	How do organisations in different sectors define talent?	31. What is your understanding of the meaning of 'Talent' (in your organisation)? 32. How do you understand the meaning of TM in your organisation?
2	Factors affecting Talent Identification (How is talent identified)?	33. Please explain the process for identifying Talent? E.g. - What devises do you use for identifying talent? - What criteria are used to identify talent? 34. Is identification internal, external or/and by appointment? Why? 35. How does your organisation find out what skills to look out for when filling important positions? 36. Do you have a plan for future key competences? e.g. have you identified possible future successors? How? Maybe through: Planned e.g. recruitment & selection for key talent/niche? • Through assigned projects or tasks? • Via competency mapping e.g. skills pool, qualifications, abilities, experience, achievements • Succession planning/talent pipelines/secondments • Talent Pool 37. Do they know this? 38. What interactions take place within the organisation for talent to be recognised?
3	When is Talent identified i.e. How early in an employee's career, is talent identified?	39. How early in an employee's career is talent identified? 40. Does the employee have any part to play in this? 41. How do management deal with aspirations of staff who may want to be selected for a TM program /Talent Pool?
4	Challenges encountered with TID. How reliable is the identification process?	42. Please tell me about your TM program .e.g. • How do you develop it? • What's the purpose or your TM program? • What role does TM play in your organisation/operations? 43. Are all employees/management made aware of your TM program, maybe at induction or when? 44. What role does performance management play in your TM program /identification process? 45. How reliable do you think your identification processes are? E.g. • How many cohorts/people have gone through this system and • How many selections have been made from these Cohorts to fill key positions? • Organisation culture influence(negative or positive) 46. What challenges do you face in making TM program a success? 47. From your experience what major constraints do you face in enacting effective TM initiatives? Financial constraints (budget), lack of time for follow-through, lack of management commitment, UK laws or social norms?

Words highlighted in red are for my personal use and will not form part of the original interview form.

Appendix 9: Citations/Narratives from Case study organisations in relation to research questions:

"…so some of the targets like having two deep successors was challenging. And the reality was that if I relate to being a HRBP, and that was part of my core role, my KPI was how I made sure for the core roles there were successors in place. I think it ended up being the high profile critical jobs, we used to call them 'hot jobs'. Or critical jobs, these are the jobs that are absolutely key to our organisation whether that be the legal implication if we don't have somebody in this role, or it is a real specialism for us. So they would be the ones we would essentially focus on. Could I say that it is absolutely '2 deep succession' for the positon, no, but the process happens. So when it comes to appraisal time ,data gets sent out to all heads of departments stating that you have only got 80% entered onto the system so you need to be 100%.so it was mandatory. The process happened without fail. In return there was a great culture of if you say it will happen, it happens and it will happen. The quality (pause), I think that's the difference, the challenge. It might happen but is there really the quality of the conversation in every case? No. But good great line managers. They do a great job of it but I couldn't tell you what percent I think was great and what wasn't (**L&D Manager, Retco on challenges to TID/succession planning**).

"There's probably 2 ways of looking at this within PHServ, the key group, that you would want to try and ensure is talented is the medical consultants. In an acute hospital firm like ours, it is the medical consultants, it is the medical consultants whom patients are referred to. So in so far as what a hospital does, saves lives makes people better, the key group will be the medical consultants. You couldn't run the hospitals without talent in other areas but it is the medical care that the medical consultants oversee that we also then receive income for. The other thing that we are looking for which is both national and local which has become fashionable of late in PHServ but we've been working on this for several years is people that possess certain values. So we are looking for talent that is caring i.e. people with a warm disposition, people that respect others, colleagues, patients obviously in the public sector there is a statutory duty to respect all the protected characteristics that is legislated for now like race and gender etc etc. The other thing that we are looking for in talent are people that display a sense of high standards. So we are interested in people with high moral standards, standards of professionalism, personal standards of (appearance), people that are certainly not contented with low standards. We are actually looking for people who are innovative and interested in implementing changes so we are really looking for non-traditionalist…" (**Assistant director (ODM) on who is regarded as talent in PHServ NE2 location**).

"So it is finding the balance btw what is right for the department and what is right for the person as there is too much emphasis on what is right for the department than what is right for the person. I get loads of questions daily and weekly from both line managers and those on the talent scheme emailing me asking for clarification. I tell them all the guidance is there and all the information is there. I say to the line manager have you had a conversation with the person? They say they are worried. I ask if the line managers have had a conversation with the person. They come back to say they are worried about it. And I say to them it is not a performance appraisal, chatting with people on how good they are and how far they can go should be a good conversation and a happy one and not a difficult one. Sometime the talent people will say their line manager won't talk to me and not given me the results of my 9 box grid can you give it to me? I also push them back and say that is what you should be doing; you should be going to your line manager and asking them in a nice way and have another good conversation. So I get lots of requests for training and clarification, can I have some more training? But I always re-direct them to the guidelines and tools and tell them that all the information they need is all there, just go in and have a conversation. It is interesting that my philosophy is that talent is the 'art of the conversation'. And traditionally, line managers and their staff are really not great at sitting and just having a conversation"… (**Civico Head of Talent Resourcing on challenges of careers conversation and management**).

Appendix 1.10: Case Study organisation reports: Locgov Leadership development Pack.

Additional Information of Locgov Leadership behaviours and Management skills

Leadership Behaviours	Effective	Outstanding
Strategic thinking	• Steps back, identifies patterns, trends • Corporate plans into strategies • Adapts and applies theory to manage situations • Multi agency partnership working • Transformational approach	• Goes beyond past experiences to draw out new insights from diverse/complex information • Sees beyond the current model and envisages new ways of delivering services • Thinks outside the box
Organisational Influence / collaborative working	• Relationship development • Having identified WHAT is required they determine HOW to get it done • Use mechanisms to implement change and improve performance • Knows when to go for it and when to hold back • Environmental / organisational awareness	• Builds alliances and relationships to win commitment for business goals and initiatives • Drives change by having outstanding organisational influence (as below)
Results focus	• Leads by example, role modelling the service and standards • Sets the pace for change • Adapts different leadership styles • Monitors the performance of individuals and team	• Drives change by having clarity of the wider perspective • Recognises agenda of others and how these can be developed to achieve win-win
Leading team and developing others	• Clear vision and impacts on others • Offer development to be more flexible and spot development opportunities to offer diversity and stretch • Builds cohesive team who knows what and how to do things • Change • Encourage team to evaluate self performance / team performance and generate operational efficiency • Be a good manager and coach	• Energises and inspires others to want to do more to support improvement • Charisma, presence • Positive culture • People give discretionary effort

Management Skills	Key skills to be gained to develop to this level
Planning & Organising	• Critical path and resources to deliver Good risk management and ability to envisage change • Planning & organising delivery / coordination of complex plans to deliver on time • Reviews the effectiveness of complex plans and establishes learning points for the future
Sector Knowledge	• Influences sector practice and is aware of the One Children's Workforce agenda • Active in their areas of service ie chairs meetings, external activity, national committees, cross service activity

	• Aware of the key topics / information / debates held by council or other integrated services • Education legislation and government papers and their impact as well as rounded appreciation of local government and political context
Resource Management	• Understands how to manage a budget, prioritise resources and implications • Appreciates the following processes; SLA, procurement, commissioning, trading, funding and contract management • Appreciation of financial context of local government
Communications	• Strong ability to network and influence key stakeholders to achieve engagement • Read and interpret written communications and understands complexity, • Develop reports and presentations, producing high quality written communications including charts, graphs and analytical data • Structures information clearly, concisely and presents facts and good balances reviews, • Develops proposals and statutory papers • Ability to challenge / negotiate / influence
Influencing and Negotiating	• Political awareness • Know who to build relationships with and build strong alliances (internal/external) • Understand the importance of networking to achieve personal outcomes
Change Management / Project Management	• Uses change / project management knowledge, tools and techniques to support the delivery of projects • Manages complex change/projects – understands lifecycle and major stages • Adapts plans to changing circumstances, anticipates and manages risk

Step Up to Leadership Development Programme

Application Form

Locgov will use the information you provide on this form to process and evaluate your application. This information may also be used for programme administration and for the purposes set out at the end of this form.
Please complete this form electronically and email it to:
Closing date for applications: 5pm on 28 March 2013

Programme applying for	Step Up to Leadership Development Programme - Development Centre
First name	
Surname	
Preferred name	

Directorate	
Service Area	
Position	
Work address	
Tel	
Mobile	
Fax	
Email	

Home address	
Tel	
Mobile	
Fax	
Email	

Preferred contact address	Work ☐ Home ☐

Who are we looking for?
We are looking for candidates who have :
• Demonstrated a genuine interest in furthering their career in Locgov
• Have participated in appropriate development opportunities such as management development, Emerging Leaders network
• Currently lead a team or lead a significant project – or do so in a setting outside of the workplace eg with a voluntary organisation
• Are successfully delivering both work and development objectives and are demonstrating appropriate behaviours in the workplace

The following information will be used to determine whether you will be offered a place on the programme. Should you require more space, please continue on no more than one A4 sheet.

If you are disabled and need us to provide any particular support or make a reasonable adjustment to enable you to apply, please contact Locgov@locgov.gov.uk

1. Describe your current position and responsibility for decision making. This may include roles within the council and/or in a role outside work e.g. non-executive roles or community leadership.

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2. Please provide us with a brief biography that describes your career to date: include any leadership positions outside your employment (e.g. public appointments, non-executive role or trusteeship)

3. Please describe a leadership or management achievement in your career to date. What was the situation? What do you think you did well? What did you learn from this?

4. Please describe a leadership or management situation which was unsuccessful. What was the situation? What could you have done differently? What did you learn from this?

5. In no more than 200 words please state why you want to take part in this development opportunity and what you personally want to get out of it?

Appendix 1.11 Interview transcripts

Transcript 1: Locgov Organisation Development Manager (ODM)

Interviewer: Hello, Thank you for the opportunity to interview you for my research. Just to give a brief about my research, I would like to know how you define talent and identify your talent and what processes you use for identification and looking at the reliability of the identification process and really understanding the general talent strategy. I also would like to know constraints challenges have you encountered with the TM program?

Response: I will start from the end and talk about challenges is that okay?

Interviewer: Yes that's fine.

Response: The biggest challenge is managers not engaging in proper workforce planning. It's a bit of a hit and miss. So you'll get a good manager who does it and for everyone one who does, you will get 3, 4, 5, that don't. It's not consistent that's probably what I am saying. The second thing I will say is there is a bit of a cultural reluctance to suggest that one person has potential and somebody else doesn't. So that is a bit of a blocker. But that is not to say that is every manager in every service. It does seem to be a stronger culture in some areas than others. So there is a reluctance to say you know what, I think this person stand out. So that is a bit of a challenge. There's Again, I think this is a cultural thing, I think there is a view that you have to have served lots of years in the authority to get to some position. So it doesn't matter if you have been any good sometimes it feels like if you have been here long enough then it is your turn,

Interviewer: Is that a general perception or just because that is the way things have been done over the years.

Response: Yes, it is because we are trying to do something different and whenever you are trying to do something different you meet with challenges don't you.

Interviewer: For the manager's bit, is there anything you are doing about the perceptions?

Response: For the managers, we are about to start a comprehensive manager development program for the 2 and half thousand managers across the council. A big bit about that is what we call, I don't know what we are calling it but it is about the conversations, conversations can be in a formal way, in form of an appraisal, a one-to one or a coaching conversation. So there's a lot of our efforts focused around that in the development program.

Interviewer: About the cultural thing which is a big thing. Do you feel that there can be a change?

Response: Yes I think so because among that 2 and half thousand managers, there are some very good people in that group and as I say I think we need to us people who are on the right wave length, to actually promote what we are doing rather than them coming out of HR, so use people who are good to sell the message on our behalf.

Interviewer: On your TM strategy, what do you look for when identifying talent? What is talent to the council?

Response: First and foremost it is about somebody demonstrating that they live the behaviours that we want and the values. This is the most important thing for our chief exec and that our managers live the values. The second thing is that we are looking for people who have in some way demonstrated to what they are doing currently a real commitment to the organisation and to lead. It doesn't mean somebody who's got long service necessarily. I suppose how you can classify it is people who have gone above and beyond the day job. So they might have a day job and they might be a school governor, they might have a day job and might be volunteer in a day centre, they might have a day job and they might support somebody with their reading in school, or they mentor a school leaver, they do something other than just turning up for work and doing a 9 to 5. On their application form for Step up last year, we also had a section that asked people to tell us in no more than 500 words why they should get the opportunity to be part of the program which is really interesting because a lot of the people just left that blank.

And then some said that it was because they loved leading and they wanted to be part of what the chief executive is doing. So that was an interesting test. So that is it in a nutshell really. It is first and foremost does this person demonstrate the behaviours and live the values, do they go above and beyond, do they have a real passion for what the council is trying to achieve in the city.

Interviewer: so you have already talked about one of the ways in which you identify this people with the above qualities is the application forms, that's one way?

Response: It's the application form and a kind of statement from the line manager which has to conclude how the individual is performing against the appraisal objectives and their current development program which is part of the annual appraisal development cycle. So we ask the line manager to support the application to confirm really what is in the application and to also to assure us that this is someone who is actually performing well at the minute.

Interviewer: So it is not just about the application by the individual, it has to tally with what the manager states.

Response: Yes, it's the two things together. And then last year we had a 170 applications for it. We did a first sift and anybody who left the section blank that |I was talking about earlier didn't get to the next stage but we then took about 97 applications to an independent group and by independent we had a chief officer of HR, two external people from outside the council, one from the private sector and the other from the voluntary sector and the Head of Service from the council supported by myself and a colleague to sift that 90 and kind of pick out the stand out people from that.

Interviewer: You mentioned the appraisal. Two things I wanted to ask there are 1) the feedback and confirmation from the manager will probably be based on their development and the appraisal probably referring to that?

Response: Yes.

Interviewer: Now if for example, someone feels that they are suitable for the leadership program and their manager objects to that, is there anyway such cases can be looked at?

Response: What we are obliged to do before the file is submitted to myself was that each leadership team reviewed all the applications individually. But I am not sure they all did that if I am absolutely honest and there was a bit of manager's promoting their favourites. So we did get some supporting documents from managers that didn't reference the appraisal thing before. But you see what people didn't realise is that we could go into the appraisal records because they are electronic and check it and we did do some random checking. Or if we kind or you know our HR colleagues usually know what's going on if somebody is not performing. You know if we had a feeling that we are not sure about that person, then we could do some checking. Now the other way round is what if somebody got 'logged'' blocked? Em, I don't know if I would necessary know about that because it would have been blocked before it got into our inbox. But One of the way we tried to get as wide or broaden the pool of applicants was to actually target our diversity forums we have a women's forum, a disabled staff network so we promoted it to them. So that went really well. In that there is the view that when somebody has a disability I think there is sometime a view from their manager that they are not able to or don't want to do a more senior job and that's not the case and in the end we did have two pal with a disability on the program this time round. I mean it is not huge, but actually proportionately, there were a reasonable number given that we do not have all that many disabled staff anyway. So I guess what I am saying is that we try and put in as many checks and balances as we could do but that wouldn't and I don't have any concrete examples of anybody being blocked but I guess it might have happened.

Interviewer: What kind of systems did you use to publicise the program as I know you said you promoted it with some forums. Was everyone else made aware?

Response: There was the usual communication system GRO which is our internal communications mechanism and it was cascaded to the management team with a brief. We used the normal communications method and cascading through the teams and promoting directly to the staff networks. This year we are going to tie in with the appraisal. When we launch the next appraisal in April, it's going to get tied in with that. So that will go round to everybody then.

Interviewer: So the appraisal will play a more important role this year than previously?

Responses: Yes it will. And I think it is about trying to encourage managers to have a conversation at appraisal time to find out where an individual sees themselves in the future.

Interviewer: just referring back to the challenges you spoke about earlier, with the managers not buying into the program. Would you that may have an adverse effect on the applications received? Probably less applications than could have been?

Response: Yes definitely. Concrete evidence for that is that for example one particular director in environment and housing I had a very conversation with the senior leadership team which is of the director and chief officer about what we are trying to achieve and kind of thrashed it out if you like and we had more applications from that directorates than any other. So those directorates of where I had some really good conversation with the senior leadership team which is only two I have to say where we had lots more applications. There was an invite where everyone was asked to put time on their agendas for myself and my colleague to come and talk to them but not everybody took that up but those two senior leadership teams where I did go and explained what we were trying to achieve etc etc we had more applications.

Interviewer: I know you mentioned that you are trying a different approach this time but how else are you trying to make it more open to everyone and what exactly do you mean by everyone, is it everyone on a particular status or grade etc?

Response: Yes it is everyone in the targeted grade. So if the grades are targeted where we know either because we have information from people who are opting to go on an early leavers program or because of reshuffling/resourcing or because of any number of reasons at the minute where we know there is going to be some movement in the next few years. So last year I think the banding the grouping there were two grades which I think was everybody from PO6 down to SO 2 which is a massive group of people. I think we are gonna narrow this this year because we have a bit better workforce information than we did last year because we know a bit better what the future of some of the directors will look like we can be a bit more focused on targeting. And where we know there's going to be gaps because of people going on an early leavers program and that sort of thing, so I think we might just look at that again and really encourage managers to think about it within the context of their own workforce planning.

Interviewer: The early leavers program is different from the emerging leaders program is it?

Response: Yes it is completely different and I think having that is not helpful and if I am being absolutely honest, it should be somebody's pet's project. And I do not think it helps with succession planning because it is open to anybody and the evidence is that actually there is limited evidence that a lot of people attending the emerging leaders program have the ability or potential to be a senior leader. Cos we have quite a few emerging leaders applying last year who didn't get through and they were quite annoyed about that but they didn't evidence it or demonstrate what we were looking for even at the first stage of the process. So it is not helpful at all having the two.

Interviewer: So what is the difference between the two?

Response: The emerging leaders, anybody can nominate themselves to attend to turn up to an emerging leaders' event. There is no process to it, there's no thinking to it as to whether this person is delivering as to the appraisal objective or has potential.

Interviewer: But how do people get selected onto the program and who does the evaluation?

Response: It is self-selection.

Interviewer: That doesn't make sense. So who does the selection for the other program called early leavers or future leaders?

Response: No the 'step up' program. Actually I was told (this is really interesting) this time last year when we were developing the PR for this not to call the program the 'Fast Track' or the 'High Potential Program' but the 'Step UP' program because we do not do that kind of language in the council. But twice in the last few months the chief executive has referred to it as exactly that and referred to the Step up program as the Fast Track program or the high potential. So if he has called it that then why can't I but I have been told I can't. Our chief executive is actually a product of the civil service Fast track program. He gets it. Not everybody does. We started a graduate program two years ago and so the graduates are employed in a two year fixed contract program but my expectation is that well before the end of that they would have gotten a promotion. So our graduates come on at a starting salary of just under 20,000. And of our first group of 10 in 2012, five already been promoted and most of them have been promoted to substantially higher positions so they have leapt up a pay scale because they are capable. So that has started to make people grumble but that is always the first thing as they say that is not fair. But they went through an interview process and it is fair as they demonstrated what was required. But it has made other people sit up and take notice. And that has added another dimension to the TM program. But it is bringing young people in who are energetic and hungry for quick promotion which is adding a different bit to it.

Interviewer: Do you also call it Fast Stream as in the Civil Service?

Response: No we just call it a graduate program.

Interviewer: So that is after two years. So will they be able to apply to join in the step up to leadership scheme?

Response: Yes, I think they would. And I am expecting at least a couple if not more to be putting them forward and I will be encouraging them to.

Interviewer: How is the application process for the graduate program? Is it from within or open externally?

Response: We promoted it to the careers advisers in local universities. But actually and I do not know how this happened but we did have applications from all over the UK last year. Apart from advertising on our website we didn't promote it on any big website.

Interviewer: There is a lot of competition for graduate jobs so

Response: Which is why we cannot , the two reasons we focus on the local universities is because our chief executives wanted us to and quite rightly and two because there are not many opportunities of that kind for working in the public sectors and our systems just can't cope with so many applications. We had about 300 applications last year.

Interviewer: I can imagine as it is really challenging out there for jobs.

Response: yes. Yes. We actually took 52 people to assessment centres for 18 positions. What we were looking at again were the behaviours, the values, genuine commitment to making a difference.

Interviewer: What is the assessment centre process like?

Response: It is a pretty standard assessment process which we use for chief officer and senior posts as well. There is an online test which for graduates is a motivational questionnaire which is not scored as part of the graduate assessment centre but is used once somebody is appointed and shared with the line manager so the manager understands what motivates that person. On the day they do a group exercise a verbal reasoning they get a presentation topic given on the day not using any form of IT or accessing IT to bring notes of whatever but they do it on the spot and they present that to a panel later and there is a partner panel which everybody in the council now refers to as this 'big dating' exercise. Because we usually have btw 8 &10 partners who are a mixture of potential

line managers of graduates, you know, people whom we are offering a graduate position in the council and partners from everyone from the police, the voluntary sector and the health sector etc, you know people with whom we do business and they are paired up and people literally go round the room and have 10 minutes with each peer and at the end of that , they collect a view from all the partners before we come to scoring and all that.

Interviewer: When you talk about reliability and the reliability of the process, how would you describe it?

Response: Yes it is a really useful exercise. Really useful. We use it for the Step up development centre as well. Our chief executive is interested in the council being smaller in size but bigger in influence. And he wants senior leaders of the future to be able to build relationships and build networks and be influential. So we are looking for people to demonstrate those skills and it is quite hard to test that. But with the partner exercise does give us a lot of information around that because people have to sit down and then introduce themselves to people they have not met and then do it again and then do it again and then do it again. And what we don't want is just somebody who tells the same story five times over. So it is a really useful exercise.

Interviewer: Would you say the Step up to leadership program is just for succession planning as you mentioned earlier or would you say that there are other reasons?

Response: Because we have a very mature workforce profile something like 40% over the age of 45, something ridiculous like that and very few people under age 25 and a not very diverse leadership profile,

Interviewee: Is it your expectation that these ones who have gone through the process will be placed in a pool to be selected when there are vacancies?

Response: Yes. That's exactly right.

Interviewer: How do you envisage the challenges of people on top not leaving?

Response: That is true at the minute. But as I speak, we have about 1100 people who are in quite senior position who have indicated that they want to use our early leavers program as a way of exiting the organisation. WE know they are gonna go but they have not been signed off yet. And though this has been ongoing for the past 6 months, it is going to happen.

Interviewer: How do you motivate people in the pool without it becoming counterproductive after going through the programs?

Response: I think we are quite clear on what we want to do but we just can't make it happen at the minute and about why it has been stalled about allowing people to leave, I don't know. That bit of the process seems to be ridiculously bureaucratic and everything seems to just stall. So once that start going a bit which I think should be from this march onward cos a lot of people are going this march, then I think we should see some movement?

Interviewer: Again there will be another process for moving people into these positions I guess? Are people going to have to apply or will it be automatic?

Response: The plan is to offer the position when it comes up to those who in the pool but we are not very clear yet but taking it day by day. We are being careful about raising people's hopes which is why I am concerned about the emerging leaders program.

Interviewer: thank you very much Miss P. for your time and hope you wouldn't mind if I come back to you with any clarification if I require it.

Response: No that is fine and hope we will get a report about your findings from the research.

Interviewer: Yes, I hope to send an executive report, once I have completed the project and thank you so much for your time.

Transcript 2: Interview with talent pool participant and line manager (Civico).

Interviewer: Good morning. How are you?

Interviewee: Very well thank you.

Interviewer: First I just want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to discuss my research project with you. Just to give a brief about my research. It is in the area of Talent Management but specifically about how organisations in the Public and Private sectors identify talent. So firstly what your perception is about what 'talent' is, at what point in your career, were you identified, and if you have attended or been enrolled on any talent program, what processes did this involve e.g. selection process and finally, your thoughts about the reliability of the process, maybe talking about challenges and hindrances things like that. So first question is 'what do you think talent is'? I can see from your email that you have been on the gold, Fast Stream, Emerging Talent and now Future leaders' scheme. If you can tell me about that then that will be helpful as well.

Interviewee:

Yes I have been on four different ones over the years. And just to confirm my understanding of your questions, you want to find out what I understand by talent and to talk you through the different schemes and I can tell you what they did, what I got out of them and the merits of the schemes.

In terms of what I consider as talent I think what the government is trying to do at the moment, it is built into the civil service reform. There is a feeling that in the past the civil service has been fairly bad in identifying individuals who have the potential to rise to senior mgmt. positions. By that I mean directors, director general and above. Of course the language has changed from senior managers to senior leaders and it seem very much leadership is lacking in the civil service and to be fair after being in the civil service for 10 years I would agree with. So in terms of identifying high potential individuals it is not about looking for the finished product or superb leaders immediately but looking for people with the qualities that leaders possess and for potential to be developed into those and really reap very senior leaders. These qualities might be e.g. Ability to work across boundaries, ability to innovate, ability to inspire and motivate and lead change and lead change is a huge amount of that.

Interview:

Please what is your position?

Interviewee:

I am what they call a grade 6 which is the highest grade below the senior civil service. The position I am in right now is that I lead a team of people who change assess the benefit system so if the government wants to change the benefit system in any way we help them impact that and work out the implication are over a much wider spectrum than just the policy will.

Interviewer:

Could you tell me about the schemes you have been involved in.

Interviewee:

the very first one I got involved in was CIVICO Gold and it was internal to CIVICO and it stood for General Opportunities for Leadership Development. What they tried to do though an assessment centre was identify high potential those who had the ability to reach grade 7 that is the level below where I am right now. That was open to all grades and mainly aimed at first line manager grades so that we call the executive managers Eos' and again it was very unstructured there was a launch event a closing event and a couple of get togethers' during the year also but it didn't necessarily give you any specific training or identify the particular qualities of leadership that you will need and dealt with leadership in a very general way and the main kind of benefit I got from it was obviously the network because it brought people from all over the department and being a huge department of a thousand

people that was very very useful. I didn't stay on it for very long only for about a year and half, the reason being that I used that network to find a job in headquarters. Because what I then realised was that the civil service Fast Stream had far more currency than the internal scheme had. So I applied for that instead as an internal candidate and found it more useful because the thing I missed out before is that it is sometimes the label that you get, so people label you as the Fast Streamer or as CIVICO Gold person and that helps open doors because people know what it is they are getting when they want to hire you. Because for all of these schemes the focus is on experiential learning so putting you in stretch positions stretch assignments and just pushing you as far as you can go rather, than on the formal training. Though he Fast Stream did for me included a lot of formal training as well as experiential learning. The network for me was the most useful part and you could use that badge to open doors to new interesting assignments you could get. So I moved around, moved jobs at least once a year on the Fast Stream I got promoted off the back of it to grade 7.

The Emerging Talent is internal to CIVICO and that is an accelerated development scheme for people at grade 7 or 6 level. So these are the post Fast Stream type of people so we found that we had development for people below grade 7 below management range and we had some good development for people at very high level at DG and permanent secretary level. So this time it was not an assessment centre but we were be picked and first of all we had to be nominated from our part of the business. We used 9 box grid to identify performance against potential and you have to be in that top line of potential to be eligible put forward for it. We then had to write a business case which is how we thought we could bring something back to the organisation and benefit from the scheme and finally we had an interview which explored the same kind of things as our business case. And that lasts for initially one year, again very much based on , em there are 2 or three set pieces during the year but not very much in btw that gave you a training bursary for you to use as you saw fit speaking to your deep coach although not many people used that. There was also something called a Talent action group which was a group of senior managers who the idea is that if they look at this pool of talent and look at the needs of the business and can move the emerging talent pool around to stretch assignments and high profile posts. However that didn't work and what they are trying to do for future cohorts is to make that work better. After a year you come off the scheme normally or you carry on for a 2nd year depending on whether you remain on that hipo set. What happened with me is that the department nominates people from its internal scheme to its cross government future leader's scheme an you cannot be on both schemes so if you are successful on the cross government future leaders scheme you come off the emerging leaders scheme. And that is the one I just started. I was successful on getting onto the cross government one. This is far more structured, you have more learning and attached to the Ashridge Business School and do various modules and much harder work really. Again we have action learning groups. Action learning sets. Experiential learning stretched assignments and formal learning as well and that's due to last between one to three years and the idea being that you will be able to compete for senior civil service jobs at the end of it. That is where I am now and from all of these schemes the future leaders scheme that's going to be the most useful. (1st half)

Interview:

how long have you been with the CVS?

Interviewee:

11 years.

Interviewer:

Did you come in as a graduate?

Interviewee:

No I was in academia as a Biochemist.

Interview:

Within the period of being on all of these schemes can you state at what point in your career you went into these schemes? Or was it all nominations?

Interviewee:

The CIVICO Gold scheme I did that approximately 1 year and half after I started at entry level at the time. The Fast Stream was a year or 2 after that after my transfer into the corporate centre that was because the CIVICO Gold was not doing anything for me as well as the Fast Streamers around me who were getting all the good assignments. Sot that was about four years after I started. The Emerging Talent I only joined at the beginning of last year that was over a year ago and the Future leaders' scheme I only just joined last week.

Interview:

 Would you say it was because of your aspirations or just because of your performance on the job and as a result you were nominated to go forward?

Interviewee:

A bit of both. I wouldn't have applied for any of these things if my line manager had not asked me to do so. But year my own aspiration and ambition played a large part. But particularly for the Future Leaders Scheme and Emerging Talent I was only allowed to apply because the department nominated me for them. So that had more to do with my current performance and also potential. They measure potential before you are allowed to go on.

Interviewer:

Everything has to do with the performance appraisal system I guess which you said is the 9 box grid?

Interviewee:

There are 2 things. There is the performance mgmt. system which everybody uses and there is the 9 box talent management grid. It was the 9 box TM grid that enabled me apply for the last 2 schemes and what was fed into it and not the normal appraisal system. Do you know about the 9 box grid?

Interviewer:

Everybody I have spoken to has mentioned it and I assumed it was a generic system for appraising everybody?

Interviewee:

The TM box grid is used for people below the CVS grade i.e. people above SEO. So grade 7 and above. So it is a 9 box grid that measures performance against potential. It has potential along the Y axis and performance along the X axis. On the top right hand corner you have high performance and high potential so we call that star performer and the opposite down there is low performer. You have to be in that top right hand corner to be nominated for any of these schemes of grade 7 and above but because you may be new on the job you don't necessarily have to be on the high performance end.

Interviewer:

If you are new on the job but you are meeting the high performance rating…

Interviewee:

It is the high potential not the high performance. What we don't want to do is discard people who are brand new into the job. So you are always assessed against your potential rather than your performance in relation to your TM stuff. Of course one year or two years down the line if you are still not performing, then there is a question there. Within the main it is on potential.

Interviewer:
Would you say potential is based on your leadership qualities?
Interviewee:
in essence yes . It tends to be line mgmt. who makes those decisions on our competencies and particularly in terms of the leadership and communication competencies.

Interviewer:
Is the 9 box grid system an electronic or software tool or manual?
Interviewee:
No literally it is just a picture of a 9 box grid. Within each of those 9 boxes there is a descriptor and the line manager works through each one and decides which applies to the person and puts them in that box.
Interviewer:
How often do you have the assessments?
Interviewee:
Normally once a year and it seems to be done very very quietly below the radar, and some line managers. Never even mentioned to me what box I was in so I had ot kind of ask about it. So it doesn't tend to be particularly well used for people outside of those talent mgmt. systems which is a bit of a shame because it is quite a useful tool.
Interviewer:
so in essence it is more like if you have the potential to go into this talent scheme you will assessed with the 9 box grid system?
Interviewee:
Everyone is assessed but it is just that it is only being talked about with the people being assessed if they are in the top right hand box and top priority and that they are going to be applying for these talent mgmt. schemes and other people have been placed in boxes but sometimes are not informed about it and they are not discussed in talent mgmt. circles which again is a bit of a shame because it can be a useful tool for everyone and not just high performers
Interviewer:
So you would say that not everyone is aware about it.
Interviewee:
Yes that is exactly right?
Interviewer:
As a manager do you also use the 9 box grid to assess your employees?
Interviewee:
As I explained earlier, it only applies to people of grade 7 and above and I have only just got to the point whereby I am managing grade 7s' and I will be using it.
Interviewer:
Do you think that the appraisal system and the TM scheme is reliable and useful?
Interviewee:
We tend to pick out most of the talented people which I think is useful. There is a clear diff between the actual appraisal system which is used in this department and the TM system. They are actually quite separate. The appraisal system isn't particularly useful. We only have 3 boxes which are either: underperforming, must improve achieved or outstanding then we have a guided curve where we have to pick numbers of people to go into those particular boxes. They are very gross kind of classifications not particularly useful. I find the conversations and the quality of conversations between line managers and staff far more useful than that particular exercise in classifying people which I find tend to demotivate rather than motivate and people just get anxious about that when in essence it is the least important part of the whole appraisal system.
The 9 box grid on the other hand is very very useful in identifying talent and high potential and that is what it is used for and not as an appraisal system.
Interviewer:
Just to clarify would you say that everything depends on the judgement of your line manager.
Interviewee:
Yes Absolutely. The point where you are applying for the more higher talent schemes, those recommendations go to the departmental board for examples the future leaders scheme it was the executive team that actually nominated people from this department so they have to take the final judgement. In most cases it is the line mgmt. who put people through to that point and it is just their judgement and not based on their aspirations.
Interviewer:
So would you say this is a challenge or one of the constraints for the program?
Interviewee:
I mean it is a challenge, but it is tending to work quite well. The particular kind of line managers. Who have been inputting into this all that kind of grade six level and above, they know what makes a good leader and what high potential looks like. So in the majority of cases, it is working quite well because it is reliant on the expertise of people who know what they are talking about. And there are descriptors in these boxes to help them. You are right that it is entirely subjective but either by chance or by design it is working quite well in this particular department.
Interviewer:
'So overall you are more or less happy with it so going forward you will say that you are quite happy with it
Interviewee:
Yes, it is working well for me.
Interviewer:
If there were to be people who aspire to get into these schemes do you think they will get the support required to make this move? I know if they are not aware they cannot get in but do you think
Interviewee:
Not on the emerging talent scheme level. I think there are people who aspire to enter the fast Stream in the operational areas who wouldn't necessarily get the support of their line managers to apply for it because mainly I think because people in the operations do not know how the fast stream works and what people get out of it so you tend to find more people from the corporate centre get accepted onto the fast stream than you do in operations which I think is probably a deficiency. I have been very very lucky that I had some good line managers who helped me with those applications. And because it is a central government system it is only the applications that the line managers can assist with other than that they become irrelevant and it is the same with the others to be

fair. Once you have been nominated the selection process is outside the hands of the line managers. It is only the nominations that count.
Interviewer:
The nominations don't come from your line managers?
Interviewee:
The nominations come from the line managers. But then that is only the nominations. You are only allowed to apply once you have been nominated. But once you have been nominated you have to go through an application process which involves a business case, interviews and in some cases an assessment centre.
Interviewer:
So being nominated gives you the access into the system.
Interviewee:
Yes absolutely. This only applies to the schemes for more senior people. But for the Fast Stream you can self-nominate you do not have to wait for the line manager to do it. But people with line manager support with their application tend to progress better because they have had that kind of support and guidance in putting the application together.
Interviewer:
For yourself, it seems you were more aware about the schemes and what would you say made you this enlightened aside from you ambition and aspirations to get you onto these schemes?
Interviewee:
To be honest it was my line manager who brought them to my attention. I knew nothing about emerging talent or Future talent until my line manager mentioned them to me and asked me to apply.
Interviewer:
Do you have access to documents like talent management policy or HR documents that inform you about what development programs there are for employees?
Interviewee:
There is information on the intranet that everybody has access to kind of very passive access if you go hunting for it you may probably find but it is not necessarily publicised. Other than the FAST Stream, the others are not publicised as much.
Interviewer:
Thank you very much. What I am going to do is put all of these information into context for analysis for my research.

Appendix 1.12: Personal notes made from Civico corporate manual on Reform plan.

Identification did not only cover leadership but also key positions and key skills (project management, commercial awareness and operations) + talent/workforce planning to ensure organisational performance. (Human capital theory??) (Sustainable leadership, risk management)

FACTORS affecting TM: Reform plan (Leadership sustainability, Change Leadership, Culture, Organisational Performance, Initiating Private Sector successful practices for success, rewards management)

Theme: Importance of Roles in Civico.

Pg 4

need for 'accountability (Line managers especially) better data management to aid decision making. (echoes what HRBP stated at the end of her interview).

Pg 8 plan is to become more digital .

Project management capabilities need improvement and development across service which is too siloed.

Culture and behaviours:

Develop a culture that is more results than process driven (refer to the Line mangers being more focused on tick box exercise and putting people into the boxes rather than thinking about who their real talent are).

Pg 18

Realisation that projects failed and poor performance because of poor planning as implementation not thought through before polices were announced while inadequately skilled staff were meant to carry out these projects. (link to HRBP's interview and HTR's about too many things going on at the same time.) Also lots of movement by senior staff before completion of these projects. (#Retention issues, LB left while I was in middle of interviews so lack of continuity).

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Why TM:

More rigorous performance management will require additional tools and enhanced skills for managers. (indicative of why line managers struggled.)

Balance in talent recognition employees in operational delivery roles as for those staff working in policy. (confirms statement made by talent pool member but ironical as 7 out of 10 civil servants work in operations!!).

Balanced and corporate management and deployment of talent to drive capability is required across the Civil service particularly amongs high potential senior staff and professionals. (Tallies with all interviewees have said.) L &D of people for effective and management of career required. Also need stronger and collective focus on the capability of departments and the Civico as a whole. (Reflects what has been said by interviewees e.g. LB about poor career conversations)

Why TM?

"High turnover in critical posts at the centre of government can lead to a lack of collective corporate memory and towards orthodoxy. To combat this, Civico will take steps to identify the key posts that would benefit from a greater stability and tenure and retain a more stable cohort while balancing the needs and priorities of the Civico" (p.21).

(Reason for TM being provision of stability (curb short tenure of staffing and promote continuity), identification of critical roles and positions, curb high turnover and retention of key staff, lopsided promotion processes) (this issue of stability also in Locgov). (so focus is on individual and departmental capabilities but one is an outcome of the other.)

5 years intensive plan. (The reform plan was a major driver of talent as can be seen here)

Pg 23

Barriers between Civico & Private sector:

Breaking down barriers through interchange between public and private sector to bridge cultural gap between two sectors. (recognises cultural gap between civico and private sector as evident from this research)

New Civico Competency Framework coing out in April 2013 with focus on both behaviours and skills to promote result oriented culture consistent high standards (these were problem areas in Civico already identified elsewehre)

Inclusive L&D (not in place yet)

L&D for hipo SCS. Rolling out new learning curriculum requiring Civico staff development side by side with private sector peers with accredited programs and qualifications from external organisations. (Institutional Theory here, but again partnership and copying imbibing private sector concepts at play here shows Civico wanting to adapt and be flexible as is part of the change agenda)

HEAD OF PROFESSIONS ROLE: maintain professional standards and (So they are in charge of TM).

Secondments to private sector organisation by staff was self driven (why?)

Secondments being discouraged for fear of staff not coming back as these secondments were only open to highly capable staff. (Contradictory)!! (ref HTR narrative about the hipo lady). Civico resolution was to develop more interesting and demanding jobs and promised career enhancement for staff on secondment to private sector on their return.

Policy on balancing departments so that those in operations are equal to those in policy making was required and advice being sought for development. (This is the effect of the Challenge of lopsided talent pool of more people from policy making than operations)

Criteria/common standards for promotion:

Rewarding good poor performance while managing poor performance was required for change so that employees could be more productive and effective. Plans for reform included development of IT skills organisationally, employee engagement and managing security.

(Corporate engagement but not 121 which is vital for employees career progress)

Why TM? The reform plan called for a flatter hierarchical structure, (no more than 8 management tiers) with focus on having the right people doing the jobs and less on job grades. (can this go for the talent identification practice which focuses on grades) This required change mindset of having the right people in the right jobs at the right time, Consideration must involve understanding the needs of the business and diverse structure of government departments.

Inclusive TM: Regardless of job grades plan is to open all job vacancies for promotion to all that qualify (not in operation now, though inclusivity propaganda in operation)

Appendix 1.13: Bibliography of documents obtained from case study organisations

CIVICO

1. Civico High Potential Development Scheme brochure
2. Civico Future Leaders Scheme Brochure
3. Civico L&D Kit
4. Civico Learning Map
5. Civico Learning FAQ
6. Civico Reform plan

LOCGOV

1. Locgov Behaviours & Values sheets
2. Application Feedback Guidelines
3. HRLT Report on Succession Planning
4. Key Leadership behaviours
5. Step-Up to Leadership application Form
6. Line Manager support statement form for Step-Up to Leadership program
7. Step-Up to Leadership FAQ
8. Step-Up to Leadership managers' brief & nomination process

PHSERV

1. PHServ Eight day Program & Speakers List
2. PHServ Application Form & Interview Questions
3. MDP Booklet 2014 (Becoming a Leader Scheme)
4. MDP Booklet (Learning to Lead Scheme)
5. PHServ Leadership Academy TM guide for Conversations
6. PHServ Leadership model
7. PHServ Values & Behaviours Framework
8. PHServ ROI Survey and Report 2014

RETCO

1. Retco 'Talent Matters' Workshop & Management brief
2. Retco promotion structure brief
3. Retco values and mission statement sheet
4. Retco definition of talent sheet
5. Retco intranet employee communications extracts

Appendix 2.1 Initial generation of themes from definitions of talent in TM literature: Deductive coding

Item	Definition in Literature	Themes
1	Tansley C. (2011), a common notion of organisational talent refers to those who are identified as having the potential to reach high levels of achievement.	1) Potential to be promoted to high levels of achievement
2	contemporary dictionaries which define talent as 'a natural ability to do something well (longman)	2) Natural ability to do something well
3	a "special aptitude or faculty, high mental ability, a person or persons of talent"(Dictionary, 1990).	3)high mental ability 4) special aptitude
4	Gagne (2000) talent exists in the few individuals who have the necessary capabilities to make a difference in given field of human endeavour, whether it is academia, sport, arts, leisure, social action, technology or business. talent emerges from ability as a consequence of an individual's learning experience	5) few individuals who 6) have the necessary capabilities to make a difference in a given field of human endeavour 7) emerges from ability 8) consequence of an individual's learning experience
5	A recent report by the CIPD observed TM requires HR professionals and their clients to understand how they define talent, who they regard as "the talented", what their typical background might be	9) they have a typical background (what is it?)
6	It's important to define 'talent' as this will influence the way talents are identified and form the basis on which TM is approached (Tansley et al 2006:2).	Talent Identification depends on the definition of talent
7	(Tansley, Harris, Stewart, & Turner, 2007): from being focused on particular people, to a set of characteristics, or to statements of need as companies vary in terms of whether they view talent as the performance and potential that exists in every employee	10) focused on a particular people with 11) set of characteristics 12) statements of needs 13)performance & potential that exists in every employee
8	whether it is a more exclusively focus on scarce and more senior positions(Yarnall, J. 2011).	14) scarce and more senior positions
9	Some scholars (Thorne & Pellant, 2006)have argued that a talented individual is "someone who has ability above others and does not need to try hard to use it. They excel with ease and grace. A talented person has a certain aura in their ability that others wish to emulate and from which lesser mortals draw inspiration"	15) someone who has ability above others and doesn't need to try hard to use it 16)They excel with ease and grace 17)has a certain aura in their ability that others wish to emulate and from wish lesser mortals draw inspiration
10	(Gagne, 2000, p. 67) asserts that 'talented people have the ability to perform an activity to a degree that places their achievement within at least the upper 10% of their peers who are active the field'	18) the ability to perform an activity to a degree that places their achievement within at least 10% of their peers

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11	Goleman's (2006) observation that in professional jobs, top performers who were capable of adding value to their organisation are worth ten times as much as their co-workers,	20) in 'professional' jobs, 21) top performers 23) capable of adding value to their organisation worth 10 times as much as their co-workers
12	CIPD (2007) goes on to describe talented individuals as those who make the greatest difference to organisational performance either through their immediate contribution or in the longer term by demonstrating the highest level of potential	24) those who make the greatest difference to organisational performance through 25) immediate contribution 26) demonstrate highest level of potential
13	Research indicates that in most large organisations, talent is linked with individuals who display the most potential to progress to more senior roles predominantly leadership positions (StantonChaseAthens-June2013)	27) individuals who display the most potential to progress to more senior roles predominantly leadership positions
14	'ability, engagement and aspiration to rise to and succeed in more senior, more critical positions'(Tansley, 2011, p. 172)	28) 'ability 29) engagement and aspiration to rise to and succeed in more senior, more critical positions' (potential for leadership)
15	"the most frequently associated characteristics of high performance in talented individuals are that they have high levels of expertise, demonstrate leadership behaviours, creativity and initiative stemming from a 'can-do attitude' based on self-belief" (Tansley, 2011, p. 172)	30) characteristics of high performance 31) have high levels of expertise 32) demonstrate leadership behaviours 33) creativity and initiative 34) can-do attitude based on self –belief
16	"…organisations in the public sector see talented individuals as those who demonstrated high performance in leadership behaviours and by those who draw upon high levels of expertise in a specialist area. This is in contrast with the initiative and creativity to be found in organisations in the private sector such as Google and Gordon Ramsey Holdings where emphasis is on high levels of expertise and creativity" (Harris & Foster, 2007, p. 5)	35) demonstrated high performance 36) leadership behaviours 37) high levels of expertise in a specialist area 38) High levels of initiative, expertise and creativity
18	Exclusive perspective which is a perception of viewing key people with high performance and potential as talents	38) view of 'key people' with high performance & potential
19	" individuals who have the capability to make a significant difference to the current and future performance of the company" (Morton, 2006).	39) capability to make a significant difference to the current and future performance of the company
20	Exclusive perspective which is a perception of viewing right people in key positions as talents (position-related understanding). "A perfect match of 'A' players' and 'A' positions' is expected to contribute to 'A' performance" (Huselid et al 2005)	40) perfect match of 'A' players' and 'A' positions' is expected to contribute to 'A' performance'
21	"....effective business strategy requires differentiating a firm's products and services in ways that create value for customers;	41) workforce differentiation strategy to identify talent

		accomplishing this requires a differentiated workforce strategy, as well" (Huselid et al., 2005, p.117)	
22		Inclusive perspective which is a perception of viewing everyone as talent This perspective assumes that everyone can potentially contribute to the overall competitive advantage of the organisation and perceives that everyone has talent	42) everyone has talent and able to contribute
23		FITM is the recognition and acceptance that all employees have talent Swailes et al.	45. everyone has talent
24		Ingham (2006) "the definitions of talent will depend on an organisation's business strategy, type of firm, overall competitive environment, and so on".	Definition is domain specific, environment

Inductive Coding
Appendix 2.2   Hierarchy

Decision Making	Capability/Efficiency		performance management	Leadership	Culture
				poor employee	poor employee
over-rating	resources	Resourcing	career conversations	engagement	engagement
judgement	bureaucracy	Types of talent	succession planning	behind the scene	behind the scene
assessment	efficiency	specialists	performance management	front of the scene	front of the scene
employee visibility	accountability	technical talent	high potential	dishonesty	dishonesty
				managers being	employees being
criteria	technology	retention	potential	proactive	proactive
				approachability of	managers being
instincts	change	TM Tenure	performance	managers	proactive
	partnership				approachability of
gut feeling	ventures	talent schemes	Diversity	fear	managers
evaluation of talent				employees being	
prog	silos		underperformance	proactive	fear
Decision making	feedback		competitive advantage	secrecy	secrecy
real vs false talent	right distribution of employees identified		burnout	transparency	awareness
senior talent forum	ratings		change	employee opening up	selfishness
development centre	inconsistencies		technology	motives	employee struggles
talent reviews	Resourcing		partnership ventures	confusion	manager struggles
partnership ventures	poor efficiency		silos	tedious	employee aspirations
ratings	talent pipeline		Vision or future plans	tricky	risk
indicators of potential	rhetoric vs reality	change	impression management	accountability	transparency

	9 box			
talent dev process	phraseology	feedback	reliability	change
reliability	mechanical activity	being known		reliability
evaluation of talent	interview			
programs	contradictions	right distributiomn of employees identified		tradition
positioning	confusion	ratings		
clarifications	tedious	capability strategy		
timing of identification	a lot of work	talent pipeline		
intervention	flexibiluity	leadership development		
gender biases	adaptation	intervention		
rater-ratee biases	Macro-pressures			
skills types	Micro-pressures			
resources	challenges			
skill audit	moving roles			
skills types				
skill gap				

Appendix 2.3: Explanation of some codes:

Explaination of Codes for coding heirarchy and theme generation:									
Codes	**meaning**								
Balance	two conflicting necessary actions posing a challenge								
Labelling of talent	given to identified talent for example maybe the name of the development program they are in								
putting yourself forward	bold and upfront,fight for oneself								
power of line managers	authority of line managers in determining talents being identified								
behaviours	organisational expected behaviours such as leadership behaviours								
definitions of behaviours	descriptions of behaviours provided by organisations and departments								
poor leadership	where people in leadership or management postions act inappropriately								
Resourcing	Talent pool recruitment								
Talent Pool	pool of talent								
diversity	inclusion of diverse kinds of talent including gender and disabled								
challenges to TiD	problems associated with the process of identifying talent								
barriers	roadblocks or bottlenecks preventing the smooth identification of talent								
Emerging themes	new theories for further research								
size of the organisation	references to how the size of the organisaton affects talent identification								
talent definition	the way talent is defined by interviewees								
Change	references to changes either present or past								
management of challenges of talent identification	any reference to how talent or challenges to talent identification is managed								
tool used to identify talent	any reference to tools used for identifying talent								
criteria	references to criteria for identifying talent								
Institutionalism	any reference linked to the instituional theory								
talent identificaton process	any reference to the process for identifying talent used by organisations								
interventions	any action taken to manage talent pool members								
lateral moves/job rotations/job dev challenges	reference to cross postings of talent e.g. deparmental or job rotation								
culture	any reference to organisational behaviour or practice								
solution	any action taken to manage the tools or process for identification								
rater-ratee relationships	references to relationship between manager and talent								
fear/risks	any reference or inference of fear either by manger or employee								
secrecy	reference to lack of transparency or openess in processes								
top leadership	references to involvement in processes by senior management								
talent pool member experience	any statement about the process by talent pool members								
managers statements about talent process	any statement by management about the process of talent identification								
Talent programs	any reference to talent development programs from interviewees								
purpose for Talent Identification	any reference to why organisations identify talent								
organistional strategy	any reference to talent identification strategy								
environment	any reference to either internal or external environment of an organisation								
talent for what?	any reference or description of why the organisation undertakes talent identification								
employee reactions to process	any description of employees reactions to process or how they are affected by it								
Ethics	any reference to unfairness or poor HR practice								
confusion or Dilemma	any referece to being confused by some process or action or pressure								
potential vs performance	any reference to potential or performance or definitions of either								
managers challenges	any reference to managers, either about their ability, incompetence or biases, poor leadership								
reliability of process	any incident or remarks showing the reliability of the processs								
job grades	any description of job grades								

Appendix 3.1: Evaluation of TM programs in PHServ NE2.

Return on Investment

2010 - 2013

1. Introduction

In September 2014 PHServ NE 2's in house Management Development Programmes entered its 7th year. The programmes are about Talent Management and retention and development of our key people at the PHServ NE 2.

There are two levels to the programme, "Becoming an PHSERV NE 2 Manager" aimed at staff in management/supervisory roles in Bands 5 and 6. The second level is called "Managers Moving On" and is aimed at managers at Band 7 and 8a.

There are sixteen members of staff on each level of the programme, with each of the divisions being represented on both programmes. The programmes use our own in house expertise to facilitate sessions on a range of topics including financial awareness, personal effectiveness (including MBTI, coaching, NLP), customer service an workforce development (including Equality and Diversity, HR Policies and KSF)

Both programmes run one day a month from September to September inclusive with the course participants giving an end of programme presentation to the PHServ NE 2's Executive Team and other senior managers within the PHServ NE 2 to explain how attending the programme has helped them to develop both personally and professionally and also importantly how they have used this learning to develop the services they work within.

There is also a third programme "Learning to Lead" which is a six month programmes is aimed at staff in Bands 3 & 4 was launched in October 2013 and a Return on Investment paper will be produced in the Autumn of 2015 to evaluate the effectiveness of this particular programme.

2. Management Development Programme Return on Investment Questionnaire

As a follow up to the last Return on Investment paper that was produced in 2013 it was agreed by the OD Team that a questionnaire would be sent out to the 70 members of staff who completed either programme between 2010 – 2013 to find out what difference attending the programme had made to them and also to find out whether there were any areas/gaps that they would still like to develop. The questionnaire was sent out in September 2013. In total 35 questionnaires were returned.

The questionnaire comprised of 3 questions with a space at the end for additional comments. The responses from the questionnaire will be grouped into themes in order to maintain confidentiality of the people who participated. Each of the questions and its themes are covered in the following sections.

3. How has attending the course improved how you manage and Lead?

- Better understanding of variation between people – tailoring approach to issues given different outlooks/personalities
- Using coaching skills to manage difficult relationships/issues
- Networking – awareness of different areas in PHServ NE 2
- More understanding of different departments and roles within PHServ NE 2
- "It has been a huge wakeup call in the sense of my style of managing"
- Taking into account other people's behaviours and consider how to respond in a manner that is more appropriate to them
- "It has made a huge difference to my relationship with staff and I now get a better response and a more united working team."

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- "It gave me the tools and confidence to carry out my job role, having Senior Managers and Directors delivering some of the training and information also helped."
- "It gave me a good insight into my own personality and that of other personality types. I find it easier to understand why some people behave in a certain way and why something which would not bother me really upsets them. I know how to avoid situations which caused stress in the past because I did not understand the needs of others."
- "I feel more confident dealing with conflict. I feel more comfortable in my dealings with managers as well as the other members of our multidisciplinary team."
- "I felt isolated in my own area before doing the course. Meeting people from different departments was good. It has given me a good network of people to call on for advice and support. I came into contact with more senior managers within PHServ NE 2 and I was able to learn from how they performed in front of us. I have adapted some of each of their styles at different times and quite often it has worked really well."
- "I learnt to look at myself differently, to imagine how I appear to other people; I have become softer in my approach on issues and also now consider the type of personality of the person that I am going to speak to and how they may react. I am a totally different person to when I started the course (for the better I think!)"
- "I feel more equipped and confident in these skills due to being on the course. The course not only teaches you by lectures/speakers; you are able to learn from other people' experiences in their roles that are on the course."
- "I believe that I now get better results from my team by taking a step back and giving them the opportunity to perform their role without feeling I have to take charge."
- "I now realise that I don't have to be the best at every aspect of the job and that there may be someone else in the team that may be better suited to a particular task."
- "I learnt many skills and knowledge from attending the course and applied what I learnt in my daily leadership role making myself and colleagues more aware of how important they are and what service they deliver for PHServ NE 2. Motivation and communication is key every day."
- Given an insight into all the different areas within PHServ NE 2 and how each department or area is a vital part to PHServ NE 2 network.
- The course gave me the confidence to believe in myself and gave me the skills to develop my career further."
- "I am now aware of my own strengths and weakness' and can adapt depending on the situation and team I am working with."
- "I feel much more confident and feel this greatly improves team moral."
- More confidence to make decisions
- Increased knowledge of the help available from other departments.
- Helped in terms of raising organisations profile and developed internal relationships.
- "Helped me to look at staff more closely and understand if a job is not being carried out to their best ability there is an underlying problem. I listen more and take ideas staff may suggest. I have also learnt to delegate and PHServ NE 2 the team to reach targets."
- "I don't know if it's improved how I manage and lead. I do think it allowed me to interpret my team members better."
- "I find it easier to engage with staff"
- More motivated
- "There have been lots of changes in my workplace and I feel that the course has helped me and helped my staff to manage change in a positive way."
- More self-belief.
- "It has helped me better understand PHSERV NE 2 as an organisation, made me more conscious and reflective in my actions. It has been a bit of a rollercoaster over the last few years, but despite a number of challenges we have created a more flexible, tighter team and managed to continue to make service development improvements which can demonstrate impact."

- "The course gave me more confidence and equipped me with the tools and social network to meet the challenges of the PHServ NE 2."
- The course has given me valuable knowledge and skills in order to be able to progress into a management role.
- I also learnt about the different levels of listening, with active listening being the key to understanding.
- The course gave me valuable skills in dealing with people, effective communication and delivering information. This was useful as part of my secondment role required me to present complex information to staff at all levels.
- Reinforced previous learning.
- "By looking at myself and how I interact with all staff, by being more positive and even happier at work."
- "I feel more confident in my job role and when voicing my opinions."
- "I feel I understand people's actions/behaviours better."
- "I have a wider awareness of the human factors that influence my management and leadership and how I can combat these."
- "Helped me manage myself better, support others and appreciate the PHServ NE 2 infrastructure."
- Helps you think of the bigger picture
- Question yourself/reflection/coaching
- Deliver effective appraisals that benefit the individual and the organisation.
- Communication can always be improved – ensuring the message is understood – feedback.
- 360 review increased confidence with positive comments from peers and managers.
- Models are useful to help manage difficult situations
- Improved communication skills.
- "Increased confidence in myself and being confident in dealing with staff in my team. I feel equipped to handle difficult issues and not afraid to try something new."
- Situations where I have to come out of my comfort zone.
- Improved confidence in my ability to lead
- Better understanding of dealing/interacting with individual team members
- Skills to maintain own health and wellbeing.
- I gained a lot of useful techniques and I think I have changed my way of thinking. I use the policies and procedures of PHServ NE 2 and advice given by the speakers on the course.

4. Since you undertook the course, have you:

		Yes (number of responses)	No (number of responses)	Comments
A	been promoted into a different/ more senior role	10	12	o "I now have a permanent band 7 job" o "Not for the want of trying" o "Gained promotion to Ward Manager during the time I was enrolled on the course" o "I was a ward sister. I am now a Clinical Nurse Specialist 4 and I am starting my MSc in Advanced Practice" o "I ask for more responsibility and I bring this to my boss's attention every KSF appraisal. The outcomes are always negative and I know I will not get any promotion within the department I work, as I am reminded that I am just a trainer and anybody can do that job." o "Have been promised promotion and taken on extra responsibilities over the last 18 months, although still not being recognised for higher additional work." o "I had already been promoted. The course gave me the tools to complete my job description with regards to man management." o "I have not been promoted but I have taken on and been given more responsibility in my work area. I now directly line manage the trainee assistant practitioners in my area. I am involved in recruitment and selection, staff appraisals and training." o In the most senior role for the profession within PHServ NE 2. o "I have tried internally and externally but have not found a suitable post." o "I have been asked to apply for a permanent position." o "No senior post available but I feel I have developed into the role of a Band 6 and my manager agrees." o "Obtained the post of deputy ward manager in January 2012 prior to starting the course in September. The course helped me see the wider picture within the organisation rather than just my division." o "Gave me the confidence to take on a more dedicated team manager role." o "I was told by my manager that I would not go any further here at PHServ NE 2 because of my dyslexia and suggested I take a course on reading and writing."
B	been seconded into a different/ more senior role	5	12	o "During and following the course I was seconded for 12 months" o "It has never been discussed and there is always that fear that if you move from your current role you might not have the same job when it's time to return." o "Moved into a project management role" o "Did a brief voluntary secondment to NICE to evaluate and advise on e-resource procurement for national framework." o "I was seconded into the Financial Advisor role for 12 months covering another secondment within the department. I felt the course gave me knowledge and confidence to fulfil this role to the best of my ability." o "I have been working as a temporary band 7 for the past 18 months."
C	stayed in the same role	23	2	o "I have managed to take on more responsibility since my manager left and was not replaced" o "I am still in the same role but if feel that my manager has given me other tasks since completing the course that I may not have had the confidence to do before" o Much more happy and confident in my role due to all the things learnt on the course I feel better equipped to deal with difficult situations."

				o	"I do enjoy my job but I am always looking for career challenges to improve my working life and help towards better services provided to PHServ NE 2."
				o	"I was new in post prior to attending the course."
				o	"I have grown within my role taking on more responsibilities. I have been involved recruitment recently and on interview panels."
				o	"This is the role I had been promoted too which coincided with the start of the course."
				o	"I feel I have developed within this role and I am happy to take on responsibility."

5. After attending the Management Development Programmes are there still any gaps/areas that you would like to develop?

- o Experience and knowledge of different areas in the hospital i.e. How to raise ECF's for recruiting staff, service reviews etc.
- o Regular management updates to keep up to date otherwise information is forgotten (especially in my role as isolated from the rest of PHServ NE 2).
- o "I feel that we never stop learning and that any further Management Development type programmes can only enhance our knowledge, skill and performance."
- o "There is always room for improvement, and I would welcome more courses like the MDP to expand my development."
- o "I may consider the Managers Moving on Course."
- o More awareness of PHServ NE 2 and strategic issues.
- o Formal Project Management course
- o Would like to find a professional Mentor
- o Only when necessary. It may be worthwhile setting up smaller more unique courses that can be booked on when individuals require the help."
- o "I found it hard when the course finished that I lost some of the links with other areas in PHServ NE 2. It would have been nice to have done the managers moving on course. I am trying to be active and develop my management role but sometimes feel a little isolated from the main organisation."
- o Developing more coaching skills."
- o Mindfulness
- o "I feel there is a gap in developing business cases or best practice in service reviews."
- o "I think the course would benefit from a programme that is more in depth with understanding and exploring equality & diversity."
- o "Dealing with bullying and harassment and conflict resolution would help meet the challenges I face on a daily basis."
- o We could have benefitted with a longer session on HR policies.
- o "I would like to consolidate and build upon the foundations the course has provided me with in areas such as NLP, advanced communication and coaching."
- o Further learning around PHServ NE 2 processes for financial management such as business case writing would also be advantageous.
- o Dealing with complaints – booking on in-house training session
- o Budgets – but these are specific to areas really
- o Managing sickness of staff and the stages involved
- o Getting the most out of ESR.
- o More on communication and dealing with difficult, failing staff i.e. practical tips.
- o "It would be good to be able to keep up to date with the workings of PHServ NE 2 in some way."
- o It would be helpful to learn more about PHServ NE 2 procedures for dealing with everyday issues e.g. which forms to use, procedures for specific tasks.
- o "I would like to spend some time shadowing managers such as divisional managers to get a different perspective of clinical/non clinical managers."

6. Additional Comments

- o Overall, a worthwhile exercise – I found it beneficial
- o This course gave me confidence to develop my leadership skills and apply for the post of leader on the labour ward
- o "I do believe that anyone who is interested in development should attend this course as it helps you understand yourself and the impact of your behaviours in the workplace. I realise that due to the course I have been more positive and have the ability to influence a more structured team."
- o "The course was well run and I personally got a lot out of it. I would recommend that other managers who have not attended the course to attend as it opens your eyes to how things can be done differently, and not always carrying on doing the same old thing and not getting anywhere."
- o "The course was really well run. Everyone I have met who has done it has found something useful in it. It is a really worthwhile course to do and PHServ NE 2 should offer it to all managers"
- o "Loved the course - would like to do it all again!"
- o "I absolutely loved attending the course, the knowledge and tools that I gained in order to enhance my skills has been invaluable and I am now very proud to manage a wonderful, committed team within PHServ NE 2, of which I feel very honoured to be part of."
- o I think this course is an excellent opportunity for all members of staff at PHSERV NE 2. I especially enjoyed meeting people who are not nurses from around the hospital that in my every day job I would never have met"
- o "It's a shame we can't all still meet up once a month!"
- o "Both course leaders, Lisa and Rachael, were extremely supportive and encouraging throughout the entire process – Thank You!"
- o "I feel the biggest single thin I took from the course was being more aware of what makes other members of my team tick. What pushes their buttons? How to adapt my leadership style to each individual."
- o "The course was very rewarding and the network of people I met was invaluable."
- o "The course helped me a lot, I have become much more confident, but still feel much deflated as promotion within the division has been promised over 12 months ago and has not reached any decision as yet. My job title remains the same even though I am involved in other areas as manager. However I am pleased to be given the opportunity to develop further within the division and would hope that the new structure as discussed will reach a speedy conclusion."
- o "Really enjoyed the course, various aspects have been shared within the team. Would highly recommend."

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- "Management is mainly dealing with people and anything centred around would be beneficial. I thoroughly enjoyed the course and wish some topics were more in depth; however, I learned a greater understanding of the PHServ NE 2 as a whole and an appreciation for my role and the role of others. Breaking down barriers between each department was another advantage of the course, meeting and bonding with other colleagues within PHServ NE 2."
- "I thoroughly enjoyed the course, I learnt a lot during the twelve months and also about myself and others and it has given me confidence in my work. I also enjoyed the social aspect, meeting new people from other areas of PHServ NE 2and finding out about what they do."
- "I was very nervous before the presentation, but after we did it, it brought a huge sense of achievement."
- "This course was a revelation to me and really changed my outlook at work."
- "I felt the course was really worthwhile and I gained a lot on additional information from it."
- "I feel the course was instrumental in my career development and gave me confidence in my leadership skills."
- "I believe the course was run at the right level and I feel more aware of support and development systems that are available both locally and nationally."
- "Thank you for the time and effort to those who ran and attended the course."
- Great course for up to date knowledge of PHServ NE 2.
- "The course was extremely valuable to me on a personal level as well as professional. It opened my eyes to the larger picture and inner workings of a large organisation. Cascading that information to my colleagues to explain why things are done in a certain way to benefit the community it serves."
- "It was a really good opportunity to meet other members of PHServ NE 2 and understand other staff roles and workings. Although I have not had promotion it was beneficial to my existing role."
- "I thoroughly enjoyed the course and meeting others who face similar issues to me."
- "I thoroughly enjoyed the course and meeting staff from different areas, listening to their views and values."
- "Fantastic course – very beneficial to me."
- It built my confidence to contact people as and when I need help and advice
- I felt the course content was good and covered a wide variety of topics.

7. Overall Return on Investment

Over the last five years the Management Development Programmes have given staff within PHServ NE 2 the opportunities to develop new skills as well as network with other staff from across all the divisions.

The majority of staff who completed the course have found that by attending, it has helped them to develop more confidence within their job roles and given them a better insight into others and their own personalities which has allowed them to adapt/change their leadership style and focus on how they lead/manage the different types of individuals within their teams to get the best out of them at all times.
Since undertaking the course approximately 15 members of staff have had the chance to progress into more senior roles within PHServ NE 2 and those that have not had the chance yet, are keen to do so and are showing commitment and determination by taking on more responsibilities within their department.
After attending the course staff would still like development in some of the following areas to name just a few:
- Communication
- Dealing with difficult staff
- Budgeting and Finance
- Dealing with complaints
 Some of those who responded also felt that the course would benefit from more in depth and longer sessions on some topics such as HR Policies and equality and diversity and some would also like to have regular management updates to keep information fresh in their mind.
Overall the staff thoroughly enjoyed the course and would definitely recommend the course to other members of staff around the PHServ NE 2. And some would consider attending any more management development type courses that come up in future.

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Appendix 4.1: Retco 9 box grid

		Low	Medium	High
3- years Performance Trend Results	Exceeds	Q6 Exceeds on Results/Low on Potential	Q3 Exceeds on Results/Medium on Potential	Q1 Exceeds on Results/High on Potential
	Meets	Q8 Meets on Results/Low on Potential	Q5 Meets on Results/Medium on Potential	Q2 Meets on Results/High on Potential
	Below	Q9 Below on Results/Low on Potential	Q7 Below on Results/Medium on Potential	Q4 Too New To Rate Colleagues who joined the company within the past 6 months only

Low ⟶ **Medium** ⟶ **High**

Appendix 4.2: PHServ 9 box grid

Readiness to move / Performance and behaviours	Professional talent: Shows promise to continue to advance in their professional field or into a wider leadership role within 3–5 years if they have the capacity and ambition to do so, but equally valuable where they are.	Developing talent, ready soon: Demonstrates the potential, ambition and motivation to develop at their current level and potentially progress in their career within 1–3 years into new and wider challenges.	Ready now: Demonstrates the potential, ambition, motivation and experience to perform at the next level now or within the next 12 months into new and wider challenges.
Exceeds expectations Outstanding performance against objectives, achieves more than what is expected of them, and demonstrates role modelling of behaviours required beyond their role.	**Professional in field** • High performance in own field. • Role models behaviours of organisation/role. • Consistent results and brings added value to tasks given • Possible reached 'expert' stage in their career. • Shows upward potential, but less ambition, likely to move on in the medium future, outside of own specialism. • Emergent wider skills.	**Key generalist** (Pivotal and flexible) • High performance with consistency of results across a variety of assignments and brings added value to tasks given. • Acts wider than professional background. • Role models behaviours of organisation/role. • Low-moderate potential/ambition to move on, possibly happy to stay in current position. • Secondary pool to fill critical positions; perhaps move one level; likely to shift to key of high professional roles over time.	**Role model** (High potential to go further) • A role model with the highest levels of performance, potential and ambition to move on. • High performer, bringing added value to assignments with lots of potential and capacity for immediate advancement. • Role models behaviours of organisation/role. • Demonstrates mastery of current assignment. • True organisation asset – role model. • First call to fill critical positions.
Meets expectations Meets the expectations for performance against objectives and behaviours required at the level for their role.	**Future professional in field** • Good reliable performance. • Behaves professionally in line with role. • Showing upward potential but less ambitious to move outside of field.	**Solid generalist** (Solid/adaptable) • Good rounded performance. • Behaves professionally in line with role. • Meets expectations. • Works wider than professional background. • Some potential to do more in long term if ambition and development allows.	**Future emergent potential** (Capacity for key roles) • Individual with high potential. • Good rounded performance. • Behaves professionally in line with role. • Has the capacity to be a consistent talent, or with stretch move to higher levels.
Partially met expectations Below 'met expectations' against performance objectives and behaviours required at the level for their role.	**Developing professional** (Needs stretching) • Current low demonstration of performance and behaviours required of role. • Being supported to reach their potential. • May be in the wrong role.	**Developing generalist** (Needs stretching) • Low performance but showing moderate potential over time outside of professional role. • Being supported, needs pushing and stretching to reach full potential. • May be bored, under-used or in the wrong role.	**Transition employee** (New to role, needs support) • New to post or assignment. • Have yet to demonstrate results, or high potential in a new position / development assignment. • Future performance will allow assessment of where they align to the grid longer term.

Appendix 5: Table 15: Cross-case analysis and summary of findings

	Civico	Locgov	Retco	PHServ	Similarities	Differences
Talent Definition	Exclusive talent approach of key position (SCVS) grades for future leadership, strategic positions, and professionals & talent as High Potential & High Performers (9 box grid definitions)	Exclusive talent (Key positions (Exclusive to EO & PO grades as successors to exiting senior leaders) as well as High Potential & High performers):	Inclusive talent: seeking high performance and potential in all staff grades for promotion to next job grade and for succession planning in stores (talent classified as 'ready now' or within 6months to one year. Definitions also Includes 9 box grid definitions	Inclusive & Exclusive talent approach. National definition is more inclusive about high performers and high potential using 9 box grid definitions. But local/regional definitions are more about exclusive key positions for leadership development & succession planning	Civico & Locgov adopted an exclusive talent approach with focus on targeted grades/key positions. All four cases are focused on identifying staff with high potential and performance. Civico, PHServ, Retco have a 9 box grid definition of talent	While Retco adopts a more inclusive approach towards all employees in comparison to the other three cases by seeking talent in all employees, PHServ appears to have an overt inclusive but covert and predominantly exclusive talent approach regionally due to the newness of the national talent initiative still being piloted and evolving.
TM Definition	TM is about Pivotal people (Emerging talent, the talented, and Super talented and Professionals) and secondly, pivotal positions (Deputy Directors &Directors) 'A'	TM is about building a leadership talent pool/pipelines with inclusion of talent from a diversity pool 'add-on' for succession planning and	TM is about HRM practices with organisationally focussed competence development and building talent pool/pipelines for succession	National PHServ advocates HRM practices with a selective focus on High potential and high performance but real TM practice is focused on leadership	TM in Civico and Retco focus on social capital as this is important for succeeding in future roles. Similarly Civico, Locgov and PHServ focused	Locgov innovates its' TM approach with a combination of an 'inclusion' add-on and 'knowledge management' strategy for capturing talent in

	Players for 'A' positions' (Director General) as well as identifying skill gaps for development. TM is also about building social capital	adopting a knowledge management strategy for capturing talent and talent transfer in exiting leaders. TM is also about workforce planning and identifying skills gap for development	planning. TM is also about building social capital	development of Key positons of the executive board and senior management team, and their next in line and identifying skill gaps	on identifying skill gaps for development amongst talent to promote organisational performance. Succession planning is implied as basis for TM in all four cases but more prominent in Locgov and Retco as Civico and PHServ focus more on leadership development	retirees; while Retco differentiates its TM practice through adopting an organisationally focused competence development as opposed to just leadership development. TM in PHServ overtly in
Talent For what? Factors affecting TID processes	To comply with UK government Civil Service change agenda to develop and build leadership pipeline and organisational capability, performance and efficiency, professionalism, identifying and closing skill gaps between Civico and private sector, for employer branding	Response to government budget cuts and mass redundancies requiring recruitment and development of successors as opposed to replacements for mass exiting senior leader positions, to enhance employer branding for attracting young talent to balance	To comply with TM practices in organisation Headquarters for ensuring continuous improvement of individual and organisational performance and capability across board for remaining competitive in the industry and succession planning in stores	To provide a national TM and leadership development framework for developing leadership potential, leadership behaviours, succession planning, organisational capability and efficiency in employee performance,	Common to all four cases as reasons for adopting TM are institutional influences (governmental, Head quarter organisation or environmental), followed by the need to improve organisational efficiency, capability and performance.	While there was no apparent or immediate threat to organisational survival with the other three cases, the adoption of TM was critical to Locgov's survival due to the mass exit of senior leaders which if not properly managed could result in a talent

	to attract and retain talent, improved culture and organisational behaviour	workforce diversity, improved culture and organisational behaviours		recognition and career management for talent retention, improved culture and organisational behaviours	More common to Civico, Locgov is the use of TM for employer branding for attracting talent. Mostly TM was for succession planning	crash with diverse outcomes
Talent Identification Process	Appraisals, 9 box grid, career conversations, nominations, applications, interviews and selection, lobbying, decision making/talent review board and talent pool for succession planning, job rotation, training and development, critical skill gap identification	Appraisals, nomination, applications, interviews, decision making and selection into talent pool, training and development, role modelling of managers to promote awareness, talent pool for succession planning, critical skill gap identification	Appraisals, 9 box grid, career conversations, decision making / talent review board, talent pool for succession planning, performance management coaching, job rotation, training and development,	National: Appraisals, 9 box, career conversations, line manager nominations, applications, and decision making / selection into talent pool for succession planning. PHServ Local/Regional: Line manager nomination, application, interviews, assessment centres, training and development, role modelling of organisations adopting TM to other PHServ organisations,	All four cases used appraisals, line manager's rating, training and development and talent pools for succession planning. In addition to this, Civico, Locgov and PHServ used line manager nominations, applications, interviews and selection processes. Civico, PHServ and Retco used the 9 box grid and talent review boards for calibrating 9 box grid scores. The power of line manager was	Only PHServ used assessment centres in addition to other processes. While Civico employed lobbying of senior leaders in addition to the other processes. Decision making processes was different in each organisation with Civico's being the most complex being so highly regulated. Similarly the functionality of the appraisals and use of the 9 box grid differed in all four. Only PHServ explicitly indicated evaluation of

				evaluation of TM success	common to all four. Career conversations was common process in Civico, PHServ and Retco. Civico and Retco used job rotations as development tools	success of their TM which adds to knowledge gaps in studies of TM
Criteria for selection	Targeted grade 6 to Director levels, 9 box grid rating of high potential/star performer, visible and versatile across roles and boundaries, team synergy, delivery of targets, honest and engaging leader	Targeted senior officer grades, line manager support with application, successful 300 words application and success at interview	Demonstrating Retco leadership framework behaviours for both hourly and salaried staff. Being rated as a high performer and high potential on the 9 box grid for salaried staff. For hourly paid staff, you have to be on talent pipeline for section manager role in stores to be identified and job rotations for increasing visibility and career prospects	National criteria: 9 box high leadership performance and potential rating, line manager authorization and diverse localized processes: targeted grades, line manager nomination, application, personal / individual interests	The power of line manager support as criteria for identification was evident in all four cases with being rated as a high performer /potential and implied or explicit display of organisational leadership behaviours which were aligned to organisational values also being important. Ability to work across departments was also critical in Civico and Retco for identification.	Being visible and having good networking and impression management skills was an important criteria in Civico due to a heavily politicised environment. Retco identification in stores for hourly paid staff was through daily observation of employee performance and behaviours and employee engagement in addition to a formal careers conversation.

					Also being in the targeted grades was important in Civico, Locgov and PHServ.	
Challenges	Poor Leadership, poor performance management (organisational and individual), poor management of career conversations departmental inconsistencies, culture, digitisation, high turnover, environmental challenges, sector gaps, too many processes for identifying talent, ethical biases, silos, job rotations	Poor Leadership, poor performance and career conversations management, assessments, High turnover retirees, digitisation, culture, environmental, aging staff population, equality & diversity issues, budget cuts, managing employee expectations, still very new program, ethical biases, silos	Finding successors, managing expectations, quality of assessments, technology, Inconsistencies in career management & promotion process between stores & Head office staff, managing subject specialists, managing employee expectations, job mobility issues	Poor leadership and performance management, poor career management, inconsistencies & conflicting processes and definitions, managing expectations, culture, high turnover and resourcing, still very new program, old-boys network regimes, ethical biases, silos	Poor leadership, poor performance and career conversations' management, high turnover, too many changes and organisational bureaucratic culture was a challenge familiar to Civico, Locgov and PHServ; with managing talent' expectation being similar in Civico, PHServ and Retco. Career pathways and compensation challenges were common to Retco and Locgov but not the others. . Locgov and the national PHServ TM programs were still very new.	Inconsistencies in some of the processes though recurrent in all four cases were different in nature in each one; In Civico and Locgov, it was about imbalanced pools majorly populated by particular departments. likewise their individual digitisation issues and challenges with the quality of assessments

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Management of challenges	Leadership accountability, Training of managers, Talent review boards, proactive talent planning :Identified key positions and skill gaps, set up specialist professions e.g. 'tax professions', holding leaders accountable, staff engagement through surveys, introduction of competency framework & standardized performance / promotion process, partnership with selected private sector organisations, flattening hierarchical structures,	Training for management, Step-Up to Leadership program, policy of inclusion in TM process, clearly articulated TM documents for applicants including Locgov's values and expected behaviours, Exiting Leavers program incentive, engaging and training decision makers HR specialists to create awareness of changes ; selling messages through managers rather than HR, initiating a graduate scheme, independent assessors	Assign KRAs to HRBPs to ensure succession process happened supported by Calibration of Talent Review board, Training managers and design of 'conversation' template, addressing issues promptly and honestly, providing honest feedback, transparency regular briefings with managers, purchase new technology, inclusion of conversations for hourly paid staff placing high performers from this group on talent pipelines for section manager roles in store, Regional Talent sharing practice, top 3 bottom 3 process,	Leadership accountability, Talent review boards, national talent and leadership framework, employee engagement, TM awareness through roadshows and role-modelling, appointing regional partners/consultants to support TM processes	Training for line managers on managing career/difficult conversations was common to all four cases. Talent review boards helped with calibrating discrepancies in ratings in all four cases. Civico, Locgov and PHServ through workforce planning identified skills necessary for organisational performance to enhance talent identification & employed employee engagement strategies to promote awareness of TM with various leadership development schemes to aid talent retention.	Civico set up a tax profession as a start for identifying professionals in Finance departments but nothing established in Retco. Both Retco & PHServ set up a leadership framework to guide behaviours but while this was ingrained in Retco culture and processes, it was not in PHServ due to lack of top management support and challenges with implementation. Similarly Civico & PHServ & Retco used the 9 box grid but while Retco maximised process efficiency and success through this resource, Civico

			Leadership framework, digitisation, simple TID processes			experienced challenges using additional resources and long decision making processes. In the same vein, Retco and PHServ were also digitalised but while PHServ had challenges with implementing TM processes due to cultural biases and funding, Retco's successful TM process was maximally due to its digitalized process which enabled transparency and monitoring of its processes. Retco managed succession through top 3 and bottom 3 program and talent sharing process.
Talent Schemes	Exclusive to targeted grades/positions	Exclusive to targeted grades	Inclusive of all grades	National: Inclusive of all grades. Local:	Both Civico and Locgov's development	Development was open all employees in

				Exclusive & Inclusive	program was exclusive to targeted grades	Retco. PHServ adopted both an inclusive and exclusive approach to talent development by making development programs accessible to all staff cadres nationally. Leadership developments were exclusive to senior management and executive positions in PHServ regions.