

To Explore the Effect of Talent Management Developments in Saudi Healthcare Sector

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Today, human capital at every level is considered more important than ever to organisations that hope to raise their competitiveness, both globally and locally, as organisations face a global, complex, dynamic, highly competitive, and extremely volatile environment. Nonetheless, organisations need to increase their attention to their human capital who owns unique qualities and greatest potential, and those who can sustain the competitive advantage of the organisation to stay on top. Notwithstanding the growing recognition of the importance of qualified employees, the main challenge facing most organisations is the shortages of managerial and professional talent. Shortage of talent is a major obstacle facing many companies in the implementation of their global strategies. Based on the increased need for basic skills and advanced skills level, talent management (TM) has emerged in many works of literature that emphasises the importance of human capital as a first step in gaining and sustaining a global competitive advantage. The McKinsey study was a turning point on how organisations today think about employees, where the change as an initial step in addressing the challenges of human capital. Talent management issues are becoming increasingly significant in a far wider range, not only for the private sector but also how it affected the public sector. The review of the literature revealed that the amount of research that has gone into talent management could be categorised in the following order: North America and Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East at the bottom. From the above extant literature, it is evident that very little research has gone into talent management in the Middle East. Therefore, a gap has been identified, which provides an opportunity to conduct more research in talent management in the Middle East. This research will attempt to fill this gap by contributing to the body of knowledge in exploring the effect of talent management developments in Saudi Healthcare Sector. This study adopted a qualitative approach using a case study. Interviews will be conducted with a target of 80 respondents in Saudi public hospitals using a semi-structured questionnaire to gain an in-depth understanding. The data collected will be analysed using thematic analysis. However, from the literature, it is suggestive that there is a positive impact of talent management in the public health care sector in the developed countries.

Keywords: public hospitals, talent management, healthcare sector, Saudi Arabia

Introduction

Talent management (TM) has been increasingly recognized as a critical success factor for organizations.

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In 1998, the topic emerged significantly when a group of McKinsey consultants coined the phrase “the war for talent” (Michaels, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod, 2001). Talent management has emerged as the biggest challenge facing organisations, which is the scarcity of talented workers possessing the necessary skills of a globally competitive workforce (Doh, Tymon, & Stumpf, 2011). As human capital is considered more important by organisations at every level, there is hope to raise their competitiveness, both globally and locally (Guthridge, McPherson, & Wolf, 2008; Becker, Huselid, & Beatty, 2009). Consequently, it is imperative that organisations increase their attention to human capital with unique qualities and the greatest potential for an organisation to achieve sustainable competitive advantage (Stahl et al., 2007; Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow, 2010). A lot of studies on talent management are located in the USA (Thunnissen, Boselie, & Fruytier, 2013). After that, TM is transplanted to the rest of the world. Extant literature demonstrated that there is very little research on talent management that has been conducted in the Middle East. This provides an opportunity for this study to fill the gap by contributing to the huge body of knowledge as we explore the effect of talent management developments in Saudi Healthcare Sector.

In order to explore the effect of TM in Saudi public hospitals, this study will use qualitative case study method. So far, secondary data from the hospitals and the Ministry of Health documents and reports have been analysed. Semi-structured interview guideline will be used to collect empirical data from a target of 80 respondents to determine employee (doctors, nurses, and managers, both senior and middle managers) perspectives of talent management development practices. The results so far are suggestive of the government of Saudi’s commitment through policy and vision 2030 of their commitment to an exclusive TM practice in the training of essentials health workers within the Ministry of Health, but the effects on performance are yet to be determined.

Against this backdrop, the current work has the following research questions:

- (1) How to examine the effect of recruitment, identification, engagement, and retention process on talent management in the state healthcare sector?
- (2) How is the training and development of talented employee conducted in the healthcare sector in Saudi Arabia?
- (3) To what extent does talent management contribute to quality of healthcare sector delivery in Saudi Arabia?

Literature Review

Since 1998, when a group of McKinsey consultants coined the expression “the war for talent” (Michaels et al., 2001), talent management (TM) has been an increasingly popular topic (Chuai, Preece, & Iles, 2008). Tansley et al. (2006) noted that the increasing number of articles and books on the realm of talent management had created a broad interest in human resource practitioners in this new direction towards talent management. They further noted that TM had become a high-priority issue for organisations worldwide. In the same line, Chabault, Hulin, and Soparnot (2012, p. 328) argued that organisations had paid great attention to the notion of talent management because of globalisation and increased competition in the market. Today, organisations are faced with the challenges of maintaining a competitive advantage, which has inevitably led to the demand for individuals who could “make a difference”. In this context, Tansley et al. (2006, p. 1) argued that the constant shortage of skills, employees’ demands to strike a work-life balance, and demographic change in the labour market created the “war for talent”. Here, organisations seek to improve their practices, policies and strategies

to retain, recruit, and develop talent successfully. Consequently, their primary goal is to “understand the skills and capabilities needed in their organisation and determine the actual or potential talents required of employees” (Tansley et al., 2006, p. 1).

To shed more light on talent management, the underlying idea revolves around ensuring that the organisation has the capable and well-qualified people it needs to attain its goals. Armstrong and Taylor (2014) clarified that TM is based on the proposition that “those with the best people win” (p. 269). In the same line, academics have mentioned that successful talent management practices have a significant role in improving organisational performance (Beechler & Woodward, 2009; Michaels et al., 2001).

TM has been defined as “a systematic and integrated process designed to recruit, attract and retain potential organisational leaders and key employees” (Kock & Burke, 2008, p. 462). Many organisations today seek to have a clear idea about what “talent” means to them based on what is consistent with their business strategies. In this regard, Ulrich (2008) progressed the debate by suggesting that talent should be identified as a mix of competence, commitment, and contribution. McDonnell and Collings (2011) stated that

both competence and commitment relate to inputs. Competence refers to the knowledge, skills and values that individuals bring to their role. Commitment refers to the application of these competencies in the workplace and the engagement of employees with their work role. Contribution, on the other hand, relates to employees’ outputs and their role in organizational success and ensuring they themselves find meaning and value in their work. (p. 57)

Here, McDonnell and Collings (2011) linked “talent” to the organization’s output, and they stressed their role in organizational success. Therefore, talent management is primarily concerned with a key group of core employees who pose unique qualities and the greatest potential, and therefore they are different from the rest of the workforce (Becker et al., 2009; Collings & Mellahi, 2009). In essence, employees at every level are more important than ever to organisations that hope to raise their competitiveness, both globally and locally (Guthridge et al., 2008; Becker et al., 2009).

TM has two philosophically distinct approaches to the management of the potential employees: One approach is based on egalitarian (inclusive); the second approach is based on differential (exclusive). These two approaches illustrate whether the organisation should follow the first approach, which based on equality as it focuses on all staff and gives them equal importance. Rather than an inclusive approach, the alternative approach (exclusive), leads a firm to create differentiated in opportunities, which have been offered exclusively to those employees who are more valuable than others. The two approaches are further discussed in detail below.

Exclusive Approach to TM

The exclusive approach relies on the notion of workforce differentiation (Becker et al., 2009); talent management should be focused, rather than including every employee in the organisation (McDonnell & Collings, 2011). Ulrich (2008) who called for the differential approach, he linked “talent” to a mix of three elements: competence, commitment, and contribution. In line with this view, some scholars suggest that the best strategy has to implement to deal with this approach is identifying valuable employees and implementing commitment-based HR configuration to attain organisational goals (Lepak & Snell 1999). Huselid, Beatty, and Becker (2005) captured this approach by describing “talent” as “A” player’s to indicate those employees who perform at the highest level of performance. Although these two approaches exist, however, TM is often

defined in the literature by adopting an exclusive approach. For example, Collings and Scullion, (2008, p. 102) defined TM as “the strategic integration of resourcing and development at the international level that involves the proactive identification and development and strategic deployment of high performing and high potential strategic employees”.

For the McKinsey consultants, employees’ differentiation related to their individual performance (Scullion et al., 2011). The key focus of this approach is that all roles in the organisation should be filled with “A performers”, referred to as “top grading” (Smart, 2005), and it emphasises the management of “C players”, or consistently poor performers, have to be removed from the organisation (Michaels et al., 2001). This exclusive perspective is mainly based on the notion of workforce segmentation. In this conception, the workforce can be divided into two groups, as follows: a small group of people “with talent” (the A players, top performers, or star employees) and a much bigger group of people “without talent” (the B and C players, or average and bottom performers (Axelrod, Handfield-Jones, & Michaels, 2002). This involves the treatment of talent as sub-members of the organisation; hence, TM is not practical without segmentation. It has been argued that the organisations that won the “war for talent” have mainly invested invaluable and scarce human capital (Michaels et al., 2001; Snell, Youndt, & Wright, 1996). Building on this idea, talented people are seen as key mediators between TM and organisational outcomes (Collings & Mellahi, 2009).

By highlighting talent identification as one of the talent management practices, some scholars have pointed out that TM is primarily concerned with employees who add value to the organisation. Those employees who are identified by the organisations as talent are those who possess the potential to have a significant influence on organisational success (McDonnell & Collings, 2011). McDonnell and Collings (2011) added that TM should be focussed, rather than including every employee in the organisation. Huselid et al. (2005) also suggested that, rather than concentrating solely on inputs, TM requires a change in mindset to focus on potential outputs. Profitability is one of the most important outputs that organisations seek to achieve. In the case of the public sector, the main aim is providing high-quality services. Fernando (2008) defined talent identification as “the process of identifying key position and roles required to support the design and deployment of strategic and operational plans and initiatives” (p. 1). In this regard, each organisation must determine specific competency requirements and what skills must be included in organisational talent pools (McDonnell & Collings, 2011). Cultural fit has emerged in many institutions as a criterion for identifying and selecting the right and superior people for the organisation. In other words, organisations are interested in aligning the employee’s personality and values to fit with the organisation’s culture by using exclusive approach (Stahl et al., 2007).

Moving on to talent recruitment, which is also considered as an important talent management practice, recruitment, and selection require that organisations use various methods or techniques of selecting the right talent that reflects the culture and value of that specific organisation (Armstrong, 2006). Dramatic changes in the competitive environment have resulted in an opening of the closed employment systems of traditional internal labour markets (Cappelli & Keller, 2014). Thus, the sources of superior employees can be internal or external by adopting an exclusive approach. And by focusing on internal talent recruitment, organisations may fill their vacant positions by hiring from their existing pool of employees. In this regard, talent identification plays a significant role in the internal recruitment process. Talent selection strategies may include work performance and goal achievement assessments (Przytula, 2014). Becker and Huselid (2006) stated, “The value

of employee skills within a firm is not just a supply-side phenomenon. It is a function of how those skills are used and where they are used” (p. 904).

As emerging markets grow and become integrated into the global marketplace, the management practices of developed countries have gradually transferred to the developing countries. As a result, in relation to recruitment, Western practices have taken root in the private sector in terms of employing the most capable employees for developing the organisation (Doh et al., 2011). In contrast, in the government sector, employment decisions are usually made arbitrarily by those in senior positions. In this regard, Doh et al. (2011) argued that most jobs in the public sector involve little regard for qualifications, and especially in the Gulf Cooperative Council (GCC), citizens are given jobs based on considerations irrelevant to the tasks or job requirements (Doh et al., 2011). However, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, this is no longer the case, especially after launching the Saudi Vision 2030, which focuses especially on talented people who are able to achieve vision goals professionally (*Saudi Vision 2030*, 2019). McKinsey & Co. formulated the Saudi Vision 2030, and hence it is not surprising to emphasise the need to pay attention to talented people in all Saudi public sectors because of their ability to achieve the desired results (McKinsey & Co., 2005). In the realm of TM, companies have begun to deal with the recruitment of individuals based on the competition for talent, as companies seek to maintain a competitive advantage by leveraging their understandings of the linkages between TM and overall firm performance (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Fulmer, Gerhart, & Scott, 2003; Gelade & Ivery, 2003). Hence, by following exclusive approach firms will be able to fill these pools with high-performing employees who may, in future, fill roles that are pivotal to the organisation when needed (Cappelli & Keller, 2014).

Talent retention is another talent management practice, one of the top priorities in organizations agenda to reduce talent employees' turnover (Oladapo, 2014). Employee retention is intended to take the necessary measures to encourage competent employees to remain in the organisation for the maximum period (Lyria, 2013). According to Frank, Finnegan, and Taylor (2004), they defined employee retention as “the effort by an employer to keep desirable workers in order to meet business objectives” (p. 12). In this regards, retention has become seen as a strategic opportunity for many organisations to maintain a competitive workforce (De Long & Davenport, 2003). In addition, many heads of HR who think about possibilities and opportunities have become interested in attracting a talented workforce exclusively (Kaliprasad, 2006). Lockwood (2006, p. 2) explained that retention is a critical element in an organisation's approach to TM, which is “the implementation of integrated strategies or systems designed to increase workplace productivity by developing improved processes for attracting developing, improving, retaining, and utilising people with the required skills and aptitude to meet current and future business needs”. Consequently, a company's management of talent should retain skilled employees in so-called A positions, who are critical for the firm's strategic capabilities and have a major influence on executing the firm's strategy (Huselid et al., 2005). Further, Ledford and Kochanski (2004) emphasised that segmentation is a fundamental factor in the management of talent and maximizes organisations' ability to meet challenges. Moreover, not focusing on the talented category would result in high costs incurred for retaining, recruiting, and developing employees. The growing scarcity of talented people in the global labour market has led to a fierce global competition for talent (Farndale et al., 2010; Mellahi & Collings, 2010; Tarique & Schuler, 2010). Therefore, Lepak and Snell (1999) proposed that it is preferable for organisations to use exclusive TM approach that aim to create long-term employment relationships with talent by fostering their commitment to the organisation.

Inclusive Approach to TM

The second approach is the inclusive approach, where every employee has the potential to have a strategic impact on organizational performances (Buckingham & Vosburgh, 2001; Yost & Chang, 2009). This approach is based on the premise of equality rather than differentiation of the workforce based on workforce value to the firm (Schuler et al., 2011). The main argument towards this approach is that it will decrease the potential negative effects of the workforce differentiation on commitment, productivity, and collaboration working (Pfeffer & Langton, 1993). Larocco and Walker (2002) emphasised that it is essential to focus on talented employees, but at the same time, avoid neglecting other employees. Whereas some criticise the biases of the division of the workforce, in that it only focuses favourably on talented employees, neglecting the possible negative effects on employees that are considered neither talented nor valuable (Becker & Huselid, 2006; Larocco & Walker, 2002; Marescaux, De Winne, & Sels, 2013). In fact, according to the inclusive approach, TM can be identified as a collection of typical HR processes, such as recruitment, selection, development, training, and retention (Iles, Preece, & Chuai, 2010; Silzer & Dowell, 2010). However, Lin (2006) claimed that adopting an inclusive approach to TM may create unnecessarily high costs for the organisation. In addition, Collings and Mellahi (2009) argued that an inclusive TM approach that includes all employees might be flawed; however, exclusive approaches to TM are often the more cost-effective and efficient solution. Although both approaches can lead to the organization's success, limited resources and the high cost of training are significant factors in whether a select few or the entire workforce is developed (Bethke-Langenegger, Mahler, & Staffebach, 2011). Therefore, TM in organisations often follows an exclusive approach. In this regard, Mulyata (2016) clarified that both approaches constitute the TM system; however, the state healthcare sector in Africa adopted an exclusive TM approach.

Kock and Burke (2008) had also stated that the key difference is that TM represents a more focused and segmented approach to managing people in strategic roles in the organization. Furthermore, the same authors added that TM is the integrated and systematic processes of attracting, engaging, and retaining key employees and potential organizational leaders. In line with this view, many studies have shown that TM focuses on segmentation. For instance, Ledford and Kochanski (2004, p. 217) confirmed that "segmentation is the division of workforce into parts that are treated differently, and it is further noted that successful organizations tended to have a segmented approach to TM while HRM focuses on all employees".

Based on these views, some scholars, such as Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries, and González-Cruz (2013) had shown that the main criticism of TM that it is difficult to distinguish between TM and SHRM. This claim comes from the idea that, if TM is an inclusive approach that refers to the whole workforce, managing talent "simply" implies proper employee management and the development of the organisation's complete workforce, which is not especially helpful in specifying how TM is different from SHRM (Garrow & Hirsh, 2008).

However, Lewis and Heckman (2006) added that TM refers to completing these processes faster and/or better. In that sense, some authors clarified that TM helps the organisation to fill key positions more quickly, and the employees filling these positions will be able to complete projects faster and with higher quality results (Somaya & Williamson, 2011). In this way, TM will help SHRM to implement its long-term strategies better and faster. Somaya and Williamson (2011) argued that talent management is an excellent means of staying engaged in the industry and creating additional income.

Challenges of Implementing TM

Previous studies have shown that the biggest challenge facing organisations is their ability to recruit, attract, retain, and develop talent (Axelrod, Handfield-Jones, & Welsh, 2001, p. 1). Elegebe (2010) also noted that there are many factors that led to this challenge, the following are the most notable: (1) increasingly aggressive competition between organisations employing talent, which use multiple sophisticated methods to attract and recruit the great people from competitors; (2) a high demand with low supply in the market for talented people; and (3) in the context of globalisation, talent as an important challenge for many organisations in different developed countries, such as the United States, United Kingdom, France, Australia and Canada, and some developing regions, such as Africa, India, and the Middle East (Scullion et al., 2011). Since McKinsey & Company underscored the “war for talent”, TM has become a priority for many organisations; US companies and the private sector were the first to pay attention to the talented. However, the issue is not less important for the public sector. Burke, Allisey, and Noblet (2013) argued that the public sector must pay attention to talented people exclusively because of the unprecedented challenges it faces in terms of the pressures of cost reduction and rationalisation, as well as the steady increase in demand for services. In addition, concerns related to a “quiet crisis” are likely if government organisations fail to compete with the private sector in terms of hiring and retaining high-quality talent (Lewis & Frank, 2002, p. 395).

In the past two decades, the public sector has witnessed a remarkable transformation by encouraging managers to emulate the private sector by applying experiences that proved successful in the private sector. In an attempt to implement this vision, traditional methods and bureaucratic procedures in the public sector have replaced by modern methods that have proved successful in the private sector (Roberts & Devine, 2003). Accordingly, during the 1980s and 1990s, the HR department has gained significant expansion and increased interest from public sector decision-makers (MacFarlane, Duberley, Fewtrell, & Powell, 2012). This is sometimes characterised as having the right people, at the right time with the right skills in the right place (Dyer & Ericksen, 2006). In order to face this new reality, there seems to be a move driven by organisations seeking to raise profitability towards talent management.

Demographic trends are one of the main challenge facing talent management developments, where declining birthrates and increasing longevity are considered as the key demographic trends driving a rapid shift in the age distribution of the general population and also the supply of labour (Taylor & Napier, 2005). In this regards, Beechler and Woodward (2009) pointed out that developed countries are facing the most dramatic shift in population profiles and old age dependency ratios. Tarique and Schuler (2010) further claimed that this challenge affects such issues as the types of employees that will be available to employers, and as the labour supply declines mainly in developed countries. To cover this shortage, firms in developed countries will seek to attract talent from developing countries.

Other challenges that affect the growth of talent management are the increasing mobility of employees across geographical and cultural boundaries is one of these factors (Tung, 2007). Globalization and lower barriers to immigration have given rise to a major challenge for TM, due to the influence of “brain drain” on talent flow (Carr, Inkson, & Thorn, 2005). Recent research has begun to shed more light on this topic (Evans, Pucik, & Barsoux, 2002; Farndale et al., 2010; Kelly, 2001; Sparrow, Brewster, & Hillary, 2004); and it has been highlighted the significant role of the HR to control the mobility of expatriates worldwide (Scullion & Starkey, 2000). Collings and Scullion (2011) argued that differences in levels of economic development

between countries and real wage rates are some of the factors that influence increasing mobility. This is a challenge to TM in Saudi Arabia. It means that there will be an increase in competition in terms of attraction and retention of talent and high-value employees.

Brain drain is one of the challenges facing the Saudi MOH, where the immigration of highly educated and skilled people has become a problem in many developed and developing countries at the same time. Unfortunately, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is also suffering from this global problem and especially the profession of Saudi doctors (Mufti, 2000). The problem of migration of professionals is not an issue facing Saudi Arabia only; by shed light on the other developing countries, researches show that many of them are suffering from the same problem which causes a scarcity of talent in countries, such as Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, and Ethiopia, where many of talents from these countries have migrated to Europe and the USA. According to Elegbe (2010), he states that the health sector in Sub-Saharan Africa is worst hit by the brain-drain phenomenon (p. 10). Stilwell et al. (2004, p. 1) showed that in 2002, there were 175 Ugandan doctors working in the USA; only 722 doctors are practicing in the entire country of Uganda. Ofori-Sarpong (2007) also pointed out that 60% of the doctors in Ghana left the country in the 1980s, looking for better opportunities. Here, it is apparent that the shortage of doctors and talent scarcity is a problem experienced by developing and developed countries alike.

Despite the fact that developing countries are seeking for innovative solutions to deal with the crisis of human resources in the field of health, where they strive to fill vacancies with distinguished employees in the field of health from developed countries (Syed et al., 2012). However, at the same time, the developed countries, such as the USA, UK, and Canada are working hard to implement programs aimed at attracting skilled and distinguished workers to attract them. One of these initiatives is to provide permanent residents or to give citizenship to ensure that there will be no turnover of those talented employees (Glavas & Piderit, 2009). The purpose of presenting this glance about the fierce competition between developed and developing countries is mainly to illustrate that the talent are demands not only regionally but also globally.

By shedding more light on the talent management practices of the Saudi MOH, it is clear that attention is largely directed towards outstanding employees in particular (MOH, 2018). This emerged through the Ministry's initiatives to meet the Saudi Vision 2030. One of these initiatives is the interest to develop and improve the efficiency of human resources. Further, the MOH announced through the 2020 transition plan, it aims to attract highly qualified and qualified current and future, according to specifications and requirements of specialisations and jobs available for different categories of human resources (MOH, 2018).

The review of the literature revealed that the amount of research that has gone into talent management research can be categorised into four areas as following: USA, Canada, and Europe (Cappelli & Keller, 2014; Oladapo, 2014; McCracken, Currie, & Harrison, 2016; Meyers, Van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013; Thunnissen, 2015; McGettingan & O'Neill, 2009; Thunnissen et al., 2013; Tung, 2007; Dries, 2013; Krishnan & Scullion, 2017); Asia (Cooke, 2011; Hartmann, Feisel, & Schober, 2010; Iles et al., 2010); Africa (Amankwah-Amoah & Debrah, 2011; Debrah & Ofori, 2005; Kehinde, 2012; Iyria, 2013, Mulyata, 2016, Oseghale, Mulyata, & Debrah, 2018); and Middle East (Abunar, 2016; Alferaih, 2015; Ali, 2011; Sidani & AL Ariss, 2014; Singh, Jones, & Hall, 2012).

The extant literature reveals that there is a scarcity of literature on research about TM in the public sector, particularly, emanating from the developing countries, and more particularly in Saudi Arabia (Al Haidari, 2015; Alfraih, 2015). Therefore, a gap has been identified, which provides the opportunity to conduct more research

around talent management in the Middle East. This research will attempt to fill this gap by contributing to the huge body of knowledge by exploring the effect of talent management developments in Saudi Healthcare Sector. To explore talent management in Saudi public hospital, this study will use qualitative method to examine the employee (doctors, nurses, and managers, both senior and middle managers) perspectives of talent management development practices.

Research Methodology

This study is part of a large project aimed at exploring the effect of talent management development in the healthcare sector in Saudi Arabia. The overall study examines the employee (doctors, nurses, and managers, both senior and middle managers) perspectives of talent management development practices to determine its effect on high performer and organisational performance. Respondents are going to be drawn from the public healthcare sector, specifically 3rd level hospital in Saudi Arabia.

A qualitative case study method is adopted so far. Secondary data were collected using Internet, hospital and Ministry of Health reports and other documents, and articles using their own website. However, in future, semi-structured questionnaire guide is going to be used to conduct interviews with professional hospital manager and Ministry of Health senior managers and/or policy-makers. A total of 80 respondents are targeted to be interviewed in the above mentioned categories. Thematic analysis will be employed to analyse the data because it has the ability to comprehend, often large disparate amounts of qualitative data and integrate related data drawn from different transcripts and notes.

Limitation and Suggestion for Future Research

In this study, all attempts are made to ensure a reliable and valid design. However, the limitation of this study should be discussed. The organisation of the study is located in the healthcare sector and limited to three major hospitals in the city of Riyadh and one rural. Consequently, the findings at this stage will be difficult to generalise. In this study, the main objective was to study the effect of talent management developments in the Saudi Healthcare Sector. The sample location and size is limited to prohibit analysis within the specific industry. However, an extension of this study to include more than four hospitals is necessary to be undertaken within the healthcare sector. The results for this study in their form should be treated as preliminary and even when the study is completed it should be seen as the first step. A large study focused on large target and sample size is suggested as a follow-up research study. Further, research is suggested to compare private and public healthcare sector.

Conclusion

The extant literature suggests that there are different levels of adoption at specific levels. In addition, there are strategies, which are formulated at various levels of performance. The secondary data collected through the institution and ministerial documentation and reports posit that there is the existence of policy on talent management development in place and professionals have undertaken training. The Ministry of Health has adopted the development of human resources through the continuous development of human resources. This is reflected in the implementation of the National Transition Initiatives 2020 projects, which aim to increase the number of Saudi health care trainees and improve the quality of training, with a focus on increasing the number of training seats for doctors and nurses. In this regards, the annual reports issued by the Ministry of Health

showed that the number of scholarships enrolled within the Kingdom in medical specialties is 873 students. The number of scholarships for medical majors outside the Kingdom is 1,711 students. The Ministry of Health pointed out in its report that the number of scholarship graduates reached 139 graduates in various medical specialties. However, it is too early to conclude whether this has an effect on performance. Finally, the article provides insight into the decision and adoption of talent management strategies by the Ministry of Health in Saudi Arabia.

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