University of Hormozgan

Iranian Journal of Educational Research

Print ISSN: 1735 - 563X Online ISSN: 2980 - 874X

Homepage: http://ijer.hormozgan.ac.ir

Educational and Behavioral Research Center

Talent Management Model in Farhangian University Based on Qualitative Findings

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Article Info

Article type:

Research Article

Article history:

Received 17 May. 2025

Received in revised form 11 Jun. 2025

Accepted 24 Jul. 2025

Published online 01 Sep. 2025

Keywords:

Talent Management,

Qualitative Content Analysis,

Farhangian University

ABSTRACT

Objective: The present study aimed to propose a model for talent management in Farhangian University, designed in accordance with the local context, the teacher-training mission, and the university's specific needs.

Methods: This research employed a qualitative approach with an inductive strategy, using qualitative content analysis. The study population consisted of experts, key stakeholders, higher education decision-makers, and faculty members in educational management. Purposeful and non-probability sampling was applied, and following the principle of theoretical saturation, 14 participants were selected. Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews. To ensure data credibility, techniques such as prolonged engagement, continuous observation, and member checking were used. Data analysis was conducted using MAXQDA software.

Results: The analysis led to the development of a conceptual model with five main dimensions: talent identification and attraction, retention, evaluation and feedback, future-oriented talent development, and succession planning. Within these dimensions, 19 components and 71 indicators were extracted, providing a foundation for policymaking and human resource planning in Farhangian University.

Conclusions: By integrating theoretical and empirical data, the final model offers a systematic pathway for identifying, developing, and retaining talents in teacher-training institutions such as Farhangian University, thereby contributing to the achievement of the strategic goals of the national education system.

Cite this article: Nouri, H., Ghorbani, M., Akbari, A. & Fakouri Hajiyar, H. (2025). Talent management model in Farhangian university based on qualitative findings. *Iranian Journal of Educational Research*, 4 (3), 1-16.

. DOI: https://doi.org/10.22034/4.3.1

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Publisher: University of Hormozgan.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.22034/4.3.1

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Introduction

The continuity and survival of any society depend on the transmission of beliefs, values, behaviors, attitudes, knowledge, and skills to the next generation. The education process serves as the mechanism for this transfer (Ghorbani Zadeh et al., 2021). Since Farhangian University is a central pillar of the education system and universities play a crucial role in economic and social life, fulfilling this role requires attracting and retaining high-quality personnel. Talent management is key to organizational success and sustainable growth. Organizations need creative, flexible, and responsive individuals, and identifying, attracting, and retaining such individuals is a challenging task. Therefore, successful organizations in today's competitive world strive to create opportunities to attract, nurture, and retain top talent (Pagan-Castano et al., 2022).

In the contemporary era, universities, as primary centers for training skilled and efficient human resources, play a vital role in societal development. Farhangian University, as the main institution responsible for teacher education, holds particular importance. Rapid changes in the education system, the emergence of new educational technologies, and the need for capable, innovative, and adaptable teachers have made talent management at this university an undeniable necessity (Zahabioon et al., 2021). Global developments and the growing needs of societies necessitate that Farhangian University take essential steps in training competent teachers. Talent management has become a significant global issue, as organizations compete to attract and retain skilled personnel while maintaining their performance (Sad Saleh Ali & Sad Khalid, 2022).

Although human capital is considered the most valuable asset of an organization, managers in some organizations show limited inclination toward utilizing organizational talents and elites. Therefore, talent management requires the systematic identification of key positions and the development of talents, a practice that has grown significantly over recent decades (Karami Gilanvand et al., 2021). Talent management refers to the process of strategically attracting and retaining suitable employees who can effectively contribute to achieving organizational goals. This multifaceted process includes ongoing management of employee motivation to ensure optimal performance standards (Jorge Viera et al., 2024).

Talent is defined as a set of individual capabilities, including skills, knowledge, experience, intelligence, judgment, and personality traits (Hosseini et al., 2022). Today, talent management has become an essential organizational need, with most organizations emphasizing talented human

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capital as a source of competitive advantage (Khaliq & Ranjbarian, 2021). Various definitions of talent management have been proposed within the frameworks of contemporary organizational and management theories. It refers to the process of identifying, attracting, developing, and retaining top talent in an organization so they can achieve strategic objectives (Nogro & Volandari, 2025).

Talent management emerged in the 1990s within human resource management. It encompasses internal processes, initiatives, and cultural standards within organizations aimed at attracting, nurturing, allocating, and retaining talented individuals to meet organizational objectives and future business needs (Ashfaq Ahmed et al., 2024). Talent management is a human resource strategy designed to enhance an organization's ability to attract, develop, and retain individuals, thereby empowering the organization to achieve current and future business goals (Chirapath et al., 2022). It involves identifying, developing, and possessing high-potential employees who contribute to organizational success, spanning a wide range of skills, including technological and managerial capabilities. Its purpose is to attract, develop, and retain skilled and knowledgeable personnel (Abdulazim Mostafa et al., 2021).

Scholars argue that talent management is a top organizational priority worldwide, as it can provide a sustainable competitive advantage in the highly volatile and challenging 21st-century market. Thus, the concept of talent management is considered a frontline strategy in human capital management (Salar & Alizadeh, 2022). Talent management is a systematic process involving the attraction, identification, development, and retention of high-potential individuals who hold special value for the organization (Zamani et al., 2022). Currently, the main challenge facing organizations worldwide is that the demand for talent exceeds its supply, prompting organizations to focus on identifying and nurturing competent individuals to enhance their capabilities (Haroon et al., 2020). One of the key future challenges for organizations is the competition to acquire talent. Increasing employer demand for skilled labor, coupled with capable employees' desire for valuable positions, has created a competition known as the "war for talent" (Kwan & Jang, 2021). Successful organizations are those that improve their strategies, policies, and procedures to attract, develop, and retain talent essential for sustaining their economic viability. To achieve this, they must identify the competencies required and then recognize potential talents among their experts (Babaei et al., 2021). Many organizations face human resource challenges and are unable to

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optimally utilize their workforce capacities, an issue that can be addressed through talent management practices (Karami et al., 2021).

Several studies have examined talent management. Takht Ravand et al. (2023) stated that talent management includes four dimensions: employee development, motivation, retention, and recruitment assurance. Norouzian et al. (2023) concluded that a talent management model comprises seven main dimensions: organizational strategy, meritocracy, evaluation and recruitment, talent allocation, talent development, career path management, and talent exit. Hajian & Danayi (2023) found that talent development mechanisms have the greatest impact on talent retention mechanisms, highlighting the importance of investing in human resource development to retain talent in public universities. Zamani et al. (2022) demonstrated that a talent management model includes nine dimensions and 43 components, such as talent development and training, internal organizational factors, identification and recruitment, talent retention and growth, talent reservoir creation, external influencing factors, organizational outcomes, individual outcomes, and dual-core human capital architecture. Nogro & Volandari (2025) showed the complexity of talent management in the digital era and emphasized its success depends on organizational structure, innovation culture, leadership, and technology. Razali et al. (2024) indicated that talent management in higher education has developed as a research area since 2006, with leadership, recruitment, development, retention, and employment as its key elements. Ashfaq Ahmed et al. (2024) studied the relationship between talent management, psychological empowerment, and job performance of teachers in public colleges in Pakistan, finding that talent management positively influences psychological empowerment and job performance.

At Farhangian University, designing a talent management model for staff can improve organizational performance, increase job satisfaction and organizational commitment, enhance educational quality, and train capable, creative, and innovative teachers. This model should consider the university's unique characteristics, teacher needs, and the challenges facing the education system. It should focus on professional skill development, motivation enhancement, continuous learning opportunities, and facilitating career growth for teachers. Additionally, the model must align with the organizational culture of Farhangian University and receive support from managers and staff. Therefore, designing a talent management model at Farhangian University not only enhances human resource productivity but also contributes to individual and

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organizational capabilities. Achieving this requires reviewing existing policies and procedures, creating flexible organizational structures, and investing in staff training and development. The use of new technologies and participatory approaches can further improve talent management processes.

The aim of this study is to design a comprehensive and practical talent management model for Farhangian University staff. Drawing on domestic and international research, expert opinions, and successful organizational experiences, the study seeks to provide strategies for identifying, attracting, developing, retaining, and deploying talented personnel to perform effectively within the organization. It is expected that this model will help Farhangian University become a leading teacher-training institution nationally and regionally and play a significant role in achieving sustainable development goals. Reviewing the research problem reveals that no study has specifically challenged the concepts of talent and talent management at Farhangian University, representing a significant knowledge gap. As outlined in the introduction, precisely defining talent and talent management, and examining relevant approaches and discussions, clarifies how talent management should be implemented in a specific context such as Farhangian University, which components should be emphasized, and which should be prioritized. Therefore, the main objective of this research is to design a talent management model for Farhangian University staff based on expert scientific opinions.

Material and Methods

This study is applied in terms of purpose and qualitative in terms of nature and approach. It was conducted using content analysis through a three-stage coding process (open, axial, and selective coding). In qualitative research, the primary aim is to gain a deep understanding and interpretation of participants' experiences and perspectives within their natural context (Strauss & Corbin, 2015; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

In this research, data were collected through field observations conducted by the interviewer and semi-structured interviews with 14 knowledgeable elites of Farhangian University. Interviews were concluded when the researcher reached data saturation and no new insights emerged. Participants were selected using purposive non-probability sampling, with selection criteria including specialized knowledge and research and managerial experience relevant to the study

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topic. The interviews lasted between 40 and 55 minutes, were recorded with participants' consent, and then transcribed. This type of interview allows sufficient flexibility for deep interaction with participants and facilitates follow-up on key topics (Delavar, 2023).

Data analysis was conducted using content analysis with an inductive approach and a three-stage coding process. Initially, open coding was used to identify primary concepts. In the axial coding stage, similar concepts were grouped into main categories. Finally, selective coding was employed to identify the core of the research and the relationships between categories (Strauss & Corbin, 2015).

To ensure the credibility of findings, Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria—including confirmability, transferability, dependability, and credibility—were employed. Measures such as participant review, peer review, and detailed documentation of analytical steps were implemented to enhance the validity and reliability of the data. After each interview, the data were verified with the participants. To ensure trustworthiness, continuous observation, and revision through participant feedback were employed. For increased confirmability, the researcher carefully examined the initial data, interpretations, and findings.

Finally, for data analysis in this qualitative study, the interview data were analyzed using MAXQDA software. In this process, dimensions, components, and indicators were categorized according to open, axial, and selective coding techniques.

Results

In this study, to identify the dimensions, components, and indicators of a talent management model for staff at Farhangian University, a qualitative content analysis approach was employed. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 14 knowledgeable experts in human resources, higher education, and university management. Participants were purposively selected based on criteria such as managerial experience, familiarity with the topic, and relevant work experience.

The data analysis process was conducted in three stages: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. In the open coding stage, primary concepts were extracted and classified from the interview texts. In the axial coding stage, these concepts were organized into intermediate

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categories based on common themes and conceptual frameworks. Finally, in the selective coding stage, the main categories were identified, and the final research model was developed.

Based on the analysis, five main dimensions were identified: Talent Identification and Recruitment, Talent Retention, Evaluation and Feedback, Future-Oriented Talent Development, and Succession Management. Within these dimensions, 19 components and 71 indicators were identified, each representing practical and measurable aspects of talent management in the context of Farhangian University.

Table 1. Categorization of Codes Extracted from Content Analysis of the Literature and Semi-Structured Interviews

Frequency	Source	Indicator	Component	Dimension
3	P1-P4-P7	Alignment of individual values with organizational values	Alignment with Organizational Strategy	Talent Identification and Recruitment
1	Khoshhal et al., 1402 [2023]:67	Alignment of individual with organizational goals and strategies		
4	P2-P6-P13 (Pashakhanlou et al., 1401 [2022]:95)	Interviewing and hiring aligned with individual talents and organizational goals		
2	Norouzian et al., 1402 [2023]:117; Babaei et al., 1400 [2021]:41	Matching individual skills and knowledge with job requirements		
2	P2 (Pashakhanlou et al., 1401 [2022]:95)	Job impact on maintaining competitive advantage	Key Job Identification	
5	P1-P7-P12 (Salar & Alizadeh, 1401 [2022]:99)	Technical knowledge or specific skills required for the job		
…	…	…	…	…

The full table contains 71 indicators under 19 components and 5 main dimensions. Here only a sample is shown for brevity.

Summary of Dimensions and Components

The identified concepts were categorized into five main dimensions, forming the final research model:

1. Talent Identification and Recruitment – 5 components:

Alignment with organizational strategy

Key job identification

Practical skills and expertise

Application of modern technology in talent identification

Organizational improvement through diversity

2. Talent Retention – 5 components:

Compensation and reward system

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Supportive organizational culture

Growth and development opportunities

Work-life balance

Employee mental health development

3. Evaluation and Feedback – 3 components:

Clarity and transparency of goals

360-degree feedback system

Continuous coaching and support

4. Future-Oriented Talent Development – 3 components:

Smart talent vision

Adaptive and lifelong learning development

Creating a future-oriented thinking culture

5. Succession Management – 3 components:

Technology and organizational integration

Human capital development

Knowledge management

Based on the qualitative findings, the conceptual model of talent management at Farhangian University is presented in Figure 1. Core Structure includes five main dimensions:

Talent Identification and Recruitment

Talent Retention

Evaluation and Feedback

Future-Oriented Talent Development

Succession Management

Components and Indicators: Each dimension includes multiple components (total of 19) and measurable indicators (total of 71) that guide practical implementation of talent management strategies.

Integration: The model emphasizes alignment with organizational strategy, use of modern technology, support for diversity, continuous employee development, and preparation of future leaders through succession planning and knowledge management.

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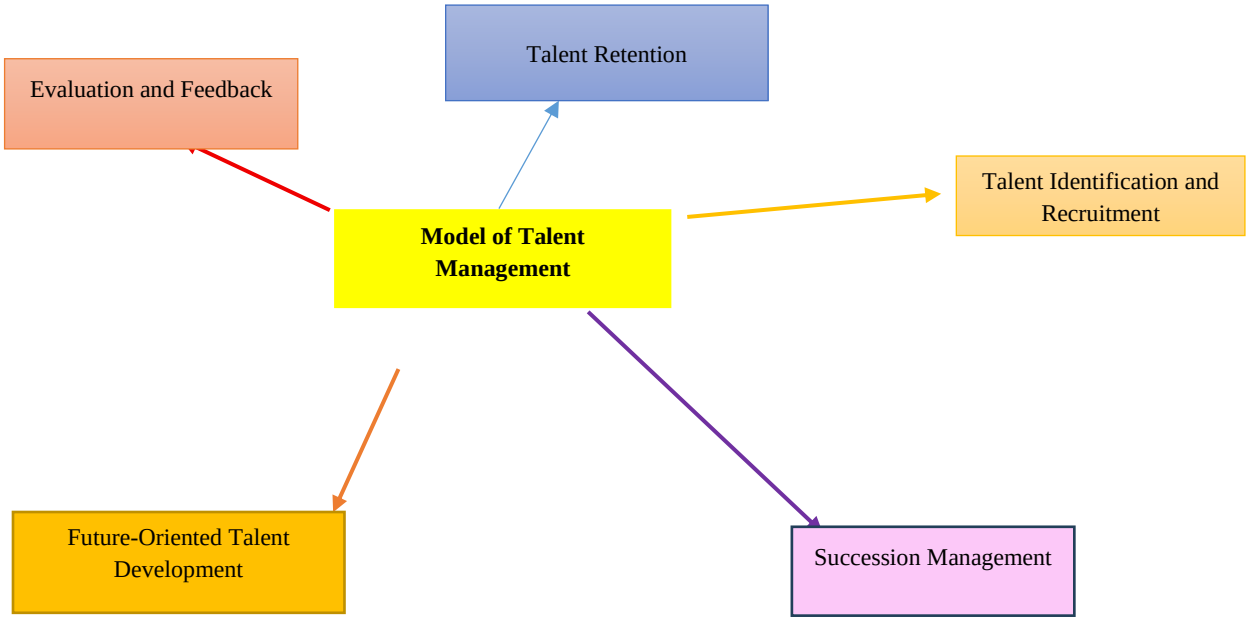


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Talent Management

Discussion

The "Talent Identification and Recruitment" stage represents a key and initial component of the talent management process, playing a decisive role in the overall effectiveness of the model. This stage involves identifying individuals with the competencies, motivation, and potential capacity for growth within the organization. In educational environments such as Farhangian University, particular attention is given to value alignment, learning capacity, and commitment to the institution's educational mission. Collins and Melahei (2009) emphasize in their strategic talent management model that talent identification should be based on organizational strategic needs. It should not be limited to individuals with current high performance but should focus on those who can have the greatest impact in future key roles. Similarly, according to the Talent Ecosystem model proposed by Capelli and Keller (2017), talent acquisition should employ multi-channel strategies, including employer branding, professional networking, and collaboration with higher

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education institutions, enabling organizations to actively and competitively attract qualified candidates.

One participant noted:

"At Farhangian University, our talent management model goes beyond merely identifying potential individuals; it emphasizes a deep assessment of both technical and interpersonal skills. We seek individuals who not only possess the knowledge and experience required for their roles but also demonstrate strong alignment with the university's strategies and long-term vision. During recruitment, priority is given to those who can create added value in key organizational positions and contribute to achieving our objectives. This approach ensures that we identify the best talent for future challenges and place them in pathways that maximize productivity both for themselves and for the university."

The **"**Talent Retention**"** dimension is strategically important because identifying and attracting talent without the ability to retain it leads to resource waste and undermines human capital. Retention encompasses actions taken by the organization to maintain talented and valuable employees over the long term. Collins and Melahei (2009) highlight that organizations should create a unique employee value proposition to cultivate an environment where talented individuals feel a sense of belonging, meaningful work, and impact. One interviewee emphasized:

"After identifying and recruiting talent, our primary focus should be on retaining these valuable assets. To achieve this, we need to implement a comprehensive rewards and services system, including competitive benefits, performance recognition, and adequate welfare services. Additionally, providing continuous professional growth opportunities—such as specialized training, conference participation, and career advancement—is crucial for retaining talent. All staff should have the chance to grow, as university employees and faculty play a vital role in educating future teachers. Moreover, we recognize the importance of work-life balance and strive to create a dynamic and motivated environment through flexible work hours and support for initiatives that enhance this balance."

Evaluation and Feedback are also central to effective talent management, particularly when the goal is employee empowerment and continuous growth. According to Armstrong (2006), effective performance and talent management require a transparent, participatory, and development-focused

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evaluation system that not only reviews past performance but also identifies future potential and individual learning opportunities. One participant stated:

"I believe that constructive evaluation and feedback are key to employee growth and development. We must move beyond traditional annual reviews and implement a comprehensive performance evaluation system that periodically provides feedback from multiple perspectives (peers, managers, and stakeholders). This multidimensional feedback helps individuals identify strengths and weaknesses and take steps to improve their performance. Additionally, we provide continuous support through mentoring, coaching, and educational resources to ensure employees have the tools and knowledge needed to achieve their goals and reach their full potential."

The **"**Future-Oriented Talent Development**"** dimension emphasizes sustainability and organizational effectiveness. This approach encourages organizations to focus not only on current competencies but also on developing capabilities that address future challenges and changing needs. Eskeman (2014), in his work *"From Talent Management to Talent Optimization"*, emphasizes the importance of future-oriented talent strategies, highlighting that organizations should optimize human capital with foresight rather than merely managing current talent. This involves anticipating future needs, developing necessary skills, and establishing systems for continuous employee growth. Schieman further asserts that effective talent management requires a strategic and forward-looking perspective capable of anticipating environmental changes and organizational needs.

Succession Management is a systematic and strategic process aimed at identifying, developing, and preparing talented individuals for key future roles within the organization. This process focuses not only on replacement but also on empowerment, continuous learning, and readiness for future leadership. In leading organizations, succession planning is part of the organizational culture rather than merely a human resource project. According to Capelli (2008), succession management should be agile and flexible, allowing organizations to position talented individuals in key roles at the right time in response to environmental changes. Hatton (2010) emphasizes the development of leaders from within the organization and establishing clear career paths for high-potential individuals, linking succession planning to strategic organizational goals. Schieman (2014) also underscores alignment between succession management, human capital, and future orientation,

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advocating for future leaders to be nurtured based on performance, potential, and adaptability to change.

The findings of this study resulted in the development of a conceptual model for talent management at Farhangian University, structured around five key dimensions, designed to meet the university's specific needs for nurturing and optimizing talented human resources to achieve the developmental goals of the country's education system. The model comprises five fundamental dimensions: Talent Identification and Recruitment, Talent Retention, Evaluation and Feedback, Future-Oriented Talent Development, and Succession Management. By adopting a process-oriented perspective, the model provides a complete and integrated talent management cycle, from identification to succession.

A comparative review with existing domestic models highlights the distinctiveness of the present model:

Rezapur et al. 2024) focused on meritocracy in sports organizations, emphasizing competency assessment, leader selection, and leadership development. The present model extends beyond competency development to include retention, succession, and future-oriented development.

Takht-Ravan et al. (2023) designed for Islamic Azad University presidents, including motivation, development, retention, and recruitment. Unlike this model, the present research incorporates continuous evaluation and future-oriented talent development for greater HR dynamism.

Pazhuhan et al. (2022) for the Ministry of Sports and Youth, focused on talent identification, training, attraction, retention, development, and job satisfaction. While overlapping in some dimensions, the present model adds continuous evaluation and future-focused talent development for improved coherence and flexibility.

Ebrahimi et al. (2022) in the automotive industry, emphasizing identification, development, retention, talent utilization, and definition of talent. The present model shares core components but emphasizes future-oriented talent development.

Eslami et al. (2021) public sector model with dimensions like talent pool, needs assessment, recruitment, talent flourishing, retention, alignment, and succession. The current model operationalizes these elements at the organizational level and adds future-oriented talent development for a complete talent management cycle.

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Babaei et al. (2021) for educational managers, focusing on talent identification, recruitment, results, evaluation, retention, development, and selection. The present model incorporates continuous evaluation and future-focused development, offering a more integrated and practical approach for educational institutions.

Comparative analysis indicates that the Farhangian University talent management model designed in this study demonstrates greater comprehensiveness, internal coherence, and implement ability than other domestic models. By integrating traditional elements such as recruitment and retention with modern components like continuous evaluation, future orientation, and succession management, this model offers a dynamic and reliable framework for educational and cultural institutions. It provides a solid foundation for establishing an effective system for nurturing, retaining, and developing specialized human capital at Farhangian University.

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Data availability statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

Ethics statement

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by the ethics committee of Islamic Azad University. The patients/participants provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

Author contributions

All authors contributed to the study conception and design, material preparation, data collection, and analysis. All authors contributed to the article and approved the submitted version.

Funding

The authors did (not) receive support from any organization for the submitted work.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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