



Talent Management & its' implementation in Indian service providing companies - mediating effects of organizational culture and human resource management practices

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Abstract : The objective of this paper is to understand the mediating effects of organizational culture and human resource management practices on talent management and its implementation in service providing companies in India. To achieve this, the concept of talent management, effects of organizational culture and the impact of human resource management practices on talent management and talent management implementation practices from past studies were examined. Also, organizations' practices with precise references to its' role for achieving the end-goals were studied. The processes adopted with an aim to assess and highlight the association among talent management and its implementation, organizational culture, and human resource management practices. The paper followed the exploratory factor analysis method and a questionnaire survey was sent to 610 professionals working in various service providing companies in India, out of which 479 completely filled-in responses were considered for analysis. The findings showcased that talent management strategies significantly influence in gaining competitive edge for organizations and is affected by organizational culture and human resource management practices. The study concluded that well-crafted talent management strategies and its diligent implementation helps in retaining existing employees and attracting good talent to the organization. Also, that the elements of organization culture and focus on employees' suggestions and on resolving their grievances helps in building better organization.

Keywords - Talent management Strategies, Organization culture, Human resource management practices, Talent management implementation, Competitive Edge, Employee concerns, Satisfaction.

LINTRODUCTION

Organizations, globally, are focused towards gaining competitive edge. Talent management (TM) strategies and its adequate implementation is potent to attract, develop and retain the valuable manpower in gaining the competitive advantage (Luna-Arocas et al. 2020). Researchers established through separate studies that organizational culture (OC) (Oyemomi et al., 2019; Saruchera et al. 2021) and Human Resources Management (HRM) practices (Singh 2000; Mohammad 2021; Jankelova 2021) cause mediating effects on TM. The OC has linkages to HRM practices and both have linkages in developing TM strategies for an organization.

Lately, TM started capturing the attention of top management, human resource professionals and manpower recruiting agencies (Painter - Morland et al., 2019). The term was used since 1865 and now becoming an integral part of almost all fields from sports to entertainment (Simonton, 2011; Harsch and Festing, 2020; Meyers et al., 2020). Many globally recognized organizations namely Microsoft and PepsiCo adopt and integrate the role of TM practices along with their HRM practices in meeting their organisational objectives (Silzer and Dowell, 2009). Consequently, the TM is rapidly emerging as a research field that includes many questions that need to be investigated (Krishnan and Scullion, 2017; Jarvi and Khoreva, 2020).

The OC has a mediating influence on high performance HRM practices (Kontoghiorghes, 2016). According to Brown and Hesketh (2005), Collings and Mellahi (2009), Lewis and Heckman (2006), TM is linked with HR planning, strategic HRM and employability. OC is a vital factor for effective TM (Wilska, 2014). Therefore, it is visible that OC and HRM are the mediating influences for the TM strategies.

The other missing aspect in all past studies is talent management implementation with other constructs used in this study. No paper in the past covers the impact of organizational culture or HRM practices on the talent management implementation strategies.

As India proceeds with many economics and commerce expansion plans including FDIs in different sectors, the future hiring will increase and it is important to have effective TM, well-grounded HRM and employee retention practices in place. It is vital to build competitive advantage for, both, the manufacturing and service organizations in India (Kalaivani 2015). Employee retention makes an organization efficient enough to perform (Hong et al., 2012).

With a careful enquiry of the research gaps, this study focuses at finding appropriate answers to mediating effects of organizational culture and strategic human resource management on talent management strategies and TM implementation in Indian service providing firms. And finally, attempt is made to develop a comprehensive structural model based on organizational culture, strategic human resource management, talent management, and talent management implementation.

II. THEORETICAL INTERACTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

Many dependable studies have been done on the field. Researchers have chosen separate constructs to establish the mediating effects. The major areas of previous studies revolved around OC on HRM practices or effects of OC on TM strategies.

Most of the studies that were done around establishing the linkages between OC and TM did not touch the areas of HRM practices of the firms. Many interesting and large-scale studies were done to find the impact of HRM practices. For eg., (Huselid, 1995) and Others like, March et al., 1997; Harel et al.; 1999; Laursen et al., 2003; Wright et al., 2005; Sun et al., 2007; Rose et al., 2008; Zack et al., 2009 and many through empirical researches examined the effect of bundled HRM practices. Similarly, Alfes et al. (2013) authors like, Karam et al., 2017; Yusoff et al., 2020; Kravariti et al. 2020) concluded that talent management and talent management implementation are important for organizations.

The study done by Hartmann et al (2010) or Tarique et al. (2010) or by Schuler et al. (2011) or Brink et al. (2012) revealed the relationship of TM, and HRM practices. Similarly, Vaiman et al. (2012) and Festing et al. (2013) studied that TM positively impacts the small and medium enterprises. Also, that TM are the evolved HRM practices. Many authors (FakhrEIDin, 2013; Thunnissen et al., 2013; Sonnenberg et al., 2014) found various context of implementing talent management strategies in an organization for not just the economic outcome, but also the non-economic value. Likewise, others (Cooke et al., 2014; Nafei, 2016; Almatrooshi et al., 2016) investigated the aspects of TM strategies and significant role of cognitive, emotional, and social competencies on leadership competencies. Anthony et al. (2018) explored that TM practices like recruitment, selection, employee development and reward structure are critical for organizations. In other separate studies, Rukunga et al., 2018; Gupta, 2019; O'Connor et al. 2019; Meyers M.C., 2020; Gallardo-gallardo et al., 2020; Kravariti et al., 2020 investigated the applicability and impact of TM strategies. All the studies in the field, nowhere, discussed about the mediating role of OC and HRM practices that impacts in shaping TM strategies and in TM implementation. Also, there is no paper done on the field in the Indian context.

2.1 Hypothesis

2.1.1 Constructs impacting the Organization Performance

A careful analysis of all the constructs selected for the study here, indicates its mediating influence. Numerous past separate studies have found mediating effects of OC on TM or OC on HRM or HRM practices on TM strategies, separately. In the next section, all these constructs are hypothesized, and linked together, both, to each other and to the TM implementation. The related hypothesis is indicated accordingly.

2.1.2 Organizational culture and strategic human resource management

As shown in figure 1, in the organizational culture construct lies the shared values and beliefs that results in different elements of behavior that helps employees to plan their perceptions and actions (Smircich, 1983, Hoogervorst et al. 2004). On the other hand, (Rodriguez et al., 2017) found that organizational culture has its indicators as symbols, ideologies, rituals, and myths. Both, organizational culture and strategic HRM are complementary to each other. Chan et al. (2004), outlined that supportive OC is required for HRM to develop advantage-creating capabilities. The linkage between OC and strategic HRM has been central to major discussions (for example, Aycan et al., 2000; Taylor et al., 2008) that found its causal effects and also the linkage between the cultures and the management practices.

Thus, it is important to determine the alignment of OC for the implementation of successful HRM practices that shapes an organization. This hypothesis postulates that organizational culture influences the strategic HRM practices. Thus, the hypothesis 1 (H1) is assumed as below:

H1 Organizational culture positively impacts strategic human resource management.

2.1.3 Organizational culture and talent management strategy

The TM strategies, is most cited in literature for organizational effectiveness and as a new strategic area of human resource management. In the study report (Thunnissen et al., 2013) mentioned that the prime purpose of talent management is to 'attract, develop, motivate, and retain talent'. Many researchers (Kontoghiorghes, 2016; Bethke et al., 2011; Luna et al, 2015; Cheese et al., 2007; James, 2012) believed that the talent management strategies enhance organizational effectiveness when aligned with organizational culture. Many research has endorsed the significance of rapport between people and organizations and how it notably impacts employee attraction and retention (Cable and Judge, 1996; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; O'Reilly et al., 1991). Thus, the past studies (Hughes and Rog, 2008; Botha et al., 2011; Eversole et al., 2012; Meng et al., 2016) have postulated the critical influence organizational culture has on talent attraction, retention and development and thereby the significant impact it can have on talent management efforts. Therefore, the mediating effects of organization culture and talent management has both, direct and indirect influences on the success of TM strategies. Thus, along with all the aspects of talent management strategies like talent attraction

and retention, there exist a strong linkage between organizational culture and talent management. Therefore, we put forward the hypothesis 2 (H2) as under:

H2 Organizational culture positively impacts talent management strategy.

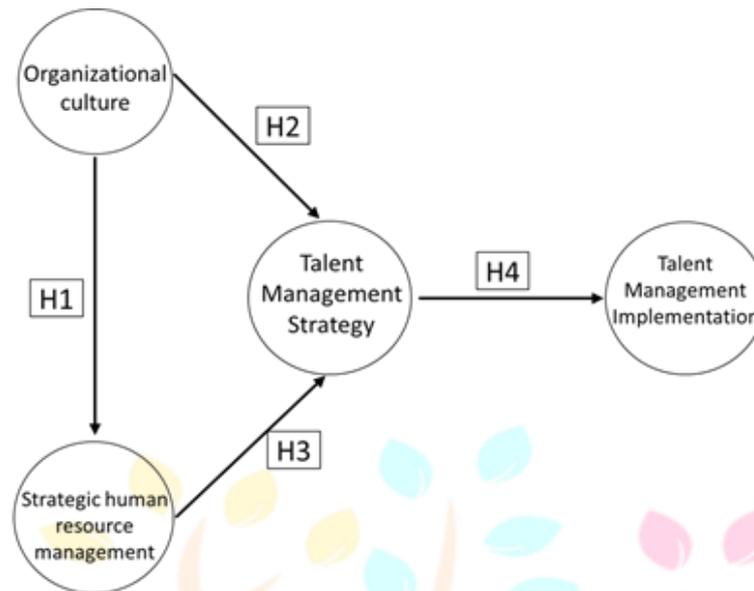


Fig. 1 Hypothesized Model of Talent Management Strategies with various mediating effects

2.1.4 Strategic human resource management and talent management strategy

For very long it was believed that TM and HRM are same and the term was used interchangeably, as both were responsible for taking care of the demand, supply, and flow of manpower within the organization involving typical HR activities like recruiting, selecting, training and performance appraisal. Studies gave rise to theories that attempt to connect strategy, HRM practices and talent management (Lepak et al., 2004). TM is a unified HRM with a specific emphasis; TM uses the same resource as HRM, however, its more concerned about the small group of employee group that are termed as “talented” due to their present performance or latent potential to rise in future. TM is directly influenced by HRM practices and is targeted towards developing competence within the organization (Cappelli, 2008); on the other side, researchers (Chuai et al., 2008; CIPD, 2007; Duttagupta, 2005) postulated that TM and HRM are fundamentally not same.

As the analysis and discussion has led to conclude that strategic HRM has mediating effects on TM strategies and the focused TM tasks for high potential group were, originally, HRM activities done for the whole organization. We theorize the following hypothesis 3 (H3) as under:

H3 Strategic human resource management positively impacts talent management strategy.

2.1.5 Talent management strategy and talent management implementation

The TM is quite new for organizations. The firms are still exploring and implementing different aspects of TM strategies. Talent management implementation, at the same time, has remained a challenge for the organizations in the emerging economy, due to their commitment to enhance workforce competencies. The talent management implementation is far better in the already established firms from the developed economy due to the knowledge and experience they carry in managing talent, which ultimately, has lower chances of failure involving high costs. Organizations are pressed with the need to remain competitive at the world level and build their abilities to respond to numerous challenges. All the TM strategy components like, talent attraction, learning and development, as well as performance management and reward practices impact the talent management implementation initiatives. It is felt that mere chalking out TM strategies are not enough, unless TM implementation are completely realized.

Talent management strategies formation is a complex process and delineates the focus area and the plans to achieve, however, it is the TM implementation that can show the real value of TM if is fully realized in organizations. Talent management strategy influence the steps to realize the TM implementations. Therefore, the hypothesis 4 (H4) is put forward as below:

H4 Talent management strategy positively impacts talent management implementation.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The exploratory research methodology was used in the research study. The details are as below;

3.1 Data Collection

The empirical research was dependent on a sample of Indian small-medium organizations operating in services industries. The hypotheses developed in section 2 were examined by taking in primary survey-based data collected from representatives and managers in different management roles in Indian services sector. As a pilot study, the survey questionnaire was sent to mid-level

and senior level human resource professionals for their expert opinion to review and validate the appropriateness of survey questions. After validating the questions, in the beginning, 750 industry professionals were contacted through emails and telephone to explain the purpose of the study and to invite them to participate in the study survey. Only over 610 showed interests. As the following step, the survey questionnaire along with a cover letter explaining the research objective were sent to the individuals through different channels such as by post, email, social media, and google form, to narrow the likelihood of biases due to the selection of single survey data gathering method (Dillman, 2000).

After a fortnight, a reminder message was sent to those who did not respond. Similarly, after another fortnight, the survey questionnaire link or hard copy, as applicable was re-sent to all the non-respondents. Parallely, phone SMSs and calls were made as a reminder after another additional fortnight. In total, 479 valid questionnaires were collected, one for each respondent. The response rate was equal to 78.52%. A few authors recommend 20% as minimum acceptable response rate value in the empirical operations management research context (Malhotra and Grover, 1998; O’Leary-Kelly and Vokurka, 1998). Therefore, 78.52% response rate of this research can be regarded adequate for the study and data analysis. Also, the sample size of our investigation study is representative of the population, and the outcome supposed to be considerable since the number of survey questionnaires sufficiently completed is higher than 100.

3.2 Data Analysis

3.2.1 Current scenario of Talent Management Practices

In this section, attempts have been made to analyze the secondary data related to the research objective. Here, we studied the data related with the research objective: the association between organizational culture, strategic human resource management, talent management strategies, and talent management implementation.

3.2.2 Examining the association of organizational culture

In this phase, efforts were put to measure the structural relationship between organizational culture and other constructs. Figure 2.0 reports to a structural model demonstrating the relationships between organizational culture and Strategic HRM, TM strategies and TM implementation.

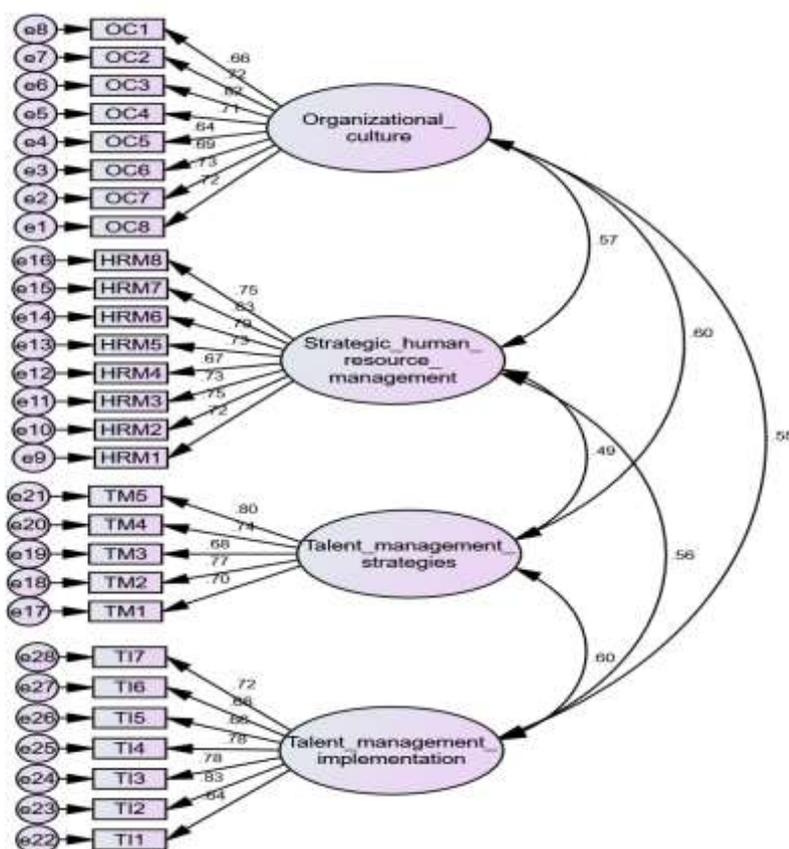


Figure 2.0 Structural model for organizational culture and organizational performance

The organizational culture items were loaded as e1 = 72, e2 = 73, e3 = 69, e4 = 64, e5 = 71, e6 = 82, e7 = 72, and e8 = 66. Likewise, the items for strategic HRM were loaded as e9 = 72, e10 = 75, e11 = 73, e12 = 67, e13 = 73, e14 = 79, e15 = 63, e16 = 75. Meanwhile, TM strategies were loaded as e17 = 70, e18 = 77, e19 = 68, e20 = 74, e21 = 80. and lastly, the TM implementation items were loaded as e22 = 64, e23 = 83, e24 = 78, e25 = 78, e26 = 66, e27 = 68, and e28 = 72 (Figure 2.0). Table 1.1 reports to the model fit summary of proposed structure model as below:

Table 1.1: Model fit summary of organizational culture and organizational performance

Title	Value	Title	Value
Chi-square (X ²)	406	AGFI	0.891
Degree of freedom (DF)	346	CFI	0.950
CMIN/DF	2.141	RMSEA	0.045
GFI	0.908	PCLOSE	0.932
NFI	0.905		

Goodness-of-fit was estimated using the Chi-square test. In the analytic properties, analysis calculated the value of chi-square = 406 and DF = 346. Thus, the CMIN/DF value was 2.141. According to Bagozzi et al. (1991), CMIN value should be below five. Therefore, obtained value is very good. Apart from it, GFI, NFI, AGFI, CFI, RMSEA and PCLOSE values were calculated as 0.908, 0.905, 0.891, 0.950, 0.045 and 0.932, respectively (Table 1.1). As per Hair et al. (2009) model fits thresholds, all these obtained model fit values are enough to analyze the structural relationships.

The Table 1.2 shows that “organizational culture”, has CR = 0.892, AVE = 508, and MSV = 359. Likewise, “Strategic HRM” factor has CR = 0.898, AVE = 0.524, and MSV = 0.329. Furthermore, “TM strategies” factor has CR = 0.857, AVE = 0.547, and MSV = 0.360. Similarly, “TM implementation” factor has CR = 0.888, AVE = 0.534, and MSV = 0.350.

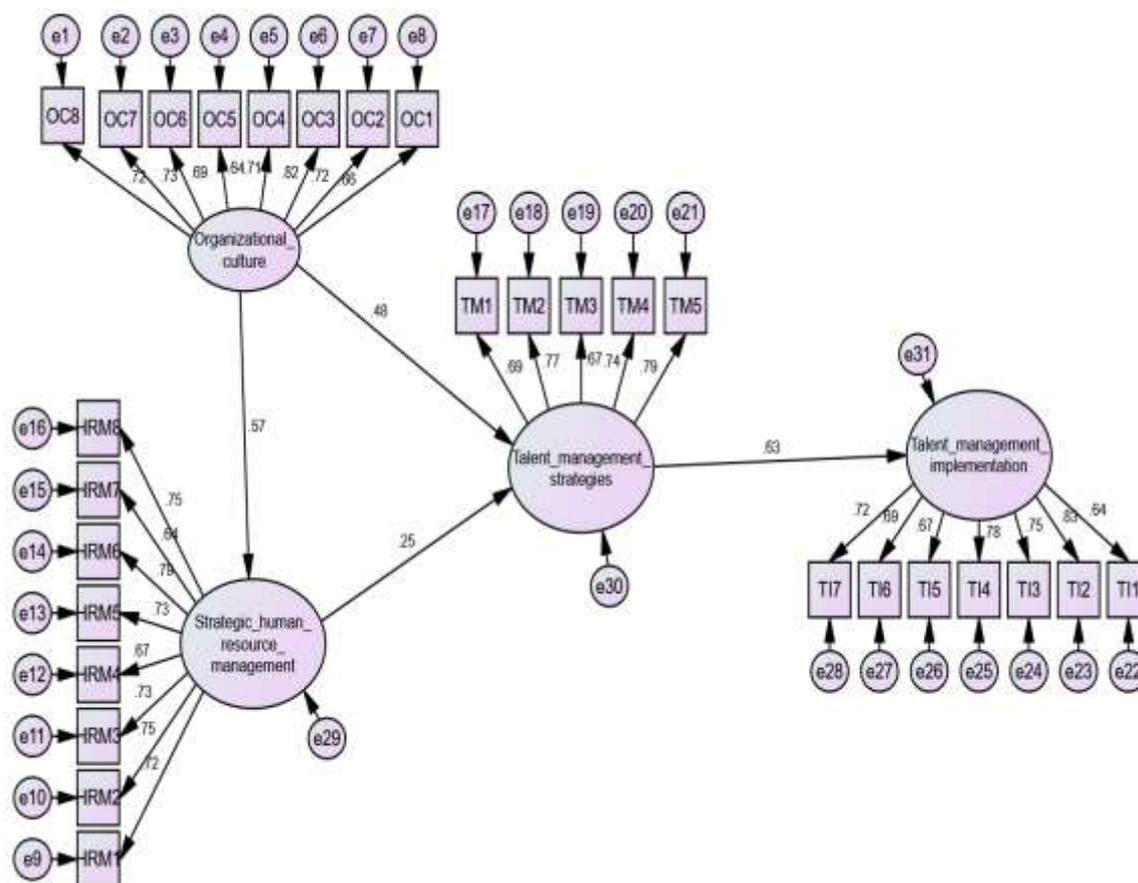


Figure 3.0 Structural model for relationship between organizational culture and HRM, TM and TI

The final take-away was that organization culture, strategic human resource management, talent management strategies and talent implementation as linked together and impact each other. The results show the changes required to adopt to gain the competitive edge.

Table 1.2: Reliability and validity analysis of the CFA model

	CR	AVE	MSV	Organizational culture	Talent management implementation	Strategic human resource management	Talent management strategies
Organizational culture	0.892	0.508	0.358	0.713			
Talent management implementation	0.888	0.534	0.360	0.547	0.731		
Strategic human resource management	0.898	0.524	0.329	0.574	0.560	0.724	
Talent management strategies	0.857	0.547	0.360	0.598	0.600	0.489	0.739

Past studies have mentioned the role and significance of organizational culture in influencing human resources management practices. Our findings claim that organizational culture directly impacts the strategic human resource management and the talent management strategies.

IV. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

4.1 Discussion and implications

In this section, attempts have been made to discuss the study outcomes and implications based on the research objectives as mentioned below:

4.1.1 Discussion and implications related to the research objective

To evaluate the association between organizational culture, strategic human resource management, talent management strategies, and talent management implementation.

The current practices in Indian service providing companies were investigated using secondary data. Findings extend the body of knowledge about the present scenario of Indian service providing organizations. Our finding conclude that organization culture and strategic human resources management practices have strong mediating effects on talent management and its implementation. As we discussed our study results with HR practitioners, they confirmed that all the four constructs had strong association and helps organization in gaining competitive advantage. All the four factors including all variables: “organization culture”, “strategic HRM practices”, “talent management strategies”, and “talent management implementation”. Also, the “organization culture” factor includes eight items, such as, open communication between departments, open communication between management & employees, employee inputs for major decisions, constructive criticism is welcomed, employee support in crisis and need, department’s goal shared with all, complaint redressal works and positive change trough improvement processes & projects. Similarly, “strategic HRM practices” included eight items, viz., performance bonuses, ownership sharing, appropriate training, external recruitment, performance reviews, information sharing, commitment to protect jobs and paid social events and “talent management strategies” includes five items e.g. employee retention, work-life balance, individual development plans, performance problems, and performance rating, and “talent management implementation” includes seven items, like, genuine training & development, individual development needs, genuine feedback to employees, conflict resolution & trust building, time to resolving personal matters, resources to complete projects and no excessive workload. Our discussion with the HR practitioners revealed that well designed talent management strategies and its careful implementation goes a long way in retaining current employees and attracting good talent in the organization.

Each item plays a significant role, however, the study showed that in if organization culture is more open and the item 2 and item 3 and item 7 and item 8 of OC (open communication between management & employees, employee inputs for major decisions and complaint redressal works and positive change trough improvement processes & projects) are practised more then it impacts the organization positively. Similarly, in strategic HRM practices, item 3, item 6 and item 8 (appropriate training, information sharing, and paid social events) are more preferred by employees and practitioners want these to be encouraged more within the organization for positive outcomes. In the same way, item 3 and 5 (individual development plans, and performance rating) in talent management strategies are welcomed more by the employees. Also, item 3, item 4 and item 5 in the talent management implementation factor (genuine feedback to employees, conflict resolution & trust building, time to resolving personal matters) are given more importance by employees over other items presented in the study. All these data are based on the discussion that we had with the practitioners during our survey.

Our findings to the research objective predominantly illustrate the body of knowledge related with the association between organizational culture, strategic human resource management, talent management strategies, and talent management implementation. First, we clarified theoretically and tested empirically that how effective organizational culture can contribute to build strategic HRM policies and TM strategies which can then be implemented properly.

The key conclusion here is that communication between department and between employees and the management can significantly impact the employee attraction, training, and retention. All the HR practitioners and researchers must focus on components of organizational culture. Also, welcoming and considering employee inputs and feedbacks and sharing department’s goals boosts the morale of employees and encourages them to put more efforts. The employee complaint redressal goes a long way

in employee retention. Therefore, the organization must focus on building better organizational culture that impacts the strategic HRM, talent management and talent management implementation strategies.

V. RESEARCH LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

There were a few limitations in this study that future research in the field should try to overcome: a) must increase the number of respondents b) this study was done only for service providing organizations in India. Future research can/ should include other industries too. c) future studies can take up components of TM strategies, such as, talent attraction, talent development, effects of training & development, employee engagement, employee feedback and talent management etc. d) The research work in future can find the impact and linkages of these separate mediating factors on overall results. Similarly, e) separate components of organization culture can also be taken as a field of study. These components when studied individually can bring some more insights in the field of knowledge.

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