

Gordon Institute of Business Science

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Effectiveness of talent management in creating an engaged banking work force

Madeline Gerber

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Student Number: 15388116

E-mail: madelinegerber1@gmail.com

Mobile: +27 84 403 2962

Abstract

Employee engagement remains a noteworthy focus point amongst leaders and remains top of mind in organisations. The benefits of an engaged workforce leads to customer and market share growth, new and innovative ideas, increased levels of customer contentment and plays a momentous role in slowing down the attrition of talented employees. The role of an enthusiastic workforce to expedite growth in organisations has become more important than ever given the slow growth rate eminent in the economy. Work engagement consequently has an impact on organisational outcomes such as loyalty to the organisation as well as impetus from employees on tasks that may not necessarily be in their immediate scope of work.

The research study examines whether talent management could effectively create engaged employees, more specifically engaged employees in the banking industry. Seventeen respondents from four of the largest banks, with head offices situated in Johannesburg, South Africa were interviewed in order to address the research objective. A qualitative research approached with the use of semi structured interviews was utilised by the researcher.

Talent management is a long-standing concept evident in both academia and in business and serves as an instrument ready to be utilised by most leaders in industry the banking industry.

Keywords

Employee engagement, Talent management, Leadership, Symbiotic relationship, Inclusion

Declaration

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

MADLINE GERBER

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1 Chapter 1 – Introduction to research problem

1.1 Research title

The effectiveness of talent management in creating an engaged banking work force.

1.2 Research problem

This study will attempt to gain a deeper understanding into the factors that could be leveraged in talent management to effectively increase employee engagement. Gallup (2013) indicates 13% as the level of world employee engagement. This leaves a handful of employees to generate profit, grow the organisation with new clients and operate optimally. Research has alluded to the effectiveness and role line leaders need to play in the pursuit of optimal levels of employee engagement but this could be placing employees in a disempowered state as it becomes another task that managers need to do as opposed to utilising the task of work relevance and importance as a shared objective (Chayes, 2013). The notion that line leaders are the key to employee engagement is also difficult to comprehend as this sentiment is not novel and yet levels of engagement remain a concern amongst organisations worldwide (Chayes, 2013).

According to Harter (2000) several bodies of present-day evidence exist regarding the management and leading the workplace as well as employees to achieve heightened performance levels. Important to note is the significance of selecting and matching people with their jobs. Research further highlights the importance of understanding your employees and matching them adequately to roles that support their disposition as opposed to trying to force them into role and in doing so compelling them to adjust or change their inherent nature in order to align to the organisation.

Lack of understanding around these matters yields employers unequipped to resolve low levels of engagement. The term talent management is also loosely defined concept and this could be contributing to the perceived failure of what employees expect organisations to do when it comes to their career path and development (Hughes & Rog, 2008).

The big four banks in South Africa provides employment to roughly 166 000 employees in South Africa (Banking salaries in South Africa: CEOs get massive pay hike, 2016). This becomes quite a significant workforce to consider when taking a view of the viability of the country. The Public Display Technologies report specifically draws focus to the employee engagement levels in South Africa and the report issued in 2015 represents

employees from mining, retail, government and more specifically relevant to this research - banking (Level of employee engagement in SA dismal - survey, 2015).

Close to 50% of the respondents surveyed indicated that they have possession of middle level management or executive positions within their organisations (The state of employee engagement in South Africa, 2015). The report confirms a decline in employee engagement levels across South Africa from and emphasizes again the importance of employee engagement levels and the impact on the organisations bottom line. The state of employee engagement in South Africa (2015) provides staggering stats on the disconnect between how well managers think they communicate and how well subordinates believe their managers communicate. Null percent of managers believed that improved communication is required and a contrasting 73% of employees believed communication could be improved, which amplifies lack of employee engagement in these organisations (Level of employee engagement in SA dismal - survey, 2015).

The Public Display Technologies report published in 2014 indicates that managers or executives do not value or consider employee engagement as a true factor that could impact their business and therefore do not place emphasis on the change that is required in order to turn it around (Engaged employees drive profits and productivity... why not in SA?, 2015). The sheer size of the banking workforce provides plentiful scope to ignite discussion amongst employees and leaders regarding engagement which could drive customary engagement surveys conducted in banks into meaningful conversations that has the ability to truly augment employee engagement levels.

1.3 Research Objectives

The above research problem has several related research objectives:

- Establish an appropriate meaning of talent management within the banking industry in South Africa.
- Explore the relationship between talent management and employee engagement on an individual level.
- Establish whether shared ownership of talent management increases levels of employee engagement.
- Establish whether employees will react with higher levels of discretionary effort towards an organisation that adequately manages their said talent.

1.4 Research scope

The scope contains the effectiveness of talent management on employee engagement. Thus literature on the importance of talent management and employee engagement is pertinent. The research will be qualitative in nature and between twelve and seventeen candidates will be interviewed in order to explore possible solutions to the research objectives. Candidates will be selected from all four banks equally to ensure that there is fair representation from all four banks. Representatives will be middle to senior level management within the organisation, qualified with a degree and a minimum tenure of four years working experience.

1.5 Research motivation

The rationale behind this research is both personal and also important to the organisations operating within South Africa. On a personal level the purpose of this research is to open a channel of communication between numerous educated, talented employees that the researcher has dealt with during and prior to the research and their employers. What became apparent in the interactions with interviewees was the lack of trust employees place within their organisations. Trust and transparency is essential for employee retention and talent management, especially during the turbulent South African economy. It is concerning that only one in five South African employees feel that their opinions are valued by their employer and that their development is of high priority within their organisations (Gallup, 2013).

Over and above the personal matters high levels of employee engagement has been linked to increased levels of employee performance (Anitha, 2014). An engaged employee keeps himself aware of the objectives that needs to be obtained and could motive other employees within the organisation to also strive in obtaining their performance objectives (Anitha, 2014). This speaks to the importance of countries and their organisations to increase their levels of employee engagement as it will put them in the best position to gain new customers and in doing so increase their growth and profitability (Gallup, 2013).

1.5.1 Analysis of Global employee engagement by Gallup

Gallup views engagement levels across the board, from local to international markets to emerging to developed markets. In the last report it was found that employee engagement across 142 countries were as low as 13%. This is slightly higher than previous years but still leaves organisations with actively disengaged employees outnumbering engaged employees by 2 to 1 (Gallup, 2013). The actively disengaged

population across countries were found to be 24% and the disengaged population at 63%.

The three categories of engagement are broken down as follows:

Engaged employees can be described as employees who have an emotional connection to their organisations, strive to reach organisational objectives and applies discretionary effort in their jobs daily. When organisations consider their employees to be their most valuable asset they are likely referring to their engaged employees as these employees have the ability to increase the bottom line, generate profitability for the organisations and increase productivity across the organisation as well (Gallup, 2013). The creation of novel ideas and initiatives are very likely to occur from engaged employees allowing the company to innovate and further increase profitability and growth. Creation of new customers are whole dependant on engaged employees as they strive to find better ways of reaching objectives and remain committed and enthusiastic towards the organisation (Gallup, 2013). Engaged employees are vital as they have a direct impact on sustainable organisational growth (Gallup, 2013).

Disengaged employees can be described as employees who have checked out. Their objective is to get through the day and only exert enough effort to complete the job at hand. They do not apply discretionary effort and do not show passion and energy towards their said objectives. They often go unnoticed by line leaders; they are likely part of the organisations management and/or senior executive team as well. They give their time but do not show concern for productivity, profitability, waste nor customer growth and development. They appear to be concerned with their next break and when it will be time for them to head home (Gallup, 2013).

Actively disengaged employees are harmful to the organisations. These employees are unhappy with their work situation and out to damage the organisation. All the positive work done in the form of raising new customers, increasing production and productivity are undone by actively disengaged employees. They contribute to company shrinkage and accidental losses. Employee absenteeism is higher amongst actively disengaged employees and this has a direct impact on organisational productivity. They are likely to take up more of the manager's time than is normally required. Actively disengaged employees need to be kept to a minimum as they erode organisations profit and contribute to the sluggish economy (Gallup, 2013).

The variances in employee engagement are vastly different across the board. East Asia, more particularly China has the lowest level of engaged employees do date. Their

employee engagement levels at 6% are less than half of the World engagement levels at 13%. This is a notable concern as China is becoming more reliant on the use of front line employers as they become a more consumer driven industry (Gallup, 2013).

Middle East and North Africa is at the peak of actively disengaged employees. This is likely perpetuated by the high levels of unemployment and poverty which also has an impact on the perceived prosperity of individual lives. Employees therefore remain in their jobs albeit at a discontented state (Gallup, 2013).

Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the US have the best proportions of employee engagement worldwide. The latter boasts engaged employee against actively disengaged employee at a ratio of 1.6 to 1 whereas Australia and New Zealand boasts a ratio of 1.5 to 1 (Gallup, 2013).

The most predominant findings in the report allude to the fact that education has a positive effect on employee engagement, but this is only relevant if employees can find work that is relevant to their skills. These findings surfaces in developing countries where there is a need for highly skilled and talented employees, these employees are more likely to be engaged with their work. In developed markets however the need for educated highly skilled labour is less of a need, and these employees are not necessary doing what they enjoy doing on a daily basis, this in turn affects their engagement levels negatively (Gallup, 2013).

It was also found that employee engagement has the ability to make a difference to the bottom line. Organisations that are able to maintain employee engagement levels close to 10 engaged employees for every 1 disengaged employee were able to generate 147% higher earnings per share than their competitors, as one would expect organisations with employee engagement levels closer to 2 engaged employees to one generated 2% less earning per share than their competitors (Gallup, 2013). Active disengagement has the ability to drain economies and Gallup estimates losses to the sound of billions for organisations who are unable to keep their workforce actively engaged (Gallup, 2013).

Important to consider is the impact poor hiring and management practices have on employee engagement. In Australia and New Zealand only 19% of leaders are engaged, the lack of engagement has a direct impact on their direct reporting line and the impact of line leaders on employee engagement are of the most detrimental (Gallup, 2013). Leadership has to be as engaged as their employees so although this could be the silver bullet in raising employee engagements levels, it does not solve for disengaged leaders in the organisation (Chayes, 2013). Leadership impact on engagement continues across

the continent, in East Asia the work environment of employees are not conducive to taking initiative, in the Middle East North Africa region the importance of personal relationships are valued over the skills and values the employees can add to the organisation and often these employees selected based on who they know do not have the capability to lead teams nor do they adequate fit the role at hand (Gallup, 2013). The net effect is disengaged employees. Countries are also impacted by their exponential growth, Southeast Asian countries need to develop the capability to attract and retain talent. The previous management styles of command and control will not be conducive to young talented employees that favour autonomy and collaboration as a leadership approach (Gallup, 2013).

The reinforcement of positive emotions is also a research finding evident in the report, yielding employees in a prosperous state of living (Gallup, 2013). Employees that are highly engaged experience less anger at the workplace and experience less stress as opposed to their actively disengaged colleagues. Employees also turn to managers to assist them in managing stress, highlighting again the role leadership needs to play in consistently keeping their employees engaged (Gallup, 2013).

Important to note that engaged employees report growth on organisations workforce and performance more often than disengaged employees do, this is indicative of the fact that employers who motivate and stimulate their workforce are more likely to propel job creation opportunities (Gallup, 2013).

1.6 Assumptions about organisations and stakeholders

The following assumptions have been made in terms of the research study:

- The organisational culture in terms of employee interaction, engagement and the way in which they go about and/or avoid managing their said talent will not substantially change during the period of the research.
- The respondents selected and interviewed were willing to participate and had sufficient understanding of their organisations employee engagement initiatives and their own career objectives.
- Given that the study was qualitative in nature a certain amount of bias in the research is acceptable.
- The participants were mindful of the concerns raised in the research study as they are relevant in their long term career goals.

1.7 Research limitations

The following aspects are limitations to this study:-

- To get a more in depth view of talent management programmes within the financial services industry it may be appropriate to interview HR departments within organisations, although biases may skew the views between HR and the employee significantly. Human resource managers may come across bias towards their organisations in an attempt to protect themselves and their employers and therefore although the exclusion of Human resources may appear to be a limitation it does reduce the risk of biases in the findings.
- Employees that will be interviewed have not been proven to be engaged nor disengaged, the limitation here is that majority of the interview respondents may be engaged in their organisations and in this case very limited information will be obtained from actively disengaged employees which may be counterproductive in trying to obtain insights as to whether talent management will assist in increasing engagement as well as whether employees are willing to co create their talent management and career objectives. The opposite is also a possibility in which most employees may already be actively disengaged and could skew findings towards a very pessimistic view on their working environment and conditions.
- Employees may also feel the need to withhold certain information from the researcher in certain cases because they will be aware of the fact that the researcher works for an opposing bank.
- Further research should be considered to obtain the effectiveness of the talent management programmes on employee engagement after an extended time period to gauge the effectiveness of the proposal.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The research calls for candidates to be interviewed that are employed in the banking sector. In order to increase the possible insights to be gained a net will be cast over the big four banks within South Africa. The research will therefore include: Absa bank, FNB, Standard bank as well as Nedbank. The big four banks are selected based on customers base size as well as the bank perceived brand value in the market. FNB, Absa, Standard bank and Nedbank have the highest amount of customers on book, although FNB lost a couple of hundred thousand customers they still remain above Nedbank and Capitec (Battle to be the biggest bank in SA, 2015). The same research provides the reader with

information on the biggest brands between banks and the big four bank hold the lead in this regards as well (Battle to be the biggest bank in SA, 2015).

This does exclude any employees from any other financial institution to be included in the study and therefore does restrict the proposed findings of the research. Capitec has been very close to Nedbank in terms of customer base size but they remain slightly behind in numbers and also not been in operation as long as the big four banks that have been selected (Battle to be the biggest bank in SA, 2015). The differing cultures between the four banks will also allow the researcher to identify how this influences talent management and engagement amongst the employees that will be interviewed.

Investec a financial institution much sought after by the affluent market in South Africa will also be excluded from the research. Investec was found to be the best private bank in South Africa and takes a comfortable lead amongst the big four banks, although they seem to be slipping slightly on the overall customer satisfaction rating (Best banks in SA for private clients, 2015). The employees from this institution are therefore automatically disqualified from the research and therefore restrict the proposed findings from the research.

Other financial institutions such as African bank, Woolworths financial services and any other financial institution within South Africa that does not fall part of the big four banks will be excluded from the study and the research findings will therefore be restricted to the views and opinions of employees employed within the four banking intuitions selected for this study.

Within the South African borders the banking industry head offices are generally situated in Johannesburg as well as Sandton. The geographic scope for this research would therefore be within these areas as head office staff and some front line staff will be utilised to extract insights on the effectiveness of talent management in creating an engaged banking workforce. Front line employees in the banking industry engage customers but the head office employees support the front line employees in their quest to strive for customer satisfaction. It is therefore imperative that employees at different departments are included in the research as the engagements amongst all of these employees are imperative. Johannesburg comprises the Absa head office employees and their corporate and private bank head office is situated in Sandton which holds both front line employees and head office staff. FNB and Nedbank's head office is situated in Sandton and here both front line and head office employees can be engaged.

Standard bank's head office is situated within Johannesburg and employees will be engaged from this area.

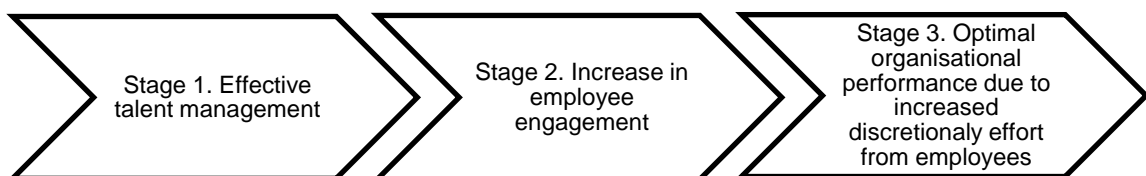
1.9 Significance and benefits of the research study

Talent management can become a very expensive exercise within an organisation. The research therefore intends to inform and influence leaders, human resource business partners and change agents on the factors evident in talent management that likely have the capability of effectively increasing employee engagement within organisation. The research will also aim to explore the relationship between talent management and employee engagement and provide leaders with the tools that can be utilised to optimise this relationship within their organisations.

Gallup already provides us with ample information on how performance is enhanced amongst employees when they are highly engaged and therefore speaks to the significance of this research as it will provide valuable insight and highlight important considerations that can be taken up by both employer and employee in the process of building a highly engaged workforce. Human resource business partners and change agents can also benefit from the research findings as they will be better equipped to utilise the insights into the design of their respective initiatives in terms of increasing discretionary effort, levels of motivation and loyalty amongst employees.

Figure 1 depicts the desired findings of the research report as depicted by the researcher. The research will provide clarity on the relationship between talent management and employee engagement. In the event that a positive link is found between two then according to Gallup's research it can be assumed that there will be an enhancement in the performance of the organisation due to the increase in discretionary effort exerted by employees.

Figure 1: Perceived impact of talent management on employee and organisation



1.10 Roadmap of the Research Study

Chapter one gives the reader an introduction to the research topic and provides detail on the significance of the research. It provides background to the research problem and

states the research objectives that need to be explored and resolved. The limitations and delimitations of the research are also stated in this chapter so as to provide relevance to the work conducted and documented.

Chapter two aims to provide comprehensive information regarding the available literature relevant to the research problem. The literature review is embedded in the research objectives providing a broad view of possible pros and cons of talent management and employee engagement as well as potential gaps that may be discovered.

Chapter three will lead with an overview of the research problem and then continue to provide full detail on the research objectives and the research questions that will be utilised in the study.

Chapter four provides detail around the reasoning of the research methodology and approach utilised for the research. Further details such as population, sample size and selection will be discussed. The relevance and need for a qualitative study will also be expressed in this chapter together with the data capturing method.

Chapter five will present a simplified format of the results based on the data collected and the relevant research objectives and questions, the use of figures and graphs may be utilised to present the findings in a more comprehensive format.

Chapter six provides the information on whether the research findings links with the literature review in chapter two or whether it does not. The research findings will therefore be discussed in this chapter and it will be analysed and interpreted in terms of the research objectives and questions.

Chapter seven provides closure on the research study and will provide relevant conclusions based on the research findings as well as recommendations to business leads in terms of their employee talent management and engagement endeavours. Recommendations for future research will be addressed in this topic as well as a summary of the research findings.

2 Chapter 2: Theory and Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The theory that is reviewed in this section defines and describes the concept of talent management programmes as well as analyses of its effects on employee engagement within organisations. The research problem that has been identified alludes to factors on the organisational and individual level that could affect employee engagement. Each of these areas will be reviewed in order to gain a clearer understanding of the drivers that could be derived from talent management in an attempt to increase employee engagement. Due to the fact that the study is of an exploratory nature, it remains critical to keep in mind that the literature review presented here is a preliminary one and that the literature review will be treated as a working document, with constant revisions and refinement of the data as it is collected (Creswell, 1994).

2.2 Definition and relevance of talent management and talent

The goal of talent management is to create a sustainable organisation that yields high performance on a consistent basis. The organisation therefore reaches strategic goals and objectives. Talent management can be broken down into a set of integrated human resource processes. The processes are designed to win in the war for talent by attracting talented employees, developing those employees, and creating and retaining an engaged workforce (Talent Management - What is talent management?, 2010).

Organisations are also placing emphasis on the identification of talent and high potential candidates in an attempt to develop a strong bench of candidates that could be utilised for succession planning (Church, Rotolo, Ginther, & Levine, 2015). Needless to say that the development of current and future leaders remain a critical component of an effective talent management strategy, especially given the turbulent business environment, the war for talent amongst organisations locally and globally as well as the need to implement succession planning amongst senior executives (Church, Rotolo, Ginther, & Levine, 2015).

Research has also found that talent management can be explained by three conceptual terms (Hughes & Rog, 2008); firstly talent management comprises basic human resource functions, such as recruiting, career development and career succession planning, the second concept is concerned with forecasting and predicting the flow of human resources within the organisation, factors such as skill levels of employees, availability of employees in relation to the required demand as well as the growth of the workforce and the attrition of the employees. This is often very similar to the human resources process. The third concept is that of talent management, focus here shifts to the

identification of talent (Hughes & Rog, 2008). Employees with high potential are sourced, developed within the organisation and rewarded.

Differential treatment of talented employees are often advocated by human resource practitioners, this sentiment was reinforced by a Conference Board report that defined talent as the employees that have the capability to significantly improve the company's current performance as well as its performance in the future (Hughes & Rog, 2008).

Human resource practices often correspond and overlap with the said objectives of talent management, the biggest difference however is that talent management implies a level of strategic integration which is aligned to internal organisational systems and external environmental factors (Hughes & Rog, 2008).

According to McDonnell (2011) talent management is one of the most prevalent concerns in organisations. The global financial crisis attributed to the debacle as companies needed to downsize and retrench staff in an attempt to survive. Both talented and less talented employees were lost to the organisation. The matter is compounded by the large skill shortage experienced across most countries and employers are finding it more and more demanding to recruit and retain talented employees (McDonnell, 2011).

According to Burkus & Osula (2011) higher performing organisations were driven by individuals with a focal point on talent, and found that employees that display exceptional performance have the capacity to outperform run of the mill performers by notable volumes. McDonnell (2011) raises flags to organisations as talent management is still a topic that is in its early adoption phase of rigorous research and employers have to get to grips with the roles within their organisations that require talented employees. Research on talent management has to be pushed from its infancy into a more developed theory and the theory should aim to address the following: Definitive description on talent management, clarity on the end result of the talent management programme and employees that are part of the programme and the dimensions talent management programmes should encompass (Burkus & Osula, 2011).

Cardy & Lengnick-Hall (2011) suggests that the organisations competitive advantage can be maintained by retaining talented employees and that this needs to become a focal point as most research considered preventative measures as opposed to actual retention strategy development. This loss of talent can result in adverse strategic and operational performance by the organisation (Cardy & Lengnick-Hall, 2011).

According to Amankwaa & Anku-Tsede (2015) retention of talented employees has become a critical success factor for organisations. Employees have become more aware of their work environment and have also become focused on ensuring their employers put together plans that aim to catapult their growth within the organisation (Amankwaa & Anku-Tsede, 2015). These talented employees will seek for opportunities outside the organisation when this expected growth does not come to fruition and they will resist leaders that do not allow for their personal objectives to be achieved. Transformational leadership is considered a possible hindrance to attrition of talented employees as it takes attributes into consideration that could lead to higher levels of motivation and also has the capability to improve the spirits of employees (Amankwaa & Anku-Tsede, 2015).

Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings (2012) also refers to the increasing global competitiveness that impact organisations across the board and that in defence of becoming redundant organisations place talent management as a top priority. The research further suggest that talent management has not yet been adequately defined and that there is often differences in how researches define the term, some researchers see talent management from a primarily human capital perspective and others see it as a state of mind in which talent becomes key to the organisations success (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Moreover it is stated that talent management importance is related to its alignment to business strategy and the corporate culture. The lack of clarity around the talent management term may be an attribute to the limited understanding thereof, but remaining a common theme however is that talent management is becoming more and more challenged across the globe but the challenge will be much more prevalent in the emerging markets (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012).

Downs & Swailes (2013) suggests that talent management is primarily related to courses of action that are concerned with the flow of talent through and organisation that needs to be strategically managed. The relevance and importance of the identification of key roles that has a lopsided influence on the organisation is emphasized and the need is therefore created to place high performers into these roles (Downs & Swailes, 2013). This in effect impacts the human resource architecture as it attempts to secure the talent within the organisation. It therefore becomes apparent that talent management typically excludes the majority of the labour market and creates a discriminatory and elitist process that places emphasis on only a very small number of employees considered as having exceptional attributes and skills (Downs & Swailes, 2013).

According to Downs & Swailes (2013) the perspective of talent at a macro-level likely considers country specific talent management or employees that are providing their

labour globally, whereas micro-level studies of talent generally considers how talent is recognised and the way that talent initiatives are developed and implemented. The management of high performing and high potential employees takes a dominant position amongst the perspectives of talent management and this is driven by the need for organisations to grow human intellectual capital on the premise that the economy is affected by the a lack of talent or talent scarcity and it therefore denotes a war for talent amongst organisations (Downs & Swailes, 2013). Majority of the mainstream research on talent management has placed emphasis on the development, implementation, processes and procedures of talent programmes within global organisations (Downs & Swailes, 2013). Although this serves as a viable solution to large organisations it does not necessarily assist the identification and management of talent in smaller organisations nor does it solve for talent identification in national cultures where differentiation could pose higher levels of complexity (Downs & Swailes, 2013).

People are generally equipped with different qualities, abilities and competencies that are either inherent or developed, it however has to be noted that talent is a socially constructed occurrence that assume different connotations in different circumstances (Downs & Swailes, 2013). The notion that talent can be identified is therefore flawed and not unbiased as it is influenced by pleasant appearances, leadership styles that are biased towards one gender as well as well as speech practices that are biased towards one particular gender. The fact that talent is a socially constructed phenomenon leaves the definition of talent exposed to the influence and impact of different managerial and professional cultures (Downs & Swailes, 2013). The obstacles organisations are faced with and the strategic positioning the organisation declares also has an impact on the definition of talent. A link can therefore be established between fair talent identification and the success of employees manipulating their employers reputation and how well liked and accepted the employee is within the organisation (Downs & Swailes, 2013).

Organisations have much to gain from effective talent management. In a project management environment for example, projects yield a much higher success rate if the organisation effectively manages their talent (Pulse of the profession, 2013). This in turn has a positive effect on the profitably of the project and the organisations bottom line profit in general (Pulse of the profession, 2013). The benefits the organisations surpasses that of financial return and could also be obtained in the following circumstances:

- Overcoming talent obstacles and challenges within the organisations by effectively engaging people to perform and exceed company goals, creating teams that deliver exceptional performance.

- Development and implementation of career trajectory for employees by developing their talent, driving their performance, and considering most talented for internal promotions that also serves to effectively implement succession planning
- Overcoming barriers of communication by effectively communicating across different departments, divisions and age groups
- Having a robust employee talent pipeline that serves the organisations in terms of being able to proactively fill open positions, identify and utilise talented employees within the organisation and being able to engage and retain talent (Pulse of the profession, 2013).

Talented individuals are said to have the ability to deliver or potentially deliver excessively greater contributions than employees that are not deemed as talent and this is visible in any given sector or position of the organisation (Downs & Swailes, 2013). Talent is therefore further defined by The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development as those individuals that have the ability to immediately impact organisational performance by their input. Their high levels of potential however are indicative of the impact they could have on the organisation in the long term as well (Downs & Swailes, 2013). Talent is evident in all segments of the workforce but talent management programmes are generally skewed towards management and leadership competencies.

The definitions of talent investigated therefore only allows for the inclusion of a very small percentage of the total working population (Downs & Swailes, 2013). The terms high performance and high potential therefore form the crux of the talent definition and although organisations are able to define what the terms high means to them, it generally takes only the top minority of employees on a specific level and with a certain performance rating into consideration (Downs & Swailes, 2013). A more holistic perspective on the definition of talent would be the existing capability or future potential of an employee that is able to deliver outstanding performance in terms of what the organisation aims to achieve (Downs & Swailes, 2013). It can therefore be assumed that if this diminutive group of talented employees had to leave the organisation it would have an exceptionally negative effect on the organisations performance (Downs & Swailes, 2013).

2.3 Talent management challenges - Challenges related to talent management practices

Although CEO's within organisation have placed focus on the importance of human capital and talent management, many of these organisations have still been negatively impacted by the shortage of talent (Pulse of the profession, 2013).

Results of having these critical roles unoccupied due to the lack of talent has lead to a decline in the delivery of service and product quality, complexities in the organisations ability to innovate, missed deadlines of important strategic objectives, incapable of reaching growth projections and not being able to peruse new market prospects (Pulse of the profession, 2013).

Talent management may be developed with the best intention but raises the concerns on whether it is ethically problematic, more over talent management is largely motivated by the organisations self-interest which results in employees being treated as a means and not as ends in themselves (Downs & Swailes, 2013).

The above mentioned ethical issues and concerns of self-interest does not pose to be a problem to utilitarian ethics as utilitarianism aims to find a balance between the damage done and the greater good that benefit different stakeholders, utilitarianism does however result in the individuals becoming lost in the notion of the greater good (Downs & Swailes, 2013).

2.1 Global need for talent management

According to Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow (2010) globally the need for talent management remains a challenge to organisations and it's driven by the following pertinent challenge:

- Global competition: The consideration of this concept brings three concerns to the forefront and it's largely driven by the fact that big organisations utilise the same universal global talent pool when recruiting (Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow, 2010). The first of the three factors is the necessity to remain competitive:
 - Organisations are looking for exceptional skills and are becoming more predictive in terms of the attributes their global leaders require to be differentiated and truly effective.
 - The second concern is that senior, educated and highly skilled staff are a rare commodity and does not meet the demand required by organisations and it therefore creates the need to broaden talent searches internationally (Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow, 2010).

- The third matter under consideration is that of an employee talent pipeline – organisations are taking a long term view of the future and are recruiting talent ahead of the actual demand. It therefore increases pressure on organisations to come to terms with their future industries and target markets and also how they effectively these organisations brand themselves globally in order to retain highly skilled and talented individuals (Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow, 2010).

2.2 Talent management challenges related to human capital within an organisation.

- The identification of the talent pool becomes the first contentious issue an organisation needs to deal with (Cappelli & Keller, 2014). The organisations scarce resources needs to be utilised to identify, develop and motivate their talented people - which consist of both high performing individuals currently utilised in a strategic role and candidates with high potential that have the ability to be developed into highly strategic roles (Cappelli & Keller, 2014). Research further suggests that exceptional performance is often the output of talent and this leads to the increased significance and admiration of talented people (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011). Talent as a concept is therefore often regarded as something that is difficult to copy, hard to find and very valuable. Important to note however is the fact that the definitions of talent in literature is fairly ambiguous and this increases the complexity amongst leaders in business to understand talent management (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011).
- Secondary to that another complex matter to consider is the assessment of employee performance; very few roles are able to create circumstances in which the performance of employees can be measured accurately (Cappelli & Keller, 2014). The organisation therefore utilises a performance appraisal process which is flawed by subjectivity, judgement and leniency biases. This hinders the true identification of top performers and creates situations in which not all employees are treated equally. Organisations now turn to competency modelling to solve for the biases created by tradition performance appraisals. This process moves away from job tasks which are attributes of jobs when measuring performance and rather measures individual performance as it relates to behaviours required by the employee in order to deliver on strategic objectives. The viability of this model is yet to be proven however (Cappelli & Keller, 2014).
- The identification of potential poses to be a more challenging task to tackle as opposed to the identification of top performers as it is difficult to predict the

outcome of future performance in a new role (Cappelli & Keller, 2014). Potential is recognized through certain abilities that are identified with the assumption that the required knowledge and skill can be learnt. Companies therefore rely on IQ test to identify these abilities but also utilise the GE nine box matrix in an attempt to identify potential (Cappelli & Keller, 2014). It however has to be noted that 40% of high potential assignments fail and this can likely be attributed to poor definition of potential amongst academics as well as firms. The failure of high potential assignments are compounded by the lack of established tools and criteria developed to assess potential (Cappelli & Keller, 2014). Selection of potential in new roles often rests on performance in current roles although this fact does not guarantee success in future roles (Cappelli & Keller, 2014). Although it has been established that talented employees yield great value to organisations, it is still not clear which employees are said to be talent and which are not (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011). Two perspectives are however evident in literature, one that considers individuals with high potential and another which considers employees that do not display high potential. Leaders consider employees with high potential as those who have the capability to take up executive roles or functions within an organisation and these employees should therefore yield significant value to organisations (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011). Emotional intelligence, ability to negotiate and the ability to operate and work well within teams, intellect, the ability to handle stress and lastly high energy levels and the ability to take a proactive approach are some of the many characteristics accredited to the perceived high potentials (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011). Furthermore other qualities such as the ability to be creative or innovative, to display high learning potential, self-sufficiency and unique leadership skills can be distinguished amongst high potentials (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011).

- The employees that do not display high potential stems from the second perspective saying that each person has something to offer and therefore everybody has talent (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011). The company therefore takes a view of the value each employee adds and does not only consider those employees that take up key positions within the organisation (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011). Talent therefore has an overall impact on the organisation and is not wholly linked to one purpose and serves an agenda that depicts a more inclusive state of affairs (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011).
- Research suggests different findings in terms of the effects the communication

of potential has on employees. In certain cases it increases levels of performance, it creates a feeling of importance to those managers who are selected to be involved in the talent management processes and in some cases there was an increase in careers success and commitment towards organisations. Talent management does not necessarily guarantee retention of the talent pool amongst organisations as some talented employees still seek employment outside of the organisations, it however has to be noted that there is not a silver bullet in terms of getting engagement right as a host of factors come into play to engage and retain talented employees and it therefore remains a tactical challenge for organisations (Cappelli & Keller, 2014).

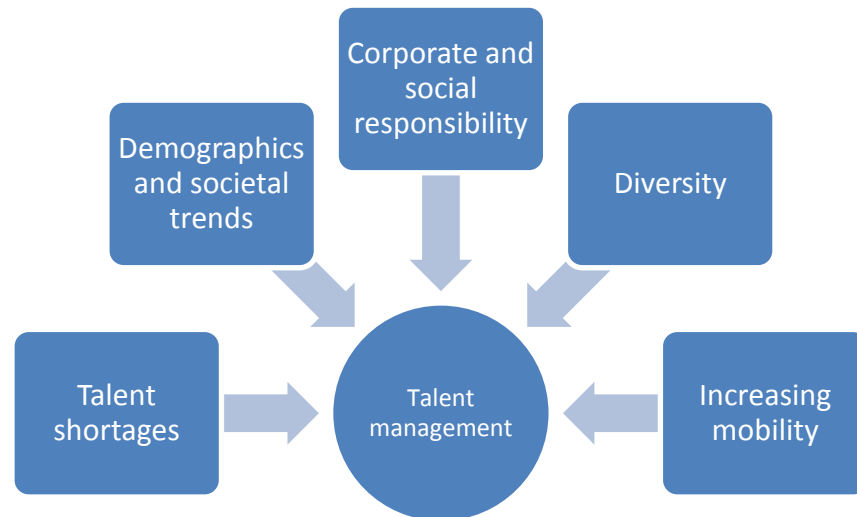
- Talent management further poses the ability to let harmful social forces loose due to the fact that outside employees are deemed to be more important and valuable over existing, internal employees. Further to this the emphasis of a few individuals over and in spite of the value and importance of team work as well as profound cultural problems that impacts the performance of the majority of employees, further increases the risk of harmful social circumstances (Downs & Swailes, 2013). Biases towards the male or female sex as well as personal factors deem the selection process of talent identification flawed with biases (Downs & Swailes, 2013).
- Not all employees will take negatively to the fact that they are not selected for talent development but the human factor is removed from the process when a minority is chosen due to the fact that they are able to contribute at a disproportionate level. This creates the perception that the worth of employees is to be found in human capital as opposed to the human being him/herself (Downs & Swailes, 2013). The exclusion of talent management programmes could be indicative of the fact that others are perceived to be better and this could have a negative impact on the self-efficacy of employees who are not selected (Downs & Swailes, 2013). Taking consideration of agency theory, it becomes an ethical issue if employees perceive their exclusion as something that is diminishing their opportunities to succeed and they are therefore harmed by this approach (Downs & Swailes, 2013).

2.4 Factors that influence talent management from a global perspective

According to Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings (2012) global talent management poses to be a key challenge to multinational organisations; there are a number of factors that attribute to its complexity as stated in figure 2 below. A number of these factors are also echoed

in research conducted by (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011) and (Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow, 2010). Detail on the five of the seven pertinent factors as depicted by the researcher below:

Figure 2: Factors that influence talent management from a global perspective



- The shortage of talent is the first factor under consideration. Multinational enterprises are recognising the importance of international talent management at an ever-increasing rate (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). This is indicative of the fact that global competition is becoming more intense and that there is a significant need for learning and innovation to commence at an international level (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Companies need the ability to anticipate technological innovations and be able to compete with international companies for talent on a global plane (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011). The continuous development evident in areas such as globalisation, technological innovation and social advancements compels organisations to stay abreast of other organisations and markets (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011). The success or failure of international business is therefore largely dependent on effectively managing human resource processes but even more pertinent is the need for superior talent in leaders (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Challenges and obstacles faced by human resource departments of multinational enterprises are the scarcity of international management and professional talent as global organisations are competing to acquire and retain individuals from the same talent pool (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). The competitiveness of a multinational enterprise is largely determined by the effectiveness of their global talent management programmes and this is evident in the tendency in increasing competition between employers as they focus on employing talented individuals

at a global level as opposed to country level in an attempt to capitalise on talented employees that are scattered globally (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). The level of mobility and opportunity for employees have increased due to the volume of immigration and factors such as the globalisation of a significant amount of professional labour markets, healthcare and information technology are examples of these professions (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). A greater reliance on expatriates with the skills to develop new markets have emanated from the employers perspective, this with the increasing need for unconventional international assignments has increased global mobility which in turn impacts global talent management (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Research further indicates that talent management concerns are increasing in complexity due to small and medium firms that are rapidly entering the international market in recent years (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012)

- Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow (2010) also suggests that the investigation and research of global talent management is increasingly becoming a pertinent matter. Organisations are experiencing heightened competition for talented employees across global borders and no longer at a country specific level and the competition amongst employers for talent has become a common occurrence (Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow, 2010). This rivalry between organisations can typically be described by two crucial drivers which relate to supply and demand (Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow, 2010). The sheer quantity of migrations as well as immigration systems that are geared to the acquisition of skills are factors that impact the supply of labour in the international markets and these factors have a significant impact on the level of international mobility and the number of opportunities for novel types of mobility (Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow, 2010).
- The demand factors however speak to the requirement of organisations to build emerging businesses with the help of skilled expatriates (Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow, 2010). Immediate execution of international projects are pertinent to organisations, as the world economy remains in a slump, and this therefore increases the necessity to have access to specialised talent for differing time periods and terms, albeit only for temporary, short term assignments (Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow, 2010). Influential leaders and or managers are also in demand internationally as they play a part in effectively transferring of knowledge and the development of social networks required to support globalisation (Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow, 2010).
- The second pertinent factor is demographics and societal trends. People are less inclined to reproduce and life expectancy is on the rise and these

demographic trends have a profound impact on the environment of talent management and the challenges organisations are faced with in this regard (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Research also suggest impacts on country specific labour supply due to the rapid changes experienced in the demographic profiles of a number of countries, this in turn forces organisation to find novel approaches when developing recruitment and retention policies (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Concerns in terms of country demographics also arise as countries are experiencing a decline in their knowledgeable and skilled workforce due to their age and the fact that they are on the verge of moving into retirement or likely moved into retirement already (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). On the other side of the coin these countries also do not have a future pipeline of skills and knowledge in terms of a youthful population and will experience a lack of capacity in their workforce and in the future large talent gaps (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). It has also been found that labourers of the baby boom generation are gradually reaching their retirement age (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011). Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert (2011) reinforces the impact of demographic changes on organisations as currently society are experiencing a sudden decline in the working population while finding that at the same time less and less youthful people are taking up employment (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011). The impact of these developments surpasses the mere short fall of workers but also threatens the availability of knowledge and skills required within organisations which elevates the necessity of retaining talent (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011). The consequence of these demographic changes is that organisations will be expected to enter the war for talent as it wrestles to satisfy its demand for talent in a market where in which the supply of talent is evidently decreasing (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011). The importance of retaining talented and skilled employees within an organisation can therefore not be underplayed, as it greatly serves organisations in maintaining their competitive advantage (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011). Intellectual capital is lost to the organisation when talented employees leave, the loss of employees also to organisations also exposes confidential information as it will likely make its way to competitors (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011). Acquiring new employees is also a costly exercise and this cost is perpetuated by investments made in developing and advancing existing employees whom then decide to exit the organisation after they reaped the benefits of the training and development interventions (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011).

- Country demographics are also impacted by younger generations such as the millennials entering the market. The game changers for this generations is their perspective of likely working for more than one organisations at a fairly young age, they are concerned with the environment and social responsibility and deem training and development as valuable inputs (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). They will however be highly sought after by organisations due to the demographic trends discussed earlier. Important to note are the differences in the expectations of the psychological contract between employer and employee, leaders will need to understand what this generation is motivated by and ensure they are able to keep them engaged (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Moreover leaders of organisations will need to understand which talent management decisions to make in order to attract and retain these employees which will therefore create another level of complexity to the process (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012).
- Thirdly an organisation that is able to build a good reputation on corporate social responsibility could utilise this as an advantage as it becomes an important attribute of talent management and talent retention (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Companies have been found to view corporate social responsibility as a viable tool in attracting talented individuals globally and it therefore plays a pivotal role in strategies developed to recruit and retain talented employees (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Moreover modern day employees strive for intrinsic rewards provided by organisation that value CSR as opposed to engaging organisation in terms of the financial benefit alone (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). An organisation with a strong CSR agenda can therefore position an holistic employee value proposition to possible candidates and leverage these factors to attract employees and award less and less focus to increasing the financial component required to recruit highly talented employees (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). The holistic employee value proposition also creates a competitive advantage to these organisations as the model becomes difficult to replicate (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). The organisations CSR initiatives could likely ignite inspiration amongst employees and this motivation could have a positive impact on the loyalty employee's demonstrate towards the organisation (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Important to note however is the impact different perspectives in terms of global environment and location may have on the relationship between CSR and people management, not only are their differing ideas between countries on CSR and global talent management but there are also differing notions in terms of the links between the two (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). These perspectives are indicative of the fact that

people situated in different institutional situations are motivated by different causes (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Research further suggest that knowledge of the links between CSR and talent management are in its infancy but does highlight that in reality it varies in terms of the different environmental contexts.

- The fourth factor that yields increased complexity to organisations in terms of talent management decision making is the diversity of employee groups operating in a global environment (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Diversity in general but also gender diversity within organisations is on the rise and is visible for example in the growing level of female employees entering and participating in the labour market, important to note however is the low levels of female representation in senior management roles nationally and internationally (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Other factors affecting the decision making and management of employees within organisations are the increased levels of ethnic, cultural and generational diversity of employees (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012).
- Increased mobility is the fifth and final factor referred to in this document and it references the increasing mobility of people globally as well as across cultural borders (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). This global emigration and or movement of people across global borders has a significant impact on talent management and the choices leaders need to make in terms of global talent management (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). There is an increasing trend evident which indicates that very exceptionally talented, educated employees show little loyalty towards organisations nor loyalty towards countries and they have elevated the number of talents spreading across the globe (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Whilst this is at play a big number of uneducated employees have little opportunities for international immigration and this ongoing trend has resulted in what we know today as the “talent divide” (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Organisations add to the mobility of the professional and high skilled workers as they hope to gain from the international management skills and international and or home grown networks these talented employees bring to the figure (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012)

2.5 Limitations of talent management

Talent management in organisations is often stunted by the organisation itself and CEO’s often complain that they are mostly ineffective in cracking talent management (Warner, 2016). Even though individuals have the ability to make a difference to organisations,

the social system, especially in bigger organisations, are generally always more powerful than the individual in determining the organisation's future (Warner, 2016). CEO's aim to find talented people who understand their specific plans and who also has the ability to change the way things work in short amounts of time, but this approach does not ignite true talent (Warner, 2016).

What is practically evident however is the fact that organisations get their employees to conform to a certain way things work within that organisation and in doing so these employees unintentionally maintain the status quo (Warner, 2016). People are recognised as talent when they show the ability to fit in to the organisations, even if only under pretence, and this has a profound impact on the need to conform and operate in fear, which perpetuates the concerns the CEO was hoping to address (Warner, 2016). A true understanding of talent management is therefore required to ignite real change (Warner, 2016). Three matters are considered under this premise:

- People are clannish or tribal. The sheer size of organisation has little impact on the fact that people still seek out people who appear to be similar in thinking and mind-set (Warner, 2016). People find comfort amongst these "like minded" individuals and often define their work through these associations. CEO's and senior leaders also get caught up in this reality and instead of promoting talent; they promote people with whom they find familiarity (Warner, 2016). Smart leaders learn to understand the game at play and they work hard to canvas themselves to executives and to ensure they communicate their familiarity to executives within their tribe and/or associations (Warner, 2016). The involvement and participation of leaders in this act leaves talent management programmes ill equipped to serve its purpose and senior leaders need to come to grips and take ownership of the role they play in causing talent management programmes to be ineffective (Warner, 2016).
- Rewarding for compliance and not creativity is another fundamental issue that leaves talent management unable to deliver on its likely purpose (Warner, 2016). Leaders often have their own interest at heart and would therefore go out of their way to look after and endorse those employees that make them look good. Too often though these employees are not brave and will therefore not drive new ways of doing things as they fear the risk of challenging their leaders (Warner, 2016). It therefore becomes highly unlikely that this group of people will have the capability to create a new future (Warner, 2016).
- The importance of context is underplayed, organisations that have been effective at creating a large internal talent pool have done so because they have focused

on people who flourish in their context and who also take to and align to their social system (Warner, 2016). These people therefore have to apply very little effort to adjust to the organisations social norms and effort could rather be spent on their individual performance. In order to become an organisation that successfully creates talent pools have much more to do with understanding your internal social systems as opposed to just hiring or promoting people considered to be the best (Warner, 2016). The value of knowing who those individuals are that have the ability to thrive in your social system is very important if you are looking to increase performance, although this should not be confused with talent (Warner, 2016). Organisations needs to consider the elements or labels used to describe individuals and see whether this tie up to the type of person they need to push the organisations forward, there is often a mismatch and senior leaders need to come to grips with these hard realities (Warner, 2016). The understanding of context required within an organisations at different levels of performance as well as the limitations of talent management needs to be understood by leaders in an organisation before hefty investments are made in the assessment of individuals who intend to present as talent (Warner, 2016). The research also confirms that the key decision makers in talent management needs to be aware of the impact cultural and institutional differences have on employees and need to take account of it when sourcing and retaining talent globally (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012).

2.6 Focused view on the literature of talent management

In an attempt to navigate literature related to talent management it becomes clear that it lacks a broad and multi-dimensional approach (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013). The definition of talent lends itself to a managerialist orientation. Most iterations of the definition of talent management make strong assumptions that the person in questions and the competences required by that person have to ultimately meet the objectives and goals of the organisation (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013). When the anticipated effects of talent management are described a similar managerialist orientation is identified. The goals of the employee in terms of wellbeing and social wellbeing are not evident in the findings; the emphasis is placed on the objectives of the organisations that have to be accomplished as opposed to the considerations of the employee's personal objectives (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013). To add to this talent management is then mainly represented as an instrument with the ability to increase employee performance more specifically job performance which should yield the organisation more productive, able to produce higher quality and terms of what is

delivered and more profitable (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013). In research numerous descriptions are found for talent but a pertinent definition of talent is that it serves as a conduit with the ability to progress the organisation to its desired state, talent will therefore continue to be an ever increasingly significant factor (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011).

The second prevailing label evident in talent management is that of unitarist. In the practice of talent management there are numerous actors identified that own a role in the process, some of which include the CEO, line management as well as HR (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013). The focus however remains on how management can achieve the organisations premeditated aspirations and the unspoken assumptions that are made is that all the actors are on-board with these objectives and neither of them have or poses the desire to peruse their own needs, views or goals (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013). The responsibility of career management and development by the employee is not made clear as only a few authors consider an active role for the employee (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013). It can therefore be said that talent management approaches provide little scope for employee involvement or employee agency and that a classic top down managerialistic approach exist (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013). The mutual gains assumption serves as the foundation of the current talent management approaches and the assumption is made that these stakeholders, whether inside or outside the organisations, share the same interests and ambitions (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013).

2.7 Salient approaches to talent in the working environment:

Talent as (meta-) competencies comporment

Describes a competency as human aptitude that can be gauged and that is required to perform optimally (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013). Competencies are considered as deportment expressions of talent and the assessment of competencies are generally considered in the context of the growth of leadership attributes, during choices of promotions and during planning of successors (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013). The building blocks of competencies include the following: personal and other characteristics, knowledge, skills and abilities. It however has to be noted that the development of skills and knowledge is more likely whereas abilities and personal characteristics remain more constant (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013). Researchers however argue that from a theoretical perspective the acquisition of competencies are impacted by dominant higher-level meta-competencies. Intellect and emotional intelligence are examples of meta-competencies and the pertinent building

blocks evident in meta-competencies therefore facilitate the required adaptable, growth and individual learning, even during times with radical environmental changes (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013).

Talent as high potential

Few people in the work environment are acknowledged as having high potential and is therefore a scarce characteristic. Potential also indicates that certain individuals have the capability to be developed from their current state into something greater and this is not the reality for the majority of the workforce (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013). The term potential is increasingly being used in the context of talent management as well as strategic human resource management due to the interests shown by organisations and consulting firms, the terms is increasingly used in the corporate context too but challenges are faced in terms of understanding the word as well as adequately defining it (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013)

Talent as high performance

The alternative perspective to talent being an indication of potential for the future is that talent could be an explicit factor that becomes clear in current actions, performance and behaviours of individuals (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013). The definition of talent is therefore conceptualised as an actual output and not as the factors and or inputs required to obtain certain outputs. The measurement of performance output poses to be much less challenging than the measurement of inputs such as potential and organisations therefore utilise the performance appraisal practice to identify talent (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013). The significance of employee performance is evident amongst literature on the process of artificially ranking employees in which the suggested top performers are comprehensively remunerated and the bottom performers are not well remunerated or likely dismissed (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013).

It is largely assumed that all stakeholders share the same understanding of talent management; differing points of view on the different competencies are not taken into consideration. This implies that what is good for the employers is good for the employee (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013). This is likely not the case in real terms. The risk of the unitarist approach towards the concept of talent is that skills and competency development remains internally focussed on what the immediate firm requires. This may have a direct impact on the employability of the individual as they likely lack skills required to operate in the external labour market (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier,

2013). This in itself is a shortcoming to the employee but also poses drawbacks to society in general.

A largely understated limitation in talent management approaches is the emphasis placed on talented individuals and the lack of attention that is placed on those people who are not deemed as talent (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013). Not being selected as talent may have a negative impact on the individuals employee well-being in terms of job satisfaction and this negative impact could be perpetuated more in the form of societal well-being if the non-talented employees, for whatever reason had to find themselves without employment. What benefits the organisation in terms of talent management does therefore not necessarily benefit the non-talented individuals (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013).

The literature on talent also considers a limited range of practices and activities. The emphasis is largely placed on the attraction, development and retention of talented individuals, very little focus is placed on the release and turnover of talented employees (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013). Most literature reiterates the importance of talent retention, minimising turn over and ensuring that these human capital investments remain within the confines of the organisation. It however may be an unrealistic expectation to assume that talented employee's will remain loyal to one organisation based on the premise that they are treated well (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013). Inter career path mobility has taken precedent in the determination of career paths and are becoming the norm amongst talented employees. Organisations could likely be in a better position and to yield benefit from the turnover of talented employees if they learn to come to terms with it and embrace it. Access to new and other customers, access to human capital and the generation of goodwill are but a few of the factors that an organisation could benefit from by leveraging talented employee turnover (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013). Former employees can therefore serve as a strategic asset to organisation and could increase the social capital of the organisation (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013).

Literature on talent as giftedness and as a strength has not been specifically researched for the working environment and encompasses a broader context (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013).

Talent as giftedness – this perspective considers individuals that are generally said to have certain gifts or talents which lets them exhibit exceptional abilities (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013). Education becomes the main consideration when reviewing

literature in this sphere and considers persons who manage to accomplish great feats in terms of tasks related to their general memory, games of strategy such as chess, athletics, music and subjects that are mathematically or science inclined (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013). Giftedness is said to be an infrequent occurrence among people in general, and Mozart is one of the few people assumed to demonstrate true giftedness. The main focus of giftedness research is conducted with children in an attempt to explain why giftedness comes to fruition and also in order for learning material can be improved to suit children that display giftedness (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013). The meaning of the term giftedness however remains unclear and undecided amongst researchers.

Talent as a strength

The new, up and coming scientific field of positive psychology forms the base of literature regarding the topic of strengths (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013). The definition of strengths deems certain attributes that certain people display which allows them to exhibit an outstanding performance and budding brilliance. When considered holistically strengths are usually understood as habitual patterns of behaviour that are partially inherent but also have the capability of being developed to some extent (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013). It is understood that all people encompass certain strengths and that it is utilised together with optimistic emotional states such as stimulation, internal motivation, elevated liveliness, genuineness and an internal sense of accomplishment. Gratefulness, fairness, kindness and forethought are examples of strengths that have been established in research (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013).

2.8 Definition of employee engagement

Agreement has not yet been reached on a definite definition for engagement but most commitment from the employer in an attempt to exceed at what they understood their objectives to be (Albrecht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey, & Saks, 2015). What has been found core to the construct of employee engagement is quite notably the levels of energy the employee displays and the involvement the employee displays in the organisation, most importantly remains the employees ambition to contribute the success of the organisation (Albrecht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey, & Saks, 2015).

A pertinent concern in terms of engagement, as a general term, is deduced and understood across a multitude of cultures (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). The framing of engagement in terms of environmental, communal and cultural setting is therefore pertinent in terms of crafting a shared understanding of the concept (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). This in turn also facilitates the development of

adequate measures of engagement when considering psychological aspects (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013)

When considering the core dimension of engagement a number of perspectives have been reached by researchers. Evident in research conducted during 2011 it is acknowledged that there are two core dimension of engagement, one related to energy levels and the second related to levels of involvement (Costa, Passos, & Bakker, 2016). When taking a look further back it however becomes evident that research conducted during 2003 made reference to three core dimensions that encompasses engagement and it was made up of increased levels of energy during work (vigour), extremely enthused and caught up with one's work (dedication) and finally completely resolute and focused on one's work (absorption) (Costa, Passos, & Bakker, 2016)

Engagement is an age old term and it first made its appearance in 1990 as part of the work conducted by Kahn for social psychology (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). The research conducted in 1990 suggested that personal engagement comes into play when individuals exclude or include their personal selves during the performance displayed while taking up their work roles (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). The constructs of these behaviours are made up by the extent to which people utilize physical, cognitive and affective degrees of themselves during performance in the work roles they take up (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). It can therefore be said that engaged employees display a genuine manifestation of themselves through their physical participation, cognitive ability and awareness as well as their emotional links (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013).

The opposite however is evident amongst employees that are not engaged or disengaged as they disconnect themselves from their jobs and restrain their individual dedication and involvement in the physical, cognitive and emotional facets of their occupation (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). Research further more suggests that the occurrence of sincere and genuine expression that individuals undergo during engagement is psychologically advantageous to those individuals (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). The research conducted by Kahn is however classified in 2011 to a broader perspective and considers engagement theories in terms of a need satisfying approach.

Other approaches to engagement consider the view of burnout antithesis – which in effect proposes that engagement and burnout take up opposing positions on the scale even though burnout considers elements of fatigue, pessimism and failure in terms of achievement, engagement on the other hand, is related to effectiveness, liveliness and

participation (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). An alternative approach to consider is the notion that engagement is an optimistic, satisfying, job-related way of thinking that exemplifies heartiness, devotion and fascination with one's occupation (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). Reference is in terms of a preference relating to work engagement as opposed to personal engagement and it is suggested that workers with high levels of engagement will probably out perform their disengaged counterparts (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013).

Gallup is a survey firm that developed an alternative approach to engagement and considers the individuals or employee's contentment and participation with their works as well as their perceived excitement for the work they conduct and this is referred to as the satisfaction-engagement approach (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). Given this perspective, the phrase employee engagement is more adequately summarised in terms of the relevant factors.

An alternative approach to engagement encapsulates a number of dimensions and differentiates between engagement towards the organisation and engagement towards the individuals occupation which is indicative of the fact that engagement encompasses numerous focus points much like that of commitment (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013).

Costa, Passos, & Bakker (2016) posit that work engagement can be considered as a rewarding, positive and emotionally motivational state of occupational happiness. A decade of research brings to light the paramount importance of work engagement in terms of the performance and happiness of the workforce (Costa, Passos, & Bakker, 2016). Research conducted on middle managers of organisations indicated that work engagement was related to additional working hours, contentment with one's occupation, improved state of health and the ability to function well within social settings and or environments (Costa, Passos, & Bakker, 2016). Further research suggests that engaged employees are determined or likely to successfully produce a desired result and behave in such a manner so as to influence events that are related to their existence (Costa, Passos, & Bakker, 2016). Their character traits comprise of elevated levels of energy, highly action orientated behaviours and an optimistic disposition and mind-set that affords them the opportunity to create environments made up of positive feedback and credit (Costa, Passos, & Bakker, 2016).

According to Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks engaged employees have high levels of resilience and recover quickly from adverse situations, are passionate about their work, experience an increase in their perceived rate of time when they are busy

with work and display increased levels of energy. Although engaged employees generally produce first-rate results on a consistent basis they also experience instances where in which they have a bad and or off day, this is indicative of the fact that engagement amongst employees fluctuates over short time periods (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks, 2015). Engaged employees display high levels of focus and exercise increased discretionary effort towards their work which in turn significantly improves the level of work produced, it is therefore important for researchers and leaders in organisations to come to terms with the fluctuations experienced by employees in occupational engagement (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks, 2015)

The classification of engagement into specific categories provides clarity in terms of how engagement has been formulated to present (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). In literature however an agreement has emerged that engagement is an optimistic way of thinking and studies have further indicated that levels of engagement are vulnerable to pressure derived from contextual and interpersonal aspects (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013).

Diverse approaches have been developed in terms of how engagement has been defined and placed into operational execution which is further intensified by the “consultancy approach” to engagement, which is associated to the satisfaction-engagement element raised earlier in this chapter (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). In this part of the literature the term engagement is generally used as an all-encompassing term that takes into account a variety of work related mind-sets, which also includes the notion of contentment with one’s job, along with observations of a variety of organisation behaviours which includes the right to be heard, participation and leadership to name a few and this therefore highlights the fact that engagement requires soundness in its construct (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013).

Definitions of engagement elude to the fact that engagement in itself may mean a number of things and that it does not only refer to an optimistic way of thinking and mind-set, an example would be research conducted in 2009 that inferred that engagement at the workplace is intended to guarantee commitment from employees to their organisations objectives and ideals, motivate employees in terms of their contribution towards the organisations success, whilst simultaneously have the ability to develop their own sense of happiness and well-being (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). It becomes evident that the term employee engagement may have been commandeered by consulting firms in industry so as to suit their own, individual agenda’s, it is apparent in the way products and services in this industry has been organised in terms of the

improvement and augmentation of employee engagement (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013)

2.9 Impact of employee engagement on organisational performance

Employee engagement can be considered as a state of mind that is evident in an employee's behaviour at the work place. The employee displays dedication, dynamism and deep involvement in one's work. These elements are highly sought after as it is deemed crucial to an organisations performance due to the fact that it attempts to provide clarification as to why some employees go the extra mile and why others don't (Cahill, McNamara, Pitt-Catsouphes, & Valcour, 2015). Employee engagement can reap benefits at three levels: Individual benefit of higher job performance and lower intention to leave. Group level benefits in the form of a more positive climate. Finally the organisation level which yields benefits by increasing the level of customer service, increasing productivity and profitability and could result in lower losses and/or accidents (Cahill, McNamara, Pitt-Catsouphes, & Valcour, 2015).

Work engagement consequently has an impact on organisational outcomes such as loyalty to the organisation, inventiveness displayed by individuals, as well as tasks that are required outside of the original role description that could not have been prescribed in advance (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). Research of Spanish and Dutch employees in the ethnology and telecommunication industries indicated that work engagement plays a role in reconciling differences between job resources and proactive actions this relationship stayed constant and remained across geographies (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013).

Job resources encompass the ability to have power and or control over roles, advice and opinions, self-sufficiency, assortment and collective support (Costa, Passos, & Bakker, 2016). The existence of job resources plays a role in predicting work engagement and this can further be described as mental, physical, societal and organisational factors of the occupation that could be useful in accomplishing work objectives, encourage individual progression and assist in reducing job anxiety and stress (Costa, Passos, & Bakker, 2016).

Performance is a complex construct but research suggests that employee engagement does have an influence on performance at an individual level and this in turn can lead to a competitive advantage for the organisation (Albrecht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey, & Saks, 2015). Employee engagement yields heightened energy levels and passion towards the organisations this in turn results in employees speaking positively about their organisations and in doing so taking up a role as a brand ambassador for the

organisation which in effect perpetuates increased levels of customer satisfaction, performance and productivity (Hughes & Rog, 2008).

Discretionary effort is displayed by employees that have high levels of engagement. This is mostly due to the fact that they are invested in reaching the organisations objectives and in doing so they increase the organisations performance (Winsor-Games, 2016).

An engaged workforce is what is required to gain new customers and grow market share, it is what is needed to boost innovation and creativity amongst organisation and it is vital in keeping customer satisfaction at a peak and plays a significant role in the retention of human capital amongst organisations (Gallup, 2013). The economy has battled to catapult out of the recession and growth of the economy has been close to zero. The importance of an enthusiastic workforce invested in the organisation objectives cannot be more vital in ensuring the sustainable growth of organisations worldwide (Gallup, 2013).

The strategies of self-leadership and the attributes of transformation leadership has a beneficial impact on both the employee in terms of their levels of work engagement that increases, as well as the organisation that yields a benefit from employees that exert higher levels of energy towards their roles which in effect increases their overall performance (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks, 2015). Further to the above mentioned it is noted that any of the two approaches can yield beneficial outcomes, it is largely dependent on the leadership requirement displayed by the employees in question (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks, 2015).

Literature has not provided guidance in terms of the interaction between engagement and gender and ethnicity and therefore opens up a largely contentious issue in terms of equality and engagement (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). The same contentious issue becomes visible in terms of diversity and equality as it is possible that employees that exhibit difficulty in concentration due to high levels of activity and those that poses chronic illnesses would likely be less successful in achieving elevated levels of engagement (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013).

2.10 Adverse impact of employee engagement to the organisation

Disengaged employees or employees with low levels of engagement have been observed and perceived within literature as challenging for employees that have been linked to low levels of happiness and also a concern for organisations as these employees are associated with mediocre or even undesirable levels of performance (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). According to Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge

(2013) the perceived benefits that highly engaged employees are able to yield is contested and said likely to be just as challenging as the implication of dealing with disengaged employees. It is noted that engagement poses the risk that not all employees deem to equally benefit from it and that engaged employees likely suffer from poor work life balance (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013). The research further comments on the authenticity of organisations that claim to reward high levels of engagement but that fail to adequately compensate their workforce. The implication and cost to employees in terms of work engagement has received very little consideration and therefore the notion that high engagement is generally an encouraging experience is queried as it commonly leads to increased output and escalating levels of intensity in terms workload (Truss, Soane, Alfes, & Delbridge, 2013).

The dark side to employee engagement is highlighted again in terms of the elevated levels of self-esteem these individuals may display which may have an adverse impact on goal achievement as energy exertion and time required for tasks may be underestimated by these employees (Bakker, Albrecht, & Leiter, 2010). Performance and innovation displayed by individuals can be negatively impacted by overconfidence and impractical optimism can be harmful to employees as it elevates levels of frustration and in turn reduce outputs (Bakker, Albrecht, & Leiter, 2010).

Extremely high levels of engagement can also be harmful to the individual as employees may revert to completing work after hours at home, which in turn impacts the family dynamics of those employees (Bakker, Albrecht, & Leiter, 2010). Research conducted amongst Dutch employees produced findings that indicated a relation between work engagement and working longer than usual working hours, although engaged employees may not necessary be workaholics that may still be working more than usual due to their high levels of engagement (Bakker, Albrecht, & Leiter, 2010). Literature related to work life balance indicates on a continuous basis that work intervening with home slows down recovery and could eventually lead to concerns in terms of the individual's health and well-being (Bakker, Albrecht, & Leiter, 2010).

2.11 Factors that impact employee engagement

The job demands resource model is able to provide an adequate explanation on the occupation and or job resources and personal resources that have a direct impact on employee engagement. On a personal level matters such as self-efficacy, a positive state of mind as well as resilience influence employee engagement but so does job resources also has an influence on employee engagement, examples such as line leader support, check in and feedback session and autonomy are considered in this regard (Albrecht,

Bakker, Gruman, Macey, & Saks, 2015). These factors have a net effect on outcomes further down the line such as exponential performance, creativity and performance in one's current role (Albrecht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey, & Saks, 2015).

Van Woerkom, Oerlemans, & Bakker (2016) posit that the utilisation of one's individual's strengths at the workplace could have a positive impact on employee engagement. More over the support that employees receive from their organisation in terms of the utilisation of their individual strengths not only enhance levels of work engagement but also facilitates the development of employee self-efficacy (van Woerkom, Oerlemans, & Bakker, 2016). The research contributes to the importance of strengths, furthermore the mediating role that self-efficacy plays in terms of the relationship between strengths use and engagement with one's occupation provides insights and understanding as to why strengths have a positive impact on employee engagement (van Woerkom, Oerlemans, & Bakker, 2016). The research therefore suggests that the allocation of tasks in terms of employee's individual's strengths could have a profound impact on self-efficacy and engagement with their jobs (van Woerkom, Oerlemans, & Bakker, 2016).

Organisations therefore have the opportunity to stimulate strengths use by leveraging the above mentioned factors but can also benefit greatly by providing an environment which allows employees to partner with others that complement their strengths and also allowing employees to participate in tasks and or strategies that highlight their strengths and diminishing their perceived weaknesses in terms of their performance (van Woerkom, Oerlemans, & Bakker, 2016).

Crucial to the research is how much of the activities of engagement should be joint and shared responsibility as opposed to the employer dictating to the employee on how these matters should be address and/or handled. Chayes (2013) denotes the necessity for employees to jointly partake in their development.

The research could explore the attributes that individuals believe they would require from the organisations in order for employees to feel engaged and in doing so develop a shared talent management model that can be utilised within organisations. The advantage of the shared model is to allow employees to take ownership of their careers by creating a platform that can be utilised for active employer and employee engagement (Royal & Sorenson, 2015). This will remove the burden from only organisations playing a part in keeping employees engaged and reduces the reliance on line leaders to drive engagement through the organisation. Employees will be able to commence with documenting their engagement and career plans in order to set their objectives for

success and in doing so take accountability for their own engagement (Royal & Sorenson, 2015).

As mentioned before Gallup's research indicates the extreme impact direct line leaders have on employees but in this research it also becomes apparent that only 10% of the world population are exceptional at managing people and currently only 18% of this population fulfils a leadership role (Royal & Sorenson, 2015). This leaves organisations with a very large deficit in closing the engagement gap of employees as these leaders may not have the skill nor the determination to proactively engage employees, again reinforcing the question on whether employees need to consider engagement as a shared objective (Royal & Sorenson, 2015).

Research provides employees with a few factors that could be implemented in the quest for raising engagement levels. The aspect of ownership is highlighted as recommendation on accountability for one's own success, so is the requirement to become aware of what personally engages oneself and how to document actions plans to remain engaged within the organisation indefinitely (Royal & Sorenson, 2015).

From a differing perspective however research does denote that positive outcomes for employees have been linked to transformational leadership. According to Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks (2015) however, circumstances may not always be conducive to creating an inspirational environment for employees and during these situations leaders may not be as effective at motivating and challenging their employees. It becomes clear that not all employees have an equal requirement or need for leadership within the work place. Transformational leadership attributes have a much higher and positive impact on employees that require a high level of leadership participation (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks, 2015). The opposite can however be said for employees that are more autonomous and the utilisation of self-leadership strategies yields the best results in terms of employee engagement in this regard (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks, 2015). The appropriate application of self-leadership strategies and transformational leadership behaviours on employees had a significant impact on employee engagement levels and improved the performance ratings received by employees (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks, 2015).

It therefore becomes evident that employees take up an active role in the leadership process and do not only take a position as passive beneficiaries in the leadership process (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks, 2015). Self-leadership can be considered as certain actions that employees display at the workplace. Self-leadership is displayed in the following examples: Employees take charge of their work environment

and position the rewarding aspects of tasks as their focal point; these employees also take the time to initiate self-reflection and individually correct inadequate work that may have been completed (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks, 2015).

Employees do display higher levels of engagement with their work during periods wherein which they have taken the lead, and this in turn has a positive effect on their performance levels, employees therefore may utilise a number of self-leadership strategies to keep motivated when leaders are absent or not actively participating (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks, 2015). Employees that require clarity in terms of organisational goal achievement may display a higher reliance on guidance from leaders and transformation leadership likely yields the most effective outcomes during these circumstances and or periods (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks, 2015).

2.12 Factors that could positively impact employee engagement

Organisations often embark on employee engagement and employee wellbeing initiatives in terms of the collecting data from employees and consulting and discussing the findings with the employees (Robertson & Cooper, 2010). This is seen as a massive drawback for wellbeing initiatives as employees have an expectation that action will be taken past the mere discussion around these pivotal matters that affect them. Organisations therefore need to budget not only for the data collection processes but also enough in order to make the changes and improvements required in affected employees life's (Robertson & Cooper, 2010). The figure 3 below indicates the steps to be taken by organisations to improve levels of employee engagement.

Figure 3: The road to full engagement (Robertson & Cooper, 2010)



2.13 Conclusion

It is clear from the research objectives that the global industry are experiencing a skill shortage and that this problem is perpetuated by the increased mobility of skilled workers (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Skilled leaders with global experience are sought after in the market in order to manage teams, lead complex projects and to stimulate skills transfer between local and global employees. Increased levels of employee engagement have the capability to yield organisations and economies more productive than those in which employees are not engaged as engagement elicits higher levels of discretionary effort from employees (Gallup, 2013). It is therefore vital for organisations to understand how they position themselves as a sought after organisation by talented employees, how they optimally engage their workforce and also how these organisations come to grips with the retention of talented employees. The onus of attracting talented skill does not only fall on organisations but also requires the impetus from a country level perspective. Design terminal from Hungary is an example of an organisations that sets out to attract talent from a country perspective at a Global scale. Organisations then have the opportunity to cherry pick from these talented individuals, this benefit to organisation however does not come without effort and organisations hold considerable responsibility in terms of retaining these talents (Design Terminal, 2016).

The engagement of employees are multi-faceted aspect and has numerous elements that have an impact on how it is understood by both employees and organisations. Employees and organisations also value different matters in terms of engagement and these aspects are not necessarily aligned when evaluated in the workplace which impacts whether and how objectives are obtained. The same can be said for the term talent management – different levels of understanding exists amongst employees and therefore the lack of clarity regarding this matter also exists amongst line leaders who represent the employers. The lack of clarity perpetuates the low level of importance organisations place on the process of talent management and the benefit it could likely yield is diluted due to this related perceptions and behaviour.

Talent management also displays a darker side which may not yield benefit to employees or the organisation. Talent management often follows an elitist approach and/or process wherein which only selected employees are considered and approached to participate in the process. The more visible roles that require more skill are earmarked to those employees who successfully participate in the talent management process, those employees who are not seen to be talent are often over looked and excluded. Organisation on the other hand do not have handle on whether talented employees will be able to perform in ear marked roles as potential does not necessarily result in good

performance. Organisations tend to limit their own growth due to the fact that they do not always adequately utilise their diverse workforces; talented employees that are selected often mirror the behaviours displayed by executive leadership teams in the organisation which perpetuates a homogenous approach to solving problems and growing the organisations exponentially.

This chapter looks at the literature relevant to talent management and employee engagement from the perspective of the organisation but also from how the employee may perceive it in the baking industry of South Africa. It is evident in the literature that talent management and employee engagement to some extent is not well defined amongst academics or organisation and the vagueness around the matter serves as the basis for the research objectives and questions documented in Chapter three. The analysis of data is explained in Chapter four.

3 Chapter 3: Research aim and objectives

Chapter three takes a view of concerns raised in chapter two which encompasses the literature review as well as the rationale for the research objectives stipulated in chapter one and continues to provide a visual on the research questions utilised for this study. The definition of the research question is either one comprehensive and/or all-inclusive question or multiple strategic questions that the research analysis speaks to (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

The all-inclusive question derived for the purpose of this study is stipulated as follows:

Can the adequate practice of talent management be utilised to enhance employee engagement?

The exploratory research study seeks to provide leaders and human resource business partners of the banking industry with relevant insights and tools that can be utilised in the quest for talent retention and optimally engaged employees. In an attempt to understand the impact of talent management on employee engagement, the research study seeks to create clarity around the meaning of both talent management and employee engagement in the banking industry, seeks to overcome talent management challenges and gauge whether it will be able to enhance employee engagement, the real impact of talent management on employees and also the levels of accountability both parties take in terms of talent planning and career mapping. This is accomplished by addressing the four research objectives listed below and by deducing the research findings into usable and practical constructs in order to provide meaningful insights that can be adequately utilised by leaders and human resource business partners in the banking industry.

3.1 Objective one

- Establish an appropriate meaning of talent management and employee engagement within the banking industry in South Africa

Question 1

- a) What is your understanding of talent management? Provide an example?
- b) What is your understanding of employee engagement? Give an example?
- c) Do you think these concepts are understood by your colleagues/managers in the business/industry?

3.2 Objective two

- Explore the relationship between talent management and employee engagement on an individual level

Question 2

- a) Do you think the company is managing your talent effectively? Why?
- b) How does this impact your performance? Explain?
- c) Do you consider yourself an engaged employee? Why?
- d) When did you consider yourself most engaged during your career?
- e) In your opinion do you think it is possible for a relationship to exist between talent management and employee engagement, if yes how do you see the relationship playing out?

3.3 Objective three

- Establish whether shared ownership of talent management increases levels of employee engagement (explain the concept of shared ownership to the interviewee)

Question 3

- a) Do you actively participate in managing your career? How?
- b) Do your seniors share/support your view of your future?
- c) Do you believe shared ownership of talent management could have an effect on employee engagement?

3.4 Objective four

- Establish whether employees will react with higher levels of discretionary effort towards an organisation that adequately manages their said talent.

Question 4

- a) Do you believe your career or talent is managed by your organisation?
Example?
- b) Does this excite and inspire you? (To know your career and talent is important to the organisation?)
- c) Are you willing to walk the extra mile for your company? Why?
- d) In your opinion are you often called upon to take on tasks with high impact to the organisation?
- e) How do you believe you execute on these tasks?
- f) How does this make you feel?

4 Chapter 4: Research methodology

4.1 Introduction

Chapter four provides a representation and explanation on the research methodology that was selected to complete the research. It aims to provide clarity on the reasons as to why the research methodology was selected and also provides rationale into why the research methodology selected was the best equipped to answer the research questions. This chapter takes a view of the research viewpoints, research approach, and design and data collection methods used. This chapter also aims to emphasize the pertinent limitations evident in the research.

Table 1: The basic research objective and research design (Burns & Bush, 2010, 144)

Research Objective	Appropriate Design
To gain background information, to define terms, to clarify problems and hypotheses, to establish research priorities	Exploratory
To describe and measure phenomena	Descriptive
To determine causality, to make “if then” statements	Causal

When considering the research design there are two pertinent factors that needs to be taken into account:

- The aim or more specifically the goal of the research
- How much is known about the research objective and the problem the researcher is aiming to address – low levels of knowledge around the topic is more likely to be addressed with an exploratory research design (Burns & Bush, 2010).

4.2 Research design

Saunders and Lewis (2012) makes reference to interpretivism which is related to the study of human phenomena in their natural environment. The interpretivist perspective holds high relevance in studies of business and management, especially in the fields of organisation behaviour and human resource management Saunders and Lewis (2012). Moreover business provides complex and very unique situations, in other words very particular circumstances are created by business and individuals that participate together at a specific time to create a distinctive social phenomenon Saunders and Lewis (2012). It was therefore paramount to the researcher to assume an interpretivism

research philosophy, given the complex and unique social phenomena created by financial institutions.

According to Saunders & Lewis (2012) the inductive approach to research is suppler in its structure as it allows the researcher to adjust the importance of research factors as it develops throughout the research process. In the research topic at hand for example one may find that the banking industry might be undergoing strain due to Fintech companies coming to fruition and that this incident may hinder the ability of leaders to engage their talented employees. Further to this induction requires a deep understanding of the research context (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The example relevant to the research topic at hand speaks to the fact that the researcher obtained information from the four large banks in the South African market which allowed the possible development of a general theory. Finally the researched aimed to obtain a thorough comprehension of the connotations people attached to events in their working context, this is imperative in the use of the inductive research approach (Saunders & Lewis, 2012)

When looking at the research objectives in chapter three it becomes clear that the researcher is trying to derive a definitive term for employee engagement and talent management in the banking industry and the researcher is also clarifying or more clearly defining the problem of employee engagement and talent management in the banking industry. Both these constructs encompass the crux of exploratory research and therefore becomes the tool utilised by the researcher to respond to the research objectives at hand (Burns & Bush, 2010)

The approach utilised for this research report was therefore exploratory in the form of unstructured experience surveys. The interviewer aimed to allow the interviewees freedom to give their personal insights and opinions on the matter, some structure did exist in order to ensure that the topic remained focused on their understanding of talent management programmes and the impact this may have on employee engagement (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The omission of questions or topics as well as the addition of questions and topics is permitted in order to gain richer insights (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). A number of probing questions was added to the interview in order to elicit valuable insights and findings that are comprehensive in terms of the topic.

4.3 Population

South African banks have historically provided numerous individuals with employment opportunities; given their sheer size they also provided a number of internal opportunities which in turn provided employees with the chance to develop a number of skills. These skills can easily be applied to other financial institutions but can also be utilised outside

of financial services. The population interviewed therefore encompassed employees currently employed within the banking industry that have either remained within one financial institution, although they may have moved internally and employees that moved between different employees during their tenure in financial services. It was paramount that the interviewees possessed at least three years and more working experience whilst being in possession of a tertiary qualification. During the interview process it however became apparent that some of the interviewees were in possession of more than one degree and a number of the interviewees also had working tenures of up to ten years in the banking industry. The necessity for work experience as well as education was a critical component in the selection of the population as it plays a part in ensuring that the interviewees are in a good position to receive a number of opportunities within and outside of the banking industry, it also serves a role in eliminating respondents that may not have sufficient work experience, skills and/or education which may impact their perceived mobility within the organisation as well as outside. The interviews goal therefore was to interview candidates that are most likely highly sought after within the banking realm and may be faced with different career opportunities on a fairly regular basis.

4.4 Sampling method and size

4.4.1 Sampling technique

The sample approach that was utilised by the researcher was a non-probability sampling technique as it was not be possible to obtain a full list of all employees that have recently moved within the financial industry and therefore not everyone in the population had a fair and know chance to be selected, it would be even more impractical to try to obtain a full list of all individuals that have been employed by the banking sector at some point in their careers (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The limitation to this approach however is that exclusion of employees have occurred as some employees may have never worked in the financial industry or they do not work in the financial industry anymore due to movements and or promotions during their careers.

The precise sampling approach utilised by the researched was purposeful sampling as it required the judgment of the researched to identify and select respondents based on the specified characteristics stipulated that would best serve to address the research objectives. Moreover the researcher also made use of the purposeful sampling technique in terms of the choice to select one or more of the of the big four banks as opposed to all financial institutions in the South African market, again some of the population will have a chance to participate and others will not (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

For the purpose of this research the researcher selected four substantial banking giants in the South African market: Absa bank, Standard bank, Nedbank and FNB.

(Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The sampling approach utilised was non-probability in the form of snowball sampling as the interviewee selected a few members who have moved from previous employers as well as employees who have remained in their current organisations for an extended period. The interviewer also relied on members originally selected to engage other colleagues to participate in the research, who either moved during the past year or employers who have remained with their current employer for three to five years (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

4.4.2 Sampling criteria

The researcher aimed and succeeded in obtaining a diverse group of respondents in terms of ethnicity and gender. A sample of seventeen employees from the banking industry was interviewed. A minimum of four employees per bank within South Africa was selected in order to obtain an opinion from employees in terms of talent management and engagement from their own, unique work circumstances and environments. Human resource business partners were excluded from the sample as they could have interjected their personal biases in terms of how they perceive talent management and employee engagement within their organisations. Employees were targeted in terms of seniority and/or tenure with in the banking industry. The roles these employees occupied were generally mid-level to upper level management. It provided the researcher with top down views as well as bottom up views in terms of talent management and employee engagement within that organisation. The researcher identified the target sample by utilising the existing network within the banking industry as well as relationships built up within and amongst the South African banks. The rationale for selecting this specific sample was in order to come to grips with the understanding of employee engagement and talent management by employees that have had experience working for banks but have also been exposed to the insights and open mindedness that are obtained by completing a tertiary education.

4.5 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis encompassed the opinion and relevance of talent management on employee engagement of each employee interviewed within the South African banking industry.

4.6 Research Instrument

4.6.1 Introduction

Open ended questions were addressed on whether the employees were exposed to a talent management programme with their previous employer and or current employer. Consideration of the effectiveness of talent management programmes and heightened employee engagement was explored between both employees who have remained loyal and those who have left for greener pastures. Qualitative data was collected during this phase to ensure insights and depth into the talent management factors that impact the employees at hand. Smaller samples were selected in order to reach the objectives of the research study and at completion of the research; seventeen people across four banks were interviewed. This provided the researcher with the possibly to get closer to the reality of a representative sample (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

4.6.2 Questionnaire trial run

The efficacy of the questionnaire had to be confirmed before the official research study could start in order to ensure that the questions were able to address the aim of the research study, to ensure that respondents were able to make sense of the questions and provide answers that are relevant to the study and also to ensure that the questions were well developed and put together (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). In literature this process is referred to as a pilot test. The researcher selected two participants to participate in the test, one whom had very little knowledge in terms of employee engagement but possesses an MBA as well and another respondent who is familiar with the research and analysis process.

The selection of these two respondents was paramount to the researcher in terms of ensuring the quality of the questionnaire. The respondent with MBA experience was able to take an objective view of the questionnaire whilst being able to keep a holistic view of the goal the research aims to achieve and could provide feedback from this perspective. The researcher leveraged these insights to ensure that questions were not ambiguous and consistent in terms of the stated themes. The analyst on the other hand was able to take a view of the finer specifics in terms of the questionnaire and the desired objectives and was able to provide very detailed feedback in this regard. The researcher required this feedback to ensure that the questions were not disjointed, that it took a logical flow and that it was understandable even to those whom have not participated in a research project as yet. Both participants of the pilot tests are employed in the banking industry which aided the general understanding of the environment wherein which the research took place. There were slight recommendations in terms of the flow of the questionnaire and this was adjusted and placed into the final document. A final

recommendation in terms of the questionnaire was to provide an explanation on some of the terms utilised, shared ownership for example required an explanation at the start of the interview to ensure that the questions related to this concept was adequately answered.

4.6.3 Questionnaire

The questionnaire is the conduit to achieving the research objectives of the research study. Respondents were furnished with a cover letter before the interview commenced that displayed the supervisor and researcher's names and contact information as well as the clause related to the respondent anonymity. The cover letter also provided the respondent with the purpose of the research.

The questionnaire contained four overarching objectives. The objectives were directly related to the themes of talent management and employee engagement in a work context.

- The first objective explored the level of understanding employees held in terms of talent management and employee engagement. The same questions were asked across the board which allowed the perspective of specialists and or middle management as well as the perspective of their senior leaders. It therefore allowed the researcher to get a fair reflection of how both groups experience talent management and employee engagement in their respective organisation.
- The second objective aimed to discover whether employees believed that a relationship does exist between talent management and employee engagement. The researcher insisted on an individual perspective in terms of this relationship.
- The third objective speaks to shared ownership in terms of the process of talent management in organisations. Both senior leaders and middle managers were confronted with the same set of questions and it provided the researcher with insights on the groups perspective in terms of the themes discussed.
- The fourth and final objective was constructed in attempt to gauge whether employees will elevate their performance levels if they believe their talents is managed and by default be engaged in terms of their work environment.

The objectives and the questions related to the objectives were constructed so that it successfully answers the research objective and it was verified with the use of the consistency matrix. See appendix 2

4.7 Data Collection Method

The researcher drove to the respective workplaces of each respondent that was selected and the semi-structured interviews were conducted privately between the interviewer and the respondent. This allowed the interviewer a fair amount of control over the interview process. This approach also however limits the researchers' chances of gaining differing views and perspectives that are generally more likely to occur during group interviews (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). All the interviews were recorded on a cellular device, and saved on a memory stick and finally transcribed at the completion of all seventeen interviews.

The scheduling of the interviews commenced via e mail and or telephonically. The researcher met majority of respondents at their place of work with the exception of two respondents who met the researcher at her place of work. The meetings were booked and confirmed to their diaries via Microsoft Outlook and scheduled for an hour each. The duration of the interview was however dictated by the willingness of the respondent to discuss information in detail, their schedules in terms of other commitments as the interview environment. In some cases the interviews were conducted in a boardroom but in a few rare cases interviews commenced in an isolated part of the respective buildings. The interviewer provided the respondents with the assurance that their information would not be displayed and had each respondent sign the consent form. The interviewer gave a brief overview of the overarching objective of the research and took the time to explain terms utilised on the questionnaire that may not have been well understood.

The questionnaire provided structure and a tangible guideline in terms of matters that needed to be addressed but the interviewer did have the liberty to ask probing questions in order to elicit more detailed responses and in some cases respondents volunteered additional information as well. Some of the information was not necessarily relevant to talent management and employee engagement but did speak to external factors that may come into play when employees are tempted to leave their current organisations.

It appeared that respondents were able to indirectly influence each other during the interview process. In one case in specific a respondent became aware that another respondent was interviewed prior, the second respondent therefore tried to ascertain what the first respondent answered to more complex and/or intimate questions in terms of the organisations efficiencies or deficiencies in terms of managing talent. A remarkable finding was the impact cultures and subcultures had in some of the organisations, in one business the perception of a united front was created and response

seemed fairly aligned yet in another very diverse responses emanated from different business units within one organisation

Interview transcriptions were in order to perform an effective analysis for the research study.

4.8 Obstacles faced in the data collection process

The biggest obstacle faced by the interviewer was that the respondent's had limited time available to complete the interviews. Some respondents started the interview by indicating that they only had a certain amount of time available to have a conversation even though the interview was scheduled for an hour. The risk posed to the researcher was that important findings may have been lost in the process given the pressures caused by time constraints. In most cases the researcher did not have the luxury to reschedule as either the interviewer was unable to supply their valuable time again or the interviewer was constrained in terms of the deadlines of the research project. Some concepts in the questionnaire were novel to certain respondents and the constraints on time made it difficult for the interviewer to provide a thorough explanation on these concepts.

4.9 Data Analysis

Interview responses were recorded but high level notes were also jotted down by the researcher. The notes aided the researcher in identifying underlying themes evident in the respondent's responses. The new themes identified served as probing questions that were utilised in subsequent interviews. O'Brien (2014) states that qualitative research is becoming more common amongst medical education literature but it is also becoming more valued. It has to be noted however that the impact of incomplete reporting elements yield the evaluation of quality in terms of research difficult (O'Brien, 2014). Quality has more than one layer and can be considered as multidimensional and includes consideration of the importance of the research question, the rigor of the research methods, the appropriateness and salience of the inferences, and the clarity and completeness of reporting. Although there is much debate about standards for methodological rigor in qualitative research, there is widespread agreement about the need for clear and complete reporting.

The transcriptions were documented into an excel document. Each objective was placed into its own excel sheet and the respondents answers to each question related to the objective was recorded into the same sheet. The responses per question were scrutinised and certain themes evident in these responses were highlighted, numbered and documented. The high level themes were grouped to identify the main findings in

terms of the research and these main themes were ranked in terms of the number of occurrences per theme across all respondent answers to a specific objective. The highest ranked themes were indicative of the more dominant subjects evident in the research findings.

According to Saunders & Lewis (2012) the analysis should commence according to a three step approach: Firstly in order for data to be described appropriately meaningful classifications of the data needs to be established. Secondly the researcher needs to make a choice on the unit of data that will be appropriate for the study and finally the researcher needs to attribute applicable categories to the units of data. The researcher therefore followed the approach as stipulated.

In order for the results of the data to be appropriately presented in Chapter 5, the data had to be interpreted. The interpretation of the data therefore commenced thematically by grouping topics that are related, ranking them in terms of the number of occurrences each theme presented in the findings and displaying highest and lowest ranked. The singular responses of each respondent served as the unit of data.

4.10 Reliability and Validity

Burns & Bush (2010) confirms that there is a real possibility for reliable measurements to exist that are invalid in reality. Validity relates to the precision of the measurement, it therefore assesses the exactness of the measurement in relation to what truly exists. Validity can therefore be understood as the honesty of responses to a measure (Burns & Bush, 2010). All factors that pose a threat to the validity of the researchers study needs to be abolished (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The factors that have a principal impact on the validity of research findings are the way in which subjects are selected a certain biases may come into play, historical occurrences that could have an impact on the project in terms of the findings, effect during data collection that could distort findings, in longitudinal studies the loss of respondents, ambiguity in terms of the general direction the researcher takes (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). According to Saunders & Lewis (2012) the definition of validity considers the degree to which data gathering techniques accurately measure what they set out to measure as well as whether research outcomes are indeed regarding what they acknowledged to be about.

There is a perceived implication in terms of the validity of the research as the research was confined to four of the biggest banks in South Africa and the findings could therefore not be generalised across industries. The researcher did however attempt to interview a diverse respondent group in terms of race and gender and attempted to interview respondents across different business units from within the banks to try and reduce

relatedness. The validity was likely improved by the researcher due to the fact that the researcher utilised a pilot test at the start of the research to ensure that a golden thread is evident between the research objective, the literature analysis, the questions for the research and the design of the research.

Burns & Bush (2010) defines reliability in terms of the responses it elicits. When a respondent provides similar responses to identical or virtually identical question it can be said that the measure is reliable (Burns & Bush, 2010). Saunders & Lewis (2012) further defines reliability as the degree to which data gathering techniques and analysis procedures will produce unswerving outcomes. The researcher acted as the most important instrument in term of the data collection process and it therefore creates the risk that the findings could have been impacted by the researcher's personal biases and weaknesses. The researcher did however strive to achieve reliability and trust in the research measures by ensuring the research design and analysis were all-encompassing and thorough.

4.11 Ethics of the Research Design

The researcher took account of crucial ethical principles throughout the research study. The principles include and are not confound to the importance of not harming research participants, making sure that responders do not feel strong-armed into participating in the research, ensuring the researcher obtained permission from the respondent to conduct research and finally upholding the standards of trustworthiness and protecting respondents interests in terms of confidentiality (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The researcher aimed to obtain insights in terms of the individual's organisations and these respondents acted as representatives of these organisations, these factors required utmost honesty from the researcher in terms of the methodologies and procedures applied in the research study (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

4.11.1 Respondent consent form

Prior to the commencement of the interview the researcher discussed the relevance of the research as well as the objectives of the research study with the potential participants. Thereafter the consent form was distrusted to the respondents, either via e mail or provided to the respondent before the interviewed commenced in order to secure the security of the respondents. Some respondents requested in abbreviated version of the research prior to the interview and the researcher shared the proposal via e mail. Some respondent also requested the questions upfront in order to prepare whereas other interviewees felt they wanted to address the questions as the researcher asked it because they felt it would allow for a less calculated response. The above

mentioned processes followed by the researcher allowed for a transparent and open environment and it allowed the researcher to adhere to ethical principles of honesty and integrity during the research study. See appendix 1

4.11.2 Confidentiality

The consent did not provide the respondent with anonymity clauses due to the nature in which quantitative research commences and in this case all interviews were conducted face to face. The consent form however included the confidentiality clauses to retain the privacy of every respondent. Prior to the start of the interview the researcher requested that the respondents refer to themselves without explicitly stating their name and the same was suggested in terms of referring to their employers. The researcher also provided the relevant assurances in terms of the how their information will be protected when it is shared.

4.11.3 Researcher and participant relationship

The researcher acts as the core instrument in collecting data and the ability to engage and respond to respondents are critical. (Collins & Cooper, 2014). Social skills precede the ability to adequately respond to others and also includes a level of communication that is capable of building bonds and open to receiving information (Collins & Cooper, 2014). In order to retain the quality of the study the researcher remained mindful of differences in terms of sex, race ethnicity and socioeconomic status. The researcher remained aware of respondent's concerns and emotions and showed a sincere interest in factors that the respondent's deemed important. The interest in others can be seen as an important character displayed by qualitative researchers (Collins & Cooper, 2014)

4.12 Limitations of the Study

In a Qualitative study the researcher takes up the role as the main tool in collecting data but is also convolutedly intertwined into the context of the qualitative research study (Collins & Cooper, 2014). The singular approach to extracting data could likely impact the study in terms of the researcher's biases. Data can be distorted, complicated and shortened by the researcher's cognitive biases, events that occurred in their past as well as their emotional reactions to situations (Tufford & Newman, 2010). At the start of the study the researcher acknowledged their beliefs and biases and could therefore suspend their judgements and biases before entering the interviews.

The scope of the research was limited to the banking industry and may not be relevant or applicable to other industries given the disposition of banks when considering the high regulations, culture and operating structures. The sample cannot be representative of the entire population due to the use of non-probability sampling (Saunders & Lewis,

2012). The banking industry keeps evolving and topics of importance change and focus shifts, given these factors the research cannot be fully representative of the banking industry.

4.13 Conclusion

Chapter four provides a detailed explanation on the research design that was utilised to address the research objectives set out in the study, whilst taking into account the possible limitations and the reliability and validity of the study.

5 Chapter 5

This chapter encompassed the outcomes of the 17 interviews that were conducted predominantly in Johannesburg in order to address the research objectives. Data was collected on a one on one basis with semi structure face to face interviews. The sample group was four of the established banks in South Africa. None of the interviews were conducted with the presence of another respondent which serves to reduce the respondent's reluctance to provide relevant and insightful information.

The findings are presented in excel in a figure format. Responses elicited from each research question were ranked in terms of how often respondents provided the same response and also ranked in terms of the total percentage each response encompassed out of all the responses received on that specific objective. Each of the figures present the main research question derived from the research objective. Some probing questions were asked in order to gain more insights, these questions will not be figured in the same format but will be mentioned at high level.

The research questions are provided below for ease of reference:

- Establish an appropriate meaning of talent management and employee engagement within the banking industry in South Africa

Question 1

- a) What is your understanding of talent management? Provide an example?
 - b) What is your understanding of employee engagement? Give an example?
 - c) Do you think these concepts are understood by your colleagues/managers in the business/industry?
- Explore the relationship between talent management and employee engagement on an individual level

Question 2

- a) Do you think the company is managing your talent effectively? Why?
 - b) How does this impact your performance? Explain?
 - c) Do you consider yourself an engaged employee? Why?
 - d) When did you consider yourself most engaged during your career?
 - e) In your opinion do you think it is possible for a relationship to exist between talent management and employee engagement, if yes how do you see the relationship playing out?
- Establish whether shared ownership of talent management increases levels of employee engagement (explain the concept of shared ownership to the interviewee)

Question 3

- a) Do you actively participate in managing your career? How?
 - b) Do your seniors share/support your view of your future?
 - c) Do you believe shared ownership of talent management could have an effect on employee engagement?
- Establish whether employees will react with higher levels of discretionary effort towards an organisation that adequately manages their said talent.

Question 4

- a) Do you believe your career or talent is managed by your organisation? Example?
- b) Does this excite and inspire you? (To know your career and talent is important to the organisation?)
- c) Are you willing to walk the extra mile for your company? Why?
- d) In your opinion are you often called upon to take on tasks with high impact to the organisation?
- e) How do you believe you execute on these tasks?
- f) How does this make you feel?

5.1 Interviews and Respondents

Majority of the interviews were conducted in the respondents work place to create a more relaxed, comfortable and safe environment in order for respondents to adequately articulate themselves. Five of the seventeen interviews were conducted at the interviewers' work place but a quiet boardroom was utilised in order to create a similar atmospheres as mentioned above. The interviews ranged from as short as ten minutes and thirty six seconds up to forty minutes and forty nine seconds.

Table 2: Overview of interviews completed

Description	Quantity
Number of Interviews completed	17
Length of all Interviews	395,65 minutes
Average duration of Interview	19,78 minutes
Longest Interview	40,49 minutes
Shortest Interview	10,36 minutes

The interviewees were selected from four of the biggest banks in South Africa namely: Absa, Nedbank, FNB and Standard bank and they are therefore categorized into four groups (F, M, T, and L) in order to represent these banks. Respondents were selected

at different levels in the bank, some middle managers that do not oversee a team and some more senior that are directly responsible for a team. This allowed the researcher to obtain a view of how people who are not able to influence talent management actually experience it in their business. The additional view the researcher wanted to generate is how those who do have influence on talent management experience it for themselves but also how they impact their subordinate's view of the talent management process.

Table 3: Summary of respondents

<u>Interviewee</u>	<u>Period employed in banking</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>Seniority</u>
A1	10 years plus	Group F	Head level
A2	10 years plus	Group F	Head level
A3	10 years plus	Group F	Head level
A4	3 to 5 years	Group F	Middle management
B1	5 to 10 years	Group M	Head level
B2	3 to 5 years	Group M	Middle management
B3	3 to 5 years	Group M	Junior management
B4	5 to 10 years	Group M	Head level
C1	3 to 5 years	Group T	Junior Management
C2	10 years plus	Group T	Head level
C3	5 to 10 years	Group T	Head level
C4	10 years plus	Group T	Head level
C5	5 to 10 years	Group T	Head level
D1	10 years plus	Group L	Head level
D2	10 years plus	Group L	Middle management
D3	5 to 10 years	Group L	Middle management
D4	10 years plus	Group L	Middle management

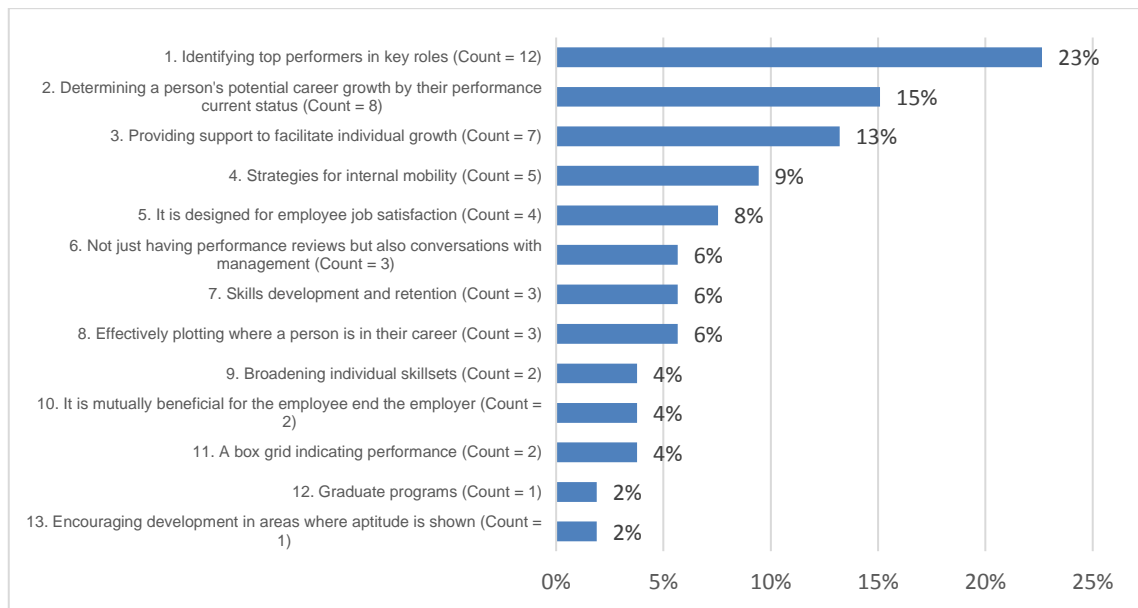
5.2 Findings of the first research objective – question 1.a

5.2.1 Introduction

As evident in the literature review in Chapter 2, the terms talent management and employee engagement are terms that are loosely utilized in academia as well as in business. The meaning of the two terms may also be adjusted to suit specific scenarios in business which opens up very broad and differing perspectives in terms of these concepts. The researcher therefore sets out to gauge how these terms are understood in the banking industry and attempts to comprehend whether these terms are congruent amongst employees from the same bank as well as differing banks.

To recap, the findings are ranked in terms of how often respondents referred to the same concept. The answers provided by interviewees to explain their understanding of talent management elicited 13 responses of which the first response was most mentioned.

Figure 4: Summary of responses - What is your understanding of talent management?



5.2.2 Interpretation of the research findings – question 1.a

The question sets out to draw from respondents in terms of their understanding of talent management. The figure provides clarity on the most important factors in terms of the responses. These highly rated concepts are listed as follows: 1 - identify talent, 2 - identify employees with potential and 3 - employers providing support in terms of how talented individuals grow in these organisations. These concepts as explained by respondents are also indicative of the fact that employers seem to display an ability to identify talent and initiate discussions with regards to talent.

“Ok so talent management for me would be recognising individuals within your team or within the organisation that have potential to really contribute to your organisations growth, it’s trying to identify that as early as possible. I would say and recognising that within your teams and just within the organisation.”(D1)

“So I would say talent management is the identification and development of individuals within an organisation to ensure that they maximise in their potential in the organisation so it’s beneficial between the business and the individual.”(A3)

The concepts that elicited a far lower rating in terms of responses are: 4 – employers providing strategies for internal mobility, 6 – employers not only engaging in a performance review but also having conversations with senior leaders, 7 – employers engaging in skills development and retention strategies and 13 – employers that

encourage development in areas where employees show aptitude. These concepts on the other hand are indicative of the fact that employers now surpass the mere conversation of talent management but also set out to take action on the outcomes of these conversation. The concern however is that employee's rate the physical activity required to effectively manage talent significantly lower than they rate how well employers have conversation with regard to it.

“Ok so my understanding is that it's identifying employees that have potential to grow into management positions or to senior management positions and at the same time it's also about identifying employees that don't have that potential. So as much as you want to manage talent to move people up you also want to manage the talent that isn't going to particularly want to climb the cooperate ladder because it's important to have both you can't have everybody trying to climb the ladder, what their goals are in the medium and long term and to train them towards that and to coach and guide them towards that so you can keep them as good talent within the bank.” (C2)

The last responses evident on the figure consider talent management as actions that employers take merely to adhere to human resource and/or business requirements. Respondents explain it as: 11 – employer box grids that indicate performance, 12 – a program put in place by employers for graduates and 5 – a tool that was likely developed by employers to increase employee job satisfaction. This tick box approach to the talent management process did not receive very high response rates but its mere appearance is indicative of how some organisations view the talent management process.

“the bank often does it with graduates and I am not, I think that same effort they put into graduates should be actually applied to people with talent but it seems like only the graduates actually get that extra effort given to them by the banks so I would say as an example what they do with the graduates, they introduce them to the executives, nurture them they guide them they put them into areas where they want to be, , all of the additional effort they make, should be with people with talent as well.”(D4)

5.2.3 Conclusion

Interesting to note all respondents from Groups F, M, T and L have a similar perspective on what they believe talent management should look like in the organisation. Although the findings of the first question indicate a fair level of understanding of talent management in die banking industry it does not appear to be much more than a process in the conversation initiation phase which lacks the actions required to adequately

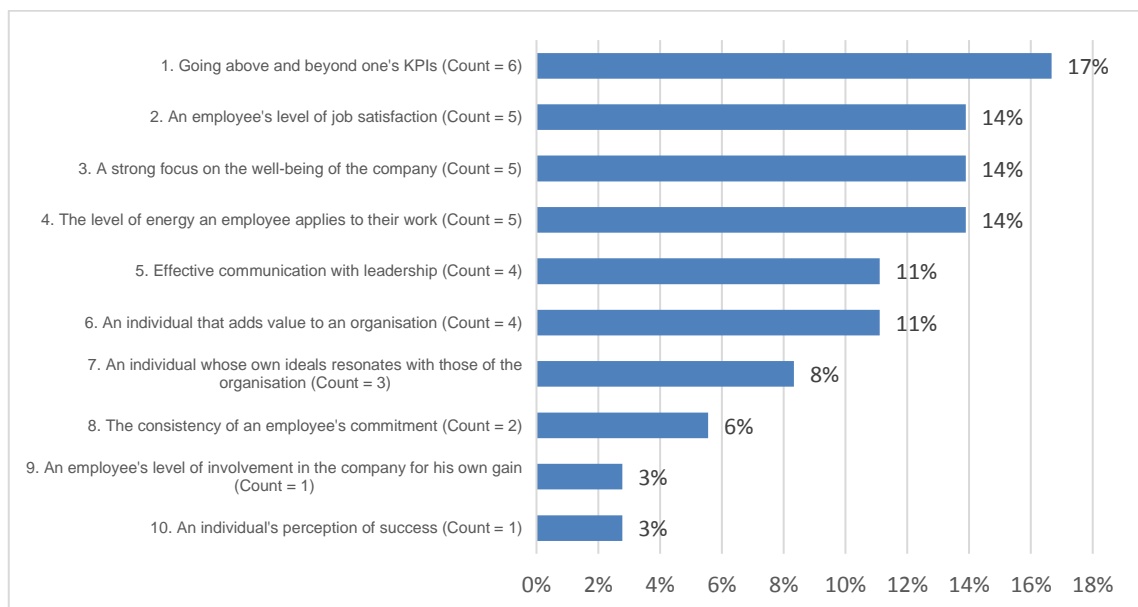
implement it. Across the banks perspectives differ in terms of how the talent management process is managed, some find it highly effective whereas some find it an activity only executed due to a business and/or human resource requirement.

5.3 Finding of the first research objective question 1.b

5.3.1 Introduction

The researcher utilizes question two much like question one in an attempt to discover whether a congruent definition of employee engagement exists within the banking industry amongst the different employees. A holistic perspective of objective one is to get an understanding of how talent management and employee engagement is viewed by employees within the banking industry. The respondents are selected from different levels in order to provide an all-encompassing view of these terms.

Figure 5: Summary of responses - What is your understanding of employee engagement?



5.3.2 Interpretation of the research findings – question 1.b

This question aims to draw an understanding of employee engagement from the interviewees. The figure displays the concepts raised by respondents and it is ranked in terms of how often it was mentioned. Some respondents mentioned more than one concept per response. The concepts that elicited the highest responses when considering employee engagement are as follows: 1- employees that go above and beyond their key performance indicators, 2 – the job satisfaction of employees, 3 – employers focus in terms of the organisations well-being, 4 – energy levels displayed by employees. These findings indicate that there are two perspectives evident in employee engagement – one from how the employees envisage it and one from how the employers

envisage it as well. These higher ranked concepts also indicate a fair level of understating in terms of employee engagement.

“So my understanding of employee engagement is the level with which an employee applies energy to their day to day job. So how does that person show up at work and what does success look like for that individual?” (A1)

“So I guess it is about the type of employee who buys into the brand and the business that they work for and almost has an infinity with that brand so I guess if you look at the sort of ethos of the bank you know does it resonate with you as a person and I think the more there is a sort of an alignment with ethical thinking and what the brand stands for what the person believes is ethical etc. and all those sort of intrinsic values, I think the more aligned those are I think the more engaged an employee will be. How much that employee is willing to give to the business outside of just the standard year of performance measures and this is the salary that goes with it. I think the other thing that drives engagement is personality actually I just think some people are built to give it all and some aren't.” (C2)

“it's someone that is prepared to go the extra mile that cares, that basically makes a lot of their own effort in terms of training and their advancement in their skills, they do research in their area of work and they are actually quite loyal to their company to, in terms of a brand, speak well of the company, encourage other people to work at the company, all of those things would be what I would consider to be employee engagement” (D4)

The concepts that are ranked slightly lower are listed as follows: 5 – employees that communicate effectively with leadership, 6 – the value an individual employee adds, 7 – the alignment of the employee's ideals with the organisation, 8 – consistency in terms of the employee's commitment. These lower ranked concepts still indicate a fair level of understanding of employee engagement amongst differing banks and employees.

“Is how engaged an employee is to the organisation, an engaged employee is that one that looks at their work as their own company, for a lack of better terminology, whatever the role that they do, they look at them as the CEO of the organisation, meaning they go the extra mile to add value to the company, it's not just about doing

what is required or doing 8-5 its more are they making a difference in their role and is that difference felt' (A2).

"I think employee engagement is in my view, it's the level at which the person who is carrying whatever the task is, is fully engaged, both in the carrying out tasks but also in having that vast interest in the business to succeed so, for example I've remained engaged as an employee of this organisation by number 1, having a key interest in the overall business performs and not just my little unit and number 2 understanding precisely what it is I can do to help those results, now the way that I would gauge my levels of engagement is whether or not if I actually see a shared responsibility in whether I end up with the organisation or not, if I can't see how my daily actions translate in the success of the business then I don't believe I am engaged." (B4)

The concepts that are ranked lower on the figure are as follows: 9 – the employee's levels of involvement with the organisations for their own gain, 10 – an employee's perspective of success. Very few people placed emphasis on these concepts but a reciprocation becomes evident in terms of what employees are expected to do to raise engagement levels but also in terms of what employers are doing to keep their talented workforce engaged.

"So employee engagement to me is how engaged myself would be in the company, so do I want to be part of the company, am I actively trying to make the company a better place? But there is also a selfish element to it is to say what can I gain from benefiting or making the company bigger, am I just a number? Or am I adding value to the company?" (C1)

5.3.3 Conclusion

Respondents from all groups in question, Group F, M, T and L have similar definitions of employee engagement. The research suggests that most employees at middle and senior level understand the concept of employee engagement. The research however also suggests that it is something that has to be driven from an employee's perspective although input from the employer would be highly valued. Reward and remuneration come into play which indicates the value perception of employees in terms of the value their employers place in them by rewarding them fairly. The alignment of company and individual values ring true to employees when considering levels of engagement. The higher the alignment the higher the levels of engagement is. Finally respondents speak

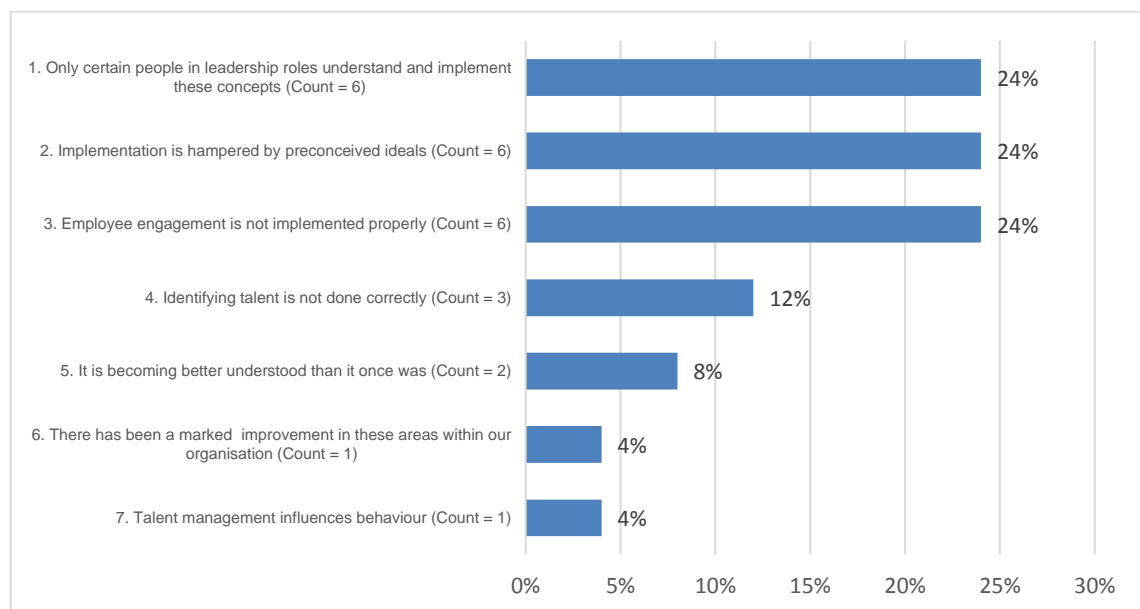
to personality types that are more geared to performance than others, a brand that individuals carry in terms of their work ethic. Employers cannot influence this but can likely better their selection process to try and identify these employees that are built to go above and beyond.

5.4 Finding of the first research objective, question 1 – c

5.4.1 Introduction

This questions probes respondents to see whether they believe that the concepts of talent management and employee engagement are understood by their colleagues and managers given their explanation of them.

Figure 6: Summary of responses - Do you think these concepts are understood by your colleagues or managers in the business or industry?



5.4.2 Interpretation of the research findings of question 1 – c

The factors ranked highest in terms of responses are listed as follows: 1 – only a select number of leaders understand and adequately implement talent management and employee engagement, 2 – implementation is hampered by preconceived notions, 3 – employee engagement is not effectively implemented. These findings are alarming as most middle and senior leaders interviewed who are in charge of employees in their business earlier claim to understand these concepts. Their roles likely hold them accountable for the effective implementation of talent management and employee engagement yet they themselves do not believe it's effectively implemented or understood. Talent management in the organisations also appears to be a matter that is ranked lower in terms of priority when it comes to important deadlines and most energy and focus is placed elsewhere.

“A lot of the managers in our area are so focused on their targets and delivering what they need to, their employees sometimes becomes just a resource, there’s a lot of project work so employees are looked at as resources in a project and I feel sometimes the actual person is not understood and the managers in our area don’t actually take the time to understand if this employee is engaged or not and if they are not what the actual issue is.”(D3)

“some managers actually take time to get to understand what you as a person are inspired by, what talent you have and they take time to make sure that they use your talent accordingly where as some managers don’t pay attention, so yes they may understand them but it’s not in their interest, all they want to see is the numbers, the numbers you know, grow the business that’s all I am interested in.” (B2)

“I would say yes, I think most people understand what these concepts are and what they mean, the execution thereof is quite different and if I can be honest with you I probably seen a lot more cases of good people that don’t get noticed or the right amount of effort is not put into them, or they not engaged and end up probably leaving the organisation or losing a level of motivation so I suppose to reiterate I think people know what they are but quite hard to implement.”(A4)

“They say they like to think that they understand it but there’s a disconnect I feel between what they say and the actual implementation of those concepts of what they like it to be. So it’s a thing of where you would say it’s part of our strategy whatever a lot of organisations say people are most important or people is what drives our business but yet when people do try to engage or when they do try to voice their opinions, there’s no effect of opinions that get voiced or they don’t see anything or they don’t feel that their needs have been addressed by the organisation or by the team.” (D2)

The last points on the figure that are ranked low are stated as follows: 4 – identifying talent is not effectively conducted, 5 – the concepts are showing marked improvements in terms of the business understanding, 6 – the organisations shows improvement in certain areas in terms of the concepts, 7 – talent management has an influence on behaviour. The low response on the above mentioned terms are indicative of the lack

of confidence interviewee's display in terms of talent management and employee engagement in their organisations.

"I think there's pockets of understanding, I think some people understand it, I think however I am specifically looking at the business unit that I am sitting in, when I look at that I don't think everyone has the same understanding. So I think perhaps a few that get it, I think the rest is not as aligned as it should be." (C3)

5.4.3 Additional responses in terms of probing questions posed

Some respondents believe that engagement is an innate ability and not externally influenced.

"I have always taken charge of my own career and progression as well so I've never wanted to sit and wait for someone to firstly tell me that I am talent, I think as much as it should be done, I don't wait for that, I recognise where I am strong, and where I fall short, and then I: so say so ok fine if I want to get there what do I do and I will engaged leadership obviously whichever organisation I am to say this is where I want to be, I think you can help me to get there." (C3)

5.4.4 Conclusion

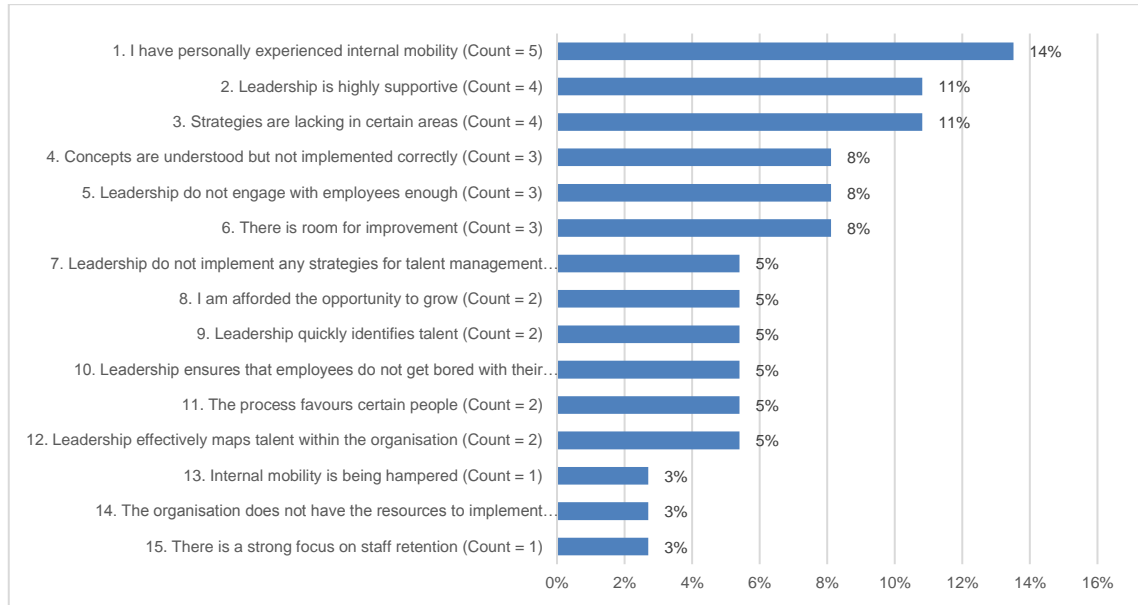
Respondent across all groups in question, Group F, M, T and L believe that understand the part they play in ensuring they remain engaged and effective, there seems to be a disconnect in terms of the support they require from the organisation to adequately manage their careers. Some employees take the reins in driving their career and levels of engagement but they are looking for a closed loop in terms of the communication they receive in the talent identification phase, feedback and action items are required by employees in order for them to understand the value they are able to add. They also long for reassurances in terms of their efforts to understand how their efforts are catapulting the organisation to its optimal performance. Overall there is very little confidence in the level of understanding employees perceive their counterparts to hold within the banking industry and very little is done in terms of the follow through needed for an effective talent management programme.

5.5 Findings of the second research objective, question 2 – a

5.5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this objective is to uncover whether a relationship between talent management and employee engagement exists in terms of the perspective of individual employees.

Figure 7: Summary of responses - Do you think the company is managing your talent effectively?



5.5.2 Interpretation of the research findings, question 2 – a

Questions two, provides the researcher with the respondent's perspective on whether they believe their careers are adequately managed in their current roles. The figure presents three highly rated responses as follows: 1 – the respondent personally experienced internal mobility, 2 – the respondent feels that their leadership is highly supportive, 3 – strategies in terms of talent management and employee engagement requires focus. Some differing perspectives are evident in the groups in terms of the concepts, respondents from group F and M agree that their talent has been managed whereas respondents from group L do not believe that this is the case and that the process may require more focus and energy.

“I would say so because I have over the last couple of years moved around to a number of different roles I have experienced the business in lots of spheres, the different spheres that we operate in as in the different business areas and I think the businesses have also been very careful that I don't get bored in that they change things every couple of years for myself.” (B1)

“Personally I do think that relationship has been driven by the group particularly, and naturally. I've been an engaged employee and I do look at myself as somebody who wants to add value so that made the process easier to be noticed quickly as talent within a couple of months of joining the group and I think even though I do try to work hard and I do try and add value I get a sense that the employer is keen to identify

talent very quickly so I think the relationship for me has been quite good and its very much aligned. The more engaged I have been the more I've seen opportunities within the group and I've seen even leaders outside my own business unit getting involved to help me find other opportunities.” (A2)

“So I don't believe that as a company holistically we are managing talent effectively, I think it happens in pockets.” (D1).

The mid to lower ranked response on the graph in no specific order are as follows: 4 – concepts are understood but not implemented correctly, 7 – leadership do not implement any strategies for talent management, 14 – the organisations does not have the resources to implement, 11 – the process favours certain people, 12 – leadership effectively maps talent within the organisation, 15 – there is a strong focus on staff retention. These response albeit lower ranked than the first mentioned indicate a very incoherent view of the way employees believe their talent is being managed. It is also influenced by the organisations strategy and focus areas, direct leaders as well as resources in terms of energy and funding.

“No I don't think so, I think there's lots of structures in place but nothing really comes from it, besides having a number of discussions with people who try to be a mentor or otherwise have a view to managing talent but never as result of my categorisation on a talent grid or anything similar.” (A3)

“I think both talent management basically in a company it does both of does, it's kind of a nice to have, it's like Maslow's hierarchy, you know it's like top of the hierarchy it's the part that, the really nice to have but when you are struggling to survive and you just trying to cope with costs and keeping resources on board, those kind of things aren't key, a secondary issue.” (D4)

“No I don't think that my current employer is managing my talent effectively, I have not had conversations that say we identify you as somebody with the potential to do whatever or has talent in this business and I have not have conversations around plans to ensure that talent is firstly developed and retained and whatever else. I think we're just running and performing and going with business as usual.” (C3)

“Yes I do I think they are but I have been in an express lane to be quite honest, I have been able to chart a lot of my path but I would rather say I have been afforded the opportunity to do it, so certainly this company is managing my talent effectively they are not only facilitating conversations, there’s a very open door policy at least towards me and some of the top management in the organisation and I believe my talents have not gone unnoticed and I particularly feel that if I had an issue or if I wanted to address anything talent related it should be taken seriously.” (B4)

“So I think they have, I have given lots of opportunities within the business as well as the greater company. I also believe it’s my responsibility as well to actually go out there up and ask for assistance where I think my career is potentially stagnated.” (C4)

5.5.3 Conclusion

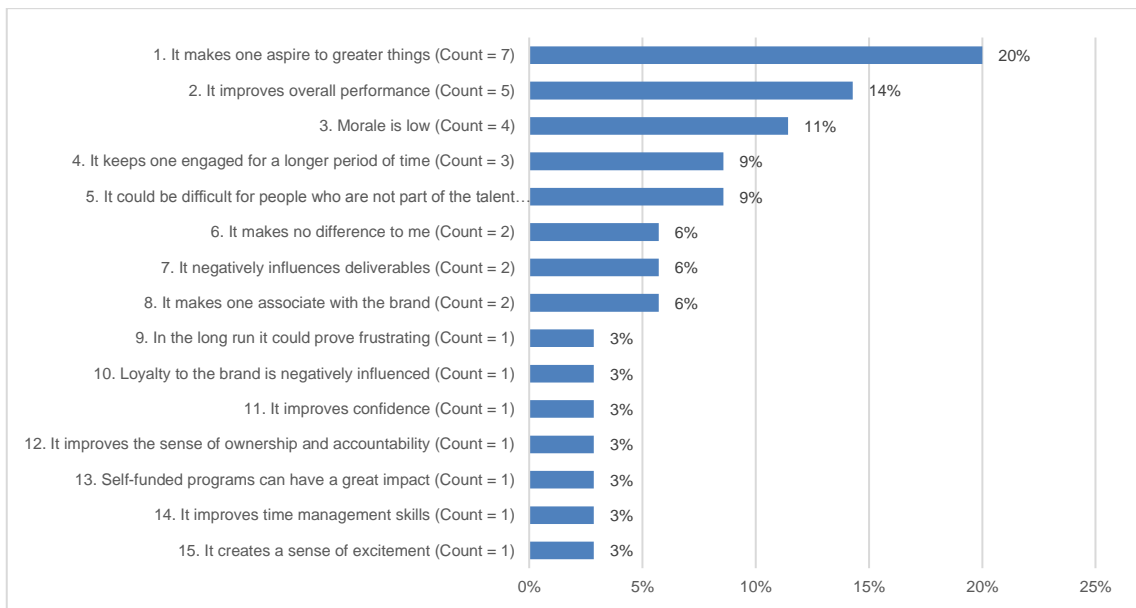
The group that remained consistent in terms of their positive view on how their organisation effectively manages their talent is Group M. The group that remained consistent in terms of their organisation not being able to manage their talent effectively is Group L. Respondents from Group F and T have varied perspectives in terms of this concept and it could be attributable to a number of factors at play. Respondents emphasize the importance of open communication with leaders, the need to be heard and understood and an even greater need for feedback in terms of the matters that are raised. Respondents often refer to resources as a hindrance to effective talent management but also raises the lack of focus from senior leaders on the importance of a matters such as talent management. Direct line leaders are called out by respondents due to their lack of participation in the talent management process, even though these leaders have adequate knowledge and understanding of the concepts.

5.6 Findings of the second research objective, question 2 – b

5.6.1 Introduction

The researcher probes the respondents to see whether the effective or ineffective management of their talent has had an effect on their performance and whether respondents are able to provide explanations in terms of how their performance was effected in this regard.

Figure 8: Summary of responses - How does this impact your performance?



5.6.2 Interpretation of the research findings

The highest rated concepts on the figure specifically refer to: 1 – employees aspiring to do greater things, 2 – improvement of employee’s performance overall, 3 – employee morale is low. Groups F, M and T are aligned in terms of their perspective on the positive impact active talent management has on their careers and this indicates that they likely had positive experiences within their organisation. Responses from Group L however conflicts with this view and indicates a loss of confidence in the organisations ability to follow through on talent management, they feel misplaced in the organisations operations as in point three above.

“I think the impact of me knowing that my talent is being actively managed has been quite positive on my current role, why I think it has because I have been shown the nirvana, I kind of sit here and I see that at least in this organisation, this organisation could be my oyster if I play my cards right, if I perform right and I nurture the relationships I have I think my talent can get me to whatever heights I would like to get to.” (B4)

“It makes me want to perform better and keep on up-skilling myself and also you start having an addiction of wanting more in terms of adding value, more in terms of climbing the corporate ladder, more in terms of being more engaged and being visible and certainly having more ownership and accountability, feeling like you are part of the brand.” (A2)

“So I think performance is driven by a lot of different things, I think self-motivation, personality, the type of manager you have, the type of team you in the business you work for, I think for me personally my performance is better when I’m challenged. I’m more engaged when I am challenged so personally for me the fact that I could make the change from one division to another and learn and be challenged is going to drive my performance more, so that’s just on a personal level.” (C2)

“So in terms of me personally I think it impacts in a sense that I don’t feel that there is an end goal to what I am achieving at work so I might be listed as talent but if there is nothing that tangibly gets done to invest in me or I don’t see the fruits of my labour in a way it kind of impacts on my mind set to make me a bit more complacent in terms of ok why should I really kill myself for this organisation if they are not going to invest in me.” (D1)

“So for me it can be demotivating, right now there’s a lot of change going around in our area, as a result it’s almost like roles have been created and you’ve got to fill them so talking back to talent management and this speaks to employee engagement as well. If you are recognised as talent surely you would be placed in a role that is suitable to your skills and where you see your career moving, at this stage it’s more about filling in the blocks.” (D3)

The figure is positively skewed toward views of how effective talent management could have a positive impact on employee performance which indicates a strong belief amongst most respondents that this could be an effective process if appropriately executed. As indicated on the figure: 4 – pro long employee engagement, 8 – it creates associations with the organisations brand, 12 – it improves the sense of ownership and accountability. The figure however also displays responses wherein which interviewees believe effective talent management will have no effect on their performance – 6.

“So luckily for me, I take charge of my own development and my own progression so it is important for me to perform, not for somebody else but for me so I ensure that I excel in whatever that I do so I can be proud of it, so for me it doesn’t effect it because I have taken full responsibility for my own development here.” (C3).

“So I think for me it gives me the confidence to know that if I do something I can do it well because I am fully equipped or I have the necessary knowledge I need to have to actually do my job. I think it has a positive impact because also for me it is a challenge as well” (B3)

“So the mere fact that you are actually recognised, you are given opportunities, it makes you work harder.” (C4)

5.6.3 Conclusion

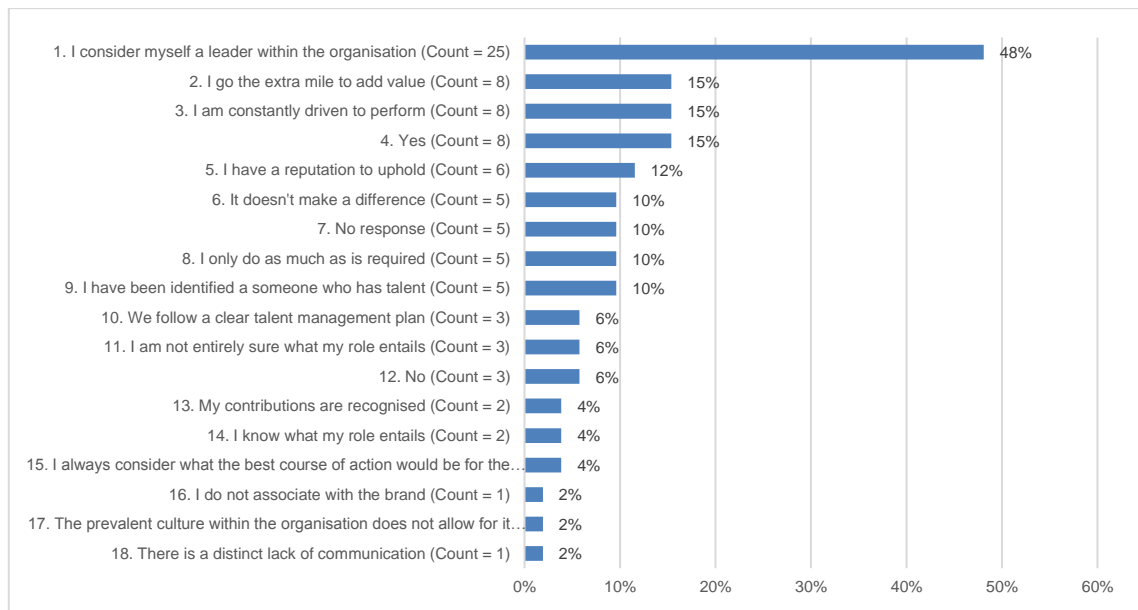
The respondents place high emphasis on the importance in their understanding of how they fit in, how they add value to the organisation and how their skills are appropriately leveraged in terms of organisational requirements. Employees also pay attention to whether organisations are sincere in terms of their talent management processes and whether employees are involved and/or considered during changes that occur in the organisation. Some respondents display a strong internal locus of control and take responsibility for their own brand and performance in the organisation regardless of the activities the organisation initiates.

5.7 Findings of the second research objective question 2 – c

5.7.1 Introduction

The researcher explores the levels of engagement amongst the respondents as Gallup’s report discussed in chapter 2 speaks to low levels of employee engagement in the workforce. The figure below provides a summary of the respondent’s feedback.

Figure 9: Summary of responses - Do you consider yourself and engaged employee?



5.7.2 Interpretation of the research findings, question 2 – c

Majority of respondents interviewed err on the side of highly engaged. An exorbitant amount of responses went to the first point listed on the figure: 1 – employees consider themselves leaders in business, 2 – employees go the extra mile to add value, 3 – employees are constantly driven to perform, 5 – employees feel they have a reputation to uphold. These responses are indicative of the fact that employees are likely engaged but that they remain engaged for different reasons. We can safely assume that majority of the respondents from Group F, M, T and L are considered engaged employees. It does become apparent however that their engagement is not necessarily driven by the organisations. Some believe it's a give and take scenario between organisations and employee and because they feel they have been invested in they give back of themselves. Others believe that they will always perform regardless given their innate characteristics or disposition.

“I am very engaged and I think it's because I understand what my contribution to the bank is, there's no ambiguity in the role that I play and how that role contributes to the overall bank I am very clear about that, I am well sponsored in the sense that the stuff that I do at my level tends to find itself right up to the top management and I think I am very comfortable that my role here is taken seriously and its contributions don't go unnoticed.” (B4)

"I do consider myself to be an engaged employee because I think from an inherent perspective my make-up is that I will always give of my all to the company because I do see a job as a privilege in this day and age." (D1)

"I do consider myself an engaged employee, I feel that I am able to approach management whenever I need to and can speak very openly and honestly with them and I kind of encourage that feedback with myself as well. I certainly with regards to what my role and what is expected of me and what I need to deliver upon I am very clear about that." (A4)

"Yes I am an engaged employee because my line leader affords me the opportunity to get recognition for the work I do, to gain exposure on projects that are not necessarily in my sphere of control and affords me the opportunity to be involved with projects so that I can add value and be recognised for my additional efforts." (C5)

The figure however also provides less favourable findings in terms of the respondent's levels of engagement. Responses visible on the figure: 8 – I only do as much as required, 11 – I am not entirely sure what my role entails, 16 – I do not associate with the brand. The concerns raised in these responses relate to whether employees are made aware what their role is in the bigger organisational objectives and whether they are kept in the loop in terms of changes that may affect them directly or indirectly. Group L has very few engaged respondents as most seem left out of the loop in terms of their organisational objective. Responses from Group T however agrees in terms of their levels of engagement with their existing employers.

"I think my previous employer, so I had a structured you know development plan and I had structured coaching plan, I sat on a monthly basis with an organisational development specialist just to ensure that we track that. So I think I was most engaged there because there was a lot of structure in place to ensure that it's developed." (C3)

"At this moment not, because of a lot of these stuff that's going on over the last few months and how it is handled, so yes there's a lot of change and wherever you go is a lot of change, it's for me the change management process that was followed or the lack there-of that concerns me, so it's not directly the way I have been treated but it's the way my employees have been treated as well so I have got people in my team

again who have just been moved around, shoved in places at the end of the day its difficult being in this middle management layer because I need to portray the message back to them, yet I am not involved in the discussion upfront” (D3)

“I don’t consider myself engaged, ok so I need to rephrase it, maybe there’s a distinction between internal drive so one thing to do is still wanting to suggest things but I don’t feel from an organisation point of view they necessarily reciprocate so yes when there’s opportunities to provide a suggestion I would provide a suggestion but at other points in other situations, I just won’t bother.” (D2)

“Currently, I wouldn’t say I am 100% engaged, so I have been entirely engaged in the previous team and there I felt I knew or 100% understood what my role was and the impact I was providing, so I knew the value I was adding that allowed me to excel and perform better. I still haven’t quite figured it out here what is my value that I am adding, I am doing work but I just don’t know how I am adding value, I don’t know how to measure that.” (C1)

5.7.3 Conclusion

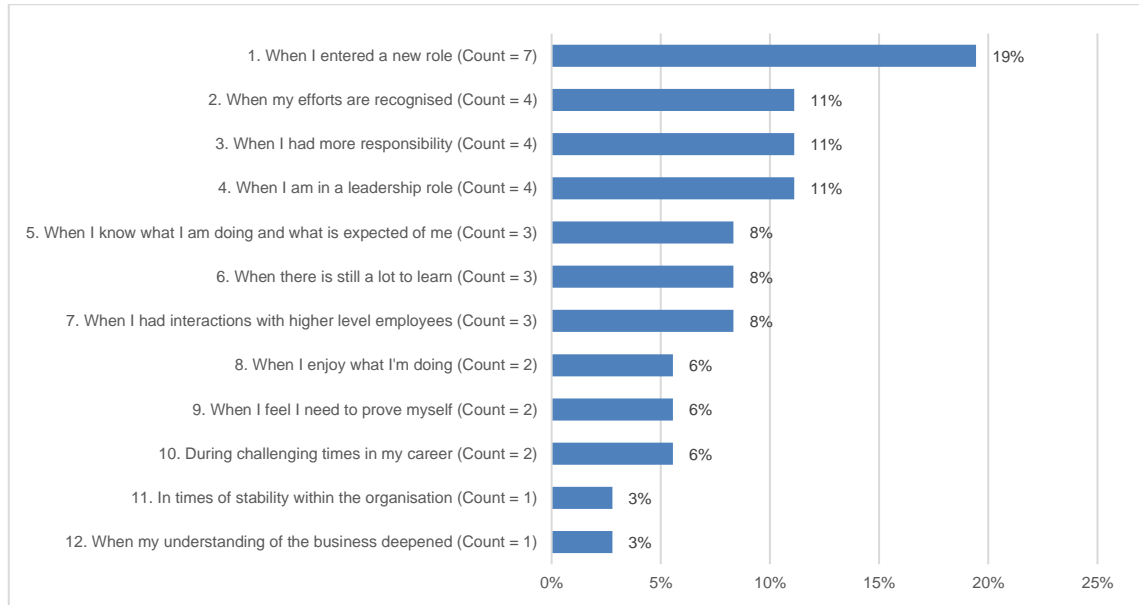
Respondents express a desire for their voices to be heard, for their opinions to count and for action to be taken once discussion have been concluded. Formal talent management and employee engagement structures are called upon by respondents in order to effectively manage employees in terms of their engagement. Respondents however still take personal accountability for the part they play in the bigger organisation and hold their own performance levels high due to their personal objectives and also due to the way they prefer to be viewed by others in the organisation. Respondents express a great need to understand their place in the organisation and those who are clear on this fact express much higher levels of employee engagement and satisfaction with their roles.

5.8 Findings of the second research objective, question 2 – d

5.8.1 Introduction

The researcher tries to understand when respondents find themselves most engagement during the course of their careers. The figure below summarises the respondents feedback but it is very notable that respondents find the time of entering a new role an engaging period.

Figure 10: Summary of responses - When did you consider yourself most engaged during your career?



5.8.2 Interpretation of the research findings, question 2- d

The figure brings to light four notable concepts that respondents feel they are most engaged by: 1 – when entering a new role, 2 – when their efforts are recognised by employers, 3 – when more responsibility is given to employees, 4 – when employers are placed in leadership roles. These responses indicate a need for accountability and responsibility within the organisation, but also relies on consistent feedback and recognition in terms of their performance.

“In a new role, and I think because I want to add value and I want to make a difference in a new role I tend to be more engaged and quickly adding value and proving myself to the organisation and being more visible and also gain credibility that I can perform.”
(A2)

“I think I considered myself most engaged when I am enjoying what I am doing and if there is recognition for my efforts.” (D1)

“I was very motivated and excited coming into a new environment, meeting new people, learning new things and I think the current organisation actually gave me so much ownership, responsibility and accountability so I owned the portfolio, whereas the previous employer I felt like I was spoon fed so I came here and I was taught to be

the owner of a portfolio and for me that gave me so much motivation and I was fully engaged.” (B2)

“I think when I was most engaged, there’s various points in my career but I think it goes back to whenever I was given a reason for why I was doing something. As well as when I was able to voice my opinion.” (C4)

Respondents from Groups F, M, T and L have experienced times during their career where in which they were highly engaged. 10 – Most engaged during challenging times in a career indicates the employees need to stretch themselves and develop their skills and capabilities. 12 – The time when the employees understating of the organisation deepened. This concept indicates that employees have a dire need to know what the overarching objectives of the organisation is in order for them to provide a viable contribution to the business.

“I think I was most engaged in difficult times when I was trying to overcome something quite challenging, I would say 2015 I was most engaged probably the toughest time of my career and dealing with complexity of managing a big team and managing performance within that team and ensuring that, that team delivers on their mandate.” (A1)

“I think in this role, probably a year and a half ago, so I think the reason I considered myself most engaged about 18 months ago till now and its simply because there is clarity of objectives, there’s clarity over roles and responsibilities but I have been given the time and the space for to be able to profile what I can do.” (B4)

5.8.3 Conclusion

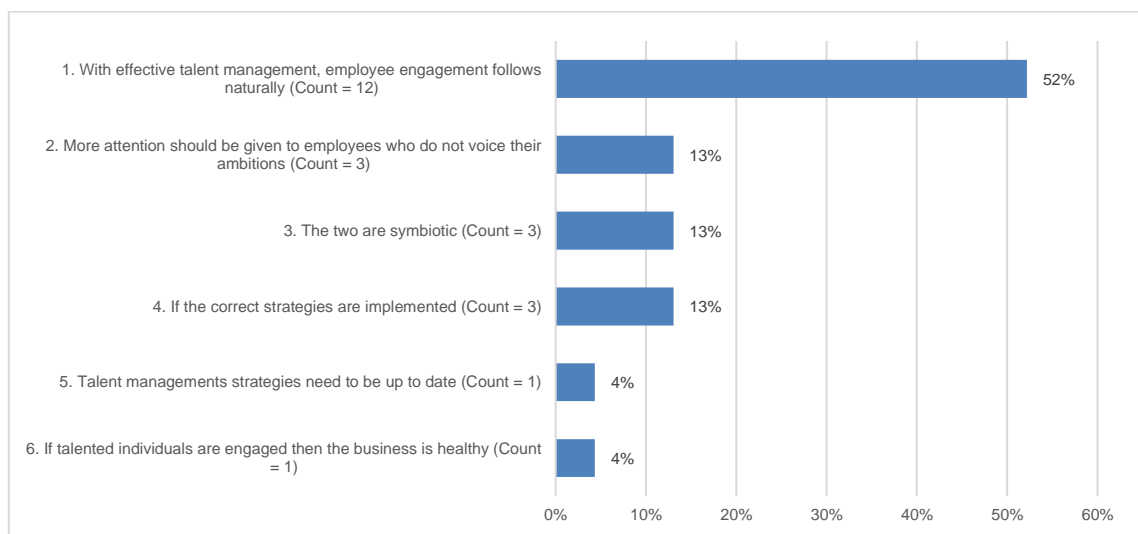
The notion that one must love what you do in order to never work a day again becomes evident in the research findings. Employees display an affiliation to the enjoyment of their roles. Important to note however is the alignment of employee skills to the roles at hand. The findings show that employees feel a need to contribute and this can best be done by leveraging employee’s skills and strengths. This will however require close proximity and open communication between employer and employee.

5.9 Findings of the second research objective, question 2 - e

5.9.1 Introduction

The researcher explores the possibility of whether a relationship exist between talent management and employee engagement and probes respondents to gather their perspectives on this concept. The figure below displays that more than 50% or respondent are in agreement that according to the concept 1: effective talent management will naturally result in high levels of employee engagement.

Figure 11: Summary of responses - In your opinion do you think it is possible for a relationship to exist between talent management and employee engagement, if yes how do you see the relationship playing out?



5.9.2 Interpretation of the second research objective, question 2 – e

The figure displays that respondents believe that effective talent management directly impacts employee engagement, the focus however remains on the effectiveness of talent management processes and strategies. See point 4 – if correct strategies are implemented and point 5 – talent management strategies need to be up to date, as indicated above.

“Ok so yes my answer to be is that it definitely will be possible for the relationship to exist between talent management and employee engagement and it could certainly be beneficial.” (A4)

“I think so I mean if you are in an organisation where you know there’s a career path mapped out for you, it allows you to be more engaged more living in the now as you

know there's a finite period to it, I definitely think that there's a relationship between the 2." (A3)

"It should be existing because the employee obviously needs to take responsibility, I don't think it's up to companies to do everything for an employee, I think one must take responsibility but it does need to be met with the balance of the company also making effort to engage that employee and to support the employee in return." (C3)

"I think there is a relationship that does exist already in that by putting talent management processes in place, business invariably ensure that employees become more engaged and that relationship I think will continue that as soon as you have effective talent management in place people do become more engaged." (B2)

"I think there's definitely a relationship or should be a relationship between talent management and how engaged an employee is because for me it's a 50/50 thing. So if I'm putting in all this effort and going over and above what I am supposed to do and I am not really getting recognised for this as an employee, it will demotivate me, employees, high performing employees always want recognition, it is not only about money, it's not only about cash bonuses at the end of the year, it's getting that recognition being given those rewards, being set on development programs, leadership programs." (D3)

5.9.3 Additional responses in terms of probing questions posed

Some responses raise important factors to be considered in the talent management discussions, aside from merely knowing they have been identified as talent.

"a couple of things, so it's definitely the want to know, the organisation does view you as talent and the second thing is then to say what are the gaps or what is holding you from getting to the next stage and I say it's a two way conversation between yourself and the organisation to say, I know that I am falling short here or maybe they identify and say, you are falling short here and then we say these are the gaps and this is the plan to close those gaps. So you can actually reach your full potential and that regular check to ensure that the employees are still very comfortable and happy in the space that they are in" (C3)

5.9.4 Conclusion

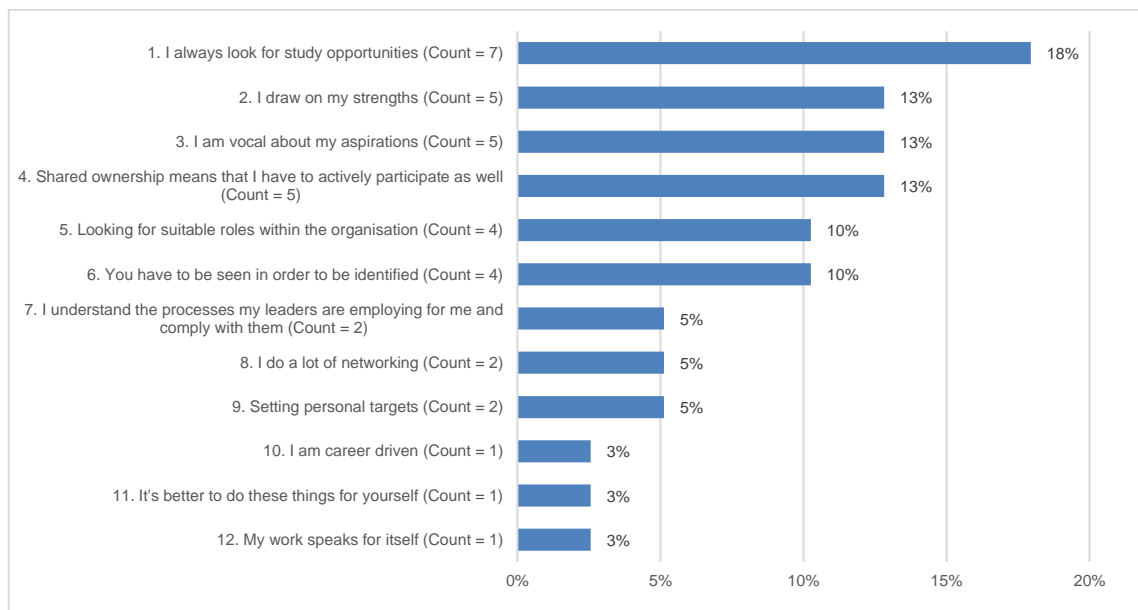
Respondents from Groups F, M, T and L agree that there is or should be a relationship between talent management and employee engagement, but places emphasis on the fact that talent management entails more than just the awareness of the fact, but requires two way conversation and actionable tasks that result in real growth for both the organisation and the employee.

5.10 Findings of the third research objective, question 3 – a

5.10.1 Introduction

The researcher explores how well the respondents manage to steer their careers. The figure below summarises the responses received. The first concept visible on the figure refers to the fact that respondents strive to further their skills by additional learning. This is likely set to motion due to increased skills mobility which intensifies competition amongst local and international peers and could also be happening as part of an attempt by employees to canvas their knowledge and skills to their employers.

Figure 12: Summary of responses - Do you actively participate in managing your career?



5.10.2 Interpretation of the research findings, question 3 - a

The figure provides differing perspectives in terms of how respondents believe their careers are adequately managed. On the one side respondents are aware of the brand they portray, the perceptions they create and the fact that people need to know who they are and what they aim to achieve, they therefore articulate their responses as evident in point 6 – you have to be seen in order to be identified, point 8 – I do a lot of networking and point 3 – I am vocal about my aspirations. At the opposite end however employees feel that hard work will attract the right attention in terms of their career, visible in point

12 – my work speaks for itself. Goal settings also makes its appearances in the finding – 9, which indicates that respondents are aware that they need to be clear on what they want in order for it to be obtained.

“Without a doubt, I think you need to put yourself in the right spaces at the right time, you got to be showing your interest to the right people and I mean it gets blurred I suppose you not always putting hand up for the job for the right person if you are actively and aggressively putting your hand up all the time but I suppose building the right relationships, the right networks for opportunities when as and when they arrive.”
(A3)

“I do, I do believe that even if an organisation is a type of organisation that actually takes care and grows its people at the end of the day you need to own it like everything else in your life you need to own it I mean no one is going to know what your goals are what your inspirations are if you don’t take that ownership.” (B2)

“I actively manage my career because I understand what I am doing in the sense of profiling myself but also understand the tools I need to get there so I often have direct gain, so in that way I understand that forms part of my own talent management process, I understand that forms part of the profile that I need to put together for me to move forward, some of the executives have had the open door policy when I had concerns, I am able to go in there and discuss issues whether they be about my own progress in the organisation or whether they be about immediate issues that I am dealing with and how I resolve it.” (B4)

“Yes, our company does not have formal talent management structures in place so you have to find your own way. I manage my career via relationships and through the work I deliver. I try to get as much exposure to the people I work with as possible so that they are able to see the skills I have and the value I am able to add.” (C5)

“So I do at the moment actively try to manage my career, one of the examples is by investing in doing an MBA so I have personally taken that on to manage my career but also try to figure out what are the other maybe roles and opportunities available within my organisation.” (D1)

5.10.3 Conclusion

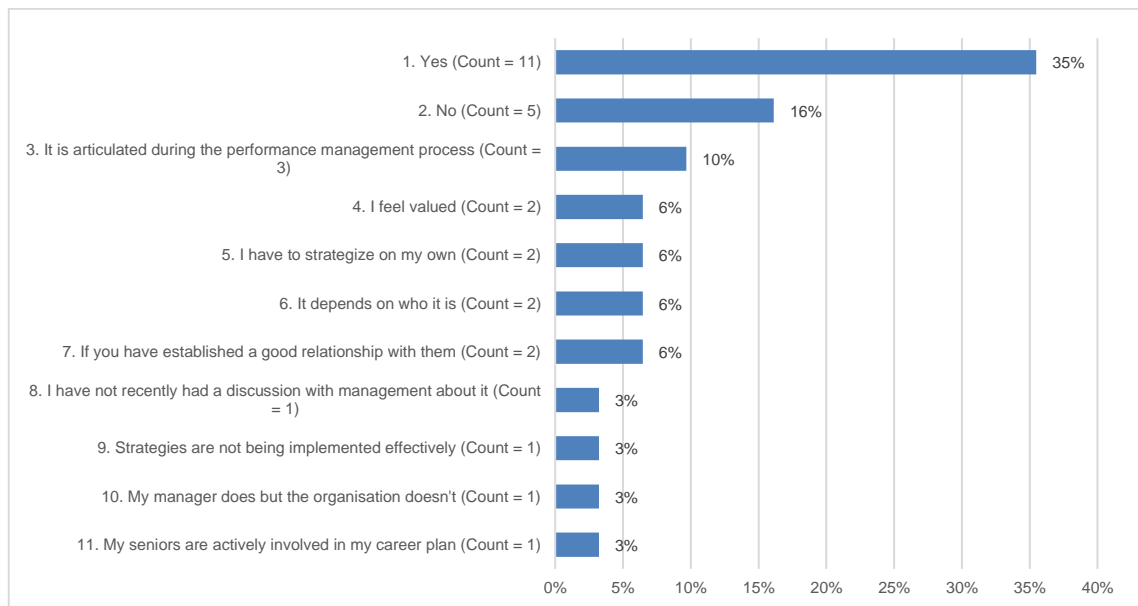
Respondents from Groups F, M, T and L all agree that they embark on certain initiatives in order to manage their careers. Some place a greater reliance on the additional knowledge they are able to add to the organisations due to additional studies and some believe that canvassing one’s abilities and networking will results in being identified for future opportunities. Open communication and making people aware of yourself is however the one element that resonates with respondents in terms of this concept.

5.11 Findings of the third research objective, question 3 – b

5.11.1 Introduction

The researcher aims to discover whether respondents have openly discussed their career aspirations and whether their seniors support their career objectives and goals. The figure below provides a summary of the responses obtained and the first response is the highest ranked by respondents which indicates that a large number of respondents do believe their seniors buy into their career aspirations.

Figure 13: Summary of responses - Do your seniors share/support your view of your future?



5.11.2 Interpretation of the research findings, question 3 – b

The figure supplies the researcher with information relating to the sharing of goals as well as the support that is provided by employers once these goals have been articulated. Pont 2 above however indicates that a large number of respondents do not believe their employers share their view of the future. This coincides with what is found in at point 5 – I have to plan on my own as well as 6 – shared dependant on who it is. Other views

relate to the fact that these discussion have no occurred – 8, which could indicate that these discussion are not a priority to the organisation.

“We actually have not had the discussion about where I see myself in 3 to 5 years or whatever it is, so it will be very difficult to say if my seniors share in my view. I know what my view is, but I don’t know if it’s known and if it is shared.” (C3)

“I don’t think anyone has asked if I am quite frankly, I have no discussion with anyone in my current role and in my previous role to be honest about where I would go next.” (A3)

“No, I have never had a career discussion with any of my line leaders, never in terms of my long term goals and where I see myself in the future. The one time a growth discussion was raised it fell through.” (C5)

“They do and I have seen it quite carefully being articulated in our performance management process where on an annual basis your manager looks at what you should be doing or what courses you should consider your development areas and things like that, so they do take it quite seriously as well.” (B1)

“I think they do I have received full support for the view of my future so as part of my 4 year plan and my immediate 12 month plan I explain that to my boss or my superior and essentially they have given me full support of where I want to be.” (A1)

“I think my immediate boss probably does support my view and tries to invest in me and my development but I would say in the greater of the organisation it is quite hard to kind of see that coming through probably because of the size of the organisation it is kind of easy to get lost within the process in a large financial institution.” (D1)

“Yes I think I have done quite well to converse my view of the future with them and I think they support it fully, I quite, I see that I am quite fortunate in the position that I am but I think it’s part of the reason why I remain fully engaged as an employee of this organisation because I believe that not only has my talent been recognised and

acknowledge, but there are people that are fully engaged in helping me realise the talent.” (B4)

“No I don’t feel that they would share it or support it, currently where I am I can’t see myself growing.” (D2)

5.11.3 Conclusion

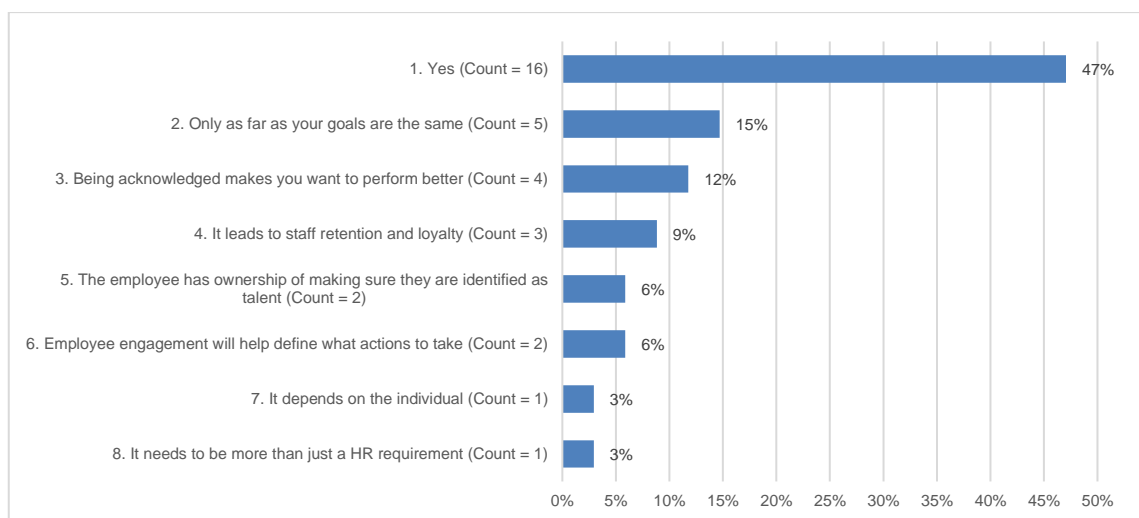
The only group that consistently describes their leaders and organisation as one that shares their support is Group M. Groups F and T have opposing views in terms of their experiences with leaders in their organisation. Group L however displays dissatisfaction with the support received from leaders in terms of long term career objectives and goals. The investment of leaders in the goals of employees creates heightened levels of engagement as mentioned by respondent B4. The lack of support by leaders reduce employee’s confidence in the organisation which has a diminishing effect on employee engagement.

5.12 Findings of the third research objective, question 3 – c

5.12.1 Introduction

The respondent explores whether employees believe that shared ownership of talent management could have an effect on talent management. Close to 50% of the group as evident below belief it could. The rest of the response are summaries in the table below.

Figure 14: Summary of responses - Do you believe shared ownership of talent management could have an effect on employee engagement?



5.12.2 Interpretation of the research findings, question 3 – c

A clear consensus is reached across Groups F, M T, and L with regards to the impact shared ownership of talent management could have on employee engagement, it is

almost as if they were all sitting in the same room when the interviewer conducted the interview. It leads to staff retention and loyalty – 4 is a very important concept to that the researcher uncovers as it could solve for the skills shortages due to skills mobility. Being acknowledged makes you want to perform – 3, makes its appearance in this questions again which reiterates the importance of the recognition that employees require. Caution is however raised in point 2 – which suggest that goals need to be aligned for it to be successful and this relates back to the fact that employees need to be able to affiliate to the organisations brand as this eases the aspiration of joint goals and objectives.

“Yes definitely because I really believe it is like a relationship you know it is like a relationship so if the organisation is showing interest in your talent and talent management you sort of want to give back.” (B2)

Absolutely I don’t actually think they can exist without each other so I think you know it can be the employers best intend to manage their talent if the business isn’t going to support that then it’s just not going to happen, generally people will leave and find a business that will support them and it can be the business best intention that they have identified you as talented but if you are not engaged you are also not going to step up to the plate so I think they need to go hand in hand.” (C2)

“I do think it could have a positive effect as there is kind of a co ownership of a person’s career. So if the person is taking ownership of their own career and talent management in isolation of the company the danger is that once they reach a certain point they will leave the organisation because they have just invested selfishly in themselves and probably do not see themselves grow within the sphere of the company. If the company is doing it in isolation of the person it could be a top down approach where the person is opposed to maybe what the company is dictating to them and doesn’t see themselves as part of the journey or the process, but if you have shared ownership of the two between the company and the person, I think that could yield better results for talent management.” (D1)

“Yes, I think it goes back to the previous answers, it’s got to be a partnership between you and the organisation, you can’t have the organisation pushing you if you are not willing recipient and you can’t be pushing the organisation if they not willing so you got to both come to the party in terms the opportunity is got to be the right one for the individual and the individual’s got to be the right one for the organisation so.” (A3)

“Absolutely, I think the shared ownership is one thing but the belief in the desired outcome needs to be shared by both a superior and the subordinate.” (A1)

5.12.3 Additional responses in terms of probing questions posed

Respondents believe you have to make your intentions known and that there are a number of ways to go about this process.

“I think it is about having discussions with your manager, a) I think you need to stick your hand up for opportunities you think you could be good at even if you are not quite sure yet I think if people don't know that you are engaged and ambitious and that you do have goals that you are trying to achieve they may not consider you for it and I think if you perform well and in your performance feedback session you getting positive feedback it is about the discussion that what are the opportunities that may be suited for me that you might know about may be coming up for consideration. Another thing people need to consider the entire bank as an opportunity, not just the division that you sit in and I think if you are open and honest with your manager and they know that you have certain goals and they are a good manager they will help you reach those goals by looking for opportunities on your behalf that they may get exposed to that you may not get exposed to.” (C2)

5.12.4 Conclusion

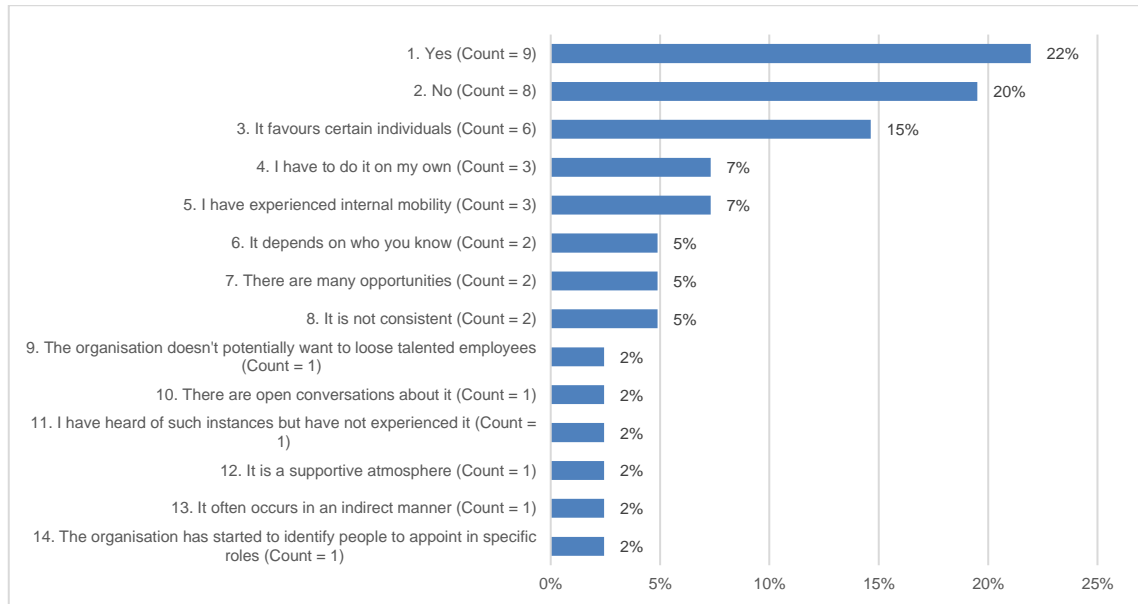
Two way communication through this process cannot be more vital to its success. A lot of reliance is placed on leaders to make time and acknowledge their employers short comings and skills and walk a path with them to develop those weaknesses and enhance those skills. Leaders also have to have the right amount of maturity and emotional intelligence to deal with skilled and talented employees as they are looking to engage in robust discussion about their career and their future aspirations. The reliance on leadership seems intense but an organisation with adequate infrastructure in terms of talent management could also assist in developing or growing an effective talent management programme.

5.13 Findings of the fourth research objective, question 4 – a

5.13.1 Introduction

The researcher sets out to understand whether the respondents believe their organisations are good at managing talent overall and not just at an individual level.

Figure 15: Summary of responses: Do you believe your career or talent is managed by your organisation, holistically?



5.13.2 Interpretation of the research findings, question 4 – a

The respondents are not aligned in terms of their views on this question and a large amount of respondents say that talent management is a well management process and another part of the group indicates that organisations do not effectively manage talent overall. Three highly ranked, notably concerning points are: 3 – the process favours certain individuals, 4 – I have to do it on my own and 6 – it depends who you know. This indicates a fair amount of ambiguity in terms of the process employees are able to follow in order to map and pursue their career objectives. Networking is developed into a political tool that individuals are able to use when targeting opportunities within the banking industry. These sentiments are unfortunately shared across all Groups: F, M, T and L.

“I do believe that my talent is managed by my organisation that being said though what is interesting is that people within the same organisation could have varied experiences because it is highly driven by your direct line manager and how they translate these things into action.” (B1)

“I think so and I think to also be honest there is a big drive within the banks of retaining black talent, so if you are talented and black you are seen as a rare commodity, particularly being female and educated, that counts in my favour, what I have seen

around me I can't say it's consistent as there are people that do struggle in the group. If you are not well networked in the group you don't know some of the senior people it's difficult to move and I think there's lots of opportunities being advertised on the system but my perception and I will put my money on it by the time the advertisement goes up for promotion whoever knows who will take that position, it is already known."
(A2)

"Yes I think to a certain way I do I think it is more in an indirect way that they manage your career instead of a direct way because of being politically correct and HR regulations so I think there is a lot of under handed indirect career talent management. There's always rumours about who is going to be the next executive role and who is headed for which position or when and you can't tell me it is a direct link to what the person has done it is also in terms of who he knows and what influence he has on those people." (C1)

"I think careers are maybe managed by them making visible what roles are available so allowing people to apply on the portals for roles that come up. In terms of talent there are quite a few leadership programmes that the bank invest in partnership with GIBS and sending people on executive courses on the Harvard course as well so I know that people who are seen as significant talent and maybe in the executive roles there's more visibility of that investment in the talent at that level." (D1)

A lower ranked but positive sentiment, 7 – there are many opportunities and 5 – I have experienced internal mobility. The bank provides a vast number of business units that can be explored by employees. The economic climate may also favour some individuals in speeding up their internal mobility.

"I also think there's especially in banking there's a lot of opportunities to grow into different roles if you want to like it's not just you know for example it's not like you either finance or you sell there's so many different things."

5.13.3 Conclusion

Direct line leaders are raised as a valuable tool in terms of talent and career management. There does however appear to be small family mentality amongst employees in the banker as the prevalence of who you know seems to dominate the

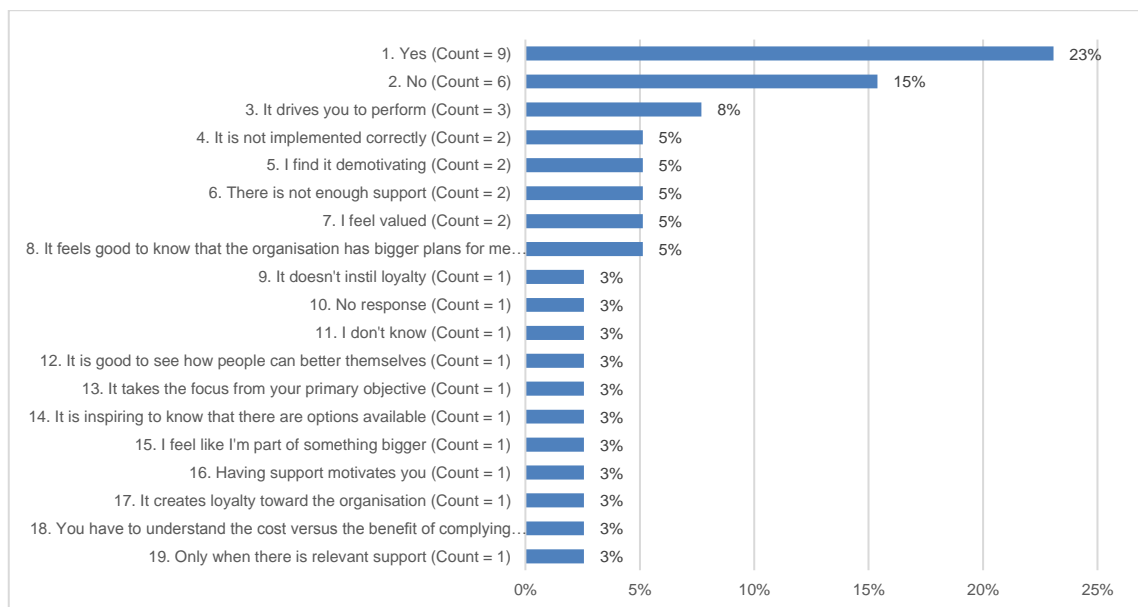
manner in which roles are fulfilled. This is likely amplified by the need for banks to transform the business in order for it to be representative of the South African market.

5.14 Finding of the fourth research objective, question 4 – b

5.14.1 Introduction

The researcher investigates the emotional state of the respondents in terms of how they are impacted by the fact that their organisations effectively manage talent. The same questions are posed to respondents who also indicated that their organisations do not effectively manage talent in this is done in order to discover whether this fact perpetuates negative feelings towards the organisation. A large number of respondents believe that they are inspired and excited by the fact that their organisation manages talented effectively but a fair amount of respondents also disagree with the notion. A summary of responses is displayed in the figure below. Poor implementation of talent management raises its head again, which is indicative of the fact that the process cannot merely be a tasks to be completed in order to meet the organisations human resource objectives.

Figure 16: Summary of responses - Does this excite and inspire you? To know your career and talent is important to the organisation?



5.14.2 Interpretation of the research findings, question 4 – b

The higher ranked concepts are split between positive and negative responses. The positive responses are listed as follows: 5 – it drives employees to perform, 7 – employees feel valued, 8 – it feels good to know that the organisation has bigger plans for their employees. The adverse to this however is the fact that people find the lack of talent management demotivating – 5 and 9 – it doesn't instill loyalty. This could lead to

a lack of loyalty from employees and does place the organisation at risk in terms of its talent retention initiatives.

“Absolutely, it does excite it does inspire but it also puts quite a bit of pressure on one to maintain that high level of performance so expectation of the organisation through this talent management process is obviously high, I just would hope that there’s relevance support when people try and go through transitions between roles.” (A1)

“Yes it does and I think it is driven by the fact that as an employee I feel that the business has bigger plans for me as an individual within the organisation.” (B1)

“It makes me disappointed that it’s not happening, very disappointed, it definitely demotivates me and it immediately removes loyalty so I mean, if I am not, if it’s not happening here, if I get a better offer why should I not take it, for me it’s the extra effort that the company could make to keep good individuals.” (D4)

“I does I think it feels like for me it makes me feel like I’m part of something bigger and I’m part of, I’m not just a number like I’m actually cared for and valued and I bring something to the organisation that someone else cant.” (B3)

“Definitely, it’s that whole human thing that you need support and once you have that support it actually excites and inspires and motivates you. So the fact that my manager is like that type of a leader is definitely inspirational.” (B2)

“It could be demotivating in a way but it also pushes you to play an active part in your career. So you are unable to merely take a backseat position because there is no structured process that will ensure growth and promotion. It therefore makes you focus on the active role you need to play, the types of relationships you need to build and the way in which you need to manage your brand.” (C5)

5.14.3 In conclusion

Respondents, more particularly respondents from Group M attach high regard to the human elements in their dealings with the organisation and their talent management processes. It indicates a requirement for a reciprocal relationship that needs to exist between the employer and the employee. The breakdown in this relationship is evident

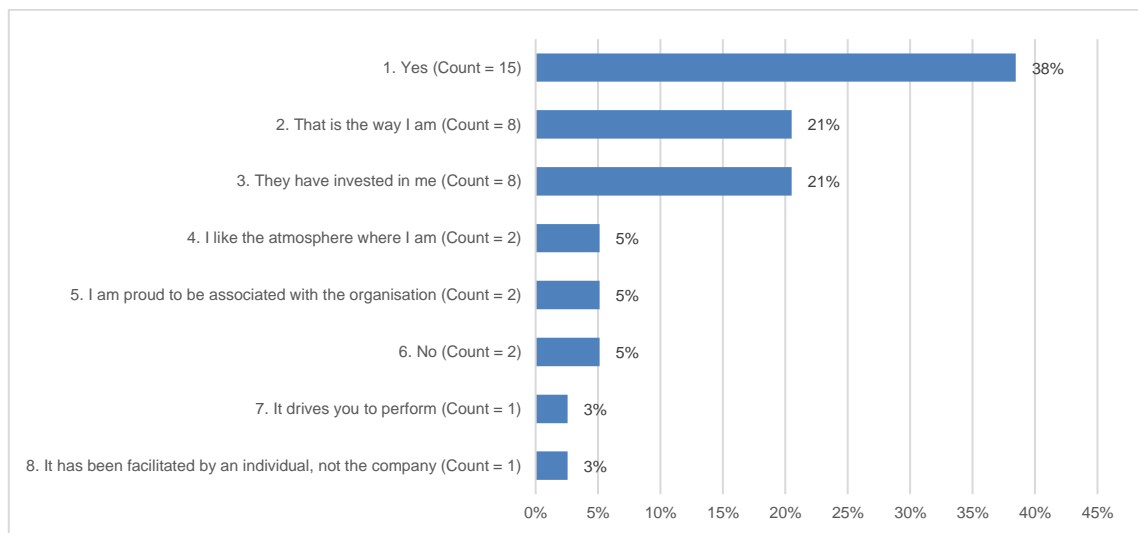
in responses from Group L. Finally Group F and T see the short comings of the existing talent management programs as a challenge that they are keen to overcome.

5.15 Findings of the fourth research objective, question 4 – c

5.15.1 Introduction

The researcher attempts to gauge whether respondents are willing to walk the extra mile for their organisations given the variances in responses obtained in the previous question. This is largely a question that requires a yes or a no response, but the researcher probes the respondents to get an understanding as to why they react the way that they do in terms of this questions. A large number of responses are positive as most respondents are willing to walk the extra mile for their employers, albeit for different reasons.

Figure 17: Summary of responses - Are you willing to walk the extra mile for your company?



5.15.2 Interpretation of the research findings, question 3 – c

Only a hand full of respondents are not willing to walk the extra mile as evident in point 6 above. The rest of the respondents however are willing to but the reasoning in terms of this fact is vastly differing. 2 – that is the way I am, obtained very high responses which indicates that the respondents have a very high internal drive to achieve. This is beneficial to the organisation but employers need to sharpen up on their recruitment processes in order to attract more of these people. The other notable point raised is point 3 – they employer invested in me. This factor reiterates again the importance of the reciprocal relationship that has to exist between employer and employee.

“I would if I see the that company has invested in me, so once again if I am doing everything I can to move my career forward and if I am rewarded with opportunities from the organisation or within the organisation then yes definitely it is symbiotic relationship.” (C4)

“Definitely if the environment is right, if you being rewarded effectively and here I am not only just talking about money I am talking holistically, if you rewarded with the right role, with the right level, autonomy within it in my case, you get the right levels of leadership and recognition.” (A3)

“The difference between the organisation and the line manager the fact that I am willing to walk the extra mile for my line manager primarily because I know how much he has done for me as an individual and it is difficult though as within the business I may not be prepared to do the same thing for other people.” (B1)

“I am willing to walk the extra mile because that is just in my makeup but it’s also has to do with the maybe their appreciation and value add that you get out of it.” (D1)

“This change happens and then it’s how its managed which is very frustrating so I would because its, I don’t want to drop the ball from me as a person, that is who I am, so I will but right know they kind of made it difficult for me to have that view.” (D3)

5.15.3 Conclusion

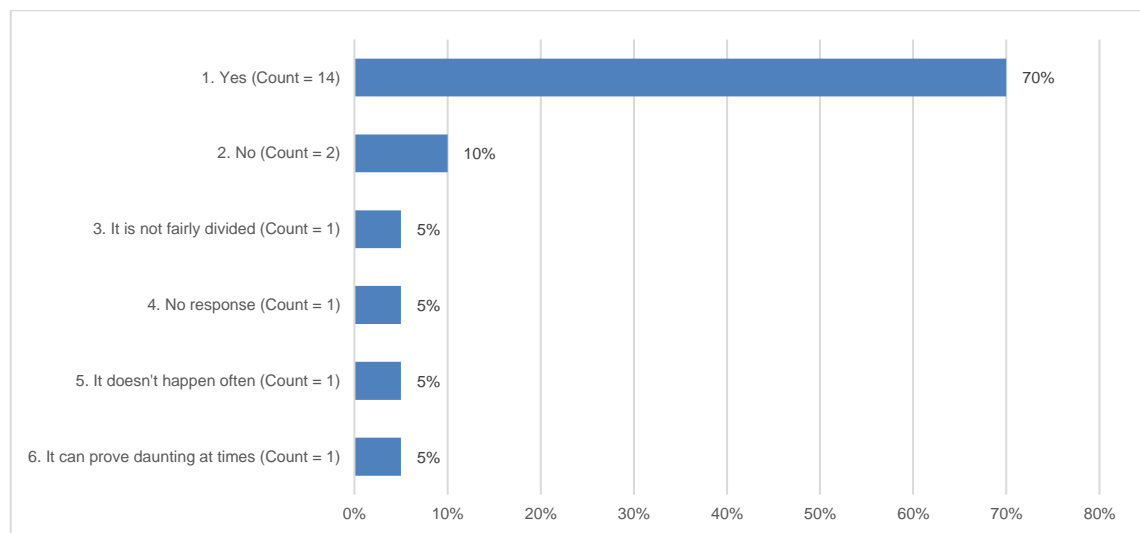
The findings show that leaders still play an integral part in talent management and employee engagement, similar to what Gallup denotes in his work on employee engagement. The organisation however could offer support in terms of dedicated structures and processes to employees and leaders in the organisation to intensify the impact talent management could have on employee engagement. Employees are no longer staying at organisations because they believe it’s their only option, investment from the organisation plays a large part in the working environment employees are happy to participate in. The group that comes across unsure of whether they are given high profile tasks is Group L, it may be a result of all the change the organisation is experiencing.

5.16 Findings of the fourth research objective, question 4 – d

5.16.1 Introduction

This question in particular was developed by the researcher to see whether respondents are employees in the organisation that likely get exposure to high profile tasks. The feedback is likely yes or no and the responses in terms of this question was mostly positive in terms of the fact that respondents are allocated high profile tasks. This allows the researcher to profile respondents in terms of their seniority aside from the title and position they currently take up.

Figure 18: Summary of responses - In your opinion are you often called upon to take on tasks with high impact to the organisation?



5.16.2 Interpretation of the research findings, question 4 – d

Majority of respondents believe that they do receive high impact/profile tasks. Very few believe that they do not.

“So I do, like I haven’t been in a role with a lot of responsibility but lately I did go through a project or I was involved in a project that really had a high impact and from my space I was the only one involved so it was quite scary and there was a lot of responsibility but also I think it’s also important that they won’t just expect something from you if they don’t think you going to pull through. So I also think that gives you a level of confidence that if you do get a task even though you might feel it’s too much responsibility or its too risky you know you not the right person for it, it should be someone more senior, you should know that you won’t be given this task unless you can actually perform.”
(B3)

5.16.3 Conclusion

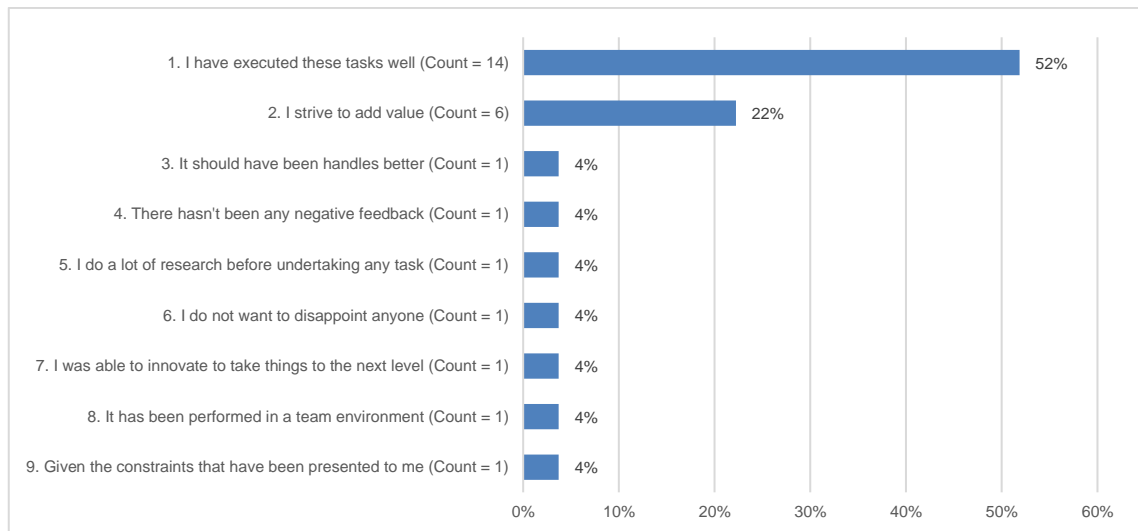
From the response above it becomes evident that high profile tasks likely assist in developing individuals and building their confidence so that they are better prepared for future opportunities. The fact that a lot of respondents do believe that they do receive high impact tasks likely speak to their tenure in the organisation as well as their levels of experience.

5.17 Finding of the fourth research objective, question 4 – e

5.17.1 Introduction

At this juncture the researcher explores the respondent’s belief of how they execute on these high impact tasks. More than 50% of the group state that they execute well on these tasks as evident below.

Figure 19: Summary of responses - How do you believe you execute on these tasks?



5.17.2 Interpretation of research findings, question 4 – e

Point 2 – I strive to add value, is a notable concept in terms of how the internal drive of respondents propel them to contribute to the organisation and add value.

“I think I do very well, also because of the brand that I have created for myself within the organisation, people tend to trust me and I’m usually given very challenging and high impact tasks because people trust me and because of that I don’t want to disappoint them.” (B2)

“I treat them with priority ok, so, because there is obviously a reason. I am lucky to have those opportunities or lucky enough to say that I have those opportunities and

obviously it awards you great exposure within the business so I come back to the networking bit, the exposure affords me to the network opportunity.” (C4)

“Very well I think again it’s still running and they did have an excellent improvement in the way things were being done within the team. I think it does highlight the fact that you know they do see you and they do recognise your abilities however seeing and recognising your abilities and actually doing something about it is two different things. So you know knowing that you’ve got this ability and if we do need you we will call you to do it but that’s not the same as saying ok you’ve got this ability to do it, let’s try and give you an avenue and growth path for your career where you can use that more often.” (D2)

“I think what drives me is to add value and make a difference, so when I am given a high task or task with high impact it excites me, I want to do it well, I want to do it right and I want to leave a legacy so whatever I role I am given it makes me really feel valued it makes me feel like I am contributing and I am trusted to deliver on such tasks and I think it is one of the big things that I would want in order for me to stay in an organisation where you constantly get exposed to initiatives that are of high impact.” (A2)

5.17.3 Conclusion

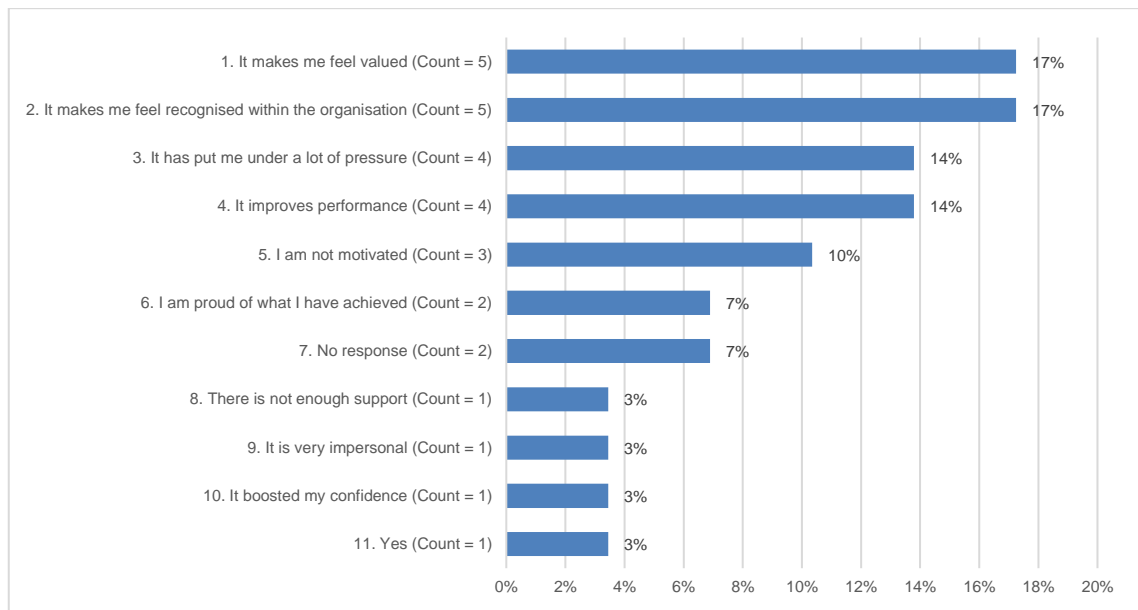
Respondents from Groups F, M, T and L agree in terms of the fact that they take the bull by the horns when given an opportunity to run with an important tasks. The reasons provided for this fact is however very different. The canvassing of one’s skills rears its head again in response to this question. The scale of these large businesses are likely contributing to the fact that respondents feel they need to be noticed. Opportunities are plentiful but so are suitable candidates. Respondents also refer to the need for a growth path, once they have developed the skills for difficult tasks they want the recognition but they also want to be leveraged in those roles so that they are able to exponentially increase their contribution. Finally personal brand comes into play again as a reason for increased levels of performance.

5.18 Findings of the fourth research objective, question 4 – f

5.18.1 Introduction

The researcher aims to evoke an emotional response in terms of how respondents feel when they are allocated high profile tasks but also in terms of how they feel about their performance when executing on these tasks.

Figure 20: Summary of responses - How does this make you feel?



5.18.2 Interpretation of the research findings

Quite notably point 1 – employees feel valued and point 2 – employees feel recognised within the organisations are the concepts that are highest ranked by respondents. This provides employers with additional tools that can be utilized to create engaged employees due to the fact that these difficult tasks push employees past their comfort zones and provides them with heightened belief in their abilities which has a direct effect on their confidence levels. Point 3 – it puts me under a lot of pressure is indicative of the fact that employees understand the expectation of their performance levels when having to deliver on important tasks and other factors ultimately results in increased performance – 4.

“No it makes me feel recognised within the organisation, so as a recognised individual, you would assume that you would hold quite a valued opinion amongst your peers so when called upon its, you feel that you are carrying a duty to always put your best foot forward.” (A1)

“I have on occasion managed areas which were out of my range of expertise and it is which actually where high profile and I was asked to actually fix them. So I have effectively fixed a number of areas that I have been associated with and the feeling of course has been in a sense of accomplishment and at the same time I have learned a lot which has also been positive for me.” (B1)

“The more complex and high profile the tasks are the more exposure you get to the rest of the bank, you know those are the types of things you need to present at various exco’s etc. and I think the more high profile those things are and the more other divisions of the bank want to adopt them, it’s almost an automatic interview for your next step you know, you’ve put your professional sort of accountability towards something that you have delivered on and you’ve owned it and run it and of course it is as good as the team you run it with but I think being able to access big forums of senior people through these types of initiatives it also certainly helps position yourself from a career planning and management point of view. I think there is always a great sense of achievement when you and your team can sit down and look at what you have achieved over the last year and how much of it has really added a massive amount of value to the business is always nice and a positive feeling.”(C2)

“It makes me feel like they obviously believe in my abilities but in the same token I don’t know if it’s because I don’t push them in as far as saying well are you really recognising me as talent whether it’s kind of like they have given the task because they know I can get it done but I don’t know if it’s actually improving my profile within in the institution to kill myself doing these tasks.” (D1)

5.18.3 Additional responses to probing questions

Respondents provide a view in terms of how they see talent management playing out in order to create an engaged workforce. The pertinent factor is the priority, focus and investment needed from organizations to make talent management programs a sustainable, durable initiative and not a quick fix to problems such as organisations that are losing their talent.

“I think it’s kind of like I am saying here, so you got the theory and you got the basic skeleton structure to execute you those and you got to be committed to it long term, you can’t just be new CEO comes in says we losing staff we need a talent program and then it doesn’t follow through, you got to actually commit and you going to have to make some difficult decisions because you going to have to take your best staff members out of their existing roles and throw them into different roles you got to protect them and make sure they not set up for failure.” (A3)

5.18.4 Conclusion

It creates a belief in abilities but has to come from a trusted source. In instances much like the feedback provided by respondent D indicates that employees would like to have a trust relationship with their employers. A relationship that surpasses the written

contract and progresses to a trusting relationship with allows for open communication. Interesting to note is none of the employees expect the investment from the employer without acknowledging that they too will have to invest back into the organisation. The emotional and intellectual skills that are developed by the pressure these profile tasks elicit is yet another attribute that employers can use to their advantage to elevate their employees engagement and performance.

Table 4: Summary of responses, objective 1 to 4

<p>Objective 1: Establish an appropriate meaning of talent management and employee engagement within the banking industry in South Africa</p>	<p>An overall understanding of talent management and employee engagement does exist amongst respondents. The talent management process seems to be stuck in the identification phase. Respondents also do not believe that the concepts are understood and/or adequately utilised by colleagues in business due to the lack of infrastructure and resources supporting talent management initiatives</p>
<p>Objective 2: Explore the relationship between talent management and employee engagement on an individual level</p>	<p>Most respondent do believe a relationship between talent management and employee engagement exist, a symbiotic relationship. Respondents consider themselves most engaged during times when they are challenge and when entering new roles. Employees desire for their employers to leverage the skills they bring to the table by utilising those skills in the appropriate roles.</p>
<p>Objective 3: Establish whether shared ownership of talent management increases levels of employee engagement</p>	<p>Respondents show great reliance for open communication and follow through on discussion that are conducted. Confidence in the organization is broken when employee aspirations do not come to fruition. Reliance is placed on leaders to get close to employees but</p>

	organisations can assist by placing supporting structures in place.
Objective 4: Establish whether employees will react with higher levels of discretionary effort towards an organisation that adequately manages their said talent.	Respondents show great willingness to increase performance when the organisation includes them in organizational objectives and changes. Respondents own the part they need to play in terms of investing in the organization but expect a reciprocal relationship with their employer. This investment could result in increased levels of engagement. A quick fix approach to talent management will likely yield undesirable results in terms of employee engagement.

5.19 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability in the research process was achieved through a level of consistency in terms of the standardisation of the methodology used to analyse the data.

5.20 Conclusion of Findings

The objective of this chapter was to demonstrate what was discovered in the qualitative study. The findings from the four questions generated accumulated results of significance and validity and established support of the prevailing literature conducted on talent management and employee engagement and highlighted factors pertinent to employers in a time wherein which skills mobility is rife and still on the rise.

6 Chapter 6: Discussion of results

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an analysis and interpretation of the research findings through the eyes of the literature review on talent management and employee engagement as documented in chapter two. Chapter two considers literature in terms of the definition, relevance and challenges of talent management. Chapter two also takes a view of employee engagement in terms of its definition and the positive and negative impact of employee engagement. Chapter five displays the results of the research process that encompassed seventeen in-depth interviews. These interviews were conducted to determine whether talent management can result in building an engaged workforce.

The four research objectives to be explored are listed below as follows:

- Establish an appropriate meaning of talent management and employee engagement within the banking industry in South Africa
- Explore the relationship between talent management and employee engagement on an individual level
- Establish whether shared ownership of talent management increases levels of employee engagement
- Establish whether employees will react with higher levels of discretionary effort towards an organisation that adequately manages their said talent.

The findings of the research study displayed in this chapter complement the understanding of talent management and its impact on employee engagement in the workplace.

6.2 Research objective one: Definition of talent management, employee engagement and the understanding of these concepts by peers

Objective one was developed to gauge how these terms are understood in the banking industry and to see whether these terms are mutually understood across these banks. A summary of the respondent's findings is documented in chapter five, when looking at figure 4, 5 and 6.

6.2.1 Talent management

Respondents define talent management as the identification of talent in a team or an organisation. It is also described as strategies for internal mobility or employers that provide support to grow employees. At a smaller scale it was found to be a skills development and retention initiative that is mutually beneficial to both the employer and

employee, the final view was in terms of employees whose ideals resonate with that of the organisation. The data therefore provides a very broad and loosely defined description of talent management. The findings also places emphasis on the identification of potential and says very little about the actions that ideally follow a structured talent management process. Likely due to the fact that respondents are not clear on what this will entail. The data highlights the organisations awareness of the importance of talent management but speaks very little about why this is important and how it will be utilised.

Literature supports this view as evident by (Church, Rotolo, Ginther, & Levine, 2015) as they confirm that organisations are also placing emphasis on the identification of talent and high potential candidates in an attempt to develop a strong bench of candidates that could be utilised for succession planning. This concept lacks follow through in terms of the bench of successful candidates as it is not evident in the findings. Literature aims to shed light to this concept by providing a reason for this ambiguity. McDonnell (2011) raises flags to organisations as talent management is still a topic that is in its early adoption phase of rigorous research and employers have to get to grips with the roles within their organisations that require talented employees.

“I think the first step to talent management will be you probably need to identify talent. In an ideal world I suppose everyone has got talent or an ideal organisation everyone that’s a part of it has a talent or a skill that they can provide, and I suppose being in a leadership or management you’re your job would be to identify what that skill or what that talent is and try and match with where there might be a gap or vacancy within the business and try and push that individual towards that. Important thing of talent management is recognising that, probably the key to getting the best out of somebody, making the most of their role that actually excites them not merely a role where you just need to fill a gap or be convenient for the organisation. To say who is this person, what are they really good at, what will they actually enjoy doing? and hopefully there is a gap within the organisation so you could link the two together.” (A4)

In conclusion, there was broad agreement from research participants relating to their understanding of talent management, they are clear on the need for talents to be identified and understand that a process needs to follow after this initial discussion. However the precise process to be mapped remains an uncertainty and is therefore vaguely discussed by participants, this too is supported by current literature as (Burkus & Osula, 2011) confirms that research on talent management has to be pushed from its

infancy into a more developed theory and the theory should aim to address a definitive description on talent management and should provide clarity on the end result of the talent management programmes.

6.2.2 Employee engagement

A holistic perspective of objective one is to get an understanding of how talent management and employee engagement is viewed by employees within the banking industry and whether this understanding is uniform across the banks in question. Respondents at various levels are interviewed to provide an inclusive view of the concepts. Respondents define employee engagement as a level of energy employees apply to their work, employees that go above and beyond their organisational objectives, employees who focus on the sustainability of the organisation and an individual that strives to add value to the organisation.

When considering literature conducted in this field it becomes evident that respondents and literature agree to a large extent on their understanding of employee engagement. Costa, Passos, & Bakker (2016) states that three dimension being: increased levels of energy, high enthusiasm and involvement with objectives at work and employees that are captivated with their work, make up engagement and reflect a similar picture as the data from respondents above.

“My understanding of employee engagement is how involved a person is in their work, how much you apply yourself in your role. Do you come to the office to just do what’s needed, a tick box mentality if not then you are likely engaged. Instead of just doing your own work you also make recommendations about how things can be improved, things that you can improve, how you can help and you go above and beyond.” (C5)

In conclusion the response amongst all Groups interviewed, Group F, M, T and L provide definitions of employee engagement that are alike. These same views are share in the literature. An interesting finding in the data is the employee’s willingness to take ownership of their engagement and their want for employers to meet them half way in this regard. This ties into literature that speaks to the fact that a lot of the engagement activities should be joint and shared responsibility between employer and employee as opposed to the organisation dictating to the employee on how to go about these matters. Chayes (2013) deduces that there is a necessity for employees to jointly partake in their development, in reality respondents have proved that they are ready to take up this role when considering the research findings.

6.2.3 Levels of understanding on these concepts amongst managers and peers

The data shows that respondents have a lack of confidence in the fact that their managers and colleagues have a firm handle on both talent management and employee engagement. The findings infer that only a select amount of people in business as well as leaders understand and implement these concepts, there is a breakdown in implementation due to preconceived ideals inherent in the organisation, employee engagement lacks adequate implementation and the identification of talent is questionable. Very few respondents believe that these concepts form a focal point of their business strategy.

Literature supports the view of respondents that organisations find it difficult to identify talent. Cappelli & Keller (2014) denotes the identification of the talent pool the first complex issue faced by organisations. Organisations need to use their limited resources to identify, develop and motivate talented people. Talent infers high performing individuals as well as those who have the potential to be highly effective in strategic roles. Literature and the research findings speak of a breakdown in the implementation of talent management due to preconceived ideals. Although individuals may have the ability to make notable changes in the organisation, they fall prey to the social systems, especially in larger corporates and these corporates therefore set the direction of the future (Warner, 2016). Senior leaders aim to find talent that who has the ability to change the way things are usually done but what becomes evident is that employees come to conform to organisations way of doing things, diminishing the innovation that may have come to fruition (Warner, 2016).

“I think at the level which I operate yes, the levels below, I think that it’s understood in parts, the concepts themselves are you know I think are probably linked to the levels of responsibility given to an individual in the organisation.” (B4)

In conclusion, very few of the respondents note a positive response in terms of the understanding of talent management and employee engagement. A few experience improvement in terms of the matter whilst others feel that the levels of understanding are increasing.

6.2.4 Objective 1: Establish an appropriate meaning of talent management and employee engagement within the banking industry in South Africa

From the research it can be deduced that a fair level of understating does exist amongst the respondents interviewed. The shortcomings in terms of why talent management has not necessarily obtained the desired levels of employee engagement resides in both a

complete lack of talent management and employee engagement initiatives or poor implementation and execution of the programs currently in place. One group disagrees with the majority and speaks to the fact that their organisation is good at keeping them engaged through talent management and this is group M. This could be due to the fact that this organisation understand their social contexts which allows for them to leverage employees that show an appropriate fit and therefore the employee's ideals naturally resonate with the organisation. The literature makes reference to this concept and infers organisations that have been effective at creating a large internal talent pool have done so because they have focused on people who flourish in their context and who also take to and align to their social system (Warner, 2016).

6.3 Research objective two: The relationship between talent management and employee engagement

The goal of this objective is to understand whether individual employees believe that a relationship exist between talent management and employee engagement. This is completed by investigating responses relating to the concepts. A summary of the respondent's findings is documented in chapter five, when looking at figure 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.

6.3.1 Do you think the company is managing your talent effectively?

Apart from one group, consensus was not reached in terms of whether respondents believe their employer's manager their talent effectively. Group M stands out as the Group with consistently positive responses. Two pertinent factors raised in responses to this question is that some experienced internal mobility and that leadership is highly supportive. On the opposite end however, concepts that also received a lot of responses were that talent management strategies were not robust and that these concept are understood but poorly implemented.

Literature agrees to what the research findings display and indicates that talent management is generally motivated by the organisations self-interest which results in employees being treated as mere resources (Downs & Swailes, 2013). This likely explains the disconnect between what the respondent as an employee perceives talent management to be and what the organisation sees in terms of what it can get out of it. The literature denotes that organisations only make provision for talent management activities in terms of data collection and high level conversation in terms of the findings, very little is done implement the action items derived from this exercise (Robertson & Cooper, 2010). Priority needs to be placed on talent management strategies not just in terms of physical but also in terms of financial investments so that it can be adequately implemented and effectively utilised (Robertson & Cooper, 2010).

“Ok so I don’t think they are managing it effectively at the moment. There’s a lot of things again that comes back to the lack of engagement where you would make suggestions and you feel like it’s not being heard, I also think with the structures they don’t have a strategy in place where you could go to actually you know discuss these things or they would effectively engage you or assist you in managing in what you feel, what talents or what skills you can offer to the business.” (D2)

6.3.2 How does this impact your performance?

Respondents placed great emphasis on the fact that appropriate talent management leads to the aspiration of greater things and also that it improves the overall performance of employees. A sense of ownership is ignited amongst respondents who believe their talent is being managed well and it also has a positive effect on their confidence. Group L is conflicted in terms of responses they provide on the question, indicating a loss of talent in the organisation due to its poor management of talent, they experience a sense of misplacement in their organisations. A need is identified amongst employees for their employers to leverage their respective skills in roles that will exude their abilities. Emphasis was also placed on the fact that talent management could be challenging to those people who are not part of the talent management initiatives and it also could decrease morale in the organisation.

Literature agrees with the research findings in terms of the negative effect it could have on the organisations morale. Downs & Swailes (2013) posit that the exclusion of less talented people from the talent management programmes could be an indication to others that some groups of employees are better than others, this in affect could have a negative impact on the self-efficacy of those employees not selected today or in the future. Further literature also highlights again that matters that benefit the organisation in terms of talent, likely does not yield a benefit to non-talented individuals mostly because the exclusion may have an impact on their levels of job satisfaction and their social standing (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013).

“Yes okay so what I could maybe say is that, it is frustrating if you feel like you are a person who is performing and according to whatever your objectives are in your role, you know that you are performing against those, but if that talent and that effort is not being recognised, then yes I think it can become frustrating, it can have quite a big impact on you in a negative way and impact your enthusiasm and your motivation

levels, okay sometimes in a big organisation not everyone is always going to get recognised as quickly as they deserve to be.” (A4)

6.3.3 Do you consider yourself an engaged employee?

Although majority of the respondents indicated that they consider themselves engaged, they did so for very different reasons. The reasons for their levels of engagement is not necessarily driven by the organisation, but it’s also driven from an innate need to want to perform and do well in the roles they occupy. Finally the way they are perceived in the organisation also plays a big part, this is visible in the response that indicates that I am engaged because I am a leader in this organisation. The group of respondents that are less inclined to display high levels of engagement towards their organisation emanate mostly from Group L and the reason they revolt is because they are not clear on their role and the contribution they are making as employees of their organisation.

Literature agrees in terms of how employees perceive the working environment. According to Amankwaa & Anku-Tsede (2015) employees have become conscious of their work environment and have also become attentive in terms of their possible growth plans within the organisation that is likely enabled by their employers. These talented employees will show resistance against leaders and/or organisations that do not support their aspiration and will explore opportunities outside of their organisations if the anticipated growth does not realise (Amankwaa & Anku-Tsede, 2015).

“I would consider myself engaged, yes I think I am an engaged employee, I am engaged because I think I am as a leader of an organisation I have a reputation to uphold, I have colleagues that report into me, who I need to lead them to give report on what needs to be done, so I am engaged in that perspective, I am also engaged because I see that the organisation has identified me as talent, through a talent management process, and I want to maintain that level of, I don’t know what you would call it but I want to maintain that perspective that the organisation has of me as talent and so I have to keep performing, keep my profile up there. Had I been at the bottom end I think it would have negatively impacted my performance because I would’ve been distracted looking at the opportunities outside of the organisation.” (A1)

6.3.4 When did you consider yourself most engaged during your career?

The data shows that employees are most engaged when they enter a new role, when their efforts are recognised, when employees are given more responsibility and when they are in a leadership role. The concepts by far outweigh other reason for employees to be engaged. Respondents also indicate a need for enjoyment of the roles they take

up and highlights again the necessity for clarity in terms of their deliverables and their holistic contribution to the organisations goals. Other highly ranked responses speak to the need of employees to know what is expected of them and also to understand what it is that they are doing.

In terms of knowing and understand what organisations expect from employees, literature provides an agreeable insights in terms of this concept and indicates that some may need more guidance than others. Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks (2015) posit that not all employees have an equal requirement or need for leadership within the work place but that certain employees may require clarity in terms of organisational goal achievement. Transformational leadership skills will likely yield the best results in terms of the performance of these individuals. Further to this Costa, Passos, & Bakker (2016) denotes that work engagement can be considered as a rewarding, positive and emotionally motivational state of occupational happiness.

“I think that last year or actually 2 years ago when my role was broadened further and I started working at a level where my interactions were with executive individuals my engagement levels were heightened and I think it has driven primarily by the fact that you start understanding what the various areas within the business are trying to achieve.” (B1)

6.3.5 In your opinion do you think it is possible for a relationship to exist between talent management and employee engagement, if yes how do you see the relationship playing out?

Employers believe that with effective talent management, employee engagement will follow naturally. Caution is however raised by respondents in terms of the effectiveness of talent management strategies as they believe the best results will be presented if the organisation incorporates talent management as a permanent, high priority objective. The findings show that respondents believe that a symbiotic relationship exist between talent management and employee engagement.

Literature agrees with the research findings and deduce that organisation stand to considerably gain from effective talent management (Pulse of the profession, 2013). The notable advantages evident specifically in a project management environment are putting talent obstacles and challenges to bed by effectively engaging people to perform and exceed company goals. Benefits in terms of communication that is clear and consistently reaches all is also evident in the literature. This in return creates high performing teams (Pulse of the profession, 2013).

“I think there is a relationship that does exist already in that by putting talent management processes in place, business invariably ensure that employees become more engaged and that relationship I think will continue that as soon as you have effective talent management in place people do become more engaged.” (B1)

In conclusion the agreement is made that all respondents believe that a relationship between talent management and employee engagement should exist, but insist that the mere awareness of talent management by employers and employees are not sufficient in solving for levels of engagement, focus and investment is required by both parties.

6.3.6 Objective 2: Explore the relationship between talent management and employee engagement on an individual level

From the research it can be inferred that employees believe that a relationship does exist between talent management and employee engagement and that this relationship carries the potential to be fruitful to both parties. Literature agrees with the above mentioned as (Cardy & Lengnick-Hall, 2011) suggests that the organisations competitive advantage can be maintained by retaining talented employees and that this needs to become a focal point as most research considered preventative measures as opposed to actual retention strategy development. This loss of talent can result in adverse strategic and operational performance by the organisation (Cardy & Lengnick-Hall, 2011). The concern however is that it isn't inherently clear whether organisations have made talent management a focal point on their agenda's. All but Group M remained inconsistent about the talent management processes that their organisations follow. The other concern is the influence CEO's and senior leaders have on the talent selection process. Instead of promoting talent; they promote people with whom they find familiarity (Warner, 2016). Smart leaders rig the system and they work hard to canvas themselves to executives with whom they find familiarity (Warner, 2016). The involvement of leaders in this act leaves talent management programmes ill equipped to serve its purpose and executives need to be aware of this pitfall (Warner, 2016).

6.4 Research objective three: Establish whether shared ownership of talent management increase levels of employee engagement

The goal of this objective is to understand whether employees believe that shared ownership of talent management could have an effect on employee engagement. The questions probes respondents in terms of their current levels of participation as well as their capabilities to navigate their careers. The respondents also address their perspective on their employer involvement in this regard. A summary of the respondent's findings is documented in chapter five, when looking at figure 12, 13 and 14.

6.4.1 Do you actively participate in managing your career?

Most respondents address this question by referring to their aspiration and completion of further education, which increases the skills level of employees which has a direct effect on their levels of confidence. Employees also note that they prefer drawing on their own strengths during challenging times. The other interesting fact noted by respondents is that they believe shared ownership of talent management means they have to actively participate as well. Respondents from all Groups F, M, T and L are in agreement in terms of the fact that they participate in managing their careers. The other ways in which employers believe they make their growth intentions known is by networking and ensuring they are visible to executives.

Literature provides a number of reasons as to why employees believe they need to upskill themselves via further education when looking at the research findings. The most pertinent is global competition, firstly organisations utilised the same talent pool globally which means local and international business compete for the same talents (Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow, 2010). To add to this organisations are seeking exceptional skills and leaders that are able to lead international teams effectively. The problem to this however is that senior educated and highly skilled staff are very rare and are not in sufficient supply to meet the organisations demand (Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow, 2010). Finally as mentioned by other authors, organisations are aiming to build a talent pipeline so that they have talents on hand for future strategic roles so that they can stay ahead of the shortage (Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow, 2010). The research findings show ample support in terms of the fact the respondents are aware that they need to canvas themselves in order to get future senior roles, education therefore becomes a serious consideration as part of their path to differentiate themselves.

“So I think I fully agree with that, in terms of our environment it is a shared ownership and the way that I participate in managing my career of course would be in terms of studying and doing short courses which align to what I need to deliver as an individual within the business.” (B1)

6.4.2 Do your seniors share/support your view of your future?

The respondents paint a fairly disjointed picture in terms of whether they believe their seniors buy into their career aspirations. Group M presents itself again as the only group who believes without a doubt that their seniors support their view of the future. The other groups raise pertinent matters such as the fact that they deliberate their own future aspirations by themselves that aspirations are only shared with certain people in their organisation and that talent management strategies are not effectively implemented.

What comes to light is that respondents seek a relationship with the employer wherein which open, two way communication can commence and that respondents place a reliance on their leaders to take the process past the formal discussion phase in current performance management discussions. Confidence in employers are lost when employees experience a lack of follow through.

Literature on the matter infers that a need for organisation to place talent management as a focal point becomes evident so that leaders have the support of the organisations to carry talent management discussion through to objectives that are actioned. Robertson & Cooper (2010) denotes that organisations regularly participate on employee well-being initiatives extracting data from employees in terms of their engagement levels and then having discussion with employees in terms of the findings. The pitfall to this positive action is that employees expect action to be taken with regards to the matters they discuss and the good this was intended to come from the initiative is lost due this notable shortcoming (Robertson & Cooper, 2010).

“Yes they do, I have been fortunate I think look the political environment and what is important for one is to find a sponsor within an organisation. I can’t say, with my immediate leader it took a while to fast track things and the intervention of a sponsor who was outside of my business unit actually accelerated the process. So I think in a complex big bank that is very political one needs to find sponsors and one must be well networked in order to move ahead and get help.” (B2)

6.4.3 Do you believe shared ownership of talent management could have an effect on employee engagement?

A clear leader in terms of responses is identified and over 50% of the group believe that shared ownership of talent management could have an effect on employee engagement. Notable conditions in terms of this response is however raised. Respondents highlight the importance of the alignment of goals between employer and employee, raise the importance of recognition from the employer as it increases employee performance and they also believe joint ownership of this concept will lead to staff retention.

Literature agrees with the view respondents provide as Gallup (2013) denotes that trust and transparency is essential for employee retention and talent management, especially given the current landscape of South Africa. Communication is therefore the conduit to achieving relationships that illuminate trust and transparency. Different leadership styles need to be considered and literature shows that transformational leadership could serve as a barrier to attrition of talented employees as it encompasses attributes that could

lead to higher levels of motivation and also has the capability to improve the spirits of employees (Amankwaa & Anku-Tsede, 2015).

“I do, I think in this organisation for example there’s a lot of canvassing, openness about who is seen as talent, who is ready to move, who is on the cuss of moving, who is a flight risk and all of that is done quite openly and the result that you get is that, there is the immediate manager that feels the need to sponsor the person that is being recognised as talent but also the assumption is that by that person appearing on a list or whatever it is, there’s been a conversation about whether that person wants to get to, so as an example if I have, if there have been 6 people earmarked for the next role and I am in the room where one on those people, who are one of the people that report to me, the expectation specifically for this organisation is that I should be able to punt and represent the interests of that person to the rest of that group, so in that sense I have the ownership of making sure that that talent is recognised and rewarded accordingly but similarly I know that if I am saying the next persons role should look like this, I know it’s because that person said that to me and then there’s these things that we’ve done to tick these boxes and therefore this person is ready to get there and I believe therefore that if you’ve got the shared ownership of talent management, not only do you get better results because then you are not pushing people into roles that they don’t really want to get into but you also have a staff member, if I’m the immediate boss, who is not ambiguous about where they might end up so you not going to be surprised tomorrow when they leave for another organisation or for another role but yet you earmarked them for the next role but if you not told them that’s the case you can’t expect them to have it any other way.” (B4)

To conclude alignment is reached amongst respondents from all Groups, Group F, M, T as they all believe that shared ownership of talent management could have an impact on employee engagement. The word could infers that this is not yet adequately supported by business. In effect the research findings presented one group that already has adequate infrastructure in place, the rest of the groups are left wanting. The data also show that employees are playing ball, but that they are overlooked due to the sheer size of their organisations and the lack of focus this concept carries in organisations.

6.4.4 Objective 3: Establish whether shared ownership of talent management increases levels of employee engagement

From the research findings it can be noted that respondents have an unwavering belief that shared ownership of talent management could have a positive effect on employee engagement. Respondent view their dealings with their employers the same way they

view relationships. A possibility of developing a shared talent management process with the use of the aspects that respondents elude to in the research could facilitate higher inclusion of employees and increased levels of engagement, it also serves as a tool to open communication channels. The advantage of the shared model is to allow employees to take ownership of their careers by creating a platform that can be utilised for active employer and employee engagement (Royal & Sorenson, 2015). When confidence in employers is lost and trust between employee and employer is broken employers tend to experience the impact in the same way they would in a relationship. There is dire need for open and truthful conversation and an even greater need for a feedback loop in terms of matters that are raised. Effective communication can reinforce the relationship between employee and employer and lead to sharing of what both parties require in the work place. Literature provides information that speaks to sharing of requirements in terms of the utilisation of one's individual strengths. Respondents desire roles wherein which they can leverage their own abilities and in doing so exponentially increase their output. Van Woerkom, Oerlemans, & Bakker (2016) agrees that the use of individual strengths in the work environment could have a positive effect on employee engagement. The fact that employees are encouraged by their employers to utilise their strengths for roles at the work place will not only increase levels of work engagement but also plays a part in enhancing employee self-efficacy (van Woerkom, Oerlemans, & Bakker, 2016).

6.5 Research objective 4: Establish whether employees will react with higher levels of discretionary effort towards an organisation that adequately manages their said talent.

The goal of this objective is to understand whether respondents themselves believe that they will apply more energy to their roles if their talent is adequately managed. This information is extracted through the use of questions relating to how the respondents perceive their organisations talent management processes, when indeed these organisations do poses them and also how employees feel about the way in which it is or isn't implemented. Some of the questions deduce a yes/no response but respondents provide additional details in terms of their response. A summary of the responses is evident in chapter 5, figure 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20

6.5.1 Do you believe your career or talent is managed by your organisation?

This question explores employees view on the organisations holistic talent management practices. A large number of responses go to both yes they do and not they do not and it therefore indicates very poor agreement between the respondents. A number of respondents believe that talent management is for a select few and that it favours certain

individuals. Together with this perception respondents also believe that being selected as talent depends on who you know and some feel that it's a process that they have to tackle by themselves. Respondents feel that there is little consistency in the process and that it seems to end at the conversation stage, as eluded to earlier. Respondents also raise the fact that big organisations do offer plentiful opportunities and that some of the respondent's experienced rapid internal mobility.

Literature agrees to this sentiment, a socially harmful situation develops when the perception is created that outside employees are seen to be more significant and valuable than the current internal employees (Downs & Swailes, 2013). Social circumstances are further harmed by the emphasis that is placed on a hand full of individuals as opposed to the bigger group, which impacts performance of the bigger group as the importance and value of team work is disregarded (Downs & Swailes, 2013). Further literature however agrees to the research findings stating that organisations do not want to lose talent. Amankwaa & Anku-Tsedde (2015) posit that organisation deem the retention of talented employees a critical success factor. Literature however also sheds a differing perspective in terms of talent management and talent identification. People inherently poses or develop certain skills and abilities, talent is a socially constructed occurrence that take up different meanings in different situations (Downs & Swailes, 2013). The perception that talent can be identified is therefore flawed as not free of biases (Downs & Swailes, 2013).

“No I don't think so if I think about it practically had I not been the one who's actually shouting hello I have reached the ceiling, no one would actually know. So I do believe that they are only assisting me now because I have shouted that you know what I have reached the ceiling but I don't think it's something the organisation does by themselves to say ok here's this person, this is how far they have come therefore we need to do this you know, so if you don't take the first step, then no one will know.” (B2)

6.5.2 Does this excite and inspire you? (To know your career and talent is important to the organisation?)

Respondents are probed to look at the human or emotional side of themselves when answering the question on whether the effective management of talent inspires them. Those who did not provide a favourable response in terms of this question is also is asked to provide a response, albeit negative. A large number of responses documented indicated that their organisations talent management processes does inspire them and a fairly large number said it does not. The explanation to the unfavourable responses focused on the fact that implementation of it is poor, support is lacking and it does not

instil loyalty. The respondents who answered favourably however states that it can drive you to perform, that it creates a sense of value to employees and the inclusion that the organisation offers to employees in terms of their bigger plans excites them.

Literature agrees in terms of the benefits that effective talent management can yield. The objective of talent management is to create a sustainable organisation that yields high performance this is unswerving (Talent Management - What is talent management?, 2010). This is evident in the data wherein which respondents state that the effective management of their talent drives them to perform better. The organisation is therefore better equipped to reach strategic objectives. Talent management can be broken down into a set of integrated human resource processes. The processes are developed to entice talented employees, to grow them so as to produce and retain an engaged workforce (Talent Management - What is talent management?, 2010). This final matter is also raised in the data as employee's states that effective talent management creates loyalty towards the organisation.

"Yes it does and I think having moved from one institution to my current organisation, one of the things stands out for me is around the ability to move internally and the career trajectory within the group is phenomenal and I haven't experienced that in this magnitude at my previous employer and there's so many things of course that one isn't happy about but that's the one thing that completely stands out for me and keeps me actually within this organisation." (B2)

6.5.3 Are you willing to walk the extra mile for your company?

Respondents indicate that they are largely willing to walk the extra mile for their companies. The two most notable response are that employer do so because of their innate characterises or because they want to reciprocate the investment the organisation has made in them. Employees take up a role in terms of their contribution to the business and want their talent to be seen by the employer, reward and recognition therefore come into play as employees are motivated to perform when they are recognised by their employers. There does however seem to be a reliance on the direct line leader to display the organisations standing in terms of the possible investment it may make towards the employees.

Literature agrees on relevance leaders have in organisation in terms of keeping employees engaged. Royal & Sorenson (2015) infers that of the total world population only 10% are excellent at leading and managing people but at the moment only 18% of

the 10% take up leadership roles. Which leaves a gaping hole in terms of the leaders required to engage a multitude of employees.

“Yes I am willing to walk the extra mile because the company has investigate my, in my wellbeing and in my growth and my career, I think the only way an employee can become engaged is where the organisation actively invest in them and actively has a conversation with employees within in the organisation where they are, what the gaps are, how the organisation can close those gaps.” (A1)

6.5.4 In your opinion are you often called upon to take on tasks with high impact to the organisation?

The allocation of high profile tasks have different meanings to organisations and the question is asked to explore whether the respondents do receive high profile tasks. The question elicits either a yes or no response and in this case majority of the groups believe they are allotted high profile tasks. Very few do not received high impact tasks and a handful feel that it is not fairly allocated. Some respondents note that it stretches their ability while some believe it increases the workload they are expected to get through which could be a skill in itself.

In literature it becomes evident that some organisations take a unitarist approach towards the concept of talent and therefore the likely allocation of complex takes to develop skills and competencies is internally motivated and focused on that firm’s immediate requirement. This could in effect hinder the employability of talented staff as they may end up lacking skills that are required to operate outside of their current organisations (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013)

“I wouldn’t say more so than average. I mean I think it is a symptom in this organisation that a certain group of people in whichever environment you happen to be in, keep on getting loaded with more and more because they are the dependable hands that get stuff done, my frustration around that is, do you see a direct correlation in that and in the outcome and there would be reward recognition and probably financial at the end of the day. Do I see a difference in my bonus which is a performance related, discretionary bonus compared to my peers based on the workload that I get asked to take on and I think I can categorically say no.” (A3)

6.5.5 How do you believe you execute on these tasks?

Majority of the respondents are of the opinion that they deliver well on these tasks allocated to them. Respondents are aware of their brand in terms of how they perform and feel concerned with not purposefully disappointing colleagues or managers.

Canvassing of one's skills has also been noted as an important factor that employees need to be aware of in their working environments. With this in mind and to ensure appearances are maintained, employees push themselves to execute well on the tasks handed to them as a display of skill and talent. Some believe it will set the stage for the next promotion whereas others believe that they may just be getting these tasks because the organisation understands their capabilities and therefore takes advantage of it. In these cases employees feel that it may not lead to any future opportunities yet they still deliver as part of their responsibility to manage their own profile and talent.

Research however denotes a differing perspective in terms of the ownership and role of employee in the talent management process. Much of the literature on talent management denotes a role for the employer in the process and not much clarity is provided in the role of the employee (Thunnissenn, Boselie, & Frutyier, 2013). This may add to the ambiguity in terms of what the organisations expects in the allocation of complex tasks and what the employer expects in return.

"I treat them with priority ok, so, because there is obviously a reason. I am lucky to have those opportunities or lucky enough to say that I have those opportunities and obviously it awards you great exposure within the business so I come back to the networking bit, the exposure affords me the networking opportunity." (C4)

6.5.6 How does this make you feel?

Respondents indicate that the allocation of high impact tasks makes them feel valued, it provides a level of recognition as the employer displays trust towards the capabilities of the employee. It has a positive effect on the employee's performance but also adds a bit of pressure in terms of expectations that are present in terms of delivery. Recognition, inclusion, communication and trust are common themes evident across the findings and play an integral part in how the respondents perceive their organisations. Respondents also experience increased confidence due to how peers perceive them given the high impact tasks that they have been allocated but also due to the fact that the organisation entrusts them with matters of priority. Literature however flags a warning in terms of the possibility of overconfidence that may be developed which could lead to impractical optimisms by employees which in effect increases frustration and may hamper performance (Bakker, Albrecht, & Leiter, 2010).

On the other hand literature provides agreement in terms of the above mentioned as it denotes that the allocation of adequate job resources have an impact on employee engagement (Albrecht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey, & Saks, 2015). Factors such as direct

manager or line leader support, one on one or check in session with closed loop feedback as well as levels of employee autonomy are considered effective in this regard and could lead to exceptional performance by employees in their roles (Albrecht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey, & Saks, 2015). The research findings show that the majority of the respondents perform well because they are invested in the organisation for a number of reasons. Their investment in the organisations objectives has a direct impact on their performance and eventually the organisations performance (Winsor-Games, 2016).

“For me at the end of it - I did it, any doubt I previously had in myself was kind of silly, you can actually do this if you put your mind to it. So I think it really boosted my confidence and also it just showed me that I do know what I am doing even though sometimes I don’t feel like I do. I mean I definitely feel like you know they see something more then I necessarily can see.” (B3)

6.5.7 Establish whether employees will react with higher levels of discretionary effort towards an organisation that adequately manages their said talent.

Largely yes, employees have already picked up responsibilities in a loosely defined role in terms of managing their own talent. The research findings show a remarkable sense of ownership in terms of the respondent’s personal investment and levels of performance towards the organisations. They do however expect the organisations to reciprocate their investment and strive to be included in the planning and long term objectives of the organisation. What is missing in the data however is the inclusion of the employees by the employer in developing and implementing talent management activities. As evident in the research findings employee engagement activities are largely driven by the organisations for the organisation. The only possible exception to the rule is was respondents from Group M that seem to be employed in an organisation that have placed talent management as a strategic objective and focus point. This is the first point of departure for organisation in their attempt to obtain effective results from their talent management activities.

A concern in terms of the discoveries of both the research and the literature is the elitist approach that is mostly followed in the process of identifying talent. The emphasis is placed on a very small number of employees in the workplace that display exceptional qualities, expertise and skills, this in turn creates discriminatory properties in the process (Downs & Swailes, 2013). This is emphasised by the sheer size of banks in South African and perpetuates the feelings of exclusions experience by the bulk of the workforce. It also leads respondents to believe that talent management is likely an

activity that is seen as a nice to have in their organisation or something that is rapidly implemented when the organisation experiences risk in terms of talent attrition.

To conclude, at this juncture another look at the model below becomes pertinent as it encompasses valuable steps for leaders to follow. Point 1 to 5 on the model below indicates valuable steps organisations can utilise to engage the workforce, it also highlights the importance of leadership coaching in order for them to provide the relevant support and guidance to employees. The research findings however highlights one short coming in terms of the model. The possible shortfall of this model could likely be the fact that employees are not included in the initiation and development of the below engagement exercise. A reliance is placed on leaders to drive the initiative through the organisation. This creates a possible weakens in the process for two reasons: Firstly, while some employees do rely on guidance and support from leaders, others prefer autonomy and prefer to be self-managed, how will they be kept engaged given their disposition? Secondly and probably most importantly is a simple ratio. Masses of employees are at the received end and a handful of leaders are expected to drive the initiative, leaders that may not even be engaged employees themselves as earlier discussed in the literature. Gallup (2013) insists that so few of them are in fact engaged. These factors could in effect yield the output of this model ineffective.

Figure 21: The road to full engagement (Robertson & Cooper, 2010)



6.5.8 Conclusion

This chapter was considered the research findings from Chapter five through the eyes of the existing literature evident in chapter two. It also takes cognisance of the bigger business problem that was documented and explained in chapter one. In some cases

the research findings were supported by the existing literature but there are also cases evident where disagreement was met between theory and practice, finally the findings extended on the current literature.

7 Chapter 7: Conclusion and recommendations

The conclusion of the research findings and research objectives as well as the goal in determining whether the outcomes of the research study were consistent with the research objectives is encompassed in chapter 7. A revised assessment of whether talent management could impact employee engagement and effectively create an engaged workforce is also provided in chapter 7, with importance placed on areas wherein which this research study contributed in enhancing the current literature on this subject. Proposals and suggestions are made to human resources partners, change agents and leaders in industry. The chapter concludes with recommendations for possible future research.

7.1 Research background and objectives

Gallup (2013) denotes as few as 13% of employees are actively engaged and likely invested in their organisations objectives. This leaves a negligible amount of employees that are able to generate income, increase the acquisition of new customers and perform at optimal levels. Line leaders are also expected to play a part to increase employee engagement levels but the output from this initiative could be trivial as line leaders are expected to place emphasis on other strategic objectives required for the organisation. The net effect are employees that are not adequately engaged and this could likely be addressed by an approach that considered shared ownership of the initiatives. Chayes (2013). According to Burkus & Osula (2011) organisations have a reliance on talented individuals as their presence yields organisations in a superior state of performance when compared to other organisations. According to Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow (2010) talent management is a global challenge to organisations and its driven by the fact that organisations themselves seek employees with exceptional skills, the labour market is experiencing and talent shortage and this is expedited by the ease of global mobility and finally organisations are building talent pipelines in advance to when they actually have roles for these talented individuals therefore leaving an even larger talent gap in the market.

The research study aims to find a shared understanding of talent management and employee engagement. Given the ambiguity prevalent in business and academia it likely adds to the ineffective development and implementation of talent management initiatives. The research study further explores whether there is a relationship present between talent management and employee engagement. It considers whether shared ownership of talent management could increase levels of employee engagement and finally explores whether employers will react with higher levels of energy towards

organisations that effectively manages their talent. The fundamental discoveries discussed in Chapter 6 are provided in a summary below.

7.2 Most pertinent Findings

Semi structured interviews were conducted amongst 17 representatives of the banking industry. The interviews were utilised to explore the research objectives and additional probing questions were posed in order to obtain deeper insights into the responses. The output of the research findings played a complimentary role in terms of the current literature as it developed supporting, contradictory and new evidence to the table. This new evidence discovered brought to light insights that are directly related to the four originally stated research questions. While a significant portion of the findings evident in chapter 6 stood in agreement with existing literature, the research study still accomplished a contribution to the broader theory base and built on the subject area by deliberating comprehensive benefits and challenges whilst raising essential activities and initiatives that can aid the banking industry's growth in maturity and know how in terms of this topic. Research findings of significance discussed below.

7.2.1 Establish an appropriate meaning of talent management and employee engagement within the banking industry in South Africa.

The understanding in terms of the concepts, talent management and employee engagement was fairly well understood across all respondents interviewed. It did however reveal that certain respondents believe it's a tick box activity that their employers embark on in order to keep employees engaged and a tool that they can utilise to initiate possible promotions whilst others believe it's a culture driven by the organisation. The breakdown of these concepts albeit understood is evident by respondents in the development and execution stages. Most respondents agree that their organisations facilitate conversations in terms of talent management and employee engagement but that they are disappointed in the lack of action that follows the engagement surveys and discussions.

7.2.2 Explore the relationship between talent management and employee engagement on an individual level

The second significant finding is that most respondents believe that a relationship does exist and if there isn't a relationship already, it should exist. Respondents believe that the relationship between talent management and employee engagement is symbiotic and that employees cannot be adequately engaged if they are not provided with the relevant tools and support. Respondents believe that reciprocity should exist between themselves and the employer and that they want to yield what they have invested into the organisation. It becomes apparent that the way in which employees perceive their

levels of loyalty has shifted towards a give and take relationship and that their attrition is driven by increased mobility of skills in the market. Literature indicates the awareness of organisation to win in the war for talent, in reality though it does not appear that talent management has reached a critical focus point on the organisations strategic agenda.

7.2.3 Establish whether shared ownership of talent management increases levels of employee engagement.

The next dominant finding indicates that employees believe without a doubt that shared ownership of talent management can increase levels of employee engagement. Respondents voice the importance of how organisations could leverage their individual strengths at the workplace in order to yield exponential levels of performance. These important pieces of information can however only be shared if open communication exist between employer and employee. Respondents ideal would be for a relationship to exist between employer and employee wherein which knowledge sharing, open communication and regular feedback on action items can occur. This feedback loop could also be used to share less favourable information between the two parties which may reduce the impact of scenarios wherein which employees may be disappointed. Employees display a willingness to be a part of their career planning and mapping.

7.2.4 Establish whether employees will react with higher levels of discretionary effort towards an organisation that adequately manages their said talent.

The research shows that respondents will increase their levels of energy exertions in order to optimally reach the organisations objectives. Adding to this respondents have already shown a remarkable sense of ownership in terms of their roles in the talent management process. A shortcoming evident in the research is that some organisation do not see talent management as a long term objective and they see it as an imposition that has to be done, this is the opposite way of how respondents view the talent management process. Respondents further add that they do not believe the talent management process is transparent and fair and that exclusion of the majority is often evident in business. This is perpetuated by the sheer size of banking organisations and lack of inclusion of employees have a likely impact on employee morale and performance. Talent management processes are generally conducted in an autocratic manner, this process of dictation diminishes valuable input that the employee could add.

7.3 Recommendations

Given the discoveries and findings evident in the research findings, the following recommendations have been made.

7.3.1 Recommendations to leaders in industry

The world is opening up at a rapid pace which allows talented and skilled employees the opportunity to expand their horizons by taking these opportunities presented to them. Organisations are therefore no longer guaranteed of a loyal workforce and need to be aware of what acts as drivers to their talented employee base. Employee engagement plays a pivotal role in optimising the organisations performance and also plays a role in keeping employees loyal to the organisation.

Leaders of business need to get close to their employees and come to grips with what it is that employees want. The responses show that a possible solution to their disillusionment with their organisations could likely be resolved with the basic ingredients required to build any relationship. The prevalent attributes will be listed and discussed as follows:

Communication – the word in itself is likely overused and probably very seldom exercised. Leaders need to open the channels of communication with employees in a sincere and trustworthy manner. This will also play a part in developing a mutual understanding of what talent management and employee engagement means and aims to achieve within the organisation. Much like customers, employees expect feedback in terms of positive and negative matters of concern and lose confidence in employers when their actions appear to be dubious. Leaders in organisations deal with cultural diversity and need to be self-aware so as to refrain from offending employees unintentionally. Open communication allows leaders the opportunity to address the issue of the perceived lack of trust, as open discussion and debate around these principles will eradicate ambiguity. The flow of communication needs to surpass employer to employee conversations and open up between leaders in industry as well so as to facilitate skills transfer and best practice in terms of employee engagement.

Leveraging of employee skills in the workplace - The effective use of communication needs to culminate into robust discussions wherein which employees have the opportunity to highlight weaknesses and strengths they believe they poses. Employees implore employers to get to grips with the skills they are able to bring to the table and for those skills to be fully utilised within the workplace. This serves not only as a sign of recognition and an indication of trust between employer and employee but also increases employee self-efficacy due to the fact that employees perform optimally when they are able to leverage their skills.

Understanding the drivers of employees - Employees indicate that they are driven by more than just monetary rewards and have become aware of their impact and the greater

environment, they also indicate a sense of self-awareness. According to Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings (2012) new generation employees show a real concern for the environment and their social responsibility. Which highlights the different expectations of the psychological contract between employer and employee, leaders need to come to grips with what the motivating factors of this generation are and ensure that they can keep them engaged (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Leaders therefore have the ability to create a mature environment that maintains a balance between monetary and non-monetary awards. Employees concern for socially responsibility needs to be taken into account by leaders so that they can understand what the environmental considerations employees deem important when driving a responsible business

Trust - The way in which employees perceive trust towards their organisation's generally entirely dependent on the leader. Leaders need to consume themselves with how trust is gained and kept so that through their actions it becomes woven into the organisation culture. This culture will exemplify the interest of the employees and will reinforce transparent behaviours within the organisation. Employees will have no choice but to take a hard look at themselves to verify whether their values and interest are aligned to that of the organisation. Leaders therefore need to be particularly honest and sincere with employees regarding the intention of the talent management processes within their organisations to reinforce openness but also as a platform for employees to willingly make recommendations without fear of being chastised. Leaders need to ensure talent management remains a focal point on the organisations agenda, and should exert effort into influencing those to buy in to the importance of talent management programs if they themselves are not able to develop it.

7.3.2 Recommendations to Human resource business partners

Inclusion of both leaders and employees - According to literature reviewed in chapter two, talent management can be understood as a set of integrated human resource processes. It could therefore be said that talent management likely resides within human resources in the organisation. Often employees will receive surveys to share their views in terms of their levels of engagement. The feedback is provided back to employees and organisations have confidence in the fact that they have adequately engaged their workforce, a shortcoming that was raised in the research findings. Employees have shown great effort from their side in owning their role in terms of employee engagement and the talent management process. The inclusion of employees are therefore vital in ensuring the development and execution of an effective talent management process within the organisation. Human resource business partners should not only draw on employees for their insights during times when the process has to be conducted but

should aim to create a forum that runs throughout the year that includes employees that are able to champion both talent management and employee engagement initiatives. In doing so they actively create a platform for employees to voice their opinions and share their insights. Reinforcing again the transparency and of the organisation as well as their willingness to create an inclusive working environment that values the opinions of all their employees. A talent management process built for the people by the people.

Developing talent management and elevating talent management processes on the organisations strategic objectives - Given the feedback generated from employees representing the talent forum, human resource business partners should be well positioned to develop effective talent management processes. The breakdown and poor execution of talent management is a concern raised in the research findings and human resources need to move away from developing quick fix, tick box activities that marks a meagre attempt to address employees in this regard. Their focus needs to move towards the development of sustainable talent management practices that are easily understood by employees and effortlessly implemented by leaders in business. This might require the impetus from executives and senior leaders of the business. Human resources will therefore have to strive to raise its importance on the strategic agenda of the organisation so that ample resources in terms of financing, infrastructure and time can be allocated to the talent management process. This initiative will likely have to be jointly undertaken by middle management and leaders in business to generate the attention this requires. In the end all stakeholders could benefit from developing and implementing talent management processes successfully.

Communication and support to leaders - Evident in the research is the lack of focus provided by leaders in terms of talent management processes due to the nature of their roles that place emphasis on deliverables related other goals and objectives of the organisation. The support human resources are able to provide in this instance could greatly alleviate the stress felt by leaders in trying to get to it all. This could be done by developing adequate talent management processes and efficiently communicating their ins and outs on a regular basis. These processes also tend to leave out the leaders themselves and human resources need to ensure that leaders also understand where they fit in the process in terms of guiding their employees but that they also feel that they themselves have a career plan and clear path to follow. This is especially important given the role leaders play in keeping employees engaged, they themselves yearn to be engaged and this is often overlooked by organisations. Human resources could also play the role of a sounding board to leaders who need to discuss less favourable situations with their direct reports and guidance can be provided in terms of how to

address these situations. Human resources and leaders could also initiate platforms that facilitate the sharing of best practice, these workshops could commence monthly as opposed to when required or on an ad hoc basis.

Communication and support to employees - As much as line leaders require support from human resources so do employees. Human resources business partners need to avail themselves to employees and this notion of openness towards employees should be well communicated and understood in the business. This infers that human resources themselves need to be well informed in terms of the organisations strategic intent in terms of performance objectives but also in terms of their strategies with human capital. Moreover human resource business partners and line leaders need to be aligned in terms of their standpoint of the organisations so that they can provide employees with frank and transparent communication, feedback, guidelines and support. The intervention of human resources also alleviates the need for employees to initiate discussions in terms of their career and talent management which frees up time for line leaders to drive other organisational objectives.

The understanding of employee engagement with the alignment of human resource business partners with the organisations strategic objectives and human capital objectives serves human resources well in the recruiting, on boarding and retention of employees. Due to the fact that human resources understand their work environment and what the organisation requires from their employees, they are better equipped to ensure they recruit employees that display a natural fit to the organisation. This naturally increase the feelings of loyalty from the employees towards the organisations and should allow for ideal alignment between both personal and organisational values and objectives.

7.3.3 Recommendations to change agents

Human resource departments generally take up a significant role within banking institutions. The reliance on change agents might therefore be less significant than on human resource business partners. This being said there are still valuable undertakings to remain aware of when organisations are undergoing significant changes:

Context - Change agents need to be consumed with the context of the organisations they are dealing with. Some departments in organisation are treated as standalone business and the cultures present in each of those departments need to be fully understood by change agents or managers within the business. Change agents need to understand the existing culture of the organisation, come to grips with how the change

might impact the culture, understand the impact this could have on the workforce and work towards minimising this perceived impact on employees.

Communicating - Open communication to employees need to emanate from all stakeholders mentioned above. Awareness of what the organisation is going through not only allows for trust between employer and employee but also creates an inclusive environment, one in which employees can voluntarily participate in the change process and provide input where relevant on how employees themselves can better manage the effect of change.

Telling a story and taking employees on the journey is the final important raised in terms of change agents. Often the lack of knowledge derives feelings of discontent amongst employees and may create a space for employees to make assumptions in terms of what they believe is happening. This could diminish loyalty towards the organisation as evident in the research findings.

7.4 Recommendations for future research

The meaning of talent management and employee engagement is ambiguous and unclear. Further to this the role of employees in the talent management process has rarely been defined in literature. Multiple factors impact talent management and employee engagement and there doesn't seem to be a silver bullet in terms of solving for these pertinent matters:

- Both talent management and employee engagement activities appear to be embedded in the organisations culture, it therefore becomes hard to measure the success of these activities. It is recommended to conduct a dedicated longitudinal study in order to determine whether appropriate development, upkeep, review and relevant adjustments to talent management programs could lead to increased levels of employee engagement that are sustainable.
- A research study could be conducted to define the degree to which specific challenges influence and impact talent management and employee engagement. The findings could in turn be utilised to understand the quantity and kinds of interventions required to address challenges that talent management and employee engagement are faced with.
- A research study could be extended across other organisations outside of the banking industry given the uniqueness in culture and operating structures evident in the banking industry. A further study could indicate whether results and

findings from this study are in agreement or in disagreement when considering other organisations.

- Leadership attributes, characteristics and behaviours and their relatedness to talent management and employee engagement could be researched.
- The same research study could be conducted throughout all the departments present in one specific bank. Business units within the bank as indicated earlier could be vastly different. This research study could provide information on whether the findings from this study is in agreement or disagreement with current research findings and also provide the organisations with a comprehensive employee engagement profile.

7.5 Research limitations

The details in terms of the research limitations are provided in chapter 4.12 and are related to the research methodology utilised for the study. It relates to the use of non-probably sampling and the researchers choice to select a target population of banks within South Africa which may in effect deem the sample homogenous. The findings are therefore restricted in terms of its application to only banks.

7.6 Concluding remarks

The aim of the research study was to establish whether talent management could in effect build an engaged banking workforce. The objective was tackled by getting an understanding of how employees understand talent management and employee engagement, whether they believe a relationship exists between the two concepts, whether they believe shared ownership of talent management could have an impact on employee engagement and whether they believe shared ownership of talent management could increase their discretionary effort towards the organisation.

The research findings uncovered important developments. The first being the importance of talent management and/or career planning to employees. Employees have taken up a significant role in ensuring they optimally contribute to the organisations objectives but that they also want to receive a similar investment back from their employers. The lack of reciprocation could lead to attrition of these talented employees and although organisations state the importance of winning of the war for talent, it has done little to bring the full impact of their initiatives to retain talent to fruition. Secondly employees display a dire need for open communication, transparency and trust, much like a relationship, organisations need to come to grips with how the psychological contract has changed and gear themselves to include employees in the development and

implementation of talent management, career planning and employee engagement activates.

The outcomes of the research study indicates that the research study achieved the pre-determined research objectives, that it supplemented the current academic literature related to employee engagement and talent management

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9 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1: Letter of consent

*I am conducting research on the effectiveness of talent management on employee engagement, and am trying to find out whether there is a relationship between talent management and employee engagement. Our interview is expected to last about an hour, and will help us understand how employees view the relevance of the above mentioned in their day to day lives. **Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without penalty.** Of course, all data will be kept confidential. If you have any concerns, please contact my supervisor or me. Our details are provided below.*

Researcher name *Research Supervisor Signature*

Email *Email*

Phone *Phone*

Signature of participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature of researcher: _____

Date: _____

9.2 Appendix 2 – Consistency Matrix

Title: Effectiveness of talent management in creating and engaged banking workforce.

Research Questions	Literature Review	Data Collection Tool	Analysis
Research Question 1: Establish an appropriate meaning of talent management within the banking industry in South Africa	(Anitha, 2014) (Saunders & Lewis, 2012) (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012)	In depth interview with employees from the banking sector within South Africa – Section 1 of in-depth interview, to be recorded by interviewer	Content analysis on open ended questions, to determine the understanding, meaning and relevance of the term talent management within the banking environment.



<p>Research Question 2: Establish the effect talent management has on employee engagement on an individual level</p>	<p>(Gallup, 2013) (Cahill, McNamara, Pitt-Catsouphe, & Valcour, 2015)</p>	<p>In depth interview with employees from the banking sector within South Africa – Section 2 of in-depth interview, to be recorded by interviewer</p>	<p>Content analysis on open ended questions, to determine whether talent management has any effect albeit positive or negative on employee engagement on an individual perspective</p>
<p>Research Question 3: Establish whether shared ownership of talent management increases levels of employee engagement</p>	<p>(Chayes, 2013) (Gallup, 2013) (Royal & Sorenson, 2015)</p>	<p>In depth interview with employees from the banking sector within South Africa – Section 3 of in-depth interview, to be recorded by interviewer</p>	<p>Content analysis on open ended questions, to determine whether employees are more engaged towards organisations when they are able to play an active role in managing their talent</p>
<p>Research Question 4: Establish whether employees will reach with higher levels of loyalty and/or motivation towards an organisation that adequately manages their said talent</p>	<p>(Gallup, 2013) (Burkus & Osula, 2011) (Cardy & Lengnick-Hall, 2011)</p>	<p>In depth interview with employees from the banking sector within South Africa – Section 4 of in-depth interview, to be recorded by interviewer</p>	<p>Content analysis on open ended questions, to determine whether employees will react with higher levels of discretionary effort towards an organisation that adequately manages their said talent.</p>

9.3 Appendix 3 – ethics approval

Dear Ms Madeline Gerber

Protocol Number: Temp2016-01427

Title: Effectiveness of talent management in creating an engaged banking work force

Please be advised that your application for Ethical Clearance has been APPROVED.

You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data.

We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.

Kind Regards,

Adele Bekker