

## Talent Management Strategies and Practices in Five Star Hotels: An Exploratory Study

Hisham E. Saad      Magdy A. Mayouf

Faculty of Tourism and Hotels, Fayoum University

### Abstract

This research aims to explore the current strategies and practices of talent management (TM) within five star hotels in Egypt. To achieve the research aim, an online questionnaire was used as a tool for data collection. 212 general managers and human resource managers in the investigated hotels were targeted to identify the practices adopted to attract, select, develop, and retain talent employees. The research revealed that the practices of talent management are still at an early stage of development, and the concept and the process require further understanding. One of the key results was that most of the investigated hotels implemented some of the basic principles and components of TM system but the actual practice has not yet been demonstrated as a complete and integrated approach. Most of the managers were aware of the benefit of talent management. This research, therefore, contributes to provide a deeper knowledge and understanding on how human talents are being managed in an important sector of the hospitality industry.

**Keywords:** Talent management, Talent attraction, Talent development, Talent retention, Five-star hotels, Egypt.

### Introduction

In the light of the continuous developments and the competitiveness, excellence and success are considered strategic goals for any business premises and similarly hospitality establishments (Barney and Wright, 1997; Lockwood, 2006; Lawler, 2008; Mathew). Today, with the increase of competition, the investment in human resources has become an important part of the strategies to be competitive (William *et al.*, 2017). One of the unrivaled sources of power that contributes to ensure growth and steadiness in modern hospitality industry is the implementation of the talent management strategy (TMS) (Gavin *et al.*, 2008). Talent management (TM) is a new methodology and technique aims to activate the role of talents, focuses on them in the processes and organizational change, select talented leaders, managers, and employees in all functions level, and develops the quality of human resources to accomplish high achievements (Cappelli, 2008). In the same context, Christensen *et al.* (2008) declared that the main idea of talent management (TM) is developing the necessary human resources to achieve the strategic aims of the establishments, through its efforts to fit the skills of working employees with current and future business needs. The discovery of talent is being considered as the primary and main task of HR departments besides their main functions of recruitment, selection and training (Boxall & Purcell, 2003). According to the Pareto principle of 20/80 rule, Iles *et al.* (2010) mentioned that 20% of the human resources can add value to 80% of the business objectives, so the companies have to invest in the talented staff to achieve 80% of its goals.

Recently, great attention has been paid to TM as a concept that focuses on the care to abilities, talents, and effective skills of human resources. The term was appeared in the late 20th century by David Watkins. The concept and process of talent management was introduced in a study by McKinsey company (1997) entitled "*War for Talents*"; it is a metaphor that reflects the intense competition among organizations for managerial talent. After that, the concept continued to be adapted and used by many authors and premises (Chambers *et al.*, 1998; Ingham, 2006). The

talented staff and their skills should be taken into consideration to be the center of the operations to achieve success and profit for business establishments (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). Currently, many companies have planned and developed the concept of its operations and methods in managing the resources and talents of its employees (Enz, 2010).

There are many changes and developments motivated business organizations to take attention and concern of TM, such as; the complexity of technology which creates several changes in the quality and nature of the labor force, the increased need for more knowledgeable, skilled, and more specialized workers, increasing of competition, the information revolution; the need of innovation and development. As a result, organizations need to design effective approaches to attract talent, develop their value and improve their performance (Maxwell and MacLean, 2008). Prior research revealed that the benefits of human talent management are; strength of the workforce power (Manpower Company, 2012), improving organizational performance (Kehinde, 2012), retention of skilled employees (Kamil, 2011; Deery and Jago, 2015), improving productivity, enhancing service quality, innovation and customer satisfaction (Cheese, 2008, Irtaimah *et al.*, 2016), organizational commitment, increasing market share and profits (Smith, 2007), decreasing staff turnover rates, and increasing profit margins (Cho *et al.*, 2006).

Since talent management is an important and supporting element for achieving premises overall goals and objectives, the shortage of talents and skilled human resource is considered the concern about nearly worldwide. Establishments around the world are engaging in a contest for the same talents pool (Brewster *et al.*, 2007). Pratten (2003) provided an interesting result that the hospitality industry has high potential talents more 17% of others industry. Disagreeing with this result, Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000), Baum (2002), Cho *et al.* (2006) and Sabuncua and Karacaya (2016) pointed out that the hospitality industry by its nature, as a labor- centered industry, is in a talent management critical situation, due to the following reasons: a deficiency of skilled and talented human resource, inability to retain exceptional talent, rising employee turnover rates, and poor human resource strategies. Having an effective talent management strategy can be a magic solution for such business environment related to compensation and benefits and help to provide better payment, working environment, job security, personal development, and increase job satisfaction and commitment (Stahl *et al.*, 2007; D'AnnunzioGreen, 2008; Pearlman and Schaffer, 2013; Solnet *et al.*, 2013; Watkins, 2014). In Egypt, there's a lack of studies concerning principles, practices, the scope and goals of talent management (Nafeil, 2015; Hafez *et al.*, 2017), and it is not very different also for the hospitality industry. With this taken into account, the aim of this research is to explore the current practices adopted by five-star hotels, as one of the most important sector of the hospitality industry, for managing talent employees.

### **Review of literature**

The development of management and business sciences in the recent years has led to the emergence of new concepts, terminology and management ideas in the field of human resources. One of the most important new concepts is the management of talent (TM) which has become increasingly important as a concept that focuses on the attention to the inputs from development, abilities, talents, and skills (Hughes and Rog, 2008). There was no consensus among scholars and academics on defining the concept of talent management. But, certain authors have tried to define it. Creelman (2004) defined TM as a process of attracting, recruiting, and retaining talented

employees. Heinen and Onell (2004) described TM as the implementation of integrated strategies or systems designed to improve the recruitment and development of employees, retain the required skills, prepare to meet current and future organizational needs and achieve success and excellence. Uren and Samuel (2007) stated that TM is the ability to provide a systematic approach to attract, recruit, staff, and develop of talent employees, and consider these employees as talent, worthy of care, attention and push forward, and to seek the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time. Bhatanagar (2004), Lewis and Heckman (2006) and Silver (2009) considered TM as a process of development, consolidation, and integration between the focus on the capabilities and talents of employees to achieve competitiveness, the development of new employees, the maintenance of existing employees, and the attraction of talented employees with high experience to work in companies. A more recent study conducted by Oldroyd and Morris (2012) indicated that TM is to focus on competitive HR talent as the most important resource of an organization or a company, attract and recruit talented candidates with talent and competitiveness, manage and determine the salaries of competitors, provide continuous training and development opportunities, manage performance processes in modern ways, provide program for retention of talented staff.

Because there are significant differences between organizations in terms of the nature of the environment in which they operate, the availability of talent, and the extent to which the organization can attract talent staff, there are many models and dimensions of talent management. One of these models was proposed by Olenapa (2004), who described the scope of talent management in five key practices; recruitment, performance management, human resource succession planning, training and development, and talent retention. Another different model suggested by Cappelli (2008) who divided the TM into four dimensions. The first is the developing of an estimated plan for the talent needed from outside to cover the shortage, the second is modifying training plan by enrolling talents in managerial skills. The third is improving the return on investment when developing staff, and finally is the balance between the concerns of employees and employers and to involve staff in decisions. A different model of talent management recommended by Maxwell & MacLean (2008) included four dimensions; attracting, selecting talent, developing talent, retaining talent.

Many researchers and theoreticians agreed upon four components for talent management, attraction and Recruitment Strategy, Selecting Strategy, Developing Strategy and Retention Strategy (Ballesteros *et al.*, 2010; Govaerts *et al.*, 2011; Shafieian, 2014; Aguinis and Bradley, 2015, Irtaimah *et al.*, 2016). The first strategy is the attracting talent which involves all the policies and practices through which talented staff are identified and selected, and can be classified into two areas: talent planning, recruiting and human resources reputation. The goal of talent planning is to determine talent positions, and this leads to putting the right talent at the right time and place. The recruitment strategy includes identifying the strategic objectives, defining the skills and talents needed to achieve these goals, and deciding whether the available employees have the skills and talents necessary, or looking for outsourced recruitment (Vaiman and Vance, 2008). Govaerts *et al.* (2011) indicated that there is no organization without talented employees, so the management should be interested in those workers, and providing them with the best ways and working environments that embrace their work and encourage their talents. A more recent study, Shafieian (2014) added that there are four sources for talent recruitment; in-house, outside environment, competitors, and academia through job fair and internships. Other area

is the organization reputation; as they should strive to build a brand and a good reputation (Armstrong, 2006; Tanuja, 2007). The applicants' generated impressions of the image reflect the reputation of the organization, and can be positive or negative. For this, companies have to provide positive quantifiable and qualitative results to be able to attract the best responses (D'AnnunzioGreen, 2008). Talented employees can be a source to attract others, as the talented follow each other. Once attracting a group of talent staff, others will move toward or be attracted towards them (Davis *et al.*, 2007; Ballesteros *et al.*, 2010).

The second practice of TM is the talent selection. The organization should implement a new program for the selection of talented, therefore, appropriate tools to choose the appropriate responses based on competencies, talent, and high performance (Barron, 2008). The process of selecting talents is not just about choosing the best candidate for the job but looking for the best candidate. The selection process is also not only to fill the gaps in the organization, but also to develop the organization to be more effective in the present and future (D'Annunzio-Green, 2008). Ballesteros *et al.* (2010) indicated that the selection of talent should, therefore, be linked to the organization's strategy and the organization's human resource planning. For organizations success; they must manage the relationship with job applicants during the selection process. The wrong choice has many negative impacts on the organization such as bad reputation and losing credibility (Scott and Revis, 2008). Shafieian (2014) indicated that companies should combine between traditional and modern selection practices, besides resumes, interview and testing periods, they should use behavioral, psychological and job knowledge tests.

According to the practice of talent developing, employees need a clear, transparent and organized career path and the organizations need to be more staff-focused in order to meet the talent staff needs and future expectations (Maxwell and MacLean, 2008). It should be noted here that the process of talent development varies from one organization to another, it can include; the raising of staff awareness of talent management, senior management support for talent management, building efficiency models to create a shared understanding of attitudes and behaviors that apply to the values of the organization, examining all areas of the talent system to identify different talent gaps, succeeding in determining, recruiting and development of talent as well as managing the talent performance and retaining, and finally, mainstream the results of talent management continuously (Dychtwald *et al.*, 2006; Wagner and Harter, 2006; Gostick and Elton, 2007). In the same context, Gostick and Elton (2007) indicated that companies should develop existing and new talent by selecting training programs that meet current performance needs, by reviewing the results of the staff assessment and identifying weaknesses in their performance and identifying appropriate corrective measures. Gostick and Elton added that discovering the in-house talents could be achieved through the process of career rotation and assigning new roles and tasks to them to help discover their abilities and skills.

The final practice is the talent retention; the aim of retention is to encourage employees to stay for as long as possible (Chambers *et al.*, 1998). These talented employees are key players and must be upheld; they lead organizations for future success and cannot afford to lose the cost of replacing them (Ready *et al.*, 2008). Profitable organization, which talents are an added value to it, need to design strategies to retain talents by involving them in decision-making, recognition of their role and competence in the organization success, providing a reward system for high performance, and providing opportunities development (Ramsay, 2006; Govaerts *et al.*, 2011). A study conducted by Aguinis and Bradley (2015) on the role of talent

management in creating stars at Chipotle restaurants, the authors revealed the importance of promoting staff fairly and transparently to the success of the restaurant and talent management programs. Supporting these results, a recent study by Hafez *et al.* (2017) revealed that the absence of motivation and the fairness of talented workers with other employees in terms of salaries and bonuses causes job dissatisfaction, because it is considered the most important part of the talent management system. Reward system should include internal and external incentives; internal incentives are innumerable rewards that satisfy the physiological needs of talented employees. External incentives include promotion, acknowledgement providing health insurance, and flexibility in working hours, improving working conditions in general, and providing social support (Walsh and Taylor, 2007; Allen, 2008; Hausknecht *et al.*, 2009).

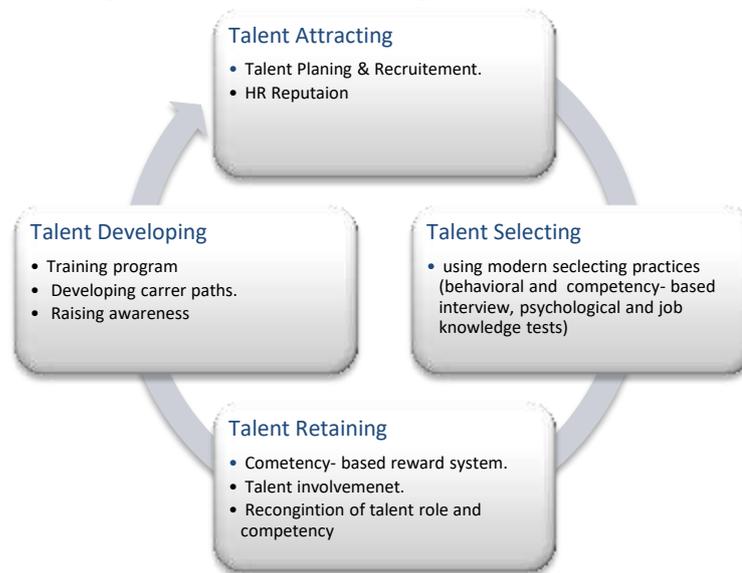
### Research Methods

The framework of the population and sample of this study comprised five star hotels in Egypt. Five-star hotels were chosen first and foremost, it is considered the most luxurious and professional sector, recognized as innovative luxury hotels and have a creative management team who holding diverse skills and competencies, considered as one of the most attractive sectors for employment and appeal to the most highly skilled candidates and provides the highest pay rates. According to Egyptian Hotels Guide (EHG) (2016), there are 167 five star hotels located in six major tourist destinations (Greater Cairo, Alexandria and North Coast, Canal cities, Red Sea, South Sinai, Lower and Upper Egypt ).The contact information related to names and e-mails of the hotels' general managers were collected from EHG and hotels' official websites. An email was sent to general managers to explain the aim and the objectives of the study and ask for agreement to include their hotels in the field study, 106 of general managers accepted to contribute in the study. Based on that, the sample frame of the study consisted of the entire population (212 hotels' general managers and human resource managers).

Data was collected using quantitative approach, a web-based survey was sent to the target respondents. The online questionnaire consisted of three parts. Part one included six questions related to the demographic or personal data of the participants (position, gender, age, education level, experience in the current position, and experience in the hospitality industry). Part two aimed to explore the current practices of talent management used by the investigated hotels; this part included thirty five questions within five sections of talent life cycle, these sections involved the practices of formulating talent management strategy (seven questions), attracting and recruiting (eight questions), selecting (five questions), developing (six questions), retaining(nine questions) of talented employees. The four- steps was chosen because of the nature of this research as an exploratory study. As the area of TM is still under study, the researchers selected the common and basic steps in the presented models. The questionnaire was developed based on several previous studies(Armstrong, 2006; Wagner and Harter, 2006; Gostick and Elton, 2007; Walsh and Taylor, 2007; Tanuja, 2007; D'Annunzio-Green,2008; Scott and Revis, 2008; Hausknecht, *et al.*, 2009; Shafieian, 2014).The respondents were asked to report their views on a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly agree=5, Agree=4, Neutral=3, Disagree=2 and Strongly disagree=1).Part three included one open ended question for any suggestions and comments. To achieve validity of the study instrument, the questionnaire was pilot tested from ten of the general managers and human resource managers (content validity) and five academic members of the faculties of tourism and hotels (face

validity). The participants were asked to review the quality of the content, the language and integrity of the paragraph, the appropriateness of the statements for the parts and sections under which it were incorporated, the linguistic accuracy, and what they deem appropriate, whether by deletion, amalgamation or addition. The changes required have been taken, including add, delete, and rephrase the language.

Figure1: The Talent Management Model



### Results and Discussions

From a total of 212 targeted participants, 163 questionnaires were completed, achieving response rate (76.8%). A Cronbach alpha statistics of all the four variables representing talent management strategy, talent attraction and recruitment, talent developing, and talent retention were more than 0.7, which pointed out that the data collection instrument was reliable. Table 1 provided the descriptive analysis of the demographic data. The results showed that most of the respondents were male (79.1%), while only 20.9% were female. This result is consistent with previous studies conducted by Brown and Ridge (2002), Vigil (2002), Archer (2003), Rindfleish and Sheridan (2003) and Kattara (2005) that there a low representation of women in the top management level. Previous study also showed that the hospitality industry is one of the most difficult business environments for women promotion and career advancement (Martin, 2000; Primavera, 2001) and woman’s positions in the hotels are mostly not desirable ones (Adiband Guerrier, 2003).

Table1: The demographic profile of the respondents (n=163)

	No.	Percent
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	129	79.1
Female	34	20.9
<b>Age</b>		
30-40	54	33.1
41-50	86	52.8
More than 50	23	14.1
<b>Position</b>		

General Mangers	77	47.2
HR Manager	86	52.8
Education Level		
University	145	89
Post graduate	18	11
Experience in the current position		
1-5	9	5.5
6-10	98	60.1
More than 10	56	34.4
Experience in the hospitality industry		
5-10	17	10.4
11-15	102	62.6
More than 15	44	27

As shown in Table1, more than half of the participants were between the age 41-50 years old (52.8%), third of them (33.1%) were between 30-40 years and 23 respondents (14.1%) were more than 50 years old. With regard to the position of the respondents, more than half were human resource managers (52.8%) and the rest (47.2%) were general managers. The results pointed out that the majority of the managers (89%) had university education, while 11% of them had post graduate education. With respects to the experience of the managers in the current position, the results revealed that more than half of the respondents had 6-10 years of experience in the current position, followed by more than 10 years of experience (34.4%) and the low percent had 1-5 years of experience (5.5%).

Table 2 identified the TM strategies and practices adopted by the investigated hotels. It was obvious that the whole general managers and human resource managers (100%) were aware of the importance of managing talented staff, as a business strategy, in achieving the hotels' strategic goals and their role in improving their future, which positively affects their development, creativity and innovation. This agrees with what was reported by Boudreau and Ramstad (2005) that the top management is completely aware of talent's strategic influence. The results also pointed out that all the investigated hotels (100%) had human resource strategy, as a long-term plan, that consisting of a set of activities, practices and policies through which the organization deals with the human resources. These plans are consistent with the overall strategy of the organization and work towards achieving its mission, aims and objectives considering the internal and external environment variables through which the organization operates.

Additionally, more than half of the respondents (55.2%) confirmed that they did not have talent management strategy, while, one third of the respondents (35%) indicted that their hotels had strategy for attracting, recruiting, selecting, developing, and retaining talent staff and this strategy is linked to the hotel's strategic goals. This finding coincided with Mathew (2015) who mentioned that there is a lack of attention to talent management in the hospitality industry and Ballesteros *et al.* (2010) who declared that more than half of the top management levels across the world thought that the talent management strategy is not align with the business strategy. The results also revealed that the majority of the investigated hotels (96.9%) assigned the duty of

managing talent to Human resource department functions, even though only five hotels (3.1%) had separated and specialized department for managing talent staff. This agreed with Solnet *et al.* (2013) who reported that managing talent in the hospitality industry is yet a main job of human resource department and disagreed with Kehinde (2012) and Boxall & Purcell (2003) who reported that companies should separate the talent management system from the human resources management system.

Regarding the talent attraction and recruitment practices, the findings pointed out that the majority of the investigated hotels (89%) had good human recourse reputation and the candidates are keen to get a position in these hotels. This result is consistent with Rynes and Cable (2003) who reported that the position and establishment's characteristics, especially the size, can motivate a prospective employee to apply for an employment due to the image and reputation, payroll, and wages benefits. Moreover, the results also showed that most of the respondents (84.1%) divided all the positions in their hotels into key and peripheral. This agreed with Boudrou and Ramstad (2005) who stated that the first step in implementing TM is recognizing the main positions, because the main role of TM is to develop talent pooling to fill in these positions. The authors stated that organizations should identify critical job positions that affect the organization's success and achieve its competitive advantage, identify the organization's talent needs plan according to the job description and the nature of the roles and tasks required to complete the operations, identify the talent gap by comparing the organization's talent needs with existing ones in the organization, develop effective strategies to attract and recruit talent, especially in light of competition and the lack of supply, and then choose the real talents that fit the actual needs of the organization, create a stock of talent, especially for critical job positions, and prepare a second tier of leaders to meet the future needs of these sites through the preparation of succession plans.

The findings revealed that the entire sample (163 managers) indicated that they had career websites for managing recruitment process. The results showed that only 21 hotels (12.9%) had plans in advance of the talent staff needed, while more than four quarters of the hotels (78.6%) did not have plans in advance of either the number of the talent staff needed or their talents, and the talents needed to recruit from the outside environment. 65% (106 of the sample) indicated that they specified the talents of the their staff who employed in the hotels, while almost one third of the managers (31.9%) did not specify the talents pool of their staff. The finding agreed with Collings (2009) and Armstrong (2011) who indicated that internal recruitment is desirable, and they recommended considering in house talent pool firstly then search for the outside environment. These findings also disagree with previous research (Mellahi, 2009; Mellahi and Collings, 2010) that an effective talent management strategy should identify the potential skills and talent required and develop talent pool from internal and external environment to fill the talent gap. Most of the managers (86.5%) pointed out that they targeted their candidates from academia through organizing job fair and conducting apprentice and internship programs to attract talent candidate from hospitality and tourism educational establishments.

The second strategy and practices were related to talent selection, the results revealed that 61.3% (100 of the studied hotels) adopted the criteria of talents when choosing from candidates, where one third (33.7%) did not considered criteria of talents in their selection methods. The previous findings were inconsistent with another results stated by the managers, as more than half of the investigated hotels (54.6%) used multiple methods for selecting talented staff including; resumes, competency- based

interviews, behavioral, psychological and job knowledge tests, while more than one quarter (27%) are still depending only on traditional selection methods such as; resumes, interviews and testing periods, these methods fail to provide an impartial measure of performance and also are considered less trustworthy for companies to hire the right person. The results disagreed with Shafieian (2014) who indicated that companies should use various methods or techniques of selecting talent employees such as behavioral, psychological and job knowledge tests. Moreover, three quarters of the managers (75.5%) indicated that the methods of selecting a talent staff are characterized by transparency in trade-offs, whereas, almost one quarter of the respondents (24.5%) were neutral on the topic of applying transparency in trade-offs and selecting a talent staff. The majority of the managers (98.8%) indicated that they were committed to apply the criteria adopted for the selection process. Additionally, more than half of the respondents (54%) were reviewing and updating the criteria for selecting gifted staff are constantly and nearly one third of the managers (31.9%) did not review and update the criteria of talent selection.

Concerning the strategy and practices of developing talents' skills and competencies, the results showed that 63.2% (103 out of 163 managers) pointed out that their hotels allocated adequate budget to support the developing of their talent staff. On the contrary, nearly one quarters (23.3%) of the hotels assigned and considered specific financial requirement in their budgets to develop talent skills. This result was due to the fact that TM is still in the early stages of its application and the top and middle management have an ambiguity in the principles of this system and how it is applied. This can be also explained by what was reported by Hejase *et al.* (2016) who reported that the services sector is essentially depending on soft skills more than technical skills of their staff. As a result, customer service and soft skills training are inexpensive compared to technical skills. This fact made the service sector unwilling to invest in developing retaining strategies and therefore, this sector usually has a high rate of staff turnover. Although there were some hotels that did not precise amount of their budget, most of the managers (88.3%) indicted that they were committed to provide the talented employees with what they need to develop their talents. Relating to the development programs provided by the studied hotels, the results also revealed that 61.4% of the sample (100 managers) designed a variety of training modules for talent staff development and more than one quarter of them (27.6%) formulated career paths of their talented staff. Furthermore, 61.4% of the investigated managers indicated that they had talent developing plans and their plans were succeeding to develop the talents of their staff. On the other hand, approximately one third of the managers (31.3%) did not have documented plans for developing their talent staff. The results also indicated that more than half of the respondents (55.8%) formulated their talent development plans based on the results of the performance appraisal.

In reference to the adopted strategy and practices for talent retaining, the results showed that almost half of the managers (49.7%) had an effective talented staff retention policy, while more than one third of the sample (36.8) did have talented staff retention policy. This agrees with Armstrong (2011) who stated that organizations with younger employees are not always successful at retaining talented workers. The findings showed different practices for retaining talented staff. The whole sample (100%) had performance appraisal systems that depend mainly on competencies and talents, 95.5% kept up a working environment which supports the talented staff to stay in their hotels, 89.6% (145 managers) provided talented staff with external and internal incentives, 70.6% (115 of the sample) supported the talented staff in self-improvement process, 68.8% (112 out of 163 managers) allowed the talented

employees to participate in the development of their hotel's strategic plans, 65.7% (107 out of 163) indicated commitment to meet the financial requirements of talented staff. The results also revealed that only one third of the respondents (33.1%) supported the promotion of talented employees beyond the organizational hierarchy, this is a little bit contradictory with another statement, as more than three quarters (78.6%) of the managers indicated that they focused on the talent and experience of their employees more than seniority in the annual assessment. This somewhat agreed with Deborah and Roper (2009) who reported that most organizations use traditional job advancement plans more than talent succession plans, as they basically concentrate on a job ladder. In case of advancement, each employee moves to the next job in the company's hierarchy.

Table2: Talent management strategies and practices adopted by the investigated hotels

Talent Management Strategy and practices	Mean	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Talent Management Strategy											
We have certainly human resources management strategy.	5.0	163	100	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Talent management is an essential business strategy.	4.7	120	73.6	43	26.4	--	--	--	--	--	--
Talent management is a significant element to achieve our hotel's strategic goals.	4.7	115	70.6	48	29.4	--	--	--	--	--	--
Managing talent is a part of Human resource department functions.	4.6	112	68.7	46	28.2	--	--	5	3.1	--	--
We have obviously talent management strategy.	2.8	34	20.9	23	14.1	16	9.8	50	30.7	40	24.5
Our talent management strategy is linked to the hotel's strategic goals.	2.8	34	20.9	23	14.1	16	9.8	50	30.7	40	24.5
We have a separated and specialized department for managing human talent.	1.9	5	3.1	--	--	--	--	123	75.5	35	21.5
Talent attraction and Recruitment											
Our career website provides the best competent and skilled applicants and achieves competitive edge.	4.7	112	68.7	51	31.3	--	--	--	--	--	--
Our staff required competences are based on functional requirements specification.	4.7	112	68.7	51	31.3	--	--	--	--	--	--
Talented candidates are keen to get a position in our hotel.	4.4	78	47.9	67	41.1	18	11	--	--	--	--
We divided all the positions in our hotel into key and peripheral.	4.3	103	63.2	34	20.9	12	7.4	8	4.9	6	3.7
We are organizing job fair and conducting apprentice and internship programs.	4.2	57	35.0	84	51.5	22	13.5	--	--	--	--
We are specifying the talents of the staff employed in our hotel.	3.7	76	46.6	30	18.4	5	3.1	32	19.6	20	12.3
We have plan in advance of the number of talent staff we need and their talents.	2.2	8	4.9	13	8.0	14	8.6	93	57.1	35	21.5
We have plan of talents we recruit from the outside environment.	2.2	8	4.9	13	8.0	14	8.6	93	57.1	35	21.5
Talent Selecting											
We are committed to apply the criteria adopted for the selection process	4.7	121	74.2	40	24.5	2	1.2	--	--	--	--
The methods of selecting a talent staff are characterized by	4.3	88	54.0	35	21.5	40	24.5	--	--	--	--

Transparency in trade-offs												
We are concerning with the adoption of talent criteria when choosing from candidates.	3.7	77	47.2	23	14.1	8	4.9	55	33.7	--	--	
We are using multiple of methods for selecting talented staff (resumes, competency- based interviews, behavioral, psychological and job knowledge tests).	3.6	56	34.4	33	20.2	30	18.4	44	27.0	--	--	
The criteria for selecting gifted staff are constantly reviewing and updating	3.3	22	13.5	66	40.5	23	14.1	44	27.0	8	4.9	
Talent Development												
We are committed to provide the talented employees with what they need to develop their talents.	4.5	119	73.0	25	15.3	5	3.1	10	6.1	4	2.5	
Our plans were succeeding to develop the talents of the staff.	3.8	80	49.1	20	12.3	12	7.4	51	31.3	--	--	
We are assigning adequate budget to support the developing of the talent staff.	3.7	57	35.0	46	28.2	22	13.5	33	20.2	5	3.1	
Designs a variety of training modules for talent staff development	3.7	76	46.6	24	14.7	18	11.0	22	13.5	23	14.1	
We are formulating the talent development plan based on the results of the performance appraisal.	3.2	22	13.5	69	42.3	18	11.0	22	13.5	32	19.6	
We are formulating career paths of talented staff.	3.0	23	14.1	22	13.5	45	27.6	73	44.8	--	--	
Talent Retaining												
Our performance appraisal system depends mainly on competencies and talents.	4.7	106	65.0	57	35.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	
We are keeping up a working environment which supports the talent staff in remaining with the hotel.	4.5	82	50.3	77	47.2	4	2.5	--	--	--	--	
We are supporting the talent staff in self-improvement process.	4.1	103	63.2	12	7.4	22	13.5	20	12.3	6	3.7	
We are focusing on the talent and experience of employees more than seniority in the annual assessment.	4.1	65	39.9	63	38.7	28	17.2	7	4.3	--	--	
We are motivating talent staff with external and internal incentives.	4.0	35	21.5	111	68.1	3	1.8	8	4.9	6	3.7	
We are allowing the talented employees to participate in the development of our hotel's strategic plans.	3.9	78	47.9	34	20.9	13	8.0	33	20.2	5	3.1	
We are committed to meet the financial requirements of talented staff.	3.6	44	27.0	63	38.7	16	9.2	30	18.4	10	6.1	
We effectively have talented staff retention policy.	3.3	35	21.5	46	28.2	22	13.5	54	33.1	6	3.7	
We are supporting the promotion of talented employees beyond the organizational hierarchy.	2.8	16	9.8	38	23.3	33	20.2	42	25.8	34	20.9	

### Summary and Recommendations

Talent management (TM) is one of the modern administrative issues and is considered to be vital in the current era. Despite its modernity, it has rapidly expanded during the last decade of the last century and has become the focus of many organizations, researchers, and specialists because of the need for talented employees who are able to cope with emerging problems and the need for competitive advantage. It is, therefore, imperative for organizations to assume their responsibilities towards their talents, who are considered the most important asset. TM defined as *the organization's mandate to recruit, sustain and develop talented workers in the labor market*. Talent management has a positive impact on organizations through improving employees' performance and productivity, increasing job satisfaction, commitment and retaining, improving service quality and market share. Despite its encouraging consequences, there is a lack of research regarding, strategies, practices, scope and goals of TM in the hospitality industry, so the aim of this research was to explore the current practices of talent management within five star hotels in Egypt.

The findings had highlighted that some of the key principles of TM are available, but the actual practice has not yet not formally implemented; most of the investigated hotels implemented some of the talent management components, but not as a complete, integrated approach. Most participants were aware of the benefits of talent management but do not implement talent management processes due to the absence of overall talent management strategy. The results showed that the entire sample had human resource strategy and also they assigned managing talent to human resource department. Another main finding was that the 57 of the investigated hotels (55.2%) neither had formulated strategy for attracting, recruiting, developing, retaining talent employees and nor integrated talent management strategy into the overall HR strategy and business strategy. Most of the sample (97%), do not assign a specialized department concerned with the affairs of talented staff.

Concerning the practices of talent attracting and recruiting either from the internal or external surroundings, the results pointed out that most of the managers stated that they divided all the positions in their hotels into key and peripheral to develop talent pooling to fill in these positions. The finding showed that the entire sample stated that they were able to attract the best candidates as they had good image and reputations among potential applicants and are considered the best employer in the accommodations sector. Moreover, the whole of the respondents indicated that they provided career websites and organized job fair and conducted apprentice and internship programs to attract potential talent candidate. One of the main findings is that the majority of the investigated hotels did not have precise and clear plans in advance of either the number of the talent staff needed or their talents, and also the talents needed to recruit from the outside environment. Additionally, more than half of the managers declared that they specified the talents of their staff who were employed in the hotels. Talent pooling plan is essential in the organizations success, as the permanent pool of talent is the source of the winning, teams always depend on the strength of the bench to ensure readiness for any position on the critical circumstances such as injury or retirement of team' members, similarly, the current staff of the organization are the main players and the formation of a talent pool represents the substitute players in the team to face any deficit in the current positions. Regarding the practice of selection, more than half of the respondents indicated that they included the criteria of talents when choosing from candidates and they also used multiple methods (resumes, competency- based interviews, behavioral, psychological and job knowledge tests) for talent selection. Moreover, more than three quarters of

the managers indicated that the methods of selecting talent staff are characterized by transparency in trade-offs and the majority of the managers indicated that they were committed to apply the criteria adopted for the selection process. Additionally, more than half of the respondents were reviewing and updating the criteria for selecting gifted staff are constantly.

The strategy and practices of developing talents' skills and competencies is a very significant component of talent management, one of the key finding is that more than half of the investigated hotels had talent developing plans and they indicated that their plans were succeeded to develop the talents of their staff. The results also showed that there was a lack financial plans to fund the policies assigned for managing talented employees in the studied hotels due to the ambiguity in the concept of a human talent management system for senior management in the investigated hotels. Despite the previous result, the majority of the managers indicted that they were committed to provide the talented employees with what they need to develop their talents. The results also indicated that more than half of sample designed a variety of training modules for talent staff development and formulated their talent development plans based on the results of the performance appraisal. Another key finding is that only one quarter of the managers formulated career paths of their talented staff. This results revealed that the majority of investigated hotels were unable to inform talented employees with career development plans, and to identify the professional tracks available for progress and advancement in the present and near future, so that the talent employees know in advance the professional, financial and moral advantages that will be returned to them and to identify the extent to which they agree with their attitudes and abilities and the creation of their thoughts towards the future to achieve productive and creative development.

The last surveyed practices were what the investigated hotels adopted to retain their talent staff (monetary and non-monetary benefits, involvement, and system of motivation). The results pointed out that almost half of the managers indicated that they had an effective talented staff retention policy. With regards to retaining practices, the whole sample indicated that they depended mainly on competencies and talents in performance appraisal, the majority of the mangers kept up a working environment which supports the talent staff in remaining with their hotel and provided talent staff with external and internal incentives. High proportion of the participants indicated that they supported the talented staff in self-improvement process, allowed the talented employees to participate in the development of their hotel's strategic plans, and they were committed to meet the financial requirements of talented staff. The results also pointed out that although more than three quarters of the respondents reported that they focused on the talent and experience of their employees, more than seniority in the annual assessment, only one third of them indicated that they supported the promotion of talented employees beyond the organizational hierarchy. This finding revealed that although the investigated hotels consider talent in the trade-offs between candidates for promotion, they still follow the regular rules for promotion through the job hierarchy structure. In case of promotion, each employee moves to the next job in the company's hierarchy structure.

The implication of this research is that it will contribute to provide a deeper knowledge and understanding on how human talents are being managed in an important sector of the hospitality industry, help hotels' mangers in evaluating their practices of managing talent employees and enhancing the practices of the talent management system thought develop an integrated system with a focus on the processes. There are some certain limitations in this research. First, this study focused

only on five-star hotels and used four steps talent management model. So, the results would be different or if it was conducted in other hotels categories, e.g. four and three-star hotels or other hospitality sectors such as restaurants sector. Secondly, this study considers only specific model, another suggestion may be using another model for future research. Another suggestion is to measure the effect of talent management practices on one of its outcomes such as staff retention, service quality, job satisfaction and commitment.

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