Talent Management Practices and Librarians Performance in Academic Public Libraries Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Talent management is crucial for attracting and retaining exceptional staff, ensuring sustainable organizational success. This study aims to identify the level of talent management practices and librarian performance in public universities in Malaysia. The quantitative method approach was used, and 358 librarians were involved. Findings show that the Librarian Performance dimension recorded the highest value of 6.24 and the Job Reward with 5.09 lower value. Suggesting the need for improvement in the aspects of rewards and career development opportunities. Addressing these elements strategically allows libraries to better achieve institutional goals and adapt to evolving educational and research needs.

INTRODUCTION

Talent management is a key element in maintaining organizational competitiveness, especially in the digital era that demands rapid adaptation to changing technologies, individuals, and organizational needs. According to Asaad et al. (2023), human resource departments should be sensitive to talent development needs through training and career development planning, ensuring that highly skilled employees are able to contribute to the sustainable performance of the organization. Technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), big data, and advanced analytics are now key tools for identifying, developing, and optimizing talent, resulting in a more strategic and personalized approach. In Malaysia, talent management challenges in university libraries include a shortage of quality replacement staff, lack of digital skills, and the need to increase institutional innovation. Zarina Begum et al. (2020) and Alsakarneh et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of succession planning and continuous development programs to ensure that organizations remain relevant. This is also in line with the Public Service Transformation Plan (PTKP) 2020–2025 and the 12th Malaysia Plan, which outlines human capital development as a pillar of national transformation

(Ahmad Nasir, 2023). In the context of university libraries, librarians play a critical role in providing quality education and research services to students and lecturers. However, Alruwaili (2018) stated that without an effective talent management strategy, institutions risk losing highly skilled workforce. In addition, Tuty et al. (2021) emphasized that consistency in talent development needs to be a priority to improve overall organizational performance.

This study aims to identify the level of talent management practices among university librarians in Malaysia. This study focuses on various important aspects, including the talent management strategies applied, the effectiveness of their implementation, and the impact on librarians' work performance. In addition, this study also examines the factors that influence these practices, such as staff competence, environment, rewards, training, and development programs. By understanding these elements, this study has the potential to contribute to the improvement of more effective talent management strategies in higher learning institutions in Malaysia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Talent management is an important process in which staff are identified, recruited, and developed with the aim of filling important roles in the organization. To realize this strategy, talent management practices must be implemented effectively, and organizations like universities should be aware of the process of preparing talented staff to become successors to preserve the mission and vision of the libraries and universities. According to Anat and Andreas (2022), failure to identify qualified and capable staff will disrupt the operational balance and inability of the organization's management, especially the library in this case study.

Talent Management Practices

Job Performance

Employee performance is a direct result of their competence and motivation in performing assigned tasks (Nanik and Setyo, 2019). Continuous assessment and matching tasks to individual skills are important strategies to ensure that performance is at an optimal level. When organizations fail to implement an effective talent management approach, it often leads to a decline in productivity and operational effectiveness. Unmotivated employees not only show low productivity levels but also lack commitment to organizational goals, which ultimately has a negative impact on the organization's competitiveness. In the long run, poor performance will affect the organization's reputation and its ability to attract and retain high-quality talent (Asaad et al. (2023).

Job Environment

A conducive work environment plays a key role in ensuring employee well-being and productivity. Elements such as a safe workplace, a collaborative atmosphere, and harmonious working relationships have a positive impact on job satisfaction. On the other hand, a less supportive work environment, such as a dirty atmosphere, conflict between colleagues, or lack of ICT support, can reduce employee satisfaction levels. When employees are not comfortable with their work environment, the rate of resignation will increase. Additionally, Zarina Begum et al., (2020) talented employees who find the work environment unconducive tend to seek opportunities elsewhere that offer a more supportive work environment. Therefore, investing in creating a conducive work environment is essential to driving overall organizational performance.

Job Rewards

Fair and competitive rewards, including salaries, incentives, and other benefits, play a critical role in increasing employee motivation and loyalty to the organization. A well-designed reward system not only

retains talented employees but also motivates them to achieve higher performance. On the other hand, inadequate or unfair rewards can create dissatisfaction among employees, reduce productivity levels, and increase employee turnover rates. When employees feel that their efforts are not appreciated or respected, they are more likely to look for other organizations that offer better rewards. Thus, effective rewards not only meet employees' material needs but also serve as recognition of their contributions to the organization (Zarina Begum et al., 2020).

Job Training

A well-planned training program equips employees with new skills, enhances their knowledge, and helps them adapt to changes in the industry. Tamba and Riyanto (2020) emphasize that effective training implementation has a positive impact on employee performance, thereby contributing to organizational effectiveness. Conversely, lack of training or imbalance in training delivery can affect employees' opportunities to grow. When employees feel that the organization does not provide opportunities for their skills development, it can lead to decreased motivation and loyalty, thus negatively affecting their productivity and performance.

Job Development

Nanik and Setyo (2019) stated that a well-managed development plan, including a clear career path and opportunities for professional growth, can increase employee motivation and commitment. However, when organizations fail to provide a clear development plan, employees may feel limited in their roles and less motivated to contribute fully. As a result, talented employees tend to leave the organization in search of better career opportunities elsewhere. Neglecting career development also increases employee turnover and talent loss, which in turn affects the competitiveness of the organization. Therefore, a strategic development plan not only helps retain employees but also drives overall organizational performance.

Librarian Performance

The efficiency, effectiveness and quality of work produced by high-performing employees have an immediate impact on organizational performance. These high-performing employees play an important role in increasing the competitiveness and productivity of the organization through contributions to innovation, work process improvement and effective strategy implementation. Mohd Saiful Rahman et al. (2022); Nanik and Setyo (2019) agree that efficiency, effectiveness and quality of work by having excellent and good employees have a positive impact on high work performance. The relationship between talent management and employee performance is significant (Nagi and Ali, 2020). For that, any organization will identify these individuals to be in it for the sake of the competitiveness and productivity of the organization. The failure of the organization to attract and retain the best talent due to weaknesses in offering competitive reward packages, a conducive work environment, and long-term development support often affects employee performance. Employees will feel low in Emotional Quotient (EQ) and, feeling a lack of career development opportunities, will tend to leave the organization to find other institutions that offer added value, such as a clear career plan and a progressive work environment.

Conceptual Framework

Based on the conceptual framework (figure 1), with careful consideration of previous studies and literature, a research framework has been proposed in this study. Five key dimensions of TMP have been identified as IV, namely Job Competency (JC), Job Environment (JE), Job Reward (JR), Job Training (JT), and Job Development (JD), which are hypothesized to have a direct impact on DV, namely librarian performance. This approach reflects an effort to integrate key dimensions in talent management to improve workforce effectiveness and productivity.
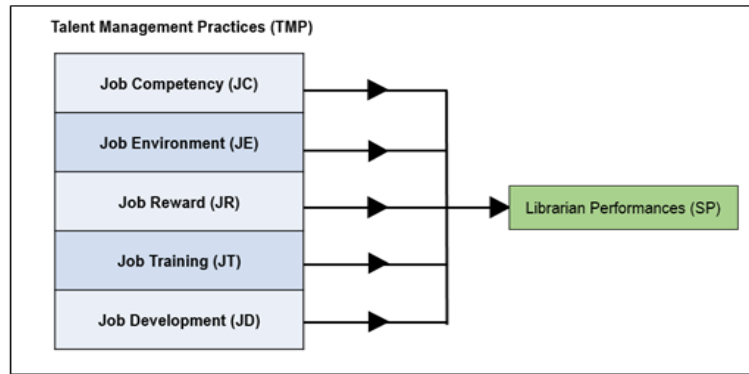
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

In this study, the quantitative method was used with 358 librarians from 20 academic libraries in Malaysia to identify the level of talent management practices and librarian performance. The sampling technique used was random sampling involving librarians' grades S41 to S52. The items in the constructs were measured using a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). The questions are about job competency, job environment, job reward, job training, and job development. In testing the reliability of the instrument, the results indicated that all the items were more than 0.7. The results of the data were analyzed with descriptive analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences program (SPSS) version 26. A pilot test was conducted with 30 respondents to check the reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

STUDY FINDINGS

Demographic data

For demographic information of respondents, the result shows that most of the respondents were female, which is 66.5% (n=238), compared to male 33.5% (n=120). For university cluster type, Research University shows 36% (n128) and followed by Comprehensive University by 35% (n125). Focused Universities contribute the smallest 29% (n105). Most of the professional librarian hold the position of senior librarian which is 57.9% (n=206) while there were only 22.5% (n=80) of respondents hold the position as a librarian s41. Position deputy chief librarian in third position with 13.5% (n48) and smaller contribution by senior chief librarian (S52) with 6.2% (n22). While for length of service, the biggest respondents was from 11-15 years with 34% (n=121) compared librarian has services 16-20 years which is 26.1% (n=93). While respondents who worked in the organization for more than 21 years 16.6% (n=59) in fourth place followed 6-10 years 13.5% (n48) and the rest 9.8% (n35) came from 1-5 years services. Therefore, Table 1 revealed the demographic profile of the respondents.

Table 1; Demographic data

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage %
Gender;		
Male	120	33.5
Female	238	66.5
Total	358	100
University Cluster Type;		
Comprehensive		

Research	125	35
Focused	128	36
Total	105	29
	358	100
Education level		
Bachelor degree	25	35
Master degree	128	36
PhD	105	29
Total	358	100
Posting Grade		
Librarian (S41)	80	22.5
Senior Librarian (S44)	206	57.9
Deputy Chief Librarian (S48)	48	13.5
Deputy Chief Senior Librarian	22	6.2
(S52)	358	100
Total		
Year Services		
1-5 years	35	9.8
6-10 years	48	13.5
11-15 years	121	34.0
16-20 years	93	26.1
21 years and above	59	16.6
Total	358	100

Common Method Bias (CMB)

The data collection for this research was obtained from a single source, where all questions in the questionnaire were answered individually by the respondents. Therefore, Common Method Bias (CMB) analysis was conducted to identify and assess the potential bias that may exist in this data set. For this purpose, Harman's Single Factor test was performed. The results of the analysis showed that when all items were restricted to one factor, the total variance explained was 48.53% (see Figure 2). According to general guidelines, common method bias is considered significant if the variance explained exceeds 50%. Therefore, these results confirm that Common Method Bias is not a threat in this research, thus indicating that no single factor dominates the data collected.

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	23.783	48.537	48.537	23.783	48.537	48.537
2	4.053	8.271	56.808			
3	2.032	4.148	60.955			

Figure 2: Total Variance Explained

Reliability Test

The data collection for this research was obtained from a single source, where all questions in the questionnaire were answered individually by the respondents. Therefore, Common Method Bias (CMB) analysis was conducted to identify and assess the potential bias that may exist in this data set. For this purpose, Harman's Single Factor test was performed. The results of the analysis showed that when all items

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Table 2; Reliability test

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.977	.977	49

Descriptive Analysis

A descriptive analysis of each variable was used. The items in the constructs were measured using a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (scale 1) to strongly agree (scale 7). The results show that the mean value for talent management practices is 5.67 (Table 9), indicating that many respondents agreed with it. Table 3 shows the overall mean value of 5.98 (standard deviation 0.915), indicating a high level of librarian competence. The highest elements are the ability to work in a team with respect (6.35) and the ability to work well in groups (6.30), which reflect strong professional cooperation. However, opportunities for improvement, such as the organization's need to quickly understand new tasks/workflows (5.58), should be noted.

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis of variable Job Competence, Job Environment, Job Reward, Job Training, Job Development, and Librarian Performance

Job Competency	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have the opportunity to maximize my abilities every day at work	5.79	1.033
I can adapt to new circumstances rapidly	5.95	.882
I have time for improvement in my job	5.90	.937
I can work well with other people on a team	6.30	.706
I can get along well with my team and treat them with respect	6.35	.689
I am excited about my job	6.00	1.048
My organization was able to quickly comprehend new tasks and workflows	5.58	1.116
total	**5.98**	**.915**

Table 4, Job Environment recorded an overall mean value of 5.62 (standard deviation 1.167), indicating a conducive work environment. Satisfaction with the workplace (6.03) and feeling comfortable working with colleagues (6.03) were the most prominent aspects. However, the issue of the organization's sensitivity/attention to employee suggestions (5.34) suggested room for improvement in the aspects of management and job support.

Table 4: Descriptive Analysis of variable Job Competence, Job Environment, Job Reward, Job Training, Job Development, and Librarian Performance

Job Environment	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have felt pleasant with my workstation	6.03	1.007
I enjoy working in the current library environment;	5.78	1.206
my work is respected	5.70	1.143
I don't feel pressured by the workload	5.05	1.385
I feel I have all the support I need to do my job properly	5.42	1.185
I feel comfortable working with my teammates	6.03	.963
I believe the organization is paying attention to the suggestions	5.34	1.280
total	**5.62**	**1.167**

As shown in Table 5, with an overall mean value of 5.09 (standard deviation 1.376), the Job Reward dimension showed the lowest rating among librarians. Financial rewards and organizational recognition

recorded moderate values (5.02 and 5.39, respectively), while the implementation of a fair reward system (4.87) requires urgent attention.

Table 5: Descriptive Analysis of variable Job Competence, Job Environment, Job Reward, Job Training, Job Development, and Librarian Performance

Job Reward	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have an opportunity for promotion with a higher salary	5.02	1.415
I have the opportunity to receive an award for my services from the organization	5.39	1.276
I feel the rewards system is fairly implemented	4.87	1.438
total	**5.09**	**1.376**

Following table 6, the overall mean value of 5.87 (standard deviation 0.997) indicates a high level of satisfaction with the training program. The highest items are excitement to learn new things (6.01) and motivation to learn (6.01), reflecting the effectiveness of the training. However, the opportunity to suggest training (5.80) requires attention to increase librarians' involvement in training planning.

Table 6: Descriptive Analysis of variable Job Competence, Job Environment, Job Reward, Job Training, Job Development, and Librarian Performance

Job Training	Mean	Std. Deviation
I feel good expectations before enrolling in the training well	5.68	1.004
I feel excited to learn new things from the training session	6.01	.924
I feel motivated to learn new things from the training session	6.01	.979
I have an accessible to suggest training related to my job	5.80	1.082
total	**5.87**	**.997**

Table 7, The Job Development dimension recorded an overall mean value of 5.26 (standard deviation 1.283), indicating a moderate level of career development. The aspects of understanding the criteria for promotion (5.77) and the opportunity to develop full potential (5.42) were the highest. However, the low staff belief in control over career paths (4.92) reflects the need to provide more organizational support in this aspect.

Table 7: Descriptive Analysis of variable Job Competence, Job Environment, Job Reward, Job Training, Job Development, and Librarian Performance

Job Development	Mean	Std. Deviation
I feel that I am in control of my career path in this organization	4.92	1.382
I feel that I am in control of my professional development in this organization	5.03	1.331
I have a clear career path in this organization	5.27	1.293
I am satisfied with my chances for promotion	5.07	1.408
I have the opportunity to develop my full potential	5.42	1.245
I understand the criteria I must meet to be promoted	5.77	1.067
I have good organizational support in build and exploring my professional career path	5.35	1.259
total	**5.26**	**1.283**

Evidently, table 8 reflex that the Librarian Performance dimension recorded the highest mean value of 6.24 (standard deviation 0.787), indicating excellent job performance. The highest items were efforts to improve work quality (6.43) and the ability to complete tasks on time (6.24), reflecting the high commitment of librarians to fulfilling their professional responsibilities.

Table 8: Descriptive Analysis of variable Job Competence, Job Environment, Job Reward, Job Training, Job Development, and Librarian Performance

Librarian Performance	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am able to carry out my work efficiently	6.13	.791
I am trying to improve the quality of my work	6.43	.717
I am able to plan and finish my work on time	6.24	.777
I always meet deadlines	6.18	.865
total	**6.24**	**.787**

Based on Table 9, the overall average value for the Talent Management Practices (TMP) dimension was 5.67, with a standard deviation of 1.087, indicating a satisfactory level of preparation among librarians. The Librarian Performance dimension recorded the highest value of 6.24, which is consistent with Table 8, reflecting excellent work performance, with librarians demonstrating high ability in improving work quality and completing tasks on time. Meanwhile, the Job Competency (5.98) and Job Training (5.87) dimensions also recorded high values, indicating the effectiveness of training and improvement in competencies provided, as stated in Table 6. However, the Job Reward (5.09) and Job Development (5.26) dimensions showed lower values, suggesting the need for improvement in the aspects of rewards and career development opportunities, which have been discussed in Table 6 and Table 7. Overall, although librarians performed well in the aspects of competencies and training, there is room for improvement in the aspects of rewards and career development to achieve more comprehensive and effective talent management.

Table 9: Summary Descriptive Analysis

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
Job Competency	5.98	.915
Job Environment	5.62	1.167
Job Reward	5.09	1.376
Job Training	5.87	.997
Job Development	5.26	1.283
Librarian Performance	6.24	.787
total	5.67	1.087

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study identifies the level of talent management practices and their relationship with librarian performance in Malaysian academic libraries. The findings show that elements such as work competence, work environment, rewards, training, and career development play a significant role in supporting librarian performance as the main driver of knowledge dissemination in universities. Descriptive analysis found that the dimensions of librarian performance, work competence, and training recorded high average scores, reflecting the effectiveness of training programs and librarians' abilities in carrying out their responsibilities. However, the elements of job rewards (mean: 5.09) and job development (mean: 5.26) showed weaknesses that require immediate attention from library management.

A less competitive reward system is seen as potentially affecting librarians' motivation and job satisfaction. Therefore, the main recommendation is to implement a reward structure that is more attractive and commensurate with their contributions. In addition, job development needs to be improved by introducing clear career paths, promotion opportunities, and comprehensive leadership training. This strategic move can not only increase librarians' job satisfaction and motivation but also ensure the retention of high-quality talent in the organization. Overall, this approach is able to strengthen the operational efficiency of academic libraries, support the achievement of institutional goals, and contribute to increasing institutional competitiveness in the higher education landscape.

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