

# **Integrating Competency Based-Management Into Individual Development Plan For University Staff**

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to examine the Individual Development Plan (IDP) of university administrators especially those who are categorised under the professional and management scheme. The IDP explains the dimensions of Attitude, Skills and Knowledge required by the administrators in order to perform their responsibilities in executing the management functions and be as the backbone of the university to achieve its mission, vision and objectives of institution. In general, IDP is expected to enhance the performance and abilities of an individual. Thus, the assimilation of IDP into talent management will enable the Human Resource Department to plan the structured Talent Development Programmes that in line with the University Strategic Planning and Key Performance Indicators of University.

**Keywords:** Competency-Based Management, Individual Development Plan, Talent Management, , University Administrators

## **1.0 Introduction**

Talent management (TM) involves many elements of human resource functions focusing on attracting, retaining, managing, and developing high quality workforce with the objective to ensure the right people for the right jobs doing the right things to ensure business success (Ramonchito M. Lacsamana et al., 2018; Sireesha et al., 2014). Gay and Sims (2006) found that TM could facilitate the development and career pathway of highly talented and skilled staff in the organisation using formalized methods, resources, policies, and processes that focus on developing employees and leaders for the future of the organisation. TM is a very important element to the sustainable management of an organisation (Kolachi & Akan, 2014; Wiczorek-Szymańska A., 2017).

The impact of the unpredictable change, complexity, volatility and uncertainty could be felt through social, political, environment, health and economic structures and processes which have surfaced from this global restructuring. One critical issue that has derived from all of

these reorganization processes is the central role of Competency-Based Management (CBM) for the success of the TM of University's Administrator (Jaes et al., 2017; Mohd Zain et al., 2017; Vilalta et al., 2018). However, managing human resources during organizational transformation is not an easy task because professionals are supposed to have a critical role in managing uncertainty in an organization and must be related to the organizational needs. With the increase in general competition, organizations must become more adaptable, resilient, agile, and customer-focused in order to succeed (Ullah, 2012)(Salleh et al., 2016). Career competencies become increasingly important today as the new profession era holds individuals primary responsible for their own career. The universities can become more effective if the TM managers know how to integrate competencies throughout all aspect of staffs' jobs including job and professional development (Salleh et al., 2016; Salleh & Sulaiman, 2016).

The Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025 has made significant transformation in fulfilling its core aspirations for Malaysia higher education, most notably in broadening access and expanding overall system and institutional quality. The nation has achieved a gross university enrolment rate of 48% in 2012 and has raised up until 70% in enrolment over the last decade to reach 1.2 million students in public and private universities (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2015). The Government is deeply committed to higher education and the annual total expenditure on higher education is equivalent to 7.7% of annual Government expenditure (where the Ministry's expenditure on higher education alone is 5.5% of annual Government expenditure) and the highest among developed Asian economies (Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, Japan), ASEAN (Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore), and countries with comparable GDP per capita (Chile, Mexico) based on UNESCO benchmarking. The Ministry aspires to attract, develop, and retain excellent university talent through specialised pathways for educators, researchers, leaders, and practitioners. The academic and administrative communities will also benefit from a conducive, supportive and meritocratic environment with better continuous professional talent development programmes that enable them to meet changing responsibilities and expectations for the Malaysia's talent will be respected, referred, and relevant, both locally and internationally (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2015; Mohd Zain et al., 2017).

In contrast to surface views of some researchers, competency models are not unique. However, practically each large and leading organization has its own competency model and try to reform their own model in order to gain a competitive edge is the ability of their workforce to maximize effectiveness. The variety observable in competency models and the existing categorizations in this domain are reasons for this claim. On the other hand, preliminary investigations have revealed that only limited number of empirical studies address on the CBM models in the public sector generally and higher education specifically (Marandi et al., 2016; Megahed, 2018; Salleh et al., 2016). The purpose of this study is to identify the role of Individual Development Plan (IDP) in facilitating and strengthening the CBM for universities. This study will elaborate the three (3) main dimensions of IDP which are directly related to Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive, Affective, Psychomotor namely as Knowledge, Skills and Attitude.

## **2.0 Research Foundation**

Human capital is considered as the driver for the organisation to achieve success. While most institutions are starting to acknowledge this, few others in higher education have established formal programmes to support the existing talent (Carpenter, 2017; Lynch, 2007). The higher education institutions are known for embracing egalitarian culture that promotes formal

identification of its existence (Butterfield, 2008; Tamunomiebi & Okwakpam, 2019). Lynch (2007) also supported that colleges and universities fall short of business and industry mindset in developing talent. One would expect that, in a knowledge economy, TM would receive the central attention and it will create a competitive edge for an organization. Lynch (2007) also stated that most educational institutions perform well in developing their students but fall short of assisting their managerial staff in their own skill development. Clunies (2007) suggested that higher education has historically been slow to adopt many corporate management processes.

TM focuses approximately on developing high potential staff for future leadership posts across an organisation. TM is used to establish a continuous leadership development plan which helps attract highly qualified, external resources while retaining current staff with significant potential values and competencies (Carpenter, 2017; Christie, 2005). TM alone is not sufficient as most programmes and activities are developed to address the needs of a group of staff without considering the specific needs of each individual in the group. Therefore, it is suggested that TM should be considered together with the IDP so that the development programmes created for this purpose will be more meaningful and effective at addressing the limitations of individual staff (Tamunomiebi & Okwakpam, 2019).

IDP is a designed system to organise and monitor the staff career training and development in the organization. The purpose of IDP in Talent Management is to provide a structured approach for the staff to reach short and long-term career goals and strengthen their current performance through intentional training process (University of San Diego, 2018). IDP is an effective tool for personal development planning and succession in the organization to cover the future need of human resources for the specific jobs given the internal and external organizational changes (Chlebkova et al., 2015). Thus, IDP acts as a mechanism to close the gap between the vision of the institution and the current staff performance.

Heuer (2003) has conducted a study of seven Ivy-Plus institutions (which includes Ivy League schools consisting of Harvard, Yale, Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Princeton, and Pennsylvania as well as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Duke University, Stanford University, and the California Institute of Technology), each one is rich with tradition and financial resources to support administrative needs. The respondents from each institution were interviewed and stated that a formal TM strategy was not in place within any of their administrations. Higher education institutions are doing well to serve outside organisations in their training and development needs while limiting such benefits to internal personnel. There appears to be a mounting trend that many companies are advocating the worth of talent development within higher education institutions, while the institutions themselves miss the opportunity (Lynch, 2007; Riccio, 2010; Tamunomiebi & Okwakpam, 2019).

Lynch (2007) strongly advocated, if universities want to be perceived as part of the solution rather than a major cause of the looming crisis, they must examine their culture and policies to better align them with the knowledge and talent of their staff. They are the key to a future society that is both just and wise. According to the result of empirical study, individuals in the sample of 418 international executives shown that eight out of ten respondents viewed an effective TM strategy as key to competitive success, with more than half of these reporting that it would become more strategically important in future years (Salleh & Sulaiman, 2016).

Administrators in higher education can truly benefit from achievements that TM has had on organisations within other industries. Clunies (2007) acknowledged that innovative

universities are examining the value of talent development as a cost-effective process to develop those who will possibly hold power and authorities. Commonly, the institution's strategic plan or the mission statement of human resource department in higher education indicates that employees are viewed as important assets in order for the universities to achieve lasting success. Every institution operates based on a strategic plan; its future financial budget and expenditure are based on a comprehensive plan, and the facilities will not be created or renovated without the presence of institution's blue print strategic plan (Carpenter, 2017; Christie, 2005).

Most institutions in the current economy cannot afford to lose a senior officer or a high potential administrator without a suitable replacement given the tremendous costs related to hiring a candidate from outside the institution (Clunies, 2007; Tamunomiebi & Okwakpam, 2019). Heuer (2003) explained that universities need to ensure the right person is holding the right position. Universities that accept the challenge to build talent from within to meet the impending leadership requirements will certainly gain an advantage over other institutions in this competitive climate (Mackey, 2008) as these leaders are familiar with the vision and mission of the universities, their culture, requirements, and limitations, thus, reducing the costs and time to get familiarized with all these.

Therefore, this paper is proposed to highlight the need for the integration between TM and IDP in molding the university administrators through the right training and development programmes. The IDP must be highly considered in developing the right training and development programmes for administrators.

### **3.0 Methodology**

This paper is a concept paper has using critical reflection method involving document analysis which is a systematic procedure for reviewing and evaluating documents for both printed and electronic (computer-based and internet-transmitted) material in order to assist practitioners by improving their approaches and practices in their respective areas (Fook, 2011). The document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge of talent management, human resource development, individual development plan and competency-based management practise in higher education institutions (Almansoori, 2015; Yin, 2014). The researchers have reviewed documents that been used for systematic evaluation as part of this study by choosing related scope such as human resource development, university talent development, individual development plan manual and competency-based management includes agendas, attendance registers, and minutes of meetings, manuals, background papers, books and brochures, diaries and journals, event programs (i.e., printed outlines), letters and memoranda, maps and charts, newspapers (clippings/ articles), press releases, program proposals, application forms, and summaries, organisational or institutional reports, survey data and various public records. These types of documents are found in libraries, newspaper archives, human resource and development offices, and institutional files (Bowen, 2009). This research is purely insightful in nature based on the authors' experience and a review of current literature and practices.

### **4.0 Finding and Discussion**

The major reasons for implementing TM practices are due to (i) insufficient strength in management (in terms of the number of candidates), (ii) loss of senior administrators due to retirement, (iii) loss of potential young administrators (iv) costs of replacing senior

administrators and (iv) insufficient number of quality successors. All these factors are essential in identifying the TM issues within the organization (Urbancová et al., 2020). Each of the reasons can be overcome when an organization has a well-defined IDP and excellent TM initiatives. Assessing the implementation of talent management practices with IDP is very important for the organization in order to ensure the talent pool is well managed and available when needed. Excellent pool of talented employees will ensure the continuity of management practices adopted by the organization (Tamunomiebi & Okwakpam, 2019).

IDP is very important in enhancing human capital in higher education institutions in Malaysia especially the public universities. IDP will guide university administrators to align the goals of the organisation with the specific Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes of its talent. Furthermore, excellent IDP will ensure the mission, goals and objectives of the organisation are successfully achieved. **Figure 1** illustrates the abilities to attract and retain, in addition to having an effective TM Program, Support Organization Outperformance (Andrianova, 2021).

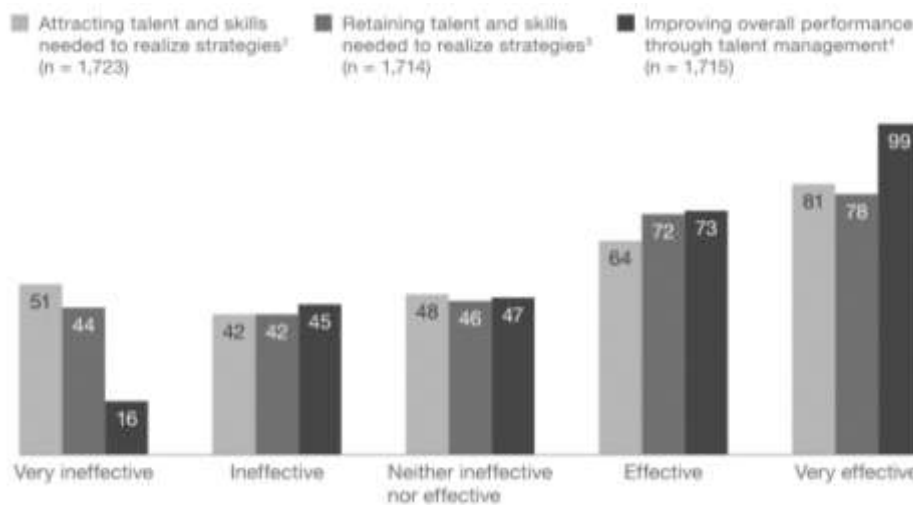


Figure 1 The Abilities to Attract and Retain in Addition To Having An Effective Talent-Management Program, Support Organization Outperformance (Andrianova, 2021)

Competency is like an umbrella covering the ability of an individual, which directly or indirectly affects the university administrator’s knowledge and experiences. It indicates how university administrators should perform their duties and how to react in any working situations. This study adopts the conceptual framework of human resource competency in improving the manager’s performance to further explain the IDP in general. However, personality traits will not be discussed since the information is not available and captured in IDP. The competency of human resources is illustrated in **Figure 2** The competency of human resources comprises attitude, knowledge, and skills that influence manager’s performance.

- a. Knowledge: It refers to the process of acquiring knowledge and advancing theory that is commonly obtained through formal education in universities, which serves as the basis of developing skills and attitudes (Dargahi, H., Alipour, M. H., Falahpasand, H. And Heidari, 2007; Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).
- b. Skill: It is the ability to implement the acquired knowledge.
- c. Attitude: It reflects humans’ mental imagination of their environment and the world (Babaie & Zakliki, 2007; Bratman et al., 2019).

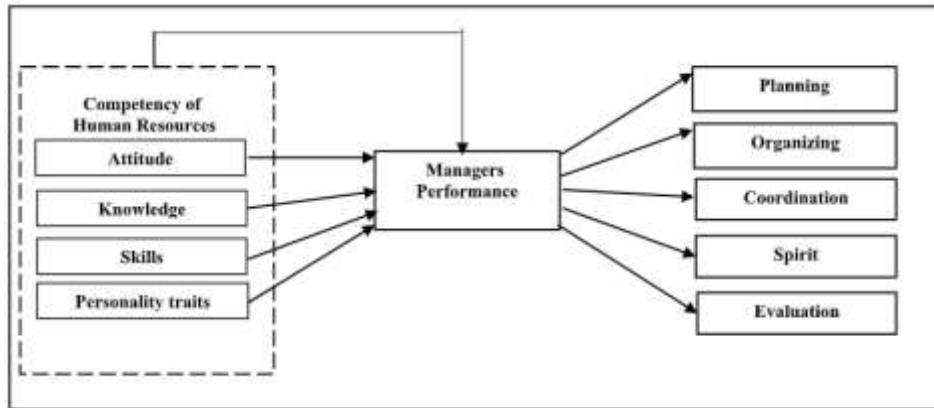


Figure 2 Competency of Human Resources Framework (Rastgoo, 2016)

Learning activities should be experiential, on-the-job training, or classroom-focused so that personnel development is well rounded or comprehensive. There is general acceptance that the term ‘management training’ is most appropriately used in discussing the need of the staff to obtain the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to perform the management roles effectively as required by the university. These competencies will further enhance their talent, which is reflected in a well-organized IDP. All the planning, organizing, coordinating, motivating and evaluating functions will be facilitated when TM and IDP become the priority in determining the employee performance in the organization (Pejabat Pendaftar UiTM, 2016; Ramonchito M. Lacsamana et al., 2018).

**Figure 3** explains about IDP that serves as a human development plan to close the gap between the desired competencies to achieve the targeted mission and vision of the institution and the current levels of competencies that the employees have. The necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes are needed by the university administrators to perform, achieve and maximise their outcome, talent and abilities to fulfil the TM plan of the institutions. In summary, all the strategies are meant to produce high performance, and to measure the impact and results of the targeted development. This assessment can be used strategically to build a performance-based organizational culture (Makarius & Srinivasan, 2017; Mercer, 2012).

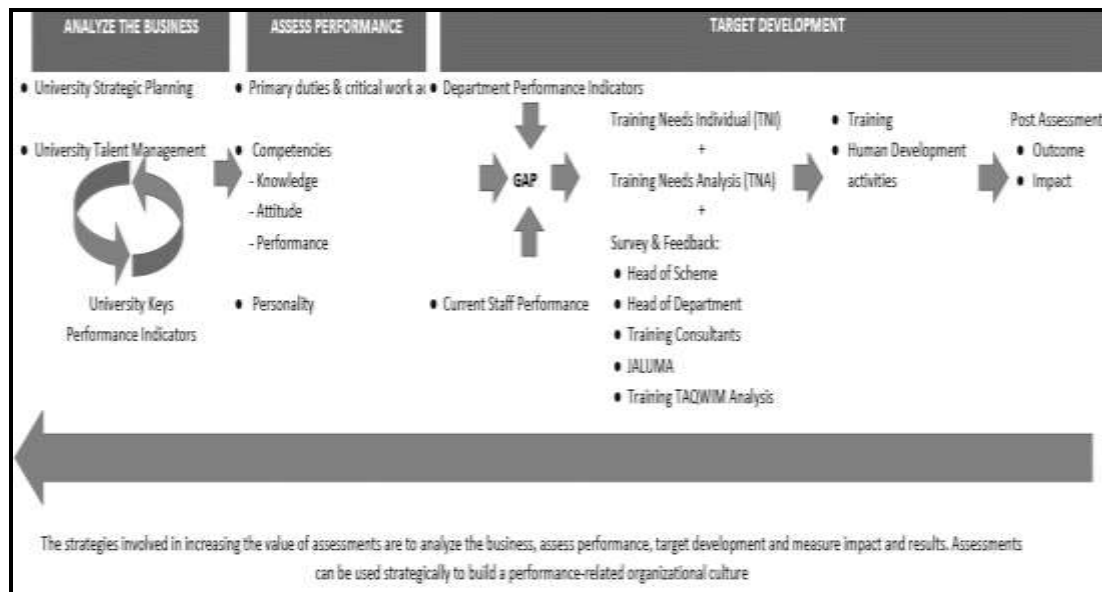


Figure 3 Increasing the Value of Assessment (Mercer, 2011)

TM must be aligned with the university strategic plan which is based on key performance indicators. The university must analyse its nature of business and then formulate the suitable IDP that can be used to assess the performance of the employees. The targeted development will further enhance the department performance indicators in which all the Training Needs Identification (TNI) and Training Needs Analysis (TNA) are properly evaluated (Palaniappan et al., 2021). The training and human development initiatives will ensure that the employees are equipped with suitable knowledge and skills that will increase their work performance. The assessment of the training and development impact or outcome by the management is essential to ensure returns on investment (ROI) (Ali & Nada, 2018; MAMPU Jabatan Perdana Menteri, 2018; Pejabat Pendaftar UiTM, 2016). IDP should be developed, becomes part of the important component, and supports the TNI and TNA for the TM assessment of universities. Below are the essential elements that make up the TNI & TNA:

- a. Annual Work Target Evaluation (SKT)
- b. Annual University Training Calendar
- c. Performance Indicators (PI): University Trans4u Programme
- d. Objective Quality: University Strategic Planning
- e. Assessment: Annual Work Performance Evaluation (LNPT)
- f. Assessment: Promotion and Career Development System

Based on **Table 1**, the career development for university administrators ranges from officer up to the registrar position in a university (Institute of Leadership and Development, 2018). The **First Tier** comprises junior executives/ officers holding Grade N41 & N44 with basic working experience, roles and responsibilities. At the initial stage, they have to understand the rules and regulations related to the administrative (academic & student) functions as well as the budgeting aspects for the department. At this stage, training is very crucial for this level of officers in order for them to adapt with the organizational work culture. They must instill the institutional and ethical values to match those of the others in their scheme (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2015; MAMPU Jabatan Perdana Menteri, 2018; Pejabat Pendaftar UiTM, 2015).

The **Second Tier** in the administrator scheme consists of the intermediate administrators holding Grade N52 & N48 in which they have gone through all the basic administrator courses and previously performed very well in their roles. At this level, administrators need to be more critical and multitasking in the area of change management, policies and decision making, strategic management, effective leadership, networking, and communication skills. They are also the subject matter expert and must possess effective conflict management skills (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2015; MAMPU Jabatan Perdana Menteri, 2018; Pejabat Pendaftar UiTM, 2015).

The **Third Tier** of university administrators comprises senior administrators holding Grade JUSA/N54 in which they are responsible and accountable to shape institution-wide policy and gain insights on balancing internal and external leadership roles. These individuals work more effectively as a member of the senior leadership team and articulate a powerful institutional vision and enlist others in pursuit of that vision. They must develop tangible strategies for long-term institutional success, advance administration and organization management. They must be strongly adept at institutional policies and decisions making with excellent grasp in organization financial and budgeting management. In addition, they must be proficient in strategic management and have creative and innovative thinking ability. Lastly, they must have effective leadership skills, collaboration skills, networking, and

advanced decision-making skills (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2015; MAMPU Jabatan Perdana Menteri, 2018; Pejabat Pendaftar UiTM, 2015).

The **Fourth Tier** is the executive administrator with Grade JUSA/ Registrar who have insights on balancing internal and external leadership roles and work more effectively as a leader of the senior leadership team. The position is held by the only one individual in the executive administration and organisation management in the university therefore he/she must have strong strategic governance, and excellent leadership skills that enable him/her to explain the institutional policies and involve in strategic decision making. Advanced communication skills, effective collaboration and networking skills with additional critical, creative and innovative thinking skills will ensure outstanding governance practice throughout the system. The one who hold this position is the role model for the assistant registrar scheme in the organization and he/she is the respected leader who have all the honour during his/her tenure in the organization (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2015; MAMPU Jabatan Perdana Menteri, 2018; Pejabat Pendaftar UiTM, 2015).

Table 1 Career Development for University Administrators (Pejabat Pendaftar UiTM, 2015)

Level of Administrators	Working Experience / Post Background	Individual Development Plan (IDP)		
		Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
<b>Executive Administrators Grade: JUSA/ Registrar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsibility and authority to shape institution-wide policy &amp; To lead successfully in a changing context</li> <li>Gain insight on balancing internal and external leadership roles</li> <li>Work more effectively as a leader of the senior leadership team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive administration and organisation management</li> <li>Executive leadership</li> <li>Strategic governance</li> <li>Talent accelerated leadership excellent series (TALES)</li> <li>Global and institutional policies and decisions making</li> <li>Blue ocean strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advance Neuro Linguistic Programme (NLP) &amp; Corporate strategic administration</li> <li>Advance communication skills,</li> <li>Effective collaboration and networking skills</li> <li>Critical, Creative and innovative thinking, Effective leadership Skills</li> <li>Crisis management Inter personnel management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutional values</li> <li>Ethics and values Integrity</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Administrators Grade: JUSA/N54</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsibility and authority to shape institution-wide policy &amp; Gain insight on balancing internal and external leadership roles</li> <li>Work more effectively as a member of the senior leadership team</li> <li>Articulate a powerful institutional vision and enlist others in pursuit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advance administration and organisation management</li> <li>Institutional policies and decisions making</li> <li>Organisation financial dan budgeting management</li> <li>Strategic management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creative and innovative thinking</li> <li>Effective leadership skills</li> <li>Effective collaboration and networking skills</li> <li>Efficient and advance decision-making skills</li> <li>Advance level of Training for</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutional values</li> <li>Ethics and values Integrity</li> </ul>



Level of Administrators	Working Experience / Post Background	Individual Development Plan (IDP)		
		Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
	of that vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop tangible strategies for long-term institutional success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blue ocean strategy</li> </ul>	Trainers (TOT)	
<b>Intermediate Administrators</b> Grade: N52/N48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand and overcome the challenges of organizational change</li> <li>Master new approaches to leadership</li> <li>Develop and implement effective strategies</li> <li>Review and assess the impact of changes in the higher education competitive environment</li> <li>Evaluate the impact of new initiatives and alliances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administration and organisation management</li> <li>Organisational change management</li> <li>Policies and decisions making</li> <li>Strategic organisational management</li> <li>Organisational financial management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective leadership skills</li> <li>Effective networking &amp; communication skills</li> <li>Advance level of Training for Trainers (TOT)</li> <li>Subject expert matters</li> <li>Effective conflict management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutional values</li> <li>Ethics and values Integrity</li> </ul>
<b>Junior Administrators</b> Grade: N44/N41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and lead high-functioning teams and function as a change agent</li> <li>Analyse financial data and understand how funds are allocated and budgets are created</li> <li>Understand to optimal role in planning initiatives</li> <li>Identify the opportunities for professional development and personal transformation</li> <li>Transformational learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial management</li> <li>Administration and management of Academic / Student / Research / Industrial Linkage matters</li> <li>Organisation Procedure, Process and Policies</li> <li>Office &amp; Quality management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resource management</li> <li>Problem solving skills</li> <li>Effective communication skills</li> <li>Basic of Training for Trainers (TOT)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutional values</li> <li>Ethics and values Integrity</li> </ul>

## 5.0 Conclusion

The TM framework for university administrators is the combination of the three (3) main components which are IDP, Human Development Process and Career Development. All these elements when combined will enable the management to enhance their talent management programmes and initiatives in order to ensure the pool of talented and high-quality human resource is sufficient. IDP in TM is very important and should become the focus of the organization to retain the excellent human capital. Therefore, the training courses developed by the university must include this aspect and must be taken seriously. Attitude, knowledge and skills cannot be developed overnight and they need proper and continuous modules that

will enhance employees' characters and personalities. IDP is crucial for the university to oversee the implementation and development issues and rapid changes in the higher education sector as this industry is very demanding either locally or internationally.

This conceptual paper captures the breadth of research that has been published on the topic of TM in higher education institution, identifies the key themes and debates in this literature, and highlights impediments to progress in the field. Furthermore, we identify some of the most critical directions for future research enquiry. The paper provides insights into those approaches that have been used to date in exploring TM of university administrators. The discussion is not meant as all-encompassing but rather than to consider especially important themes and questions that empirical research and enhanced conceptualization have the greatest potential to advance the field of TM for university and other institutions. The lack of understanding of the association between TM and IDP will otherwise preclude a clear understanding of how IDP contributes to organizational high performance and can be further explored for future research.

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The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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