The logic for organizational talent management scorecard

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore how academicians and talent management (TM) professionals (internationally and locally) perceived TM. Primarily, the intention is to report their views regarding the measurement and strategic alignment facets of the TM, in order to find out if TM does indeed require more attention. To carry out this task, a survey was conducted to understand the views of academics and TM professionals. Data was collected from both the academics (who have a research interest in the field of TM) and the TM professionals involved in ensuring the right talent for the organizations. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to 200 academicians and TM professionals (locally/internationally), 102 duly filled questionnaires were received that makes a response rate of 51%. Apart from filling the questionnaire, the respondents were also requested to explicitly express their views regarding the measurement and strategic alignment aspects of TM in organizations. The result of the survey supported the idea of the development of TM scorecard for effective TM in organizations. Finally, the survey offers justification factors for the preparation of the organizational TM scorecard, which will be helpful in the effective implementation of TM strategies in organizations since it could help the organization to achieve a competitive advantage.

1. Introduction

In 1998, McKinsey and company consultants introduced the term 'war for talent' and highlighted the importance of TM, and it was stated that "Better talent is worth fighting for" (Chambers et al., 1998). TM is often described as the "systematic attraction, identification, development, engagement/retention, and deployment of talents, who are considered particularly valuable to an organization."

TM has conceptually been defined by Collings and Mellahi (2009) through AMO (ability, motivation, opportunity) theory, which entails that employees' performance is a function of their ability, motivation, and opportunity to perform. However, Collings et al. (2017) described TM as a resource-based framework, which depicts an exclusive TM approach, thereby considering talent as a main strategic resource for creating a competitive advantage.

2. Literature review

Today technology and social change have evidently transformed the notion of talent, and now, it is considered as the most important asset for the organizations. Consequently, to achieve sustainably effective organizations, Lawler (2018) deliberated that talent should drive business strategy in order to achieve augmented performance. While studying the case of Maersk, Alziari (2017) identified a linkage between TM and wider management of organizational capabilities. Moreover, it has been advocated that 'Strategies define capabilities and capabilities define talent,' thereby highlighting the importance of talent to win over the competition. Boston consulting group (BCG) "believes the key to sustainable business performance is tightly linking leadership to talent capability-building and value creation" (BCG, 2018). The argument generated by BCG entails that TM is a strategic capability, which helps in maintaining sustainable performance. Furthermore, Vaiman et al. (2017) contextualized TM in a global context and argued that talent is not generic, and processes for deployment of talent are required to build organizational capabilities. King (2017) has debated on TM in the national context and has discussed the example of Canada as a nation is continuously involved in talent attraction and development both domestically and internationally,

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which has entailed Canada a strength to compete for global and national talent. Therefore, a question arises here, how we will know what optimal TM capabilities; we should have to achieve for sustainable organizational performance. So, measurement is the correct answer to this question.

Exploring the connection between HRM practices, TM, and firm performance in an emerging market of turkey, Glaister et al. (2018) found out that each of the TM practices was positively associated with firm performance, depicts strong organizational performance. The association between TM and organizational performance was modeled by keeping a creative climate as a mediator by Ingram (2016) in Poland, and data was collected from 326 big companies. The results were indicated that in order to facilitate organizations for better performance through a creative talent environment is the essential element. It also supports the connection between TM and organizational performance. Kilic et al. (2016) used the scale already utilized by the Oehley (2007) for assessment of 'partial TM competency model' in a university environment of Turkey, identified talents in educational setting generally play an important role in organizational success as well as in creating a positive organizational culture. Ulrich (2015) adopted a holistic approach and emphasized that talent and organization culture both need to be viewed together and proposed that this integration will create sustained competitive advantage. Hence, it can be argued that TM has a direct relation with organizational performance and a source for creating a competitive advantage. Here, another question arises on how to measure the organizational performance regarding TM practices in different organizational settings.

The main focus of the French aerospace industry case study conducted by N'Cho (2017) was to highlight the use of 'Big data' for managing talent in the milieu of change management within project management organizations. In the subject study, it has been asserted that talent analytics could help in defining the right time in the right way to develop talent. Thus the talent could be redeployed across different project phases to address the forthcoming challenges. It has also been noted that the use of talent analytics could optimize the talent deployment in projects, on as and when required basis. Here, a notion postulates that the TM analytics could help in project success, and if these analytics could be adopted in a scorecard form, it will determine and assist in knowing what value is being generated by the talent for the project.

This is the age of data and importance of good data cannot be ignored, Russell and Bennett (2015) have reported that big data could be used to measure and classify both personality traits and cognitive abilities of the talent. Furthermore, they have also informed that companies used the talent-related data in a very innovative way regarding TM decision making and to analyze the organizational performance through effective TM. Basically, this approach enables organizations to identify, which TM capabilities are essential for sustainability.

A fuzzy analytic hierarchy process (AHP) approach to measure the human capital (HC) in Turkish environment was applied by Bozbura et al. (2007) to measure the human capital (HC) in Turkish environment since it was asserted that "you cannot manage what you cannot control, and you cannot control what you do not measure." Basically, a model having five main elements that include talent, strategic integration, cultural relevance, knowledge management, and leadership, along with sub-attributes and 20 indicators, were established.

Huselid et al. (2005) developed workforce scorecard on the same footings of Kaplan and Norton's Balanced Scorecard (BSC) framework but have used workforce success, leadership and workforce behavior, workforce competencies, and workforce mindset, and culture indicators as performance lenses to evaluate the results, instead of the traditional perspectives of BSC, which consists of financial, customer, internal processes, and learning and growth. It could be argued here that with this approach, there could be an alignment issue between workforce strategy and wider organizational strategy.

Another approach naming Total Performance Scorecard (TPS) has been found in the literature, which has been formulated by integrating concepts such as the Personal Balanced Scorecard, Organizational Balanced Scorecard, Project Balanced Scorecard, Lean Six Sigma, and Talent Management into one overall holistic and organic framework (Rampersad, 2008). It could be debated that the lean and six sigmas are process improvement techniques, whereas, BSC is a holistic approach, which translates strategy into action at all levels of an organization and provides an effective measurement of the organizational objectives.

PMI (2014) published a report in the context of thought leadership series regarding TM, wherein it has been stressed that organizations should reexamine their TM approaches to stay aligned with business requirements since it is paramount for the execution of strategy through projects and programs. It is pertinent to mention that aligning business strategy with the TM initiatives is paramount for generating augmented performance. Kaplan and Norton (1996) developed a framework called balanced scorecard (BSC) to measure organizational performance through performance measures (key performance indicators). Basically, the balanced scorecard is about aligning the long term strategy with the management processes of the organization. Thus, it could be argued here that the idea behind BSC can be used to develop TM scorecard for organizations. Furthermore, the alignment issue of strategy and TM efforts could also be taken care of due to this approach.

While pondering the strategic performance measurement and management in nonprofit organizations, Kaplan (2001) emphasized that "Strategy and performance measurement should

focus on what output and outcomes the organization intends to achieve, not what programs and initiatives are being implemented." By taking the same lead, the notion of TM measurement scorecard could be a right step, since it will have all the ingredients that an organization wants to achieve through TM strategy for competitive advantage.

In order to develop a robust tool for lucid recruitment decisions by project managers within a project environment, Cognizant (2012) conducted a study and found out that project manager scorecard is the valid option to measure and apprehend project management competency at the center level and classify the areas for improvement. A Paper with a title of "A scorecard approach to portfolio and program management (PPM) talent management" was presented by Salasoo et al. (2013), they found out that in order to take rational staffing decisions regarding talent a PM scorecard is needed. Furthermore, they have advocated that PM scorecard "assists in measuring and identifying project management competency at the center level and identify any areas for improvement."

A healthcare TM survey was conducted by the Turner (2018) regarding the effective TM strategy, which "ensures the right mix of health workers in the right place at the right time with the right resources needed to perform their jobs and management support to enable them to work effectively to their full scope of practice," entails that all the activities such as TM success factors and related TM policies required for right TM strategic implementation require specific performance metrics.

The argument generated by Huselid (2018) below essentially points towards the use of workforce analytics for talent in the implementation of organizational strategy and in creating value. Hence, it indicates towards scorecard approach since managing and measuring the metrics are common ingredients of a scorecard (Harvey and Sotardi, 2018; Tayler, 2010; Kaplan et al., 2001). Based on Huselid (2018), "Workforce analytics refers to the processes involved with understanding, quantifying, managing, and improving the role of talent in the execution of strategy and the creation of value. It includes not only a focus on metrics (e.g., what do we need to measure about our workforce?), but also analytics (e.g., how do we manage and improve the metrics we deem to be critical for business success?)."

Keeping above in view, it has been noted that in the existing literature there is strong support for the development of organizational TM scorecard to measure the TM efforts in organizations (Huselid, 2018; Turner, 2018; Salasoo et al., 2013; Cognizant, 2012; Rampersad, 2008; Huselid et al., 2005). Furthermore, need for alignment of TM strategy with the business strategy has also emerged as a vital strategic concept, since this alignment will enhance the performance and will also generate a competitive advantage for the organizations (Lawler, 2018; Collings et al., 2017; PMI, 2014; Kaplan and Norton, 1996).

Therefore, the debates on the existing TM awareness, TM strategic alignment with the business strategy, and the measurement aspect of these approaches in the preceding paragraphs indicate that TM has not been fully utilized/applied. Hence, it requires in-depth exploration and a search comprehensive measurement tool. Furthermore, the question of whether measuring these constructs through a scorecard approach is a good idea. Consequently, the results of this study will provide the basis for the development of the organizational TM scorecard.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore how academicians and TM professionals (internationally and locally) perceived TM. Primarily, the intention was to report their views regarding the measurement and strategic alignment facets of the TM and to find out if TM does indeed require more attention.

4. Method

The study adopted an exploratory approach and a qualitative research design. Research is based on the survey data, generated from the profound views of the academicians and TM professionals. Apart from filling the questionnaire, the respondents were also requested to explicitly express their views regarding the measurement and strategic alignment aspects of TM in organizations. Basically, the aim was to achieve methodological data triangulation (Denzin, 2006). Patton (1999) identified that triangulation in qualitative inquiry provides a comprehensive understanding of the issue. Furthermore, it is also viewed as an approach to test validity through a convergence of data.

4.1. Sample

The survey was sent to 200 respondents, 48 academicians, and 54 TM professionals responded, it indicates that 51% filled the survey. However, every respondent did not provide a detailed response in the open-ended format as requested.

4.2. Measure

Questions were developed to find out the views of the academicians and professionals regarding the measurement and alignments aspects of TM, in order to establish justification for the development of TM scorecard. The items were formulated as statements that had to be rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, and in total, 14 items were developed.

The survey measured the following justification factors for the preparation of organizational TM scorecard:

- Strategic resource: Is talent a strategic resource.
- Strategic outcomes: Do talented employees generate strategic outcomes for organizations.
- Achieve goals: Does talent become a valuable strategic partner that helps the company achieve its goals.
- Effective talent management: Could effective talent management help organizations to address labor market challenges.
- Strategic business goals: Should talent management initiatives be aligned with strategic business goals.
- Aligned strategy: Should talent management strategy be aligned with the business strategy.
- Competitive advantage: Does talented, well trained, and committed workforce helps the company to attain a competitive advantage.
- Organizational strategy: Does effective management of talent have a role in the implementation of organizational strategy.
- Talent measurement: Should talent management efforts be measured.
- Measurement of talent deliverables: Are identification and measurement of talent deliverables important to pursue a corporate strategy.
- Talent management metrics: Should rigorous talent management metrics be established.
- Effective instrument: Is scorecard an effective instrument to measure the performance.
- Performance management tool: Is scorecard the performance management tool that compares strategic goals with results.
- Talent management scorecard: Talent management scorecard can help in effective talent management.

5. Data analysis and results

As unveiled in Table 1, the study consisted of a sample of 48 academicians (having research interest in talent management) and 54 TM professionals.

Furthermore, the majority of the academicians were from Europe, whereas the TM professionals were mostly from Pakistan, Turkey, and UAE.

Table 1: Demographic composition

Academicians		TM Professionals	
Country	Number	Country	Number
UK	04	UK	04
Ireland	04	UAE	06
Germany	01	South Africa	03
Netherland	01	Ireland	03
France	02	Malaysia	04
Sweden	02	Turkey	08
Denmark	03	Canada	04
Spain	01	Pakistan	22
Australia	02		
New Zealand	03		
South Africa	04		
Canada	02		
Malaysia	05		
Turkey	04		
Pakistan	10		
Total	48	Total	54

5.1. What do academicians think?

The analysis of the academicians' response to the survey questions is appended in Table 2. It has been noted that for most of the questions, the respondents have chosen either 'agree or strongly agree' option to record their choices. Thus, indicating strong support for the development of TM scorecard. Fig. 1 shows the Academicians response.

5.2. What do TM professionals think?

The analysis of the TM professionals' response to the survey questions is appended in Table 3. It has been understood that for most of the questions, the respondents have chosen either 'agree or strongly agree' option to record their choices. Consequently, it indicates strong support for the development of TM scorecard. Fig. 2 shows the TM Professionals' response.

Table 2: Academicians' response

Percentage of Respondents	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Average
Strongly Disagree		6.3							2.1		4.2	2.1	4.2	4.2	3.85
Disagree		8.3	4.2	4.2		4.2			6.3	8.3	12.5	6.3	12.5	12.5	7.93
Neutral	4.2	27.1	25	25	8.3	6.3	8.3	16.7	22.9	16.7	25	22.9	25	16.7	17.864
Agree	29.2	29.2	39.6	39.6	43.8	37.5	43.8	41.7	37.5	47.9	41.7	37.5	41.7	50	40.05
Strongly Agree	66.7	29.2	31.3	31.3	47.9	52.1	47.9	41.7	31.3	27.1	16.7	31.3	16.7	16.7	34.85

5.3. Results of the open-ended responses by respondents

Qualitative data analysis software NVivo 10 was used to organize and analyze the open-ended data gathered from the respondents. In the first step, all the statements given by respondents in their e-mails were organized for analysis in NVivo 10. In the next step, coding was done, and different nodes were developed. Moreover, the coding reference for all the nodes was generated from the software, and the word frequency query was also calculated. After that, the major themes were identified as per coding

references. Furthermore, the final thematic map was developed to establish justification for the formulation of an organizational TM scorecard.

5.4. Word frequency query

The output of the NVivo word frequency query is shown in Fig. 3, and it could be deduced that the main words in focus are the talent management, measuring, align, goals, scorecard, strategy, and organization.
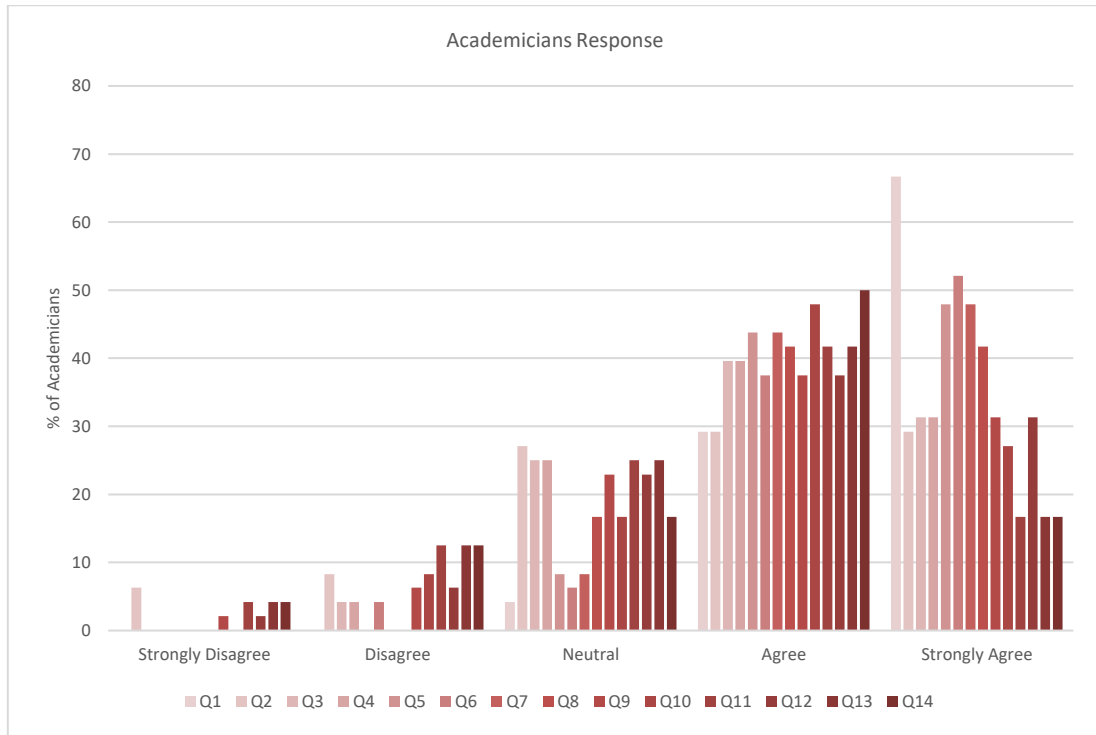
Fig. 1: Academicians' response

Table 3: TM professionals' response

Percentage of Respondents	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Average
Strongly Disagree											1.9				1.9
Disagree		7.4	3.7	1.9		3.7			5.6	9.3	14.8	5.6	14.8	18.5	8.5
Neutral	3.7	31.5	29.6	31.5	5.6	7.4	5.6	20.4	20.4	20.4	20.4	20.4	22.2	16.7	18.3
Agree	18.5	31.5	37	37	44.4	37	44.4	40.7	35.2	40.7	44.4	35.2	44.4	46.3	38.3
Strongly Agree	77.8	29.6	29.6	29.6	50	51.9	50	38.9	38.9	29.6	18.5	38.9	18.5	18.5	37.2

Fig. 2: TM professionals' response

Fig. 3: Word frequency query

5.5. Nodes comparison by number of coding references

By looking at the nodes comparison by a number of coding references in Fig. 4, it is clearly visible that the 'TM scorecard' comes out to be the major theme that emerged after coding views of academicians and TM professionals regarding the formulation of TM scorecard. Followed by the TM alignment, TM perceptions objectives, and measures.

Fig. 4: Nodes comparison by number of items coded

5.6. Final thematic map

Presented in Fig. 5 is the final thematic map, and the initial thematic map has been generated from the NVivo after coding the interviews data, by looking at the thematic map (Fig. 5), it has been deduced that three main themes have emerged from the data, which are TM perceptions, TM strategic alignment, and TM scorecard. Furthermore, TM scorecard has emerged as an outcome theme, consequently establishing the justification for the formulation of TM scorecard content.

Fig. 5: Final thematic map

6. Discussion

The main aim of the study was to find out the views of the academicians and TM professionals regarding the measurement and alignments aspects of TM, in order to establish justification for the development of TM scorecard. The result of the survey questions filled by both the academicians and TM professionals support the idea of the development of TM scorecard for effective TM in organizations. As far as academicians were concerned for most of the questions, they chose either 'agree (40.05%) or strongly agreed (34.85%)' option to record their choices. Similarly, the result for TM professionals was also not different, since

their response for most of the questions was 'agree (38.3%) or strongly agree' (37.2%). These results are in line with the findings of the studies conducted by Huselid (2018), Turner (2018), Salasoo et al. (2013), Cognizant (2012), Rampersad (2008) and Huselid et al. (2005).

Correspondingly, the outcome of the detail responses by both categories also extends strong justification for the formulation of TM scorecard. As it could be seen from the results of the word frequency query presented in Fig. 3 that the main words in focus were the talent management, measuring, align, goals, scorecard, strategy, and organization. Furthermore, the results of node comparison by a number of coding references Fig. 4 also supports the notion TM scorecard and the alignment of TM strategy with the business strategy for augmented organizational performance, which is supported by the studies conducted by Huselid (2018), PMI (2014), Huselid et al. (2005), and Kaplan and Norton (1996).

As it is clearly evident from the undermentioned statement of a respondent from the academician group that putting the right man at the right job doesn't serve the purpose of effective TM at organizations. Furthermore, the measurement will provide high light the gaps in the TM efforts and also indicates, which initiatives are giving results, a possible explanation for this can be found in the study by Huselid (2018) regarding workforce analytics: "Putting the right person at the right job is not good enough; all the processes and efforts to do this need to be recorded, and the results should also be effectively measured. So to do that, an effective talent management measurement tool is the answer."

Similarly, the following statement given by one of the TM professionals highlights the strategic
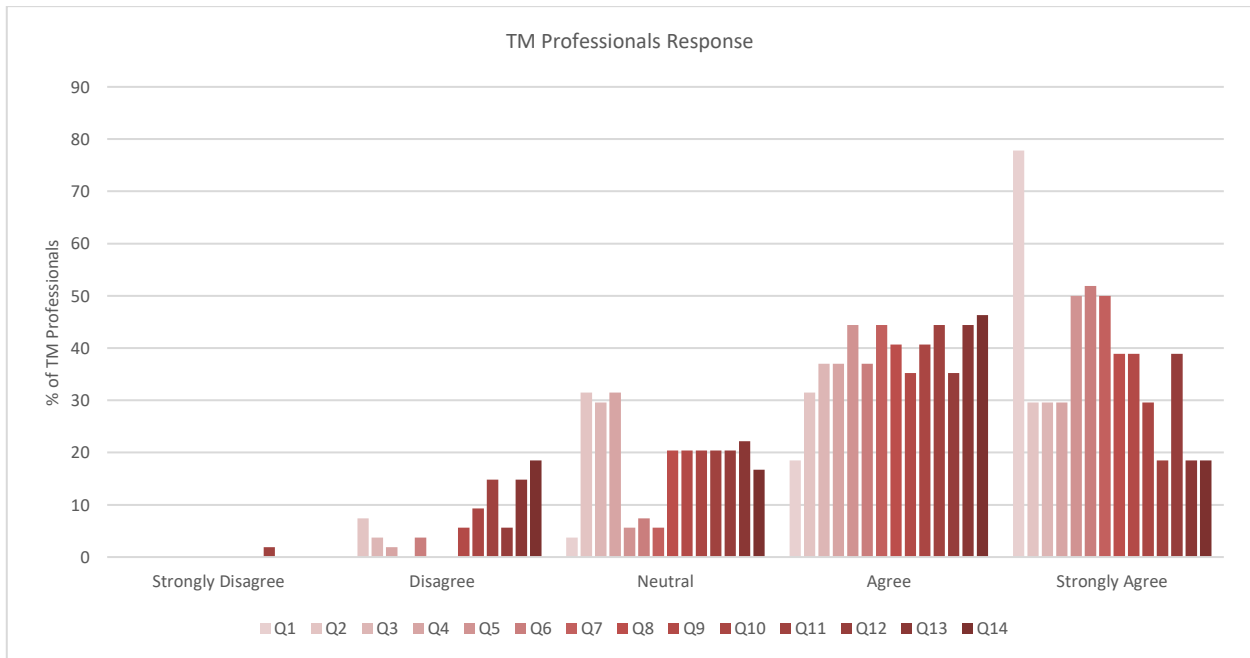
alignment of the TM initiatives with the organizational goals. Basically, in doing so, an organization will get to know what kind of talent is required to achieve its organizational goals; consequently, appropriate efforts will be carried out to acquire a particular talent: "Organizations should deliberate business strategies and goals and align talent management initiatives with these goals. Organizations can narrow talent searches when they fully understand their strategic goals."

Besides, it is consistent with the argument generated by Collings (2014) in the literature that companies with better alignment between organizational and employee goals achieve augmented performance and better employee motivation. Similarly, it has been argued by Vaiman et al. (2017) that talent is not generic, and processes for deployment of talent are required to build organizational capabilities for achieving organizational goals.

By looking at the results (views of academicians and TM professionals) of the survey, it could be inferred that effective TM enhances the competitiveness of the companies. Furthermore, another important aspect has been highlighted as well, i.e., the effectiveness of the TM in generating augmented organizational performance, and it has been stressed that TM efforts need to be measured through a scorecard, since Kaplan and Norton (1996) deliberated that scorecards help in performance management.

7. Implications and conclusions

The main purpose of this study was to know the TM perceptions of academicians (having TM as research interest) and TM professionals (internationally and locally). Principally, the objective was to note their understandings concerning the measurement and strategic alignment aspects of the TM, and this was done by employing a qualitative survey, the results were very supportive.

As far as implications are concerned, this research is first of its kind, since a traditional concept of measurement for TM (Rampersad, 2008; Huselid et al., 2005) has not been used. Instead, a strategic approach will be adopted in the form of a TM scorecard (Lawler, 2018; Collings et al., 2017; PMI, 2014; Kaplan and Norton, 1996). Consequently, by utilizing TM scorecard organizations would be able to measure the contribution of particular talent in the success of the organizational strategy, in doing so, it will enhance the competitiveness of the organizations. Furthermore, it will lead the organization towards achieving a competitive advantage.

Generally, it is imperative for every organization to align its business strategy with its talent strategy to achieve organizational goals; hence TM scorecard will be an effective tool to address the alignment issue for the organizations. Similarly, it will serve the purpose of TM analytics as well, which will be used by management for data-driven decision making regarding talent.

Finally, the availability of TM scorecard for measurement of talent management would enable organizations to study the efficacy of their talent management strategies and their outcomes.

Compliance with ethical standards

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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