

A STUDY ON IMPACT OF TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Priya Kumari ¹ R.Hariprasad ²

¹ MBA Final Year Student, Department of Management Studies, Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai

² Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration, Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai

ABSTRACT

People are what keep organizations running. That sounds obvious, but it is easy to forget when the focus shifts entirely to numbers, targets, and quarterly reviews. This paper looks at something more fundamental — whether the way organizations manage talent actually changes how employees feel about their work. Specifically, it examines the impact of talent management practices on employee engagement, drawing on survey data collected from 150 respondents across multiple departments and experience levels.

The study uses percentage analysis, Chi-square tests, and ANOVA to explore whether demographic factors such as age, gender, educational qualification, department, and years of experience influence how employees perceive talent management and engagement. Results show that while age, gender, department, and experience level do not significantly affect engagement perceptions, educational qualification does. Training and development emerged as the most valued practice among respondents, and a large majority expressed satisfaction with existing talent management systems.

Keywords: Talent Management, Employee Engagement, Training and Development, Performance Appraisal, Career Growth, Recognition and Rewards, Organizational Performance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Ask any HR professional what keeps them up at night and there is a good chance it involves two things: finding the right people and holding on to them. Organizations spend enormous amounts of money recruiting talent, building onboarding programs, running appraisal cycles, and offering incentives. But despite all that effort, employee disengagement remains stubbornly common. People show up, do the minimum, and leave — sometimes mentally before they leave physically.

Part of the problem is that talent management is often treated as a set of separate HR activities rather than a connected system. Recruitment happens in one corner, training in another, appraisals in yet another — rarely working together with a unified goal. When practices lack coherence, employees sense it. They begin to question whether the organization genuinely invests in them or is simply going through procedural motions.

Employee engagement, in this context, is not just a buzzword. It is the degree to which employees feel emotionally and psychologically connected to their work and their organization. Engaged employees are

not just compliant — they bring discretionary effort. They go beyond the job description because they want to, not because they are told to. That distinction matters enormously for productivity, innovation, and long-term retention.

This study sets out to understand the relationship between talent management practices and employee engagement. It looks at whether specific practices — recruitment, training, performance appraisal, career growth, and recognition — make a measurable difference in how engaged employees feel. Data was gathered from 150 respondents using a structured questionnaire, and the findings were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. The goal is not just to confirm that talent management matters, but to understand which parts of it matter most.

2. BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Evolution of Talent Management

Human Resource Management has shifted considerably over the past few decades. What once revolved around administrative tasks — payroll, attendance, hiring paperwork — has become something far more strategic. Organizations now recognize that the workforce is not simply a cost center but a source of competitive advantage.

Talent management emerged from this shift. At its core, it refers to the deliberate effort to attract, develop, and retain people who have the ability and commitment to drive organizational success. It is not about managing everyone the same way; it is about identifying what different employees need to grow and aligning those needs with where the organization wants to go.

2.2 Concept of Employee Engagement

Employee engagement describes the emotional investment people bring to their roles. An engaged employee genuinely cares — about the quality of their work, the success of their team, and the reputation of the organization. This is different from satisfaction, which is about how comfortable someone feels, or happiness, which can exist without real commitment.

Research has consistently shown that engaged employees are more productive, more creative, and far less likely to leave. They act as advocates for the organization. The opposite — disengaged employees — quietly undermine team performance, drain manager time, and inflate turnover costs.

2.3 The Link Between Talent Management and Engagement

When employees are hired thoughtfully, trained well, evaluated fairly, given chances to grow, and recognized for their contributions, they tend to feel that their organization sees them as individuals, not just headcount. That feeling of being valued is at the heart of engagement.

Conversely, organizations that rely on inconsistent appraisal systems, offer little developmental support, or treat recognition as an afterthought tend to produce workplaces where people feel disconnected. The relationship between talent management and engagement is not accidental — it is structural. Good practices create conditions for engagement; poor ones erode it.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The academic conversation around talent management and employee engagement spans several decades and disciplines. What follows is a selective overview of the most relevant contributions.

Collings and Mellahi (2010) built a compelling case for strategic talent management, arguing that organizations which systematically identify and develop high-potential employees in critical roles are more competitive over the long run. Their work was notable for insisting that talent management be integrated with business strategy rather than left as a standalone HR function. Tarique and Schuler (2010) extended this thinking to global contexts, showing that cultural complexity and talent scarcity require flexible, internationally informed HR frameworks.

Dries (2013) challenged the tendency to limit talent management to top performers, making the case that development programs aimed at all employees — not just the high-potential few — generate broader gains in engagement and morale. Thunnissen, Boselie, and Fruytier (2013) supported this view, finding that inclusive approaches to talent management reduce turnover and strengthen organizational commitment.

On the engagement side, Macey and Schneider built an influential conceptual model defining engagement as a psychological state combining emotional, cognitive, and behavioural elements. Their key insight was that organizations cannot engineer engagement directly — they can only build conditions that make it more likely. Saks (2010, 2020) took a similar line, showing empirically that perceived organizational support and fair treatment are among the strongest predictors of how engaged an employee will be.

More recent studies have continued to refine this picture. Mensah (2015, 2020) demonstrated through quantitative work that structured talent management systems produce significantly higher engagement scores across different organizational settings. Bibi (2017, 2021) focused specifically on performance appraisal and reward systems, finding that fairness in evaluation is strongly connected to how motivated employees feel. Jena and Pradhan (2018, 2022) conducted research in Indian organizations, noting that training programs and career development opportunities are especially influential drivers of engagement in that context.

Mehta (2024) and Sharma (2025) contributed more integrative analyses, each showing that the combined effect of multiple talent management practices is stronger than any single practice in isolation. This suggests that organizations benefit not from doing one thing exceptionally well, but from building a system where practices reinforce each other. The implication for this study is clear: examining any single practice without understanding how it connects to others risks missing the fuller picture.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was designed with four primary goals:

1. To examine the talent management practices currently in place across organizations.
2. To assess the level of employee engagement and the factors shaping it.
3. To analyze the relationship between talent management practices and employee engagement outcomes.
4. To propose practical recommendations for organizations seeking to strengthen this relationship.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design. This approach is suited to the aim of the study, which is not to test a new theory from scratch but to carefully document and analyze the current relationship between talent management practices and employee engagement. Descriptive research allows for systematic data collection and meaningful inference without experimental manipulation.

5.2 Sample and Data Collection

A sample of 150 respondents was selected using convenience sampling, a non-probability technique that prioritizes accessibility and voluntary participation. While this limits generalizability, it is appropriate given the exploratory scope of the study and the diversity of departments and experience levels represented in the sample.

Primary data was gathered through a structured questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The questionnaire covered demographic information, perceptions of talent management practices, and self-reported engagement levels. Secondary data was drawn from published research articles, management journals, and institutional reports to provide contextual and theoretical grounding.

5.3 Analytical Tools

Three statistical techniques were used to analyze the data. Percentage analysis was applied to describe the distribution of responses across demographic and categorical variables. The Chi-square test was used to assess whether statistically significant associations exist between demographic factors and perceived impact of talent management on engagement. One-way ANOVA was applied to test for differences in mean scores of talent acquisition perceptions across demographic groups. All tests were evaluated at a five percent level of significance.

6. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

6.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The sample skews toward younger professionals. Nearly three-quarters of respondents (74.7%) fell below the age of 25, with 20% between 25 and 35. This likely reflects the composition of the industries surveyed — particularly IT and services sectors that tend to employ a younger workforce.

Gender distribution showed a majority of male respondents at 66%, with 34% female. Most respondents were postgraduate holders (46%), followed by undergraduates (36.7%), professional degree holders (9.3%), and others (8%). The IT department represented the largest single departmental group at 29.3%, followed by "Others" (22.7%), Marketing (15.3%), HR (12.7%), Finance (10.7%), and Operations (9.3%).

In terms of experience, half the respondents (50%) had less than one year of experience in their current organization. A further 36% had between one and three years. This concentration of relatively new employees is relevant — it suggests that findings about talent management perceptions may be especially shaped by early-career experiences.

Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Below 25	112	74.7
25 – 35	30	20.0
36 – 40	6	4.0
Above 40	2	1.3
Total	150	100.0

Table 2: Gender Distribution

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	99	66.0
Female	51	34.0
Total	150	100.0

Table 3: Working Department of Respondents

Department	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Finance	16	10.7
HR	19	12.7
IT	44	29.3
Marketing	23	15.3
Operations	14	9.3
Others	34	22.7
Total	150	100.0

6.2 Talent Management Practice Insights

A strong majority of respondents — 76% — confirmed that talent management practices were formally implemented in their organization. Only about 10.7% said they were not, while the remaining 13.3% were

uncertain. This baseline is encouraging; it suggests the study is examining how well these practices work, not whether they exist at all.

Training frequency showed a strong leaning toward monthly programs (46%), followed by quarterly (25.3%), rarely (11.3%), half-yearly (9.3%), and annually (8%). This is a positive sign — frequent training signals organizational investment in skill development. Quarterly performance appraisals were most common (46%), though a notable 25.3% said appraisals happen rarely.

When asked to rate the fairness of appraisal processes, the largest group (34.7%) rated it as fair, while 28.7% said very fair and 28% remained neutral. Only 8.6% expressed dissatisfaction — a relatively low figure, though the 28% neutral category leaves room for improvement. Career growth opportunities were affirmed by 66% of respondents, with 24% uncertain and 10% indicating these were absent.

Asked which practice contributed most to their professional growth, respondents ranked training and development first by a significant margin (46%), followed by career growth opportunities (29.3%), performance appraisal (13.3%), recognition and rewards (8.7%), and mentorship programs (2.7%). Overall satisfaction with talent management came in at 43.3% satisfied and 23.3% very satisfied — a combined 66.6% expressing positive sentiment.

Table 4: Frequency of Training and Development Programs

Frequency	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Annually	12	8.0
Half-Yearly	14	9.3
Monthly	69	46.0
Quarterly	38	25.3
Rarely	17	11.3
Total	150	100.0

Table 5: Overall Satisfaction with Talent Management Practices

Satisfaction Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Very Satisfied	35	23.3
Satisfied	65	43.3
Neutral	40	26.7
Dissatisfied	8	5.3
Very Dissatisfied	2	1.3
Total	150	100.0

6.3 Chi-Square Test Results

Chi-square tests were run to examine whether demographic variables were associated with perceived impact of talent management on engagement. Results are summarized below:

Demographic Variable	Chi-Square Value	Table Value	Significance	Decision
Age	5.295	12.592	$p = 0.507$	H ₀ Accepted
Gender	2.866	5.991	$p = 0.239$	H ₀ Accepted
Educational Qualification	18.519	12.592	$p = 0.202^*$	H ₀ Rejected
Working Department	16.350	18.307	$p = 0.090$	H ₀ Accepted
Years of Experience	5.872	12.592	$p = 0.438$	H ₀ Accepted

The data tells a clear story. Age, gender, department, and experience level do not determine how strongly an employee is affected by talent management practices. The one exception is educational qualification, where the chi-square value exceeds the critical threshold. Respondents with different educational backgrounds appear to perceive the impact of talent management on engagement differently — possibly because their expectations, career stage, or exposure to developmental opportunities vary by qualification level.

6.4 ANOVA Results

One-way ANOVA was applied to test whether mean scores on talent acquisition practices differed across demographic groups:

Variable	F Value	P Value	Significance ($\alpha = 0.05$)	Conclusion
Age	7.991	0.001	Significant	Age influences talent acquisition perceptions
Gender	2.768	0.067	Not Significant	Gender has no significant influence
Department	12.961	0.000	Significant	Department influences talent acquisition perceptions
Years of Experience	11.740	0.000	Significant	Experience influences talent acquisition perceptions

While gender shows no statistically significant effect on how employees perceive talent acquisition practices, age, department, and years of experience all produce significant differences in mean scores. This matters practically. It suggests that a one-size-fits-all talent management strategy may not work equally well across all employee groups. Older employees and those with more tenure likely have different expectations from recruitment and development processes compared to new joiners. Similarly, departments with varying work structures and performance norms will respond differently to the same practices.

7. CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine how talent management practices relate to employee engagement. The findings suggest that the relationship is real, meaningful, and contingent on several organizational and individual factors. Training and development stood out as the practice with the strongest perceived impact on professional growth. This makes intuitive sense — development signals investment, and when employees feel their organization is genuinely interested in helping them grow, they tend to respond with greater commitment and effort. Performance appraisal satisfaction was moderately positive, but the substantial neutral group hints at a gap between stated fairness and felt fairness. Many employees are not opposed to being evaluated — they want the process to feel credible.

Statistical analysis confirmed that demographic variables do not uniformly predict how talent management practices affect engagement. Except for educational qualification, individual factors like age, gender, department, and experience did not show significant associations with engagement outcomes in chi-square testing. However, ANOVA results revealed that age, department, and experience do shape perceptions of talent acquisition specifically — which suggests that even if overall engagement is not demographically determined, specific practices need to be designed with different groups in mind.

The practical takeaway is not complicated. Organizations that build thoughtful, connected talent management systems — where recruitment, development, appraisal, and recognition work in concert — create the conditions for engagement. Those that treat these as isolated activities often find that even well-intentioned initiatives fail to move the needle. Engagement is less a product of any single practice and more an outcome of the overall experience of being managed.

8. SUGGESTIONS

8.1 Strengthen the Development Ecosystem

Given the clear preference for training and development, organizations should move beyond compliance-driven training calendars toward learning environments that feel relevant and continuous. Monthly training cadences are a good start, but quality matters as much as frequency. Programs should be tied to actual skill gaps and career aspirations, not just organizational convenience.

8.2 Improve Appraisal Transparency

The 28% neutral rating on appraisal fairness is worth taking seriously. Neutral does not mean satisfied — it often means employees have given up expecting the process to be meaningful. Quarterly appraisals are already common, which is the right cadence. What needs improvement is clarity on how ratings are determined and how feedback translates into real developmental action.

8.3 Recognize Beyond Compensation

Recognition and rewards came last in terms of perceived contribution to professional growth — a finding that organizations should examine honestly. Recognition does not have to be expensive. Public

acknowledgment, increased responsibility, and visible career movement are forms of recognition that often matter more to employees than monetary rewards alone.

8.4 Tailor Practices to Employee Segments

Since age, department, and experience influence how employees perceive talent acquisition, HR teams should consider more differentiated approaches. New joiners need structured onboarding and quick visibility into career paths. Experienced employees need challenges that stretch their capabilities. Departments with measurable outputs may respond differently to feedback systems than those with more qualitative work.

8.5 Build a Culture of Feedback

Periodic surveys and structured listening sessions should become organizational habits rather than occasional exercises. Employees notice when their feedback disappears into a black box. Closing the loop — telling employees what was heard and what changed — builds the kind of trust that sustains engagement over time.

8.6 Align Talent Management with Organizational Purpose

Ultimately, talent management works best when employees understand where the organization is going and see their own growth as part of that journey. Connecting individual development plans to team goals, and team goals to organizational direction, turns talent management from an HR process into a shared conversation about the future.

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