Conceptualisation of Talent Management in United Kingdom (UK) Higher Education Institutions in the context of New Public Management: Academics Perspective

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to Almighty God for answering all my prayers and making this complex educational endeavour a success.

To my father (Godfrey Obasogie Oseki), you laid the education foundation I followed. May your faithful departed soul, through the mercy of God Almighty, continue to rest in perfect peace (Amen). I dedicate this to you.

Thank you, mother, for all you have done to help me become the person I am today. I dedicate this to you.

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Declaration

I hereby declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis is my own original work and reiterate that it has not been obtained from material previously published or written, nor material accepted for the award of degree or diploma, except where due acknowledgement or reverend is given to the author or publisher.

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List of Abbreviations

AACSB - The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business

ACF - Academic Career Framework

APRs - Annual Performance Reviews

CEOs - Chief Executive Officers

CIPD - Chartered Institute of Personnel; and Development

CVCP - Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals

EIASM - European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management

EFMD - European Foundation for Management Development

EQUIS - EFMD Quality Improvement Systems

FMI - Financial Management Initiative

FTC- Fixed Term Contract

FTE - Full-time equivalent

HE - Higher Education

HEFCE - The Higher Education Funding Council for England

HEIs - Higher Education Institutions

HMSO - Her Majesty's Stationery Office

HRM - Human Resource Management

KEF - Knowledge Exchange Framework

KPIs - Key Performance Indicators

KTP - Knowledge Transfer Partnership

MNCs - Multi-National Companies

NAB - National Advisory Board

NHS - The National Health Service

NPA - New Public Administration

NPM - New Public Management

NSS - National Student Survey

NTFS - National Teaching Fellowship Scheme

OECD - The Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development

OfS - Office of Students

P&DR - Performance and Development Review

PCC: Performance and Career Conversations

PDR - Performance and Development Review

PPA - Progressive Public Administration

RDF - Researcher Development Framework

REF - Research Assessment Framework

REF - Research Excellence Framework

SMEs - Small and Medium Size Enterprises

SRR - Significant Responsibility for Research

STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

TEF - Teaching Excellence Framework

TM - Talent Management

TNE - Transnational Education

UCU - University and College Union

UGC - University Grants Committee

UKPSF - United Kingdom Professional Standard Framework

UKRI - United Kingdom Research and Innovation

VC - Vice Chancellor

VCET - Vice Chancellor's Executive Team

Abstract

Talent management (TM) has been one of the dominant debates among professional and academic literature since the 2000s. Its various approaches and practices have been adopted by many private organisations globally. However, despite the popularity of TM literature, there are certain contexts and sectors that remain relatively underrepresented, such as the public sector and/or higher education institutions (Al Ariss, Cascio and Paauwe, 2014; Sparrow and Makram, 2015; Khilji et al., 2015; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020; Kravariti et al., 2023).

Likewise, there is little empirical research into the ways that academics conceptualise talent and TM, as well as its practices and processes in their institutions. Therefore, this study seeks to contribute to the conceptual and empirical understanding of talent and TM within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the context of New Public Management (NPM) within the theoretical framework of stewardship theory. This study uncovered how talent and TM are defined and perceived by academics in UK HEIs, a sector that is increasingly competing on a global level for academic talent. The research further outlines the relationship between TM, NPM and stewardship theory. The aim of the research is twofold: First, to understand the perception of academics in relation to talent and TM practices in the context of NPM. Second, to provide valuable insights aimed at informing good practice and policymaking for academia and organisation management.

An interpretivist philosophy with multiple cases is adopted as the primary research method. Two Northwest England HEIs are selected as the qualitative cases, with one being a member of the Russell Group universities and the other a non-member of the group. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with academics at different levels of their career and trajectory. Cases documents related to HRM and TM were reviewed.

Findings indicated that individualism, limited and partially developed performance management practices, ad-hoc career management practices, staff training, formal and informal mentorship, and the type of line manager were the main attributes of the TM practices observed by academics as NPM reform cut through their institutions. In addition, the research reveals that there are some levels of similarities and differences in the way academics in the two cases conceptualise talent, TM and TM operationalisation.

Chapter 1: Introduction to the research

1.0 Background

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are seen as sites of innovation, creativity, skills and growth development, with a focus on long-term scholarly and professional goals involving the development of knowledge for the greater good of society at large (EIASM, 2013; Franco-Santos et al., 2014; Taylor, 2024). They have become more like businesses over recent decades and as such there are now more concerns with such things as performance outcomes, short-term driven results and more private sector style management processes i.e., the sweep of New Public Management (NPM) in the sector (Deem, 1998; Bacon, 2014). The issue of global mobility (staff and students being able to move around the world) means more competition for organisations in the higher education sector. Private sector style processes regarding staffing now include attention to the types of employees now often referred to as 'talents', and how they are defined, sought and retained (World Economic Forum, 2011; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020).

The origin of higher education (HE) in the UK can be traced to the University of Oxford being the first formally recognized HE institution in 1096 and this was followed by the University of Cambridge, St Andrews and University of Edinburgh (Rüegg, 2004; Radice, 2013). It is important to note that there was a significant growth in the HE sectors in the 19th century as a result of the award of the royal charters by the Queen that conferred independent legal status to the University College and Kings College both in London, University of Wales (formally known as St. David's College) and Durham University (Historic England, 2024). By the end of that century, the universities that are today referred to as redbrick, such as the Universities of Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Liverpool, Bristol, and Birmingham were established with focus on STEM subjects and medical courses (Harvey, 2005; Radice, 2013). This took the number of UK HE institutions to 9, plus some university colleges. By mid-20th century due to an increase in population and demand for knowledge and skills required to enhance the growing technological economy, the UK government responded to the demand by establishing colleges of advanced technology with the first set of colleges (Loughborough, Salford, Aston, Bradford, Brunel, Bath, City and Surrey) founded in 1956 and then gaining university status by 1966 (Radice, 2013; Donnelly and Norton, 2017).

The growth in the HE sector continued with previous university colleges such as Leicester and Hull being awarded university status and new universities such as Warwick, Kent, Sussex, Essex, Lancaster, York and East Anglia established. A further expansion of the sector was achieved with the Further and Higher Education Act of 1992 which gave university status to 35 previous polytechnics and some other institutions (Radice, 2013). Furthermore, from 2001 to 2013 more universities were established referred to as the Post 92 Universities, some of which were previously vocational institutions. That development increased the number of HE institutions by 31 and out of the 31, 10 were granted the status of university colleges of Higher and Further Education (Radice, 2013; Donnelly and Norton, 2017). As a result of this development, it is obvious that HE provision is now provided by different institutions with distinct backgrounds and reputations with some leading the international league tables each which constitute what is referred to as higher education institution, ranked based on academic reputation, student satisfaction, research output, faculty-student ratio, employability, employer reputation, and more (Harvey, 2005; Caruana and Spurling, 2007; Carpentier, 2018; Times Higher Education, 2024).

The continual change and dynamism of today's business environment has also made it increasingly tasking for organisations including HEIs to garner the right kind of talents needed to ensure success. Interest in talent management (TM) in HEIs is rooted in demographic, economic and political shifts and challenges, such as: declining birth rates; an ageing workforce (Strack et al., 2008; Randall, 2017; Khan, 2019); shortages of skilled manpower, globalisation, institutionalism, protectionism, increased mobility of workforce (Shaikh, 2009; Collings, 2014; Hazelkorn, 2017); increase mobility of academics (van den Brink et al., 2013); NPM, managerialism with reduced financial resources, research assessment frameworks, global and national rankings of universities (Deem et al., 2007; Bacon, 2014; and Kallio et al., 2021); Brexit (Mayhew, 2017); budget cuts, underfunding, global pandemic, influence of technology, and the war for talent resulting in scarcity of academic talent in many disciplines (World Economic Forum, 2011; van den Brink et al., 2013; Hazelkorn, 2017; Hancock and Schaninger, 2021; Kravariti, Jooss and Scullion, 2023).

European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management - EIASM (2013, p.1) put forward that, "TM is increasingly identified as a critical success factor in the corporate world yet academic research in this area has developed more slowly and despite the growth in recent research it still lags behind practice". Michaels et al. (2001) established that, talent is the sum of a person's abilities, his or her intrinsic gifts, skills, knowledge, experience, intelligence, judgment, attitude, character and drive…includes his or her ability to learn and grow…includes the best and the brightest and many organisations adopted the term to refer to their "A Level" employees who rank in the top 10 to 20%". Armstrong and Taylor (2017) argued that "talent is what people must have in order to perform well in their role and make a difference to organisational performance through their immediate effort as well as have the ability to learn and grow, including having the potential to make an important contribution in the future" (p. 278). While CIPD (2023) supported that talent refers to "individuals who can make a significant difference to organisational performance… either be through their immediate contribution or, in the longer-term, by reaching the highest levels of potential".

The private sector has focused more on TM in recent years, but as outlined previously the importance of retaining academics in HEIs is likely to become more important in what is an increasingly competitive and outputs driven global sector but the question that is left unanswered is if all academic staff could be classified as talents given their high level qualifications (van den Brink, 2013; Hilman and Abubakar, 2017; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020; Dries, 2022). While such debates about the concept are important, and will be discussed in more detail, evidence indicates that HEIs are certainly confronted with the problem of paucity, recruitment and retention of staff (Fernández-Aráoz et al., 2011; Saini and Wang, 2014; Thunnissen and van Arensbergen, 2015; Norris and Adam, 2017). As a result, TM remains a key problem for policymakers and managers in HEIs (Verhaegen, 2005; Reilly et al., 2014; Steckler, 2014; Paisey and Paisey, 2018). The challenge for top management and policymakers in HEIs is not only how to better manage and retain academic staff who can make a significance difference to their organisational performance but also how to turn the management's actual intentions of the principles and practices of TM into implementable local practice in the context of NPM (Kubler and Sayers, 2010; Gandy, Harrison and Gold, 2018; Thunnissen, van Arensbergen and van den Brink, 2021).

TM has been acknowledged as a critical function that contributes to organisational performance and success despite meaning different things to different people and organisations. Thus, it can be referred to as a phenomenon (Dries, 2013; 2022; Meyers and Van Woerkom, 2014; Collings, Vaiman and Scullion, 2022). And as such, this study views TM as a phenomenon. Considering TM as a phenomenon enabled the researcher to plurality of perspectives found in TM practices across literature, the case study institutions and secondary data sources (the case study institutions' official documents, websites, press releases, and other publicly available sources) that were reviewed and used to support the research findings rather than adhering to a normative framework that emphasises '*one right way'* of approaching or studying TM (Dries, 2013 p. 8).

For instance, the research of Meyers and Van Woerkom (2014) identified exclusive/stable, exclusive/developable, inclusive/stable, and inclusive/developable as the basic assumptions of the basic characteristics of the four talent philosophies, which are influential predictors of TM practices, that in turn influence individuals and organisational outcomes. Research such as this that examines how talent philosophies influence the choice of TM practices could provide interesting insights. For instance, the study conducted by Meyers et al. (2020) in which 321 HR managers revealed that all four of the aforementioned talent philosophies were equally common in the industry. This implies that businesses use talent and TM in different ways, and that the variations stem from disparate conceptions of what talent and TM are (Meyers and van Woerkom, 2014; Meyers et al., 2020). Furthermore, Dries's (2022) recent collaboration with HR professionals bolsters the argument that examining TM as a phenomenon, i.e., "whatever organisations are doing that they are calling TM" (p. 3), has scholarly and professional value. Thus, TM is considered a phenomenon in this study.

1.1 Rationale of the research

This study responds to the recent calls for further research to examine differences in the conceptualisation of talent and TM at country, sectorial, organisational, and departmental levels (Al Ariss, Cascio and Paauwe, 2014; Sparrow and Makram, 2015; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020; Dries, 2022; Kravariti et al., 2023). This research will contribute to closing the gap and provide more evidence of how the phenomenon (talent and TM) is conceptualised from the viewpoint of academics within HEIs in the context of NPM. In addition, a multiple case study such as this will allow for critical examination of the conceptualisation of talent, TM and the relationship between NPM and TM as well as related academic frameworks dominating current literatures within the business world and their applicability in the HE sectors (Tansley, 2011; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019; Thunnissen, van Arensbergen and van den Brink, 2021).

Economic and technological growth as well as global competitiveness are driven by the creativity, innovations and growth of HEIs (Salmi, 2009; Hughes and Kitson, 2012; Hodgson and Spours, 2015; Taylor, 2024) driven by their long-term scholarly and professional goals involving the development of knowledge for the greater good of the society at large (EIASM, 2013; Franco-Santos et al., 2014). HEIs have a key role to play in all these and in the communities in which they are located as they directly and indirectly contribute to the economy, employment, and social development of such regions (Jongbloed, Enders and Salerno, 2008; Deiaco et al., 2012). However, the view of HEIs is changing due to more short-term result orientated and output driven by the NPM reform and continual changes in the vitality of today's business environment which has also contributed to increased international, national, and local competition, reduced financial resources, research assessment framework, ranking, rating, increased competition for students and customer's satisfaction (Deem et al., 2007; Whitchurch, 2008; Bacon, 2014; Fletcher et al., 2015). As a result, HEIs are adopting business, performance, and TM practices at all levels to facilitate their business strategy and performance as well as actualise their goals (Jongbloed et al., 2008; Whitchurch, 2008; Kubler and Sayers, 2010; van den Brink et al., 2013; Gandy, Harrison and Gold, 2018; Kallio et al., 2021). This management approaches challenges long established notions of academic autonomy (Larson, 1977; Freidson, 2001; Broucker, De Wit and Verhoeven, 2018; Börnfelt, 2023) and little is known about the impact of such strategies and practices on the academics that works in these institutions (Watson, 2010; van den Brink, Fruytier and Thunnissen, 2013; Thunnissen and van Arensbergen, 2015; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015; Kamal, 2017; Hilman and Abubakar, 2017; Paisey and Paisey, 2018; Gandy, Harrison and Gold, 2018).

Additionally, the capacity to acquire, deploy, develop, reward, and retain people is becoming a critical issue for TM in public sector organisations, particularly HEIs (Poocharoen and Lee, 2013; Van den Brink, Fruytier and Thunnissen, 2013; Boselie and Thunnissen, 2017; Kravariti and Johnston, 2019; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020). Public sector organisations are obviously not the only employers fighting for highly skilled individuals, and various pieces of study indicate that academic disciplines are already experiencing a chronic scarcity of talented individuals in some nations (Khan, 2021; Boamah, Callen and Cruz, 2021; Council of Deans of Health, 2023; Universities UK, 2024). The makeup and quality of academic staff are critical to the quality of education, courses and HE research, as well as the reputation and competitive position of HEIs in the academic community (Lorange, 2006; Thunnissen, 2016; Björkman, Smale and Kallio, 2022). As a result, TM has entered many HEIs' strategic management agendas, and it is being reinforced by the trend of institutions transitioning from a collegial to a managerial model (Deem, 2001; Broucker, De Wit and Verhoeven, 2018; Börnfelt, 2023). Thus, the use and importance of group and individual performance indicators and measurements in academic evaluation (based on B3 metrics, REF, TEF, KEF, quality and quantity of publications, ref-able, funding bids, quality of teaching, student feedback, student pass rates, and retention, etc.) has increased (Thunnissen, van Arensbergen and van den Brink, 2021; Björkman, Smale, and Kallio, 2022; OfS, 2023). Although these systems have become widespread and heavily critiqued, their use and influence on academics that are being talent managed have received little attention. Therefore, there is a clear need for further investigation in this area as well as to close this enormous gap.

Furthermore, most research conducted on TM, has been conducted in the business and corporate world (Tansley et al., 2013; Feldman, Ng and Vogel, 2012; Ariss et al., 2014; Kravariti et al., 2023), with very little in HEIs, most especially in UK, as well as no comparative work conducted among UK HEIs (Björkman, Smale and Kallio, 2022). In addition, little is known about the relationship between NPM and TM in UK HEIs and how this impact on the academics that work in these institutions (Kubler and DeLuca, 2006; De Vos and Dries, 2013; Takawira, Coetzee and Schreuder, 2014; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020). Therefore, there is a clear need for further investigation in this area, due to the gap and the link with retention, which is an important aspect of effective TM practices, these being designed to promote the retention, commitment and performance of academic staff who are the key resources of their institutions, thereby promoting the sustainability and competitiveness of HEIs (Zhang, Fried, and Griffeth, 2012; 2014; Thunnissen and Van Arensbergen, 2015; Paisey and Paisey, 2018; Thunnissen, van Arensbergen and van den Brink, 2021).

In summary, scanty attention has been paid in UK TM literature about the extent to which TM concepts, ideas and practices may have applicability in achieving broader organisational goals in public sector organisation (particularly in HEIs) and its impact on academics (Holbeche, 2011; Reilly et al., 2014; Poocharoen and Lee, 2013; Boselie and Thunnissen, 2017; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020; Thunnissen, van Arensbergen and van den Brink, 2021; Kravariti et al., 2023). This is an essential area given the multiplicity challenges HEIs face in managing their workforce, performance, and global competitiveness. As TM is another employee management strategy which is interrelated to HRM and other concepts such as stewardship theory. Therefore, this study will provide insights aimed at informing practices and policymaking around institutional TM practices in UK HEIs in the context of NPM.

1.2 Aim of the research

The purpose of the research is two-folds: First, to comprehend how academics in UK HEIs view talent and TM practices in the context of NPM. Second, to provide valuable insights aimed at informing good practice and policymaking for TM, most particularly TM in UK HEIs.

1.3 Objectives of the research

- To explore how talent is conceptualised by academics in the case study institutions.
- To examine how TM is conceptualised by academics in the case study institutions.
- To establish how case study institutions academics' experience TM practices in the context of NPM.
- To explore ways in which academics in case study institutions attempt to achieve their institution's expectations in the context of NPM.

1.4 Research questions

- How do academics in case study institutions conceptualise talent?
- How do academics in case study institutions conceptualise TM in their institution?
- How do academics in UK HEIs experience the operationalisation of TM practices in their institution in the context of NPM?
- How do academics in UK HEIs attempt to attain their institution's expectations in the context of NPM?

1.5 Research Gap, Significance and Anticipated Contributions to Knowledge

First, Tansley et al. (2013), Al Ariss et al. (2014), Khilji et al. (2015), Kravariti and Johnson, (2019; 2022), Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen, and Scullion (2020), and Dries (2022) suggested that certain contexts are underrepresented in the TM literature. Higher education happens to be among such contexts, especially in terms of how the phenomenon of talent and TM is conceptualised (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; van den Brink et al., 2013; Thunnissen and Van Arensbergen, 2015; Thunnissen, van Arensbergen, and van den Brink, 2021). Recent research in the field has mainly focused on global TM, i.e., across multi-national corporations (Schuler et al., 2011; Collings et al., 2011; De Vos and Dries, 2013; Bowman and Hird, 2014; Cascio and Boudreau, 2016; Collings, 2017; Collings et al., 2019; Kravariti et al., 2023), therefore, this study provides some insights about the phenomenon in an academic, professional and public sector context, which may be transferable within similar sectors.

Second, TM comparative case study work is also scanty (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Poocharoen and Lee, 2013). The limited amount of TM literature (for example, Kubler and DeLuca, 2006; Edwards and Smiths 2010; van den Brink et al., 2013) focuses on either comparative analysis among developed countries, multi-national companies (MNCs) and small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) with no study directed to drawing a comparison among HEIs in UK despite the significant role the sector plays in the economic, socio-cultural, technological growth as well as global competitiveness of the UK (Hodgson and Spours, 2015; Fairfoul, 2015; Norris and Adam, 2017; Higher Education Statistical Agency, 2020; Taylor, 2024). Due to the above gap, there is clear need for research in this area. For instance, the research respondents to the investigation by Poocharoen and Lee (2013) on TM in the public sector were civil servants and public service officers from various ministries, federal departments, local governments, and statutory bodies in three different countries (Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand). However, in this study, respondents are academics at UK HEIs. In addition, unlike Poocharoen and Lee's (2013) research, which investigated the views of government representatives of the three countries in relation to the kinds of TM schemes they have in place, in order to explain the variation among the schemes, this research aims to comprehend how academics in UK HEIs view talent and TM practices in the context of NPM. Furthermore, while their research seeks to provide answers for how government representatives of the case study countries defined talent, this research seeks to provide answers for how academics in case study institutions conceptualise talent and TM as well as experience the operationalisation of TM practices in their institutions. Therefore, though both studies are comparative in nature, they are also distinct in different ways.

Third, this research is also responding to the call for contributions to the discussion and empirical evidence on the link between TM and other phenomena, and organisational level outcomes, in this case the link between TM, stewardship theory and NPM (Al Ariss et al., 2014; Thunninssen, 2016; Narayanan, 2016; McDonnell et al., 2017; Kravariti et al., 2021). It is against the above backdrop that a critical review and investigation of the experience of UK academics in relations to TM and NPM is essential to provide a clear picture of the relationship between both phenomena from the viewpoints of the academics that are being talent managed.

From the insight generated from the study, the researcher intends to recommend TM practices that HEIs policymakers and management could adopt which might have significant impact on the commitment and retention of their academic staff in the era of NPM and beyond. Thereby helping such institutions to remain competitive as well as successful in the current challenging global business environment and beyond (Al Ariss and Crowley-Henry, 2013; Takawira, Coetzee and Schreuder, 2014; Porter, Woo and Campion, 2016).

In addition, previous empirical research and literature on TM suggested that a variety of practices, policies, and activities might influence talents commitment and retention such as NPM and stewardship mechanism. However, a foremost critique of such literatures is that they reflect a narrow and biased view of talent and TM from the perception of policymakers, top management and human resource professionals with little or no attention to the talents being talent managed (Dries and Pepermans, 2008; Björkman et al., 2013; Thunnissen and Van Arensbergen, 2015). For instance, rather than considering the experience of the employees who are being talent managed, the majority of empirical research concentrates on the managerial and HR practitioners' experience and perspective of talent and TM practices, policies and activities (Stahl et al., 2012; Thunnissen et al., 2013; Thunnissen, 2016). To close this gap, this study examines employees and/or academics experience with a range of TM practices, policies, and activities in HEIs that may have an impact on talent commitment and retention within the framework of stewardship theory (Thunnissen, 2016; Björkman, Smale and Kallio, 2022).

Lastly, staff training and development is one of the key practices of TM (Stahl et al., 2012; Schiemann, 2014; CIPD 2023). According to Newton, (2023), UK employers spend billions of pounds on training and development of their employees annually, and this increases modestly yearly. UK HEIs seems to be one of the key sectors that invest lots of money in the training and development of their workforce (Robson and Mavin, 2014; Nicholls, 2014; King, Roed and Wilson, 2018; Floyd, 2022). The claim made by Thunnissen (2016, p. 61) is that while conceptual TM literature discusses the potential benefits of TM practices on organisational performance, it rarely conducts empirical research on the practices' actual efficacy. CIPD (2024) stressed the need for organisations to use talent and/or people analytics to collect, process, assess, and evaluate people’s data as well as improve organisation performance. Thus, this research sets out to fill the gap in the limited empirical research on the evaluation and assessment of TM initiatives from the angle of academic training and development activities in HEIs in the context of NPM. This research carefully explored the issue to provide an insight into how the funds invested in training and development of academic talents underpin TM activities and have an impact from the academics' perspective.

1.6 Research Design and Approach

In line with the aim and objectives of the research, the methodology adopted for this research is mainly qualitative approach considering its interpretivist and subjectivism stances, aimed at understanding academics' perceptions. Primary data were obtained from two universities within Northwest England using a semi structured one-to-one interview and documentation methods. This approach allowed the researcher to better understand the perceptions of academics on talent and TM, including notions such as academic talent, TM practices in their institution and their experience of TM as well as achieve the research objectives based on 18 in-depth, semi structured interviews and secondary (documents) data from the case study institutions as this approach has been argued to best help to capture the meanings of experiences shared amongst research participants about the phenomenon (Eisenhardt, 1989; Patton, 2002; Denzin and Lincoln, 2003; Bryne, 2004; Cohen et al., 2007; Yin, 2009; Fitzgerald and Dopson, 2009).

The researcher investigated the relationship between TM practices and NPM in HEIs via interpretivist, qualitative, explorative multiple case study (two cases with multiple units) research approach. It is important to note that the number of the participants required to answer the research question and objectives was not known from the onset of the research as the researcher continued to interview participants until there was no new information emerging and the responses from participants, units and cases got to the point of saturation (Cresswell, 1998; and Guest et al., 2006) at the 16th interview for this research. However, the researcher carried on interviewing participants until the 18th interview to see if there would be new information. Apart from getting to saturation, the number of interviews conducted is in accordance with qualitative researchers' suggestions: Cresswell (1998) suggestion of five (5) to twenty-five (25); Morse (1994) suggestion of six (6); Bertanx (1981) cited in Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) endorsement of fifteen (15), Cresswell (2013) suggested four (4) to five (5) cases per study for case study research, Dukes (1984) recommendation of three (3) to ten (10) for phenomenological research, Kuzel (1999) suggestion of five (5) to eight (8) participants in a homogeneous sample and twelve (12) to twenty (20) for maximum variation sample. In addition, Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) recommended three (3) to ten (10) for interpretative phenomenological research while Corbin and Strauss (2015) proposed at least five (5) one-hour interviews for theoretical saturation.

The data collected through semi structured interviews was analysed using (thematic analysis) NVivo 12 after all recorded interviews were transcribed and analytical process concentrated on recurring codes and themes by align them with academic literature and theories as well as the research objectives. It is also important to note that to reduce the researcher's bias the interviews were triangulated with the data obtained from academic literature, public domain and documents from the case study institutions.

The research participants were fully informed about the research ethical approval (a copy of the approval was provided for each participant), and the purpose, methods and uses of the research data (including issues of confidentiality and anonymity covered) through the participants' information sheet, the informed consent form and brief explanation before the commencements of interview with all participants. In line with the principle of confidentiality and anonymity the names of case study institutions and participants were concealed as agreed with research participants.

1.7 Structure of the report

This thesis consists of eight chapters structured as follows:

Chapter 1:

This is the research's introduction section. This section covers the research background, justification, expected knowledge and practice contribution, aim, objectives, research questions, research gap, significance, expected knowledge contributions and summary of the research design.

Chapter 2:

This chapter reviews the literature on TM and the main research phenomena, i.e., talent, TM, TM perceptions and practices, talent recruitment, development, and retention, commitment; career development; TM models; TM in HEIs institutions and the UK perspective.

Chapter 3:

This chapter explores literature on NPM, its origin, definitions, principles, theories, implication for the research, rationale for using stewardship theory as a framework/theoretical background for understanding TM in HEIs, criticism of NPM, NPM in UK HEIs, underpinning intellectual ideas unfolded from literature review in Chapter 2 and 3, and the research theoretical framework.

Chapter 4:

This chapter explains as well as analyses the various research methods and the methodology used in the study, along with the rationale behind it.

Chapter 5:

This chapter presents and analyses the data collected via semi-structured one-to-one interviews and documentations from the selected case study institutions.

Chapter 6:

This chapter presents the conclusion of the research including the conceptual, empirical, and managerial contributions, as well as the limitations and directions for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature on talent and TM. It is divided into seven sections. Section 2.1 is an etymological review of the word talent. Section 2.2 examines the different approaches to talent. Section 2.3 explores TM and its origin. While Section 2.4 examines the various schools of thought and/or philosophy of TM. Section 2.5 reviews some of the key practices, processes and activities of TM. Section 2.6 explores TM in HEIs, Section 2.7 examines TM in UK HEIs, and a summary of the chapter follows in Section 2.8.

2.1 Etymological review of the word talent

Understanding the meaning of "talent" is crucial, especially for HEIs operating in diverse environments with varying strategic goals, as precise definitions of management terms in real-world situations are essential for shaping and putting into action successful organisational strategies. Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries, and Gonzalez (2013) noted in their investigation of talent in the workplace that research in the field of TM does not always demonstrate an adequate awareness of prior work. The development of broadly recognised TM ideas and practices is hampered by the persistent ambiguity around the definition of "talent" in the workplace (Tansley, 2011; Ross, 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and Gonzalez, 2013). Therefore, the analysis begins with an overview of the origin of the word talent.

Holden and Tansley (2007) claims that although the word "talent" is thousands of years old etymologically, lexicologists show that the phrase has changed significantly throughout time due to changes in individuals, context, and time. The definition of "talent" has evolved over time and encompasses many different ideas. The Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks, Romans, and other ancient people utilised it as a unit of weight in its early forms. The phrase comes from the Greek word tálanton, which has two meanings (Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and Gonzalez, 2013; Kravariti, 2016). The first meaning relates to an antiquated system of measurement that swiftly evolved into a type of money that the Greeks and Romans utilised. While the charisma of a person is referred to in the second definition of the word "talent," it was originally associated with the ability to persuasively argue in the context of the ancient Greek market (Tsartsidis, 2013 cited in Kravariti, 2016).

According to Tansley, (2011) Talent became a monetary unit when value was attributed to one talent of silver. The Bible is credited with bringing the word "talent" into English. An account of a man who gives his servants five, two and one talents each respectively, "according to his ability" before setting out on a journey is found in Matthew 25:14 (Tansley, 2011; Ross, 2013). Although the master in this story obviously recognised the abilities of his servants, the usage of the phrase "giving each one according to his ability" may suggest that talents can be both “innate and demonstrable” (Kabwe, 2011 p.13). Likewise, during the Middle Ages, the term "talent" denoted an innate mental capacity that allowed a person to advance more quickly than others. Afterwards, the term acquired additional meanings; for example, in the early 1930s, it was used to describe charming people or sports champions (Knowles, 2005 and Creswell, 2009 cited in Kravariti, 2016). Summers and Holmes (2006) likened talent to, ‘ability, gift, aptitude, power, skill, facility, endowment, forte, flair, knack and compared talented to, ‘gifted, able, expert, master, masterly, brilliant, ace (informal), artistic, consummate, first-rate, top-notch (informal), and adroit.

According to Tansley (2011), human resource professionals now also use the term "human capital," which is occasionally used synonymously with "talent" in specific situations. These days, athletes, musicians, and other individuals who stand out from the crowd in each setting by extraordinary performance are referred to as "talents" (Kabwe, 2011; Tansley, 2011; Gallardo et al., 2013). Examining the origins of the term "talent" reveals that its meaning has evolved based on the characteristics or traits of the time.

Talent as defined by the above sources has two diverse meanings. While the first refers to high natural ability, special innate skill and aptitude, a natural ability to do something exceptionally well, special aptitude or unique competence. The other refers to talent as a unit of weight or money (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013). The two perspectives relate to the notion of talent as object (personal characteristic, as innate abilities) and subject (as a person or people possessing special skill or abilities). These definitions raise questions as to whether individuals in certain occupations, for example the traditional professions of law, medicine, academia (Freidson, 1994; 2001; Johnson, 1972), generally considered as ‘expert labour,’ (Muzio, Ackroyd and Chanlat, 2007), might thereby all be considered as ‘talented,’ or whether distinctions might be made between individuals. This chapter focuses on exploring the concept of talent, TM and other theories related to the study.

2.1.1 Talent in the world of organisations

The challenge with most TM literature is that it invariably starts with a discussion on how talent can be defined. This research is not exempt from such a challenge. While there has been substantial research undertaken on talent and TM, it is important to note that there is no consensus in practice as to what talent is. People are rarely precise about what they mean by the term 'talent' in organisations or work, including HEIs and this has critical implications for TM practice and strategy (Tansley, 2011; Dries, 2013; Roper, 2015; Thunnissen and Van Arensbergen, 2015; Collings, Mellahi and Cascio, 2017). Therefore, one of the main objectives of this research is to critically review and examine the definitions of talent and TM in use by key stakeholders within the field, in order to suggest a working definition for TM in HEIs. This is important because a working definition is crucial for the robust development and implementation of frameworks, strategies, practices, policies, processes, and the establishment of an effective culture of TM that is shared among all stakeholders within the institutions.

The word 'talent' as it is used in relation to organisations has different meanings, as identified by scholars from diverse backgrounds and industries. Thus, the way talent is defined is influenced by the type of organisation (industry, sector, and nature of work); management and leadership; group level implications; mainly focus on individual and dynamic - context - changes (Tansley, 2011; Dries, 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020; Farndale and Vaiman, 2022). Hence, managers (line) could have perceptions and working definitions of talent. Table 2.1 provides an overview of some of the popular definitions of talent as related to organisations.

Table 2.1 Some popular definitions of talent in the world of organisations

Source	*Definition*
Michaels et al. (2001)	"…Talent is the sum of a person's abilities, his or her intrinsic gifts, skills, knowledge, experience, intelligence, judgment, attitude, character and drive. It also includes his or her ability to learn and grow. For McKinsey, talent refers to "the best and the brightest" and many organizations adopted the term to refer to their "A Level" employees who rank in the top 10 to 20%" (p. xii).
Ashton and Morton (2005)	"Talent can be identified as an employee who performs superior and possesses high potential for further development" (p.30).

Lewis and Heckman (2006)	"Talent is essentially a euphemism for 'people and because the perspectives regarding how people can and should be managed varies so greatly the TM literature can recommend contradictory advice" (p.141).
Stahl et al. (2007)	"a select group of employees – those that rank at the top in terms of capability and performance – rather than the entire workforce" (p. 4).
Tansley et al. (2007)	"Talent consists of those individuals who can make a difference to organisational performance, either through their immediate contribution or in the longer-term by demonstrating the highest levels of potential" (p. 8).
Ulrich (2007)	"Talent equals competence [able to do the job] times commitment [willing to do the job] times contribution [finding meaning and purpose in their work]" (p. 3).
Cheese, Thomas, and Craig (2008)	"Essentially, talent means the total of all the experience, knowledge, skills, and behaviours that a person has and brings to work." (p. 46).
Silzer and Dowell (2010)	"…our use of the term talent includes people with both innate and learned abilities and skills" (pp. 13-14).
Ulrich and Smallwood (2012)	"We have synthesized these general talent discussions into a simple formula: Talent = competence × commitment × contribution. *Competence* refers to the knowledge, skills, and values required for today's and tomorrow's jobs. One company further refined competence as *right skill*, *right place*, *right job*, *right time"* (p. 60).
Downs and Swailes (2013)	"A more qualitative definition of talent is that it is the current capability or future potential of an employee to deliver exceptional performance in relation to what the organisation wants to achieve. If this small group was to leave the organisation, then its departure is assumed to have a disproportionately adverse effect on organisational performance" (p.269).
Dries (2013)	"Talent can mean different things to different people (e.g., researchers, companies, HR practitioners, individual employees), and considering the immature state of the field it is difficult, at this point in time, to evaluate which meanings of talent are 'more valid' than others. Depending on the theoretical framework you use, the population you wish to study, and the academic discipline you aim to contribute to, your talent management project might look very different from other, pre-existing work" (p.269).
Schiemann (2014)	"…define talent as the collective knowledge, skills, abilities, experiences, values, habits, and behaviours of all labour that is brought to bear on the organisation's mission" (p.282).

Armstrong and Taylor (2017)	"Talent is what people must have in order to perform well in their role…make a difference to organisational performance through their immediate efforts…have the ability to learn and grow… have the potential to make an important contribution in the future" (p. 278).
Thunnissen and Buttiens (2017)	Define talent as "the mixture of doing the work you like and doing it good" (p.408).
Kravariti and Johnson (2019)	Defined public sector talent as, "an individual who possesses those competencies, knowledge and values that reflect the public sector's core principles, which enable him/her to use their exceptional abilities to serve the public for the common good" (p.6).
Bagheri et al. (2020)	Talent refers to three distinct logics: i. capabilities and unique contributions of an individual; ii. a significant employee; iii. a definite and featured group in a company (p.89).
CIPD (2023)	"Talent refers to individuals who can make a significance difference to organisational performance… either be through their immediate contribution or, in the longer-term, by reaching the highest levels of potential".

2.1.2 Insight from literatures on the definition of talent in the world of organisations

More than half of the literature reviewed to date for this research contains a definition of talent, while the other does not have a clear definition of the word. It is essential to note that the conceptualisation of the word talent in different contexts has become more than ever important for researchers and TM experts to advance in the field of TM (Ross, 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Devins and Gold, 2014)

In summary, recent research has put forward two main approaches to the definition of talent in the world of organisation, which can be categorised as 'object' and 'subject' approaches (Tansley, 2011; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Meyers et al., 2013; Thunnissen et al., 2013; Khilji, et al., 2015; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019; Dries, 2022).

2.2 Different Approaches to Talent in the world of organisations

2.2.1 Object approach:

Some of the various sources reviewed conceptualize talent as an innate ability that manifests in a particular field. It is commonly understood as above-average ability for a specific function or range or functions (Trost, 2000; Devins and Gold, 2014). Some of the sources in Table 1 see it as a 'special ability' (superior mastery; exceptional characteristics demonstrated by individual; the best and the brightest; demonstrating the highest levels of potential etc.) that makes the individual who possesses it stand above the rest of their peers in the specific field of their talent (Gagne, 2000; Williams, 2000; Meyers, van Woerkom and Dries, 2013; Dries, 2022). For this group of scholars and practitioners, talent is often likened to excellent performance in a given field. This approach identifies a comprehensive understanding of skill that takes into consideration three aspects: behavioural i.e., the personal abilities/capacity/capability of individuals to deal with interpersonal relationships; cognitive i.e., the level and kind of education and training individuals have obtained to help them understand and act in the world of work; and technical i.e., the capacity to undertake certain types of roles/tasks effectively and efficiently (Devins and Gold, 2014).

The object approach to talent is further categorised as conceptualize talent as: (i) natural ability; (ii) mastery of systematically developed skills (experience); (iii) commitment and motivation and (iv) as fit between an individual's talent and the context within which he or she works (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Thunnissen et al., 2013; Devins and Gold, 2014; Dries, 2022).

2.2.1.1 Object approach: Nature

According to scholars and HRM practitioners of the nature/innate debate, "talent" is something you either possess or not. This approach's stance is that some people are so extraordinarily endowed that no amount of development or instruction could bring more common mortals close to their level (Meyers, van Woerkom and Dries, 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and González-Cruz, 2013; Meyers et al., 2020; Dries, 2022). According to this approach, the notion that talent is an innate skill has a big impact on how it may or may not be managed. Buckingham and Vosburgh (2001) put forward that talent refers to attributes that are much more lasting and distinctive than information and abilities, which are relatively "easy" to transfer. They therefore argue that talent is almost impossible to cultivate or impart. Davies and Davies (2010) supported the idea that talent is inherently unpredictable and cannot be fully controlled. Rather, they advised businesses to focus on providing talent with opportunities. They added that talents constitute a relatively small proportion of the workforce who are capable of great performance and have significant potential.

2.2.1.2 Object approach: Nurture

The nurture advocates argue that early ability alone does not prove innate talent, as learning opportunities are crucial (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and González-Cruz, 2013; Meyers, van Woerkom and Dries, 2013; Dries, 2022). They are argued that child exceptional abilities are often a result of their early experiences, with doubts about their success without these opportunities. For instance, McCall and Lombardo's (1983) put forward that, based only on their current skill set, employees are more likely to fail in their later years of employment. A study by Davidson et al. (1996) found that the top students they investigated had parents who were encouraging of them. For future leadership competencies, McCall (1998) stressed the value of experience-based learning. Therefore, in the view of nurture advocates, talent is the capacity for experience-based learning and includes traits such as a proactive search for learning opportunities, a comprehensive grasp of management, problem-solving skills, willingness to take risks, feedback, and knowledge gained from mistakes.

2.2.1.3 Object approach: Commitment

Talent as commitment refers to a worker's dedication to their company's success, coordinating personal with organizational objectives (Ulrich and Smallwood, 2012). It is an additional approach to talent, not a replacement for natural ability or the mastery method. Talent is characterized by perseverance, determination, motivation, curiosity, and enthusiasm. It is associated with determination, motivation, curiosity, and enthusiasm, acting as a deterrent to quitting and offering the organisation the best (Jericó, 2001). Instead of replacing innate and/or nurture ability, it is advisable to view the concept of talent as commitment as an extra approach to talent (Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and González-Cruz, 2013).

2.2.1.4 Object approach: Fit

The last 'object' approach to TM emphasises the fit between an individual's talent and the context within which they work (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2004; Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and González-Cruz, 2013). This approach emphasises the importance of context, stating that talent's meaning is relative and subjective. Advocates of the fit approach emphasised that talent should be defined and operationalized in an organisation's culture, environment, and work type, as it influences performance. Iles (2008) argued that, given that people's performance might vary depending on their immediate surroundings, the leadership they receive, and the team they work with, the organisational context is crucial. Collings and Mellahi (2009) supported the idea that an individual's talent is dependent on both the quality of their work and their skill set, not just either of both.

2.2.2 Subject approach

The second meaning of talent, talent as subject, refers to a person or persons of talent, connoting people possessing distinctive skills, abilities, or faculty. The subject approach to talent is newer than the object approach and is classified into two distinct typologies: (i) inclusive (talent understood as the entire workforce of an organisation) and (ii) exclusive (talent understood as an elite subset of an organisation's population) (Preece et al., 2010; Tansley, 2011; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Thunnissen et al., 2013; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019).

2.2.2.1 Inclusive subject approach: talent as all people

This approach to the description of talent classifies everyone in the organisation as talent. According to this approach, “talent is used as all-encompassing term to describe the human resources that organisations want to acquire, retain and develop in order to meet their business goals” (Cheese, Thomas and Craig, 2008, p.46). Slizer and Dowell (2010, p.14) supported that, “in some cases, talent might refer to the entire employee population”. From this perspective it might be argued that all academics are considered as ‘talent’ and treated as such. How academics perceive the way they are treated is therefore of great interest. This viewpoint equates TM to strategic human resource management and as a result has come under criticisms for being too comprehensive and pointless (Lewis and Heckman 2006, Garrow and Hirsh 2008; Thunnissen et al., 2013). It is not especially helpful to clarify how TM differs from strategic human resource management, according to Garrow and Hirsh (2008), if talent is defined as the entirety of the workforce. Managing talent, they claimed, entails proper workforce management and the development of all individuals within the company. Notwithstanding being too comprehensive and somewhat vague, the inclusive perspective to talent is commonly justified in TM literature and among scholars or practitioners, using this approach, the argument is that knowledge-based economies and companies cannot survive or maximise profits without their employees. It is people that are the most valuable resource of organisations when compared to other factors of production, which includes land, capital and even in recent times it is not technology but labour that stands out (Tulgan, 2002; Crain, 2009; Thunnissen et al., 2013). This perspective allows every individual or employees to reach their potential and promotes equity within the organisation, because as a result of treating everyone in the organisation equally, a more pleasant, cohesive and motivated working environment is achieved (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Swailes, Downs and Orr, 2014; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019; Swailes, 2020).

2.2.2.2 Exclusive subject approach: talent as some people

This typology is centred on the segmentation of the workforce and the identification of a select or small and elite group of employees who rank at the top in terms of capability and who will make a difference to organisational performance, either through their immediate contribution or in the longer-term by demonstrating the highest levels of potential (Tansley et al., 2007; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Devins and Gold, 2014). This perspective to talent can be further classified into talent as high performance and high potentials (Tasnsley, 2011; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013). Thus, scholars of this approach to TM proposes that organisations should identify high potential and performer employees, develop and train them, appoint/promote to key positions to enable them to contribute and influence the organisational performance and reward them exclusively (Collings et al., 2017; O'Connor and Crowley-Henry, 2019; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019).

2.2.2.3 Talent as high performers

This approach likens talent to high performers, the best in the organisation in terms of ability and performance, who contribute significantly to the current success of the organisation as well as being key to the future survival of the business (Stahl et al., 2007; Davies and Davies, 2010; Ross, 2013; CIPD, 2023). Talent according to this approach is individuals with recurring patterns of behaviour associated with successful performance in a role (William, 2000; Stahl et al., 2007; and Tansley, 2011). It is important to note that the level of performance required from individual talent will naturally depend on the needs of the organisation and the nature of work dynamics. This suggests that instead of accepting a general definition of what TM is, organisations would prefer to have a definition that suits their sector, nature of business as well as organisational strategy.

2.2.2.4 Talent as high potentials

This approach likens talent to a select group of employees who demonstrate a high level of potential. Tansley (2007) put forward that, "talent consists of those individuals who can make a difference to organisational performance, either through their immediate contribution or in the longer-term by demonstrating the highest levels of potential" (p. 8). High potential employees are individuals with the ability, engagement and aspiration to rise to and succeed in more senior and critical positions (Tansley, 2011). Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2013) put forward that high potential employees are thought to have the capacity to progress more quickly than their colleagues while exhibiting behaviours that set them apart from "regular" employees. Downs and Swailes (2013) concluded that, "a more qualitative definition of talent is that it is the current capability or future potential of an employee to deliver exceptional performance in relation to what the organisation wants to achieve, if this small group was to leave the organisation, then its departure is assumed to have a disproportionately adverse effect on organisational performance" (p. 269). However, as already noted, limited work has been conducted in public sector, professional organisations, such as HEIs.

It is important to note that both high performer and high potential approach to talent imply exclusiveness (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013). Despite the appealing motive associated with the inclusive approach to TM, which aims at developing all employees to the best of their abilities (Buckingham and Vosburgh, 2001), more scholars favour the exclusive approach (Iles, Chuai et al., 2010). Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2013) put forward that, "the exclusive approach is not only defended widely in the literature, but also the most prevalent approach to TM found in HR practice (p. 296)." Scholars of this approach also stressed that differential treatment and segmentation of high performance and potential employees, based on their differential talents, can create a continuous competition in which individuals are motivated to develop their competence level, acquire, and apply the skills and potential the organisation requires to succeed (Netessine and Yakubovich, 2012; Höglund, 2012; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Cascio and Collings, 2022).

Despite the various attributes of the exclusive approach to talent critics argue that the appraisal of performance and potential of talented individuals is usually not grounded on objective indicators alone, but rather reflects judgements made by senior and line management which may turn out to be subjective, therefore prone to susceptible bias. Dries and De Gieter (2014) argued that the notion that highly talented and skilled workers are fundamentally distinct from those with less talent may be incorrect because it ignores the possibility that A players might look like B players in specific situations and vice versa. Also, the notion that previous success indicates future performance is debatable and frequently serves as the foundation for identifying outstanding employees among the workforces. Some critics contend that designating a limited subset of workers as talented can have unfavourable consequences since it can make such workers more sensitive to criticism and more afraid of failing than they would otherwise be (Swailes and Blackburn, 2016). Moreover, labelling a select group of employees as talented can create self-fulfilling prophecies. Lastly, giving a sizable share of the organization's resources to a small portion of the workforce may demotivate the entire workforce, decrease employee commitment, create a lack of cohesion, and be risky and vulnerable to legal problems (Pfeffer and Sutton, 2006; Silzer and Church, 2010; Netessine and Yakubovich, 2012; Martin and Schmidt, 2010; Swailes and Blackburn, 2016; Savanevičienė and Vilčiauskaitė, 2017).

2.2.3 Academic talent

HEIs globally and researchers, including in the United Kingdom do use the phrase "academic talent" (Durham University, no date; Paisey and Paisey, 2018; University of Liverpool, no date). For example, the University of Copenhagen did stress the need for a vibrant academic environment to deliver on its vision to be the global best institution and to achieve that, they need to ensure that they recruit, retain, and develop talented academic staff and they also acknowledge how difficult it is to spot, attract and retain academic talents due to the global competition (University of Copenhagen, no date). Verhaegen (2005) stressed the important role academic talents play in the success, performance and reputation of their faculty, school, and institutions as well as the shortage and competition for such top talents globally. Reynolds (2014) put forward that, in the HEIs sector academic talents are exceptional academics who deliver excellence in teaching, research, leadership and administration as well as those who can become heads of schools and departments. Van den Brink, Fruytier and Thunnissen (2013) in their study of HEIs in Netherlands attempted to define academic talent from the perspective of academics from humanities, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and medical sciences in order to better understand how to manage their performance. They established that academic talents are those individuals that have achieved high level of performance in terms of peer review, citation indexes and international referred publications.

It is important to note that this is just from the context of Netherlands HEIs and within the humanities, STEM and medical sciences fields. However, they did stress that the conceptualisation of the term academic talent is influenced by the by structural, subfield and contextual factors of the case study institutions investigated. Therefore, given one of the definitions (inclusive approach) of talent (Garrow and Hirsh, 2008; Thunnissen et al., 2013;

CIPD, 2023), all academic staff could be considered as ‘talent,’ in this research, they will be approached as such, with a view to then understanding how they perceive all of this. As such, hereon, the review will refer to ‘academic talents,’ meaning at this stage, all academic staff. In addition, as a result of the important roles played by “academic talents” (Verhaegen, 2005; Van den Brink, Fruytier and Thunnissen, 2013; Reynolds, 2014), the impact of contextual factors on the conceptualisation of the term, it is essential to investigate how academics from other contexts such as the UK (given the fact that so many HEIs are now using the term) perceive and conceptualise the term, what are the characteristics of an academic talent, how do we spot, develop, and retain (for example what are the factors that would make them leave or stay in their job) them in UK HEIs? Thus, part of the research objectives of this study is to provide some answers to these questions from the point of view of academics themselves within the Schools/Faculty/Department of Health and Society, and Business of the selected case study UK institutions. These faculties/departments have been selected because it is the assumption of the researcher that academics within the field of Business will be familiar with concepts relating to talent and TM, as the concepts that are related to the notions are often used in the corporate business world and often part of their curriculum while Health, Nursing and Society/Social Care have been selected because it is associated with sciences where it is very technical and complex to establish academic performance standards (Ferreira and Otley, 2009).

2.3 Talent Management

2.3.1 Origin of Talent Management

To understand what TM is, it is essential that we examine what started the whole ‘talent’ debate within the world of business. The origin of the term ‘TM’ can be traced to the late 1990s, as a result of the McKinsey Group’s description of what they named, ‘War for Talent’, in the overheated labour markets of that time (Chambers et al., 1998; Michaels et al., 2001; Beechler and Woodward 2009). The growing talent debate since the 1990s can be seen in part at least as an inevitable reaction against the ‘anti planning’, and the ‘do it yourself’ approach to talent development which resulted from the scarcity of talented and competent staff (Charan et al., 2001; Thunnissen et al., 2013b; Cappelli, 2015). The publication of McKinsey Group’s work suggested the need to safeguard the company’s core employees and win the war for talent with external rivals, as “better talent is worth fighting for.” Their research investigated seventyseven (77) big companies across the United States of America with a quite wide array of sectors, thus incorporated a significant amount of data from the employees of the organisation (Chambers et al., 1998; Michaels et al., 2001; Beechler and Woodward, 2009).

The concept "War for Talent" was based on four main changes at that time: demographic change; a shift in business to a knowledge economy; globalisation; and changes in traditional employment relationships (Chambers et al., 1998; Michaels et al., 2001; Cappelli, 2008). Since then, organisations continued to compete for talent and in 2000; McKinsey management Consultancy Company updated their report. Michaels, et.al. (2001) found that most surveyed organisations were finding it harder to attract, identify, develop, engage, retain, and deploy talent for their organisations than during their first survey.

TM since 2001 has developed and received great attention among academics and practitioners (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Blass, 2009; Iles, Chuai and Preece, 2008; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Collings, Vaiman and Scullion, 2022) with heated debates on what it really means. Therefore, like talent, TM is defined in several ways, and lacks a consistent, joint definition (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Tarique and Shuler, 2010; Vaiman and Vance, 2008; Thunnissen et al., 2013; Sparrow and Makram, 2015). There are now several conflicting definitions (Dries, 2013; Thunnissen, Boseliw and Frutier, 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015). This is not surprising, given the abstract nature of the meaning of the word '*talent'* itself. Table 2.2 provides an overview of some of the definitions of TM in use.

Table 2.2 Different definitions of talent management

Pascal (2004)	"Talent management encompasses managing the supply, demand, and flow of talent through the human capital engine" (p. 9).
Ashton and Morton (2005)	"TM is a strategic and holistic approach to both HR and business planning or a new route to organizational effectiveness. This improves the performance and the potential of people (the talent) who can make a measurable difference to the organisation now and in future. And it aspires to yield enhanced performance among all levels in the workforce, thus allowing everyone to reach his/her potential, no matter what that might be" (p. 30).
Cappelli (2008)	"At its heart, Talent management is the process through which employers anticipate and meet their needs for human capital and setting out a plan to meet it" (p.1).

Armstrong (2008)	"… as the process of identifying, developing, recruiting and deploying talented people... it is better to regard talent management as a more comprehensive and integrated bundle of activities, the aim of which is to secure the flow of talent in an organisation, bearing in mind that talent is a major corporate resource's" (p. 68).
Collings and Mellahi (2009)	"The systematic identification of key positions which differentially contribute to the organisation's sustainable competitive advantage, the development of a talent pool of high potential and high performing incumbents to fill these roles, and the development of a differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling these positions with competent incumbents and to ensure their continued commitment to the organisation" (p. 304).
Davies and Davies (2010)	"Talent management is defined as a systematic and dynamic process of discovering, developing and sustaining talent" (p. 419).
Scullion and Collings (2011)	"Global talent management includes all organizational activities for the purpose of attracting, selecting, developing, and retaining the best employees in the most strategic roles (those roles necessary to achieve organizational strategic priorities) on a global scale" (p.7).
Silzer and Dowell (2010)	"Talent management is an integrated set of processes, programs, and cultural norms in an organization designed and implemented to attract, develop, deploy, and retain talent to achieve strategic objectives and meet future business needs" (p. 18).
Al Ariss, Cascio and Paauwe (2014)	''…activities and processes that involve the following: (1) systematic identification of positions that differentially contribute to an organization's sustainable competitive advantage; (2) the development of a diverse talent pool to fill these roles, and the development of a differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling them; and (3) continued commitment to the organization and to the well-being of societies, while taking local and national contexts into account'' (p.177).
Collings (2014)	"Talent management … refers to management and development of high-performing and high-potential incumbents in critical organisational roles…" (p. 301).
Taylor (2014)	"While definitions vary, it is really simply a question of thinking strategically about recruitment, engagement, development and retention of particular 'talented' people" (p. 371).

Cascio and Boudreau (2016)	Talent management could be identified as the management and development of high-performing and high-potential employees in critical and important organizational roles (p.111).
Armstrong and Taylor (2017)	"Talent management is about ensuring that the organization has the talented people it need to attain its goals…involves establishing and maintaining a 'talent pool' or pools'…this is achieved by operating a talent pipeline which provides for the flow of talent needed to maintain the talent pool through the processes of resourcing, talent identification and talent development" (p. 278).
Crowley-Henry and Al Ariss (2018)	"TM can be defined as a way of identifying, selecting, recruiting, developing, and retaining talents to meet strategic goals of companies" (p.2059).
Kravariti and Johnston (2020)	"The implementation of key procedures to ensure public sector employees possess the competencies, knowledge and core values in order to address complex contemporary challenges and fulfil public sector strategic objectives for the common good" (p. 10).
CIPD (2023)	"Talent management is "the systematic attraction, identification, development, engagement, retention and deployment of those individuals who are of particular value to an organisation… this may be through their 'high potential' or because they are fulfil critical roles".

Given the essential role academics play in their institution's quest to sustain competitive advantage locally, nationally and globally as well as being classified as a public sector organisation in this research, the proposed definition of Kravariti and Johnston (2020) of TM in public sector organisation is adopted for this study. They defined TM as the:

> *"The implementation of key procedures to ensure public sector employees possess the competencies, knowledge and core values in order to address complex contemporary challenges and fulfil public sector strategic objectives for the common good"* (Kravariti and Johnston, 2020 p. 10).

This definition bears a robust resemblance to that of the CIPD (2023), which defined the term as the methodical recruitment, identification, development, engagement, retention, and deployment of employees who are particularly valuable to an organisation due to their high potential for the future growth or their performance in roles that are essential to business operations. The definition is also in line with the views of Reilly (2008); Garrow and Hirsh

(2008); Glenn (2012); Poocharoen and Lee (2013); Thunnissen and Buttiens (2017); and Boselie, Thunnissen, and Monster, (2021) of TM in public sector organisation.

2.4 Talent Management Schools of Thought and/or Philosophies

2.4.1 Talent management as the presence of key practices

This school of thought see TM as a collection of traditional human resources department practices, functions, activities, or specialist areas such as recruiting, selection, training and development, performance and reward management, career and succession management, and retention management (Heinen and O'Neill, 2004; Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Sparrow and Makram, 2015). It is important to note that TM to this school of thought is akin to what Personnel and Human Resource Management has always done, (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Sparrow and Makram, 2015), but "doing it faster" through the use of internet and outsourcing with "dedicated set of advanced and sophisticated practices" across the organisation (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Silzer and Dowell, 2010; Sparrow and Makram, 2015).

2.4.2 Talent management as the identification of strategic pools

This school of thought describes TM from the notion of talent pool, which puts forward that a dedicated set of advanced and sophisticated practices as well as processes are fundamental to effective and efficient TM (Sparrow and Makram, 2015). For these scholars' TM is a set of processes designed to ensure an adequate flow of employees into roles throughout the organisation. Therefore, key to this approach is the projection of employees' needs and managing the progression of employees through positions mainly through enterprise-wide software applications (Robertson and Abbey, 2003; Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Jooss, Burbach and Ruël, 2021).

Despite the very strong view this school of thought has put forward their view which is closely related to that of classic succession planning and management, human resource planning and the human resources architectures literatures. This focuses on identifying, developing, mentoring, and coaching people to fill critical business and leadership roles in the future, thereby having a talent pool which will ensure that there is no gap when a critical role becomes vacant. In addition to the typical Human Resource practices and functions such as recruitment and selection, training and development, performance and reward management, retention management and so on (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Sparrow et al., 2014).

2.4.3 Talent management as a categorisation of people

This school of thought describes TM from two basic views, i.e., (i) talent as an unqualified good and resource to be managed, mainly according to performance levels, and (ii) talent as undifferentiated (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Sparrow, Otaye, and Markram, 2014; Sparrow and Makram, 2015). These scholars and professionals agree with the Axelrod, Handfield-Jones, and Welsh (2001) publication on “War for Talent." This approach examines the categorisation and differential management of a small elite of high-performance and high-potential employees, considered to have unique skill sets that are much sought-after, hired, and differentiated by competing firms regardless of their specific role and the needs of the organisation. It puts forward the differentiation of employees using a range of mechanisms designed to attract, retain, and develop the workforce, as well as arguing that employees should be classified according to their performance levels, such as A, B, and C to denote top, competent, and bottom performance (Huselid et al., 2005; Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Williamson, 2011).

2.4.4 Talent management as a categorisation of positions

This school of thought views organisational effectiveness and success as based on the management of key positions rather than the classification of people. It advocates for the identification of key positions that categorically contribute to organisational success and sustainable competitive advantage, accompanied by the development of a talent pool of high-potential and high-performance incumbents (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Sparrow, Otaye and Markram, 2014). Huselid et al. (2005) further explored the key positions as follows: ‘A’ position has two major features: a disproportionate role in an organisation’s ability, in exciting some part of its strategy, but wide variability in the quality of work displayed by among the employees in that position. Although the abilities needed to fill "B" positions are common and employee performance in these roles may not vary that much, the positions may also be strategically significant for the organisation. "C" roles perform responsibilities, however because of their less significant role in the success of the organisation, they may be considered nonessential (Huselid et al., 2005; Sparrow, Otaye and Markram, 2014; Sparrow and Markram, 2015).

2.4.5 Similarities in the various schools of thought

Despite the varying schools of thought of it is important to note that there is a common theme, which takes two different dimensions that differentiate the concept of TM from other people management concepts (Vaiman, Haslberger and Vance, 2015). Firstly, is the common use of key individuals with high level of talent, measured by their knowledge, skills, aptitude, and ability, and employed in key roles and add value to the business. The second common feature is the additional HRM systems, policies, procedures, and techniques that are efficiently and effectively used to manage such talented employees (Tarique and Schuler, 2012; Vaiman, Haslberger and Vance, 2015).

2.4.6 The talent management school of thought this research aligns with

This research aligns with TM as a categorisation of positions. Organisations must make critical choices regarding the kind and scope of the TM practices and philosophy they develop and execute, regardless of whether they decide for an exclusive or inclusive approach to TM. Specific procedures for hiring, deployment, performance review, reward, career development and redeployment should all be part of TM practices and policies (Schuler, 2015). Furthermore, the inability of many companies to integrate and align the essential components of a TM system makes talent deployment difficult (Sparrow et al., 2014; Morley et al., 2015; Makram, 2018). This research aligns with TM as a categorisation of positions in terms of philosophy or school of thought. The reason for this is that every position or role requires certain set of abilities, aptitudes, experiences, competencies, and skills for the role holder to function effectively. Thus, such positions should attract certain attention for them to be managed effectively, rather than focussing on the individuals that fill them.

TM philosophy as the management of positions has attracted less criticism and emotional reactions when compared to the classification of people. And it is believed that effective categorisation of positions into categories A, B and C will lead to value creation, value leverage, and value protection for organisations and their workforce (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Sparrow and Makram, 2015; Bradley, 2016). For instance, the A roles have two main characteristics: they play a disproportionately large influence in an organisation's ability to carry out some parts of their strategic plan, yet the calibre of work produced by those holding those positions varies greatly. Even though B roles still demand strategic thinking, the necessary skills are widely available, and employee performance varies little. Although there are tasks to be completed by the occupiers of the C roles, their positions could be considered non-core or outsourced. From HEIs TM perspective, Bradley, (2016 p.15) stressed that "the importance of both teaching and research activities means that universities need to identify pivotal, high value-added, roles in both teaching and research". Thus, positions can be categorised to assist organisations to acquire the best candidates, retain them as long-term employees, and help them advance their careers.

2.5 Talent Management Practices, Processes and Activities

Most academic and professional literature on TM agrees on talent acquisition, deployment, succession planning, training and development, reward and retention management as being the dominant practices and activities of TM (Stahl et al., 2012; Thunnissen et al., 2013; FernaNdez-AraOz, 2014; Schiemann, 2014; CIPD, 2023) but there are additional ones such as talent performance management and so on. Blass (2009) put forward that, 'talent management seems to be the intercept between strategy, succession planning and HRM, drawing primarily on development strategies, recruiting and retention strategies as well as reward strategies, supported by good data sources, monitoring and measurement'. For Davies and Davies (2010), the key elements/practices/activities of TM are talent identification, talent development and talent culture, While Stahl et al. (2012) suggested three sets of practices which include training and development, retention management, and recruitment, staffing, and succession planning that cover most TM operations. Along with certain distinctive and cutting-edge methods that exceptional organisations had pioneered, they also discovered a set of practices that were shared by most of the companies they analysed in each area of activity. The CIPD (2023) put forward that, TM involves the methodical recruitment, identification, development, reward, retention, engagement and positioning of people who are especially valuable to an organisation, either because of their 'high potential' for the future or because they are performing tasks that are essential to organisation critical operations.

Considering most definitions of TM discussed previously, and in particularly the definition adopted for this research, one could conclude that the key types of activities/functions/ elements/processes/components of TM are recruitment, staff and succession planning; training and development; reward and retention management (Slizer and Dowell, 2010). Schiemann (2014) described some of the key practices and processes of TM with the "talent lifecycle" which comprises all the activities of relationship between the organisation and its talents, and includes attraction, recruitment, staffing, and succession planning, training and development, performance management and retention management. See Figure 2.1.

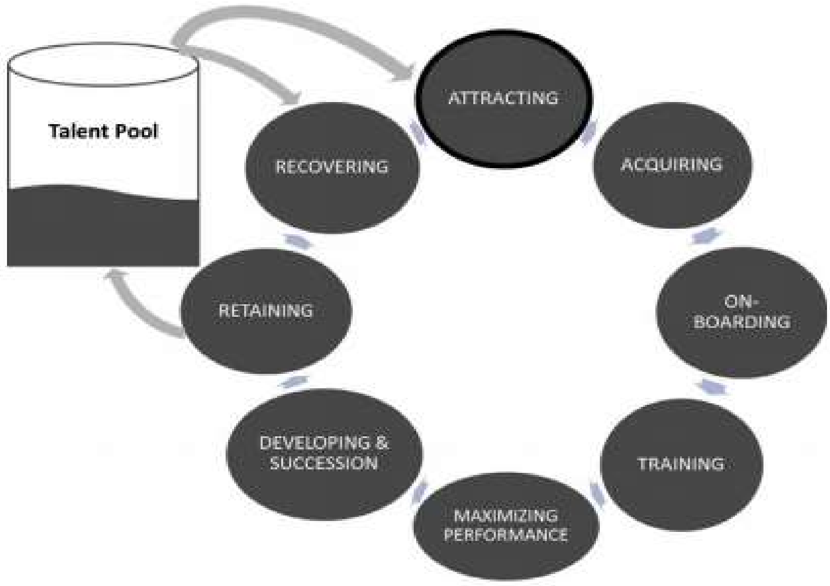


Figure 2.1: Schiemann (2014) Key practices and processes of TM

Hence TM could be seen as a significant sets of strategic activities that usually revolve around the following: identification, recruitment, and selection of talents from the external labour market; identification of key internal talents; training and developing of employees; management of talent flows (including facilitating the movement of talented individuals within the organisation and across regions and countries, in the case of multinational organisations); Engagement and Ensuring retention of talented people (Sparrow, Hird and Balain, 2011; Tarique and Schuler, 2013; Taylor, 2014; Vaiman, Haslberger and Vance, 2015). Though most literature agrees on the practices discussed above as being the key TM practices, but there are additional ones such as talent deployment.

2.5.1 Talent Retention

The major challenge for HR practitioners and top management today lies not only in hiring but rather in retaining the talent that an organisation recruits and nurtured (McGee, 2006; Stahl et al., 2007; Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Erasmus et al., 2015). HEIs are not left out in this assertion as talent retention is one of major concerns within the sector as institutions are losing highly qualified academics to other sectors (such as NHS) and to other HEIs that are able to offer better rewards, benefits, roles and promotions (Holbeche, 2011; Van den Brink, Fruytier and Thunnissen, 2013; Erasmus et al., 2015; Mohammed, Baig and Gururajan, 2020). Fernandez-Araoz (2014) opined that, ‘Once you’ve hired true high potentials and identified the ones you already have, you’ll need to focus on keeping them’. Retention relates to the extent to which an employer retains its employees (Armstrong and Taylor, 2017). While retention strategies aim at ensuring that key people stay with the organisation, and that wasteful and expensive levels of employment turnover are reduced (Blass, 2009; and Taylor, 2014). Stahl et al. (2007) put forward that, creating and delivering a compelling employee value proposition, personalised career plans, highly competitive compensation and a healthy balance between personal and professional lives are elements of successful TM and retention strategy.

Several scholars (Scullion and Collings, 2011); Tucker and Williams (2011); Clark, (2014); Erasmus, et al. (2015); Hilman and Abubakar (2017) opined that organisations should take an interest in finding out what staff value, in order to create an environment that provides those values, this also applies to HEIs. This in turn may lead to greater employee commitment and retention and can be achieved through effective engagement of talented staff. Davies and Davies (2010) support that, talented staff need to feel valued and made to understand that the organisation recognises their contribution makes a difference, “Affirmation is powerful; feeling appreciated, recognised and valued is motivational” (p.424). There is no guaranteed measure that will retain talent, but the key issue organisations must identify, and profile solutions to, will be the establishment of why talented employees leave (Stahl et al., 2007; and Blass, 2009). There are different factors that contribute to this, but this research will focus on the investigation of four key factors: Talent recruitment, Talent career development, Talent reward and Talent engagement (Collings, Mellahi and Cascio 2017; O'Bryan and Casey, 2017).

2.5.2 Talent Acquisition

There is numerous literature that has examined the significance of identifying the right people to fill key roles within organisations. Talent acquisition is the process of having the right person, in the right place, at the right time (Srivastava and Bhatnagar, 2008; Taylor, 2014; CIPD, 2023b; Marrybeth et al., 2019). Talent acquisition, according to Hennigan, Bottorff, and Watts (2024), is a strategic method for attracting, selecting, and hiring new personnel for a business. In contrast to ordinary recruitment, which occasionally prioritises number above quality, talent acquisition is a methodically selected procedure used by companies to choose the ideal candidate for their company (Jooss et al., 2024). It is essential to note that, after the effective identification of key roles and positions within an organisation with greater impact on the business strategy, organisations need to identify the right individuals to fill them as failure to do so can mean individuals are positioned in roles that they are ill-equipped to perform which could eventually lead to disastrous outcome for the organisation (Michaels et al., 2001; McDonnell, 2011). The talent acquisition activity involves working through a series of stages: defining the role; attracting applications; managing the application; selection process; making the appointment; and onboarding and training new staff (CIPD, 2023b).

The market is beginning to see human capital as a source of value for companies and shareholders since talent is valuable, hard to come by, and difficult to replace (Marrybeth et al., 2019 and O'Keeffe, Aziz and Christiansen, 2024). Companies that are better at attracting, choosing, and keeping this talent do better than those that don't. Employee engagement and productivity both rise with improved talent acquisition. In today's fiercely competitive market, maximising team engagement, motivation, and retention through careful consideration during the hiring process is essential. A competitive edge in the talent war can only be gained by a talent sourcing process that is well-defined and performed from beginning to end, producing results that are consistent and compliant.

Stahl et al. (2012) and Sparrow and Makram (2015) put forward that, talent acquisition practices in most organisations they researched now follows a talent pool strategy, i.e., the organisations recruit the best people and then places them into roles rather than trying to recruit specific individuals for specific jobs. This is the current practice of TM in terms of talent acquisition that shape the way organisations now recruit (Jooss, Burbach and Ruël, 2021). They added that organisations in their sample recruit talent through a variety of channels, including direct applications via the Internet, on-campus recruitment fairs, and summer internship programs. Most organisations researched developed close ties with leading universities around the world to attract top talents (Stahl et al., 2012).

It is important to note that companies traditionally focus on job-related skills and experience to select people. However, some leading multinationals companies have expanded their definition of the right people in the right place to include cultural fit as a key selection criterion and a result such companies compares applicants' personalities and values to that of the organisation's culture and strategy (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Guerci and Solari, 2012). In order to recruit the very best individuals from the internal and external labour market most leading companies including HEIs, ensures that their organisation's brand is very attractive, place cultural fit as a key selection criterion by assessing the applicants' personalities and values against corporate culture and strategy; use leadership competencies and validated assessment instruments to identify high-potential candidates, grade employees on the performance-potential matrix; adopt a selection and succession talent inventories for the development of talent pool (Verhaegen, 2005; Kubler and De Luca, 2006; and Paisey, and Paisey, 2018; Mohammed, Baig and Gururajan, 2020).

Van den Brink and Thunissen (2013) study of Netherlands universities established that, as result of the transformation from collegial system (where professors and academics enjoys high level autonomy) to managerial model (impact of new public management) the academia has now emerged as having a chronic shortage of talented staff as they must compete for highly qualified employees in the global, complex, dynamic, and highly competitive environment. The shift by HEIs to a more managerial model and shortages might imply that TM practices such as career development used in the private sector might becoming more prevalent within academia too.

2.5.3 Talent Deployment

Groenewald et al. (2024) assert that in the current competitive business environment, companies must harness the potential of their employees to maintain a competitive edge. According to CIPD (2023a), deployment refers to the process of utilising the workforce in the best possible way. Talent deployment involves identifying, relocating, and utilising individuals' abilities and knowledge to optimise value (Morley et al. 2015). This comprises allocating individuals to tasks, initiatives, positions or jobs in order to maximise their impact and raise the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the company (Jooss et al., 2024). Carefully aligning talent to organisational goals and needs is known as talent deployment (Yildiz and Esmer, 2023).

Beyond just placing things operationally, talent deployment emphasises long-term planning and alignment with the strategic vision of the company. It is imperative to enquire as to whether repositioning someone will make them more or less valuable (Vardi and Collings, 2023). Organisations must comprehend how well the individual fits into their current and future setting in order to provide an accurate response to this question. Organisations need to make sure that every position is filled with people who have the skills and talents needed to contribute to the company's objectives and strategic priorities by deploying talents (Martin, 2018). Businesses need to find areas where their workforce lacks certain abilities. The necessary training and development can then be planned. This will facilitate the deployment of personnel via project work, formal learning, skill enhancement opportunities, job rotations, and secondments (Nijs, Meyers and van Woerkom, 2024). Effective TM and deployment are critical, and organisations must be able to step up to the challenge.

Organisations should set up an efficient talent culture and process to aid in developing workforces with the capabilities necessary to succeed (McKinsey & Company, 2023). Too many organisations fail to take into account the skills needed to put new ideas into practice. Companies can enhance organisational performance and even obtain a competitive edge by deploying people effectively (Jooss, Burbach and Ruël, 2021). Organisations may create a long-lasting competitive edge in the external market and promote corporate success through the strategic deployment of talent. According to Puruis (2011) and Martin (2018), the secret to realising employees' full potential and accomplishing organisational objectives is talent deployment. Companies can foster innovation, increase efficiency, and obtain a competitive edge by strategically matching personnel with organisational goals (Gallardo-Gallardo and Collings, 2021; McKinsey and Company, 2023).

2.5.4 Talent Career Development

Once organisations have hired the high potential staff (staff/talent), it is crucial to focus on helping them live up to their potentials by offering development and career progression opportunities that push them out of their comfort zones (FernaNdez-AraOz, 2014). Talent career development is an essential part of TM and retention (Ulrich and Ulrich, 2010; Burkus and Osula, 2011; Claussen et al., 2014; Hilman and Abubakar, 2017). Ordóñez de Pablos (2004) states that firms can protect their human capital from being eroded by making knowledge, skills, and capabilities more unique and valuable by a so called “make system”, or internal system of human resource development, which comprises comprehensive training, promotion from within, a developmental performance appraisal process, and skill-based pay. Kamal (2017) added the importance of career development for promotion within universities.

Stahl et al. (2012) put forward that excellent companies commit significant resources to training and career development and embarks on activities such as sophisticated training programs; promote from within policy; mentorship; coaching; encourage employees to sit on boards of other companies and participate in professional networks; involve line managers (in activities such as coaching or mentoring, job-shadowing opportunities); and job rotation. Guerci and Solari (2012); and Mohammed, Baig and Gururajan (2020) from their research suggested that individuals within the talent pool have different training and development opportunities that employees not included in the pool. They added that, the training and career development opportunities in all cases were different in terms of quality as the organisation invest more resources on those in their talent pool and they were also given favourable treatment in term of professional growth and involvement in projects that will accelerate their career.

2.5.5 Talent Reward Management

The term ‘reward’ according to CIPD (2021), “generally covers all financial provisions made to employees, including cash pay and the wider benefits package (pensions, paid leave and so on)”. It can also include wider provisions for employees, with the term total reward encompassing non-pay benefits. Armstrong and Taylor (2017) added that, reward systems are designed to meet the needs of both the organisation and its stakeholders, including their talents as well as to operate in a fair, equitably, and consistent manner. They also stressed that reward is not just about pay and employee benefits but includes non-financial rewards such as recognition, learning and development opportunities, and increased job responsibilities.

Merson (2010) put forward that, “if you are looking to recruit or reward knowledge or experience, you should be prepared to pay for it when you use it”. Levels of remuneration should be sufficient to attract, retain, increase commitments, and motivate talents. Reward and TM need to reinforce the same message though in order to retain highly potential, high performers and in many workplaces, they exist as separate discipline/functions that rarely communicate with each other (Farrow et al., 2010; Syedain, 2010; Rose, 2014; Hilman and Abubakar, 2017). Therefore, understanding the relationship between performance measurement, desired behaviours and appropriate reward are important aspects of an organisation’s talent retention strategy (Carter, 2014; Summer, 2014; Wiley, 2014). To understand how all of this might operate, and indeed differ, in HEIs, the discussion now moves on to look at the background of HEIs.

2.6 Talent Management in Higher Education Institutions

HEIs worldwide are facing growing competition for funding and students. Finding the most talented individuals is also a critical strategic issue for HEIs (Kivinen, Hedman and Kaipainen, 2007; Van den Brink, Fruytier and Thunnissen, 2013; Thunnissena and Boselie, 2024). However, the competition for highly educated and academic talents is fierce because other organisations are also engaged in this "war for talent" (Chambers et al., 1998; Stahl et al., 2012; Holley et al., 2018). Governmental functions have evolved. Universities all throughout the world now have more liberty to encourage efficiency, cost-effectiveness, flexibility, and an entrepreneurial spirit thanks to NPM, which has continued to reduce direct involvement and state control since the 1980s, particularly in the last 20 years (Schippers, 2024). According to Meyer et al. (2005) and Zomer and Benneworth (2011), these trends led to the deregulation of academic institutions and the emergence of the entrepreneurial university. A growing number of internal actors, such as professional managers and support staff, have taken up the demands of external economic and managerial pressures for efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, and flexibility. These actors have put in place performance management systems, measurable standards, and regulations to regulate and control academic performance (Thunnissen and Buttiens, 2017).

The national governments required quality and accountability in quantifiable goals and metrics, including on individual performance targets, in return for institutional autonomy (Enders et al., 2011). HEIs across the globe, including those in the US, UK, Netherlands, Australia, India and other countries, are being granted greater autonomy to operate in a market environment that is becoming more deregulated in order to address these challenges (Pellert, 2007; Bradley, 2016; Divekar and Raman, 2020). According to Lorenz (2012), Broucker and De Wit (2015), Parker (2024), and others, NPM distinguishes itself from traditional public administration by emphasising professionalism, self-management, implicit norms, and a preponderance of qualitative performance indicators.

A multitude of standards, audits, and expectations to meet have resulted from the substantial expansion in the number of external stakeholders associated with and impacting HE institutes (Erickson, Hanna and Walker, 2021; Kayyali, 2023). The goal of the competition and increased institutional (financial) autonomy was to encourage HEIs worldwide to become more responsive to the diverse demands of their students for relevance (Abdullah and Abubakar, 2017). It has also been highlighted that the creation of relevant teaching materials and useful knowledge is essential to resolving societal and economic problems (Enders et al., 2011; Zomer and Benneworth, 2011).

Thus, the shift in HE from a collegial to a managerial paradigm has led to the inclusion of talent and performance management on the strategic HRM agenda of many HEIs. (Deem, 2001; 2005; Kubler and DeLuca, 2006; Van den Brink, Fruytier and Thunnissen, 2013). TM is gradually coming to be seen as a suitable framework to help organisations change their transactional HR systems into more agile and strategically supporting ones. Pellert (2007) and Van Raan (2005) both note that HEIs are loosely tied, fragmented institutions that prioritise individual performance within a collaborative environment. Furthermore, academics and their disciplines are usually stronger linked than academic institutions, NPM requires it the other ways round (Bradley, 2016). From a TM standpoint, universities must recognise critical and highly valuable roles in both teaching and research due to the significance of these activities. As a result, there has been a rise in the application and significance of individual performance indicators, including bibliometrics, in the acquisition, training, deploying, engaging, and rewarding of academics (Thunnissen, van Arensbergen and van den Brink, 2021; Schippers, 2024).

Despite facing criticism for their broad use and implementation in daily TM practices decisions (Parker and Jary, 1995; Nkomo, 2009; Özbilgin, 2009; Gomez-Mejia et al., 2009; Van den Brink et al., 2010), these systems have been widely accepted. According to Yielder and Codling (2004), academics and managerial executives alike must explain and carry out university strategy in respective fields. HEIs must establish critical and highly valuable roles in both teaching and research given the significance of these activities from a TM standpoint. As a result, there has been a rise in the application and significance of control and directive mechanisms, individual performance indicators, including bibliometrics, in the hiring, training, deploying, engaging, and rewarding of academics (Thunnissen, van Arensbergen and van den Brink, 2021; Schippers, 2024). Despite receiving criticism for their widespread use and implementation in daily TM practices decisions, these systems have been widely accepted (Parker and Jary, 1995; Nkomo, 2009; Özbilgin, 2009; Gomez-Mejia et al., 2009; Van den Brink et al., 2010). Bradley (2016) added that academics and managerial leaders in their respective fields and roles are required to align with institution’s strategy, metrics and management.

Consequently, the dependence of academics on managerial and administrative personnel to oversee these systems increased (De Jong et al., 2011; Thunnissen and Buttiens, 2017; Erickson, Hanna and Walker, 2021). The university's primary functions, research and education, became less closely linked as organisational units grew increasingly interconnected

(De Weert, 2001; Thunnissen, van Arensbergen, and van den Brink, 2021). The outcome of this was a specialisation and differentiation in work activities and abilities, which paved the way for the adoption of TM practices, approaches, and activities which are now gradually adopted in the majority of HEIs (Musselin, 2007; Schippers, 2024).

2.7 Talent Management in UK Higher Education Institutions

The origins of TM in UK HEIs could be linked to the move to what is referred to as NPM (Deem, Hillyard and Reed, 2007; Franco-Santos, Rivera and Bourne, 2014), most especially to the recommendations of the Jarratt Committee for the management of HEIs as well as the1988 Education Reform Act, which led to the establishment of the Higher Education Corporation to manage the institutions that had mostly been affiliates of local education authorities (Deem, 2004; Harvey, 2005; Broadbent and Laughlin, 2007).

As a result of the NPM, in 1985 Jarratt Committee made up of vice-chancellors and principals was established to review the overall management (including efficiency and effectiveness) of UK HEIs. It is important to note that the committee recommended a lot of changes to the way HEIs are managed and some of the key recommendations included the use of performance and TM practices, less reliance on funding from the government, financial prudence when managing their resources, including human resources and talent pool (Deem, 2007; Fanco-Santos et al., 2014; Broucker and De Wit, 2015). It is important to add that apart from Jarratt Committee of 1985 and the 1988 Education Reform Act, other measures and regulatory bodies have been introduced to the HE sector which are in line with TM concept such as the Research Assessment Framework (REF), National Student Survey (NSS), B3 metrics of the OfS's regulatory framework, workload models, and so on (Broucker and De Wit, 2015; OfS, 2023).

The implementation of NPM and the eventual introduction of practices such as REF, TEF, NSS, OfS B3 metrics and workload models were executed in HEIs without consideration of whether the concept will be appropriate for the sector. This is critically essential for TM research and the HE sector, given the existing deeply rooted collegiate culture it has, and the significant role individualism plays in HEIs context as (Schuller, 1995) well as the implication on TM practices. Thus, it is essential to investigate the impact of such measures in the management of academic talents in UK HEIs from the viewpoint of the academics.

2.8 Summary

This chapter has provided a synopsis of the reviewed literature related to talent, approaches to talent, academic talent, TM, TM Schools of Thought, TM practices, processes and activities in general. It has then provided, background to UK HEIs, TM in UK HEIs, how this relates to the NPM in UK HEIs. The meaning of "talent" is crucial for HEIs operating in diverse environments with varying strategic goals. Understanding the concept of talent is essential for shaping and implementing successful organisational strategies. The term "talent" has evolved over time, with its origins spanning thousands of years. It has two distinct meanings: high natural ability, special innate skill and aptitude, or a unit of weight or money. Talent can be both innate and demonstrable, and it has also been used to describe charming people or sports champions. The research aligns with the concept of talent as a categorisation of positions. Organisations must make critical choices regarding the kind and scope of their TM practices and philosophy, regardless of whether they decide for an exclusive or inclusive approach. Specific procedures for hiring, performance reviews, pay, career development, and redistribution should be part of TM practices and policies.

The research aligns with TM as a categorisation of positions in terms of philosophy or school of thought. Positions require specific abilities, aptitudes, experiences, competencies, and skills for effective functioning. Effective categorisation of positions into categories A, B, and C will lead to value creation, value leverage, and value protection for organisations and their workforce. From a HEIs TM perspective, universities need to identify pivotal, high value-added roles in teaching and research activities. Positions can be categorised to assist organisations in acquiring the best candidates, retaining them as long-term employees, and helping them advance their careers. TM is a complex field that involves various practices and activities, including talent acquisition, deployment, succession planning, training and development, reward, and retention management. It is often seen as the intersection of strategy, succession planning, and HRM, drawing on development strategies, recruiting and retention strategies, and reward strategies. Key elements of TM include talent identification, talent development, and talent culture.

The concept of TM is also used in HEIs globally, such as the University of Copenhagen, which emphasises the importance of recruiting, retaining, and developing talented academic staff. However, the concept of academic talent is influenced by structural, subfield, and contextual factors of the case study institutions investigated. In the UK, academic talents are individuals who have achieved high levels of performance in terms of peer review, citation indexes, and international referred publications. The research aims to provide answers to these questions from the perspective of academics within the Schools/Faculty/Department of Health and Society, and Business of selected case study UK institutions.

The origin of the term "talent" can be traced back to the late 1990s, when McKinsey Group described the "War for Talent" in the over-heated labour markets. This concept was based on demographic change, a shift in business to a knowledge economy, globalisation, and changes in traditional employment relationships. Since then, organisations continue to compete for talent, with conflicting definitions emerging due to the abstract nature of the word "talent." TM is a complex and multifaceted field that requires careful consideration of its definitions and practices. By understanding the role of academic talent in achieving success and addressing the challenges faced by organisations, we can better understand and manage their talent effectively. The global competition for funding and students in HEIs is a critical strategic issue, with the "war for talent" intensifying due to other organisations engaging in this "war for talent." Governmental functions have evolved, leading to increased autonomy for HEIs to encourage efficiency, cost-effectiveness, flexibility, and an entrepreneurial spirit. Internal actors, such as professional managers and support staff, have implemented performance management systems, measurable standards, and regulations to regulate and control academic performance.

The shift from a collegial to a managerial paradigm has led to the inclusion of talent and performance management on the strategic people management agenda of many HEIs. TM is gradually becoming seen as a suitable framework to help organisations change their transactional HR systems into more agile and strategically supporting ones. Despite facing criticism for their broad use and implementation in daily TM practices decisions, these systems have been widely accepted. Academics and managerial executives must explain and carry out university strategy in respective fields, and universities must establish critical and valuable roles in both teaching and research. As a result, there has been a rise in the application and significance of individual performance indicators, including bibliometrics, in the hiring, training, deploying, engaging, and rewarding of academics.

The origins of TM in UK HEIs can be linked to the introduction of NPM in public sector organisation, recommendations of the Jarratt Committee for the management of HEIs, and the 1988 Education Reform Act. Other measures and regulatory bodies have been introduced to the HE sector in line with TM concepts and NPM principles, such as the REF, TEF, KEF, NSS, OfS B3 metrics, and workload models. Thus, it is essential to investigate the impact of these measures in the management of academic talents in UK HEIs from the viewpoint of academics. The next chapter examines NPM, the stewardship theory and the theoretical framework for this research.

Chapter 3: New Public Management, Talent Management and Theoretical Framework

3.0 Introduction

The aim of this study is to better understand how academics in UK HEIs perceive and experience talent and TM practices in the context of NPM. Even though numerous external and internal factors might influence the conceptualisation and implementation of talent and TM in organisations. This study sees NPM as an important factor that influences how talent and TM are conceptualised and operationalised in organisations, in terms of object, subject, exclusive and inclusive approaches. This chapter introduces the theoretical framework, which serves as the foundation for the research.

The chapter is divided into eight sections. Section One describes the development of contemporary NPM. Section Two explores the principles of NPM. Section Three examines NPM in the UK. Section Four analyses the criticism of NPM. While Section Five described the study's theoretical framework. Furthermore, Sections Six and Seven critically explore stewardship theory and the implications of stewardship theory for this research, respectively, while Section Eight summarises the chapter.

3.1 The Development of Contemporary New Public Management

NPM is one of the most dramatic trends in public administration in the last 45 years, which has altered the traditional system of public sector administration to public sector management with a focus on performance management, TM, quality control, competition, less government involvement, as well as attention on effectiveness, efficiency, and economy (3Es) (Pollitt, 1990; Hood, 1991). Unlike traditional public sector administration, which places emphasis on process-driven characteristics including a clearly defined organisational structure that clarifies authority and responsibilities as well as rules (Hood, 1998), NPM principles move away from such notions about public sector organisations to a notion of more flexible and independent entities.

A major traditional form of public sector system that originated in the United States of America (USA) was Progressive Public Administration (PPA), which occurred between the 1890s and 1920s, with a main emphasis on bureaucratic systems and processes, centralised staffing and employment structure, limited authority of line managers and management, fixed pay for employees, monolithic units, and permanence of tenure and contracts of employment with principles that are in line with Taylor's scientific approach to management (Hood, 1991; 1995; Miller, 1994; Thynne, 2003).

The key argument of the introduction of this PPA approach to managing public sector institutions is that it will help to reduce waste, incompetence, and corruption in the public sector (Hood and Jackson, 1991; Gendron et. al., 2001, p. 281) by differentiating the public sector processes and what it produces from that of the private sector, which had flexibility on things like the award of contracts, procedural rules, and managerial responsibilities, as well as promoting honesty and neutrality within the sector. The PPA principles focused on policy rules and skills, implicit performance criteria, and a centralised structure that relies on top-down decision-making with inactive management. Unlike the private sector, it is important to note that the PPA type of administration had the main aim of reducing the level of influence politicians have on the award of contracts in the public sector organisations with the aim of reducing bribery and corruption within the sector (Hood, 1995). However, the NPM rather aim to reduce the differences between private and public sector management as well as give more power and flexibility to line managers (Hood, 1995).

Meanwhile, it is important to note that by the late 1960s, the New Public Administration (NPA), which had its roots in the United States of America (USA), emerged, and its scholars challenged the PPA's lack of recognition (by the traditional public administration systems) for the increasing interest of the public in terms of the quality of service delivery they require from the public sector institutions and the nature of the public sector bureaucracy that gives too much power to the existing organisational structure, capability, experience, and skill (Frederickson, 1996). The NPA also stressed the negative impact of technology on policies, processes, and organisational capabilities as the root cause of organisational problems during its era (1960s–70s), thereby contributing to the quest for the need for a change in the traditional nature of public administration (Marini, 1971; Dunleavy et al., 2006). However, the concept of NPA had little or no impact on the system of public administration of that era, though it contributed to the agitations for the need to change the traditional public administration system (Waldo, 1971; Frederickson, 1980).

The global radical and sustained reforms in the public sector are championed by NPM, which has changed the traditional nature of public administration systems and introduced a new orientation as well as shifted the way the sector operated before 1980. The change brought about a transition from public sector administration to management with results-driven supported by the 3Es principles of Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economy (Pollitt, 1993; Hood, 1998; and Shepherd, 2018). It shifted the values in the public sector, which were more based on professional values of service, to meeting the needs of the service user. The most popular cited works and contributions to NPM are Hood (1991), "A Public Management for All Seasons," and Hood and Jackson's (1991) work on "Administrative Argument." It is interesting to note that Hood and Jackson view NPM as an acceptable administrative philosophy and administrative argument with origin from empirically orientated political science and theory of practical argumentation with the same notions of organisation design (Barzelay, 2005). NPM as an administrative argument concept is represented in Hood and Jackson's work, represented in Fig. 3.1 below:

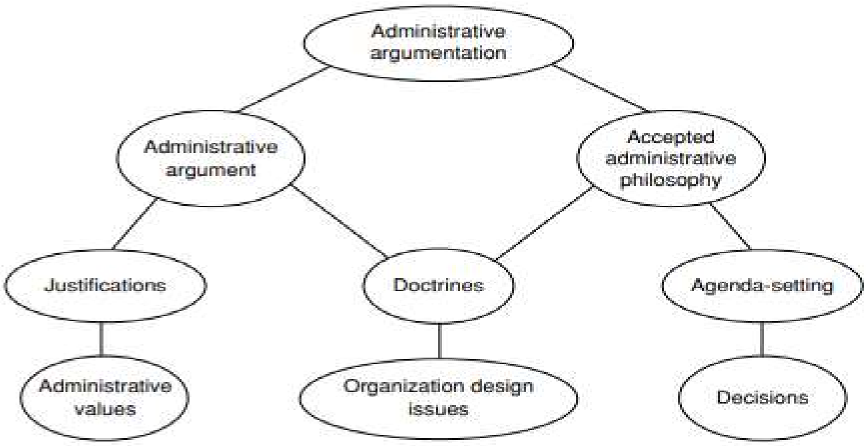


Figure: 3.1. Administrative argumentation: a conceptual map (Sources: Barzelay, 2005, p.16)

Since then, a new ideology and phenomenon tagged NPM in the public services has evolved in scope and advanced in conceptualisation among public policymakers and academics (Hood, 1991, 1995; Osborne and Gaebler, 1992; Pollitt, 1993; Newman and Clarke, 1995; Ferlie et al., 1996; Newman, 2002; Deem, 2004; Diefenbac, 2009; De Vries and Nemec, 2013; Shepherd, 2018). The NPM unarguable changed the traditional public administration orientation from a clearly defined hierarchy structure of authority, process-bound, and rule-bound approach to a more business-like and private sector orientation driven where TM, HRM, and performance management techniques are applied to achieve employees' commitment (Ferlie and Ongaro, 2015; Hood and Dixon, 2015; Bach, 2019).

A different heuristic that clearly summarises the main characteristics of the NPM is the 3M (markets, management, and measurement) model proposed by Ferlie (2017). The first M markets comprise the creation of new quasi-markets inside the core services that are still provided by the public sector, in addition to the simple privatisation of the nationalised sectors. Buyers were supposed to put pressure on suppliers to raise service standards and shorten wait times. Finally, they could threaten to revoke contracts with underperforming suppliers. The second M is for management, a profession generally given leverage by NPM reforms to take on powerful public sector labour unions and public services professionals. An important NPM tagline was "Management must manage." In line with NPM ideology, the new public managers should actively manage significant change rather than just bureaucratic routine, enforcing political centre-desired policies against local opposition. Measurement is the subject of the third M in the 3M model. High public agency performance was the goal of NPM reforms. However, public institutions' performance had to be measured in the now low-trust atmosphere so that it could then be actively contested and, if necessary, managed from outside. Explicit performance measuring systems that were created externally replaced implicit, professionally dominated modes of self-regulation (Ferlie, 2017).

The UK has also seen different public sector reforms that have contributed to the shift from the traditional public administration systems to a public management system that minimises the role of the state in the marketisation of public services and attempts to drive performance, outputs, and outcomes. The Financial Management Initiative (FMI) introduced in 1982 and the Next Steps Initiative 1986, which is also known as "Agencification," are good examples of such initiatives (Institute of Government, 1987). The FMI was introduced in the UK with the purpose of radically changing the way public sector institutions are structured and being managed (HMSO, 1982). It put forward the adaptation of accrual accounting to calculate cost for internal and external outputs, embraced management accounting principles and performance management functions, and emphasised the need to separate service provider and purchaser (HMSO, 1982; Miller and O'Leary, 1987; McSweeney and Duncan, 1998).

According to HMSO (1988), the origin of the Next Steps initiative, which set out to separate the delivery, advisory, and regulatory functions of the government, could be traced to FMI. The initiative promoted the need for autonomy for managers and management as a means of motivation to drive performance improvement and output. The measure suggested that the UK public sector institutions were just too massive, multifaceted, and diverse in nature, and as a result, it recommended that agencies that are clearly separated and independent from the executive functions of government be established. Such agencies were given the autonomy to drive government's modernisation initiatives as well as promote the independence of managers, give them the right to manage as discrete units empowered with the autonomy to adopt human resource management techniques such as TM and performance indicators to obtain manage performance, increase employee commitments and output, and drive performance improvement (HMSO, 1988; Greer, 1994; Lawler and Hearn, 1995). It is argued that policymakers have started to see public services as too often focused on the needs of (self-serving) professionals and not just service users.

Another very important contribution to the development of contemporary NPM is David Osborne and Ted Gaebler's book titled "Reinventing the Government," which promoted customer-driven orientation and the use of internal competition, measurement, and quantification of outputs, encouraging the importance of individual choice and employee empowerment to reinvent government as well as advocates of "entrepreneurial government" (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992). David Osborne suggested that "the problem isn't the cost of government. People want a lower crime rate, a cleaner environment, and a stronger economy" (cited in Bruce and Rothstein, 1994). They argued that their movement was triggered by three forces, which included examples that successful businesses in the private sector were setting and experiences from the bureaucracies themselves and the public, which suggested therefore traditional public administration systems must be restructured to handle the challenges of the information era (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992). Unlike other government agendas, their reinvention was not only about cutting cost and preventing fraud or corruption but about changing the ways public sector institutions are managed, from vast centralised institutions to decentralised, from command and control bureaucracies to entrepreneurial institutions that embrace competition, service outcomes, and cutting management layers, accountable to the public for the results they deliver rather than inputs or processes (Bruce and Rothstein, 1994; Osborne, 2006).

The unique thing about Osborne and Gaebler is their background and experience, which are mainly within the public service, compared with other contributors in this area, who were mainly academics. Thus, it is important to add that their contribution focused more on external forces that influence public sector management, as they suggested that managers in the public sector do understand that best practices in organisations such as General Electric, General Motors, and so on can rapidly improve performance output in public sectors. Therefore, they suggested changes from four major perspectives of culture, customers, control and consequences, just as Osborne, suggested that "most civil servants never face real consequences" for their poor decisions (Bruce and Rothstein, 1994). Their contributions to the transformation of the traditional public sector systems and entrepreneurialism (their new approach was tagged "***entrepreneurial government***") will be explored further in Section 3.2 under models and theories of NPM (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992).

Apart from the contributions and works of the above academics, theorists and professionals already discussed in this section, it is worth mentioning that other prominent academics and theorists has contributed to the development of contemporary public management since 1980s, which has led to various different terms in use, which includes Lan and Rosenbloom's (1992) - ***Market-based public administration***; Power and Laughlin's (1992) - ***Accountingization***; Barzelay's, (1992) - ***Post-bureaucratic paradigm***; Pollitt, (1993, 1998); Newman and Clarke, (1995); and Deem's (2004) - ***New managerialism***; Newman's (2002) – ***Modernization***; and of course Hood, (1991; 1995); and Ferlie et al.'s, (1996) - ***New Public Management***. Some of these terms are used interchangeably (Hughes, 1998; Shepherd, 2018).

For example, while Lan and Rosenbloom's (1992) market-based public administration emphasise more internal competition, use of performance indicators, as well as viewing individuals who use the services of public sector organisations as customers, Power and Laughlin's (1992) accountingization focusses more on the need for clearer explicit cost classification, description, and justification in aspects where costs were formally combined and unclearly defined. While Pollitt (1993; 1998); Newman and Clarke (1995); and Deem's (2004) New Managerialism and Newman's (2002) Modernisation are of the view that management is a good thing, an important, and a discrete function, therefore it should be given the freedom, authority, and right to manoeuvre and manage the resources of organisations to achieve the required outcome and output.

NPM and the other contemporary public management concepts mentioned above aim to make public sector organisations more flexible, and this includes the way they manage their human resources, including employee relations, terms, conditions, and contracts. Additionally, it seeks to empower managers to take decisions about organisations resources and increase the productivity of their agencies, thereby moving the public sector institutions from the classical bureaucracy and traditional low-trust institutions to ones where performance is criteria-based and is determined by service quality and cost/value of resources (Pollitt, 1993; Hood, 1995; Clarke and Newman, 1997; Lapuente and Van de Walle, 2020).

Given the importance of NPM as well as its ubiquity, the concept remains an insufficiently theoretically researched notion (Klages and Loffler, 1998; Shephered, 2018). There is no universally accepted definition of NPM, but exploring the contemporary development of the concepts has helped to clarify the basic viewpoints behind the concepts. The next section will explore the definitions of NPM.

3.1.2 NPM and the problem of definitions

Despite the significance of NPM and numerous studies and publications on the concept, there is no single definition that is generally acceptable about what it should be, what it is, or even what it should not be, which makes the concept still undertheorized in spite of its prominence in the 21st century (Klages and Loffler, 1998; Deem, 2004; Ferlie and Ongaro, 2022). The complication of defining NPM is evident due to its relationship or similarities with other concepts, as discussed in the previous sections, such as managerialism, neoliberalism, modernisation, and accountingization , as well as its interrelationship with politics, economics, technological advancement, and socio-cultural factors that exist in different continents and nations of the world, which made Hood (1998) acknowledge it as “the art of the state.”

According to Hood (1991), NPM was a term that originated from academics in the United Kingdom and Australia in the early 1980s, which emphasised the need for public sector institutions to adopt private sector practices and models in order to improve their effectiveness and efficiency and achieve notable excellence. Hood (1991) conceived NPM in a public sector organisation context as having seven key features: an emphasis on private sector styles of management; an opposition to the traditional bureaucratic focus of the public administrator and focus on hands-on and entrepreneurial management instead; giving prominence to output controls; a measure of performance; and the introduction of clear explicit standards, including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs); decentralisation of public services, including the importance of a shift to the promotion of competition in the provision of public services; including the importance of a shift to the promotion of competition in the provision of public services; and strict management of resource allocation and promotion of discipline.

According to Schedler and Proeller (2000), one important notion included in NPM is the removal of politicians from direct management and decision-making roles in the public sector. Therefore, rather than the government being the only entity that makes decisions, managers and suppliers of public goods and services within the public sector, as well as other stakeholders like the public, private, voluntary, and community sectors, are seen as important players in the day-to-day operations of public sector institutions, with the government's primary duties starting with managing the intricate relationships between the various stakeholders (McLaughlin et al., 2002).

A good way to summarise what the shift to NPM involves in the UK is Deem's (1998) definition as the adoption by public sector organisations of organisational forms, technologies, management practices, and values more commonly found in the private business sector. Supporting this, Wallace and Pocklington (2002, p. 68) put forward that NPM is "the belief that all aspects of organisational life can and should be managed according to rational structures, procedures, and modes of accountability in the pursuit of goals defined by policymakers and senior managers." NPM, on the other hand, is viewed by Huang, Pang, and Yu (2016) as the supremacy of management over all other activities, the creation of quasi-market competition for public services, and the development of mechanisms for quality auditing and accountability. The concept, according to Deem (1998), is a means of classifying and comprehending attempts to impose managerial practices, more typically connected with medium-sized and big "for profit" businesses, onto nonprofit organisations and the public sector. Importantly, Leicht et al. (2009) suggest that the primary objective of NPM initiatives is to subject professional public service delivery to market forces through disaggregation, competition, and incentives. This is an important point to realise for the case study institutions. The particular forms of NPM vary by location and impact a broad range of professional groups.

Given that NPM techniques involve the use of an internal cost centre, the fostering of competition between employees, flattening organisational hierarchies, the marketisation of public sector service, and monitoring of efficiency and effectiveness through measurement of outcomes and individual staff performance, it is an attempt to change the regimes and cultures of the public, requiring public sector employees to focus on aspects once confined to private sector organisations (Hood, 1991; Deem, 1998; Bacon, 2014). As O'Reilly and Reed (2010, p. 962) stressed, two strands of managerialism have been marked in the 'roll out' of NPM. One prioritises devolved authority and service innovation within competitively designed environments; the second prioritises culture management and the alignment of the beliefs and values of managers with those of policymakers (Lapuente and Van de Walle, 2020).

Given the context of this research, HEIs, the definition of Deem (1998) of NPM is adopted for this study. She defined NPM, “new managerialism,” as the:

> *“…the adoption by public sector organisations of organisational forms, technologies, management practices and values more commonly found in the private business sector.”* (Deem, 1998 p. 47).

This definition bears a robust resemblance to what is obtainable in HEIs in most countries in the era of NPM and in the UK, particularly (Hyndman and Lapsley, 2016; Al Mahameed, Yates and Gebreiter, 2024). It would have been considered heretical until recently to suggest that the cultures and activities of HEIs either needed to be managed or were "managed" in any meaningful way. Those in charge of HEIs were viewed as academic leaders rather than managers or chief executives; they were seen as communities of scholars conducting collaborative research and teaching. But as HE has expanded throughout the UK, it has also become more necessary to provide an explanation for public funding allocations and show that higher education is cost-effective (Deem, 2004; Dent and Barry, 2017; Parker, 2024). Overt management of finances, personnel, students, teaching, and research is becoming a bigger issue for academic leaders at HEIs, and it is their responsibility to make sure that such value is supplied (Field, 2015; Knies, et al., 2024).

Additionally, HEIs are under pressure to improve the calibre of their teaching, learning, and research outputs. At the same time, annual "efficiency gains" must be made in accordance with funding council and prevailing government policies, which means that funding for equipment, research, and educational resources will decline as the number of resources per student taught will decline. However, the emphasis on rivalry amongst HEIs for research funding, students, and academic research "stars" and "talents" has also served to highlight how much HE may be said to function in a quasi-market situation (Deem, 1998, p. 48).

One consequence of the current regimes in UK HEIs, for example, is that staff members are being affected by quasi-market circumstances and government policies, which has also resulted in pressure to complete more work with fewer resources. Both external and internal sources of pressure are present in their institutions. The pressure comes from the outside, coming from a variety of quangos that manage quality rankings and resource distribution. Internal pressure on academic staff manifests itself as actions taken by academic managers and administrators to reorganise, control, and regulate academic staff work and working conditions (Enders, Kehm, and Schimank, 2014; Parker, Martin-Sardesai and Guthrie, 2023). The next section looks in more detail at noted academic views of what NPM involves in terms of sets of principles.

3.2 Principles of NPM

NPM has become the predominant phenomenon of the 21st century public sector and with the emergence of a more top-down approach to management in HEIs, NPM is said to have fully manifested within the citadels of higher education (Deem, Hillyard and Reed, 2007). Interestingly, there are many viewpoints on NPM; however, Hood (1991) work has been acclaimed to be the foundation for the definitions and principles of NPM as well as the transformation of public sector administration to public sector management (Lawler and Hearn, 1995; De Vries and Nemec, 2013; Shepherd, 2018). Hood (1991) conceives NPM as having seven overlapping principles that are interrelated, as stated in Table 3.1:

Table 3.1: Classification of the seven principles of New Public Management

No	Doctrine	Meaning	Typical justification
1.	Move to disaggregation of large bureaucratic units/departments/functions within the public sector institutions	Unbundling and division of formerly large, centralised, and complex bureaucratic units into decentralized units which are not officially attached or affiliated but work together at the same time acting independently and in their self-interest for each public service and product.	The key justification for this, is the "need to create manageable units" within public sector organisations that will enable institution to benefit from the use of contract franchise agreements within and outside public sector institution as well as split provision and production interests.
2.	Drive towards greater competition within public institutions with the introduction of more short-term contracts	Move to term contracts and public tendering procedures. This also saw the introduction of incentives for performing employees that is determined by their output.	Competition and rivalry as a key measure to lower costs and promote better standards within public sector institutions.
3.	More emphasis on private sector styles of leadership and management practice	A shift from the rigid bureaucratic style management to more flexible means of recruiting, selecting, human resource planning and rewards as well as greater use of public relations techniques with	The drive to adopt successful private-sector management approaches, tools and practices in the public institutions.

		public sector institution, such as using terms like academic talents.	
4.	Greater emphasis on discipline, prudence and parsimony in resource management and use within public sector organisations.	This encompasses resisting labour unions demands, focusing on human resources/labour discipline, reducing 'compliance costs' to business, cutting direct costs generally of the workforce, e.g., on things like career development activities, etc.	The main reason for these measures is to do more with less i.e., to get more value for money as well as check and monitor resource demands of public sector units and institutions.
5.	Greater emphasis on 'Hands-on professional management' in the public sector were skills and competences are essential.	Giving manager more freedom to manage as well as more obvious and visible power of line management functions and performance management measures.	This principle vindicates that for you to hold people accountable you most ensure that there is no diffusion of power but give them a clear task, responsibilities, authority and power to take actions.
6.	Drive towards clear and explicit standards and measures of key success indicators	This means more measures that requires clear definition of goals, targets, KPIs of quantifiable outputs.	The argument for this principle is that for you to hold people accountable you need to give them clear statements of goals, objectives, targets and performance indicators.
7.	More focus on outputs and outcomes controls and less emphasis on processes and inputs	Resource allocation and rewards linked to measured performance; breakup of centralized bureaucracy-wide personnel management. The main focus here is the use of quantitative performance indicators to measure outputs of individuals, units and agencies rather than the previous use of bureaucratic procedures and reliance on input control.	The main justification for this is the need to focus more on performance output and results instead of input and processes.

Source: Doctrinal components of new public management (Hood, 1991, pp 4-5)

While the first four principles of Hood (1991) relate closely to the notion of the differences between the private sector and the public sector organisations with the clarification and justification of what the introduction of the private sector style of management will mean for the public sector institutions, the last three principles emphasise the application of regulations and performance measures indicators that will support achievement of effective and efficient public service delivery (Hood, 199; Dunleavy and Hood, 1994; Pollitt, 1995). The first principles, for example, focus on the unbundling and disintegration of formerly large, centralised, rigid, and complex traditional bureaucratic organisation structures within public sector organisations into decentralised, flexible functional units that enable delegation of authority with clear division of labour and a quick decision-making process, as well as enabling the sector to meet the needs and demands of the public better (Pollitt, 1995; Ferlie and Ongaro, 2015). Hood and Jackson (1991) added that NPM is based on the values of control by output measures, control through business methods, prefer paid work or variable or pay by outcome, limit tenure or by recall or hirer fires, use independent public bureaucracy, separate 'policy' and 'admin' specialism, use private or independent organisation, having a pluriform structure, use differentiated ranks or one boss or delegation, multi-source supply/within organisations, prefer admin/managerial skills, contract out or for the field, decide by discretion, multi-source supply/between organisations, and promote on merit or bosses' judgement.

Traditional bureaucratic structures of public sector organisations were known for their uncompetitive nature, reflected in HEIs in collegial systems that were previously prominent (Friedson, 1994). However, the second principle of Hood seems to address this by shifting public sector organisations towards greater competition through the introduction of performance management measures and TM practices with the introduction of incentives for performance output and introduction of more short-term contracts, which is now obvious in such organisations, including HEIs (Suzuki and Hur, 2020). This reduced, or in some cases, eliminated, the monopoly of public sector organisations as the sole providers of certain services and promoted the avenue for multiple providers of public goods and services, thereby encouraging competition among public sector institutions and between public and private sector institutions (Walsh, 1995; Kaboolian, 1998). Thereby giving members of the public choices to change providers as well as public sector organisations to compete for customers, which will require better meeting the needs of the customers/stakeholders through the provision of better standard services (Dunleavy and Hood, 1994).

The impact of the NPM on HEIs cannot be swept under the rug in a study of this nature. Hood (1991) put forward that, the origin of the NPM model can be traced to the relationship between new institutional economies and managerialism. It is important to note that the formal (new institutional economies) were built on transaction cost and principal-agent theory, which helped to generate a set of administrative reform and doctrines, built on ideas of contestability, competitions, user choice, transparency, profitability, sustainability and close concentration on incentive structures (Hood, 1991; Dawson, and Dargie, 2002; Deem, 2007).

The latter (managerialism) focusses on the collection of administrative reform doctrines based on the notions that professional management expertise is moveable and supreme over technical expertise, requiring high discretionary power to achieve results through the development of appropriate cultures and the active measurement and modification of organisational outputs and performance (Hood, 1991; Schuller, 1995; Dawson and Dargie, 2002; Bacon, 2014).

The focus of the third principle is the need to eliminate the characteristics and practices of traditional public sector organisations such as large bureaucracy, lots of red tape, lower managerial autonomy, complexity, permeability, absence of competitive pressures, multiple and vague goals, less materialistic managers, and less organisational commitment (Boyne, 2002) to a more flexible regime where public relations techniques and successful private sector management practices are incorporated into public sector institutions. The fourth principle stresses the attainment of parsimony of resource use within the public sector organisation through the reduction of labour union demands, discipline of human resources, reduction in the cost of doing business and delivery of services, cutting direct costs generally of the workforce, as well as getting more value for money (Walsh, 1995; Hood, 1991; 1995). With this principle in HEIs, for example, management will be looking at pass rates, REF, funds attracted by researchers, publications, and so on.

The purpose of the fifth principle is to strengthen management control and function in public sector organisations by changing the concept of anonymous bureaucratic managers to visible active managers with clear responsibilities to manage output, outcome, and performance. The principle also agitated for managers to have more discretionary authority and power instead of the previous diffusion of power to ensure accountability within public sector organisations (Hood, 1991). This principle is closely linked to the sixth principle, which stresses the need for more accountability not in terms of managers this time but for the outputs and outcomes through the provision of a clear statement of goals, objectives, effectiveness, and efficiency, which should be preferably stated in clear quantitative terms required, and in the words of Hood, the need for a "hard look at objectives" (Hood, 1991., p. 4). Finally, the seventh principle emphasised the need to depart from the traditional bureaucratic process-orientated and input control for output control and result-orientated of resource allocation and rewards to be aligned to performance measurement and indicators of employees through the achievement of their key performance indicators set for them (Hood, 1991).

In summary, Hood's seven principles clearly differentiate NPM from PPA in the way public sector resources, including human resources, business methods, and structure, are managed and designed. This is by achieving more for less because of adaptation of a more private sector, business-like approach, better quality management, cost-cutting, frugality, and the and the introduction of human resource management techniques such as TM to secure better employee commitment and performance, as well as better measurement of outputs through performance indicators (Hood and Jackson, 1991; Dunleavy and Hood, 1994; Diefenbach, 2009).

The impact of the NPM on HEIs cannot be swept under the carpet in a study of this nature. Hood (1991) put forward that, the origin of the NPM model can be traced to the relationship between new institutional economies and managerialism. It is important to note that the formal (new institutional economies) were built on transaction cost and principal-agent theory, which helped to generate a set of administrative reform and doctrines, built on ideas of contestability, competitions, user choice, transparency, profitability, sustainability, and close concentration on incentive structures (Hood, 1991; Dawson and Dargie, 2002; Deem, 2007). The latter (managerialism) focusses on the collection of administrative reform doctrines based on the ideas of professional management expertise as portable, supreme over technical expertise, requiring high discretionary power to achieve results through the development of appropriate cultures and the active measurement and adjustment of organisational performance and outputs (Hood, 1991; Schuller, 1995; Dawson and Dargie, 2002; Bacon, 2014).

Supporting Hood's views, Pollitt (1995) also conceives NPM as having seven principles, which could be said to have its foundation on Hood's ideology. He envisaged NPM as a concept that requires better transparency in the use and allocation of resources including talents, capping of budgets and cost cutting; unbundling and disaggregation of complex traditional bureaucratic organisations into smaller units; decentralising management authority; introduction of more measurement, quantify output objectives and targets, and performance indicators; the need to clearly separate provider and purchaser roles; more focus on quality services, response to customers' needs and clear statements about expected standards in terms of quality; and focus on performance related pay including flexibility pay and reward systems as well as splitting of the national pay conditions and scales (Christensen and Lægreid, 1999; Pollitt, 2003). These notions are said to be similar to those of Hood; for instance, looking at it from the point of view of TM, they both agreed to the need for clear and explicit standards and measures of key success indicators (Principle 5—Pollitt and 6—Hood), as well as the need for greater competition within public sector institutions with the introduction of performance-related pay and flexible pay and reward schemes (Principle 7—Pollitt and 6—Hood 2). In the aspects of disaggregation of the complex and rigid traditional public bureaucratic institutions, both Pollitt and Hood also emphasised the need for separation of such complex institutions into smaller units. Pollitt, just like Hood, is also a great advocate of achieving quality control through giving managers freedom to manage through the decentralisation of management authority and strengthening line management to manage performance (Pollitt, 1990; 2003; Hood, 1991; Rosenberg Hansen and Ferlie, 2016).

Earlier, the rather different approach and focus of Osborne and Gaebler (1992) were referred to, with their focus on reinventing government. Their ten principles of entrepreneurial government include:

- Competitive government: governments encourage rivalry amongst service suppliers.
- Community-owned government: this type of governance gives citizens more influence by transferring authority from bureaucracy to the community.
- Governments that are goal-oriented gauge the effectiveness of their agencies by concentrating on results rather than inputs.
- Mission-driven governance: rather than being guided by laws and regulations, governments are guided by their missions.
- Anticipatory government: governments avoid issues before they arise rather than merely providing services afterward.
- Customer-driven government: governments redefine their clients as customers and offer them choices.
- Enterprising government: instead of just spending money, governments work to earn it.
- Decentralised governance: states adopt participatory management and decentralise power.
- Governments that are focused on the market favour market procedures over bureaucratic ones.
- Catalytic government: this type of government focuses on inspiring the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to take action in order to address issues facing the community rather than just delivering basic services. (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992. pp. 19-20).

Osborne and Gaebler's principles of reinventions (most especially the first, third, fourth, fifth, seventh and ninth principles) can be relate to the conventional individualist cultural stance, in which the main recipe for improving public management is competition and market-type consumerism. While Peters (1996) proposed a four-part principle of governing which include market government model, participative government, flexible government and deregulated government, relating to different diagnosis of the problems seen by governments Ferlie et al. (1996) suggested four principles of ideal NPM which include efficiency drive, downsizing and decentralization, in search for excellence and Public Service Orientation.

The Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development - OECD, (1996) characterised NPM as five rooted ideologies which includes:

- an emphasis on outcomes, including efficacy, efficiency, and service quality, as well as whether the intended beneficiaries genuinely benefit.
- a decentralised management structure that better balances power and accountability, allowing for client and other interest group input to be considered when decisions about resource allocation and service delivery are made closer to the point of delivery.
- a stronger emphasis on the needs of the customer and the supply of options for them by fostering competition both inside and between public sector organisations and their non-government rivals.
- the freedom to investigate more affordable options for direct public provision or regulation, such as the use of market-type tools like user fees, vouchers, and the sale of property rights.
- accountability for outcomes and for establishing due process as opposed to strict adherence to regulations, and a corresponding shift from risk avoidance to risk management. (Keating, 2001).

These five OECD NPM principles mirror most of the principles of Hood and Pollitt, which support the need for new public sector orientation and change in the way it manages and operates, not just to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector institutions but also to encourage a shift to the creation of competitive environments and improve performance incentives. The last principle adds a new notion to NPM in the area of risk management and due process, which seems to be an element of strategic management more in line with Osborne and Gaebler's (1992) paradigm of participatory government concept. Therefore, apart from the last principle, the OECD principles are in line with the Pollitt and Hood paradigm, which emphasised the need to achieve value for money within public sector organisations through the mechanism of unbundling massive bureaucratic and complex institutions into decentralised agencies, adoption of management by objectives, establishment of a competitive environment, promotion of accountability, adoption of private sector styles of leadership and management practice, more discipline, prudence, and parsimony in resource management and use, and more focus on outputs and outcomes controls and less emphasis on processes and inputs.

Thus, the principles discussed in this section set the foundation for theories of New Public Management (Boston et al., 1996; Boston, 2011; Ferlie, 2017), which will be discussed in the next section.

3.3 NPM in UK HEIs

The NPM was gradually adopted in UK HEIs in the 1980s and 1990s as a result of an increase in demand for public accountability in the sector and the introduction of private sector management strategies to public sector organisations (Deem et. al., 2007; Rowland, 2008; Bacon, 2014; and Broucker and De Wit, 2015). Tolofari (2005) added that, NPM has led to structural changes both at the school level and in institutions of higher education, which include changes to roles and relationships, patterns of governance and power structures, patterns of accountability, the flow of resources, and the educational and other values that underpin the institution. A number of writers, such as Ferlie et al. (1996), Marginson and Considine (2000), and Duke (2002), cited in Tolofari (2005), highlighted the changes that have been made to the governance of higher education as a result of NPM, as follows: A new kind of executive power and structural innovations; new methods of devolution; a decline in academic disciplines in governance; expanded periphery that is in line with entrepreneurialism; inclusion and social engineering; changes in delivery methods; enhanced flexibility of personnel; performativity and reputation management (Tolofari, 2005).

The new managers introduced into the sector were expected to coordinate the distribution of power that arises from splits between policy and implementation, between purchasers and providers, between specific individual performers and employees in general, and between the commissioning and delivery of services. This was to tackle a supposed management and leadership deficit with the aim of increasing productivity and gradually eradicating the traditional culture of bureaucratic professionalism and liability (Barker, 2009; Broucker and De Wit, 2015).

Hood (1991), in his analysis, examined the various takes on NPM. He stated that although some bureaucrats believed that NPM was the only solution to the unrecoverable mistakes and even moral bankruptcy of the previous public management, others disregarded NPM's main thrust, viewing it as a gratuitous and philistine destruction of over a century's work in creating a unique public service ethic and culture. In addition, he further connected NPM to four other administrative "megatrends": attempts to counteract or slow down the growth of overt public spending and hiring; a move away from core government institutions and towards privatisation and quasi-privatisation, with a renewed focus on subsidiarity in service provision; the development of automation, particularly in information technology, in the production and distribution of public services; and the emergence of a more global agenda, in addition to the well-established practice of national specialisations in public administration (Hood, 1990; 1991).

Additionally, while the idea of NPM continues to take hold of many public sector industries, a number of criticisms have been associated with it. One of such criticisms includes the application of private sector people management techniques in a public sector type institution such as HEIs, which may lead to the risk associated with such private sector practices, most especially within public sector administration, including that of HEIs, which have unique ethical, regulatory, socio-cultural, constitutional, and even political elements that make them different from private sector organisations (Pollitt, 1990; Flynn, 2002). However, it has also been argued that the introduction of such practices might offer better transparency in people management so that unethical or unfair practices can be detected and managed more easily. In addition, there are suggestions that the emphasis on performance management and measurement may improve the behaviours and performance standards within such institutions (Hughes, 2003; De Wit, 2015). The fact remains that the impact of NPM practices on the employees that are being talent managed within their roles is still under researched (Shepherd, 2017).

3.4 Criticism of NPM

Although NPM has received numerous applauses from scholars for its contribution to public sector institutions economy, effectiveness, and efficiency, it is important to note that it has also received several criticisms in literature by numerous scholars, one of which is about its philosophical and theoretical base. There are a significant number of scholars who have questioned the level of the NPM body of knowledge and its theoretical basis. Common (1998b) put forward that NPM is a new measure that results in just a collection of techniques and checks applied in various agencies and that it lacks precise meaning of its own. Scholars such as Maor (1999) and Boston et al. (1996) also questioned its NPM claimed ideology of managerialism, which is mainly based on public choice and agency theory. They argued that the claim of both theories that all human behaviour is dominated by self-interest is questionable because such an assumption is not true. There is also the suggestion by Painter (1997) that the private sector style of management may not always be applicable within public sector institutions, and the private sector organisations may also need to benchmark and adopt some public sector principles. This view was supported by Boston et al. (1996, p. 39), who also suggested that it is wrong to assume that public sector practices do not have any role to play in private sector organisations and vice versa. They therefore suggested that the existing practices within public sector organisations are not less good than what is obtainable in private sector institutions.

The second major criticism of NPM is the question of whether the concept is a new paradigm and a global phenomenon, which authors such as Aucoin (1990), Osborne and Gaebler (1992), OECD (1995), and Hughes (1998) are in support of. However, scholars such as Hood (1995, p. 104), Summa (1997), Cheung (1997), and Common (1998a) have argued against the NPM being referred to as a new paradigm and global phenomenon. This set of scholars believes that public sector problems vary from one country to the next considering their history, culture, politics, and institutional characteristics and that different countries will take different reform initiatives at various stages of their existences for different reasons. Therefore, one cannot conclude that there is a ready-made initiative or solution or one best practice that is applicable to all countries (Cheung, 1997). Hood (1995) supported that the new international paradigm claimed by NPM reforms is not homogeneous and built on substantial biassed ideologies as well as initiatives that are exaggerated globally but lose their similarities when country reforms are compared. As a conclusion from the research of Pollitt and Summa (1997) on the UK, New Zealand, Finland, and Sweden, they argued that there were differences about what the NPM reforms were set up to achieve in the countries and that there were exact similarities among the NPM principles in these countries. While Finland and Sweden, which are Nordic nations, placed more emphasis on modernising their state systems to be able to respond more effectively to internal and external environmental changes, the focus of the UK and New Zealand was mainly based on how to reduce the distinctiveness and extent of public sector institutions

(Pollitt and Summa, 1997). Common (1998a) further argued that NPM, as a misnomer phenomenon and unsubstantiated as well as remaining, is responsible for the scattering of management practices and reforms around the world. Hesse (1997, p. 143) also questioned the global convergence of NPM and added that there is a great difference between what is obtainable in Eastern and Western Europe when it comes to NPM reforms. He added that it is clear that the history, culture, tradition, environment, and administrative systems of the various countries did influence and must be considered when designing as well as implementing their NPM reforms (Hesse, 1997).

Additionally, while the idea of NPM continues to take hold of many public sector industries, a number of criticisms have been associated with it. One of such criticisms includes the application of private sector people management techniques in a public sector type institution such as HEIs, which may lead to the risk associated with such private sector practices, most especially within public sector administration, including that of HEIs, which have unique ethical, regulatory, socio-cultural, constitutional, and even political elements that make them different from private sector organisations (Pollitt, 1990; and Flynn, 2002). However, it has also been argued that the introduction of such practices might offer better transparency of people management so that unethical or unfair practices can be detected and managed more easily. In addition, there are suggestions that the emphasis on performance management and measurement may improve the behaviours and performance standards within such institutions (Hughes, 2003; and De Wit, 2015). The fact remains that the impact of such techniques on the employees that are being talent managed is still under researched (Diefenbach, 2009; Lee, Burch, and Mitchell, 2014; Takawira, Coetzee and Schreuder, 2014).

Furthermore, in terms of NPM, HRM, and TM, there is no doubt that NPM reforms have impacted HRM and TM both positively and negatively, as well as led to the redesign of HRM practices. This notion reflects the move of management moving away from nationally agreed pay scales globally to a more individualised performance-related pay, contracts to ensure pay for performance, permanent contracts, most especially for senior public workers, and so on. This has also seen the introduction of reward packages to incentivise managers in public sector organisations to hit the KPIs set and stimulate competition, which could sometimes be to the disadvantage of the public. This has also contributed to the rise in the pay levels for senior managers, but in return, senior public managers have less certainty about continuing tenure when they fail to meet the KPIs set (Hood and Dixon, 2015). They might be employed on medium-term renewable contracts. As a result of some of the reform initiatives, the turnover rates increased, as senior managers in public agencies deemed to be failing are laid off in turnaround regimes (Harvey et al., 2010). The main impact of this is that senior management turnover rates with public sector institutions, in some cases increased, may rise to the extent that they become dysfunctional as teams dissolve and organisational memory erodes (Hood and Dixon, 2015; Ferlie, 2017).

3.5 Theoretical Framework

Various theories, models, perspectives and views have been proposed in the literature to explain TM in organisations. For instance, Iles, Chuai, and Preece (2010); Ariss, Cascio, and Paauwe (2014); Gallardo-Gallardo (2015); and Boselie, Thunnissen and Monster (2021) identified a few theories, models and perspectives used to explain TM in organisations, including resource-based view (RBV), employee assessment, institutionalism, knowledge management (KM), career management (CM), social exchange theory, Harvard HRM model, value chain model, and strengths-based approach. However, two well-known and diametrically opposed ideas have received attention in relation to public institutions (Segal and Lehrer, 2012; Hernandez, 2012; Franco-Santos, Rivera, and Bourne, 2014; Salomonsen, Schillemans and Brummel, 2024). The two theories could be used to understand the distinct TM strategies for organisations as well as have different presumptions about human behaviour. These are the stewardship theory and agency theory.

A theoretical framework is an overview of current theories that provides a solid foundation upon which to build the arguments you will make in your own work or thesis (Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2014; Lederman and Lederman, 2015). Researchers create theoretical frameworks to make connections, explain phenomena, and forecast future events. A theoretical framework explains the current theories that underpin your investigation, demonstrating the foundational nature of your work (Anfara Jr. and Mertz, 2014; Varpio et al., 2020). Put another way, the theoretical framework is an essential first step in your research effort and it justifies and contextualises the later research. A comprehensive theoretical foundation prepares the researcher for success in their subsequent writing in the later chapters and research endeavours (Imenda, 2014; Lynch et al., 2024). Therefore, a framework presents an integrated way of looking at a problem under investigation and explains the associations between the main concepts of a study, arranged in a reasonable structure to aid and provide a visual representation of how ideas in a study relate to one another as well as existing theories or frameworks (Maxwell, 2013; Marshall and Rossman, 2011). Such framework usually identifies the series of steps the researcher intends to follow in order to achieve its research aim and objectives as well as answer the research questions (Ravitch and Riggan, 2017). The Fig. 3.2 framework makes it easier for the researcher to easily specify and define the concepts within the problem of the research (Luse, Mennecke and Townsend, 2012), it can simply be referred to as the research guide.

The importance of the theoretical framework in this research is that it assists the researcher in the following: identifying and constructing the worldview of the phenomena to be investigated; establishing that the research question is an extension of the argument for relevance; showing how the research design maps onto the aim of the study, research questions, and contexts; highlighting the data to be collected as well as providing the researcher with the raw materials needed to explore the research questions and objectives (Grant and Osanloo, 2014; Ravitch and Riggan, 2017; Lynch et al., 2024). Essentially, it justifies the reasons why the research topic is worth studying and the assumptions of the researcher and other scholars. It is important to add that a good research framework must also be expressed in writing for it to be understood clearly (Fisher, 2007; Ravitch and Riggan, 2017).

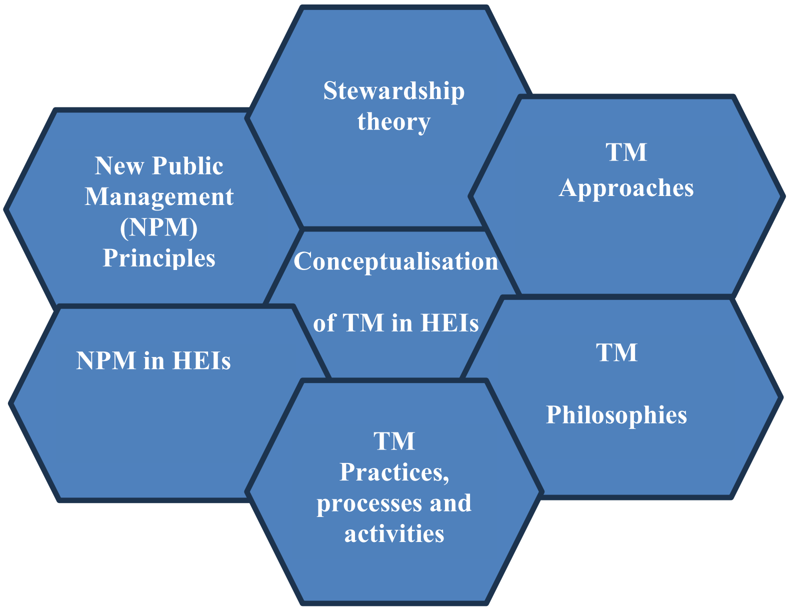
The theoretical perspective in the current research largely draws on stewardship theory. Despite TM and NPM being elusive concepts that lack a coherent theoretical base with blurred boundaries, this section attempts to explore a core influential and prominent theory, stewardship theory, that has been emphasised in academic and professional literature for research in public sector institutions (Aucoin, 1990; Boston et al., 1996, 2011; Gruening, 2001; Ferlie, 2017; Mills, Bradley, and Keast, 2021). Stewardship theory proposes that individuals (stewards) are keen to subdue their own personal interests, protect the long-term welfare of others, and act in a pro-organisational manner that is guided by public service values (Davis, Schoorman and Donaldson, 1997).

While contract governed projects and agencies have been the focus of most recent research applications of stewardship theory in the public sector (Torfing and Bentzen, 2020; Salomonsen, Schillemans and Brummel, 2024), this study examines how academics in case study institutions conceptualised and experienced TM in the context of NPM. The research evaluates the viability of TM in the context of NPM based on stewardship theory and investigates whether and how it meets positive expectations from the academic’s point of view.

This research examines cases in which collegiate culture and empowered self-regulation were formerly actively and fully pursued with modifications to NPM principles introduced. This section examines stewardship theory and helps us understand the underlying assumptions as well as its implications for TM in HEIs in the context of NPM.

Research on TM is underpinned by theoretical frameworks. The theories and viewpoints differ in terms of characteristics and their assumptions about human behaviour and propose different TM approaches in organisations. They help researchers to understand the underlying assumptions of different organisational TM strategies (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015; Kravariti et al., 2023). However, the researcher opted for stewardship theory because it is convinced that stewardship theory covers the broad concept of TM, most especially in relation to the research aim and objectives and could enable the researcher to provide answers for the research questions. See Figure 3.2.

See Figure 3.2: The Research Theoretical Framework



Source: Author

In addition, the current research draws on stewardship theory because it can be linked to the factors that influence TM practices within public sector institutions, including HEIs which include the advancement of trust, open communication, empowerment, long-term orientation, performance enhancement, autonomy, collectivist options and interests, the systemic fit of an organisation with the condition of its environment, treating followers like owners and partners, honouring relationships, etc. (Davis, Schoorman, and Donaldson, 1997; Schillemans and Bjurstrøm, 2020; Steinfeld, 2023; Salomonsen, Schillemans and Brummel, 2024). Although previous research has suggested linking TM and performance management to NPM and related theories (Teo and Rodwell, 2007;; Kravariti and Johnston, 2019; Boselie, Thunnissen and Monster, 2021; Kravariti et al., 2022) as well as using stewardship theory to underpin TM and performance management (Segal and Leher, 2012; Hernandez, 2012; Mills, Bradley and Keast, 2021), very limited of such work seems to have used it as an interpretive framework for TM practices in public sector organisations, particularly in HEIs, which is precisely what this research does (Bleiklie et al., 2011; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020; Kravariti and Johnston, 2019). The stewardship theory examined in this section will be used as an interpretive and theoretical background in order to analyse the case study findings.

Organisations have different perspectives about what is talent and who is a talent. They also apply different TM approaches to ensure that employees' performance and organisations objectives at different business levels are achieved. Their view of talent could be seen through the lenses of 'innate' or 'acquired', 'object' and'subject', while the TM approach could be 'inclusive' or 'exclusive', 'formal' or 'informal'. For this research, the work of Lewis and Heckman (2006); Van den Brink, Fruytier and Thunnissen (2013); Meyers, Van Woerkom and Dries (2013); Cappelli and Keller (2014); Swailes, Downs and Orr (2014); Boselie and Thunnissen (2017); Kravariti and Johnston (2019); Thunnissen, van Arensbergen and van den Brink (2021); Boselie, Thunnissen, Monster (2021), and Dries (2022) are specifically significant and relevant. Lewis and Heckman, and Meyers, Van Woerkom and Dries work is important for this study because it facilitated the data collection and analysis required to describe the conceptualisation and definition of talent and TM in UK HEIs. Cappelli and Keller, Swailes, Downs and Orr, Kravariti and Johnston, Boselie, Thunnissen and Monster, and Thunnissen, van Arensbergen and van den Brink research are relevant and applicable for this research as they facilitated the data collection and analysis required to describe the types of TM approaches and practices in public sector organisations, particularly HEIs. These perceptions, approaches, and practices relatively vary in their underlying assumptions about their conceptualisation of talent and TM approaches and practices.

The assumptions about talent and TM approaches organisations implement can be said to be influenced by their intellectual viewpoint of NPM and organisational theory that underpin their assumptions about human behaviour (Boston, 2011; Franco-Santos, Rivera and Bourne, 2014;

Ferlie, 2017). Stewardship theory as an organisational theory emphasises that employees are not merely self-interested and individualistic but are influenced by situations that could be influenced by the interests of the group they belong to, their organisation, the public service, and society in general, as well as their personal values (Davis, Schoorman, and Donaldson, 1997). Thus, an organisation's TM strategy is a key determinant of how talent and TM are defined and conceptualised, as well as the adopted approaches. It has been argued that TM (inclusive TM) is a practice focussing on the long-term development of human capital and could be theoretically explained by stewardship theories (Davis, 1997; Hernandez, 2012; Segal and Lehrer, 2012; Cross Walker, 2020). Thus, stewardship theories can be used to explain the choices of HEIs TM activities to meet the challenges of the HEIs. Consequently, given the high expected returns of investing in the workforce, institutions and policy makers seem to focus substantially on managerial views and business returns on investment rather than individual academic views when considering stewardship theory (Clark et al., 1998; Mirvis, 2017).

While some opposing theories to stewardship theory, such as agency theories, reinforce what some TM scholars refer to as exclusive subject approach, i.e., talent, as some people who are high performers and high potentials therefore should be trained, developed, and educated, appointed/promoted to key positions to enable them to contribute and influence the organisational performance as well as reward them exclusively (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Collings et al., 2017; O'Connor and Crowley-Henry, 2019). Stewardship theory underpins the inclusive subject approach, i.e., talent as all people, encompassing all employees in an organisation, and advocates for all the employees to be given the opportunity to reach their highest potential and promoting equity within the organisation. Thus, by treating everyone within the organisation equally and by providing a fair and open opportunity for everyone to be trained, developed, appointed/promoted, and rewarded, a more pleasant, cohesive, collegial, and motivated working environment is achieved (Slizer and Dowell, 2010; Swailes, Downs, and Orr, 2014; Swailes, 2020).

3.6 Stewardship Theory

Stewardship theory has its foundation from sociology and psychology with the premise of management as stewards driven and motivated to act in the best interest of their executives or the owners of businesses and is often seen as an alternative to agency theory (Franco-Santos, Rivera and Bourne, 2014). Davis, Schoorman and Donaldson (1997, p. 25) defined stewardship theory as “a steward protects and maximises shareholders wealth through firm performance, because by doing so, the steward’s utility functions are maximized." Hernandez (2012, p. 174) defined stewardship as “the extent to which an individual willingly subjugates his or her personal interests to act in protection of others’ long-term welfare." Even though some theories address manager-agent relationship and interest divergence, there is a need for additional theories to explain what should be done if the interests of both parties should align (Segal and Lehrer, 2012; Rouault and Albertini, 2022) as required in HEIs given the nature of the sector. As a result, stewardship theory is one of the theories that covers that gap by exploring relationships based on other behavioural situations (Donaldson and Davis, 1991). The theory was developed by Donaldson and Davis as a new viewpoint to understand the existing links between ownership and management of organisations (Pastoriza and Ariño, 2008; Steinfeld, 2023).

Davis, Schoorman, and Donldson (1997) suggested that the steward behaviour model of man is based on the idea that pro-organisational and collectivistic actions are more useful than individualistic and self-serving behaviours. Thus, when it comes to choosing between acting in the best interests of the business and oneself, an employee's actions may not be at odds with those of their employer (Glinkowska and Kaczmarek, 2015). Stewardship theory proposes that individuals (stewards) are keen to subdue their own personal interests, protect the long-term welfare of others, and act in a pro-organisational manner that is guided by public service values. The theory assumes that people are not necessarily "self-interest,”, "self-serving,” “opportunistic,” and “individualistic” agents but people whose attitudes and interests are collectivistic, pro-organisational, as well as in line with what the organisation's values, vision, mission, goal, and objectives are (Franco-Santos, Rivera and Bourner, 2014; Schillemans and Bjurstrøm, 2020).

At the organisational level, the two parties, which are the management/managers at one side and employees/staff at the other side, that work together to ensure the goal, objectives, and performance output are achieved, are constantly reassessing whether to behave as self-concern, opportunistic agents, or as stewards. Though it is important to note that, people have their own personal situations and preferences, which could prevent them from acting in the interest of the organisation or in a collectivistic manner or even change them from their steward behaviour, and as a result, individuals can behave as stewards, and they can behave as agents (Dicke, 2002; Rouault and Albertini, 2022). Stewards do have their physiological needs, but the difference between self-interest and individual/agent (agency theory) and stewards is how their needs are met. Stewards believe that for their needs to be met, they need to work towards collective ends and organisational objectives; if given the options, agents will choose to increase their individual utility as well as protect their self-interest (Crew and Rowley, 1988; Arthurs and Busenitz, 2003; Steinfeld, 2023).

However, stewardship theory suggests that there is no conflict of interest between managers and owners, and the purpose of management is to identify the procedures and organisational frameworks that allow for the best possible cooperation between the two groups (Donaldson, 1990). Stewardship theory acknowledged that executive control is not inherently problematic; hence, organisational managers typically engage in a benign manner (Donaldson, 2008), which sort of supports NPM principles and TM practices. Nevertheless, the fundamental presumption that underlies the recommendations of stewardship theory is that the manager's actions are consistent with the principals' interests. Just as Van Slyke (2006) stressed that, stewardship theory prioritises goal convergence among the stakeholders in corporate governance over the agent's self-interest.

In other words, stewardship scholars suggest that the commitment and performance of stewards are impacted by whether the organisational structure and situation in which they work enhance effective action and if the management’s motivations align with the model of man underlying stewardship theory, with governance structure empowered (Donaldson and Davis, 1990; Caldwell et al., 2008; Segal and Lehrer, 2012). Therefore, the autonomy of stewards should be fully granted in order to maximise the benefits of the stewards because they can be trusted, and as a result of this, the financial and human resources that are required to manage the behaviour of the steward towards pro-organisational behaviour are saved as a result of stewards being motivated to behave in a way that is consistently in line with the organisational objectives (Davis, Schoorman and Donldson, 1997).

According to stewardship scholars, the following strategies can be used to achieve and maintain alignment and motivation, which are crucial elements of organisational performance:

- having a well-organised, understandable business strategy goal and mission statements that allow people to focus their decisions and actions on achieving it.
- proclaiming an organisational culture that prioritises performance improvement and involves ongoing evaluation and reflection.
- advocating for intrinsic as opposed to extrinsic benefits.

- putting a lot of effort into efficient employee resourcing (talent acquisition, selection, induction, and succession planning) to make sure that the organisation hires and retains the best qualified individuals with the necessary skills, expertise, drive, and interest.
- promoting procedural equity, justice, and inclusivity because these traits encourage people to act and safeguard the long-term well-being of others and the company.
- fostering a culture of collective employee accountability for organisational results. (Franco-Santos, Rivera and Bourner, 2014)

Despite the stewardship theory's insight, some academics have criticised it for its presumptions about people because they believe it minimises the opportunism that is part of human nature and is therefore unsustainable in private sector organisations (Glinkowska and Kaczmarek, 2015). Furthermore, the theory has been critiqued by some scholars for being static because it believes that individuals do not learn from their interactions and only considers the relationship of the principal agent at a particular point in time (Pastoriza and Ariño, 2008; Mills, Bradley and Keast, 2021).

According to Franco-Santos, Rivera, and Bourner (2014), adopting stewardship theory in a setting where proof of efficacy and efficiency is needed, as is the case in private sector organisations, may be unfeasible and challenging. Even in the public sector, there is a dearth of research on the implementation and results of the stewardship strategy. For instance, Segal and Lehrer (2012) investigated the use of a stewardship strategy in the education sector of the Canadian school system. They investigated the effects of the district's schools moving from an agency-based to a stewardship-based administrative structure. They concluded that it is difficult to fully embrace stewardship in an educational system when individuals are morally obligated to and actively involved with the long-term goals and objectives of their organisation. These settings are therefore essential for developing an organisational culture, structure, and atmosphere that promote stewardship, high levels of trust, and intrinsic drive while discouraging opportunistic behaviour.

NPM is a predominant modern-day concept just like TM, which seeks to promote greater operational efficiency and effectiveness as well as produce better economy, i.e., value for money, in the provision of public services (Hood, 1995; Ferlie, Fitzgerald and Pettigrew, 1996; Hood and Dixon, 2013; 2015). With the introduction of NPM and managerialism in public sector organisations, annual efficiency-saving targets were set, with more measurement and quantification of outputs to meet within budget, adaptation of people management techniques to secure employment commitment and drive competition, and the increase in employment of contract rather than permanent employment, which signifies a more flexible labour pool within the public sector (McLaughlin et al., 2002; Bach and Kessler, 2008; Diefenbach, 2009; Hood and Dixon, 2015). All these factors are indeed in line with TM principles, which could provide insightful theoretical background for understanding TM in HEIs (Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020; Kravariti et al., 2022).

One of the main purposes of the introduction of NPM is to drive higher public agency performance, and one of the keyways to achieve this is through the way agencies deploy and manage their human resources through directive mechanisms that seem to align with TM components and techniques of employees' management and strengthening of line management functions (for instance, performance management, categorisation of workforce, etc.). For example, as a result of NPM initiatives, regulators of public agencies were given the power to introduce measures such as fines, loss of jurisdiction, agency closure, league tables, naming and shaming of failing agencies, and so on (Hood and Dixon, 2013; 2015). All these factors are also indeed in line with TM principles that could be implemented at the individual and group level within the organisational level and therefore could also provide insightful theoretical background for understanding TM in HEIs.

TM, most especially the exclusive approach, seems to provide greater voice for consumers of organisations' services and goods through the contributions of the customers/consumers to the performance management systems/process, which is in line with NPM principles and initiatives to promote greater voice and choice for the users of public services. For example, within the HE sector in the UK, one of the regulatory bodies, The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), has directed HEIs to ensure that they have effective systems in place to promote student voice, provide information about the success rate of their degree, including completion and amount/percentage of those that gain employment after graduation, and provide information about students experience as a result of ensuring that students get value for the fees they pay, and all relevant information should be published on the institution's websites (Brown, 2015; Watt, 2017). A different oversight organisation, the OfS, has stated that HE providers must deliver successful outcomes for all their students that businesses recognise and value and/or allow for continued education. They emphasised further that graduate employment, particularly advancement to professional occupations and postgraduate study, degree outcomes, including differential results for students with varied characteristics, and student continuation and completion are crucial for HE providers (OfS, 2023)

Just like TM, NPM initiatives within public sector organisations are viewed by some scholars as a good measure to increase transparency in the management of resources, including talent resources, and promote good leadership in institutions where there may be inherited problems with extensive management and leadership that make such institutions ineffective. Thus, NPM changes could be implemented in a newly established, purpose-built agency that operates independently of the rest of government and can employ a carefully chosen modernising elite (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011; Ferlie, 2017; Bach, 2019).

The NPM concept, as established in most public sector organisations and UK HEIs, primarily relied on theories such as agency theory, which held that relationships are usually conflicting and that the contract must be narrowly managed to achieve primarily economic objectives (Franco-Santos, Rivera and Bourner, 2014; Schillemans and Bjurstrøm, 2020). Although there has not been a deterioration in performance or accountability to the public in some public sector institutions because of the implementation of agency theory. However, there have been instances where economic objectives have been temporarily met, a decrease in performance, accountability to government agencies, and the public needs have not been met (Diefenbach, 2009; Overman, 2016; Sands, O'Neill, and Hodge, 2019). Thus, this study explores the potential for TM and NPM to be successfully implemented within HEIs based on stewardship theory, i.e., paradigms other than the rigid principles of agency theory.

The emergence of stewardship theory at the beginning of the twenty-first century offered paradigms that were defined by stronger demands for collaboration as opposed to conflict and/or rivalry. These paradigms provide a means of aiding in the comprehension of whether and how the goal of better fulfilling the expectations of the public, top leadership, and government regarding managing public institutions is being accomplished. The opposing theory, agency theory's premise that an agent would only act against the principal's interests, and its accompanying remedy of strict control were both contested by stewardship theorists (Jensen and Meckling, 2019) using transaction-focused contracts that held the agent accountable for fulfilling their end of the bargain. Stewardship theorists supported that an agent is someone or an organisation that is inclined to act in the principal's and society's best interests (Hernandez 2012; Mills, Bradley, and Keast, 2021).

In response to the challenges and rejection of the numerous dysfunctions of the market-based NPM remedies, the implementation of NPM principles (Osborne 2006, 2010; Mills, Bradley, and Keast, 2021) occurred concurrently with the challenge of agency theory-based mechanisms

(Christensen and Laegreid 2008). By combining organisational architecture from the public, private, and third sectors, stewardship theorists were able to develop alternative intraorganisational interactions (Koppenjan 2012). With the conceptualising of the public governance system as extending beyond the immediate contract to the external environment, encompassing exchanges between individuals and/or groups and/or organisations, stewardship theory was argued to correct the narrow intraorganizational focus of NPM (Caldwell and Karri, 2005; Osborne, 2010; Mamun, Yasser and Rahman, 2013).

According to Mills, Bradley and Keast (2021), the stewardship theory paradigm expands the scope and intensity of interactions within and between sectors, particularly with the public sector, to promote increased cooperation, collaboration, and community engagement. When combined, these conceptualisations offer a tenable proposal for governance that takes the organisation into account and has the service provider and its stakeholders acting in the organisation's best interests. Academics and practitioners would feel more confident approaching the governance of these vital public services from a service-centric (Osborne et al., 2014) rather than contract management, perspective if these propositions were found to adequately explain the reality of contemporary governance systems and interorganisational relationships, which may propel effective TM in public institutions such as HE.

In rejecting the foundations of agency theory, stewardship theorists argued that an agent's action should serve the principal and other stakeholders, including employees, customers, the host communities, etc. (Caldwell and Karri, 2005; Davis, Schoorman and Donaldson, 1997), in this example the HEI students and their parents. As stewards, people or organisations prioritise the long-term interests of others over their own (Donaldson, 1990; Davis, Schoorman and Donaldson, 1997; VanSlyke, 2007; Hernandez, 2012). They place a higher value on the convergence of their goals with those of the principal. The community, which might include local SEMs, parents, students, host communities, and other groups, can also benefit from stewardship habits in addition to their own organisation (Caldwell and Karri, 2005; Hernandez, 2012).

The strong control of agency theory prevents this tendency to act in the principal's best interests (Tosi et al., 2003; Diefenbach, 2009). However, structural and psychological elements that support the principal's emphasis on autonomy, shared culture and norms, trust and personal power, and sense of responsibility (Davis, Schoorman, and Donaldson 1997; Hernandez 2012; VanSlyke, 2007) can foster this disposition. Stewardship theory is now being applied to the governance of public institutions. Snippert et al. (2015) research, for instance, acknowledged the positive impact of stewardship relation conceptualisation of the behaviours in the management of Dutch Highways Agency. This study supports the use of stewardship relationships in the management and implementation of TM practices in UK HEIs.

Stewardship theorists support a conceptualisation of conduct that goes beyond the limited agency model's approach to contractual compliance of the existing relationships between ownership and the management of organisations as well as administrators/managers and employees (Donaldson and Davis, 1990; Block, 1993; Franco-Santos, Rivera and Bourner, 2014) in two respects through their strong criticism of agency theory. The first has to do with performance that benefits the principal, or another beneficiary more than what agency theorists have conceptualised. The second is the abasement of interests, or maybe a remarkable act of selflessness. It will be essential to comprehend how these two facets of the behaviour conceptualisation that incorporates a wider social perspective, derived from stewardship theory, apply, if at all, in the context of public sector organisations in order to determine whether or not stewardship theory provides a framework for successful TM in HEIs within the framework of NPM.

Table 3.2: The key points of the philosophy of stewardship theory

Criteria	**Stewardship Theory**
Theoretical basis	Organisational psychology and sociology
Assumptions	People are driven by service. The goals of the institution and the individual are in harmony. People are motivated by their own nature.
Behaviours and Manager motivators	Pro-organisational Non-financial (internal)
Focus	The organisation strictly regulates who performs the work and on whom, but it has lax controls over how well it is done.
Time horizon	Oriented to the delivery of results in the long term.
Role of information	Learn and improve performance.
General approach to the uncertainty of managerial behaviour	Trust

Owner – manager relationship	Mutual interests
Typical recommendations for corporate governance	Consulting as the most important role of the supervisory board wide range of management’s authority fixed salary.

Sources: Donaldson and Davis, 1990; Davis, Schoorman, and Donaldson, 1997; Franco-Santos, Rivera and Bourne, 2014; and Glinkowska and Kaczmarek, 2015.

3.7 Implications of Stewardship theory for this research

Considering the research question, stewardship theories can be applied to interpret the meaning of talent and TM within HEIs, as well as better understand the reasons why institutions adopt different practices to manage their talents and to predict the likely consequences of such practices.

Generally, the view of TM has been reviewed to better reflect its complexity and to accommodate both financial (exclusive approach) and non-financial (inclusive approach) factors; the focus on determining who is a talent, in this case academic talent, what is TM, and assessing/measuring talent(s) performance through key indicators remains unclear. Stewardship theory views talent and performance from a broader lens and relates it to a long-term goal, objectives, and outcomes, and this is communicated to all stakeholders, including employees, so that they can engage and align their personal goal with the long-term objectives of the organisation. Stewardship theory encourages the application of trust-maintenance approaches, including growth, shared leadership, socialisation, reflective practice, and systems that minimise corruption, such as those that rely on peer, external, and self-regulation. The identification and relational approaches, which are predicated on the idea that people are interdependent and foster collective identity, are aligned with stewardship scholars. These approaches also align with the inclusive TM approach (Bolden et al., 2012).

Reflecting on the view of Weick’s (1976, pp. 11–12), “Patterns of Loose and Tight Coupling: Certification verse Inspection,” because of the complexity of organisations including HEIs, different TM practices and apparatuses may be required within institutions because of the organisational context. Weick suggested that:

"certification" provides the proposition for question of "who does the work" while "inspection" provides the proposition for the question "how well is the work done" (Weick's, 1976 p.11).

Stewardship theory depends on the skills, knowledge, and incentives of both consumers and staff (patterns of looseness and certification). Weick suggested that, for educational organisations, including HEIs, a mix of a tight system and control that can determine "who does the work and on whom" and a loose system and control on "how well the work is done" may be required to be more efficient and effective than a single approach or combination of other approaches. Though there is little or no empirical evidence to support this notion, this research attempts to explore and establish what is obtainable in field and case study institutions as well as investigate the adaptability of a single theory, stewardship theory (Lutz, 1982; Beekun and Glick, 2001; Meyer, 2002).

Adopting TM techniques is predicated on the idea that investing in the acquisition, training, career development, retention, reward, and engagement of talented employees may make a substantial positive impact on the organisation's performance (see McDonnell, 2009; Tarique and Schuler, 2010; Meyers et al., 2020; Jooss et al., 2024). Regarding this, embracing stewardship theory means considering talent as a "person who possesses those competencies, knowledge, and values that reflect the core principles of the public sector, which enable him/her to use their exceptional abilities to serve the public for the common good" **(**Kravariti and Johnson, 2019). Thus, acquisition, retention, engagement, and development of talents can be seen as investments in people who have the skills, knowledge, and values that are consistent with the guiding principles of the public sector institution and who can use their extraordinary ability to benefit the public good. The present thesis explores the relationship between stewardship theory and effective application of TM practices in the context of NPM in UK HEIs.

3.8 Summary

As a result of the review of literature in Chapter 3, it can be concluded that talent, TM and NPM are complex concepts that attract different meanings in different contexts, as well as at organisational and individual levels. Therefore, the way talent is defined and managed is influenced by the type of organisation (industry, sector, and nature of work); management and leadership; organisational levels; individual and group dynamics; context; and changes (Van Dijk 2009; Dries 2013; Poocharoen and Lee, 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020). This type of attribute can be problematic and has become more than ever important for researchers and TM scholars to advance in the field of TM in order to provide empirical answers to the definition of both concepts (Talent and TM) in various sectors, and in this case, the public sector (HEIs), and how a dynamic management approach such as NPM has influenced the practices, approaches and activities of TM within HEIs (Bleiklie et al., 2011; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Boselie, Thunnissen and Monster, 2021).

Chapter 3 has also provided a synopsis and described the theoretical viewpoint adopted in this study: TM, NPM, and stewardship theory. Stewardship theory has been utilised because both the organisations (case studies A and B) and their employees have felt the gradual impact of the introduction of NPM principles in their institutions since its inception over three decades ago (Deem et. al., 2007; Bacon, 2014; Broucker and De Wit, 2015). The concept of NPM has been discussed in relation to other public sector organisations and how it has attracted and/or influenced other types of management concepts (such as performance management, managerialism, etc.) for implementation in the sector.

Considering the fact that the research context is within HE sectors, due to the very complex and diverse nature of public sector organisations, scholars suggest that such institutions may require the adoption of stewardship approaches to TM and performance management in order to optimise their workforce outcome and needed organisational performance (Torfing and Bentzen, 2020; Mills, Bradley and Keast, 2021). Stewardship theory provides a paradigm for conceptualising TM in public sector organisations (HEIs in particular) and the governance structure that better meets the expectations of varied stakeholders regarding their performance. Since there are problems replicating what is obtainable in the private sector, which appears to be more in line with agency theory and TM's exclusive approach. There is limited research in the context of HEIs that explores the TM approach that is in use in UK HEIs in the context of NPM. Thus, it is important to explore the implications of such an approach on the academics within such institutions to provide insights aimed at informing good practice and policymaking for TM in UK HEIs institutions. The concepts, theories, and approaches discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 will be used as an interpretive framework to analyse the case study findings. The research methodologies used for the research are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 - Methodology

4.0 Introduction

Research is grounded on some fundamental theoretical assumptions about what constitutes valid research and which research methods are appropriate for the development of knowledge in each field (Jonker and Pennink, 2010; Bryman and Bell, 2015; Myers, 2020). To conduct any research, it is important to know what a researcher's fundamental philosophical assumptions are. The methodology chapter discusses the rational conventions and the design strategies underpinning this research.

In doing the above, the researcher is conscious of the cautionary advice about the selection of suitable research methodologies. Gorard (2001, p.8) suggested that in choosing methodologies, "you must decide on your research topic and the questions you are curious about first, and only then consider how best to answer them". He added that, "don't fit your proposed study to your favourite approach, and then try to disguise this as philosophical, rather than methodological, decision". As a result, the researcher critically reviewed the various methodologies and used the findings to inform the best methods for this research.

4.1 Research Methodology

The term methodology refers to theory (the process of explaining things we experience in the observable world to make then comprehensible) and philosophy (concern with the fundamental nature of knowledge – how we as human beings make sense of the observable world) of how research should be undertaken. Therefore, the assumptions one makes about the issues will have important implications for the research method or methods that they choose to adopt (Anderson, 2013; Saunders et al., 2019). Methodology also relates to the principles, procedures, and strategies of research and is crucial because the data that makes up any study, and the conclusions based on the data, are only as valid and reliable as the methods of investigation that were used to obtain, interpret, and analyse them (Johnson and Duberley, 2000; Gary et al., 2007; Creswell, 2012).

Creswell (2012, pp.7-8) suggests that a Research Process Cycle involves the following six steps:

- Identifying a research problem, which consists of specifying a problem, justifying it and suggesting the need to study it for audiences.
- Reviewing the literature, which includes locating resources, selecting resources, summarising resources to build and verify theories as well as identifying the research gap.
- Specifying a purpose for research, which includes identifying and narrowing the purpose statement to the research questions or hypotheses.
- Collecting data, which includes selecting individuals to study, obtaining permissions, gathering information.
- Analysing and interpreting the data, which includes breaking down, representing, and explaining the data.
- Reporting and evaluating research, which includes deciding on audiences, structuring the report, and writing the report sensitively.

Therefore, in selecting an appropriate research methodology a researcher must critically examine the research topic, objectives, and questions consciously in order to make an informed choice of the methods rather than just picking preferred approaches (Gorard, 2001; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Sekaran and Bougie, 2010; Saunders et al., 2019).

4.2 Research philosophy

Saunders et al. (2019, p. 130) defined Research philosophy as, '*a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge'*. It is the assumption about the way in which data about a phenomenon should be gathered, interpreted, analysed, and presented. The research philosophy researchers adopt indicates important assumptions about the way in which they view the world, and their assumptions will underpin their strategy and the methods they choose (Crotty, 1998; Burrell and Morgan, 2016). Burrell and Morgan (1979) put forward that, research philosophy could be viewed from four philosophical perspectives, namely: epistemology, ontology, human nature, and methodology. While Saunders et al. (2019) added that, the three ways of thinking about research philosophy are ontology, epistemology, and axiology.

4.2.1 Ontology

The ontological assumption refers to conventions about the nature of reality and relates to the stance of a researcher on the nature of reality and existence (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012; Saunders et al., 2019). The ontological assumptions of a researcher shape the way in which they see and study their research objects (such as the case study organisations, management, participants' working lives, organisational events, and artefacts, etc.), determines how they see the world of management and determines the choice of what the researcher research for their research project (Saunders et al., 2019). This said stance could be either objective (external) to the researcher ***(objectivism) or subjective and socially constructed (subjectivism)*** (Collis and Hussey, 2014; Saunders et al., 2019).

According to Bryan and Bell (2015) and Saunders et al. (2019), the objectivism position is focused on natural science and implies that social reality exists independently of social actors, whereas the subjectivism position is concerned with the arts and humanities and suggests that social reality is influenced by social factors. As a result, under the objectivism perspective, researchers have no control on the objects of their research, whereas under the subjectivism stance, the researcher's actions or perceptions have the power to affect the objects of their research. For this research, the researcher adopts the subjectivism position because TM involves exploring the system through which individuals experience it, exists within a context of social relationship in terms of their live in experience within their working environment, and involves socially constructed perceptions of employees as talents, with the phenomenon of TM having different interpretations among individuals and management in different organisations in the context of NPM. This research explores social phenomenon of talent and TM in the world of HEIs in UK where the practice occurs and as a result, it involves human activities, all of which requires a socially constructed ontology.

4.2.2 Epistemology

Epistemology refer to humans' understanding, perception, and interpretation of events around them (Crotty, 2014; Bryan and Bell, 2015; Smithy, 2015). It is concerned with the nature and scope of human knowledge as well as deals with issues relating to how we can learn about reality and what shapes the basis of our knowledge and perceptions (Blaikie, 2007; Ritchie et al., 2014). Burrell and Morgan (2016 cited in Saunders et al., 2019, p. 133) added that, '*Epistemology refers to assumptions about knowledge, what constitutes acceptable, valid and* *legitimate knowledge, and how we can communicate knowledge to others*.' Easterby-Smith et al. (2012) put forward that, the methods used to conduct an inquiry into the nature of the social and physical worlds are also included in the assumptions. The epistemological assumptions seek to accept knowledge that has been verified by appropriate methods as genuine knowledge. Thus, rather than beliefs, epistemology is the study of the standards by which we may determine what does or does not constitute knowledge and thoughts about what counts as knowledge (Blaikie, 2007; Duberly et al., 2012; Saunders et al., 2019). Bryan and Bell (2015) stressed that epistemology is required to answer two essential questions: how do we know the world and what is the relationship between the researcher and the researched?

Researchers have a wide range of methodologies at their disposal when choosing epistemology, which is frequently used in methodology literature (Saunders et al., 2019). However, it is crucial that researchers understand the consequences of the many epistemological approaches, as well as the benefits and downsides of each (Saunders et al., 2019). For example, it is not a given that a researcher can choose from a variety of epistemologies; rather, what matters is whether a method is appropriate for addressing the research question or questions, as well as the aim and objectives of the study. As a result, while formulating philosophical hypotheses, researchers need to exercise extra caution. The five main schools of thought in this regard are positivism, interpretivism, postmodernism, critical realism, and pragmatism (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 144). Any of these ideologies, or a combination of them, form the foundation of most research philosophies (Saunders et al., 2019). According to Creswell's (2012) research process cycle (pp. 7-8), interpretivism (phenomenological) has a strong influence on this study since it aims to rely on questioning the research participants in order to generate a rich and deep understanding of the phenomenon of talent and TM in the context of NPM being investigated.

4.2.3 Discussion of the main research philosophies

It is essential to state how crucial it is for researchers to have a thorough understanding of research philosophies, since doing so gives them the chance to interpret their research process and define the methods they will use for reasoning. Researchers studying business and management can select from a variety of research philosophies according to their aims, issues, and purposes, as was previously indicated. The conceptual aspects of talent and TM are still inadequately studied, particularly when it comes to the public sector and NPM. Talking about the several philosophies that are available in business and management research, such as positivism, postmodernism, interpretivism, positivism, and critical realism, is crucial. The researcher chose an interpretivist strategy since it provides various benefits for this study. It enables the researcher to comprehend the phenomena of talent and TM under investigation through the interpretations that the research participants (academics) ascribe to the phenomena and concepts, providing a greater knowledge of academic life and human experiences. It also enables a more in-depth comprehension of the subjects and their perspectives on the phenomena, as well as being appropriate for studying context-specific processes. Thus, this study is centred around the interpretivism research philosophy (Collis and Hussey, 2014; Saunders et al., 2019).

4.2.3.1 Positivism

The philosophical perspective of positivism relates to the natural sciences and involves employing an observable social reality to generate generalisations that resemble laws (Saunders et al., 2019). From the perspective of ontological assumptions, positivism's central tenet is that the social reality exists independently of social actors (Easterby-Smith et al., 2007; 2012). Stated differently, a researcher and a research object are two different things (Weber, 2004). According to Saunders et al. (2019), a researcher who adopts an extreme positivist stance will regard organisations and other social entities as real in the same sense as they regard physical objects and natural events. According to positivists, knowledge can only be validated by facts that are distinct from one's own thoughts, not by conjecture (Bryan and Bell, 2015). In order to generate pure, objective evidence that has been gathered and evaluated by a natural scientist with facts that cannot be altered or subjected to interpretation, positivists thus concentrate on scientific empirical procedures in research inquiry. This philosophical position focuses on finding observable and quantifiable facts, such as regularities, with the presumption that only social phenomena that are observable and quantifiable provide reliable and insightful data. Accordingly, it is thought that data obtained from study objects should be measured using quantitative, experimental, or objectivist research methodologies (Collis and Hussey, 2014; Saunders et al., 2019).

Within the positivist philosophy, surveys, hypothetical-deductive reasoning, and experimental tools can all be used. Since researchers using this approach are more likely to follow a highly structured methodology in order to facilitate replication and to maintain objectivity in their research findings, they also tend to remain neutral and detached from the research objects, particularly the data collection process (Crotty, 1998; Robson, 2011; Myers, 2020). In organisational science research, which aims to find and learn new information about phenomena, positivism is a widely accepted attitude (Holden and Lynch, 2004). In light of the previous debate, the researcher believes that the phenomena being studied cannot be regarded as scientific, so he does not think positivist philosophy is appropriate. Since various persons from diverse cultural origins generate and experience different social realities in different contexts and under different conditions, TM practices apply to natural skills that may not be observed or copied. The researcher agrees with the interpretivists' criticism of positivist attempts to find clear-cut "laws" that apply to everyone, but he also agrees with their argument that complex human behaviour loses valuable insights if it is reduced to a set of generalisations that resemble laws (Klein and Myers, 1999; Saunders et al., 2019). Social scientists, on the other hand, believe that studying humans and their social environments cannot be done in the same way of studying physical phenomena. They believe that positivism did not adequately address the dynamics of social phenomena or the need for subjective research methods when studying humans (Klein and Myers, 1999; Saunders et al., 2019).

4.2.3.2 Critical Realism

The broader realism philosophy included direct realism and critical realism, of which critical realism is a subset (Bryman and Bell, 2015). British philosopher Roy Bhaskar, who proposed a shared ontology and epistemology for the natural and social sciences in the late 20th century, is credited with introducing this relatively new research philosophy (Bhaskar cited in Sayer, 1992). It made the claims that reality is outside of the researcher's control and that specific data collection and interpretation methods can be used in both social science and natural science research (Proctor, 1998; Sayer, 2000; Saunders et al., 2019). Unlike positivist (realism) philosophy, which holds that what we observe and experience of the world through our senses accurately and truly represents the world, it focuses on explaining what we see and experience in terms of the underlying structures of reality that shape the observable events (Saunders et al., 2019). According to critical realists, the conclusions we draw from our experiences in the real world are not the actual things but rather an expression of them. As a result, we must use a technique known as "retroduction," or reasoning backwards, to find the larger picture, since the events we initially encountered only made up a small portion of it (Collier, 1994; Reed, 2005).

Critical realism places focus on researchers' curiosity to learn more about a phenomenon rather than drawing conclusions based only on surface observations (Reed, 2005; Bhaskar, 2011). Using the participants' own narratives as a guide, this study examined how academic talents are fundamentally perceived in relation to talent and TM in the context of NPM. As a result, the critical realism philosophy is unsuitable for this current research because its goal is to understanding individuals' experiences within their contexts rather than to identify the underlying causes and mechanisms that shape deep social structures and how they influence day-to-day organisational operations through a thorough historical analysis of social and organisational structures and their evolution.

4.2.3.3 Postmodernism

Like interpretivism, postmodernism first appeared as a critique of positivism. Postmodernism emphasised the importance of language and power dynamics in research procedures and aimed to challenge conventional wisdom (Donaldson, 2003; Chia, 2003). The world is shaped by the collective actions of powerful persons, not by any particular method of comprehending or expressing it, as postmodernists emphasised (Saunders et al., 2019). A choice that is thought to be impacted by the power dynamics among these people, whose collective decisions will continue to be dominant and effective for the time being, even though they are not the best ones. For this reason, postmodernists aim to investigate and reveal the power dynamics that uphold the dominant style of sophisticated thinking (Calas and Smircich, 1997; Adams, 2010).

The basic goal of postmodernism is to investigate and reveal the shortcomings of the conventional (positivist) structured approaches of conducting research. An essential element of postmodernist research acknowledges that the power dynamics between the investigator and research participants influence the knowledge generated during the investigation process (Saunders et al., 2019. Researchers that follow this philosophy generally seek to disprove the conventional wisdom regarding thinking, knowing, and acquiring knowledge. They also seek to expose alternative methods of acquiring knowledge that were previously concealed or purposefully removed (Kilduff and Mehra, 1997; Chia, 2003).

The goal of postmodernist researchers is to challenge radically the established ways of thinking and knowing within organisation by challenging the organisational practices, processes, and systems, try to investigate and expose what perspectives and realities they exclude and leave silent and whose interests they serve which will normally involve the deconstruction of any forms of information and documentation from texts, images, conversations, voices, and numbers (Saunders et al., 2019). All these can be very time and resources consuming which might not be achievable for research like this that is time bound. Therefore, researchers are hesitant to accept postmodernism due to its associated criticisms and ambiguous impact on research (Kilduff and Mehra, 1997; Saunders et al., 2019). Owing to these objections, Donaldson (2003) explicitly declared that organisational studies should not embrace the postmodernist philosophical perspective, to which the project's researcher agreed.

4.2.3.4 Pragmatism

In contrast to other philosophies, which either question or affirm our reasoning and understanding of the world, pragmatist suggest that reasoning and concepts are only relevant if supported with action and practical outcomes (Creswell, 2014; Saunders et al., 2019). Charles Pierce, William James, and John Dewey introduced the pragmatic philosophy in 1878 in an effort to reconcile objectivism and subjectivism. It contends that worldviews can be socially shared and individually unique with varying contextualised experiences (Morgan, 2014; Shariatinia, 2016; Kaushik and Walsh, 2019). The tenets of pragmatic research methodology emphasise the importance of emphasising the implications of findings and research questions over methods, and researchers should employ the methodological strategy that best addresses the research problem under investigation (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Patton, 1998; Hall, 2013).

The pragmatist scholars completely rejected the notion that researchers can access the reality solely by using a single scientific method (Maxcy, 2003; Kaushik and Walsh, 2019). Therefore, it embraces plurality of methods and is often associated with mixed-methods or multiple-methods (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Morgan, 2014). The pragmatists firmly believe that our actions are influenced by facts. According to the researcher's interpretation of this concept, every action has an outcome. According to Hammond (2013) and Creswell (2014), pragmatism is a relatively flexible philosophy in terms of concepts and makes use of the best research methodologies that are accessible. Researchers who want to improve organisational practice instead of fighting ontological, epistemological, and axiological arguments between various ideologies use it (Saunders et al., 2019). According to Jonker and Pennink (2010), Morgan (2014), and Creswell (2014), the research problem, the best way to accomplish the study objective, and the best approach for addressing the research question all influence the research design in pragmatic research.

One of the main criticisms of pragmatic philosophy is that it implies that human activity is not determined by outside factors, but rather that the meaning of human actions may be discovered in their effects. Additionally, this method contends that intellect, inaction, and action all allow humans to shape their experiences. Furthermore, it holds that reality is dynamic and ever-changing, which is why pragmatists value action above all else (Goldkuhl, 2012; Morgan, 2014; Kaushik and Walsh, 2019). In addition, the main aim of pragmatist about what works has been a recurrent problem and criticism of the philosophy (Morgan, 2014). Researchers have argued that pragmatism principles can inform many kinds of research but cannot be selected as a research methodology because researchers cannot claim to offer anywhere and anytime solutions to research problems (Biesta and Burbules, 2003; Hammond, 2013). Therefore, due to the criticisms associated with the pragmatist philosophy, and not wanting to use it as an escape route from the challenge of understanding other philosophies and adopting the one more suitable for the research, has been deemed inappropriate for this research. Unlike, the interpretivist approach seemed to clarify the meanings of intentional human behaviour within a specific context by arguing that knowledge is always subject to interpretation and value judgement (Habermas, 1972; Easterby-Smith et al., 2012; Myers, 2020)

4.2.3.5 Interpretivism

As a philosophy, interpretivism emerged from the perceived shortcomings of positivism with the goal of bringing humanistic worldviews and settings to new and fuller understandings and interpretations of social life. The interpretive research tradition arose from the tenets of hermeneutics, phenomenology, and symbolic interactionism, all of which hold that human experience is less predictable and generalizable than that of the scientific tradition because it is inherently influenced by social context, realities, and circumstances (Crotty, 1998; Anderson, 2013; Myers, 2020).

Interpretivists argued that because people give meaning to physical occurrences, they should not be studied in the same way as physical phenomena because of their social context. Therefore, rather than attempting to mimic scientific research, social science research needs to be distinct from it (Weber, 2004; Collis and Hussey, 2014; Bryan and Bell, 2015; Saunders et al., 2019). Rather than emphasising explanation, interpretivism is marked by a concern on understanding human cognition and behaviour in social and organisational contexts. In addition to focusing on narratives, stories, perceptions, and interpretations related to time and context, it entails developing new understandings and worldviews as a contribution, seeking understanding without subtracting variables from what can be measured, and generally using an inductive approach to achieve reflexivity (Crotty, 1998; Klein and Myers, 1999; Lees and Lings, 2008). According to interpretivists, shared meanings are a type of "intersubjectivity" rather than objectivity, and an object of research cannot be isolated from the researcher due to its intense subjectivity (Walsham, 2006; Creswell, 2014).

Furthermore, interpretivists believed that a person's gender, experiences, cultural views, and norms may all potentially affect how they see something, which could then directly affect a research object (Proctor, 1998; Bryan and Bell, 2015). Interpretivism aims to investigate the intricacy of social phenomena and grasp a notion within its context, as opposed to measuring social phenomena like positivism (Collis and Hussey, 2014). Rich data is sought after by interpretivism in order to produce fresh and improved interpretive understanding of a study problem and object (Klein and Myers, 1999; Saunders et al., 2019). Geertz (1973) argued that what interpretivists call data are really the researchers, *"own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to"* (p. 9) which is achieved through the process of communication and interaction with the research object/participants (Easterby-Smith et al., 2007; 2012). This research seeks to understand TM practices within HEIs in UK by the researcher's construction of academic talents and their managers' constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to in relations to TM and how this influences the intention of academics to leave or stay in their job.

According to interpretivism, individuals perceive the world in different ways and, as a result, interpret what they see or perceive it in different ways. In contrast to positivism, which views researchers as neutral parties who keep their distance from the research topic, interpretivism takes a more humane approach and develops a close relationship with the research subjects.

Because in-depth semi-structured interviews with academics who are talent managed and their line managers were used to gather research data, the researcher in this study can be considered closely associated with the research objects. When interpreting gathered data, interpretivism employs qualitative research techniques and an inductive reasoning process. This philosophy guides the use of techniques by researchers that enable them to extract detailed information from small samples and data, with an emphasis on narratives, stories, perceptions, and interpretations. These techniques include case studies, interviews, and observational methods, and they allow researchers to attach meanings to the data that are gathered from various perspectives (Robson, 2011; Myers, 2020).

4.2.4 Paradigms of Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods

The application of qualitative and quantitative approaches to research methodologies, as well as the use of mixed methods in more recent times, are the foundational principles of research (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010; Creswell, 2014; Myers, 2020). According to Bryan and Bell (2015), researchers find it difficult to categorise research methods into only two categories: qualitative and quantitative paradigms. While adopting a particular approach is still valuable, using many ways when conducting research has become more relevant (Niglas, 2010; Easterby-Smith et al., 2012; Saunders et al., 2019). Proctor (1998) and Malina, Hanne, and Selto (2011) argued that while this approach can minimise the limitations associated with a single approach, it might not be the best choice for all research projects. This is mainly because the mixed method approach has its own drawbacks related to politics, representation, legitimation, and integration (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2007; Collis and Hussey, 2014).

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), qualitative research emphasises the close interaction between the researcher and the subject of study, the socially constructed aspect of reality, and the situational restrictions that shape the inquiry. Merriam (2014) added that interpretivist inquiry, or qualitative research, takes a naturalistic tack in an effort to comprehend phenomena in context-specific situations. Conversely, positivism, often known as quantitative research, is more concerned with reality that is logical and deductive and tests hypothetical generalisations using experimental procedures and/or quantitative measures and frequencies (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Adams, Khan and Raeside, 2014). Quantitative research, as summed up by Creswell (2009), is a way to test theories by looking at the relationships between variables. The variables can then be measured, usually using instruments, so that numbered data can be evaluated. The introduction, literature and theory, methodology, results, and commentary make up the predetermined format of the final report. As opposed to qualitative researchers, practitioners of this type of investigation make assumptions about the ability to generalise and replicate findings, defend against bias, test ideas deductively, and adjust for alternative explanations (Creswell, 2009). That is corroborated by Fellows and Liu (2015), who stated that factual data collection, factual relationship analysis, and the evaluation of how research findings support or refute prior findings are the main goals of quantitative research. According to Saunders et al. (2019), positivism is inherently aligned with the quantitative approach, as it expedites and affordably covers a wide range of circumstances for study.

While qualitative research is described as a way to investigate and comprehend the meaning that individuals or groups attribute to a social occurrence or human situation by Creswell (2009) and Yin (2014). Quantitative researchers typically aim to determine the cause of an event, make predictions, and generalise their research findings. This means that they can be involved in any kind of study that yields results without the need for statistical techniques or other quantification methods. Emerging questions and techniques, data kinds gathered in participant settings, inductive data analysis creating broad themes from specifics, and the researcher's interpretations of the data's significance are all part of the qualitative research process. According to the aforementioned authors, the final report's format is flexible, and people who conduct this kind of study are in favour of an inductive style of inquiry that emphasises individual meaning (Creswell, 2009, p. 4). According to Saunders et al. (2019), qualitative research aims to clarify, comprehend, and draw conclusions by applying the findings to analogous contexts.

It is essential to note that, if a method is adequate and can help achieve the research aim, then using it to tackle a research problem is considered suitable (Merriam, 2014; Saunders et al., 2019). Using a single technique strategy is less time-consuming and more cost-effective than using a mix or multi-method approach (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). According to Yin (2003), Locke et al. (2007), Flick (2014), and other scholars, the choice of methodological approach should be based on the nature of the research problem, what has been investigated, the proposed research questions and objectives, the expected results, the research objects/participants, and the researcher's influence on the research process.

According to Creswell (2014), mixed methods research is a study strategy that incorporates both methodological approaches and philosophical presumptions. This approach comprises both qualitative and quantitative data that are combined in a single study or a series of studies, as well as philosophical presumptions that govern the path of data gathering and analysis. The main idea is that, when combined, quantitative and qualitative methods offer a deeper comprehension of study issues than either method does on its own. According to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2010), mixed methods research refers to the overarching inquiry logic that directs the choice of particular methods and is influenced by conceptual stances shared by practitioners of mixed methods (such as the rejection of "either-or" decisions at all stages of the research process). Coghlan and Brannick (2014) emphasised that the researcher's actions are predicated on the underlying assumptions of each paradigm, and that each paradigm indicates a fundamental variation in their methodology. It was quickly added by Coleman and Briggs (2004, p. 14) that researchers should critically evaluate which approach best fits their study purpose rather than relying solely on a single paradigm.

Table 4.1. Highlights of Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Procedures – Comparative Chart

Procedures			
Characteristics	**Qualitative method**	**Quantitative method**	**Mixed method**
Focus on the philosophical foundations of research.	Qualitative phenomenology (nature, essence), constructionism, and symbolic interactionism.	Quantity: Realism, positivism, and logical empiricism.	Qualitative and Quantity – pragmatism, critical realism.
Data collection instructions	Researcher as primary instrument. This is because the researcher plays a key role in retrieving the opinions and feelings of the research participants through techniques such as: interviews, observations, bibliographical and documentary surveys.	Inanimate instruments: scales, tests, surveys, questionnaires, computers.	Concurrently using a single, quantitative and qualitative tool. sequential; the use of multiple instruments at different times.
Arrangement of the instrument.	A timetable of topics and subtopics for the interview, or a list of open-ended questions. Schedule of observations. Concept sets and a timeline for compilation.	Standardised questionnaire with predetermined questions and multiple-choice responses; optionally includes some open-ended questions.	A collection of concepts, a compilation schedule, an integrated interview plan, and observation schedules are all included in the fixed standard questionnaire.

Type of data record for procedure.	Audio-visual materials, narrative text, and a synopsis of bibliographical and documentary research.	Multiple-choice, dichotomous, scales, and exact transcriptions of responses to closed ended questions. May also have some open-ended questions (note this is optional).	Integration of methods; substitute predetermined responses; narrative writing; audio recordings; filming; and summaries of documents.
Mode of data processing for the different types of procedure.	Files including bibliographical and documentary summaries; data files (interviews, documents, etc.); data categorised; etc.	Bibliographical files, review notes for documents, statistical databases, etc.	Databases with statistics, testimonials, interviews, and documents; data arranged according to categories; files with bibliographical and documentary summaries, etc.
Data interpretation and analysis, including the incorporation of literature, theoretical references, and documentary reviews.	An explanation of the text's narrative structure. Interpretation and contextualisation of the meaning contained in sounds and visuals. Examination of the testimonials and documents for content.	The actions and/or behaviour of variables, indices, and indicators. inferential statistics that are descriptive. single-, double-, or multivariate analysis. detailed tables, charts, and graphs pertaining to statistics. statistical analyses.	Combining qualitative and quantitative data for analysis. Results triangulated with quotes from reports, narratives, and testimonials are displayed as tables, charts, and graphs. Text and audio-visual document triangulation.

(Sources: Steren, 2010; and Anderson, 2013; and Saunders et al., 2019).

4.2.5 Justification for adopting Qualitative Research Method

Choosing an appropriate research approach and appropriate methodologies at the commencement of the study is a difficult commitment. To choose the best study design, the researcher must carefully review all relevant literature on the topic. Qualitative approaches are a natural fit for interpretivists because they enable social scientists to produce detailed and comprehensive accounts of how people interpret their lived experiences (Anderson, 2013; Fox, 2014; Creswell, 2014). When establishing novel concepts and adding to preexisting theories and/or knowledge, researchers must have a natural interpretation of the world (Remenyi et al., 1998; Lee and Lings, 2008; Bryman and Bell, 2015). The inductive tradition, which builds general patterns from what has been observed, is the source of explanations for social phenomena (Stake, 1995; Silverman, 2004). Thus, the qualitative approach tends to focus on inquiry, finding, narrative, storytelling, and inductive reasoning (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2014; Saunders et al., 2019). It is a potent source of conceptual, empirical, and managerial contributions to knowledge that is derived from fieldwork (such as documentations, interviews, and observations) in the real world, research participants' lived experiences, and naturally occurring states (Tucker et al., 1995; Merriam, 2014). This study's design generally fits this description. To provide a clear picture of the experience of academics on talent and TM

practices in UK HEIs in the context of NPM. A comprehensive review of the literature on TM and NPM, from both macro and micro perspectives, was conducted before proceeding into the empirical procedure.
The researcher chose to employ qualitative methods because they offered a rich, comprehensive, and dynamic information source that might aid in understanding how UK HEI academics view and experience the notions of talent and TM in relation to NPM. This implies that the researcher was given suitable guidance to guarantee the validity and reliability of the research findings as well as a deeper comprehension of how academics in the HEIs perceive talent and TM practices in the context of NPM.

The researcher was able to comprehend academics' perspectives on the phenomena through the use of qualitative methodologies, drawing from the managers' and academics' own firsthand experiences of being talent managed. The situation is made more relevant overall because qualitative procedures are inherently rich with details and insights into participants' lived experiences of the world, which may be epistemologically consistent with the researcher's perspective (Tucker et al., 1995; Merriam, 2014). Therefore, qualitative research is the most appropriate strategy to addressing the research aim and objectives of this study, according to a survey of numerous methodological literatures (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Elo et al., 2014; Flick, 2014; Saunders et al., 2019). The overarching aim of this research is to comprehend how academics in UK HEIs view talent and TM practices in the context of NPM. To meet this aim, the following objectives were formulated from critical literature analysis on TM and NPM:

- To explore how talent is conceptualised by academics in the case study institutions.
- To examine how TM is conceptualised by academics in the case study institutions.
- To establish how case study institutions academics' experience TM practices in the context of NPM.
- To explore ways in which academics in case study institutions attempt to achieve their institution's expectations in the context of NPM.

There are several reasons to use a qualitative approach, according to Tarique and Schuler (2010), Tulving (2014), and Parahoo (2014). These include gaining new insights into well-known topics and improving understanding of phenomena that are not well understood, as well as gaining a more detailed perspective and story that may be challenging to communicate through quantitative methods. Therefore, qualitative methods are suitable when the researcher is interested in finding out the meaning that participants associate with the problem or when the researcher has concluded that quantitative methods are insufficient to adequately characterise or interpret a problem; however, these methods do not convey the meaning that researchers or authors of literature convey (Yin, 2014; Cresswell, 2014). The capacity of qualitative data to employ lenses to examine their studies and more thoroughly characterise a phenomenon was underlined by Denzin and Lincoln (2005) and Merriam (2014) as a crucial factor to take into account from both the reader's and the researcher's point of view.

The interrelationship between the researcher and the study participants is considered significant from an epistemological perspective. However, because interpretation of the data does not occur until all the data has been processed, quantitative research does not give the researcher the luxury of such interrelationships and space to think on the data during the investigation. As a result, the information gathered frequently represents a moment in time in the given context (Stake, 1995; Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, 2014). Qualitative research, on the other hand, allows substantial data to emerge or continue to develop as the study progresses. This is especially true during the data collection process (such as during observations and interviews), which enables the researcher to look for patterns of unexpected perceptions and generally sketch the larger pictures that emerge as well as realising their own consciousness (Stake, 1995; Creswell, 2014). This was made clear throughout the research as it moved forward, with significant evidence continuing to emerge and change. It is noteworthy that the utilisation of visual aids to illustrate various aspects of the procedure and the revelation of data can spark novel and intriguing avenues of investigation that could be overlooked in a quantitative study can effectively extract a comprehensive and fresh interpretation from research participants (Easterby-smith et al., 2001; Tarique and Schuler, 2010; Creswell, 2014). Which is essential to this research.

In addition, the researcher adopted qualitative approach because of weaknesses associated with TM empirical and conceptual foundation as suggested by the following scholars: Reilly (2008); McDonell et al. (2010); and Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2015) and the strength of qualitative approach in addressing the issues (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2009; 2014). Therefore, adopting an approach that is suitable for exploration of TM as a human phenomenon, given its infancy state is more appropriate as this can facilitate empirical, conceptual and managerial contributions in the subject area (Tarique and Schuler, 2010; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015).

4.3 Research Approach

Blaike (2000) proposed that a research approach which is sometimes described as deductive, inductive or abductive provides a beginning point and a series of processes by which "what" and "why" questions can be answered. According to Saunders et al. (2019), the level to which research focuses on developing or testing theories presents a crucial question about the deductive, inductive, and abductive methodologies that can be used to design your research study. The aforementioned approaches differ in terms of their ontological presumptions, beginning points, stages or logic, application of concepts and theory, explanation and understanding styles, and the status of their results, as Kapitan (1992) and Blaike (2000) emphasised. This research section looks at each approach in detail.

4.3.1 Deductive Approach

The deductive method looks for reasonable inferences from the premises and is used to test current theories. According to Dubois and Gadde (2002), it makes use of hypotheses derived from the observation of current theory, which are then put to the test in practical settings. Since the deductive method typically employs arguments based on laws, established principles, rules, and existing theories, the intended conclusion of a deductive research project may either confirm or refute current theory (Saunders et al., 2019). Deductive methodology differs from inductive methodology in that it begins with the identification of pertinent theories, guidelines, models, and frameworks and then gathers data to validate these pre-existing concepts, theories, guidelines, models, and frameworks. Inductive methodology draws general conclusions from individual instances or empirical observations by moving from specific to general (Creswell, 2014; Myers 2020). The deductive technique is most likely supported by the positivist research philosophy, according to Saunders et al. (2019), as it is a scientific method that promotes structure, quantification, generalisability, and testable hypotheses.

The interpretivist approach, however, serves as the foundation for this research because there are not many empirical studies on TM practices, especially in the context of HEIs in the era of NPM (Tansley et al., 2013; Al Ariss et al., 2014; Khilji et al., 2015; Paisey and Paisey, 2018; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen, and Scullion, 2020; Björkman, Smale, and Kallio, 2022). In contrast to the deductive approach, which uses data collection to evaluate propositions or hypotheses related to an existing theory, the inductive approach gives the researcher the opportunity to explore the phenomenon, identify themes and patterns, and create a conceptual framework through the lived experiences of the academics being talent managed and their managers.

In addition, this research is not deductive because it has an intention to contribute to the conceptual and theoretical background as well as gain an empirical insight into talent and TM in the context of NPM and not testing existing theories (Dubois and Gadde, 2002; Saunders et al., 2019). As the research problem is new in nature, which warrants an inductive approach in order to develop conceptual and empirical frameworks. Furthermore, there are currently limited research on conceptual and empirical insights on the conceptualisation of talent and TM practices in public sector organisations (Boselie and Thunnissen, 2017; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020), which need confirmation in the sector (HE) under study. Thus, the inductive approach will enable the researcher to establish how academic conceptualise talent, TM and TM practices via their individual live in experiences in the context of NPM (Locke, 2007; Creswell, 2014).

4.3.2 Inductive Approach

When making empirical observations on phenomenon assumptions of interest and developing concepts based on them, an inductive research approach, as opposed to a deductive approach, moves from the particular to the general (Locke, 2007; Nola and Sankey, 2007). According to Saunders et al. (2019), an inductive technique is used in research where data collection is the first step in exploring a phenomenon, and theory is developed or built in the form of a conceptual framework. It entails going from the specific to the general in order to derive a general conclusion from specific cases or actual findings. Thus, theories are developed using evidence gathered from inductive research projects. An inductive researcher challenges the philosophical premise that knowledge is a creation of human existence rather than something that arises naturally. The setting in which such events occur is perhaps of special interest to research employing an inductive reasoning method. In contrast to the deductive approach, a small sample of participants may therefore be better studied than a huge number. Therefore, this method is primarily grounded in interpretivist philosophy and involves examining a small sample of participants in a specific setting. It is also likely to address the context in which these events occur (Dubois and Gadde, 2002; Harriman, 2010; Saunders et al., 2019).

Inductive approaches in most research cases use qualitative data collection techniques. Diverse data gathering techniques may be used to establish various points of view on phenomena, and case studies and other strategies are a key component of qualitative approaches (Bryman and Bell, 2015). According to Saunders et al. (2019), an inductive technique is utilised to examine a phenomenon, find themes and patterns, and develop a conceptual framework, whereas deductive research uses data collecting to assess assertions or hypotheses related to already established theories.

Inductive researchers employ a variety of techniques in addition to the case study, including grounded theory, ethnography, action research, and narrative inquiry. These approaches might be integrated in a particular research endeavour to gather detailed and comprehensive data from a small sample in order to develop theory and/or contribute to conceptual and empirical insight/framework about a phenomenon. Konrad (2008) contended that research questions that are exclusively formulated by deduction from a comprehensive understanding of the existing literature are likely to yield only minor advancements in the subject of study. Johnson (2015) and Bryman and Bell (2015) assumed that the majority of studies that use an inductive technique will not necessarily provide theory but will instead offer precise and thorough comprehension of research themes. Thus, this supposition suggests that not every inductive investigation leads to the development of theory.

However, Locke (2007), Bernard (2011), and Saunders et al. (2019) argued that an inductive approach's purpose is to generate meanings from the data set collected in order to identify patterns and relationships based on learning from experience, patterns, and regularities in experience are then observed in order to generate conceptual and empirical insights. Harriamn, (2010) and Eisenhardt, Graebner and Sonenshein, (2016) supported that, inductive approach to research requires development of new theories and concepts as well as advance knowledge as qualitative data and analysis has the advantage of providing comprehensive description about a phenomenon that makes new theoretical or conceptual explanation possible. According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2016), an inductive approach frequently uses qualitative research techniques like case studies and ethnography, which enable management researchers to find organisational practices throughout time and provide answers to how-and-why issues. Thus, the research objectives align with the inductive approach as the questions requires answers to “how” academics in the case study institutions conceptualise, view and experience talent and TM in the context of NPM.

With inductive research, the researcher begins by coming up with a research topic, then develop empirical generalisations and identify preliminary connections as he or she progresses through the research with no hypotheses at the initial stages and the researcher not knowing the type and nature of the project findings until the research is completed (Harriman, 2010; Woiceshyn and Daellenbach, 2018; Saunders et al., 2019). As a result of this inductive approach is often referred to as a bottom-up approach to knowing, in which the researcher uses observations to build an abstraction or to describe a picture of the phenomenon that is being studied (Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle, 2010).

The inductive approach is considered appropriate for this research because the concept of talent and TM mean different thing to different people in different organisations (Thunnissen and Buttiens, 2017; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020; Farndale and Vaiman, 2022). There is still ambiguity in relations to the definition, phenomenon, concept, and overall objectives of the phenomenon (Lewis and Heckerman, 2006; Collings and Mellahi, 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo, 2015; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019; Dries, 2022). Moreover, Saunders et al. (2019) opined that, researchers using an inductive approach to reasoning is likely to be particularly concerned with the context (in this case UK Higher Education) of where such events take place. In addition, inductive approaches are more likely to work with qualitative data and uses a variety of methods to collect such data (in this case interviews and documentations) in order to establish different views about the phenomenon. Furthermore, they adapt a small sample of subjects (research participants) to have a feel of what is going on, in order to better understand the nature of the problem by interviewing employees and their line managers about their perception of the phenomenon and their experience of working at the case study (Locke, 2007; Yin, 2014; Saunders et al., 2019).

4.3.3 Abductive approach

The common perception of the abductive technique is that it combined the best elements of the deductive and inductive procedures in order to overcome the shortcomings of each (Kapitan, 1992). The abductive approach entails gathering information to investigate a phenomenon, recognising themes, and elucidating patterns in order to develop a new theory or alter an old one. This theory is then tested through the collection of more data (Saunders et al., 2019). The conceptual framework that the abductive approach develops from pre-existing inductive and deductive theories is one of its distinguishing features. This framework is typically adjusted in response to unanticipated discoveries found in the study findings (Habermas, 1978).

Both inductive and deductive approaches are critiqued because theorists argued that no amount of empirical data will necessarily enable theory building in an inductive approach and a deductive approach lack of clarity in terms of how to select theory to be tested through formulating hypotheses. This is where the abductive said to address the setbacks of both approaches with the adoption of a pragmatism, postmodernism and critical realism philosophies (Blaike, 2000; Van Maanen et al., 2007; Saunders et al., 2019). This is due to the fact that the abductive approach begins with the observation of theories and proceeds to examine the theories in more detail. Data are gathered to create a conceptual framework, which is subsequently tested using new data that may result in the development or modification of theories (Saunders et al., 2019). The abductive technique is more frequently linked to the later, theory modification (Kapitan, 1992; Dubois and Gadde, 2002). The abductive technique is centred on finding new variables and linkages within research phenomena with the goal of changing current theories, in contrast to the deductive approach, which tests or confirms preexisting variables. It is noteworthy that the abductive technique is occasionally referred to as "retroduction," particularly in the literature of critical realists (Saunders et al., 2019).

As the aforementioned analysis indicates that a research project can concurrently employ deductive and inductive methodologies. According to Saunders et al. (2019), this method is known to have many benefits over using just one. According to Dubois and Gadde (2014), the research technique literature does not often embrace this perception, even though it may be accurate. Abductive reasoning is not always the optimal method, according to Hurmerinta-Peltomäki and Nummela (2006). They added that the optimal strategy is the one that will most effectively address the research question and complement the chosen research design. Thus, research emphasis and familiarity with various research traditions should guide the selection of a research approach (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012; Saunders et al., 2019).

Since the goal of the research is to examine people's perceptions and experiences of talent and TM, the abductive approach is deemed inappropriate for this study because the researcher believes the phenomenon under investigation may not be deemed legitimately scientific enough to warrant a deductive or abductive approach, which either requires quantitative or mix methods. Furthermore, the inductive approach already chosen is best suited for this research because the practice in issue is solely organisational, and data and knowledge about it are derived from organisational documentation, employee interviews, and observations. As application of an objective natural scientific method that uses statistical valid techniques may not yield the meaning understanding of concept and practices of TM as an in-depth investigation of the phenomenon is needed.

4.3.4 Key differences among the different Research Approaches

The differences between the deductive, inductive and abductive approaches as highlighted by Kapitan, (1992); Blaike (2000); and Saunders et al. (2019) and reproduced in Table 4.2

Table 4. 2: Key differences among the different Research Approaches

	Deductive	**Inductive**	**Abductive**
Aim	To verify the persistence and test theories in order to weed out erroneous ones.	To develop broad generalisations that can be applied to explain patterns.	To explain and comprehend social life through the perspectives and motivations of social actors.
Logic	When the premises of a logical argument are true, the conclusion must also be true.	An inductive inference draws untested conclusions from known premises.	Known premises are utilised in an abductive inference to produce testable conclusions.
Generalisability	Making generalisations from the broad to the specific, particular and/or detailed.	Making generalisations from particular and or specific to general	Making generalisations based on how the particular and the general interact
Use of data	The process of gathering data is employed to assess claims or theories pertaining to an established hypothesis.	To investigate a phenomenon, find themes and patterns, and develop a conceptual framework, data collecting is utilised.	The purpose of data collecting is to investigate a phenomenon, find themes and patterns, place these in a conceptual framework, test this with more data collection, and so on.
Theory	Verification or falsification of theories.	Theory development, building and formation.	Creating new theories or modifying old ones by

			adding them where suitable is known as theory generation or modification.
Objective	Test the hypotheses by matching them with data	Use these laws as patterns to explain further observations.	Develop a theory and test it iteratively

4.4 Research Design

This section explains the research framework used in the study and provides support for the decision to implement the research plan. The structure, methods, and processes of study design serve as a roadmap for decisions ranging from generalisations to specific techniques for gathering, analysing, and interpreting data (Bickman et al., 2004; Churchill and Iacobucci, 2005; Creswell, 2014). Yin (2014) put forward that it is the strategy for addressing the research question and achieving the study's goals and objectives. Saunders et al. (2019) stressed that choosing a research design is influenced by a number of variables, including the audiences for the study, the nature of the research aim and question(s), and the experiences of the researchers.

In this research, the researcher is keen on investigating how academics in the HEIs view talent and TM practices in the context of NPM. The researcher is also keen on establishing how case study institutions academics' view and experience TM practices in the context of NPM and ways in which academics in case study institutions attempt to achieve their institution's expectations in the context of NPM. Thereby contributing to the conceptual base of TM and provide insights aimed at informing good practice and policymaking for HRM, particularly TM in HEIs. Investigating talent and TM in the context of NPM from the viewpoint and live in experience of the academics themselves is crucial because the researcher is convinced that the opinion of academics in relations to these phenomenon within the context of NPM, across HE sectors, within UK has not been sufficient explored (Gelens et al., 2013; Collings and Mellahi, 2013; van den Brink et al., 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo, 2015; Paisey and Paisey, 2018; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020; Thunnissen, van Arensbergen and van den Brink, 2021; Björkman, Smale and Kallio, 2022).

The qualitative approach, which is indicated in Table 4.1, is used by the researcher. This approach is thought to be the most appropriate for this study and will ensure that the goal of the research is met (Bickman et al., 2004; Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2014; Saunders et al., 2019).

According to Yin (2014), completing this kind of in-depth research within the allotted time frame necessitates a research strategy that is informed by an acceptable research design. Yin (1994) further stated that the elements of a case study researcher's design are research questions, units of analysis, data collecting, and standards for evaluating results. Thus, as noted by Yin (1994, 2009, 2014) and Eisenhardt (1989, 2007), Table 4.3 illustrates the steps that are espouse in this research prior to, during, and following the data collection process.

Table 4.3: Revised Research Design

First phase - Research formulation	**Stage One – Research inquires**	- A critical literature review – To understand the research problem. - Identification of research objectives, questions and formulation of research aims. - Review research questions and identify research gap. - Case selection and access. - Synthesis of the literature review and cases' documentations.	In this stage, the researcher undertook a critical literature review (research gaps were identifies), formulated the research aim and objectives as well as identified the research question. Case study institutions were identified. Secondary data were collected via the internet using University of Salford Solar Library search, general google search and documentation request from case study institutions.
	Stage 2: Research design and plan	- Select methods for gathering data - Carry out pilot research - Apply adjustments as needed - Carry out the final research	The researcher next stage including the identifying, and choosing an appropriate research strategy, approach and data collection technique. Pilot research was carried out, and pertinent modifications were made to the semi-structured interviewing processes. At this point, a request for ethical permission was submitted to the Salford University Ethics Committee, and which was granted.
	Stage 3: Field work	- Collate data. - Development of thematic findings - Analyse and interpret findings.	This stage was conducted with academic staff and their line managers within case study institutions using semi-structured interviews, documentation and observations with the consideration of triangulation.
Second phase – Data Collection; Analysis	**Stage 4: Implementati on**	- Utilisation and evaluation of the findings. - Development of the conceptualised framework.	Stage 4 focused on the use, analysis and evaluation of the results as well as further review of the conceptualised framework and development of concepts.

Application	**Stage 5 – Application**	- Development of conclusion and implications.	The final stage focused on the conclusion drawn from the research, presentation of conceptual, empirical and managerial contribution, limitation of the research and the implication for future research.

Sources: Yin (1994; 2009; 2014); Eisenhardt (1989; 2007)

4.5 Data Collection Methods and Justification

This section examines and defends the researcher's data collection and analysis techniques, which were based on Yin (1994, 2009, 2014) and Eisenhardt's (1989, 2007) multiple case study research design. to conduct a critical investigation of how academics view case study institutions in terms of talent and TM practices within the framework of NPM. Both primary and secondary data sources were employed by the researcher. One-on-one semi-structured interviews at case study institutions (by in-person and video conference sessions) and a review of the documentation pertaining to secondary data from the case study institutions were the primary data sources.

4.5.1 Case Study Research Strategy

A case study strategy entails a careful examination of a situation in one or more chosen relevant cases. Yin (2009) supports the approach that it is an empirical investigation that looks closely at a current occurrence in its actual setting, particularly when it is difficult to draw clear distinctions between the phenomenon and the context. A case study might comprise one or more instances, different levels of analysis, and a focus on understanding the dynamics that exist within specific settings. This was reinforced by Eisenhardt (1989). The problem under investigation possesses the ability to provide a comprehensive grasp of a situation, encompassing an understanding of a phenomenon, practice, process, or individual or individuals (Cresswell, 2002). Stake (1995) added that case studies are an investigative approach whereby a researcher delves deeply into a programme, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals (cited in Cresswell, 2009). These cases are limited by time and activity, and the researchers gathered comprehensive data over an extended period of time using a variety of data collection procedures. Merriam (2009) concluded that it is a thorough explanation and examination of a bounded system. The interpretive paradigm, which aims to see circumstances through the eyes of research participants, is where case studies fit in as a research method. It is important to note that there is a growing confidence in case study as a rigorous and credible research method, and that case study research can be engaging, rewarding, and stimulating while at the same time being emotionally and intellectually challenging (Stake, 1995; Hartley, 2004).

The case study approach is deemed appropriate for this research for two primary reasons. First, the approach's capacity to facilitate a comprehensive and multifaceted examination of complex phenomena within the context and experience of real life, as well as its unique value in investigating, analysing, and describing phenomena in the context of daily life settings (Yin, 2009). In this case to explore how talent is conceptualised by academics in the case study institutions, to examine how TM is conceptualised by academics in the case study institutions, to establish how case study institutions academics' experience TM practices in the context of NPM, and to explore ways in which academics in case study institutions attempt to achieve their institution's expectations in the context of NPM. This is because the phenomenon of talent and TM has different interpretations among organisations in the world of work and resides in the minds as well as contrasting experiences of management and employees (Lewis and Heckerman, 2006; Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020; Farndale and Vaiman, 2022).

Secondly, when the study issues concerning what and how are scrutinised based on the premise that the researcher has minimal or no influence over a modern collection of phenomena and/or events (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2009). In this research, case study was adapted to investigate talent and TM in UK HEIs in the context of NPM because it allows the researcher to explore the phenomenon in the real lived experience and setting of the research participants. The approach has the benefit of unfolding the hiding reality about the implementation of a strategy or policy (in this case TM) and the effect it is having on the institution including its employees. Thus, case study approach is particularly useful to help develop, understand or enhance concepts, in this case to contribute to the empirical and conceptual background/framework of talent and TM and provide recommendations for improving TM practices for both individuals and institutions in HE sectors.

The decisions to adopt the case study research design were made after a thorough analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of both single- and multiple-case studies. Considering what may be learned from a case or instances, as opposed to only evaluating the degree of replication and generalisation, is a typical goal of case study methodologies (Stake, 1995). Eisenhardt (1991) stressed that the question is not whether two situations are preferable to one or four or better than three. Instead, the right number of instances depends on the current state of knowledge as well as the amount of new information that will likely be discovered through incremental cases. Given constraints of time, access, the Covid-19 pandemic, and financial support a qualitative multiple case study (of two cases), approach is appropriate design under four major grounds (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 1994; Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007).

4.5.2 Justification for Multiple Case Study Approach

First, the strength of multiple case study approach is that it clarifies if an emergent finding is idiosyncratic or distinctive to a particular case/unit or is consistent with several cases/units (Eisenhardt and Graeber, 2007; Yin, 2009; 2014). This is important because TM has a weak conceptual basis due to its infancy (McDonnell, 2009; Tarique and Schuler, 2010; Thunnissen et al., 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo, 2015) and the adapted approaches will enable the researcher to facilitate recommendations through interviews and documentations.

Second, there are still significant gaps in the research on TM within certain contexts and sectors of which the public sector which HEIs is classified under happens to be among such context (Paisey and Paisey, 2018; Thunnissen, van Arensbergen and van den Brink, 2021; Björkman, Smale and Kallio, 2022; Kravariti et al., 2023). Scholars such as Collings and Mellahi (2013), Dries (2013), Tansley et al. (2013), Van den Brink (2013), Thunnissen et al. (2013), and Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2015) have proposed that this is due to an excessive emphasis on theory development at the expense of actual application. With a particular focus on TM in the context of NPM, these gaps enable the utilisation of multiple case studies not only a valid approach but also a chance to delve further into the world of HEIs from a human perspective, with practical consequences for management and staff.

Third, the case study methodology is a valuable research strategy that can benefit organisational studies by applying a variety of data gathering techniques, as suggested by Denzin and Lincoln (2003) and Fitzgerald and Dopson (2009). For instance, interviewing, observing and document analysis techniques which enables the researchers to get closer to research participants in order to understand their world in the context of NPM. It enables the researcher to study the research question and objectives in depth, interact with contextual factors and subjects through the breath of methods of data collection, access small number of cases, stay closer to the research participants, in a situation where the subjective perceptive of the real world about the phenomenon is required in a particular context (Stake, 1995; 2006; Neuman, 2011; Yin, 2009; 2014). All these enable the researcher to collect valuable and rich data that reveals the matching patterns between data collected from cases and enable contribution to conceptual and empirical background of the phenomenon under investigation, as well as promotes the dependability, credibility, trustworthiness, and transferability as well as the validity of the research through the lived experiences of the research participants (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Koch, 1994; Yin, 1994; 2009; 2014; Eisenhart and Graebner, 2007). Fourth, the perceptions associated with the phenomenon to be explore are intensely captured (Yin, 2009, p. 18). Findings from relevant literature indicates that the in-depth issue of talent and TM practices within certain context and organisation is under-researched due to its infancy (Lewis and Hackman, 2006; Tarique and Schuler, 2010; Nijs et al., 2014; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020; Farndale and Vaiman, 2022; Kravariti et al., 2023) and in the case public sector organisations. A key feature of case study research is the use of multiple data sources, which also enhances the credibility of data collected and findings (Hancock and Algozzine, 2006). Though multiple case approach is criticised for its lack of rigor (Eisenhardt, 1989). Flybjerg, (2006, p. 237) argued that the traditional criticism of being too narrative can in reality be taken as a strength that the research might unearth a particular but essential problematic issue. Trellis (1997) and Yin (1994) supported that, employing a multiple sources data from different cases, and maintaining a chain of evidence actually addresses the weakness and criticism of validity, reliability and lack of rigour of multiple case study approach.

The insights multiple cases give of the process-oriented and the lived experiences study is therefore important (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 1994; Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). The lack of clarity between the boundaries of the phenomenon (the concept of talent and TM) and the setting (HEIs) necessitates the need for clarifying the influence of the phenomenon in the context of NPM. Therefore, with case studies, the researcher could develop a comprehensive subjective description of the particular instances of a phenomenon that are typically based on a variety of data sources from institutional documents (archival records/historical account, internal organisation policies and procedures, other internal and external literatures relating to the cases. etc.), observations and interviews (Eisenhardt 1989; Stake, 1995; 2006; Neuman, 2011; Yin, 2009; 2014; Easterby-Smith et al., 2015).

Researchers gather comprehensive information utilising a range of data gathering techniques over an extended period of time for case studies, which are typically constrained by time and activity (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2013). Cohen et al, (2001) supported that a case study can be used to describe past, present, and future-focused actions. While Anderson (2013) acknowledged that this approach is common among HR researchers who are employed and working on a project within a specified timeline. It also aims to explore the interplay of various events and circumstances that contribute to the investigation's emphasis.

In addition, multiple case approach is distinctive in context and breath when compared to a single case because it increases data collection and analysis and the rigor of the research, which enables successful theory development, generation, and reliability (Eisenhardt, 1989; and Yin, 1994, 2013; Stake; 2006; Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2014). This is because it is more likely to create research that is more robust and enable the researcher to draw comparison among the cases by matching pattern between data collected from cases (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 1994; Stake, 2006). Therefore, in this study convincing and realisable findings were attained through application of triangulation to back the reliability of the research, including the use of semi-structure interviews, documentation and observation.

Rigorous procedures were followed in the process of data collection which included an in-depth review of the case study institutions relevant documents, establishing good rapport with the research respondents to build trust as well as to ensure natural conversation, recording interviews in double gargets, ensuring respondents responses are properly probed which led to the interview lasting between 50 minutes to 2 hours, and observation of the respondents behaviours during interviews which were jotted in the researcher’s field notes during the semi-structure interviews with the academics. All these ensured that data collected were consistent and reliable. Despite the above justifications of the strengths of case study approach, it is important to note that the research is aware of the limitations of the approach which are discussed in the next section.

4.5.3 Limitations of Case Study Approach

A major criticism of case study is generalisation. Robinson and Norris (2001), put forward that generalisation is the justification for transferability, which entails a move from the context of investigation to the context of application. Since the two contexts are never the same, this move is often made on the basis of judgement and occasionally conviction. It has been said that results from sample units are better characterised as particularisation and that case studies do not offer a strong basis for generalisation (Stake, 1995). When comparing case studies to other qualitative methodologies, the topic of generalisation is raised because they focus on a specific item. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) reinforce the idea that the pursuit of particularity and the pursuit of generalisation are mutually exclusive. Qualitative researchers, however, often hold that findings have greater relevance and are seen to be generalizable to theory, if not to the world, if several cases show that they support the same theory (Saunders et al., 2007; Yin, 2014; Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). This was one of the justifications for using several case studies as opposed to one in order to facilitate theory generalisation.

The subjectivity of the case study approach is yet another significant drawback. It can be argued that researchers have values and that all researchers have biases (Denzin and Lincoln (2003). Flyvbjerg (2006) opined that the case study approach retains a bias towards verification, which is the propensity for the researcher's preconceptions to be confirmed. However, the research was able to manage this through cross checking of consistencies within and among cases as multiple case approach is distinctive in context and breath when compare to a single case because it increases data collection and analysis and the rigor of the research, which enables successful theory development, generation, and reliability (Eisenhardt, 1989; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Yin, 1994; 2013; Stake; 2006). This is because it is more likely to create research that is more robust and enable the researcher to draw comparison among the cases by matching pattern between data collected from cases (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 1994; Stake, 2006).

4.5.4 Justification for Selected Case Study Institutions

Yin (1994) particularly advised that the selection of cases do not need to be chaotic but the reason for the selection needs to be constructive and justified to proof the quality of the research findings. Kuzel (1999) and Flick, (2014) put forward, that issues relating to appropriateness and adequacy could be used to justify the reasons for selecting specific cases for research. They added that, appropriateness applies to suitability of the cases to the research aim, problem, objectives, and the phenomenon of investigation. While the adequacy is concerned with how many cases is appropriate for the research. Since the focus of the research is to understand the view and experience of HEIs academics in relations to talent and TM practices in the context of NPM as well as provide insights aimed at informing practice and policymaking for TM in UK HEIs institutions. Therefore, the selection criteria was influenced by institutions within HE sector - both case studies are within this sector and that are distinct in their type – while the case study A belong to the Russell Group which are more research intensive/driven university, case study B belong to the University Alliance Group which are more teaching focused as i.e., prioritising innovative teaching and student experience more (Flick, 2014; University Alliance, no date; Russell Group, no date). It is important to add that issues of accessibility of case study institutions, time and financial constraints were considered in the selection of cases (Seawright and Gerring, 2008). As a result, institutions located within Northwest region, United Kingdom were considered and two units (faculties/schools) within each case, making four units in total.

To meet the criteria for appropriateness, the researcher applied purposive sampling approaches by considering the significance of the cases, the differences and similarities among the cases, and predetermined criteria for case selection (Patton, 1990; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Kuzel, 1999). The two-case study was chosen based on its exceptional intensity and vital importance in the HE sector (Patton, 1990). Cases rich in information (intensity); cases that allow for logical generalisation (better expressed as transferability) to other cases because, if the evidence from one case is true, it is evident from their membership in the Russell and University Alliance Groups, which they share the same values with; thus, evidence collected from the cases is likely to be true to all other cases in the groups they belong to (critical); and cases that demonstrate unusual manifestations of the phenomenon, such as exceptional success in terms of world-class and notable failures in terms of issues with staff retention (extreme) (Patton, 1990).

As per differences and similarities among the cases, this is also driven by homogeneous and stratified purposeful strategies. Homogeneous case strategies refer to the fact that variation between cases is minimised, analysis is simplified, and study is focused (Patton, 1990; 2002). The drive is to achieve a sample whose components, for instance, people, respondents, cases, and so on, share similar features or characteristics, such as people or research respondents who share similar occupations or backgrounds, in this case academics within HEIs. Stratified purposeful refers to cases that illustrate characteristics of a particular subgroup to facilitate comparison and not for generalisation or representation (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002).

The aim of employing this sampling technique is to gain better insight into the phenomenon under investigation by viewing it from different perspectives. It enabled the researcher to capture a diverse, broader view or range of perspectives about the phenomenon under investigation, ranging from different experiences, attributes, and situations. Then, "maximum variation cases, despite having diverse variations, exhibit important common patterns that cut across variations" (Guba and Lincoln, 1989; Mahoney and Goertz, 2004). In terms of predetermined criteria for case selection, this can be in two folds: fieldwork-based or theory-based. The researcher employed the fieldwork-determined cases using snowball sampling strategy. Snowball sampling strategy refers to a situation where the researcher identifies cases that are information rich for the phenomenon under investigation from informants within the case who know cases or people that are information rich (Patton, 2002; Berg, 2009; Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2014).

Therefore, the sampling technique used for this qualitative research is purposeful and snowball sampling techniques (for the cases and respondents), unlike quantitative research, which uses random sampling (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2014). With purposeful sampling, the researcher selects respondents and cases that can best help them to understand their phenomenon or answer the research questions, and it is essential that the research ensure that the respondents and case(s) are information rich (Saunders et al., 2007; Berg, 2009; Neuman, 2011; 2014; Anderson, 2013; Creswell, 2014).

The individuals (academics) and case study institutions have been selected to enable the researcher to broadly explore the research questions and enhance the concept of talent and TM within the context of higher education. Berg (2009) opined that snowball sampling, "involves first identifying several people with relevant characteristics and interviewing them …then ask for names (referrals) of other people who possess the same attributes they do…" (p. 51). With concepts like talent and TM, where people have varied views, it was felt that it would be interesting to ask individuals to refer the researcher to colleagues who they feel are talented. The initial challenge was to identify the first sets of respondents through theoretical sampling, then the first group of individuals identified further respondents, who then identified further individuals, and so on (Berg and Lune, 2012; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019).

4.6 Comparative Research

Comparative research is an approach that enables researchers to gain a deeper understanding through the comparison of significant actions, situations, events, organisational processes and tactics, and individuals, data from various organisations, cultural, or national settings is examined (Farquhar, 2012; Bryman and Bell, 2015). With the use of this technique, the researcher will be more equipped to comprehend the themes from various backgrounds and recognise and analyse any parallels or discrepancies that are discovered (Anderson, 2013).

The researcher was able to respond to what, why, and how questions about talent and TM in the context of NPM by using case studies and comparative research (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003; Bryman and Bell, 2015). It also allowed the researcher to investigate the contextual differences in how talent and TM are conceptualised between the case study institutions (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003; Stephens, 2009). As a result, practitioners and academics are able to view TM issues and practices from a broader angle and consider the potential influence of contextual factors on the organisational approaches, strategies, and practices. Furthermore, when examining the similarities and differences between the cases under investigation, case study and comparative research methods are highly helpful as they can serve as themes for introspection and discussion of ideas, procedures and practices (Merriam, 1998; Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007; Gerring, 2007; Anderson, 2013).

Thus, using inductive reasoning as a guide, the researcher employed a multiple case technique. The researcher was able to examine the distinctions and similarities inside and between the examples thanks to the multiple case approaches, which made it possible to make relevant comparisons. Carefully choosing the examples was essential in order for the researcher to spot patterns in the cases or forecast deviations from the literature (Eisenhardt, 1989; Burns, 2000; Yin, 2003; Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). In addition to allowing for the development of concepts through the recognition of perceptions, patterns, processes, approaches, and activities among the constructs within and across cases and their underlying logical arguments, this improved the transferability, credibility, confirmability, dependability, and trustworthiness of the researcher's findings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Argyris, 1988; Koch, 1994; Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007; Bryman and Bell, 2015; Nowell, et al., 2017).

4.7 Triangulation, Validity and Reliability

Creswell (2014) defines triangulation as the process of verifying data collection techniques and information from various persons, such as academics and their line managers, data types, such as observation field notes taken during interviews, documentation collated from the case study institutions and the actual interviews, in qualitative research descriptions and themes. While Gibbs (2007) suggested that validity in qualitative research involves the researcher checking for accuracy of the finding by employing certain procedure such as case study protocol in this case, qualitative research reliability involves the ability of the researcher to justify that their approach is consistent, and the outcome of the study are repeatable. Creswell (2014) added that qualitative validity refers to the researcher's use of techniques like member verification and triangulation to assess the research findings' trustworthiness, authenticity, correctness, dependability, or credibility. However, validity is contingent upon the degree of accuracy of the research findings, as noted by Yin (2014), Adams, Khan and Raeside (2014), and Nowell et al. (2017). A few of the main drawbacks of the case study approach are its lack of rigour, bias susceptibility, capacity to support credibility and authenticity, and alignment with the logical sequence of the scientific research approach.

To address the above issues and justify that the outcome of the research in terms of confidence in trustworthiness; credibility, confirmability and then transferability the researcher adopted a multiple case study instead of a single case, to triangulate among different data sources to enhance the authenticity as this provides the opportunity to establish whether the findings of one case occurs in the other cases and as a result being able to generalise from the findings and most important to be able to transfer the research finding to other organisations (Yin, 2009; 2014; Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, as per the findings of Koch (1994), Merriam (2014), and Lincoln and Guba (1985), validation of qualitative research, which includes multiple case studies like the one used in this study, can be accomplished through extended fieldwork and observation, triangulation, peer reviews, debriefing, refinement of hypotheses as the investigation progresses, clarification of researcher bias from the beginning of the study, rich and detailed description, the researcher's request for participants' opinions regarding the validity of the findings and interpretations, and external inquiry audits.

The multiple case study design enables the researcher to collect data from several sources of information from talented academics at different stages of their career and their line managers on issues relating to their perception of talent and TM practices in their lived experience. To confirm the transferability of the research findings the researcher ensures that exactly the same questions were used to conduct the semi structure interviews with the various categories of research participants. In addition, subject bias was managed by interviewing research participants individually, privately, and separately.

In addition, the researcher used prolonged and critical discussions throughout the semi-structured interviews, as well as effective behaviour observation of the participants during the meetings, to ensure the validity of the findings. The results of the pilot study and the further research forced the researcher to revise the research aim and questions in order to get the best answer as well as the right response. The research is also subjected to internal auditing, which comes from peers, the researcher's supervisor, and a co-supervisor, as well as external auditing, which comes during internal assessment, internal evaluation, and VIVA, to verify its validity and transferability.

Furthermore, construct validity which entails determining appropriate operational measures for the ideas under study was also utilised to guarantee the validity of the research findings (Yin 2009). In order to do this, the researcher conducted a pilot study to determine whether the semi-structured interview protocol was appropriate, designed and supported the research objective and the semi-structured interview questions with relevant academic and professional literatures, identified operational measures that are consistent with the concepts through relevant academic and professional literatures, and created a data collection protocol that provided a chain of evidence that allowed the researcher to justify the study's validity and reliability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Koch, 1994; Golafshani, 2003; Yin, 2009; Merriam, 2014).

4.8 Research Context

4.8.1 Brief Background of Case Study Institutions

This aspect of the report serves as an introduction to the institutions under investigation which consists of institution A and B where data were collected.

4.8.2 Case study A

The first case study of this research is an institution which has pride itself as the first UK civic university as a result to its contribution to Northwest England as the world's foremost industrial city and desire to develop the lives of people through education. The origin of the institution could be traced to 1824 as a result of the country's movement for education for working people and since then the institution has gone through many developments and growth with one of the biggest being its merger in 2004 which makes it the biggest single location university in the UK. They also have over 25 Noble Laureates to their credit and rank high in most global top-ranking bodies.

The Royal Charter that established the institution recognises the Board of Governors as the governing body of the institution and they are subtle with responsibility for running it. Their responsibilities include leading and managing the strategic direction of the institution, academic administration, financial management (including ensuring the institution's books are sustainable and feasible as well as the management of the workforce of the institution, including the academic staff who are the participant of this study. The structure of the institution is broken down into three faculties and each of the faculties is made up of schools which in most cases collaborate in multidisciplinary projects with over 7,000 academic and research staff. The focus of this research is on the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work which is part of the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health (it ranks fifth globally and second in the United Kingdom for Nursing) as well as the Business School which is part of the Faculty of Humanities. It is interesting to note that the business school was one of the first two schools of business established in the UK, founded in 1965 and is currently triple accredited by Association of MBAs, AACSB International, and EQUIS. It is important to note that the researcher had access to and reviewed the different documents and literature of the case institution. See Appendix 9 for list of documents.

4.8.3 Case study B

The origin of the institution could be traced to the establishment of a mechanics institution in 1850 and then the formation of a working men's school in 1851. It is interesting to note that the merger between the two institutions at the end of 19th century led to the formation of one of the Royal Technical Institutions and by 1921 the institution was renamed college but by

1958 there was a split in the college which led to the formation of two different colleges. One of the colleges which is the case study of this research became Royal College of Advanced Technology and a university in 1967 because of the Royal Charter granted by Queen Elizabeth 11. It is interesting to note that both institutions again finally merged to be one institution in 1996 to what is known as the university today. The institution has over 2500 staff with the vision to advance development and innovations, in artificial intelligence, robotics, digitalization, and smart living. The institution is headed by a Vice Chancellor who is supported by the Vice Chancellor's Executive Team (VCET) in the management and administration of the institution. It is important to add that the VCET includes academics and professional administrators such as Deans of Schools and Directors of service Departments. They all have different responsibilities in supporting the Vice Chancellor in achieving the vision, mission and strategic objectives of the institution. It is important to note that the researcher had access to and reviewed the different documents and literature of the case institution. See Appendix 10 for list of documents.

4.8.4 Research Participants

The primary sample in the research were academic staff and their line managers. The major challenge the researcher faced was that data collected was a true representation of the phenomenon being investigated within the cases. However, the choice of a cross selection of faculty types and their members as well as line managers (across schools/departments/faculties) considerable transferability of TM practices within the cases as well as richness and reliability of the data. In addition, data collected from within/among the cases via documentation, semi structured interviews and observation enable the researcher to achieve reliability for the purpose of triangulation as they enable cross checking for similarities and differences within/among cases for the purpose of theory building (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 1994; Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007).

Overall, 18 semi-structured interviews were conducted between January 2019 and December 2021 through face-to-face, Teams, and Zoom. Eleven of the interviews were conducted face to face meetings and seven online meetings via Teams/Zoom due to Covid-19 pandemic. In accessing participants, units and cases the researcher first requested for approval from the institution's faculties/school/department heads and then approach participant directly or through snowballing. Therefore, line manager had little or no awareness/influence of who the research participants were.

As mentioned earlier on in Chapter One, it is important to note that the number of the participants required to answer the research question and objectives was not known from the onset of the research as the researcher continued to interview participants until there was no new information emerging and the responses from participants got to the point of saturation at the 16th interview for this research. However, the researcher had carried on interviewing participants and reviewing recorded interviews until the 18th interview. As mentioned in chapter One, apart from getting to saturation, the number of interviews conducted is in accordance with qualitative researchers' suggestions; Cresswell (1998) suggestion of five (5) to twenty-five (25); Morse (1994) suggestion of six (6); Bertanx (1981) cited in Guest et al. (2006) endorsement of fifteen (15), Cresswell (2013) suggested four (4) to five (5) cases per study for case study research, Dukes (1984) recommendation of three (3) to ten (10) for phenomenological research, Kuzel (1999) suggestion of five (5) to eight (8) participants in homogeneous sample and twelve (12) to twenty (20) for maximum variation sample. In addition, Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) recommended three (3) to ten (10) for interpretative phenomenological research while Corbin and Strauss (2015) proposed at least five (5) one-hour interviews for theoretical saturation.

Due to the sensitive nature of the cases sector and in order to maintain confidentiality and anonymity as well as promote research ethics the cases and research participants are assigned a code, to provide anonymity. Details of case institutions and research participants are provided below in Table 5.1

A knowledge of the academic titles, roles or positions in UK HEIs is fundamental for this research though it is an area which is overlooked by researchers. However, due to its importance to this research, this study identified the typical academic title in UK HEIs. Though this might slightly vary from one institution to the other but for the purpose of this research, the main emphasis was on the conventional academic titles generally used by most UK HEIs which are listed in table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Academic titles in UK universities

No.	Titles
1	Professor
2	Reader
3	Senior Lecturer
4	Lecturer
5	Assistant/Associate Lecturers/Research Associate

Source: (Waltz, 2013; Discoverphds, 2021; and Case Study Institutions Academic Roles Manual 2021; 2022; Informatics Europe, 2023)

4.8.5 Inclusion Criteria for Participants

A research inclusion and exclusion criteria establish which members of the targeted population are eligible to participate and those who are not (Patino and Ferreira, 2018). They are collectively referred to as eligibility criteria and defining them is essential when looking for research study participants (Saunders, 2012). This makes it possible for researchers to precisely examine the demands of a group that is comparatively homogeneous (such as academics in business schools). Factors such as demographic characteristics like age, gender identity, ethnicity; study-specific variables like length of service with the organisation, role, position and field, and control variables like number of publications, trajectory (such as research, teaching, administration) are examples of frequent inclusion and exclusion criteria. Your confidence that a causal relationship exists between the groups you have chosen may be weakened if your inclusion and exclusion criteria are not well defined. This will have an impact on both the internal validity of your research and the generalisability (or external validity) of your conclusion (Nikolopoulou, 2022).

Thus, inclusion criteria refer to the qualities or traits that potential research subjects need to possess in order to be part of the study. Demographic Social or regional factors are examples of common inclusion criteria. Features that help identify possible research subjects who should not be included in a study are called exclusion criteria. These may also include circumstances that result in a research study participant's withdrawal after they are first recruited. As such, those who satisfy the inclusion requirements might also have extra traits that could affect the study's conclusion. They ought to be left out as a result (Hornberger and Rangu, 2020).

Academics in the fields of business and health science (faculties and/or schools) from two UK HEIs meet the inclusion criteria for this study. Since talent and TM are normally included in business curriculum, it was assumed that those who worked in this field were conversant with these phenomena and concepts. Given the current difficulty in identifying, acquiring and retention of talents as well as the evidence of unintended consequences from talent and performance management mechanisms and practices, health science was selected as a representative of basic or pure science (Macfarlane, et al., 2012; Council of Deans of Health, 2023; Universities UK, 2024; British Medical Society, 2024; The King's Fund, 2024).

4.9 Methods of Data Collection

The primary source of data collection were semi structure interviews and observation. In terms of secondary sources, relevant documents from case study institutions were employed.

4.9.1 Interview

This research used interview to gather data about the phenomenon under investigation (talent, TM and retention) through the individual who experience the phenomenon (i.e., the academics and their line managers) who are participating in this research, who will provide the data through statements about their perception and descriptions of their live-in experience of the phenomenon under investigation. Interviews are purposeful dialogue between two or more persons and are used to obtain factual data and insights into attitudes, feelings, and real live experience of research subjects (Kvale, 1996; Saunders et al., 2007; 2019). It can take three forms, which includes structured; in-depth/unstructured; and semi structured (Anderson, 2013). The use of this method of data collection can enable researchers collect valid and reliable data that a relevant to their research question(s) and objectives (Creswell, 2014; Beyers et al., 2014; Saunders et al., 2019). This can then be analysed for meanings and meaning themes by the researcher. Yet, literatures indicate this is never straightforward (Denscombe, 2008; Ferraro, 2014; Bryman and Bell, 2015) and indicates some cautions, weaknesses as well as the advantages of this method of data collection.

For instance, skilled interviewers may influence the participants' reactions and responses by imposing their own references frame; the design of the interview questions may lead to bland answers thereby making the research findings weak; participant might tell researchers what they want to hear or false information; it can be expensive to carry out in terms of time required to administer, transcribe, analyse and present findings; and it requires considerable skills compare to other methods (Creswell, 2014; Budnick et al., 2014; Saunders et al., 2019). In terms of what is required and relevant, this includes questioning techniques, when to probe further, listening and note taking skills, as well as ability to control the interview session in order to answer the required questions (Ferraro, 2014). Notwithstanding its drawbacks, Kvale (1996, p. 11) argued that the interview method of data collection signalled a shift away from viewing human subjects as nothing more than manipulable objects and data as existing outside of the subjects themselves and towards the idea that knowledge is created through human interaction, frequently through conversation.

4.9.2 Justification for Semi Structured One to One Interview

Semi-structured one-on-one interviews are non-standardized, non-standard interviews that allow the researcher to record participant responses to a list of questions during study time and collect more reliable data from the respondent's reality perception (Burns, 2000; Saunders et al., 2007; 2019). Thus, the interview's goal is to enable us to see things from the other person's perspective (Patton, 2002). Because semi-structured face-to-face interviews provided the required platform for academics and their line managers to openly voice their opinions, the researcher chose to employ them (Berg and Lune, 2012). This method of data collection enabled the researcher to check that questions were clear and understood by the research participants as well as probe answers to ensure that the right insights were provided about the phenomenon under investigation (Kvale, 1996; Potter, and Hepburn, 2005; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). According to Cohen et al. (2007), interviews provide a platform for participants interviewer or interviewee to share their perspectives on the world in which we live and how they see situations from their own vantage point. In this way, the interview becomes more than a means of gathering information about life; rather, it is an integral part of life, inseparable from its human embeddedness.

It was also perceived by the researcher as a method that would enable the collection of rich data. Bryne, (2004, p. 182); Cohen et al. (2007, p.349) supports that is a constructed rather than naturally occurring situation and when carried out correctly, can reach a degree of intricacy and depth unavailable to other methods, especially survey-based ones. Effective semi-structured one-on-one interviews could therefore provide information that helps the development of a more robust conceptual basis for the phenomenon, which is one of the main goals of this study.

This method of data collection very much appeals to the researcher due to his interest of collecting raw rich data from the research participants of their views, opinions, experience and understanding. This enabled triangulation with the combination of interviews and documentation data collection techniques as well as justify the validity and reliability of the research findings. It enabled the researcher to achieve the aim, objectives of the research and answer the research question as well as obtain an in-depth understanding of the perception of academics about the phenomenon of talent and concept of TM in the context of NPM and adequately address the research gap.

It is important to add that, the duration of the interviews, ranges from 50 minutes to 2 hours which was determined by the willingness of the research participants to continue the conversation with a relaxed setting determined by them and within ethical considerations. The interview guidance notes were sent to the participants before the interviews and informed consent forms were signed for every interview. Copies of both documents are in the Appendices 7 and 8. The researcher guidance notes were also emailed to participants before the interview, and the researcher also reminded the participants about his commitment to confidentiality, anonymity, and data protection principles.

4.9.2.1 Interview Protocol

Interview protocol are the guidelines for the interview, it includes the interview questions, but it can also be much more than that (Jacob and Fuergerson, 2012). A good protocol will serve as a helpful reminder to carry out the right steps, such as obtaining informed consent, verifying that the audio recording equipment is operational, and confirming that the interviewee is comfortable being recorded. The procedure may include some additional questions to ask, in addition to the main interview questions, in case the participant finds it difficult to comprehend the question or to respond, or if the participant's answers deviate from the subject (Imperial College London, 2024).

The interview protocol designed for this study enabled the researcher to follow proper procedures before, during and after the data collection process. The interview protocol included a well-designed script for opening and closing the interview, design and collection of informed consent form (See copies in the Appendices 5, 6, 7 and 8) which includes giving each interviewee a participant invitation letter, participant information sheet, interview guide as well as an informed consent form to read through and then sign before each interview, ensuring that the researcher begins the interviews with basic questions to help build rapport and a comfortable space for the participant, and ensure that the interview questions are open-ended questions that would enable more time and space for the participants to open up and share more detail about their perception of talent and experiences of TM.

The interview protocol also enables the researcher to ensure that the interview questions are informed by research and literature review about the topic being investigated (See chapter 2 and 3). The protocol procedures also ensure that the interviewer begins with questions that are easier to answer before moving to more difficult questions. Prompts were also designed for difficult or abstract questions to help the research participants answer each of the open-ended questions or at least help to get them going (Jiménez and Orozco, 2021), as this will also enable participants provide a rich qualitative detail about their experiences and perceptions about the phenomenon being investigated (Rabionet, 2011; Hunter, 2012; Imperial College London, 2024). The interview protocol was also slight adjusted when required and guidance for timing included. The researcher also ensured that a pilot test was conducted for the interview protocol with two colleagues who share similar criteria to the research participants to assess whether the interview questions for example makes sense. This also enabled the researcher to familiarise himself with the order and flow of the questions.

4.9.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis, according to Bruce and Lune (2012), is the methodical, thorough, and meticulous examination and interpretation of a specific body of data with the goal of identifying patterns, themes, meaning, biases, and significance. Understanding how to interpret the field's recorded text is necessary for analysing qualitative data that has been gathered and compiled in order to provide answers to research questions (Creswell, 2014). This stage of the research seems to be the most difficult for qualitative researchers who select case study method because there is less development of the techniques and academic literatures that explains the skills required to manage this aspect of the research in comparison to other methods (Yin, 2009; Nowell et al., 2017). According to Nowell et al. (2017), most qualitative researchers do not include a detailed description of the analysis process in their research work, which has an impact on the reliability, transferability, credibility, and confirmability of the research findings. This is because researchers are required to provide their audience with a description of their analysis methods or the assumptions that guided their analysis.

Thematic analysis approach was adopted for the purpose of data analysis in this research. Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 79) defined thematic analysis as a "method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and describes your data set in (rich) detail". Thematic analysis approach was used for this research because it has been established to be most appropriate for classifying words-based data by reducing them to more relevant and manageable construct of data (Yin, 2009; Creswell, 2014; Kuckartz, 2014). Braun and Clarke (2013, p. 3) put forward that thematic analysis is, "theoretically flexible because the search for, and examination of, patterning across language does not require adherence to any particular theory of language, or explanatory meaning framework for human beings, experiences or practices" … and… "this theoretical independence means … can be learned without some of the potentially bewildering theoretical knowledge essential to many other qualitative approaches".

It is important to note that thematic analysis approach is not without its own limitations because in the process of classifying, categorising, coding and reducing the data collected some key information might be lost, the researcher's bias and subjective judgement might also set in (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Bakharia (2014) acknowledged that the main issues with analysing qualitative data arise during the data-reduction process, which involves classifying numerous words and phrases from texts into fewer content nodes. Additionally, the process of allocating incidents to categories may be biassed, subjective, and dependent on the researcher's judgement, which could impact the validity and reliability of the research findings. Stefansson (2014) and Kuckartz (2014) suggested that the weakness/problem could be managed through inviting different people to help assign the incidents (codes) to different categories (themes and subthemes). It is important to note that, the researcher received help in terms of feedback and feedforward from his research supervisor and colleagues who reviewed and commented on the analysis and identified shortfalls during the allocation process. In light of these limitations, the researcher nevertheless employed thematic analysis to pinpoint themes and the frequency with which particular codes and themes surfaced and reappeared in the data collected during semi-structured one-on-one interviews and review of documents collected from the case study institutions. Finding a connection between TM and NPM was made possible in large part by the thematic analysis.

Braun and Clarke (2006 p. 87; 2013, pp. 3-5) identified six steps for consideration during the data analysis phase which are: "familiarising yourself with your data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report". The above six steps were observed in the interpretation and analysis of data. See Table 4.5:

Table 4.5: The step-by-step interpretation and analysis of the research data

Phases	Activity	Description and application to this research
One	Familiarisation with the data	• At this phase the researcher transcribed the data in a case-by-case basis as well as immersing himself in the data collected via semi structured interview, observation and documentation. • The researcher listened to the audio-recorded data of the interviews and transcribed them (by way of converting recorded audio into text), read and re-reading the transcribed data and documents collected from case studies as well as jotted down any initial observations. • It is important to note that the researcher meticulously listened to, read and re-read the recorded data in the process of transcribing and typing, as well as noted down initial ideas.
Two	Generate Coding	• Coding involves segmenting and labelling text to form essential features, descriptions and broad themes in data which are of relevance to the research questions and that will guide researcher's data analysis. • The transcribed interviews' data in the form of Microsoft word documents were imported directly into NVivo 12 by the researcher for coding and data analysis at this stage.

		• Since the research participants were all asked similar questions, it was also easy for the researcher to use heading styles to automatically organise their responses in NVivo. See Appendix 11.
Three	Searching for themes	• Understanding what your interviewees are saying, their key points, their unexpected viewpoints, how their thoughts differ, and where they agree and disagree is all part of the thematic analysis process (Braun and Clarke, 2006). • "A theme is a coherent and meaningful pattern in the data relevant to the research question" (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p. 3). Themes are similar codes grouped together to form meaningful pattern and major ideas in the database relevant to the research question. • Organising the codes into more advanced topics is the process of creating themes. The NVivo theme piles and maps were utilised by the researchers to cluster codes into more inclusive groupings. The researcher was able to drill down into the data for a more in-depth study using NVivo, which also provided a general sense of the trends present in the data. To determine the most frequently used words by the research participants, the researcher conducted a brief word frequency check. It allowed the researcher to see new themes that were developing. See Appendix 11. • Additionally, NVivo gave the researcher the ability to store insightful remarks in the code box, which was incredibly helpful for sourcing quotes for the thesis presentation. At the end of this step, the researcher creates themes and subthemes by compiling all the coded data pertinent to each theme. • The researcher in this phase segmented the data into manageable units by building tables with themes and subtheme relevant to the research question and objectives with the help of NVivo. See Appendix 11.
Four	Reviewing themes	• Verifying that the themes "work" in relation to the coded extracts and the entire dataset is the goal of this phase (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p. 3). • The researcher went over the themes in this step, going over the data that had been coded for the component codes and

		questioning the prospective themes. This is also the point at which the researcher decides if the theme is sufficiently supported by some data or whether there is too much variety among text parts to justify the themes. Additionally, some themes had to be renamed or subdivided into other themes by the researcher at this phase. • The researcher started to identify and describe the nature of each individual topic as well as the connections between the themes at this step, reflecting on whether the themes create a convincing and engaging story about the data.
Five	Defining and naming themes	• This phase is where the researcher writes a detailed analysis of each theme by analysing the essence of each theme as well as construct a concise and clear name for each theme. • During this stage, the researcher also compared the participants' statements based on their jobs, positions, levels, faculties, and/or institutions. Additionally, the researcher created NVivo cases for research participants. As a result of this the researcher was able to query the themes where necessary and refine the names of the themes where required. • This, at this phase, the researcher frequently refined the themes to come up with clear definitions and also saw the foundation of new and punchy themes.
Six	Writing up	• Writing the report in its final stage and entails combining the analytical narrative with data extracts to tell the reader a compelling tale about the data and place it within the context of previously published works. • At this stage in the process, the researcher has reviewed the thematic analysis and is confident that no new evidence has emerged. Based on this, the researcher begun to write up the findings by applying the information from the data analysis to the research aim, objectives, questions, observation notes, documents, and existing literature.

An adaptation of Braun and Clarke (2006; 2013)

In analysing data, researchers have choices of using manual process or computer assisted process. In terms of computer, there are various computer programme available for qualitative researchers such as: Atlass.ti; HyperRESEARCH; AQUAD; MAXQDA; CAQDAS; NUD*IST; ZyINDEX, and NVIVO (Creswell, 2014). Manual data analysis entails reading the data, then marking it by hand using colour coding (highlighter) to spot parts of the text and dividing it into themes of the research (Creswell, 2014). It is important to note that the researcher used a combination of manual and computer assisted process for data analysis of this research. Thus, at every point, of the thematic analysis phases, after manual coding of data, a further confirmation and verification of codes was done using NVIVO 12 by the researcher. The NVIVO software made it possible to develop and validate the categories by allowing the data to be reviewed. The researcher was able to review the interview transcripts using NVIVO 12 after all required transcripts prepared in Microsoft Word were uploaded. This presented an additional chance to explore for underlying significance. Since NVIVO 12 only offers computer-assisted coding and categorization, this process was very time consuming.

4.9.4 Documentation

Yin (2009) and Cresswell (2012) stated that, documents consist of public and private records that are valuable source of data qualitative researchers obtained about an organisation or research participants. They can include newspaper, policies and procedures (including Human Resource policies and procedures), staff handbook, faculty newsletters, minutes of meetings, personal journals, letters, blogs, website information and so on which could lead to insinuation that can be further investigated. It is important to note that HEIs have rich documents that provided information on issues that would have been ordinarily difficult to unfold as well as serve as evidence for policies, procedures and practices (for example academics role/position classification), therefore a very good complimentary data collection source for a research of this nature, multiple case study (Anderson, 2013; Flick, 2014; Coffey, 2014). In addition, documents play an essential role in the design of interview questions, the design of the conceptual framework as well as validation of data collected from interviews (Piekkari et al., 2009; Bryman and Bell, 2015; Saunders et al., 2019). This is particularly important for this research, which main aim is to understand the perception of HEIs academics in relations to talent and TM practices in the context of NPM. And to provide insights aimed at informing good practice and policymaking for HRM, specifically TM in UK HEIs. Thereby contributing to the body of knowledge on the conceptual background of TM.

The documents collected for this research were very sensitive and information rich (See Appendixes 9 and 10) enable the researcher to have an overview of the various TM practices within each institution. As a result, they provided the viewpoint of the organisations from which the researcher will be able to provide objective judgements as well as achieve reliability and triangulation for the research. It is important to note that documentations as a data source have the downsides of being difficult to access, can be expensive to obtain, might be outdated, incomplete, inaccurate, incorrect, and fake. (Creswell, 2012; Bryman and Bell, 2015). Despite the above shortcomings, the method was selected because of its feature of being a rich source of information about the case study institutions and participant. Documents also serve as an asset and source of information in the preparation of the semi structured interview questions and selection of researcher participants, and cases, being a complimentary technique to the other (observation and semi structured interview) methods as well as enabling the researcher to increase reliability through triangulation (Yin, 2009; Flick, 2014).

4.9.5 Observation

According to Cohen et al. (2007), observation stands out as a research method because it allows researchers to collect "live" data from social situations that naturally arise. This allows researchers to see firsthand what is happening in a real-life setting instead of depending on reports from others. They continued by saying that the use of immediate awareness, or direct cognition, as the primary mode of study has the potential to produce more genuine or legitimate data than mediated or inferential methods would. This is one of the method's main advantages. Hughes (2016) added that observational notes, record events experienced principally through watching and listening and contain as little interpretation as possible and are as reliable as the observer can construct them.

Morrison (1993 cited in Cohen et al., 2007) pointed out that observation allows the researcher to collect information about the following:

- the physical environment of an organisation. For instance, its physical setting and other contextual factors. For example, one will be able to determine if the working environment is conducive enough.

- the human setting, for instance, the organisation of employees and their characteristics, levels, positions, roles, and makeup of the groups or individuals being observed, including things like their gender, race, class and age.
- the communication and collaboration setting, for instance, the interactions that are taking place which may include the formal, informal, intentional, spontaneous, conscious and unconscious, verbal, non-verbal, and
- the procedures, systems, process, practices and programme setting, such as the resources of the organisation, in terms of curriculum, pedagogic styles, training and development activities and so on.

The researcher adapted the interactional setting approach of observation which involves taking field notes which could be taken during the interview or very near to the time normally in some form of jotted notes, diary or journals which could also be formal, informal, planned, unplanned, verbal, non-verbal etc. (DeWalt and Dewalt, 2002; Cohen et al., 2007; Hughes, 2016). Brief field notes were taken about any observable behaviour, attitude, body language, and side talk during and after the interviews these were very useful during transcription, interpretation, and data analysis to remind the researcher about any form of hesitation, emotions and conscious/unconscious impact on the responses given by each study participant.

Notwithstanding the usefulness of this method, there are some weaknesses associated with it. Robson (2011) and Anderson (2013) argued that the observation method of data collection can be time consuming, challenging as well as difficult to fulfil as the presence of the researcher might influence the behaviour and responses of the participants. They added that it can also be intimidating for inexperienced researchers due to the legal and ethical To address the aforementioned concerns, the researcher initially disclosed the interview's aim and objectives to the research participants in order to earn their trust and enable them to offer in-depth perspectives, interpretations, valuable new insight and first-hand accounts on talent and TM practices in the context of NPM (Cohen et al., 2007; Adams, Khan and Raeside, 2014). The approach was chosen by the researcher due to its ability to yield significant new insights by means of firsthand observation of the experiences of individuals being observed, as well as sufficient information to aid in addressing the research aims and inquiries. Very good example in this research are the different emotional responses, behaviours and attitudes demonstrate (some broke down in tears when telling the story of their workload and career progression) by the research participants during the interview. Therefore, this method of research, enabled the researcher to record, describe and interpret the participants' behaviour in the context of their work (Robson, 2011; Anderson, 2013).

4.9.6 Pilot Study

Saunders et al. (2007, p. 606) suggested that "small case study to test a questionnaire, interview checklist or observation schedule, to minimise the likelihood of respondents having problems in answering the questions and of data recording problem as well as to allow some assessment of the questions' validity and the reliability of data that will be collected". For this reason, pilot research was carried out at two universities to assess the suitability of the semi-structured interview protocols before utilising the interview checklist to gather data. The pilot study's goal was to improve the interview protocol so that participants would have no trouble responding to the questions and that recording the data would not provide any difficulties for me (Yin, 2009). Data for the pilot study came from two participants in the HE industries. These subjects differed from those in the primary investigation. It is significant to remember that in order to ascertain whether the goals, questions, and research aim of the pilot study have been satisfied, the data were manually transcribed and evaluated. Feedback from participants was sorted to determine whether the interview questions appear to make sense to them, and the process gave me the opportunity to check if the participants had any problem understanding or answering questions, whether in their view there were any topic missing, if they found any question unclear or uneasy and any other suggestion.

As a result of the pilot study findings, it was discovered that some adjustments were need to the questions related to training and career development sections as questions appeared to be repeated, which would have meant the respondents having to answer the same questions twice and the introduction was also adjusted. In addition, from the pilot study the researcher discovered that academics do not like using the phase 'line manager' instead they prefer to use the term "colleagues". It was also discovered that "academic talents" were mainly addressed as "highly potential" and "high performers" within the sectors. Therefore, this was applied in the interview question to highlight talent when required. The pilot study enabled the researcher to adjust the structure and content of the interview questions, highlighted areas of importance to the research question and objectives as well as ensure that the researcher was ready for the primary stage of data collection.

4.10 Ethical Considerations

Every piece of research has ethical issues and dilemmas and trying to anticipate in advance, where these might occur is an important part of research design (Fisher, 2007). As a researcher one has a duty not to treat others unfairly or badly or to use (or permit others to use) information you find out about them to do harm. The researcher approached the Research Ethics Boards of the University of Salford for approval before going to the field to collect data in order to address all the ethical issues surrounding this research. Walshan (2006) identify three main ethical issues to be considered in conducting research: confidentiality and anonymity; working with the organisation; and reporting in the literature (p. 327).

The researcher considered and strictly adhered to ethical issues aimed at protecting participants and their organisations. Issues such as informed consent, reciprocity, confidentiality, deception, respect for individuals, groups and the organisations, assessment of risk, data access and ownership, data storage and protection (including issues on protecting data from third parties and how to dispose data), using ethical interview practices, protecting the anonymity of participants (which might include not disclosing participants identity, assigning aliases to them during analysis and pseudonyms for the organisation), managing sensitive issues disclosed during interviews and defining boundaries (Patton, 2002; Saunders et al., 2007; Anderson, 2013; Creswell, 2014; Bryman and Bell, 2015) will be reflected upon and guidelines strictly adhere to. Application for ethics approval was made to the University of Salford Ethics panel and approval was granted before the researcher went to the field to collect data.

4.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter covered numerous topics that impacted the methodological approach and the design of the research. The researcher has stated the philosophical position of the study with respect to its ontological and epistemological stance. Accordingly, an interpretivist, qualitative, inductive, socially constructed (subjectivism) ontology with a multiple-case study design has been adopted, reflecting conviction in the existence of an independent reality to enable me to address the research questions. Since it makes it easier to interpret the reality that the research participants express, adopting a subjectivism epistemology and interpretivist philosophy was thought to be the most appropriate course of action. The researcher closely and carefully immersed himself in the research process and engaged with strategic actors from two different

UK HEIs through in-depth semi-structured interviews in an attempt to solicit varied views about how academics in UK HEIs view and experience talent and TM practices in the context of NPM. To provide valuable insights aimed at informing good practice and policymaking for TM, most particularly TM in UK HEIs. The researcher analysed each case separately, using the same analytical strategy each time to ensure consistency in handling the data sets collected over the course of the study. The following chapter presents, discusses, and analyses the research findings.

Chapter 5: Qualitative Data Findings, Analysis and Discussion

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents, discusses, and analyses the empirical findings obtained from case study institutions about the conceptualisation of talent and TM practices in the context of NPM. The chapter is divided into twelve main sections with complementary subsections. The chapter begins with a table that contains the details of the research participants in both case studies (Section 5.1). This is followed by sections 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4, which discuss the conceptualisation of the word talent, TM, and academics' experiences of TM practices in Case Study A. Then Section 5.5 examined the ways in which academics in Case Study A attempt to achieve their institution's expectations in the context of NPM. Sections 5.6, 5.7, and 5.8 examine the conceptualisation of the word talent, TM, and academics' experience of TM practices in Case Study B. Section 5.9 examines the ways in which academics in Case Study B attempt to achieve their institution's expectations in the context of NPM. Section 5.10 discusses and analyses the findings within case study institutions. Section 5.11 explores the similarities and differences between the two case study institutions in terms of themes. Section 5.12 examines TM approaches using the theoretical perspective of stewardship theory. Section 5.13 presents justifications for the adoption of TM practices in the HE Sector. The last section, Section 5.14, presents the summary of the chapter.

5.1 The Research Participants

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews with academics at various career stages and with varying backgrounds at each case study institution were used to gather qualitative data. This comprised of eighteen one-on-one interviews with faculty members from the universities under investigation. Table 5.1 on the next page shows the interviewees' profiles, which indicate their position and gender. The methodology chapter explains the inclusion criteria for the research participants and how the data from the interviews were analysed using thematic analysis.

Table 5.1 Case Study Participants Information

Case/ Code Name	Group membership.	Number of interviews	Participant Position	Age range (30 – 70) and Gender
HEI A	*Russell Group*	9	Professor and Associate Dean for Academic and Research Staff Development.	Female
			Professor of Nursing (Head of the Division of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work and Director of the NIHR Applied Research Collaboration for Greater Manchester).	Female
			Professor of Organisational Psychology (Member of board of editorial board of Human Relations and the Journal of Business and Psychology).	Male
			Professor of Comparative Employment Systems - Fellow of the British Academy and an Emeritus Fellow of Murray Edwards College, University of Cambridge (Previously Deputy Director of Business School and Head of the People, Management and Organisation Division).	Female
			Professor of Financial Management and Chair.	Male
			Professor of Healthcare Management - Director of the Nye Bevan NHS Leadership Programme and Co-director of Leadership and Management in the Higher Specialist Healthcare Scientist Training (HSST) Programme.	Female
			Senior Lecturer - Programme Placement Learning.	Female
			Research Fellow/Lecturer in Healthcare and Public Sector Management.	Male
			Lecturer in Healthcare Leadership and Management Research.	Male
HEI B	University Alliance Group	9	Associate Dean (Previously Interim Dean and Associate Dean Operations and Strategy) School of Health and Society.	Male

			Professor in Health Information and Evidence Based Practice, and Director Centre for Social and Health Research.	Female
			Professor of Criminology and Chair.	Male
			Reader	Female
			Subject Group Head/Senior Lecturer in Marketing.	Male
			Lecturer in Midwifery.	Female
			Lecturer in Enterprise and Innovation.	Male
			Lecturer	Female
			Associate/Assistant Lecturer	Male

5.2 Conceptualisation of the word talent at Case Study A

This section offers evidence on how academics from Case Study A conceptualise and define the term talent. It explores the findings from the case study institutions with the insight of the researcher via the literature review on the conceptualisation of talent in HEIs. In case study A, talented academics are viewed as possessing exceptional qualities that can help the organisation achieve its strategic objectives. A Professor of Health Care Management comments:

> "*…is the human capital that is brought to bear to enable the objectives of the organisation to be achieved" [ResP5 HEIs A].*

A Senior Lecturer echoes that:

> "*One that is able to make contributions to knowledge and one who is able to apply those contributions in a classroom setting" [ResP8 HEIs A].*

Talented academics at case study A are seen as individuals with exceptional qualities that meets the organisation needs and can help progress the organisation forward. A Professor of Nursing and Head of Division explains:

> *"Well, if it was for a research post…. I will be looking for a research performance that was very strong for their stage of career whatever their stage of career is, so I will be looking at journals, peer review journals, publications, research grant income, their*

leadership roles in research, what they have achieved in research…. If it was for academic post that is for traditional academic post on top of that I will be looking for teaching experience, how well their teaching has been evaluated, and then if they kind of fit with the organisation needs, so hmm it depends on what the post was whether it kind of fit with what we needed but I will be looking for a strong performance in whatever aspect the post was" [ResP6 HEIs A].

A Professor of Health Care Management put forward that, since the institution is a research-led university, publications are considered very important. She added that, often, the biggest challenge for the institution is probably the challenge of recruiting someone who is both an excellent researcher and teacher. Therefore, according to her, an academic talent in the context of case study A would be someone who is able to make contributions to knowledge and one who is able to apply those contributions in a classroom setting *[ResP1 HEIs A]*.

The above view is supported by another academic colleague who is a Research Fellow, he suggested that:

"…is the ability to do good research so by that I mean to generate insightful new knowledge. I suppose in an applied discipline like mine is also about that knowledge been useful and used so is not just necessarily esoteric knowledge but a stuff that prove useful in our case Health to help develop better organisation and management and so on" [ResP4 HEIs A].

The description of talent given by the aforementioned interviewees can be understood as extraordinary qualities displayed by a single academic in the fields of teaching, research, and administrative support. Outstanding academics are thought to be able to help the organisation meet its goals and have a good impact on the institution's expansion. As per this definition, talent encompasses a range of talents and abilities that can be either acquired or innate, or a combination of both, and is necessary for doing effective research, teaching, and/or administration. Therefore, talent in the case study A's academic context can be attributed to either exceptional natural abilities (nature) or a combination of both nature and nurture. Academics with talent are excellent performers and achievers in research, teaching, and administration because of their practice and development over time (nurture).

Statements derived from the reviewed documents indicated that the case study A five-year (2021-2025) strategic plan document for people management targets evidently used the word talent as follows: "We will continue to implement an optimal talent acquisition, development and retention strategy to attract the best individuals from diverse backgrounds." There was evidence from other documents reviewed at the institution that indicated that talented academics are individuals who have demonstrated exceptional abilities and contributions, either by demonstrating excellence abilities in tasks or projects that might be within or outside the normal requirements of their role.

Evidence derived from the reviewed documents further specified that talent encompasses the ability to exceptionally and effectively complete a task or project ahead of timescales, the management of an unexpectedly complex task successfully and within an agreed schedule, as well as commitment above and beyond the call of duty in dealing with exceptional events. Statements from the institution's documents are in line with the accounts of interviewees who acknowledged that academic talents are individuals who possess the ability required to obtain research grants, do good research, make contributions to knowledge, and apply those contributions in a classroom setting as well as communicate their research outcomes to society at large.

Statements derived from the institution's documents on Rewarding Exceptional Performance Policy and Procedure (2020) indicated that the exceptional contributions must be sustained for a period of at least 6 months and are expected to continue for the foreseeable future. Accounts derived from the reviewed documents also indicated that the sustained exceptional contributions to the institution are gathered from the P&DRs process. The reviewed documents further indicated that the evidence of exceptional abilities and performance should be within the requirements of the employee's role and may include, but not be limited to, the completion of agreed objectives to a consistently exceptional standard, documented examples of the individual providing customer service (e.g., to a student) to an exceptional standard, details of tasks/projects completed to an exceptional level, and documented examples of exceptional achievements that have demonstrably resulted in an enhanced level of contribution within the existing grade.

The above statements, interviewees testimonies and additional findings from documents reviewed at the institution clearly indicated that the case study opinion of talent aligns with that of Van den Brink, Fruytier and Thunnissen (2013) and Reynolds (2014), who put forward that academic talents are those individuals that possess exceptional abilities. They added that they are exceptional academics who deliver excellence in teaching, research (in terms of peer review, citation indexes, and international referred publications), leadership, and administration, as well as those capable of becoming heads of faculties, schools, and departments.

5.3 Conceptualisation of Talent Management at Case Study A

Evidence from interviewees indicated that the current approach to TM in the institution is more inclusive. Thus, TM is conceptualised as nurturing, training, and developing all academics across all levels, departments, divisions, and faculties. Despite the very loud concerns of some interviewees about the impact of individualism, TM at the institution, according to the interviewees, helps to identify and develop areas of competence and strengths among all academics at all levels as well as help employees progress their careers in the organisation. A Professor of Comparative Employment Systems and Director of the Work and Equality Institute explains:

> *"Whatever the particular aspect whether is teaching or research or administration, we are responding to actual performance and including their ability in putting in bidding for funds for doing new things and that obviously part of the daily lives of academic, is to apply for things and we would allocate things on the bases of who does it best but they are not in a category so somebody that didn't do it well this year can do it well next year"[ResP3 HEIs A].*

A Lecturer in Health Care Management further explains how TM practices are used to attract, identify, select and manage the performance of academic talents as well as acknowledged that the institution applies inclusive approach to TM.

> *"Why are you thinking within the academic community that I work in, it is a (exclusive talent management) prerequisite. I think it is a prerequisite that gets found out during the selection process and interview. The ones that came through are the ones with the ability to answer eloquently and demonstrate intellectual capabilities just by answering a question and sometime the question will be answered with another question which shows an enquiry mind. So, I believe through sort of selection that in most cases people are appointed to post in the academia with that level of talent inherent. I think non-talented academic staff get found out and don't last." [ResP1 HEIs A].*

A Professor and Head of Division comments:

> *"I suppose we would, we would be more inclusive. We don't label people. However, in a way we possibly indirectly do that because if somebody is performing really well in their early career of research particularly research, we will seek to make sure they have adequate time for their research and we may be able to get them on a permanent contract in way that for some people we can't, is more difficult we would want to be looking to retain them and not for them to want to go away. I don't think we do a lot extra for people, but it will be based on performance not just potential performance but for some early evidence of strong performance we would treat people slightly differently. We don't label them as such".* [*ResP6 HEIs A]*.

Therefore, though high-performance and high-achieving academics are encouraged, nurtured, and rewarded, as well as motivated to apply for promotion, such opportunities are also open to all academics. Not being able to demonstrate high performance or achievements would not result in being classified as a non-talented academic. In addition, all staff are offered developmental and mentoring opportunities as well as time off for sabbatical study leave; if required, it is not selective.

It is also interesting to note that academics in Case Study A indicated that their institution had stewardship mechanisms in place that were more in line with an inclusive approach to TM. Despite the increased pressure as a result of the P&DR processes and individualised performance review, the steady growth of individualism, REF, TEF, KEF, B3 metrics, competition among HEIs, etc., the research participants at the institution are of the opinion that stewardship mechanisms that promote trust, communication, supportiveness, and collaborative culture are currently more noticeable in their institution.

Interviewees believe that the exclusive approach to TM, which is more associated with command and control, self-interested individuals, opportunistic, transactional leadership, and performance targets used to differentiate good from bad performance, is less pronounced in their institution. They also added that it will be unethical to apply such a mechanism as a permanent situation in their institution because people are constantly applying for additional support for projects, grants, and submitting publications, and they may be rewarded with opportunities if applicable. Perhaps after outcomes, which is fine, by giving them extra funding for travel, for example, if they publish in 4-star journals. Not by somebody saying you are a 4-star person, you get this money permanently; only if they are achieving the 4-star publications do they get it, so the institution is not actually categorising people; they are only categorising their performance, which varies from year to year. Thus, the institution is not actually putting people into groups or classifying academics, saying these are the high performers and these are the low performers. An interviewee further explains:

> *"No, we assume that all staff, everybody we recruit is capable of going up to the level of professor, it doesn't really mean that actually happens with everybody because lots of things happens along the way but we will regard people as having that capacity and sometimes they get derailed, sometimes they go off, they want to get quicker they go to other universities that perhaps promote earlier, things like these but we don't have a sort of different track routes. I mean there are a few teaching focus group jobs but again that is for things that are mainly specific and vocational where is difficult finding Chartered Accountant to come and teach in more professional aspect of accountancy*" *[ResP3 HEIs A].*

Interviewees indicated that although the university provides opportunities for career development, career progression, training and development, rewards and so on, however academics must demonstrate the capacity and willingness to develop and progress their career.

A Professor and Co-director echoed that:

> *"The high performance one, we encourage and nurture them to apply for promotion. We offer them development opportunities and mentoring opportunities. And time off for sabbatical study leaves" [ResP7 HEIs A].*

The institution's schemes reviewed, such as the standard P&DR mechanism and the supplementary P&DR documents produced by each department, division, school, and faculty, are evidence of measures put in place to identify the developmental needs of academics and possible career progression tracks under the supervision of line managers. Such arrangements could be managed formally or informally, which is determined by the nature of the relationship that exists between a faculty member and his or her line manager.

Statements derived from the reviewed documents in Case Study A also indicated that one of the key impacts of NPM and evidence of TM in the institution is the abolition of strong tenure, which was deemed to hinder the university's effectiveness and efficiency. This allowed the institution to declare academics redundant before their retirement age. Academics granted tenure before November 20, 1987, were entitled to keep it unless they accepted promotion, placing them in a more vulnerable position. The revised Status XVII clause of the institution was passed in November 1992, but some academics argued it could attack academic freedom and bring the institution into disrepute.

This change altered financial relationships and abolished the strong tenure form in HEIs in general, allowing universities to declare academics redundant before retirement age, declare subjects superfluous, and end tenure employment. Institutions also encouraged early retirement for younger staff and those on less generous terms. These contradict the principles of stewardship theory because they are short-term orientated and concerned with tangible outputs, unlike stewardship-based mechanisms, which are long-term orientated, where resources are invested in individuals and on creating enabling as well as high-trust working and business environments.

Documents reviewed indicated that in 2017, 171 academic staff at Case Study A, including 140 in the Business School, were made redundant, blaming Brexit and new government legislations. The institution's financial statement in its annual report revealed a reserve of £1.5bn, with £430m available. Reasons for redundancies include reduced public funding, global competition, potential decline in student numbers, exchange rate fluctuations, new private providers, TEF, and Brexit uncertainties. The institution's focus on monitoring, incentives, and controlled environments negates a stewardship-based approach to talent retention and development. As recent as 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic gave the institution another opportunity to cut down staff openly by publishing on its website opportunities for staff to take voluntary redundancy, salary reductions, and unpaid leave. Though employees were told not to be under no obligation to take up the measures and should not feel any pressure to opt into them, it is a means of encouraging redundancies and staff cuts (University Website, no date; Local Newspaper, 2020).

Statements derived from the institution’s five-year (2021-2025) strategic plan document for people management reviewed clearly stated that the university:

> “*…will attract, engage, develop and retain the very best staff, students and alumni…Through enhanced and tailored development programmes, we will continue to train, support and nurture the talents of our staff…, with digital skills, environmental sustainability awareness and empathetic leadership among the areas of focus. We will*

maintain our commitments to… recognise and reward staff performance aligned to our values and embed a new colleague talent and succession planning framework supported by leadership development programmes".

The above statement also indicates the presence of TM practices and principles within the institution. Documents reviewed at institution A also indicated that it has an integrated set of practices, processes, programs, and cultural norms in the organisation designed and implemented to attract, develop, deploy, and retain talents to achieve their strategic objectives and meet future business needs. For example, Figure 5.1 indicates the various processes and mechanisms used to manage academic talent at the institution, including the introduction of KPIs.

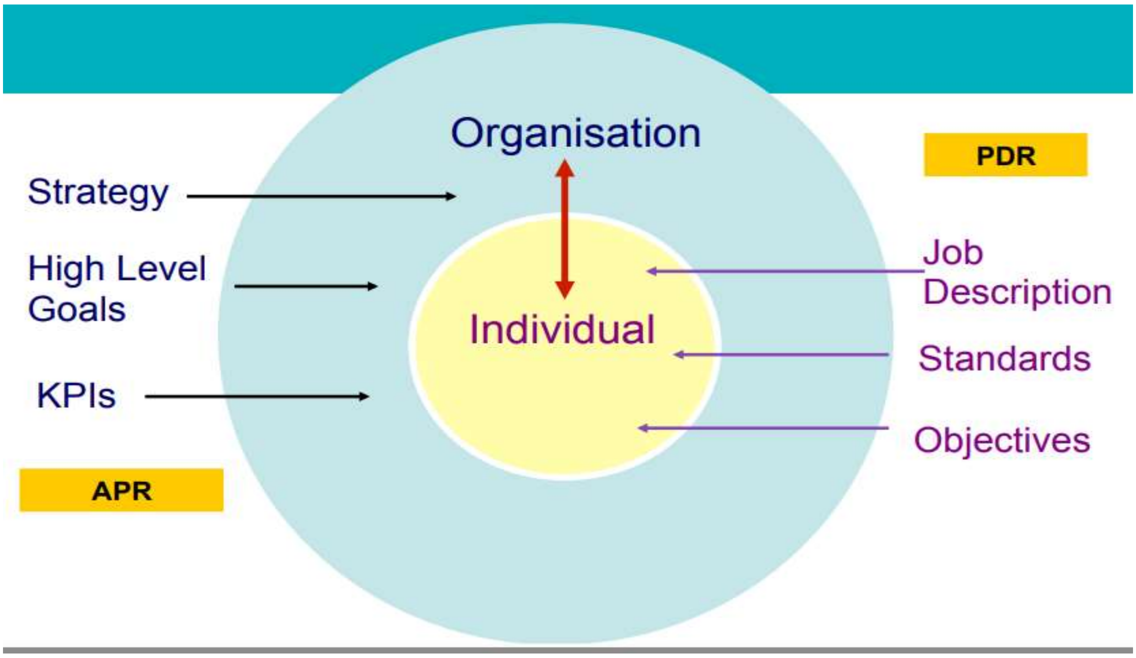
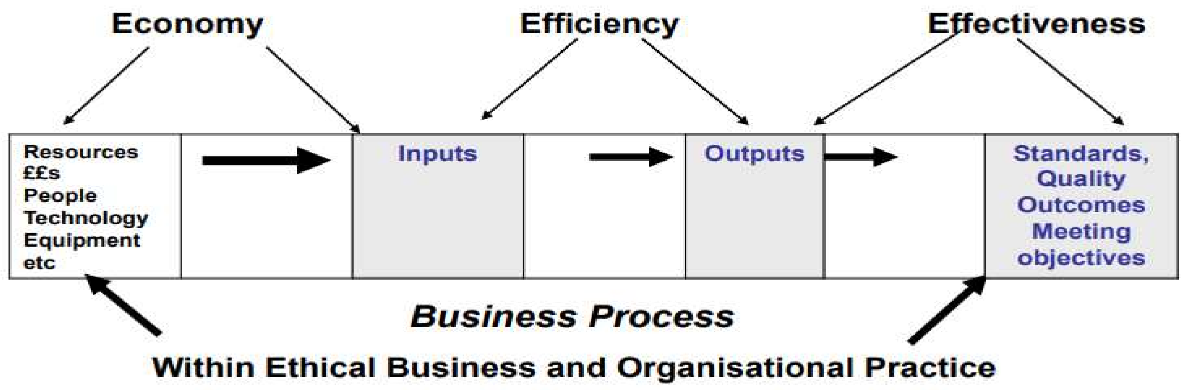


Figure 5.1: Case Study A, Organisational Operational and Individual Performance Management Framework.

The institution's P&DRs system is crucial in managing academic talents. It connects individual contributions and career aspirations to the university's vision, allowing individuals to reflect constructively on their performance. The process focusses on assessing recent performance and setting objectives for the future, considering future development. This talent and performance management measures ensure academics perform to their best abilities and contribute effectively to the team and the institution's strategic goals (Organisational Operational and Individual Performance Management Framework, 2020).

Another interesting discovery while reviewing case study A documents relating to TM was the Four Es of performance paper. The document is a crucial aspect of effective TM at the institution, focusing on "Stars/over-performers" and “individuals consistently meeting requirements”. The institution's performance management system emphasizes efficiency, effectiveness, and economy, with ethical business and organisational practices. See Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2: Case Study Four Es of Performance



(Source: Institution A, Organisational Operational and Individual Performance Management Manual)

This approach focusses on producing the required outputs and outcomes using minimal resources and time.

It is important to note that the TM mechanisms used to manage individuals in case study A, such as P&DR systems and tools, the four Es of performance, etc., are used at the individual level, unlike stewardship theory's group-level approach. Which suggests the move towards a more individualised performance measurement, review, and monitoring system. Though these mechanisms are not currently strongly enforced, they suggest that inclusive and stewardship-based approaches to TM are more prevalent now in the institution. Thus, the presence of a combination of inclusive and exclusive approach of TM mechanisms and culture in the case study suggests that what is currently obtainable in terms of TM at the institution is a hybrid approach to TM. This is because even though evidence from interviewees and some documented evidence suggests that the institution has lots of evidence of inclusive practices and culture as well as stewardship-based enabling performance management mechanisms currently in place, there is also evidence of growing directive performance management mechanisms and exclusive practices in case study A.

5.4 Academics’ experience of TM practices in the context of NPM at Case Study A

The four main themes identified from employees’ experience of the conceptualisation and operationalisation of TM at case study A are presented in the subsections below:

5.4.1 Individualism replaces a structured TM programme

The interviewees acknowledged that TM in case study A is a complex issue that relates to the delivery of the institution’s strategic goals. And the emergence of the concept in their institution has led to an increase in individualism rather than collectivism or collegiate culture, which used to be the norm in the institution. Evidence indicated that TM at the institution involves a loosely knit management framework in which individuals are expected to take care of only themselves, unlike the system in place before the introduction of NPM in the case study, which promotes a tightly knit framework that encourages close interaction among academics, their colleagues, and managers in terms of sharing ideas and good practices and collaborating for research projects and publications. The people management practice at institution A was previously seen as a ‘soft' line management process, a collegiate culture and communalism that reflected a sense of community and collaboration among academic colleagues.

Some interviewees are still of the opinion that academic resistance to corporate-type TM processes that promote individualism, which is in line with an exclusive approach to TM, will continue to exist. They favoured the inclusive approach to TM, which aligns more with stewardship theory, which acknowledges transformative leaders who pay attention to what is favourable for their organisation and staff and support shared leadership, some level of autonomy, and self-management. Thus, evidence indicates that TM is currently viewed more from an individual perspective in case study A; it is up to the individual, for instance, to develop themselves and their career. Individualism is the most recurring theme among the research participants about the operationalisation and conceptualisation of TM during the initial and subsequent coding of the interview transcripts with the highest number of nodes.

A Lecturer explained:

> *“Very little. I just go back to this thing that is up to you, it is a very autonomous job now. We work in teams in certain circumstances but very often is individual and it is a transactional relationship really. I will give you an example, I am new to this*

undergraduate programme, is only 4 weeks, have been involved through the whole time I have been here my colleague text me, why we were talking, he gives us briefings…" [ResP2 HEIs A].

He further explained:

"The other level of that is that we have a Head of Group and is a revolving role amongst the professors and every year I will sit down with whoever is the head of the group and make plan for the following year in terms of what I would like to do but it ends up being a conversation of what I am expected to do. What I would like to do is more research, but I haven't time to write any bids, you know proposal to get funding therefore nothing has dropped in my lap. So, I am also taking advantage next year of study leave, sabbatical for six months so that I can write up some of the research I have done sitting on the shelve. So again, very informal, not structured, not institutional…a good climate to be in but in terms of formal structure of career development and talent management they don't exist" [ResP2 HEIs A].

Interviewees acknowledge that individualism is associated with practices that focus on individual performance, individual incentive schemes and rewards, individual-focused job design, a formal appraisal process with individual feedback, merit-based recruitment and selection, accomplishment-based promotion, self-driven career development, informal learning (on the job), and so on. They further acknowledge that it can be determined by the degree of interdependence an organisation maintains among its employees. While collectivism is associated with practices such as group incentive schemes and rewards, group-focused job design, informal appraisal processes with group feedback, informal recruitment, selection, and promotion processes determined by levels of loyalty to the organisation, and group-driven career development with formal learning incentives.

A Senior Lecturer echo same perspective as to why he thinks individualism is the order of the day at the institution: He stated that,

"The only way you get to be valued is by putting yourself forward so had I not applied for that no one would have, no one said to me you ought to apply for that or actually ………. you have taken on this job you shouldn't have been doing that you have gone on and above what you ought to be doing nobody did that if you want to be promoted to here although the guy did said you might be put forward nobody has ever put me

forward for promotion, you have to put yourself forward for promotion there a bit more support within the smaller group here but by and large as I said it is a very individualistic culture here" [ResP5 HEIs A].

A further assertion on individualism is reflected in the statement of a Professor and Head of Division below:

I think what happen in this university, from my perspective is that there is individualism and that takes the place of corporate structure, you are very much on your own person… there is no corporate support, the assumption is that you just carry on and do it yourself…it is a very autonomous job…it is individualised with a strong expectation that you would move up that academic ladder…it is a transactional relationship [ResP7 HEIs A].

TM is further viewed from the perspective of individualism in terms of the roles and responsibilities allocated to academics. Interviews affirmed that, though approach to TM is inclusive, individualism play a special role in the management of academics at the institution currently in terms of project initiatives. A Professor comments:

"… the only project which I largely control is the student consultancy project, 60 projects, 20 for charities, 20 for small businesses in the UK and 20 for international businesses outside the UK. Obviously, I have no boss in running that but there are other people running the administration, the marketing, and there is no one person that does the whole thing [ResP2 HEIs A].

His view is also supported by another Professor and Associate Dean:

"…they may be doing a lot of things, but it might be individualised what they do [ResP7 HEIs A].

And the first female Professor of the institution and Director of the Work and Equality Institute added that:

"…there isn't anybody telling you that and also it is a very individualistic type of place so actually you are expected to, the expectation is that individuals will make their own way rather than they will be guided and supported to do things… "…you must put yourself forward for promotion [ResP3 HEIs A].

It is also important to stress that the notion of TM being a systematic concept to attract, identify, develop, engage, retain, reward and develop high potential and performing individuals who are of value to the organisation was not shared in the context of the institutions. Interviewees indicated that, although there were different formal and informal practices as well as different TM mechanisms evident in their institution, they were not formally incorporated into a formal practice of TM programme or strategy. For example, according to interviewees, issues relating to career advancement is up to individual academics to manage their careers. An interviewee explains:

> *"Your career is down to you seems to be the slogan here, "your career is down to you…No, that's purely up to me what training I go on. I mean you do report it in this annual review, or you can do but it has never been discussed…they meant be a discussion about what future training you want to go on but in my experience that is very much up to you…Nobody has really said to me I think you ought to go on that training…I will be the one to say I think I need to go on this training, I will go on it*" *[ResP4 HEIs A].*

Thus, it is evident that the interview respondents share similar views about the idea that TM is not full grounded in their institutions and what they see is high level of individualism where they must manage their career themselves and ensure their performance is up to expectation with little or no support from the institutions. This is reiterated in the conclusion statement of a Professor and Co-director:

> *"It is a very laissez-faire system and a very individualise system…Personally, I will go back to possible thing I have said earlier. That is probably down to the individual to manage themselves more…But that is the thing that properly hit you because you have the conception of the university being collegiate and is not, obviously not from my recent experience" [ResP5 HEIs A].*

The idea of TM as a package, holistic system, and exclusive TM was not shared in Case Study A. The emphasis placed by most interviewees was on the growth of individualism since the advent of NPM. Though they acknowledged that the institution has different formal mechanisms that were used at various levels, units, divisions, schools, faculties, and the institution, such mechanisms were not integrated into a formally designed and monitored TM framework, which could obviously be viewed as a loosely designed TM system in its adolescence stage. Hence, this suggests that a hybrid approach to TM is currently employed at Institution A.

Evidence from documents reviewed indicated that Jarratt's report recommends the introduction of performance appraisal and development schemes in HEIs to promote self-betterment and growth of academics. This approach, coupled with the introduction of term contracts and public tendering procedures, has led to competition among academics and growth of individualism. In case study A, the appraisal schemes were introduced in 1988 (their application was recommended by a Working Five Party Committee), impacting professional advancements, promotions, appointments, and pay settlements. The case study highlights the importance of competition and rivalry in lowering costs and promoting better standards within public sector institutions.

NPM has significantly impacted the appraisal system at Institution A, affecting academics at all levels and trajectories including professors and the institution's CEO/VC. The appraisal system typically flows from top to bottom, with some departments opting for a reverse system. The institution primarily uses permanent contracts or Fixed Term Contracts (FTC) for contractual arrangements, with the use of FTC becoming more popular due to NPM. It uses FTC for temporary replacement cover, allowing input from specialist practitioners, and completing specific tasks or projects. The Policy and Procedure on Contracts of Employment documents reviewed asserts that FTC must be objectively justified on a case-by-case basis. However, statements derived from the reviewed documents indicated that FTC was not evoked before the emergence of NPM in Institution A. The introduction, changes and modification of different types of contracts has further weaken stewardship-based mechanisms, collegiate culture and inclusive approach to TM as well as fuelled competition and individualism at the institution.

The drive to adopt successful private-sector management approaches, tools, and practices in public institutions was obvious in case study A, with a shift from rigid bureaucratic-style management to more flexible means of recruiting, selecting, human resource planning, performance management, and rewards. As obtainable in private sector institutions, case study A has an annual performance review (APR) system that assesses the performance of the faculties. The reviews are usually held in the autumn of each year. The main aim of the review meetings is to ensure the institution’s strategic plan is on course, with detailed discussions on statistics and a forward-looking view of the plan. The institution’s CEO and Vice-Chancellor chair the faculty and PS APR meetings.

The institution acknowledged in statement derived from reviewed documents that, the purpose of the APR is to review performance and progress in support of the University's strategic plan, as well as forward planning. Actions are identified to be followed up during the year. A complete evaluation of university performance in the previous year is presented to the Board of Governors’ accountability review.The APR process is a crucial part of the institution's performance management, involving review panels and a Students' Union representative. It assesses key performance indicators such as teaching and learning, research performance, and financial data. The Planning and Resources Committee provides administrative support for the APRs, coordinating data provision and monitoring operational priorities. The process is structured to guide the institution towards continuous improvement towards the university's strategic plan. The internal annual accountability process is cantered on the APRs held for each faculty, PS, and cultural institutions, followed by a local review and an external accountability review by the Board of Governors.

The aforementioned pointed to a change from a strict bureaucratic approach to managing who gets what done and how (the stewardship-based approach) to a more flexible and agile style that encourages individualism within the organisation. This approach loosely regulates who gets what done and how well it is done, while also streamlining policies, procedures, and decision-making processes to make sure they are less formal, more purposeful, and more responsive. Thus, case study A uses a hybrid approach to TM.

5.4.2 Limited and Partially Developed Performance Management Practices

This section offers evidence about another key opinion of academics on TM at Institution A, which happens to be the second most recurring theme: limited and partially developed performance management practices. The nodes that were common amongst the interviewees are: performance-related conversations (annual review or discussion); professional role-related training (career-related); and corporate practices training (mandatory, induction, etc.). Though interviewees acknowledged that there is evidence of some sort of performance management practice at the institution, their testimonies indicated a sort of downbeat view in terms of such practices being deeply rooted in the institution. An interviewee commented:

> *"There is more of that now, the university does now provide a sort of training events around let's say promotion, about what they are looking for, what criteria and so on, that sort of opportunities didn't exist before…" [ResP4 HEIs A].*

The above view is supported by another interviewee who acknowledged that:

> *"hmm I think is probably still the same in theory…we do provide a few things like a bit of guidance on promotion, we provide training opportunities, there are some training opportunities, although as I say some of them I got to go and beg to be funded for them, I can't just say I have got my allowance for this year so I can go and do that course" [ResP1 HEIs A].*

Some interviewees made it clear that the institution has encountered or will encounter difficulties in trying to operationalise exclusive TM practices due to the deeply rooted collegiate culture in institutions of such nature and size. One of the main reasons participants gave was that the institution is a big bureaucracy with lots of complex demands at different levels, divisions, and faculties. The main relationships among colleagues will be in small groups in the academic circle, such as meetings and talking with people, publications, and talking at conferences. These insights are reflected in the quotes from a lecturer below:

> *"Actually actively fostering talent is a difficult thing for the universities to do because the university as named, is a beast, a big bureaucracy with lots of thing but main relationships will be small groups of academics who will collaborate on research and then how they get accepted by larger group in the academic circle side which will be mainly by publication and will mainly also be by meeting and talking to people, meeting them in conferences, you know being accepted" [ResP2 HEIs A].*

He further noted that:

> *"…the university was that poor in developing talents in those days (he laughs), it wouldn't happen now… but if you think you are managing a very structured and definite situation, you have a very narrow set of objectives which some people at the university like to manage that way, the plain fact is that if the world changes an half and they ridicule your policy is not going to be a good thing [ResP2 HEIs A].*

Due to the nature of case study A, its size, the collegiate culture and structure of management that previously existed, which still have a great impact on it, as well as the role individualism currently plays, as mentioned earlier, the majority of the research interviewees are of the opinion that performance management, which is one of the key components of TM at the institution, is partially present, and TM as a systematic notion to identify, develop, engage, retain, reward, and develop high-potential and performing individuals who are of particular value to the organisation, is in its adolescent stage in the context of the case study. For instance, an interviewee acknowledged that her division now effectively collects data about performance through the annual performance review mechanisms (P&DRs) they have in place:

> *"…We gather them at the end of the annual performance review process. Eliciting training needs is part of performance review. And we have the training needs as part of the performance review and work out how to deliver them" [ResP6 HEIs A].*

In terms of reward, which is a key component of performance management, she added that:

> *"So, I give them verbal feedback and emails feedback mainly. I try to create opportunities for them that they may not have. I put them forward for promotions, support their promotions applications. That are the sort of things" [ResP6 HEIs A].*

When probed further, the interviewee confirmed that there is no standard procedure for rewarding high performers or high achievers within the division. It will normally depend on the discretion of line managers.

Another repeated concern of interviewees in terms of performance management is the focus of the management on academics who are close to the end of their careers. A Professor and Director comments that:

> *"The problem is getting people at professorial level to come without demanding a very high salaries which that are not set internal differentials because they come, and they do less and get paid twice as the people that were here already so that's the problem. So try to avoid getting into that rat race of paying higher salaries but the current management/administration of the school don't agree with me, they are very keen on hiring at high salaries, who are stars, they don't seem to have noticed that those come here and don't do anything, they have already done their work and become a star and now they move somewhere else and they stop having to do so much work. So, I am not particularly in favour of that way of managing people" [ResP3 HEIs A].*

The above views disagree with the way talent, performance, career, and reward are managed in terms of certain roles in the institution. This reflects segmentation of the workforce and the identification of a small selected and/or elite group of employees who rank at the top in terms of capability, evaluation, recognition, and who they assume will make a difference to organisational performance, either through their immediate contribution or in the longer term by demonstrating the highest levels of potential and performance, which contradict stewardship theory. This also applies to as little as 1 to 15% of the segment of the workforce in terms of talent acquisition, development, building talent pools, succession planning, deployment, reward and recognition, career management, life-long learning, performance management, employee engagement, and employee retention. The insights indicate that most academics in Institution A are opposed to the performance management strategy the institution currently has in place, as it favours some people and is partially implemented. Respondents stressed that partial performance management as well as some elements of an exclusive TM approach are particularly risky for HEIs of their nature and suggested that it is crucial for the institution to adopt an approach that is fair and consistent across the board in all its TM processes for it to attract, access, develop, and retain talents from the widest possible pool and external labour market.

Thus, it is important to note that some individual participants' accounts, as evident in the case study documents reviewed, suggest that effective implementation of TM strategies is achievable and required. However, it will be a hugely enormous mission for the management of the institution to implement, most especially if they totally toll the line of performance management strategy targeted at an exclusive TM approach.

Statements derived from the reviewed documents in Case Study A suggests that the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) of 1984 introduced KPIs for UK HEIs, including the institution. The committee report emphasised the need for long-term strategic plans, identifying strengths and weaknesses, including academics, using KPIs. This approach aimed to maintain cohesion and morality while setting targets for faculties, schools, departments, divisions, and resources. KPIs measure teaching quality, research grants, student feedback, and more, which are all in line with the principles of NPM. NPM principles advance the need for clear goals, objectives, targets, and performance indicators to hold individuals accountable in public sector institutions. Institution A does not only set KPIs at the individual academic, unit, department, school, or faculty levels but also at the institution or corporate level. At the corporate level, the university now uses explicit measures to state and clarify its goals, targets, and KPIs for quantification outputs. Unlike what is obtainable with a stewardship-based mechanism where strategic goals and objectives are discussed and agreed upon among the different stakeholders of the organisation, in case study A, top leadership at the corporate level sets the goals and strategic objectives of the institution.

Accounts derived from the reviewed documents (the university's annual reports for the last 25 years) clearly indicated that the institution's KPIs are based on factors such as tuition fees, education contracts, including teaching income, and numbers of full-time home and EU students' income. In addition, data on full-time international student fees and numbers, income from funding bodies, research grants and contracts, investment income, donations and endowments, residences and catering income, world and national university rankings, and the National Student Survey satisfaction score are also considered essential elements of the institutions' KPIs. Furthermore, research and discovery in terms of the REF (the UK-wide assessment of university research performance) and how the university research is assessed as 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent, relevance of the institution's social responsibility and sustainability, number of staff and students that achieve the New Year's Honour Award, National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS), Innovate UK's Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) rankings, and the number of strategic partnerships are also considered indispensable criteria of the university's KPIs.

Evidence from documents reviewed indicates that the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (Research) and (Teaching Learning and Students) at a university are responsible for maintaining academic quality and standards in research, teaching, and student experience. The committee relies on data from the institution's schools or faculties and scrutinises documents, policies, and supporting information related to research quality and standards. They review annual progress reports and academic talents against the institution's "Research KPIs" and "Teaching and Learning KPIs" and make recommendations for policy revision. Both committees work within clear targets and guided by measurable KPIs, ensuring the institution's quality assurance frameworks meet external standards.

Statements derived from the reviewed documents also indicated that at the individual academic (and, in some cases, team) level, the institution uses the P&DR mechanism and the supplementary P&DR documents produced by each faculty to set and manage clear and explicit standards as well as measures of key success indicators for all its academic staff at all levels, ranging from lecturer, senior lecturer, reader, and professor. The institution acknowledges in over twenty-six of its documents reviewed that the P&DR process is the single most important way in which the institution makes sure that every individual and/or team can perform to the best of their abilities and fulfil their professional aims and ambitions. The focus of the P&DR is to monitor how well the work is done at the individual level rather than focussing on performance at the group level. Unlike stewardship theory, agreement with a review of performance at the group level to promote a sense of community and development as well as intrinsic rewards. The P&DR process is designed in line with the Follett principles, which strongly recommend that HEI employers work together to undertake joint recruitment and appointment, joint job planning, and joint appraisal, as this helps to avoid a situation where the two parts of the role compete against each other. The objectives and targets set for P&DR meetings, for example, should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely) and contribute to both the local (faculty/school/team) strategic plan and to the institution's values and strategic plan.

The purpose of the P&DR at institution A is to assess the achievements and progress of academics against objectives and their development plan, recognise their team accomplishments, discuss upcoming objectives, adjust current objectives as appropriate, and agree on development requirements. The line managers or reviewers are required to prepare for the meeting by reviewing the objectives and development plan of the academic staff, their key achievements since their last review, how they have developed their skills and increased their contribution to their team, the feedback they plan to give, identifying the potential objectives and development areas for the next year (setting expectations of the reviewee), and anticipating the feedback the individual might give to the reviewer and the institution.

Statements derived from the reviewed documents indicated that with the introduction of the P&DR process in the institution, which includes the annual performance review meeting and measures that require clear definition of goals, targets, and KPIs of quantification outputs, TM practices are now deeply rooted in the institution because of NPM. The institution's argument for this is that for you to hold people accountable, you need to give them clear statements of goals, objectives, targets, and performance indicators. Hence, the P&DR process at the university focusses on academic performance in various activities relating to their chosen trajectory, responsibilities, circumstances for the last 12 months, and the agreed improvement required.

Evidence from documents reviewed at Case Study A also indicated that the institution has a formal mentoring programme in place to manage its staff performance at all levels and departments. The programme was introduced in 2008, and over 1100 mentees have benefitted from it. It is managed by the Learning and Organisational Development Team. The main purpose of the scheme is to support the career development of staff with the assistance of more experienced colleagues. The mentoring program is intended to last nine months and requires approximately 15 to 20 hours of commitment from both mentors and mentees. Mentors and mentees will meet four or five times over the period, and both will be able to attend supporting seminars. In one of the documents analysed, the institution's Learning and Organisational Development Team notes that the initiative is becoming increasingly popular, with over 250 matches formed in 2022 alone, a 60% increase from the previous year.

The institution suggests that participating in the mentoring programme will help mentors develop their communication and people skills that are transferable into their own role, provide them with evidence for management skills used for managing others as well as a plus for their CVs and help with their job applications. For example, a Lecturer acknowledged that the mentoring programme is a:

> *"...feel good" factor; helping people figure out the best path forward; a great way to gain insight into what goes on in other divisions" [Case Study A, Organisational Development web page].*

As per, the mentees, the scheme hope to help them develop their leadership, managerial and supervisory skills, plan future career direction, how to achieve progression and promotion, suggest how to balance research and teaching roles, increase grant application success, expand network, manage work-life balance, learning about the institution functions and values, etc.

A Senior Lecturer who was a mentee also added that,

> *"I have gained new perspective, tools, and insights on work-life balance and in achieving a better balance between my day-to-day administrative duties and my longer-term research goals" [Case Study A, Organisational Development web page].*

The application of the programme is open to all members of staff and since 2022 the institution's alumni can also apply for participate in the scheme. Mentees also have the chance to matching with mentors outside the institution.

Case study A documents reviewed also indicated that by the end of the 1980s, the vision and goal of the institution had begun to change. The focus shifted towards increasing the number of students admitted, widening access to higher education, and reducing unit resources. The new approach was a result of the emancipation of NPM and its impact on HEIs, which the University Grant Committee (UGC) previously tried to protect. The institution argued that the new approach would enable them to do the following effectively:

- Administer their resources with more competent skills,
- Apply a more economical style of teaching (such as by conducting lectures in large lecture theatres or classes with large student numbers) and
- Adopt a corporate ethos and a system of line management (which is peculiar to TM) that all focus on output.
- They also added that the new approach would enable them to increase their outcome control and productivity, attain more publications, graduate more students, and achieve or meet all the government and the public require of them.

The focus on output affects all spheres of the academic community, from those involved in the recruitment of students to those that are teaching and research focused. For example, statements derived from the reviewed documents, "*Admissions tutors received instructions to honour the offers they had made to all candidates who had achieved the A-level results asked of them, but they were not to indulge near-misses and not to use the Universities Central Council on Admissions (now Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) clearing system to make up number*" (Efficiency and Academic Freedom Document).

Statements derived from the reviewed documents also indicated that a long list of internal and external key performance measures and indicators were introduced as targets to monitor the output of academics. This includes pass and graduate rates, classes of grades and degrees awarded, research quality, capacity to attract research grants and deliver projects, teaching quality, and student satisfaction (internal indicators). Other indicators used to monitor academic output include publications, conference papers, inventions, patents, consultations, prizes, awards, and medals won. In terms of operational indicators, Institution A uses things like class size, staff-student ratios, the range of modules taught by colleagues, administrative roles, and so on to measure the outputs. It was explicitly stated that "more hours are to be spent compiling quantitative records and assessing colleagues' abilities." Committees such as the

Academic Quality and Standards Committee (Research) and the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (Teaching, Learning, and Students) are among the committees set up by the institution to ensure the performance indicators relating to the academic staff are achieved. The focus here is on the use of quantitative performance indicators to measure the outputs of individuals, units, and agencies rather than the previous use of bureaucratic procedures and reliance on input control. The main justification for this is the need to focus more on performance output and results instead of input and processes.

At the corporate level, the institution's vision statement reviewed, contained in its future strategic plan and other documents indicated that the institution wants to be "recognised globally for the excellence of our people, research, learning and innovation, and for the benefits we bring to society and the environment. And in order to gauge our progress towards our vision and achieve the vision by 2025".

They also came up with several measures of success, which are used to measure performance against eight areas as contained in the institution Our Future document reviewed, which include:

- *"Research and discovery – "The quality of our research will place us among the top 5 UK universities in research excellent framework".*
- *Teaching and learning – "We will achieve a top quartile sector position for student satisfaction".*
- *Impact on society – "We will measure our success against a portfolio of measures and quality marks of Social, Cultural, Economic and Environmental impact".*
- *Our people – "Our values 85% of our people will say the University is a good place to work"; Innovation – "We will be recognised as Europe's most innovative university".*
- *Global influence – "We will be recognised as among the best universities in the world, in the top 25 in leading international rankings.*
- *Carbon reduction – "We will align to the city's decarbonisation pathway and 2038 target zero carbon"; and*
- *Financial sustainability – "We will be generating operating cash of 10% of revenue before strategic expenditure".*

Most of the above indicators are quantifiable, specific measures that could be used to gauge the progress of the institution towards its vision and make it focus on results in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, quality of service, and whether the intended beneficiary's gain.

The institution's annual reports reviewed are also critical evidence that indicates its focus on outputs and outcome controls since the emancipation of NPM and TM in the institution. The annual reports reviewed indicated clear use and expression of KPIs in different areas that state the expected outputs and outcomes in very clear quantitative and qualitative methods in line with its stated four core areas and three values as contained in its strategic plan, "Agenda." The institution's outputs and outcomes are measured against core areas, which include research and discovery, teaching and learning, social responsibility, and people (which includes their staff and students). The institution's values include innovation, global influence, and civic engagement (Case Study A, Strategic Plans).

The institution in 2011 achieved a 6th place ranking in the Academic Rankings of World Universities, despite a disappointing National Student Survey (NSS) result of 79% student satisfaction. This indicates a focus on outputs and outcomes controls, rather than processes and inputs. In 2021 and 2022, the institution's total income increased by 3.4% and 10.6%, indicating a clear focus on outputs and outcomes controls over core areas and values. In addition, Institution A focused on and maintained the funding for courses that were thought to be more profitable or "key", such as medicine, engineering, economics, and area studies, while funding for subjects such as life science, arts, humanities, and social sciences was reduced. The institution had to also justify the average amount they spend per student (unit of resources). The main reason for these measures is to do more with less, i.e., to get more value for money, as well as check and monitor the resource demands of public sector units and institutions.

Thus, the focus of Case Study A here is the use of quantitative performance indicators to measure the institution's outputs rather than the previous use of bureaucratic procedures and reliance on input control. The main justification for this is the need to focus more on performance output and results instead of input and processes.

5.4.3 Ad hoc Career Management Practices

This section offers evidence on the opinions of academics on career management practices. It presents the views of interviewees about career development practices in case study A and their relation to TM. The nodes that were common amongst the research participants are: mainly tailored to the academic and research requirements of the institution, faculty, and division needs rather than the individual or both individual and the institution needs; self-driven career management; individual selective opportunities (training programmes, funding), informal learning (on the job), and constraints on self-development (time, funding etc.).

Evidence from interviewees indicated that career management practices at the institution have evolved significantly over the years. The career management practices at the institution focus on professional development activities (e.g., seminars and workshops on publishing, grant writing, administration and teaching skills); availability of research support through research collaboration platforms, funding opportunities for research and support for grant application; provision for sabbaticals, support with securing research funding within and outside the institution and research leave without normal teaching and other workloads; informal ad hoc mentoring programs between senior and junior faculty members; cross faculty, division and department collaborations aim at improving academics' career and research trajectories; recognition and rewarding academic excellence through honours and awards; academic leadership turnings to prepare those seeking management and leadership trajectory for administrative roles; provision of promotion and tenureship support aim at providing information for academics to understand the various requirements for promotion via meetings; availability of networking conferences and events to promote professional connections within and outside the institution; P&DRs to set goals and discuss progress which may include career development; and so on. Even though career management practices have evolved significantly at the institution over the years, most especially because of the introduction of NPM, the effectiveness of such initiatives is still not well established in terms of implementation.

Evidence from interviewees indicates that it lacks transparency and that there are no well-established, structured, and formal requirements on career management measures available for academics in terms of career development and progression. And as a result, some respondents see career management practices at the institution as still at their ad hoc stage, which they expressed with phases such as "your career is down to you," "up to the individuals," "luck," "relationships with management and/or line managers," and "an excuse for not developing everybody, which is unfair." These perceptions are reflected in the quotes below:

> *"…and what it often is, is exclusive talent management, just creaming off few people. And this is very mistaking because those are the people who are most mobile and whatever you do to try to retain them probably fails, so unless you have an approach*

of trying to have a broad development of everybody you will focus all your resources on the group who will eventually going to walk away anyway" [ResP3 HEIs A].

For instance, when asked, how are your career development and aspirations managed here, a Lecturer responded that:

> *"They are not, you might have gathered that by now. It's all up to you. The mere fact that it is individualised and not institutionalised and there is no support can leave you in limbo and there isn't any much of it. It is down to you, if I was to go back to the place I worked in London (An institute), there will be an expectation of progression based on ability and achievement and structured support for you to do that and in a short space of time, 6 years I became one of the management team of the institution. I have been really focused on just the day to day and I think this is quite common, lecturer overload is quite common and there is little space to think about your career development" [ResP1 HEIs A].*

His view is further supported by another participant:

> *"There is no clear career management system that I am aware of. You know, your career is down to you, seems to be the slogan here, your career is down to you. Hmmm we do provide a few things like a bit of guidance on promotion, we provide training opportunities, although as I say some of them, I got to go and beg to be funded for" [ResP4 HEIs A].*

The views above indicated that though there are some career management initiatives like those mentioned earlier on in case study A, but the institution is not insistent about them, and there are no clear requirements for individuals who would like to foster their careers. It is up to individual academics to manage their careers. For example, a Head of Division explained that she encourages junior colleagues to get mentors that could provide guidance and support for their career progression, which is an informed way for someone to achieve his or her career inspiration. This also supports the notion that the division does not have a formal mentorship or coaching programme in place that is tailored to the academic and research needs of the division member, as you will find in an organisation with clearly established career management systems.

The Head of Division further stressed how important mentorship is:

"Well, I would say get good mentorship from people who understand nursing academic careers or have academic careers. I think mentorship is really important. I think protect your time for research is very important. Hmm I think is probably mentorship [ResP6 HEIs A].

Hence, looking at the insights above, it is obvious that academics in Institution A acknowledged the presence of some career management initiatives in the institution. However, most respondents are opposed to the way such initiatives are implemented due to a lack of clearly laid-out policies and procedures for such initiatives, time constraints, work overload, a lack of support from top management and/or line managers for such initiatives, funding issues, favouritism and bias, which could be unethical, and so on.

This view was further echoed by a Lecturer:

"But it doesn't register, there is no sort of secret file on me (mentioned his name), is another ticking of box, it doesn't happen. Whereas if it was a structure talent and career management programme, they will be pushing things at me, saying we think you should go for this, you know. Present at this conference, take your first step as a Programme Director, you know a structure sets of activities, that's my assumption, no, nothing, nothing like that. I think is down to individual cultures, I think this university is far too busy to worry about other things than to think about me" [ResP2 HEIs A].

A Senior Lecturer stressed that:

"The level of autonomy that you have is a sort of indication that is up to you to sort out your own career development, so part of it is my fault because I haven't and I don't see the clear blue water of space in front of me where I could actually introduce things that will be purely for my own career development unless I get this sabbatical because it just come at you, you know" [ResP8 HEIs A].

A Research Fellow added that:

"No, that's purely up to me what training I go on. I mean you do report it in this annual review, or you can do but it has never been discussed. They meant be a discussion about what future training you want to go on but in my experience that is very much up to you. No body has really said to me I think you ought to go on that training. I will be the one to say I think I need to go on this training, I will go on it" [ResP4 HEIs A].

A Lecturer described the impact of time constraints and workload as well as their effect on career management as follows:

> *"Is like water, you know you stand in a pool of water on two feet and try and keep your feet dry. It just flows in and no matter where what stage of the year you are at, there is always something, therefore there isn't specific time set aside by this institution for academics to focus on their personal career development" [ResP1 HEIs A].*

Thus, most respondents stressed the need for career management practices to be more structured and organised than in the current ad hoc stage of the institution. The view supports the notion that career management at the institution is still at its ad hoc stage and more individualist-managed, which some research participants stressed could be particularly risky within HEIs. This suggests that the institution's financial resources are invested in the development of control, monitoring, and incentive mechanisms rather than investing in both the organisation and activities that empower individuals, as well as in creating an enabling environment whose intended outcomes are long-term in nature. Interviewees suggested that it is crucial that the career management approach adopted be open, fair, standardised, and consistent for all institutions to attract, access, develop, and retain talents from the widest possible pool and external labour market. Therefore, though career management practices in case study A have made significant progress since the era of NPM, evidence from the institution suggests that it is still in its developing stage and could better serve the career progression needs of its academics if aligned with stewardship-based mechanisms.

5.4.4 Staff training

The fourth-most-recurred theme is staff training. Interviewees acknowledged that there are varieties of training opportunities offered at Case Study A. Most interviewees confirmed that the institution has a compulsory training scheme for new academic staff induction (*New Academic Programme)*, which covers general HR policies and procedures (including the employment contract and the university reward and benefits) of the university; institution, faculty, division, and department orientation; teaching and learning; equality and diversity; technology and ICT; administrative processes; health and safety; research support; professional development; library orientation; services and facilities; campus facilities tours; and mentorship programmes. A Senior Lecturer commented:

"I mean there are lots of courses around things you might do in your everyday job so for example if you join the institution newly there is what we call the new academic programme, if you join as a lecturer, it will give you guidance about teaching, marking, supervising students, all these sort of things" [ResP8 HEIs A].

A Professor who has been with the institution for over 40 years echoed similar view:

"The probationary staff have the trainings they must complete to pass probation. Hmm beyond that there is not huge amount of training. I mean depends on what kinds of training that is related to your role…you might need to take the Equality and Diversity Training before you sit on the Employment panel. Those are the kind of compulsory training you must do" [ResP2 HEIs A].

An interviewee further echoed:

"They are lots of statutory trainings, you have things like interviewing, diversity and inclusion training, research integrity and ethics, display screen, health and safety, and things like that" [ResP9 HEIs A].

The interviewees also mentioned that the institution also has a variety of in-house training tailored specifically to meet the strategic goals and objectives of the institution in terms of research and teaching excellence, as well as the needs of its existing academic staff. The trainings identified by interviewees include grant writing and funding opportunities; research methodologies and techniques; pedagogical workshops and trainings (to help academics improve their teaching, learning and assessment skills); management and leadership development training especially for those aiming at administrative trajectory; financial management; recruitment and selection, diversity and inclusion training, digital and technology skills for teaching and research resource and delivery; research integrity and ethics; display screen; health and well-being; stress management; time management; mentoring and coaching; public engagement and communication; international and global projects, partnerships and collaborations; academic writing and speaking. A Professor and Head of the Division commented:

"Oh, there is a lot of them! Too much to list really. I mean one of the really good strengths of the university here is the Staff Development Unit. So pretty much anybody can get develop on anything they feel like. You know time management, difficult conversations, leadership, finance, financial management, recruitment and selection,

you know you name it. There is very general, generic kind of development you can get within sort of specific development focus on different types of research, teaching, how to I mean all those things I mean basically anything" [ResP6 HEIs A].

However, the perceptions about staff training available for academics vary among interviewees, with most of the research interviewees echoing that the training available is mainly tailored to meet the strategic objectives and other needs of the institution rather than striking a balance between the needs of the business and its academic staff. This suggests that staff favour training plans and interventions that align more with the stewardship-based mechanisms, which do not only focus on individual performance measures, strategic performance, and operations of the institution but also on individual needs, including their intrinsic motivation, values, and talents, as well as career development and advancement. A Professor and Previously Deputy Director of Business School and Head of the People, Management, and Organisation Division explained:

"I think the compulsory trainings are to meet the job needs. I mean there is a major problem we don't have a training budget so if you are doing a career development review with somebody and they do need training, this has happened to me in a few times, and I recommended training and it turns out that, there is no budget for training. Is not provided by the university, there is no budget for supporting people, this is appalling. Therefore, we have this box about what training they need, and we have no training budget, so I don't think training is a high priority in that sense. The only training, they provide is to meet the university's need and there isn't much support for people who might need additional training on a more personal level" [ResP3 HEIs A].

Interviews also indicated that, some of the staff training available at the institution is designed merely to meet statutory requirements and tailored to cover the back of the institution in terms of regulations, and in most cases a tick box exercise. A Professor commented:

"There are number of trainings if you like boldly speaking are courses to tick various legal boxes, things like that, thing you must do, mechanising this like intuitive 30 years ago but now there are some legal test to cut pass, did you do them, piece of training somebody say they have done piece of training who sign the box that they actually do this thing, say the person was trained, mechanisation, institutionalisation is becoming stronger and stronger as the university grow is necessary because it is becoming a more

giant beast it has to keep check of whether is producing something useful" [ResP2 HEIs A].

Interviewees indicated that training such as equality and diversity training is designed to enlighten and ensure that academic staff on interview panels do not breach the Equality Act during the selection process. The research integrity and ethics training is designed to ensure that academics maintain the required standards in their respective research practices, which are essential for the institution's reputation for research and teaching excellence. Another interesting finding is that, although most interviewees acknowledged the availability of well-designed staff training packages in the institution, some interviewees ascertained that the training in most cases was merely tick-box exercises. It appears that training is to meet the university needs in terms of external statutory obligations and requirements; to meet the job needs, sometimes irrelevant; lack consideration for the availability of time for staff to attend; and are mainly internal or in-house. They added that the quality of training also varies across different faculties, divisions, and departments of the institutions and those organising it.

The interviews also made it clear that the issues with the types of training available leave them with little or no extra knowledge, decrease their morale for wanting to attend future training, and make them feel the organisation is not interested in investing in their development. The quotes below reflect the views of academics in case study institutions on the assertions of staff training above: A Professor and Co-director of Leadership and Management added that:

"Not very because they are narrowly defined because it is research led university so for those staff who are more of a teaching focused, they can feel as though there is not much in terms of career development for them" [ResP5 HEIs A].

There is also evidence from institution A, which indicates that approaches to staff training might also differ among the various faculties, schools, divisions, and departments that make up the institution. The approach adopted by some of these units might actually meet not just the needs of the institution but also academics. An interviewee explains:

"…I think they are, what the word is, they are done differently by different people in different part of the organisation so it may be different elsewhere, but my experience here has been there is no emphasis on training and development really. That's just down to me... [ResP4 HEIs A].

In terms of, if the case study institution is concerned about the quality and impact of the training and development programme academics partake in, many of the research respondents do think that the management is not that concerned about the quality of most of the trainings. A Lecturer explained:

> *"Hmm… the only was the external one, Health Education Academy. And they came back to us again and again for a bit more feedback and it was things like have you managed to make changes we discussed, you know like, and everyone is like no we have not had the chance, but in-house stuff nothing" [ResP8 HEIs A].*

The comments above were supported by another Lecturer:

> *"No, simple answer I don't have much to say about that. Hmm…The organisation is just too big. The Vice Chancellor of the University knows nothing about me and why should she? With 5000 people and that is probably an underestimate. Low down the tiers, my 20 immediate colleagues to ask me if I went to a training or conference, how was it and how did the presentation of paper go but it doesn't register with the organisation. I think is down to individual cultures, I think this university is far busy about worrying about other things to think about me. Have you seen the small daily paper The Eye, every other day front page university in crisis over pension? They don't f…. care about what I am doing" [ResP1 HEIs A].*

Accordingly, it is important to note that there were no significant differences in the conceptualisation of staff training among interviewees in case study A. The main assumption among interviewees is that staff training at the institution is mainly targeted to achieve the university's strategic objectives and meet statutory requirements.

Evidence from case study A indicated that, in line with what be the situation in case study A before the coming of NPM, deans, heads of departments, division heads, and unit heads are now required to obtain and demonstrate managerial skills rather than just scholarly qualification, skill and experience. They are also required to prioritise and pursue the institution's strategic plans, goals, objectives, and policies instead of their sectional (faculty, school, division, department, and unit) interests. In the new order, the VC and President/CEO of the institution play a significant role in the appointment of deans and heads of schools, as the Board of Governors will rely on their recommendations for the appointment of individuals to such positions.

Furthermore, some key training, personal development, career advancement, and appointments are now based on academics' performance via annual appraisal review schemes as obtainable in private sector business. Giving the management team more freedom to manage, seeing the university as a corporate enterprise to which the various units and individual academics are responsible and accountable, as well as more obvious and visible power of line management functions and performance management measures, became the order of the day at Institution A. This principle vindicates that for you to hold people accountable, you must ensure that there is no diffusion of power but give them a clear task, responsibilities, authority, and the power to take action.

In terms of the assertions by academics about the initial appraisals conducted in 1988, the institution has over the years failed to invest in its academics' career development and training of its employees. The institution established a Staff Training and Development Unit, headed by a lecturer in the Department of Adult Education, with the aim of providing academics, professional support staff, and para-academics with the training, development, and skills they require to be more efficient and cost-conscious in the in the world of today. In terms of training and development for managers and line managers, statements derived from the reviewed documents indicated the institution's VC put forward that:

> *"It is vital to the University of ---------- that we have effective, capable and engaged leaders and managers throughout this incredible organisation. It is very often the quality of leadership and management that makes it possible for all colleagues to achieve their potential at work. In this way, your work benefits people in many different ways both locally and around the world. Aligning Our People to Our Future strategy is key".*

Evidence from reviewed documents also indicated that the university also currently have resources and activities specifically developed by their Directorate of People and Organisational Development for managers at all levels, tagged "Managers' Essentials" and "Must Do's.". The institution believes that "Managers' Essentials" and "Must Do's" will enable managers to carry out their day-to-day responsibilities effectively and efficiently, as well as develop themselves as managers.

5.5 The ways in which academics in Case Study A attempt to achieve their institution's expectations in the context of NPM.

5.5.1 Mentorship

A recurring theme among the interviewees in case study A that cannot be ignored is mentorship and its role in their career advancement. Most of the academic interviews acknowledge the role of formal and informal mentorship in their career and TM. They stressed how important the professional advice, guidance, and support the various mentorships they have had have been to them at different levels of their academic lives. In terms of when they newly obtained their job, research ideas, getting into the publication ladder, specialist areas, as well as teaching and designing learning activities.

Some of the recurring nodes from interviewees in terms of mentorship and their TM includes career development; emotional support; knowledge transfer; networking opportunities; publishing and research support; diversity and inclusion through provision of support, personalised guidance; advise on career advancement strategies; diverse perspectives that fostered innovation and creativity via interdisciplinary thinking; opportunities for the underrepresented; provision of real world insights; adaptation to change and acclimatisation to the new academic environment; general development which covers both academic and non-academic issues such as mental well-being and work-life balance issues; and contribution to their job satisfaction and retention with their institution even during difficult times. An interviewee explained:

> *"In the same way an efficient academic is somebody who can smartly identify getting good mentors…Mentorship is extremely important and mutual choice between the person being mentored and the mentor… almost everything he said to me in two or three sentences over the years were gold. I ignored it, I didn't benefit, where I took it, led me to much more than what I would guess of at that time, led me to my career accomplishments" [ResP2 HEIs A].*

Interviewees confirmed that, the contribution of their mentors either appointed for them by their institution or by themselves has enhanced their academic career, success in their role, mental well-being and enabled them to make the right choice in difficult times, therefore advised junior academics to get a mentor. The following quotes adequately reflects this:

Well, I would say get good mentorship from people who understand nursing academic careers or have academic careers. I think mentorship is important. I think protect your time for research is important. Hmm I think is probably mentorship" [ResP7 HEIs A].

Interviewees also stressed the important of informal/unofficial mentorship that develop naturally without a structured framework and that is based on personal connection and mutual interests. Though institution A have a formal mentorship programme, but most interviewees seem not to have availed themselves the opportunity to use the formal mentorship programme but rather opted for informal mentorship because they believe it offers more benefits and value compared to formal mentorship. An interviewee put forward that:

"I mean there are stuff like mentoring programme, there is a mentoring programme you can get a mentor if you like to discuss things with and they can, you know they have more experience and they might be able to advise you about stuff I haven't taken that up. There are somethings I haven't taken up. I don't particularly feel they are gear up for me I suppose perhaps everyone will say this". [ResP5 HEIs A].

Interviewees acknowledged that both forms of mentorship are valuable means of enhancing academics career within their institution. However, informal mentorship provides a range of benefits such as flexibility, open-end relationship that is more long term, less accountability, covers wider range of issues ranging from career guidance to personal/work-life issues, based on personal connection and common interest. Therefore, this type of mentorship seems to me more popular among academics at case study A. An interviewee supported that:

"I think you get a certain perspective from colleagues but informal mentorship, we generally seek out informal mentorship from people we feel is quite comfortable with and already know so I think they are probably quite likely to be people who will challenge us very much…You know informal advice from trusted senior colleagues or even peers hmm. So, I think informal mentorship adds for everyone…Well, I didn't really have any formal mentorship really. I have not had formal mentorship, so I have only had informal" [ResP6 HEIs A].

In summary, mentorship either formal or informal according to interviewees provides a range of benefits for academics in case study A that improves their career, personal well- being and professional development, thus mentorship seems like an essential component of TM at the institution.

5.5.2 Line Manager

According to interviewees, the types of line managers an individual has at Institution A can greatly impact the way they are managed. This notion seems to be one of the most recurring themes among the interviewees. Some of the recurring nodes from interviewees in terms of the influence management/line manager and their TM include the management and/or leadership style; how they communicate; how they manage their performance; interest in staff career development; consideration for work-life balance; awareness and level of interest in inclusivity and diversity; the way they plan succession within the faculty, school, division, department, or unit; the ability to embrace change; fairness and equity in resource allocation; the ability to respect, recognise, and appreciate others, etc.

Interviewees believe that over the years, effective communication and consultation have contributed greatly to the success of the institution, and the current management since 2013 has failed to toe the line of their predecessor, which is causing lots of problems in the institution. A professor comments:

> *I have been differentially committed depending on who's been in the management and where the management is going. I think the last few years have been the most problematic, but I think my commitment is to my immediate group than the people involved in the institute now. I have been committed to the institution as a whole, I am not uncommitted as a whole but there has been a lack of consultations with senior staff since 2013 and that has affected everybody and last year there was process of compulsory redundancies that certainly not didn't affected my group or me but certainly affected attitude toward the management of the school so that in my view that has completely misguided colleagues and very damaging to our ability to recruit and retain people, and to motivate people and that was done without any consultations with senior staff so. [ResP3 HEIs A].*

The above interviewee suggested that autocratic or unitary management within the faculty or top management of the institution, that the institution has had since 2013, would not foster a culture of creativity and innovation, thereby failing to develop and inspire academics effectively. Another interviewee further stressed how the leadership style within her faculty and the institution in general could influence her decision to leave the university due to the impact it could have on how talents are managed *[ResP5 HEIs A]*. These testimonies negate stewardship theory approaches to management, which propose that strategic priorities at all levels should be discussed and agreed upon among the different institution stakeholders through active communication, engagements, dialogues, consultations, and discussions. This is even more crucial within organisations such as HE, which consists of academics and professionals from all spheres of life. Another interviewee further stressed the importance of consultation and communication:

> *"Hmm… so, I don't always agree with everything that senior management and senior colleagues in the school and the university have decided upon in terms of strategy that doesn't affect my commitment to the job but might affect my commitment to participation in academic administration" [ResP8 HEIs A].*

The above extracts suggest how important effective communication between line managers and/or top management is for academics at Institution A. It is greatly believed among most interviewees that a lack of open and effective communication can lead to high turnover, a lack of trust, misunderstandings, a lack of commitment, and dissatisfaction. This view is also supported by stewardship theory-based approaches to management. An interviewee commented that:

> *"I mean the thing that will make me leave would be if there was a sort of change of management culture that make me feel negatively about all the things, I have said I feel positive about…So if the senior leadership of the faculty and the university changes in a way that I would feel uncomfortable with that will be what will make me leave" [ResP7 HEIs A].*

The above interviewee stressed earlier how he benefited from the institution in terms of his career development and growth. Including how he was seconded to multinational companies abroad as well as opportunities to participate in cross-departmental collaboration, which greatly enhanced his research and career development. Interviewees also confirmed that line managers have the responsibility of managing their PDR (in terms of assessing and appraising their performance), and they have experienced different approaches over the years. They emphasised that how performance is managed can lead to talent attrition if the system in place is flawed by the line manager, while effective performance management that recognises and rewards talents as well as sets reasonable and clear targets can inspire and motivate academics.

For instance, prior to the 1980s, the power and freedom given to the Vice-Chancellor as the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of HEIs were limited compared to their counterparts in private sector organisations. This is cascaded downward in the organisation in terms of hierarchy and line management. However, the events of the 1980s to date have placed Vice-Chancellors and other line management within UK public universities in similar positions with their counterparts in the private sector, with enormous power and huge salaries in order to enforce government policies and act as their agents within HEIs; this was also the case in Institution A. As one of the vice chancellors of the institution put forward that, "*part of his failure was the inability to tell colleagues that things couldn't go as they did before and that he had to play cards he only believed in."* He added that his positions in the management of the institution cost him personal friendships with his academic community due to his suspicion of people having different hidden agendas.

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Statements derived from the reviewed documents also indicated that before 1986, the role of "Head of Department" and the selection/appointment of academics to the role were traditionally reserved for professors. Then professors usually either select one of their own (either enamoured or seen as preeminent) either on a rotation basis (three-year term) or permanently to the position. However, this notion has changed at Institution A, as it reformed the role of professors by separating their responsibility from the automatic administrative and managerial roles and limiting it to "academic leadership." The reason the institution gave for this change in a reviewed document is that there is a need to address the problem of "*good scholars who had no capacity for administrative but none the less refused to delegate authority.*" Some documents also reviewed indicated this change might be related to the move by top management of the institution to "*identify more precisely where responsibility la*y, *particularly for control of resources, which increased in importance as resources shrank*" because of NPM. One of such documents also indicated that, the change is a move to further put the university's VC indirectly in charge of every core area of the institution.

Though the appointment of Head of Departments is not still the responsibility of the institution's VC but depends on the consultations of the deans of faculties or schools, it is important to note that the VC has great influence in the appointment of the deans of faculties or schools. Therefore, it can still indirectly influence the appointment of heads of departments. It is important to add that the reform met a lot of opposition from the professors, as they wanted one of their own to take charge of their departments even after the report. For example, statement derived from a reviewed document indicated that "*should a department refuse to back a professor's candidacy, as occasionally happens, he or she might be deeply offended and apply for a job elsewhere*." Despite the change in the appointment of a head of department, the notion among many professors to date is that they are paid to assume administrative responsibility.

In summary, evidence from interviewees and documents reviewed in case study A indicates that though there are TM practices and systems in place at the institution, there appears to be individualism replacing a structured TM programme, limited and partially developed performance management practices, ad hoc career management practices, staff training that is mainly focused on the needs of the institution rather than that of the institution and the individual, more interest and trust in informal mentorship than formal mentorship, and the significant influence of line managers on TM.

5.6 Conceptualisation of Talent in Case Study B

This section offers evidence on how research participants in Case Study B conceptualise and define the term talent. Talented academics are seen in case study B as having exceptional skills that can aid the institution in achieving its goals. A professor commented:

> *"Yes, academic talent, the most talented academics are very good teachers, they are very good researchers, but also I think they need to be very good administrators as well or have a good sense of how academia works" [ResP4 HEIs B].*

Interviewees acknowledged that talented individuals within the context of their institution should have the ability to disseminate knowledge to students and the outside world, i.e., outside academia (either locally, nationally, or internationally), create knowledge by doing research, and engage the industry. The definition of academic talent above can be interpreted as a combination of exceptional abilities possessed by someone with high potential and performance. A senior lecturer explained:

> *"The first thing as an academician is the ability to disseminate our knowledge and that dissemination is not only limited to our students but worldwide, internationally, nationally, and locally as well as all stakeholders seeking the knowledge. So, it is our responsibility. And then creation of knowledge, so we must do research and that is an important thing. Then we need to engage the industry, support the industry. I think those are the three key responsibilities of academics" [ResP6 HEIs B].*

A lecturer re-echoed:

> *"...You have to be a good researcher, you need to be able to disseminate the knowledge (dissemination means including the teaching, delivery, development of resources and other things), and you should be able to engage with the industry" [ResP8 HEIs B].*

A reader added:

> *"I think we should, we can because if you look at it, this is the basic requirements of an academic: doing research and publication, teaching and industry engagement. And if someone have all these three categories, then we can say they are talented academics and if someone does not have these three basic requirements of an academic, you can say they are not talented academic. Because academics do not mean just only teaching, academics should do the research. Academics should engage with the industry" [ResP7 HEIs B].*

Interviewees suggested that talented academics can positively contribute to the development, growth, and performance of their institution if they possess the above characteristics effectively (ability to do research and publish, teach, participate in industry engagements, and be a good administrator).

An interviewee concluded:

"My experience is that not everyone is cut out to be a teacher, right. Certainly, they are individuals who have the soft skills, but they don't have the knowledge or hard skills and vice versa. I have known in my academic career lots of brilliant people if you are having a one-on-one conversation with them, they know everything they need to know but they can't impact that to students. So, they can talk at this high level of academia, but they don't know how to bring it down to students' level for them to understand. So certainly, they are lots of people who have those hard skills, but they can't impact the knowledge. When I say impact, I mean engage and connect with the students" [ResP6 HEIs B].

The above view also reiterates the significance of student satisfaction in their institution and today's HEI context, especially with the emancipation of NPM principles. The definitions and comments from interviewees also indicate that talent includes a range of abilities and skills that can either be innate, acquired, or a blend of both. For example, one can learn to be an effective teacher/lecture through education and training interventions. This view suggests that while talent can include innate natural ability (nature), it can also be developed over time through various developmental interventions and acquired experience (nurture) in one's chosen career, in this case as an academic.

Statements derived from the reviewed documents indicated how talented academics enable Case Study B to achieve their strategic goals. The University Strategic Plan document for 2022 to 2027 indicates that:

"Our Schools are home to dedicated and talented colleagues and students, who can claim the following fantastic achievements: Top 20 subject ranking for Radiography, Social Policy, Physiotherapy and Social Work in The Times Good University Guide 2022; We are the 3rd largest provider of nursing in the UK supporting the NHS with 400 graduates per year…; We support the success of the Greater Manchester economy through the SME Help to Grow programme through our Business School".

In addition, the institution's Reward and Recognition statement reviewed also indicated that its,

"*... aspirations are to be an employer of choice in the higher education sector that attracts and retains talent, where employees are rewarded and recognised for their contribution*."

Various documents reviewed at institution B, including its Performance and Development Reviews (PDRs) Process documents, Academic Career Framework (ACF), Professorial Review Policy, etc., indicated the characteristics of a talented academic in the three different trajectories of teaching and learning, research, and enterprise and industry collaboration.

For instance, in terms of teaching and learning trajectory, statements derived from the reviewed documents indicated that a talented academic is:

> *"An individual who makes a significant strategic contribution to enhancing inclusive and diverse learning and teaching within and beyond the institution, who demonstrates a sustained record of successful strategic leadership in academic practice and development with impact across the sector at national and/ or international levels. External accolades may include HEA Principal Fellowship aligned to UKPSF and/or National Teaching Excellence Award e.g., National Teaching Fellow or Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence…".*

The above statement indicated that an academic talent, according to case study B, is an individual who has the required ability and aptitude that can make a significant difference to organisational performance, either through their immediate contribution or, in the longer term, by reaching the highest levels of potential. It also applies to exceptional academics who deliver excellence in teaching, research, leadership, and administration, as well as those who can become heads of schools and departments.

In addition, case study B ACF (2022) documents reviewed indicated that the criteria and indicators for the impact of an academic in the research trajectory include:

> *"An individual with the ability and potential to produce internationally - excellent independent, original, significant and rigorous research contributions to a subject area or body of knowledge… who demonstrates successful delivery of outstanding contributions to a subject area or body of knowledge, demonstrating both the ability to sustain own research and to be successful against research competition in ways appropriate to the discipline".*

The above statements and additional findings from documents reviewed at institution B clearly indicated that the case study opinion of academic talent in terms of research trajectory aligns with Van den Brink, Fruytier and Thunnissen (2013), who put forward that academic talents are those individuals that have achieved high levels of performance in terms of peer review, citation indexes, and international referred publications.

5.7 Conceptualisation of Talent Management Case Study B

The interviewees indicated that the current approach to TM in the institution is mainly an exclusive approach. Thus, TM is conceptualised as nurturing, developing, rewarding, and retaining academics that are deemed to be high performers and/or have high potential that will be of benefit to their units, departments, schools, faculties, and the institution either now or in the future. Though some interviewees oppose this approach due to their experience and ethics, the majority of interviewees acknowledged that the institution has an exclusive system of TM. Interviewees echoed that the new TM ACF framework helps to identify and develop areas of competence and strengths in individual academics as well as help them progress their careers in the organisation. Thus, what the institution is looking for is very clear, and when you do not have the abilities to demonstrate that you possess the characteristics, you cannot progress or get certain rewards. An Associate Dean explains:

> *"We should always encourage everybody. So, everybody should be given the same opportunity, everybody should be invited to be become part of something but equally we must think we are running a business in our mind, if you get somebody who is incredible talented, you want to push that person because you know you are going to get better return on your investment, so yes probably" [ResP1 HEIs B].*

Interviewees confirmed that the institution now does a lot of work around the PDRs and identifies people who have developmental needs required by the institution and who have shown they have talent for other things so that they could become richer and have more opportunities to do it. Some people buy into that big time while others just want to do their work and go home, and it is important to categorise such people for the benefit of the institution/business *[ResP1 HEIs B]*.

A Professor and Director explains some TM practices at the institution:

> *"…in three ways, obviously the Professional Development Review (PDR) systems which is the formal system of the university that nobody likes but that is there. We will be thinking for some people around coaching and mentoring in a formal way so that*

people we see as somebody who could bring something to the team, we could think about coaching and mentoring them. And the third thing is being on the Executive, is about being there and say if you want to talk, informal meeting, informal coaching and informal support and mirroring, what we do and saying you are doing well, keep at it because some people just find it difficult" [ResP2 HEIs B].

The above views indicate that TM at case study B to a large degree involves identifying, developing, rewarding, and retaining the most exceptional and promising academics in the view of the institution. The reason given to interviewees for adopting this approach is that exceptional academic contributions can have a substantial impact on the institution's performance. The aim is to create a context where the best academics can flourish, thereby benefiting the students, institutions, and society now and in the future. It is all good to want to invest time and money, i.e., resources, in things that will enable the institution to flourish, but what about empowering academics that might not be at their best now? What about performance enhancement activities for such academics? What about honouring relationships that will promote the long-term success of the institution as put forward by stewardship theory?

Interviewees also comment on how the institution in recent years has become stricter in setting expectations for performance, teaching, research, and other activities. A senior lecturer commented:

"Historically, it hasn't been taken into consideration in ………. Because like I say every year students complain about this faculty or couple of faculties and nothing has been done. I think finally I have come to hear that recently maybe in last 8 months, that the faculty was brought in and being told that you need to make these changes or else you need to go. If there were talent management system that was working effectively, this person would have had report, realistic report that tell them you need to improve otherwise you will have to leave" [ResP6 HEIs B].

Interviewees suggest that the institution now has systems in place that offer individualised personal developmental plans and supports for exceptional individuals, provide exclusive rewards and recognition for exceptional achievement (including awards and promotions), provide a framework (ACF) for setting expectations, and are willing to invest in exceptional talents. Thus, the current reward systems in the institution aligns with extrinsic reward and directive mechanisms, which bases rewards entitlements, promotions, and incentives on measurable performance criteria. However, stewardship theory proposes more in terms of reward mechanisms. The theory emphasises the total reward package that comprises both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards. Extrinsic reward in terms of base compensation at market rate, fair promotions, awards, and recognitions based on strengths. While intrinsic rewards that create a sense of community, treat individuals like owners and partners, honour relationships, as well as create a sense of autonomy and development.

A professor re-echoed:

> *"So there is quite a strong sense in the University of ……… which is share across all UK universities that people should be rewarded specifically on their individual performance so you will difference in academic level, lecturer, senior lecturer, at professorial level there is even a difference in the amount of salary awarded according to whose research income, how many publications, how many PhD students and so on and so forth" [ResP4 HEIs B].*

In terms of the focus of the institution B when it comes to academic TM. A lecturer explains:

> *"Academic expectation like I mentioned will cover opportunities for research, opportunity for industry engagement, and the teaching. When these three things are happening, we are happy. We have limited opportunity for research because of high orientation for teaching. So, intellectually it has negative effect on my expectation. That is the motivation intrinsic side and if you look at the financial side, if you do not get the next promotion of course again it demotivates you because financially you will get less salary" [ResP5 HEIs B].*

Given the fact that the institution is more teaching-focused, thus the emphasis of their TM programme is more on teaching, despite academics being required to do research and publish as well as demonstrate some administrative commitments to be promoted. The view is further supported by a lecturer and admissions lead:

> *"The amount of additional work to recruit these students to the university is excessive but the university target are income generation and success, and if you don't bring the right students in you don't, you don't have income generation and you don't have the success. And we hardly either get praised or thanked for that part of it. Every so often we get an email in saying you know who's got a publication, you should all be writing and being published, but we are too busy keeping the people on sit. I know that I have some very good teaching sessions, but it never goes any further, it isn't recognised*

unless it is something that is published, and it isn't published because it is a lecture. So, I don't feel that valued by the university in the way that a small amount of praise will make a huge difference, a small amount of recognition will do" [ResP3 HEIs B].

In addition, interviewees also explained that despite the fact that they achieved their PDRs' targets and met the institution's requirements for promotion, they had to wait for years without getting promoted while colleagues who have not met the required criteria set by the institution are being promoted. It is important to note that such action could hinder the sense of community, meaningfulness and wellbeing of the individuals affected, as proclaimed by stewardship theory.

An interviewee noted that:

> *"But if we look at now, I can compare, we can see other peoples' profile and their contributions, if I compare with others, we can see what they have done and who were promoted by the institution. We can simply compare. So, if we compare normally, I can't fully agree that my service is valued. Ok, I have got previous feedback saying you have done a very good job, you are making good effort, you have done a brilliant job in this area, and so on. I got that types of informal appraisals right but when it come to the formal acceptances, you should have the opportunity for the next step promotion which I have been waiting for 5 years now" [ResP5 HEIs B].*

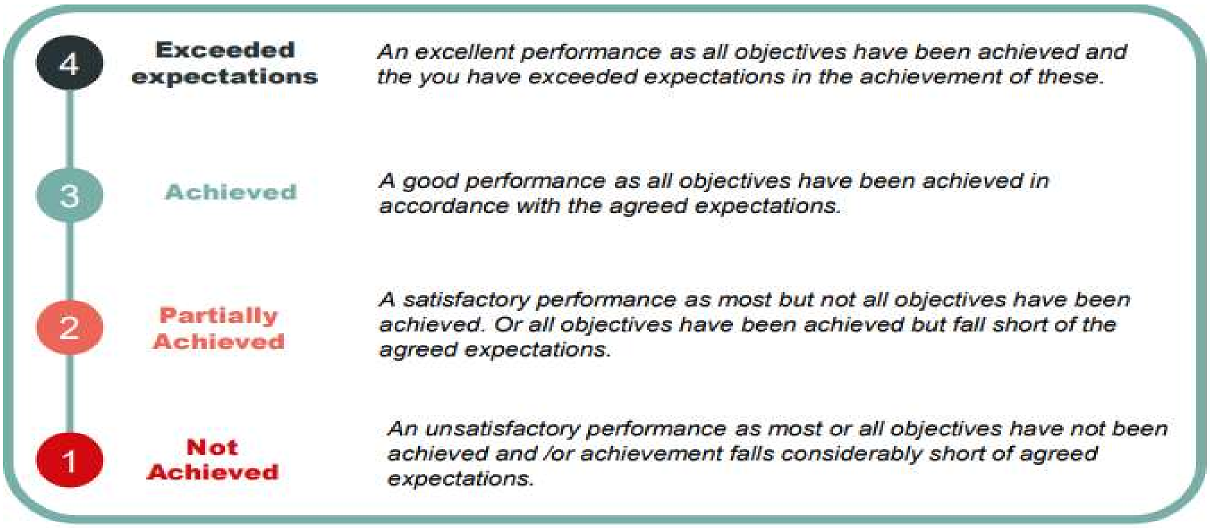
Thus, the above assertion indicates that interviewees in case study B conceptualised the operationalisation of TM at their institution as an exclusive approach.

The institution's ACF indicates that the framework is designed to support academics to deliver the best teaching, research, and enterprise/industry engagement through the provision of training and development activities that are mapped not only to the institution's requirements but also to individual academic career aspirations. Case study B indicated in its ACF framework introductory message reviewed that through the ACF they:

> "*…will be able to identify and grow our own talent through a transparent approach that you can use and aspire to. It also helps us to benchmark performance in a transparent and equitable way aligned to a structured framework*".

The ACF aims to remove any form of disparity between different academic trajectory with opportunities for successful development, recognition, and progression across teaching, research, and enterprise. The ACF contains what good performances look like at the institution and across different career phases and trajectories. It is important to note that the ACF is aligned to external metrics such as the *Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), the Research* Excellence Framework (REF), the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF), etc. Achievements against the ACF have four ratings, which include 4 (exceed expectations), 3 (achieved), 2 (partially achieved), and 1 (not achieved). See Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3: Academic Career Framework (ACF) Ratings



Source: Case Study B ACF, 2022

Further evidence of TM in case study B is the Performance and Career Conversations (PCC). The purpose and objective of the PCC is to improve performance and enhance career development and wellbeing through:

- Setting specific and meaningful objectives aligned to the ACF.
- Having clarity about role responsibilities and required contribution to the wider school and university objectives.
- Understanding what is expected in terms of behaviours.
- To be able to evaluate one's contribution against that of other colleagues in a clear and transparent way.
- To reflect on one's career path and next steps in terms of support and responsibilities.

In addition, though the feedback from academics is that the institution's PDR meetings are to tick-box exercises instead of two-way conversations, there is no doubt that it gives individuals the opportunity to set and review their performance goals and career development, receive feedback from the line manager, clarify job purpose, and record objectives.

Given the practices discussed above and other practices such as the various training and development programmes as well as reward practices evident at case study B, there is no doubt that TM practices are on the rise at the institution as a result of the introduction of NPM in UK HEIs.

5.8 Academics' experience of TM practices in the context of NPM at Case Study B

The four main themes that emerged from academics' experience of the operationalisation of TM in the institution are presented in the subsections below:

5.8.1 Individualism replaces a structured TM programme

Interviewees acknowledged that despite the move by case study B towards a structured and collective programme and practices of TM, the institution can be said to be characterised by several individualist practices that emphasise the autonomy of academics in delivering their responsibilities (in terms of teaching methods, designing courses, freedom to choose research areas, managing research projects, and how they pursue their academic interests as well as their personal growth in their chosen trajectory). Interviewees also comment that individualist practices that expect individual academics to take personal responsibility for their career, professional, and personal development that align with their individual goals, allow academic freedom, freedom to explore novel ideas that could lead to groundbreaking research, freedom to belong to different networks and choose formal/informal mentors within and outside their institution, acceptance of diverse viewpoints, as well as practices that acknowledge and reward individual academics exceptional achievements in teaching, research, and other academic-related areas, are still the order of the day in case study B.

A programme and admission lead comments:

“The admission role I am left to my own devises where we do have some senior persons who just contact us but because we do our job well, we don’t really hear much of those people…Is more often just group email, we are not really identified individually for many things is more group communication…Yes, I think the organisation expectation is more accomplish the job and as long nothing goes wrong, drastically wrong that’s it” [ResP3 HEIs B].

A professor added that:

“…so then obviously you set yourself targets to achieve those things you need to do if you want to be a professor [ResP2 HEIs B].

A senior lecturer re-echoed:

“…………… gives you nothing. So, I have to climb this ladder by myself, I need to pay for my own conference, I need to pay for my own data collection, and when I publish, I do it on my own as well, right” [ResP6 HEIs B].

When asked if the institution has a structured framework or system in place to identify, develop, reward and retain academic talents. An Associate Dean for Operations and Strategy explains*:*

“Not that I know of, I know there is something they are look at as a university, but I don’t think it is something that they have actually lined down yet because they are moving onto this academic career framework (ACP) which will kind of be there to help people get things through, but I am not quite sure yet that it is at that stage” [ResP1 HEIs B].

Interviewees confirm that case study B does not currently have a full-fledged, well-structured, and collectivist TM system in place that identifies, develops, rewards, and retains talents within the university as advocated by stewardship theory. Such a system aims at investment and management of talent to achieve collaborative and collective goals and objectives, as well as creating a high trust and enabling environment that is long-term orientated. In such context, individual talents are encouraged to collaborate and network within the organisation, share knowledge, embark on special projects, publish together, and aim for group awards. In such systems, open metrics are used to measure the effectiveness of the TM practices to make sure they align with the institution’s strategic goals and objectives.

There were no interviewees comments on collective recognition and a reward mechanism in place that recognises and rewards talent units or the wider faculty for their contribution to the institution and society in general. However, what is currently obtainable in the institution in terms of TM is more of individualism and an exclusive approach to TM that acknowledges autonomy, personal responsibility, academic freedom, allows personal professional and career development, as well as acknowledges, celebrates, and values individual academic contributions and achievements.

An interviewee highlighted that:

> *"The university doesn't focus enough on personal development. When I go through the performance appraisal and planning for the next year with my unit, is almost like ticking the boxes. Did you do this, did you do that. But there is no genuine discussion on, ……. where do you see yourself going in the future, what are your areas of interest, what are the things you want to develop, what are the things we need to develop as a unit and so on" [ResP6 HEIs B].*

Hence, concerning the opinion of academics shared across case study B about the operationalisation of TM, most of the interviewees share similar views, which suggest that inclusive TM is not grounded in the institutions, and what they see is a high level of individualism where academics have to manage their responsibilities, research, development, and careers themselves with little or no well-structured system or framework that covers all practices of TM and support from the institutions.

Evidence from case study B documents reviewed indicated that in 2011, the institution introduced the academic role descriptions and expectations of the academic standards manual, which provides a comprehensive set of descriptions for substantive academic roles and non-substantive academic roles at the institution. The manual was put together by the institution's Academic Roles Working Group to address the need for clear job descriptions and consistent role profiles for academic staff at the institution. The manual contains clear information about the responsibilities of academics, and it is designed to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of academic staff align correctly with the responsibilities of professional services and support staff because of school structures as well as consistency across schools, faculties, and colleges. The introductory section of the manual contains its purpose and benefits, as well as how the manual might be used by all parties, including individual academic staff.

Information in the manual documents reviewed also clearly indicates key tasks and activities as well as clear expectations of all academic staff and role holders ranging from Dean of School, Associate Dean, Director, Professor, Reader, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer, New Lecturer, Teaching and Learning Intern, Senior Tutor, Research Fellow, Research Assistant, Programme Leader, Module Leader to Personal Tutor, which is in coherent with the institution's student charter. In line with how documents of such nature are very proactive in the private sector organisation, the institution stressed that the manual will be reviewed and updated annually to reflect the internal and external needs and requirements of her stakeholders (such as commercial partners, employers, regulatory bodies, students, parents, colleagues, partner organisations, and other universities and colleges) and changes in the institution's practice, as well as enable the institution to adopt consistent and coordinated approaches. It is the belief of the institution that the manual will help the academic staff to understand their role better, the reporting structure, the relationship between different academic roles, the progression route, and the main profession services. The manual comprises three sections, which include the general expectations of academic standards (which include the learning and teaching expectations), descriptors of substantive academic roles, and descriptors of non-substantive roles.

The institution indicated that, the document could be used in the following ways: to support consistent working practices across the university by providing clear statements of responsibility and accountability for particular tasks and topics, to identify roles and responsibilities for constituent parts of university processes and systems, including identifying key interfaces between roles, to embed effective use of the ACF/PDR process by providing a clear framework for both reviewer and reviewee to base their discussions on, and to facilitate objective setting, to identify development needs for role holders, to support them in performing their role effectively, to inform the job description and person specification, and support the recruitment process for a new member of staff, to support induction of new members of staff by identifying key responsibilities, key contacts and development needs, and to support career progression within the university, by providing guidance on content and responsibilities of different roles. The institution also indicated that the manual is designed in relation to a range of the institution's policies and procedures, as determined through their scheme of governance.

In addition, evidence from the University and College Union (2021) document reviewed indicated that, as of 2019/2020, case study B still has a significant number and percentage of staff on fixed-term contracts by job family. For example, the total number of all academic staff on fixed-term contracts at the institution stood at 130, which accounts for 12% of the total academic staff number. In terms of teaching staff only, the institution had 35, which accounts for 19% of the total number. In terms of research-only staff, 35 academics belong to this category, which accounts for 60%. While in the teaching and research staff, 60 academics are on fixed-term contracts, which accounts for 7% of the workforce that belongs to this segment. Institution B is not also left out of HEIs that use hourly paid contracts, zero hours contracts, and atypical staff. Evidence from UCU also indicated that Institution B has 505 academics on different forms of atypical contracts that are outside full-time employment with no regular hours. Having such short-term contracts indicates the institution's interest in short-term tangible outputs and self-interest.

5.8.2 Emerging Performance Management Practices

This section offers evidence on the opinion of interviewees on a key component of TM, which focusses on assessing how well academics are contributing to the institution's strategic objectives and goals, discussion and setting of expectations, provision of feedback, and support they get for their professional development. It is evident among interviewees that performance management practices have evolved over the years in case study B in response to various changes in administrative (NPM), educational, demographical, and technological circumstances/reforms. The emerging performance management practices happen to be the second most recurring theme among the research participants at the institution. Evidence indicates that the emerging practices that are currently prominent in the institution are to ascertain that TM practices and academics are performing effectively as well as aligned with units, schools, faculties, and the institution's strategic goals and objectives. The practices are also influenced by the institution's strategic priorities as contained in its various policies and procedures. The nodes/subthemes that were common amongst interviewees in relations to performance management practices are: performance related conversations (annual performance review/discussion), performance development review meetings, outcome-based evaluation, ACP, students feedback, teaching and student experience, student centric practices, student satisfaction and retention, teaching excellence (related to Teaching Excellence Framework – TEF), poor or lack of professional role related training (career related), development and training programme, corporate practices training (mandatory, induction etc.), research impact, industry and community partnership and engagement, digital learning and technology, data driven metric, KPIs, etc.

The research participants openly expressed their opinion about the operationalisation of TM in relation to performance management, which is a key component of TM. Their insights reflect their opinion about the role students feedback, teaching and student experience, student-centric practices, student satisfaction, and retention now play in the performance management of academic talents at the institution currently. This indicates that apart from the command-and-control efforts by top management of the institution, leaders of the university monitor closely the results of the institution's performance outcomes mainly from the students' perspective as required by their regulatory bodies rather than focussing on what is meaningful for both the staff and the institution.

A senior lecturer explains:

> *"There is a colleague, I am not going to call her name for five years I have been in ………….(name of institution) this faculty always have bad review from students, really bad reviews, of course sometimes you need to take that with pinch of salt because sometimes students could be harsh untruthful but I think in this instance they were truthful because there were so much evidence that says that this person, this faculty need to do one or two things. Is either they improve the delivery, nothing wrong with the staff knowledge, the faculty has the knowledge, but the delivery style has to change because for the students we need to focus more on being customer centric and that is outside of academia as well" [ResP6 HEIs B].*

He further explained:

> *"I said, every year students complain about this faculty or couple faculties and nothing has been done. I think finally I have come to hear that recently maybe in last 8 months, that the faculty was brought in and being told that you need to make these changes or else you need to go. If there were HR or talent management system was working effectively this person would have had report, realistic report that tell them you need to improve otherwise you will leave or have to leave" [ResP6 HEIs B].*

Interviewees also indicated that the institution's PDRs are an essential element of the TM system they have in place. PDRs are usually expected to cover things like teaching effectiveness/evaluation, research output, professional development, performance appraisals, discussion around promotion and tenure, review feedback from students, review of service and administration, internal peer review, line manager review and feedback, external peer review, etc. The focus of the PDRs is to monitor and control how well individuals at all levels have done their allocated responsibilities rather than focussing on performance at the group level, which stewardship theory proposes will promote a sense of community and development, as well as intrinsic rewards.

An Associate Dean comments:

> *"We do a lot of work around the PDR and identify people who have got development needs and who have shown they have got talent for other things so that they could become more richer and have more opportunities to do it. Some people buy into that big time why some other people say that they just want to do the work and go home, and I think that's fine. I absolutely think that's fine, people who say they are not doing extra work" [ResP1 HEIs B].*

When asked if is ethical to treat people different because of the outcome of PDRs, he further commented that:

> *"We should always encourage everybody. So, everybody should be given the same opportunity, everybody should be invited to become part of something but equally we have to think we are running a business in our mind, if you get somebody who is incredible talented, you want to push that person because you know you are going to get better return on your investment, so yes probably [ResP1 HEIs B].*

A Lecturer explained that:

> *"We have what is call PDR. Performance Review meetings. Annual Performance Review meeting, Normally, we have twice a year, the mid-term and the final. That is the opportunity we have to set the performance targets, talk about the challenges and barriers we have, and normally we can communicate. In addition, we have normally daily and weekly basis we have issues doing our jobs we can communicate. In addition, we have formal meetings, unit, and department level meetings where we can communicate things. At personal level and career level you have to communicate with the line manager, or you can communicate with the senior managers" [ResP5 HEIs B].*

A Professor commented that:

> *"Yes, we have three meetings (PDRs) a year with our line managers, start of the year to set objectives, middle of the year to see how things are going and end of the year to see how is gone and what you want to do next year. Well, I suppose really two meetings a year because the first one is how things went last year and what you want to do this year, then there is one at middle year again to see how it's going, then you get to the end of the year to see how is gone. And it is usually an hour each time, there is plenty of time to do that and my manager is also available if you need to contact them about something specific outside of those for a meeting in relation to what you are doing yeah. So, I think there is sufficient time" [ResP4 HEIs B].*

The Professor further commented that:

> *"Yes, yes, I had two-line managers. I had one for teaching and one for research. I met with both of them, the line manager for teaching discussed with me, what I will teach and what I was expected to do and the line manager for research explained how the research administrative framework works and how I will fit into that and how they would monitor my research activities and give me time to do the research based on what I was producing" [ResP4 HEIs B].*

In conclusion, despite interviewees acknowledging the importance of performance management measures, most especially the PDRs in case study B, some interviewees still see some of the components of performance management as a tick-box exercise and, as a result, are still emerging with a main focus on the needs of the institution rather than meeting both the needs of university and academics. A lecturer comments:

> *"Yes, my expectations and that of the employer expectations, if you look at that, because of the career progress level, I think I have achieved all my targets, publication, teaching, supervision, during this past five years my students have successfully completed well, I have run my modules well. Unfortunately, progress, career progression and promotions, I didn't get what I expected yet" [ResP8 HEIs B].*

Therefore, the above accounts indicate how performance management measures are used to align academic talent performance to case study B's strategic goals and objectives as well as academic excellence.

Evidence collected from case study B documents also indicated that the institution does not only set KPIs at the individual, unit, department, school, or faculty level but also at the institution or corporate level. This means that more measures that require a clear definition of goals, targets, and KPIs of quantification outputs, which are part of key practices of TM, were introduced at the institution because of NPM. These measures are more directive performance management mechanisms than stewardship-based performance management mechanisms. A very good example is the introduction of the ACF, which the institution believes will contribute positively to its KPIs and Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) outcomes.

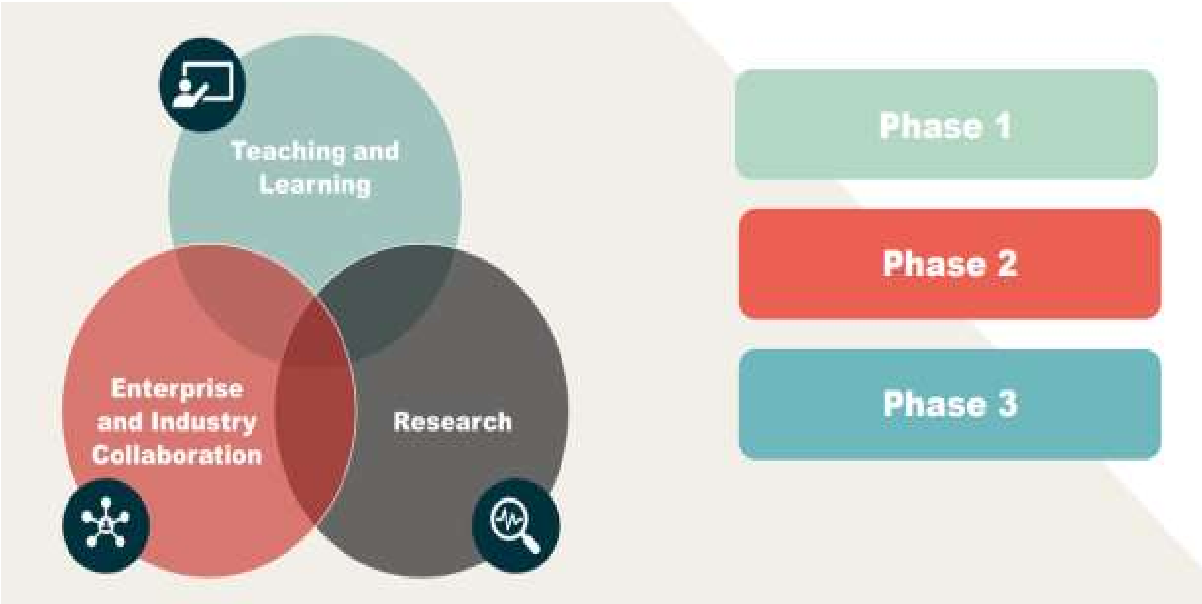
The ACF was introduced to replace the PDR as a more holistic and transparent approach that guides and supports academics in attaining their career aspirations as well as line managers in effectively and efficiently reviewing their subordinates' performance against set performance indicators. It is the aim of the management of the institution that the ACF will enable academics to deliver the best teaching, research, and enterprise mapping their training and development needs not only to their individual career aspirations but also to the institution's requirements. The institution added in their ACF Guide (2022/23) that they,

> *"... will be able to identify and grow our own talent through a transparent approach that you can use and aspire to. It also helps us to benchmark performance in a transparent and equitable way aligned to a structured framework... It's a key enabler for great performance and career conversations (PCC) and setting meaningful objectives"* (Statements derived from the reviewed documents).

Just like KPI documents obtainable in private sector institutions, the ACF at institution B is a well-structured document that indicates what good performance looks like across the institution at different career levels, phases, specialities, as well as different subject areas. The ACF framework provides line managers with clear, meaningful objectives for PCC with their colleagues and clear direction for academics at different levels to follow through the provision of different pathways for progression routes across teaching, research, and enterprise and their career aspirations and development, as well as opportunities for successful recognition and reward.

The ACF framework follows an annual cycle that explores the varied career paths that are available. The pathway has leadership threaded through it, with phases building broadly from individual contributions to leading a team and leading leaders. While the framework also clearly includes criteria that describe three main career routes or pathways that define academic expertise and leadership skills and competences across three career stages of teaching and learning, research, and enterprise and industry collaboration.

Figure 5.4: Institution B ACF Guide, 2022/23



Source: Institution B ACF Guide, 2022/23

It is to be noted that the ACF is applicable to all permanent and fixed-term academic colleagues, whether full-time or part-time, and academics and their line managers are expected to use it as a tool for conversations in performance review and professional/career development needs as it aligns with the national Researcher Development Framework (RDF).

The institution also acknowledges that with the ever-evolving requirements of TEF, REF, KEF, OfS and their own internal as well as external environment, the ACF must remain current and up to date, not only reactive to the requirements but also proactive to the anticipated changes. Therefore, it is planned that ACF will be reviewed annually by specialists across the university to ensure that the pathways continue to reflect the lived academic experience but also support the development that sits alongside each pathway so that a new version could be released for each academic year. The new version is usually introduced in the last week of an existing academic year for the next academic year. The institution stressed that the intention is not to keep changing the expectations, but for the documents and their criteria to remain reflective of the current reality. In contrast to what is obtainable with a stewardship-based mechanism where strategic priorities are discussed and agreed upon among the different stakeholders, and in this case, including academics at different levels and trajectories of the organisation, top leadership at the corporate level in case study B sets the goals, strategic objectives, and priorities of the ACF.

For academics new to ACF, it is expected that it will guide them in their conversation with their line manager to set objectives and discuss their performance targets and developments, while for existing academics/those that have used it before, it will serve as a reference point during their annual performance review meeting as well as a reminder of how to use the ACF effectively. Therefore, the ACF is both a development and performance tool because academics could use the framework to benchmark your own personal performance, strengths, and career development plans against the indicators set out within the framework, and line managers could use it to discuss and set objectives for both performance and practical career development support during PCC with their teams. Just as Institution B added, "The ACF is aligned to key university priorities and key metrics (e.g., for REF, TEF, and KEF outputs, student quality metrics, i.e., progression and employability), which are referenced throughout all the career phases. It identifies and recognises those successes and contributions across all the key career phases." This means more measures that require a clear definition of goals, targets, and key performance indicators (KPIs) of quantification outputs have been introduced at Institution B because of NPM, and the argument for this is that for you to hold people accountable, you need to give them clear statements of goals, objectives, targets, and performance indicators.

Apart from the ACF, which is a key performance measurement tool, other documents such as the Professorial Review Policy, the Professorial Review Form (PRF), the Professorial Review Profile (PRP), Significant Responsibility for Research (SRR), the Annual REF Code of Practice, the HEIF accountability statement, and so on are recent mechanisms put in place by Institution B as a result of NPM to set clear targets and performance indicators for academics at different levels of their career within the institution. For example, the Professorial Review Policy indicated that the Professorial Review process is designed to provide a mechanism whereby the university can evaluate and recognise professorial performance. This evaluation is based on an evidence-based approach for underpinning self-assessment and peer evaluation through the Professorial Review Form and through a set of empirical measures that will form an individual profile for the Professor (Institution B, Professorial Review Profile Document).

Evidence from case study B also indicated that, as a result of NPM and TM, the institution now uses quantitative performance indicators contained in its strategic framework and its faculty annual reports to measure the outputs of individuals, units, faculties, schools, and the institution as a whole rather than the previous use of bureaucratic procedures and reliance on input control. There is now more focus on outputs and outcomes controls and less emphasis on processes and inputs at the institution. For example, the institution's Strategic Framework 2005-2015 identifies the strategic priorities designed to steer the medium-term development of the university as well as outlines the performance indicators to measure progress and effectiveness.

Statements derived from the reviewed framework documents indicated that the university wants to be recognised as:

> *"…an enterprising university, achieving internationally recognised excellence in education for capability, research for the real world, and partnership with business and the community."*

Over the years, the strategic framework has become more quantitative in nature in terms of performance indicators to measure outputs as a result of the impact of NPM and TM. For instance, the current corporate strategic framework of the institution 2022–2027 indicates clear quantitative performance indicators to measure the university success in terms of outputs. This defers rather from the previous use of bureaucratic procedures and reliance on input control, as well as the early stage of NPM within the institution when qualitative measures were the case. See details of the breakdown of case study B performance success indicators as contained in its corporate strategy for 2022–2027 reviewed in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2. Case Study B Measure of Success indicators

MEASURE	**TARGET (2026/27)**
Education (cohort completion, National Student Survey (NSS), Qualification Achievement Rate (QAR), graduate employability)	Top 50
Total number of full-time equivalent students (including international)	30,000
Total number of international students (FTE)	7,500
Apprenticeships new starts	> 850 a year by 2026/27
Colleague body that better represents our community	
Innovation (grade point average in the Research Excellence Framework	Top 50

Absolute Scope 1 and 2 (a carbon emissions measure relating to our heat and power)	81% reduction from 2006 to 2030
Building quality, A & B ratings - the highest quality ratings in building classification types	90%
Surplus as a percentage of income	5%+

(Source: Case Study B Corporate Strategy for 2022 – 2027)

As indicated on the table above, the expectations of the institution in terms of performance and how it will be measured are clearly stated. For instance, the institution has set a target for itself to be among the top 50 universities in the UK in terms of each cohort completion, the National Student Survey (NSS) from their students, Qualification Achievement Rate (QAR), and graduate employability. Just as the University VC stressed in the institution's 2022 annual report reviewed that,

> "*The twin pillars of education and research are the core of what we do. And this strategy sets out our aspiration to become a top 50 university for both our teaching and our research."*

The institution is also very specific in terms of the total number of full-time equivalent students and full-time international students they intend to have by the 2026/2027 academic year, which is 30,000 and 7,500, respectively. As well as the apprenticeships, which are a new and popular area due to government policy, that institution aims at a number higher than 850 a year by 2026/27.

Evidence from the university's 2017 annual report document reviewed indicated how the institution has performed against its key success indicators in the areas of education, research, student recruitment, and income for three consecutive academic years. See Figure 5.5.

Figure 5.5 Case study B - university key performance indicators - 1

Category	Core indicator	Actuals		
		2016/17	2015/16	2014/15
TEF	Teaching on my course (%)	85	85	85
	Assessment & Feedback (%)	75	76	75
	Academic Support (%)	81	80	80
	Highly Skilled Graduates (%)	70.7	60.1	58.8
	Non-Continuation (%)	11.8	13.9	11.7
REF	Research Active Staff (%)	87	78	77
	Research Income (£ '000s)	5,523	6,203	5,937
	Enterprise Income (£ '000s) (Per HEBCIS return including elements of research and CPD activity)	13,399	15,633	16,664
Institutional Sustainability	Surplus/(Deficit) % of Income	3.3	3.4	(2.6)
	Pay to income ratio %	54	53.7	56.2
	Overall recruitment (FTE) [All students including franchise]	19,848	19,541	18,565
	Inward international (FTE)	1,562	1,951	2,244
	TNE recruitment (FTE)	1,702	1,550	1,172

(Source: Case Study B 2017 Annual Report)

The above table clearly indicates areas of growth, stagnation, and decline in terms of the institutions' core success indicators. For example, student feedback in terms of "teaching on my course" remains at 85% over the three academic years (2014/15, 2015/16, and 2016/17) while the "research active staff" percentage has a steady increase across the three academic years, ranging from 77%, 78%, and 87%, respectively. However, while the overall student (FTE) and transnational education (TNE) recruitment experience increases during the three-year academic period. However, the inward international (FTE) experienced a continuous drop from what it was in 2014/15 academic year 2,244, to 1,951 in 2015/16, and then to 1,562 in 2016/17 academic year. As a result of the areas the university experienced drops, the institution identified their top five risk areas and came up with five strategic priority areas they need to focus on with mitigating activities to address the fall in the areas.

Evidence from the university's 2022 annual reports reviewed uncovered how the institution employs smart tools to monitor progress towards its corporate strategy targets. According to the reviewed document, the institution establishes performance targets that describe their ambition within their strategic priorities and that allowed them to track the value they create in those areas. Thus, their performance is reflected across the targets established for 2021–22. The 2022 annual reports considered data for the last three years and indicate the areas the institution met or exceeded target, within 5% of target, and missed target. See figure 5.6.

Figure 5.6: Case Study B - University Key Performance Indicators - 2

UNIVERSITY CORE INDICATORS	ACTUALS			TREND	HIT TARGET
	19-20	20-21	21-22		
Teaching on my course (%)	81	75	77		—
Assessment & Feedback (%)	75	69	70		—
Organisation & Management (%)	70	64	65		✗
Graduates in professional employment or further study (%)	70	67	67		—
Progression (%)	82.7	81.9	77.4		✗
Research & Knowledge Exchange (£'000s)	11,938	11,948	13,242		✗
Citations Impact (Field weighted)	1.28	1.26	1.34		✓
Controllable day to day operating surplus as % of income	3.8	7.1	8.2		✓
Pay to income ratio % (excluding exceptional costs)	58.5	53.9	50.7		—
Overall student recruitment (headcount)	26,247	29,442	30,957		✓
Inward international student recruitment including distance learning (headcount)	1,656	2,921	4,248		✓
TNE: Transnational Education taught outside the UK recruitment (headcount)	4,126	4,784	4,734		✓
Building quality – A+B (%)	90	92	92		✓

Keys: ✓ Met or exceeded target — Within 5% of target ✗ Missed target

(Source: Case Study B 2022 Annual Report)

Evidence from the institution's 2022 annual report documents reviewed also highlighted what it is doing to remedy missed targets and ensure that they meet or surpass the target for those areas of the university core indicators that are within 5% of the target. For example, the assessment and feedback metric has declined to 70% 2021/22 academic year from 75% that it was in the 2019/20 academic year. Statements drawn from the reviewed documents indicated that the institution places a strong emphasis on teaching, assessment, and feedback, with academic and professional services teams collaborating closely to improve future performance.

The evidence from interviewees and statements derived from the reviewed documents in this section shows how a key component of TM, performance management practices, which focus on assessing how well academics contribute to the institution's strategic objectives and goals, is emerging at Case Study B. Interviewees and documents reviewed show that TM and performance management practices in case study B have evolved over time in response to changes in administrative (NPM), educational, demographic, and technological circumstances/reforms.

5.8.3 Individualised and Ad hoc Career Management Practices

Evidence indicates that there are some open efforts by the management of case study B to support the career development of academics through the ACF, which some interviewees acknowledged is transparent to some extent but not currently standardised and compulsory for staff and managers to use at all levels of the institution. Interviewees acknowledged that the framework is designed to support career growth and flexibility within the institution, enabling academics at different stages of their career to work in the career pathways or trajectory that match their strengths and/or interests with the additional opportunity of exploring other career trajectories. However, implementing the requirements and meeting the criteria of the framework do not actually mean academics will progress in their career or be promoted by the institution. A lecturer explains:

> *"We now have a framework called the Academic Career Framework (ACF) recently introduced, which include some guidelines. But in terms of progression and promotion, universities can't promote all the academics because it depends on the budget and other requirements. What is really happening in the universities is politics, because sometimes you can see someone with less experience, less performance, and less research promoted if management wants" [ResP5 HEIs B].*

A Reader further explains how this impacts staff:

> *"Of course, demotivating because that is the nature of human, you compare with other colleagues, because we can see what they have done and what I have done, we can simply compare. Everything is visible, so whether this person have done publication, whether they are committed to the job, whether they have supported students, engaged students all these are open things. It demotivates, it happens to many people, not only me" [ResP7 HEIs B].*

Interviewees indicate that career management and development is not all about coming up with a framework, but individuals need time, resources, and opportunities to achieve the criteria in the framework. A senior lecturer comments:

> *"Career development opportunities for academics means opportunities for research, opportunities for professional engagement but I think the university are now paying more attention for the teaching, than the other two because money comes mainly through the students. Therefore research, research opportunities very less when it comes to the real work which is actually a big problem because we need research. There is a limited opportunity for research because of the pressure for the teaching [ResP6 HEIs B].*

The above view was further echoed by a lecturer who stressed the importance of continuing development and financial support as well as networking opportunities for building professional and career advancement opportunities which are essential for his career management and development needs, and the impact his current workload is having on his career aspirations:

> *"Certainly, I am prepared, I have told someone just this week in one of my research meetings that listen, research opportunity if they don't support me soon, I am sure explicit support soon, the next opportunity with better job, with better research like stuff, I am gone. So, it does have clear impact, if they don't support and like I said I have been shouting for five years about research and I have only one publication in five years. One publication in five years, one three-star, and that is because in part I am not getting the time to do research, I am not getting supported to travel and go conference and do papers and so on. So, giving me the work time and financial support is very important" [ResP9 HEIs B].*

An interviewee also stressed the problems of lack of time, a clear succession plan to prepare academics for leadership roles within her school, poor work-life balance to help academics manage their professional lives and work burnout, a lack of career path planning that will enable academics to plan their career development effectively within the institution as obtainable in the industry, and fair recognition of efforts and promotion that can increase academic motivation and job satisfaction:

> *"The university puts a lot of activities on. The problem we have is that we don't have the time to go to them or the capacity to go to them. So, it might be a full day or two full days or it might be in a lunch hour down the road when we are trying to squeeze tutorials in because our students don't have all summer off. Our students only have 6 weeks holiday a year, 6 to 7 weeks. So, they are always around, or we are always dealing with something which is very different to other courses, so we don't have the capacity to go off to a training session [ResP3 HEIs B].*

She added that:

> *"I might just say, if you wanted one word recognition. Hmm we are working at a high level with no recognition, with no thanks, no appreciation for what we are doing. Financial reward yes of course but an internal part way to promotion without advertising post externally, the talents are in the university why somebody externally without looking at what is here because I know I am good enough to do that admission job. I also know my other four colleagues are also good enough to do it. So why have they then looked past us and go external to advertise the post. The university need to show some loyalty to its staff and create some pathways for them to progress. You know is a place where you find some of the most intelligent people in the country working in the university, so if you are going to bypass them and bring somebody else why would you do that, why is like being ignored and to me if you are not feeling wanted or rewarded then is a problem. And unfortunately, I do know that is across the board the people feel the same so" [ResP3 HEIs B].*

Interviewees indicated that they would like to see career management and development practices like those in some industries where there is clear career path planning, investment in individuals, formal mentorship, coaching, and personalised performance feedback that highlight areas of personal improvement that support continuing career development, and opportunities for training and development programmes that are not just business focused but also met the personal career advancement of academics as espoused by stewardship theory. An Associated Dean comments:

> *"I would like to see something like a "rising star" programme. Like you see in the industry where people are identified may be year one or two when they come into the institution as rising stars, and they are given a kind of definitive programme. What is it you want to do? So, I want to be a Research Professor, so we say this is how you get to be a Research Professor. If you want to be an Associate Dean in Research and Development, this is how you get to do that, and you do things may be things like mentoring or shadowing or maybe you give them some responsibilities so that they can develop their talent" [ResP1 HEIs B].*

Some faculties also confirmed that they have an actual career plan in place.

> *"There is a career progression structure that academics should know about, that is promoted by the university [ResP1 HEIs B].*

However, this is not a standardised practice in case study B as confirmed by the interviewee below who indicates that she has a personal career plan in place:

> *"He will say ………… you are very good at this and this, I think you will be also good at this when have our PDR meetings, I have got a career plan. All the ideas will go on a Career Plan, obvious we a big kind of organisation we have a new structure in our school at the moment and within the new structure I kind of have a new role in that new structure" [ResP2 HEIs B].*

Thus, the above testimonies indicate that career management practices are still in their ad hoc stage and more of an individualised practice at case study B compared to what is obtainable in industry. Which in most cases is standardised and occurs at the group level rather than focussing on how well the individual has performed in the past to determine who gets recognition for career development support as proposed by stewardship theory.

The drive to adopt successful private-sector management approaches, tools, and practices in the public institutions was obvious in case study B, with a shift from the rigid bureaucratic style of management to more flexible means of recruiting, selecting, human resource planning, performance management, and rewards, as well as greater use of public relations practices within and outside the institution, such as using terms like academic talents. For example, various documents reviewed in the institution indicated new initiatives like those obtainable in private section organisations.

Evidence from the institution's ACF guide and related documents reviewed indicated that it is a performance and TM scheme that is like what is obtainable in private sector organisations. It also includes plans for frequent performance appraisal and review through its PCC conducted by line managers with their teams. For instance, ACF guide indicated that,

> *"The conversations you have throughout the year should give you a good idea of how you are doing. At the end of the year, you will receive a rating for the impact and contribution made in relation to your objectives. As your objectives are drawn from the ACF and the descriptors included, this is also an indication of your achievements against the ACF" (ACF Guide, 2022/2023).*

It is important to reiterate that the ACF is "aligned to key university priorities and key metrics (e.g., for REF, TEF, KEF outputs, student quality metrics, i.e., progression and employability), which are referenced throughout all the career phases." The purpose and agenda for PCC is also clearly stated in the ACF guide, which includes:

i. Setting defined and relevant objectives matched with ACF.
ii. Understanding your role in achieving school and university objectives.
iii. Understanding expected behaviours.
iv. Establish a clear and honest evaluation of your contribution in comparison to peers.
v. Reflect on your career path and next steps, including support and responsibilities (ACF Guide, 2022/2023).

Line managers and their teams are expected to have quality conversation PCC, which should allow individual goal setting and review, team goal setting and review, career development, two-way conversation, include feedback from line managers and peers/teams, opportunity to clarify purpose, and live objectives recorded. The drive by institution B to adopt successful private-sector management approaches, tools, and practices such as the ones discussed above indicates how NPM has attracted TM practices to the institution over the years.

Evidence from case study B documents reviewed indicated that the institution wants to be known as an organisation that "attracts and retains talent" as well as reward and recognise their contribution. And as a result, the institution has several schemes in place that ensure such rewards and recognitions are fair and equitable. Though evidence from the institution indicated that the various arrangements the institution has in place aim at increasing academic motivation and performance, it is also important to add that they also drive or stimulate competition among academics, units, departments, schools, and faculties in the institution.

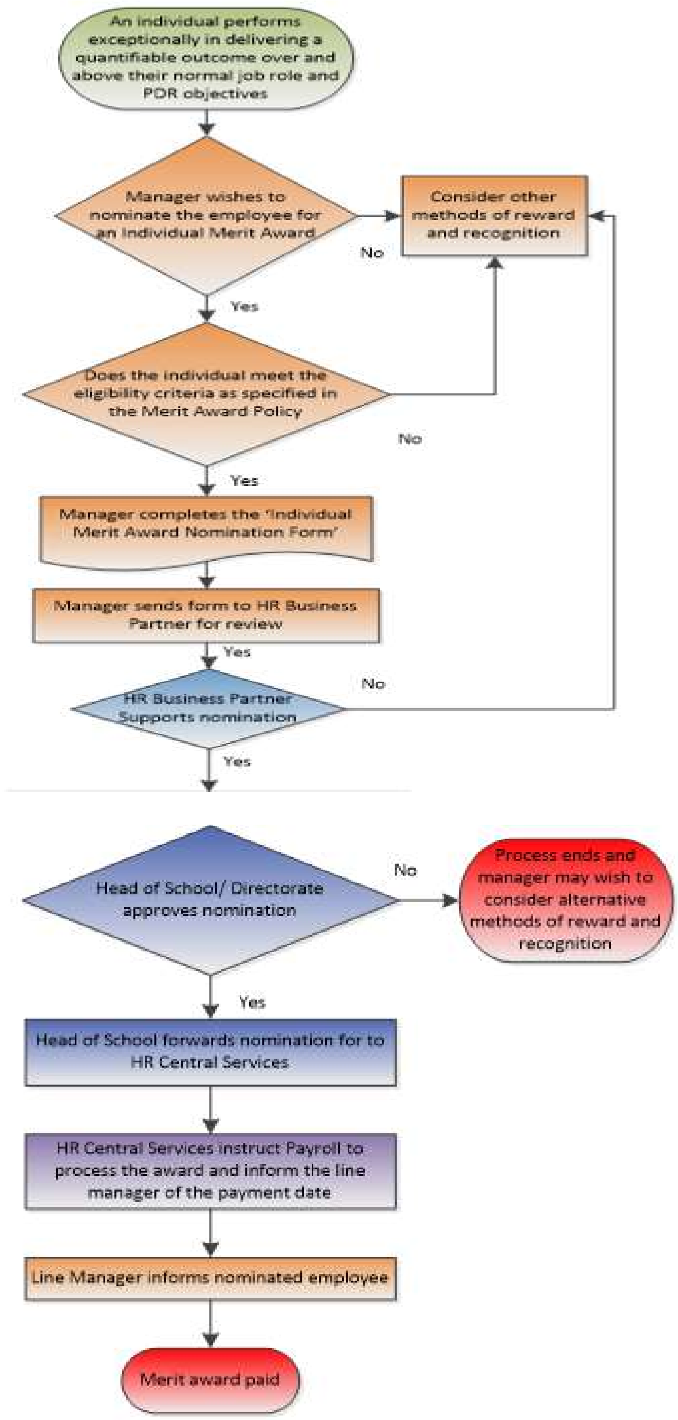
Statements derived from the reviewed documents indicated that the institution has arrangements such as the recognition of merit awards, lecturer and professorial promotions, grading, HR Excellence in Research Award, Academic Role Descriptions and Expectations of Academic Standards, HERA 14 elements scoring, additional annual leave, ACF and/or PDR, PCC, Academic Summary Form, Significant Responsibility for Research" (SRR), the institution's Ten Behaviours, REF 2021 Code of Practice scheme, etc. drive competition, self-serving, individualist options, short-term interest, and rivalry but are used to achieve the KPIs, lower costs, and promote better standards within institutions.

The Institution's merit award scheme was introduced to recognize and reward staff including academics who are supporting the institution to achieve its strategic objectives through their exceptional contribution and performance in their chosen trajectory. The institution Merit Award Policy documents reviewed indicated that the merit award scheme,

> "*…does not form part of employees' contracts of employment, and the university may amend the policy from time to time as a result of legislative or commercial requirements.*".

There are two categories of the merit award value, which include Category 1 attracting £500 and Category 2 attracting £1000 prize. The eligibility criteria for Category 1 and Category 2 merit awards are the same, and they include that the activity or event being nominated was over and above the normal job role and PDR (now ACF) objectives, the event is a major one-off activity or a sustained effort over a period of time, the activity undertaken is over and above the fundamental efforts required to support the university's objectives and evidenced by a quantifiable benefit, the exact circumstances are extremely unlikely to be repeated, and no other payment was received in relation to this activity. See Figure 5.7 Merit Award Process Map.

Figure 5.7 Merit Award Process Map



(Source: Institution B Merit Award Policy)

Accounts derived from the reviewed documents indicated that line managers are expected to nominate their subordinates by completing the Individual Merit Award Nomination Form when they feel that a member of staff meets the criteria set out in the eligibility criteria and they wish to nominate the employee for a merit award. It is important to note that individuals cannot nominate themselves for an individual merit award; it is the sole responsibility of their line manager. The nomination is then reviewed by the HR Business Partner for the School or Professional Service, then by the Financial Manager for consent, and the Head of School or Director for final approval.

For academics at lecturer level/position and aspiring to be senior lecturers, they are required to demonstrate effectiveness and evident significant contribution to the development of inclusive and diverse learning and teaching initiatives through program or subject leadership to the benefit of the school and/or institution, providing mentorship to their peers to promote a collegial and collaborative educational environment across their school or discipline, and making decisions and impact to enhance the student learning experience. In terms of external recognition, it may include the HEA Senior Fellowship aligned to UKPSF. If they are of the research trajectory, such academics should be able to demonstrate and evident the ability and potential to produce internationally excellent independent, original, significant, and rigorous research contributions to a subject area or body of knowledge.

Furthermore, the institution's academic role descriptions and expectations of academic standards and the job detail template for all academic roles documents also explicitly contain expectations of academic standards at different levels. Academics have access to these documents, therefore allowing them to know the overview, role detail/purpose/responsibilities, person specification, qualifications, background and experience, knowledge, skills, and competencies required for at various levels. The documents also contain information about research expectations for academics. It highlights requirements regarding research outputs/publication, postgraduate supervision, research income/projects, and impact and presence.

The arrangements discussed above, and other schemes of the case study B discussed are designed to create a sort of competition and rivalry among academics at the institution as well as serve as a key measure to lower costs and promote better standards within institutions. It also aims to provide incentives for performing academics, which are determined by their output.

In terms of competences that are essential for line managers and the tool to ensure this is met. The institution’s ACF documents reviewed clearly states the expectation at managerial levels across the three trajectory areas of teaching and learning, research, and enterprise and industry collaboration. As per teaching and learning-focused academics, individuals at this level are expected to or work towards achieving the ability to demonstrate significant strategic contribution to supporting diverse and inclusive teaching and learning within and outside the institution. They are expected to show a continuous record of successful strategic leadership in academic practice at different sectors at the local, national, and international levels. External achievements such as the National Teaching Fellow of the National Teaching Excellence Award, the Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence of Advance HE, and the Higher Education Academy Principal Fellowship (achievement) aligned to UKPSF can be used to indicate the impacts of managers in the teaching and learning trajectory.

As per the research trajectory, statements derived from the reviewed documents indicated that, academic managers are expected to lead by example by exhibiting evidence of delivering:

> "*…outstanding contributions to a subject area or body of knowledge, demonstrating both the ability to sustain own research and to be successful against research competition in ways appropriate to the discipline.*"

For academic managers in the industry and enterprise trajectory, they are expected to lead the institution's strategic priorities across different industries and/or sectors. They are expected to be attracting and delivering significant external income for the institution, as well as supporting others to achieve and develop the skills and competencies to do the same.

5.8.4 Staff training

Evidence indicates that there is one thing that case study B is very good at, it is the amount of training activities it has in place. Such as induction training for new staff, training on teaching and learning, diversity and inclusion, digital and technology, health and wellbeing, university research ethics and academic integrity, research skills, research methods, health and safety, library resources and technology, anti-slavery, supervision of student research, supervising doctoral research, research funding, and grant writing, as well as leadership and management. A senior lecturer comments:

> *"To be honest the university have a comprehensive stream of trainings. I have to give them that. The university have all the trainings we need in all areas. Whether it is research skills right, funding skills, like how to apply for funds, soft skills in terms of teaching and presentation, PowerPoint, software, they have everything to be honest.*

But the staff are not motivated to use it. Due to Covid-19 there is increase focus on online training and they have provided unlimited training. And you can repeat training. It is up to the staff now to be honest" [ResP6 HEIs B].

Though the interviewee also acknowledged that the staff are not motivated to do the training because they are basically business focused rather than for both business and personal career development needs. This suggests that staff members prefer training programs and interventions that are more in line with the stewardship-based mechanism, which places equal emphasis on meeting individual needs and those of the institution as a whole. These individual needs include intrinsic motivation, values, and talents, as well as career development and advancement, in addition to individual performance measures, strategic performance, and institutional operations. This was expressed in the comment of the senior lecturer who emphasised that:

"It (the trainings) is to meet current job needs, full stop. Is there personal developmental focus, it might be inherent in the Performance Appraisal, but it is not primary. It is not the primary focus from my perspective. It is not the personal development, is about we have a need, an immediate need to equip staff and we need to do everything to equip them. So, we have lot of training right now" [ResP6 HEIs B].

A Professor also acknowledged the varieties of trainings available in the institution:

"Oh… How long, how long a list should I give you (he laughs). Hmm staff gets induction course which gives them an overview of everything, you know teaching, learning, ethics, research, administration…………. In fact, my colleague joke that I have been to all the training that have been offered by the university. I haven't but I did go to a lot of trainings in the first ten years of my time at ………" [ResP4 HEIs B].

The above view was also supported by a Lecturer who echoed that:

"When you first join the university they provide induction, I think it goes on for the first year. Then there are some compulsory trainings. For example, technology training which is compulsory training. And there are some annual trainings when rules and processes are changed, you must attend those trainings. We also have research trainings and research bidding training; we also have that type of trainings" [ResP5 HEIs B].

Another Lecturer re-echoed that the trainings are mainly to meet the business needs of the institution:

> *"Mainly to meet current job needs rather than the individual because these trainings come from the university level, so they are expecting, so their focus is more on the jobs rather than the individuals" [ResP9 HEIs B].*

In addition, interviewees also confirmed that some of the trainings are designed and made compulsory for academics to attend because they are statutory requirements, and the institution cares less about the actual impact of such training. And as a result, interviewees see some of the training as a tick-box exercise. A lecturer comments:

> *"I think the objective of most of the trainings is to tick the university boxes such as for the ref in the future, to show they are putting them on but actually whether the staff attend or not is a different matter completely" [ResP3 HEIs B].*

An interviewee further comments:

> *"There are some trainings that are required due to legislation or legislation changes and are compulsory, therefore we have to attend them. But some of the trainings are required and some of the trainings I feel are not required and are time wasting. The purpose of the training will determine its impact. Is it useful for me or my CV. The more it is useful for me, the more it will impact on my motivation, the type of training that will impact on my motivation is really less in the university. The type of trainings we get is the training that will help improve our job, the skill sets required for the job, directly the university need them to help run their operation smoothly" [ResP5 HEIs B].*

Interviewees emphasized that majority of the training programmes they have in place is to meet the short terms need of the institution. A Reader echoes:

> *"So, there is no long-term focus on training and development, I will say that. Right now, it is meeting a short-term purpose, people don't know how to teach online, people don't know how to use software, and people don't know how to use Microsoft teams, let's train them but that is to meet the need of now" [ResP7 HEIs B].*

There is also evidence from the institution B, which indicated that approaches to staff training might also differ among the various faculties, schools, divisions, and departments that make up the institution. The approach adopted by some faculties, departments, and units might actually meet not just the needs of the institution but also academics. The quote from an Associate Dean, who has previously served as a Dean of the Faculty, supported the above notion:

> *"In addition, to all the university ones, we also run programmes for staff training, we call them the Wednesdays event. We do them Wednesday afternoons just for an hour. And is as a result of the staff asking us if we could have some development, so we have them in everything ranging from how the finance of the university work because some people have no idea to pedagogy, new ways of teaching, stuff from the library, how to deal with complaints, how to deal with complements, we utilise a lot of the work with the OD teams in the central university so quality assurance and their teams come over and that what we try to run so anyone can come and is open. You can say I fancy doing that one because I am taking a compliant management case, you can just drop in and have something round that. So that is what we do on top of the university courses" [ResP1 HEIs A].*

Interviewees confirmed that there are lots of trainings and opportunities at Case Study B. However, most of the trainings are merely business- and regulatory-focused. Interviewees stressed the need for training opportunities to focus on both the long-term business needs of the institution and the personal, professional, and career development needs of the academics as proposed by stewardship theory. They also stressed the need for the provision of appropriate time for academics to attend such trainings as a result of the current workload they have.

In addition, statements derived from the reviewed documents indicated that the university has various formal training schemes in place. For example, the university's "Management Skills Masterclasses" are designed to provide short trainings on key topics via coaching, online resources, and bespoke solutions, as well as support the career development of their staff. Topics drawn from soft skills, leadership, administrative and financial understanding, and professional gap analysis are covered in the programmes. Masterclasses are expected to develop knowledge, skills, and behaviours as well as clarify the expectations in terms of their role. In terms of qualification, the institution also has the Employee Apprenticeships, which are fully funded programmes that will enable managers to achieve the following qualifications:

- Associate Project Manager (L4 Cert HE Project Management Consultancy)
- Chartered Manager (L6 BSc Hons Business and Management)

- Senior Manager (L7 Master of Business Administration)
- Senior Manager (L7 MSc Leadership and Management)
- Digital and Technology Solutions Specialist (L7 MSc Digital Technologies)

The qualifications are delivered internally by the institution's Business School and the School of Science, Engineering, and Environment. The institution invests a minimum of 20% of the contractual hours of the individuals' enrolled on the programme to enable them to complete the qualification for the duration of the course. Enrolment in the programme is subject to the approval of the participants' line manager and director or dean of their school or faculty.

Furthermore, statements derived from the reviewed documents showed that due to the more visible power of line management functions, TM practices and performance management measures in case study B are currently compared to what they used to be some years ago. And due to the fact that managers at the institution now have more freedom to manage, which vindicates one of the principles of NPM that suggests that, for you to hold people accountable, you must ensure that there is no diffusion of power. This principle supports that managers should be given a clear task, responsibilities, authority, and power to take actions. As a result, the institution has also put measures in place, including special training and development programmes, to ensure existing and new managers are well prepared for the task ahead of them. Every individual, including academics, that is appointed or recruited (existing or new managers) into line management or other management roles at institution B is now required to undergo the institution's management programme. The programme is designed to empower managers at Case Study B with the knowledge, skills, and competences they require for people management in a complex and challenging HE context. The institution acknowledged in the webpage of the Management Programme that,

> "*Leading and managing people in Higher Education can be complex and challenging. To navigate effectively in this culture, people managers need to have confidence, clarity, and agility to harness the experience and diversity offered by their team members*" (Institution Website, 2023).

The institution anticipates that, the programme which is runs for six months will support managers in their management and leadership roles. An Academic at the institution that has been through the programme acknowledged that, *"I must admit to being very dubious about the ... Managers Programme having experienced many a 'managers' course previously within my NHS career. After day one however I was completely bowled over and knew this was something completely different that I was going to enjoy. Within the next few weeks, I could begin to see changes in my leadership style. Areas which I was not aware needed developing suddenly came to the forefront and it was a revelation!"*

The duration of the programme is six months minimum. The programme includes five modules:

- Module 1: Engaging People Management: This module enables new and existing managers to build trust and engagement among their subordinates. It also enables them with the required skills to be able to have an impact on those around them and their role at the institution.
- Module 2: Managing Performance and Career Conversations: It is intended that this module will enable new and existing managers to create a feedback and feedforward performance management culture.
- Module 3: Developing and Enabling Your Team: It is intended that this module will empower managers to create a learning culture and enhance relationships to enable their team.
- Module 4: Attracting, Recruiting, and Retaining the Right People: This module is designed to develop managers practical skills about the labour market and how to build teams for the future.
- Module 5: Personal Career Journey: This module enables new and existing managers to consolidate their learning from the course, evaluate their career direction, and draw up a PDP.

Apart from participating in the training, during the programme managers are expected to establish relationships, settle into their new position or role, and understand the team culture and strategic direction. The various documents reviewed indicated that the purpose of the programme is to ensure that the institution, team, and individual managers are excellent, effective, and efficient in all activities relating to value for money, student experience, and world-class research.

Thus, as a result of the interviewees testimonies and documental evidence reviewed above discussed above, it is obvious that institution B now places substantial emphasis on hands-on professional management, in which skills and competences are essential. The principle also supports that managers should be developed and given a clear task, responsibilities, authority, and power to take actions.

5.9 The ways in which academics in Case Study B attempt to achieve their institution's expectations in the context of NPM.

5.9.1 Informal Mentorship

Informal mentorship in TM processes was evident from the experience of interviewees in case study B. This process encompasses experienced academics providing unstructured guidance, advice, and support to less experienced faculty either within or outside their institution. Interviewees suggested that informal mentorship is usually based on personal relationships and interests, unlike formal mentoring, which is strictly formal. They added that the focus of such intervention could range from career development and growth, research, teaching, and work-life balance issues to other personal needs. A professor comments:

> *"I think I was very fortunate that my boss who I came over with from the University of ……., had lots of expectations of me and was also very encouraging towards me. So, I think he saw in me the things I didn't see in myself. So, when I had my PDRs, he would say…………I think you should work towards this. I think you will be good at this, or I think you be good at that, so he was very good at doing that. So one of the things he suggested was, I think you will be a good teacher or I think you will be a good lecturer and at the time I was I Research and I had a Research contract but he identified that and felt I will make a good teacher, then he guided me towards the opportunity so that I can do some lecturing and things like that so I think I have been very fortunate in that sense" [ResP2 HEIs B].*

The professor further comments on how informal mentorship has given her the platform to develop professionally and academically, as well as the attainments of leadership and management growth.

"I will say in terms of my expectations when I started 21years ago, they have been more than realised because I never wanted to be a professor, I never wanted a leadership role within the university… I have had people in the right way say you can do this. You know we think you will be good at this let's give you this opportunity. Yeah…. But not formal mentorship. I have never had any formal mentorship. I don't like formal mentorship. So yes mentorship. It is mentorship really and guidance from others, informal mentorship" [ResP2 HEIs B].

A senior lecturer also echoes how informal mentors that he had at his previous institution still help him in terms of publication till date:

"As I said from one relationship, I met a few people and one of the big projects I am working on now is through one of the conferences I went with him, when I was at………… and I think, this is going to earn me two or three stars in the next one year or something. Again, that is through informal mentorship. That is where the potentials are and that is where the publications are coming from because you meet people, you build relationships and work with people and collaborate" [ResP6 HEIs B].

Another interview also re-echoes how informal mentorship helped her identify her teaching potential and guided her towards her career aspirations:

"I was on the research track, and I had a research contract, but he identified that and felt I will make a good teacher then he guided me towards the opportunity. So, that I can do some lecturing and things like that. So, I think I have been very fortunate in that sense, I think for me informal mentorship has been very helpful and very facilitating" [ResP9 HEIs B].

In summary, interviewees mentioned how informal mentoring has contributed to their professional and career development, though not as structured as formal mentoring however it has been more valuable to them. They also expressed their concerns about formal mentoring, which they said, in most cases, it is usually too structured and does not meet their personal, developmental, and career goals. Interviewees added that, in most cases, the formal mentoring is more aligned to the business need and what the institution needs. And the formal mentors are not usually flexible. Thus, informal mentorship, which is the fifth most recurring theme among research participants at case study B across all levels of academics, seems to have contributed to the personal and career development of participants. Senior colleagues have also used it to build their professional relationship with junior colleagues, as expressed by an Associate Dean:

> *"I do a lot of informal monitoring, what I call corridor conversations you kind of meet people, you talk to people, find out what they are doing, give them a bit of advice, ask them to come and see you if they want, and just try to support some of their ideas and developments. Informal support, mirroring you know what we do and actually saying you are doing well, keep at it because some people just find it difficult." [ResP1 HEIs B].*

5.9.2 Line Managers

The impact of line managers' style in TM processes and practices was very evident and the sixth most recurring theme from the experience of interviewees in case study B. Interviewees mentioned that management support or line manager empathy can boost TM practices effectively, while ineffective management and an unsupportive line manager can affect the overall quality and effectiveness of the operationalisation of TM practices and experience. A senior lecturer comments:

> *"I will say it is very important, looking at the three heads. The first one, anything he ask me to do I will do it even if it is not in my job description. I was that sort of manager in my previous life. Although, I am the senior manager, but I am sympathetic to the employees because I always believe employees will go the extra mile to support you if they can interact and engage with you and they believe in who you are as a leader. The second guy because he was managerial, more authoritarian and autocratic my communication with him was always formal and it was always to do with some aspects of the job. And if he asked me to do something outside my job description/WAMs I will tell him I am not doing it, in a nice way that I am not doing it. The last one which I said he's more in-between, I will try to accommodate but less or now I am only doing what is within my workload. So, there is some flexibility with him also, although I will not go overboard. I will not go overboard within reason I will be flexible with him. The guy in the middle I know this is not my workload, I am not doing it" [ResP6 HEIs B].*

He added that, in terms of performance appraisal or PDR meetings and communication of concerns:

"The first guy I use to do it informally. I will go to his office knock and talk with him. So, it was not on a formal basis mostly informally. The second guy will always be formal, they will never be informal. And the third guy is a ball balance between the two. I will sometimes have an informal meeting with him and sometimes have formal. So, it depends on all three of them again. So, I will think who the leader is, is very important in talent, manging the talent for me, in being managed" [ResP6 HEIs B].

Case study B documents reviewed also indicate that the ACF is used to discuss, clarify, and set objectives for both performance and practical career development support available during PCC meetings in accordance with the institution's strategic goal priorities and key metrics in terms of TEF, REF, KEF outputs, and student quality and satisfaction metrics. It can be used for individual goal setting and review, team goal setting and review (as line managers will usually manage teams), a career development plan, feedback and feedforward from the line manager, feedback and feedforward from peers/teams, a clear purpose, recording objectives, and a two-way conversation to identify and recognise successes and contributions across all the key career phases. However, it is the responsibility of the manager to dictate how the ACF is implemented, and this gives it a directive performance management appearance rather than a stewardship-based performance management apparatus.

Interviewees also confirmed the key role played by line managers in terms of recognition of performance and career development.

A Lecturer comments:

"Yes, we have changed line managers since then and the one who recruited me fought harder for our recognition, expectation and we discussed all the roles. Good and strong leadership and probation period. Since she left a few changes of senior have been made, they have impacted on how appreciated we are, and recognition for what we are doing" [ResP3 HEIs B].

She further comments on the inability of some faculty management to get attention and support from the institution's top management to address the issues they are been confronted with in their faculty:

"I am fully committed if not over committed to this institution and I have realised that I am burning out so in getting retired and I need to ease up a bit because I am just constantly checking emails at home, at weekend, at night and I can't keep up with my

workload and if I keep on going like this is not healthy…. The interaction problem is we keep telling the senior management and the organisation we have not got enough staff, we are drowning, we have got too many students, and nothing comes back. Our management goes to see the senior people, they do not call back, and we make no further progress. So, the interaction is a bit like them and us. Nobody is being able to, nobody is prepared to listen or willing to make change in the organisation to help us" [ResP3 HEIs B].

Interviewees also confirmed the key role played by management, leadership and line managers in terms of career development. A Professor comments:

"There was an instance last year where I applied for a senior role within the university, and I wasn't successful in getting that and she (The Faculty Dean) was very good with the feedback and tried to put the things that weren't in place, and I was told why I didn't get the job and I am trying to make sure that's being addressed. And, I have been given other opportunities to develop other roles also at a senior level. So, she has been very good at that, and my actual line manager have been very good at the same, in doing the same thing so I am about to move to a new role" [ResP2 HEIs B].

It was further evident that due to the nature, context and size of the institution the roles of management at all levels and line managers are even more crucial:

"I think it is easier to see your value within the school. I think there are people in our senior management team and our Dean of School who are very good in seeing the value in people and monitoring those people and kind of encouraging you. I think at the university level that is kind of a bit lost because the organisation is too big. So, unless you are the right place in the right time, or making yourself known to the right people or someone makes you known then is quite easy to get lost" [ResP2 HEIs B].

Documents also reviewed at case study B also indicated that line managers across the institution use the ACF to discuss and set objectives/targets for both performance and practical career development support during PCC meetings/discussions with their teams. This also evident the significant role played by Line Managers in terms of performance review at individual levels. It was also indicated that PCC meetings and discussions anchored by line managers serve as a motivation tool and stimulate individuals to aspire to higher positions, while at the same time driving competition among academics to achieve higher expectations.

For example, it is indicated in the ACF phase 3 that a strategic leading practitioner in the teaching and learning trajectory is one that makes a significant strategic contribution to enhancing inclusive and diverse learning and teaching within and beyond the institution and who demonstrates a sustained record of successful strategic leadership in academic practice and development with impact across the sector at national and/or international levels.

Hence, the above experiences sort of reiterate the impact line managers could have on TM practices as well as the important roles and responsibilities they play in managing TM processes in public sector organisations. These testimonies negate stewardship theory approaches to management, which propose that the strategic priorities at all levels should be discussed and agreed upon among the different institution's stakeholders through active communication, engagements, dialogues, consultations, and discussions. This is even more crucial within organisations such as HE, which consists of academics and professionals from all spheres of life.

5.10 Discussion and analysis of findings within case study institutions

In the previous sections, two UK HEIs case studies were presented and explored. The findings revealed the perception of HEIs academics in relation to talent and TM practices in the context of NPM, as well as provided insights aimed at informing good practice and policymaking for TM among academics in UK HEIs via the lens of stewardship theoretical framework. The two cases are unique because A is a traditional institution that is a member of the Russell Group, while B is one of those UK universities that was previously a Technical Institute and member of the University Alliance Group. This section will further explore the key findings of this research in terms of the similarities and differences between the two cases in the context of literature and empirical evidence.

The discussion is focused on five main areas of the research findings: conceptualisation of talent in UK HEIs; conceptualisation of TM in UK HEIs; justifications for the adoption of TM practices in the HE sectors; academic experience of TM practices in the context of NPM; and evolving issues in the case study organisations. Figure 5.8 illustrates the impact of stewardship theory on TM based on the findings of this research. Ranging from the conceptualisation of the definition of talent, its approaches, definition of TM, its approaches, TM philosophies, practices, processes, activities, and its eventual outcomes for talents and organisational performance.

5.10.1 Conceptualisation of Academic Talent in UK HEIs

The literature review in Chapter 2 indicated that there are diverse views in the conceptualisation of talent (Tansley, 2011; Dries, 2013; Collings, Mellahi and Cascio, 2017; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019; Dries, 2022). Thus, there is no general acceptable definition of the word talent, as its definitions are influenced by the context in which the organisation operates. Yet, how organisations define talent remains a controversial issue due to the lack of consensus on its meaning and characteristics, as well as its complexity and contextual implications. Therefore, the definition of talent varies within (for instance, disciplines and/or trajectories) and across organisations as well as sectors (Tansley et al., 2007; Dries, 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020). The findings from the case study institutions support the above notions that how talent is defined is influenced by internal strategic needs, the focus of the institution (for instance, research and/or teaching focused), and the sector of the organisation (Tansley, 2011; Thunnissen et al., 2013; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019). Though both institutions are in the same sector, their focus and strategic objectives differ.

Four main conceptualisations of academic talent were identified by this study from the viewpoint of the object approach to talent, which focusses on talent as characteristics of individuals (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013): natural ability; mastery of systematically developed skills (experience); commitment and motivation; and as fit between an individual's academic and the context within which he or she works (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Thunnissen et al., 2013; Devins and Gold, 2014; Dries, 2022).

5.10.1.1 Talent as natural ability

Academics in both case study institutions considered natural aptitude in their conceptualisation of talent. Talent is viewed from this perspective as a set of innate abilities that a person possesses without necessarily acquiring or nurturing them through training, education, or experience, as well as deliberate efforts (Trost, 2000; Vinkhuyzen et al., 2009; Devins and Gold, 2014). Academics at both institutions understand academic talents as having the natural ability to think critically, solve problems, be inquisitive and curious, possess the ability to absorb, retain, and recall complex subjects, are effective communicators, adapt to evolving situations, and possess research and analytical aptitudes. It suggests a disposition for specific activity in this context, such as an inherent ability to communicate knowledge and/or add to knowledge in the HE sector. For instance, some people possess the natural ability to speak, are extroverts, and are very curious. Such aptitudes or proficiencies enable individuals who possess them to stand above the rest of their peers in the specific field of their talent (Gagne, 2000; Williams, 2000; Meyers, Marianne van Woerkom and Dries, 2013; Dries, 2022), in this case in academia.

In case study A, for instance, being a research-focused institution, faculties considered academic talents as the possession of research prowess ability that enables them to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their chosen fields (through the disposition to engage in systematic investigation and input to the body of awareness in a particular subject area), apply those contributions in a classroom setting (through their clear communication with students, both verbally and in writing to facilitate effective knowledge dissemination), and the society at large. Such inherent ability enables individuals to push the boundaries of knowledge through research and impact the academic community as well as society despite all sorts of obstacles. This view implies that talent involves an innate ability that manifests in a particular field and is understood to be above-average ability for a specific function or range of functions (Trost 2000; Devins and Gold 2014; Dries, 2022).

In case study B, for example, being a teaching-focused institution, faculties considered academic talents to be individuals that have teaching prowess abilities that enable them to engage learners, create a collaborative and meaningful learning experience, as well as contribute to the overall academic learning community. Such contributions are felt in their pedagogical know-how, innovative teaching practices, curriculum enhancement, and the impact of their teaching on students' learning outcomes, including assessment results and feedback. For instance, the capacity to retain complex subjects' information and the ability to articulate knowledge clearly and disseminate ideas effectively through oral and/or written form are inherent skills that resonate among academics in Case Study B. Thus, individuals who possess such abilities or aptitudes are assumed to stand above the rest of their peers in the specific field of their talent (Michaels et al., 2001; Trost 2000; Vinkhuyzen et al., 2009).

Thus, the view of talent as an innate or natural ability resonates among respondents in both case studies, which suggests that academic talents are characterised by certain traits and inherent aptitude that allow them to perform well or at their individual best. Such aptitude enables them to exhibit exceptional skills and abilities in relation to critical thinking (being capable of taking a critical perspective of things going on around them, looking behind what is going on, not taking the surface of a phenomenon), memory retention, problem solving, adaptability, research capacity, effective communication, curiosity, as well as paying attention to detail, which are essential skills to have in academia and crucial for its performance (Vinkhuyzen et al., 2009; Wood et al., 2011; Meyers, Marianne van Woerkom and Dries, 2013; Dries, 2022). This view suggests that even with the same amount of education, training, developmental intervention, and experience, certain people will always outperform others because of the natural aptitude they possess. Therefore, institutions look out for such aptitude during the internal and external talent acquisition processes.

Given the fact that HE is a sector that requires certain qualifications for one to be recruited as an academic, one will imagine that talent as an innate ability will not be that popular among academics. However, evidence from respondents from case study institutions aligns with the beliefs of HRM practitioners and scholars, who acknowledge that talent is a natural ability to a great extent (Meyers, Marianne van Woerkom and Dries, 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and González-Cruz, 2013; Dries, 2022). For example, Schmidt and Hunter's (2004) research indicates that general mental ability significantly predicts occupational level and performance within one's chosen occupation, outperforming other factors such as job experience, education and training.

5.10.1.2 Talent as mastery of systematically developed skills and learning from experience

The views of academics from both case study institutions resonate with literature that conceptualises talent as mastery of knowledge, skills, capacity, and ability that persons acquire and nurture over a period through systematic and deliberate intervention, effort, learning, experience, and practice (Michaels et al., 2001; Arvey et al., 2006; Ulrich, 2007; Cheese, Thomas and Craig, 2008; Dries, 2022). It involves the premeditated, deliberate, and conscious acquisition of specific competencies and skills. For instance, academics from both case study institutions acknowledged that the first step to being an academic talent is the attainment of a PhD. Accomplishing a PhD requires conscious and purposeful efforts, which include both hard and soft skills in education, training, effective time management, communication proficiency, and practical experience when collecting data from the field. The role of conscious and deliberate practice of specific competencies and skills echoes among the research participates in both institutions. This includes practices that are primarily directed at performance improvement, that are of organisational need and relate to its strategies, involve informative feedback, and provide sufficient opportunities for repetition and correction of errors via practical experience (de Bruin et al., 2008; Meyers, van Woerkom and Dries, 2013; Dries, 2022).

In case study A for instance, which is a research intense focused institution, academic talent is also conceptualised as individuals that have over the years acquired a set of talents in research methodology, data analysis, ethical research practices, publication skills, grant writing and proposal ability (for securing funding for research projects), possess effective communication and presentation skills (to be able to present in academic events including seminars, conferences, symposium, etc.), capacity to network and collaborate with interdisciplinary teams, peers, and external institutions and partners, literature review (to gain knowledge of existing literature and identify the gaps that requires further research), and of course mentorship. Achieving the above requires commitment, conscious efforts, and time, and is required to be impactful as well as successful in case study A or a research-focused institution. In this view, the attainment of academic talent requires being selfish with one's time and a deliberate rejection of excessive workload that will obstruct an individual from achieving the talents mentioned above. Several studies agree with the above assertion that the amount of practice and time that a person engages in deliberate acts or practices enhances their ability, aptitude, and capacity for talent, thus their performance and achievement (de Bruin et al., 2008; Day 2010; Colvin, 2010; Schiemann, 2014).

In case study B, for example, which is more of a teaching-focused institution, academics suggest that acquiring, cultivating, and nurturing a range of skills and competences can enhance one's talents and effectiveness. The essential talents that can be nurtured include pedagogical knowledge and skills, learner-centred teaching, technological integration, curriculum development, assessment and constructive formative and/or summative feedback necessary for effective evaluating learners performance, classroom management, being able to respond to the varied learning styles of students (with the world becoming a global village and HEIs attracting students from diverse backgrounds), the ability to engage in CPD, pastoral and mentorship skills, and of course effective communication. Being able to nurture the talents and aptitudes mentioned above contributes to the high performance and high potential of individual academics as well as a rewarding and successful career in teaching-focused institutions where the focus is on learners' engagement, development, progression, satisfaction, and teaching excellence.

The view above resonates with scholars that conceptualise talent as nurtured and/or learnt abilities and skills (Cheese, Thomas and Craig, 2008; Yost and Chang, 2009; Day 2010; Armstrong and Taylor, 2017) that is required to contribute and perform effectively in an organisation as well as enable an individual to reach his or her highest levels of their potential (CIPD, 2023).

5.10.1.3 Talent as commitment and motivation

Evidence from both institutions suggests that the dedication an individual exhibits at work and the observable intrinsic qualities he or she possesses, which contribute to the overall success and performance of their institution, are attributes of talent (Ulrich, 2007; Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries, and González-Cruz, 2013). Academics in both case study institutions acknowledged the importance of commitment and motivation in their current roles and institutions. Some participants stressed that it is needed on the side of the academics as a coping strategy due to the inadvertent consequences of the NPM in HEIs, which have altered the occupational roles, academic career trajectories, and workload of faculty members in substantial ways. The intrinsic and dedication qualities include genuine passion for work and a show of dedication to organisational goals, strategic objectives, vision, and mission statement (Pruis, 2011; Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and González-Cruz, 2013; Mahjoub et al., 2018). In addition, qualities such as being proactive and taking initiatives, exhibiting strong work ethic, team commitment and collaboration, demonstration of leadership qualities, active engagement, remaining adaptable and flexible as a result of (internal and external) change in response to the dynamic and emerging market, maintaining ethical values and standards, as well as engaging in career development and advancement that are in line with the organisational needs (Michaels et al., 2001; Ulrich, 2007; Bhatti, Waris and Zaheer, 2011; Kontoghiorghes, 2016). This view suggests that the qualities identified above are now essential for creating a positive organisational culture and productive working environment and being perceived as committed.

In the view of case study A, which is a research-focused institution, academics stress the importance of faculty members seeing beyond their current circumstances and being able to place things in a wider context, around how societies and economy's function. Lots of commitments and motivation are required to be able to do this given the decline of collegiality, respect for occupational identity, and increased workload. And if they do not have that wider interest and commitment, although they might be able to do a narrow piece of research to be technically proficient, they will run out of steam and will not be able to do anything very interesting in the future. This was not the case in the past, when academics in HE institutions had sufficient time, the cooperation of colleagues, and a reasonable workload to engage in scholarly pursuits. Thus, talent, commitment, and motivation in a research intense institution like Case Study A are determined mainly by academic dedication, drive, and perseverance towards scholarly pursuits and academic excellence (Ulrich, 2007; Weiss and MacKay, 2009; Pruis, 2011).

The dedication, motivation, interest, and enthusiasm in a research-focused institution like Case Study A could be directed towards things like conducting relevant and impactful research, contributing to knowledge by publishing in reputable journals as well as other credible academic and professional sources, and investing time and energy into obtaining research grants and funding required for research projects. Additionally, motivated and dedicated academic staff members will be eager to share and/or present their research findings both inside and outside of the academic community, assume leadership roles in research projects that enhance the institution's reputation for research excellence, and uphold the highest standards of research ethics and procedures. Motivated employees will also be open to working together, mentoring students and junior faculty members, and, of course, committed to ongoing professional development to keep up with the swift advances in research and the field of education.

In case study B, for example, which is more of a teaching-focused institution, the focus in such institutions is the willingness of academics to invest discretionary time and energy into activities that will enable them to foster an effective, engaging, and positive (EEP) learning experience as well as an environment for students to flourish (Ulrich and Smallwood, 2012; Van der Heijden et al., 2022). Such commitment is necessary in the current context of HEIs, as it will foster learners' retention, success, and satisfaction (as they are treated as customers), as well as contribute to the overall success of the institution. This is also in line with the condition imposed by the Office for Students (OfS), which is one of the latest manifestations of NPM in HEIs: that students receive the required support in higher education, a high-quality academic experience, protection of interests, employment opportunities, and value for money, ensuring a successful and fulfilling academic journey (OfS, 2022).

The dedication, motivation, interest, and enthusiasm in a teaching-focused institution like Case Study B need to be directed towards things like a student-centred approach to teaching and learning environments, the planning of collaborative and engaging sessions that could enhance students experiences, the demonstration of passion for the academic role and subject area of specialists, and the investment of time and energy into innovative teaching methods and resources (including the use of technology, social media, etc.) that will accommodate different learning styles and make learning more engaging.

Though the current context and workload in HEIs have led to a reduction in the availability of time for academics to see students, i.e., being able to create time to see, support, guide, signpost, and mentor students, which contributes a lot to their pastoral and educational experiences, So, while academics now have less unallocated time, there is now more expectation that these things will happen because of NPM. Therefore, dedication, motivation, interest, and enthusiasm in a teaching-focused institution require high commitment and contribution to curriculum enhancement, being flexible to students and institutional needs, commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive learning environment given the fact that HEIs attract students from diverse backgrounds, and of course, the zeal to engage in continuous professional development in order to stay abreast of current pedagogical, educational, industry, and technological trends.

5.10.1.4 Talent as fit between an individual and work context

Academics from both case study institutions conceptualise talent as a fit between an academic and the context within which he or she works. This view aligns with literature that conceptualises talent as the fit between a person's talent and the context within which he or she works, i.e., being in "the right place, the right position, and/or at the right time," as well as the organisation's culture, environment, and type of job (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and González-Cruz, 2013). This view emphasises the alignment of an individual's knowledge, skills, aptitude, capability, and proficiencies, as well as attributes, with the job description and person's specification. Thus, criteria such as job, team, and organisational fit are essential.

Although what is meant by fit varies between the two case study institutions because of their strategic focus. Thus, the fit will be determined by matching an individual to the organisational context and the role, as well as ensuring that it is at the right time (Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and González-Cruz, 2013). This is because, an individual who performs excellently in a teaching-focused institution may struggle in a research focused institution (Coulson-Thomas, 2012). This view stresses the significance of the synergy between a person's attributes and the job profile, as well as the context of the role. In the opinion of academics at both case study institutions, emphasis is given to things like competencies and skills match, team fit, organisational fit, role fit, cultural match, management and leadership fit, strategic fit, ethical value and standard fit, drive and motivation match, innovation and problem-solving capacity fit, and so on. The fit approach suggests that the right match between a person, in this case an academic, and their role is essential for maximising and/or enhancing performance, motivation, job satisfaction, high morale, and overall organisational output and/or performance. Although this has long been known in the world of work and used in private sector organisations to describe talents (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2005; Becker, Huselid and Beatty, 2009; Collings and Mellahi, 2009), Thus, findings from both case study institutions confirmed that alignment of an individual's knowledge, skills, aptitude, capability, and proficiencies, as well as attributes, with the job description and person's specification of a role is an essential requirement for academic talent. Thus, in this regard, HEIs appear to be no different from other organisations.

In the view of the case study A for instance, personal attributes such as research track record in reputable/highly rated journals and other academic and/or professional sources, research expert in specific field of study, evidence of success in grant application and approval for research projects, match with the institution's research objectives (most especially in the era of NPM and focus on 3Es – Economy, Effectiveness and Efficiency), communication of research finding within and outside the academia, flexibility and proactiveness to change research focus, area and methods (a very good example, is a Professor who narrated how he gradually moved from Englis Literature background to ending up as a Professor of Financial Management in 40 years of his career at institution A), willingness to collaborate in interdisciplinary research within and outside the institution's community, etc. are key to matching most academic roles with individuals as a result of the institution being a research focused university. In addition, commitment to adhering to the institution's research ethical standard, willingness and commitment to mentor early-career researchers, as well as openness to a research leadership role, are also seen as attributes that are essential for persons who match the most academic role at the university and will foster the institution's research excellence strategic goals.

In case study B, for example, personal attributes such as possession of appropriate knowledge, skills, and experiences in the subject area (the desired criteria for this are usually a holder of a PhD in a relevant field) and effective communication skills (as some interviewees echoed, that is not sufficient to have the knowledge, but the ability to communicate it to students and foster understanding of complex concepts as well as issues is also key). Especially in the context of NPM, where customers' satisfaction is important, this is an essential fit for an institution like theirs.

In addition, academics in the case also acknowledged personal attributes such as student-centred approach to teaching, commitment and ability to design an inclusive learning resources and environment, ability to design and provide timely and fair assessments, feedback and feedforward for students, ability to plan and deliver creative and stimulating teaching sessions that boosts students learning experience and satisfaction (at selection stage of employee resource this is assessed through presentation, role play etc. to some extent), possession of relevant ICT skills, flexibility and proactiveness to adapt teaching resources and strategies to meet the current needs of the institution as well as students' diverse learning styles and other needs. And of course, such fit also requires academics to align their teaching resources, methods, and strategies with the curriculum objectives of the institution, as well as their willingness to participate in mandatory and other continuous professional development activities that are required to keep abreast of changes and trends in the sector. For example, in the UK, such changes may be related to data protection, freedom of information, fire safety, equality, diversity and inclusion, protection of intellectual property, cyber security, etc.

Table 5.3 Summary of discussion on the Conceptualisation of Talent in UK HEIs

Case study institution	**Case study A**	**Case study B**
Talent as natural ability	Some degree	Some degree
Talent as mastery of systematically developed skills and learning from experience	High level requirement	High level requirement

Talent as commitment and motivation	High level requirement	High level requirement
Talent as fit between an individual and work context.	High level requirement	High level requirement
Key issues arising	Impact of contextual factors because of being a research focused institution.	Impact of background factors because of being a more of teaching focused institution.

In summary, talent from the viewpoint of interviewees in the case study institutions, refers to relevant and/or useful (innate and/or nurtured) abilities, aptitudes, skills, knowledge, proficiencies, attributes and capacities that match the contextual needs of an organisation with dedication and intrinsic drive.

Talent = relevant and/or useful (innate or/and nurtured) proficiencies + dedication + match.

This claim is consistent with academic literature that put forward that, **Talent** = Competence **x** Commitment **x** Contribution (Ulrich and Smallwood, 2012 p.60). However, this study adds ***relevance*** and ***usefulness*** to the algebraic equation.

Relevant innate or nurtured proficiency = Useful innate and/or nurtured qualities such as ability, aptitude, skills, knowledge, proficiency, and capacity to communicate knowledge; possession of research methodology; critical thinking; academic administration; etc.

Dedication = Committed and motivated (intrinsic drive) to deploy the qualities in achieving optimum performance and potential in an organisation.

Match = Such qualities must fit the contextual need, team and environment of the organisation.

Thus, when compared to Ulrich and Smallwood's findings, this study's findings suggest that in the current global business context and the HE sector in particular, talent is not just about competence, commitment, and contribution; but also needs to be relevant and useful to the organisation as well as match the business and its customers' needs (Ng and Burke, 2005; Qin, 2020; Jooss et al., 2024). For example, in the HE sector, no matter how competent and committed an individual is, if the students' feedback is saying something else about the person and the satisfaction rate collected via module evaluation questionnaires remains continuously very negative or poor, then he or she is not useful. This is because the negative feedback from the students will eventually have a negative impact on the institution's NSS and OfS ranking, then the individual is not useful and relevant. The individual also needs to have relevant qualifications, experience, behaviour, and attitude to be able to teach certain cohorts of students as well as fit certain teams and the institution's needs. The study emphasises the need for academics to match their strengths with the types of institutions they apply to. Evidence from this research also stressed the need for institutions to clarify what type of institution they are in their job advertisements, i.e., if they are research-focused or teaching-focused institutions. As this will enable applicants to match their strengths with the type of institutions they apply to work (Thunnissen and Buttiens, 2017; Meyers et al., 2020; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020).

5.10.2 Conceptualisation of Talent Management in High Education Institutions

There are diverse views and approaches in the conceptualisation and operationalisation of TM in organisations and among scholars (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Thunnissen and Van Arensbergen, 2015; Paisey and Paisey, 2018; Kravariti, Jooss and Scullion, 2023). There is no generally acceptable definition and approach of TM, the way it is conceptualised and deployed remains controversial and lacks consistency or a joint description (Thunnissen et al., 2013; Sparrow and Makram, 2015). The way TM is conceptualised and implemented is determined by different variables such as type of organisation, nature of work to be done, industry, sector, and what it is for, i.e., contextual factors (Tansley et al., 2007; Boselie and Thunnissen, 2017; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2017; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020). And this is not surprising, given the abstract nature of the word ‘talent’. Thus, evidence from the case study institutions also indicated that how TM is conceptualised, deployed and implemented is influenced by the administrative priorities, the type of industry, sector, type of work, context, and management of an organisation. Two main conceptualisations and operationalisations of TM were identified in this research: inclusive and exclusive approaches to TM practices.

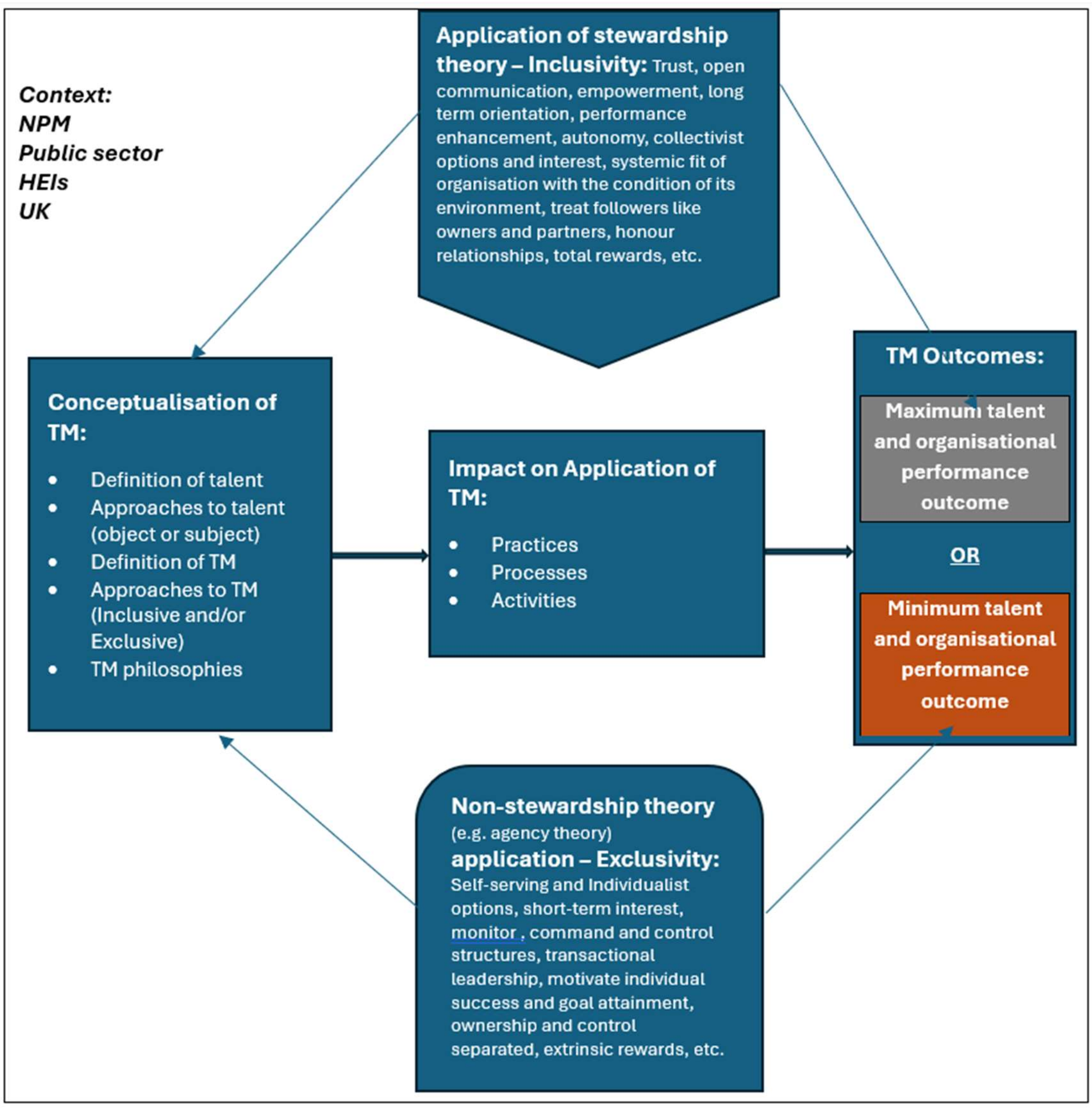
The research findings suggest that the TM systems and processes used by both institutions are to some extent homogeneous and standard, with varying levels of sophistication. However, the manner in which they use these practices, as well as the resources and time they dedicate to them, differs. The study suggests that HEIs use eight types of TM systems: systems for talent acquisition, systems for talent deployment, systems for performance planning, systems for performance measurement, systems for performance review, systems for performance reward, systems for performance management, leadership and coordination, and systems for training and development. This study discovers that the systems come from powerful stakeholders at the institution's corporate level, external regulators, and the government, all of which are influenced by the NPM philosophy and the directive mechanism premises. These directive mechanisms coexisted with stewardship-based doctrines founded on traditional academic principles such as trust, collaboration, community, autonomy, and academic freedom.

The research findings suggest that there are some similarities between TM practices in private sector organisations and HEIs with regards to the identification, development, and retention of skilled personnel. Both industries seek to develop talent, encourage career advancement, and match employees with organisational objectives. However, due to the differences in organisational structures, financial and/or funding sources, and purposes, the specific tactics could vary. While businesses in the private sector might prioritise profitability and market competitiveness, HEIs might place a higher priority on teaching, research, and academic accomplishments. The fact that the core ideas of TM, such as recruitment, training, career development, retention, reward, and succession planning, remain applicable in both situations despite these distinctions suggests that TM in UK HEIs are not all that dissimilar from what is obtainable in private organisations.

Evidence from both case studies suggested that using stewardship-based inclusive TM techniques is more ethical and has a favourable impact on academic staff members' well-being and student satisfaction. Academics in case study A, for example, acknowledge decreased levels of professional stress due to the emphasis on stewardship-based inclusion practices. Thus, good research quality, high student satisfaction, high surplus or low deficit figures, and a high retention rate are linked to the stewardship-based and inclusive TM of academic personnel. Scholarly occupational stress is higher in case study B because of the increased exclusivity, emphasis on control, monitoring and command systems. Low student satisfaction, low employability, low surplus over time and large deficit figures are all linked to low academic staff wellbeing. This result is consistent with other studies and more recent statistics (McCormack, Propper and Smith, 2014; OfS, 2024) about student satisfaction in UK universities.

In terms of student satisfaction, the majority of the research participants also believed that stewardship-based inclusive measures had a positive relationship with institutional general performance outcome and wellbeing. NSS and OfS statistics show high levels of student satisfaction in those institutions (such as case study A) that highlight stewardship-based, inclusive, and collectivist behaviours. This finding is consistent with comparable research done in the UK using a different dataset (McCormack, Propper, and Smith, 2014). While case study B (though a teaching focused university), an institution that emphasises more exclusivity, individualist options, monitor, command and control systems, as well as transactional leadership, demonstrates lower levels of research excellence (REF, 2022a&b).

Figure 5.8 The Research Theoretical Model after Findings



Source: Author 2024, based on the research findings

The research findings suggest that the reliance of a HEI on stewardship-based inclusivity mechanisms is positively correlated with the outcomes of its academic staff and institutional outcomes; conversely, the reliance of a HEI on control, command, exclusivity, and transactional management mechanisms is negatively correlated with these outcomes. See figure 5.8. The complexity and long-term focus of scholarship pursuits may help to explain this. Stewardship-based TM systems, therefore, encourage a setting of trust, autonomy, collectivism, collegiality, and collaboration, which benefits them, as proposed by stewardship researchers (Davis, Schoorman, and Donaldson, 1997; Segal and Lehrer, 2012; Hernandez, 2012; Mills, Bradley and Keast, 2021).

5.10.2.1 Inclusive approach to Talent Management

In case study A, academics conceptualised the approach to TM as mostly inclusive. The assertion is further supported by the institution's reviewed documents. The approach has similar characteristics to what is referred to as good HRM practices (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Sparrow et al., 2014). The emphasis of this approach is the design of a dedicated set of sophisticated and superior HRM practices directed at resourcing, deploying, developing, rewarding, retention, engagement, performance management, and succession and/or management of all employees (Heinen and O'Neill, 2004; Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Sparrow and Makram, 2015). This is unlike the exclusive approach which is more pronounced in case study B, which is focused on the segmentation of the workforce and the identification of a select or small elite group of employees who rank at the top in terms of capability and who will make a difference to organisational performance, either through their immediate contribution or in the longer term by demonstrating the highest levels of potential (Tansley et al., 2007; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Devins and Gold, 2014). The focus of the inclusive approach to TM is everyone (the entire workforce) in the organisation, and it is conceptualised as the systematic attraction, identification, nurturing, development, training, engagement, retention, and deployment of all employees in an organisation. It involves designing workplace strategies and values that promote equity, diversity, and inclusion. It embraces fairness in opportunities for growth and career advancement for all employees as well as aims to leverage the strengths that diverse talents bring to the organisation.

The inclusive approach to TM is consistent with the stewardship-based or enabling approach, in which strategic priorities are debated and agreed upon by the various institutional stakeholders rather than the top leadership team determining the purpose and strategic priorities. In terms of organisational resources. They are more concerned with all persons and the creation of an enabling and high-trust environment than with selecting individuals and the implementation of monitoring, reward systems, and control.

TM, according to academics at Case Study A, enables all faculties to identify areas of capability and proficiency as well as support them in advancing their career in the institution and beyond. The assertion supports the views of others who put forward that the dominant approach to TM adopted by the majority of organisations in the public sector is an inclusive approach (Thunnissen and Buttiens, 2017; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019; Cross Walker, 2020; Collings, Vaiman and Scullion, 2022). In view of this perspective, it might be debated that all academics are considered to have ‘talent’ and treated as such in case study A. This viewpoint equates TM to strategic human resource management (Lewis and Heckman, 2006). It allows every individual or employee to reach their highest potential and promotes equity and inclusiveness within the organisation. The approach suggests that by treating everyone in the organisation equally, a more pleasant, cohesive, and motivated working environment is achieved (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Swailes, Downs and Orr, 2014; Swailes, 2020).

The TM practices, tools and initiatives in Case Study A are designed with all employees in mind and likened to the high-performance working system (HPWS) approach (Sparrow et al., 2014). This approach involves organisations designing and deploying a bundle of HRM practices related to recruitment, selection, training, performance management, succession planning, reward, and engagement that are created to attract, retrain, and motivate all employees to increase performance (Guest, 2011; Samdanis and Lee, 2015). The inclusive approach focusses on the collection of typical HRM activities, practices, processes and functions (Hartmann, et al., 2010; Sparrow, et al., 2014). There are no specific sets of HRM practices and activities that must be included in the bundle, as this will be determined by the organisational needs, strategic objectives, sector, and context (Meyers, van Woerkom and Dries, 2013; Downs and Swailes, 2013).

Case study A, the Organisational Operational and Individual Performance Management Framework, and the P&DR system are good examples of how the institution manages the talents of its academics at all levels towards contributing to organisational performance, research excellence and students’ satisfaction. The institution guidance notes for P&DR form instance, indicated that the P&DR process is designed to connect individual contribution and career aspirations to the achievement of the university's vision as well as help individuals reflect constructively and critically about their own performance. The PDR meeting(s) is designed to achieve clear objectives which include reflection on recent performance, setting future objectives and expectations, and considering the future development needs of all employees at different levels. Thus, the development of the entire workforce and/or academics is seen as essential for the actualisation of the organisation's strategic objectives and success.

The inclusive approach to TM in Case Study A is believed by interviewees to guarantee an egalitarian administration of resources among all employees in the organisation instead of focussing on a few sets of people tagged "high performers and/or potential" as an excuse for not developing everyone. Interviewees suggested that it promotes equity and inclusiveness by treating everyone in the organisation equally and fairly, with the outcome being a more pleasant, collegial, and motivated workforce. The majority of interviewees stressed that it creates a conducive work climate and environment where all employees feel valued and can achieve their optimal performance outcome and potential (Bothner, Podolny and Smith, 2011; Sparrow et al., 2014; Swailes, 2020).

The findings above suggest that despite the introduction of NPM principles in Case Study A, which seek to emphasise accountability, market orientation, effectiveness, and efficiency and aim to apply private sector management practices to improve its public service delivery. The institution's TM practices still have deeply rooted pre-NPM practices for managing their human resources which are consistent with the stewardship-based or enabling approaches. The current TM practices at the institution include a dedicated set of sophisticated and superior HRM practices directed at resourcing, developing, rewarding, retention, engagement, performance management, and succession and/or management of all employees, which one would not expect due to the emancipation of NPM in HEIs. This reveals how well-developed tradition, culture, and HRM practices are countering some of the impact and principles of NPM in HEIs (Brown, 1997; Dnes and Seaton, 2001; Broucker and De Wit, 2015; Broucker, De Wit and Verhoeven, 2018; Bleiklie, 2020).

5.10.2.2 Exclusive approach to Talent Management

More than half of the academics interviewed at Case Study B conceptualised the TM approach, practices, tools, processes, and initiatives deployed in the institution as mostly exclusive in nature. Even though the approach adopted by the institution can be said to be a hybrid approach, information from interviewees and the institution's documents indicated that it is more of an exclusive and directive-based approach to TM. In contrast to the inclusive approach to TM that is consistent with the stewardship-based or enabling approach, the focus of this approach is on segmentation of the workforce and the identification of a selected elite group of employees who rank at the top in terms of capability and who will make a difference to organisational performance, either through their immediate contribution or in the longer term by demonstrating the highest levels of performance and/or potential (Tansley et al., 2007; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Devins and Gold, 2014).

Literature and scholars of this approach suggest that organisations should identify high-potential and performer employees, develop, train, reward (including appointing/promoting them to key positions), and retain them, to enable them to contribute to and influence the organisational performance (Collings et al., 2017; O'Connor and Crowley-Henry, 2019). High performance and/or high potential is key to this approach of TM (Stahl et al., 2007; Meyers, van Woerkom and Dries, 2013). Talent according to this approach applies to selected individuals with recurring patterns of behaviour associated with current successful performance in a role and/or have the potential to make an important contribution in the future (William, 2000; Stahl et al., 2007; Tansley, 2011; Armstrong and Taylor, 2017).

In case study B, there was evidence from interviewees and the institution's documents reviewed of practices, tools, processes, and initiatives that indicated the classification and segmentation of academics in terms of performance rating. The approach categorises employees into different performance levels, such as A, B, C, etc., to indicate high performance, potential, competence, average, and low performers, respectively (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Hartmann et al., 2010). Case study B, ACF framework for instance, indicated the classification and segmentation of what good performances look like at the institution and across different career phases and trajectories. This type of mechanism and/or framework is supported by Netessine and Yakubovich (2012) and Höglund (2012), who stressed that, if an individual's achievement and performances can be accurately rated, segmentation and classification of performances can motivate low performers to develop and apply the aptitude and quality the organisation requires or leave.

Just like TM practices obtainable in private sector institutions (Kabwe, 2011; Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou, 2019; Grant, Garavan and Mackie, 2020), the ACF at institution B is a well-structured document that indicates what high performance and high potential look like (Silzer and Dowell, 2010; Meyers, van Woerkom, and Dries, 2013; and Dries, 2022) across all academic levels, different careers and/or trajectory, phases, and specialities, as well as different subject areas in the institution. The ACF framework provides management and line managers with clear, meaningful objectives for performance management, serves as a tool to monitor performance and potential, and is also used as a guide for career conversations and performance review meetings with colleagues and/or subordinates (Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and González-Cruz, 2013; Thunnissen and Buttiens, 2017; Dries, 2022). It also enables management to clarify directions for academics at different levels to follow (through the provision of different pathways for progression routes across teaching, research, and enterprise), is used as a mechanism for managing the career aspirations and development of individuals, and can be used as a mechanism for successful recognition and reward of performance (Iles, Chuai et al., 2010; Gelens et al., 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Bratton and Watson, 2018).

The above suggests that Case Study B demonstrates more of an exclusive TM approach that adheres to NPM's core values which is consistent with directive performance management mechanisms and negates the stewardship-based or enabling approach that aligns with the traditional academic values such as trust, collegial culture, collaboration and autonomy. For example, when deciding whether to offer opportunities for further development and career progression, the ACF is used to track and ultimately identify those with the competency as members of special groups of individuals within the organisation who are thought to have strengths and the potential to be talented at their chosen job roles (exclusive approach). Scholars and the literature have argued that the rating or ranking systems deployed in the exclusive approach to TM are usually subjective and not always objective due to the role played by line managers and management in the process (Pepermans et al., 2003; Meyers, van Woerkom and Dries, 2013; Sparrow et al., 2014). Thus, the process of rating individuals as either excellent, good, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory performers (i.e., high performers and/or potential performers and low performers, etc.) may be fundamentally subjective, therefore prone to bias and ethical concerns regarding the transparency of selection, training and development opportunities, reward, promotion, and tenure decisions (Silzer and Church, 2010; Walker and LaRocco, 2002; Swailes, Downs and Orr, 2014; Swailes, 2020). Findings from Case Study B indicated that the introduction of the ACF framework as an approach to TM in the institution is an excuse for not wanting to invest in the development of all academics.

This opinion resonates with the Sparrow et al. (2014) view that the focus on individuals rather than the practice of TM justifies the perception that TM is mainly focused on those that rank at the top in terms of capability and performance rather than the entire workforce. If not well managed, this can eventually lead to negative effects as it can lead to increased sensitivity to feedback and fear of failure among those identified as excellent performers (Kotlyar and Karakowsky, 2012; Meyers, van Woerkom, and Dries, 2013). In addition, interviews suggest that the exclusive approach of TM can undermine academic freedom by favouring academics who conform to specific academic norms, impacting academic job satisfaction, morale, and engagement if not properly managed. Thereby limiting potential intellectual diversity. Scholars and literature echoed this view that it can create a perception of favouritism and limited opportunities for those not ranked high or excluded from the talent pool, thereby leading to low organisational morale, embittering a loyal workforce and antipathy among employees (DeLong and Vijayaraghavan, 2003; Swailes and Blackburn, 2016; Swailes, 2020).

Despite the shortcoming mentioned above, findings from the institution suggest that the exclusive approach to TM can enable the institution to effectively manage the talents that possess unique skills that are difficult to attract and replace, hard to find, and much sought after in a very competitive global market and HE sector. Therefore, findings from the institution align with proponents of the exclusive approach to TM. Which indicate that TM mechanisms that can help identify, develop, engage, retain, and reward people with such potentials are required for the competitive advantage of the institution. This view has been supported by scholars such as Michaels et al. (2001); Boudreau and Ramstad (2005); Becker and Huselid (2006); and Meyers and Van Woerkom (2014).

Table 5.4: Summary of discussion on the conceptualisation of TM in UK HEIs

Case study institution	**Case study A**	**Case study B**
TM Approach	More inclusive: Mainly discontented and concerns about exclusive TM.	More exclusive: Moderate acceptance of the features, processes and characteristic of exclusive TM.
Focus of TM	All staff	High Performer and High potentials
Reviewing performance	PD&R	Moving PDR to ACF
Primary development methods	Trainings and formal mentoring scheme	Trainings
Transparency of approach	Some TM practices and process not clearly and/or openly communicated	Becoming more transparent. Now openly communicated via the ACF for instance

Resources	Moderate availability of resources required for TM	Lack of resources required for TM
Emerging insights	Impact of internal and external contextual factors impact on the institution's approach to TM.	Internal and external contextual factors influence the institution's approach to TM.

5.10.4 Academics Experience of Talent Management Practices in the context of NPM

The acquisition, deployment, development, engagement, reward and retention of individuals who are valuable to the organisation, driven by market forces and performance orientation, with emphasis on efficiency, economy, effectiveness, as well as accountability, were the main characteristics of TM practices and processes identified in case study institutions. This finding aligns with the observations of literature, scholars, and professionals who view TM as the systematic attraction, identification, induction, training and development, performance management, engagement, retention, succession planning, and deployment of those employees who are valuable to an organisation because of their performance and/or potential or the critical role they have (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Al Ariss, Cascio and Paauwe, 2014; Paisey and Paisey, 2018; CIPD, 2023; McKinsey, 2023). Findings indicated that the TM practices introduced because of NPM have resulted in a high level of individualism, limited and partially developed performance management practices, ad hoc career management practices, and more customised staff development and training activities.

5.10.4.1 Growth of Individualism

Findings from case study institutions suggested that there is a shift towards individualism, replacing the collectivist structured human capital management systems. Interviewees echoed that the traditional collegial culture, processes, and practices that used to exist have been gradually replaced with individual-centric approaches over the years because of NPM. The institutions are now characterised by market-driven and performance-orientated, personalised development and recognition features of TM and NPM principles. The changes have also resulted in academic staff becoming more autonomous and self-directed in terms of roles and responsibilities, as well as their career path and management.

For instance, findings from case study A revealed that TM at the institution of recent years involves a loosely knit management framework in which individuals are autonomous and expected to take care of themselves, and how well their roles and responsibilities are met is now closely monitored. Though evidence suggests that the institution still embraces the mechanisms of stewardship theory, which foster relationship-centred collaboration through shared leadership and management, there is a gradual move away from what was previously evident in the institution, where they used to have a tight-knit framework that encouraged close interaction among academics, their colleagues, and managers in terms of sharing ideas and good practices and collaborating for research projects and publications. Human capital management in the case study, according to interviewees, used to be characterised by a softer line management process, a collegiate culture, and communalism that reflected a sense of community and collaboration among faculties. This finding supports the observation of literature and scholars that suggested that HEIs have been changing from a collegial and soft management system, which was relatively free from any sense of management and accountability to a managerial and individualist model, in which management practices are adopted from the private sector (Broucker and De Wit, 2015; Broucker, De Wit and Verhoeven, 2018; Bleiklie, 2020). Thus, individual performance systems and metrics have entered academia. Excellence and talent are now predominantly linked to matters such as productivity, peer review, citation indexes, international refereed publications, and students' satisfaction and outcomes as a result of NPM (van den Brink, Fruytier and Thunnissen, 2013; Bradle, 2016; Thunnissen, 2016; Abdullah and Abubakar, 2017; Paisey and Paisey, 2018; Kallio et al., 2021).

It is also evident that TM practices and mechanisms are not fully grounded in Case Study A. What is very evident is the increase in high level of individualism where academics are expected or required to manage their careers themselves and ensure their performance is up to expectation but with little or no support from the institutions. The emphasis online management is also downplayed in the institution. The idea of TM as a whole package or holistic system and exclusive TM was not shared at case study A. For example, responsibilities are mostly self-managed as long as things are moving smoothly; issues relating to career advancement are up to individual academics to manage, and as a result, issues relating to career advancement are up to individual academics to manage; some faculty had to use their sabbatical leave to do so. The emphasis placed by most interviewees when probed about this pointed to the growth of individualism since the advent of NPM. Though they acknowledged that the institution now has different formal mechanisms for performance management, which is one of the key components of TM, such as the Organisational Operational and Individual Performance Management Framework and the P&DR system, that were used at various levels, units, divisions, schools, faculties, and in the organisation in general to manage individual and group performance. Nevertheless, such mechanisms were not yet fully integrated into a formally designed and monitored TM framework, and so this could be viewed as a loosely designed TM system still in its adolescence stage.

However, the findings in case study B revealed that though there were some variations in how academics in the institution experience TM compared to that of case study A, the institution does not also currently have a full-fledged, well-structured, and collectivist TM system in place that identify, develop, reward, and retain talents within the university. What is evident in organisations with a full-fledged TM framework are mechanisms that aim at the management of talent to achieve collaborative and collective goals and objectives. In such a situation, individual talents will be mandated to collaborate and network within the organisation, share knowledge, embark on special projects, publish together, and aim for group awards. What is observable instead in case study B is also a high level of individualism and an exclusive approach to TM that acknowledges autonomy, personal responsibility, and academic freedom, allows personal professional development and career advancement, as well as acknowledges, celebrates, and values individual academic contributions and achievements.

A very good example of the mechanisms that promote individualism in the university is the ACF, which is an open metric and framework designed to support individual academics to deliver the best teaching, research, and enterprise/industry engagement through the provision of training and development activities that are mapped not only to the institution's requirements but also to individual academic career aspirations. It was used to replace the PDR system, which was more inclusive and softer in nature. Like the KPIs mechanism used in the private sector organisation, the ACF is used by line managers to set clear, meaningful objectives for PCC as well as effectively and efficiently review their subordinates' performance against the set performance indicators. It is a well-structured document that indicates what good performance looks like across all levels of the institution.

5.10.4.2 Limited and Partially Developed Performance Management Practices

Schiemann (2014) described performance management as one of the key practices and processes of TM within the "talent lifecycle." While CIPD (2022) described it as the attempt to optimise the value that human capital creates by maintaining and improving their performance in line with an organisation's objectives. And at its minimum, performance management includes activities such as the establishment of objectives for individuals and teams, improving performance among the workforce, teams, and the organisation in general, and holding people to account for their performance by linking it to reward, career progression and termination of contracts. However, evidence from both case study institutions indicated that the performance management practices are limited and partially developed. Findings indicated that the current context, structure, size and previously deeply rooted collegiate culture have greatly impacted the level of performance management practices in both institutions. Thus, the gradual introduction of the principles of NPM, which give more priority to effectiveness, efficiency, economy, and market-driven orientation, is the key focus of the management of both institutions rather than performance management activities.

For example, the Performance & Development Review (P&DR) is the main evidence that indicates that case study A has some form of performance management mechanism in place. The institution also clearly acknowledged that the P&DR is the single most important way in which it ensures that every individual can perform to their maximum capability as well as fulfil their career ambitions. However, evidence from the institution suggests that the implementation of the P&DR is weak and ineffective compared to what is obtainable in private sector organisations. This indicates that the institution is implementing TM practices (though inclusive in nature) but in a different way from what is obtainable in the private sector (exclusive approach). For instance, the P&DR is offered to staff annually, and evidence reveals that it is the responsibility of individual staff to ensure the review is effective by preparing for it and contributing to the meeting. Thus, when it comes to establishing clear objectives for individuals and teams to see their part in the university's mission and strategic goals, the current P&DR system of the institution lacks such mechanisms and features. It is important to note that the P&DR system case study A currently has in place is also limited in terms of holding people accountable for their performance. That is in terms of linking individual performance to reward, career progression and even termination of contracts, despite the removal of the original form of academic/strong type of tenure by the 1988 Education Reform Act. Even when it comes to promotion and recognition, it is solely the responsibility of individuals to put themselves forward.

Evidence from the institution further indicated that despite the introduction of the P&DR system because of NPM, its implementation has been weak, due to the institution being a very large bureaucracy with lots of complex demands at different levels, divisions, schools, and faculties, as well as its deeply rooted collegiate culture history. Findings from the institution also suggest that it will be extremely difficult to implement a full-blown performance management (P&DR) system, most especially with hard mode and exclusive TM practices. The current performance management initiatives at the institution are characterised by a lack of clear and focused performance expectations, a lack of effective alignment with the strategic goals of the institution, the subjective nature of the P&DR process due to the level of contributions of parties and data involved, failure to address individual developmental needs, most especially from top management, overreliance on quantitative metrics (e.g., number of publications), and a lack of regular, consistent, open and supportive feedback on performance and progress. Thus, this study finds that the current performance management practices in case study A are limited and partially developed. Literature and scholars suggest that addressing the above performance management features in case study A will strengthen its processes and improve its employees' performance and growth, as well as the organisation's performance and success (Ter Bogt and Scapens, 2012; Glenn, 2012; Kallio, Kallio and Grossi, 2017; Thunnissen and Buttiens, 2017; Kallio et al., 2021).

Unlike case study A, case study B now has a more structured and focused performance management system in place. For instance, the recent introduction of the ACF, which is designed to support academics to deliver the best teaching, research, and enterprise/industry engagement through the provision of training and development activities that are mapped not only to the institution's requirements but also to individual academic career aspirations, is an indication that the institution is trying to maximise the contribution of individual academics to its strategic goals. This is because the outcome of the ACF will be followed by a tailored development plan to address the career aspiration and development of individual academic. Just like performance management systems that may be used in the private sector, the ACF aims to establish clear objectives for individuals across all trajectories, improve performance among employees, and hold people to account for their performance by linking it to reward and career progression. The ACF is an indication of the presence of an all-encompassing framework and implementation of one of the good principles of performance management as advocated by CIPD (2022).

The ACF aims to remove any form of disparity between different academic trajectory with opportunities for successful development, recognition, and progression across teaching, research, and enterprise. The ACF contains what good performances look like at the institution and across different career phases and trajectories, and it is linked to the institution's strategic goals as well as its internal and external metrics. One of the key components of the ACF is PCC. The main purpose of the PCC is to improve performance, enhance career development and wellbeing through setting specific and meaningful objectives aligned to the ACF. Despite the various positive attributes of the ACF, it is important to note that it has not been fully rolled out across all units, departments, schools and faculties. It is currently implemented alongside the institution's PDR systems and/or meeting, which evidence from the university suggested is more or less a tick box exercise. It is also important to note that the PCC plays an essential role in the ACF system. If the meetings do not hold due to other factors such as workload and lack of commitment on the part of parties involved (line managers and colleagues), the system will be ineffective and fall short of expectations.

Although evidence in case study B indicated that the PDR meeting gives academics some levels of opportunity to set and review their performance goals and career development, receive feedback from line managers, clarify job purpose, and record objectives, the outcomes of such meetings are mostly implemented in favour of the organisation rather than both the individual involved and the organisation. For instance, activities such as attendance at external and international conferences, seminars, training, and other development initials that are crucial to career development are not usually approved or funded by the institution.

5.10.4.3 Ad hoc Career Management Practices

Career management is the process through which individuals collate information about their interests, values, proficiencies, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (in terms of career exploration), identify a career goal, and engage in career and professional plans that will increase the probability of achieving the career goals (Greenhaus, 1987; Greenhaus, Callanan and Godshalk, 2010; Van der Heijden et al., 2022). While the activities organisations deploy to support their human capital career development, which will enable the employees to achieve their career goals, obtain promotion and pay raises, as well as support their growth into leadership and management positions, are referred to as organisational career management (Baruch and Peiperl, 2000; De Vos and Cambré, 2017; Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019).

Despite the recent clamour by career theorists for boundaryless and protean careers, i.e., the new career models, which focus on individuals being responsible for their career management and advancement (Herrmann, Hirschi and Baruch, 2015; Tomlinson, Baird, Berg, and Cooper, 2018; and Pudelko and Tenzer, 2019). Scholars have continued to stress the importance of the role of the organisation in the career management of high performers and high potential workforces and the relationship between organisational investments in career management, career success, and organisation success (De Vos and Dries, 2013; FernaNdez-AraOz, 2014; Cappelli and Keller, 2014; Hilman and Abubakar, 2017; Sutherland, 2018; Mohammed, Baig and Gururajan, 2020). Thus, suggesting a shared responsibility between individuals and the organisation for career management, career success, and organisation success. Literature, scholars and HR professionals have suggested that organisations should engage in activities such as career counselling, succession planning, career-planning workshops, internal recruitment, mentoring programmes, effective performance evaluation, outplacement and preretirement programmes, dual-ladder systems, supportive work environment, work-life balance, creation of pathway programmes, support for networking activities, assessment centre for the appraisal of individual's competences, and so on to enhance the career management and advancement of their workforce (Gutteridge, 1993; Baruch and Peiperl, 2000; Eby, Allen and Brinley, 2005; De Vos, Dewettinck and Buyens, 2009; Stahl et al., 2012; Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019).

Evidence from case study institutions resonates with the findings in academic and professional literature, which suggests that organisations do not provide enough support or encouragement for the career growth and development of their employees (De Vos and Cambré, 2017; Sutherland, 2018; Zacher et al., 2019). Thereby resulting in a surge in the new career types, such as boundaryless careers (including staff turnover) and protean careers in the case study institutions. Findings from both case study institutions align with existing literature (Kim, 2017; Sutherland, 2018; and Pudelko and Tenzer, 2019) and suggest that a boundaryless career in academia usually entails moving freely between industries, institutions, and disciplines. It could entail working with a variety of specialists, conducting interdisciplinary research, and pursuing initiatives outside of the purview of conventional academia. To promote a dynamic and diverse academic career, this strategy places a high value on adaptation, innovation, networking, collaboration, and a readiness to explore new subjects. While adaptability, ongoing self-directed learning, and individual liberty define a protean academic career, successful academics frequently pursue a variety of research interests, participate in lifelong learning, and actively look for opportunities to advance both personally and professionally. They might move between different professions, welcoming change and putting their personal development and ideals ahead of conventional career paths. This strategy permits flexibility and the pursuit of a worthwhile and satisfying academic experience.

For instance, findings from case study A suggest that, despite the introduction of an appraisal system since 1988, the establishment of the Staff Training and Development Unit and the P&DR system, as well as the development of lots of resources and activities by the Directorate of People and Organisational Development for all levels of academics and administrators, the effectiveness of such initiatives is still not well-established in terms of implementation. This is an example of why most academics are now returning to boundaryless and protean careers in HEIs just like their counterparts in other sectors and/or industries.

Testimonies from the institution also indicated a lack of transparency and well-established, structured, and/or formal requirements on career management measures available for academics in terms of career development and progression. Despite the presence of numerous career development activities, the institution is not insistent about it, and there are no clear requirements for individuals that would like to foster their career. Findings from the institution also suggest that there are no clearly laid-down policies and procedures for such initiatives (in terms of standardisation), no consideration for provision for sufficient time to engage in such activities (meaning academics need to spend their own time in such activities, thereby impacting negatively on the work-life balance), a lack of top management and/or line managers support for such initials, a lack of sufficient funding to engage in some activities, and the presence of some sort of favouritism and bias, which could be unethical. And as a result, individual academics take ownership of their career (with a focus on their personal values) and self-directed developmental activities. Regardless of the progress case study A has made over the years in terms of career management and given the above evidence of the current situation on the ground, it can be concluded that career management activities in institution lacks standardisation and are still in their ad hoc stage. The irony is that one would have expected an institution with such a reputation to take the lead in modelling career management practice in HEI.

Unlike case study A, case study B has more visible, open, and supportive career management activities in place. For instance, there is the presence of mandatory training and development programmes to prepare existing and new managers for the task ahead, the Management Skills Masterclasses, employee apprenticeships that enable managers to achieve leadership and management qualifications, and the ACF, which is designed to support career growth and flexibility within the institution, enabling academics at different stages of their career to work in the career pathways or trajectory that match their strengths and/or interests with the additional opportunity of exploring other career trajectories.

However, despite the progress attained so far in case study B, findings indicated a range of factors that act as barriers to career development and progression: the presence of unrealistic workload; lack of and/or insufficient financial support; insufficient support for networking opportunities for building professional and career advancement opportunities; lack of clear succession plan to prepare academics for leadership roles; poor work-life balance that most time results to work burnout; lack of career path planning; lack of fair recognition of efforts and promotion; absence of formal mentorship and coaching programmes; lack of personalised performance feedback; insufficient opportunities for training and development programmes (internal and external) that are not just business focused but also meet personal career advancement needs of academics, etc.

Thus, when compared to what was obtainable over 25 years ago, where career management practice is well structured, standardised, and implemented (Bersin by Deloitte, 2017), the findings from case study B indicated that career management practices are still in their ad hoc stage and more of an individualised practice. For example, the ACF of the institution is not currently standardised and compulsory for staff and managers to use at all levels of the institution and attaining the requirements and meeting the criteria of the framework do not actually mean individuals will progress in their career or be promoted by the institution.

5.10.4.4 Staff training

Findings from both case study institutions indicated that this is something the institutions have in abundance in terms of the number of training and development activities. These range from: compulsory training scheme for new academic staff induction to grant writing and funding opportunities; research methodologies and techniques; pedagogical workshops and trainings (to help academics improve their teaching, learning and assessment skills); management and leadership development trainings most especially for those aiming at administrative trajectory; financial management; recruitment and selection, diversity and inclusion training, digital and technology skills for teaching and research resource and delivery; research integrity and ethics; display screen; health and well-being; stress management; time management; mentoring and coaching; public engagement and communication; international and global projects, partnerships and collaborations; academic writing and speaking, anti-slavery, supervision of student research, supervising doctorial research, research funding and grant writing, as well as leadership and management, library resources and technology, etc. (Nicholls, 2014; King, Roed and Wilson, 2018; Floyd, 2022).

However, evidence from both institutions also suggested that most of the trainings offered and available are merely focused on achieving the university's short-term strategic objectives and business needs as well as meeting statutory, legal, and/or regulatory requirements rather than meeting the short- and long-term business needs of the institution as well as the personal, professional, and career development needs of the academics. Thus, they are in line with NPM-type objectives, and as a result, the impact of most training activities is not measured and/or evaluated. For instance, case study A training on equality and diversity is designed to enlighten and ensure that academic staff on interview panels do not breach the Equality Act during the selection process, while the research integrity and ethics training is designed to ensure that academics maintain the required quality and standard in their respective research practices, which is essential for the institution’s reputation as a renowned research and teaching excellence centre. In addition, evidence from case study A also revealed that despite the availability of well-designed staff trainings in the institution, the majority of the trainings are merely meant to tick the box. And as a result, management across the institution is not concerned about the quality and impact of most of the trainings.

Findings from case study B also indicate that if there is one thing that the university is great at, it is the amount of training activities and programmes it has in place, some of which have been mentioned above. Evidence indicated that despite the numerous staff trainings available, staff are not motivated to access the trainings because they are basically business-focused rather than for both business and personal career development needs. They are also designed and made compulsory for academics to attend due to statutory requirements and short-term needs of the business. Again, the institution is seen as caring less about the actual impact of such trainings. It is important to note that there is also evidence that indicates variation in staff training among the various faculties, schools, divisions, and departments that make up the institution. As a result, the approach adopted by some faculties/schools might meet not just the needs of the institution but also academic needs. For instance, a particular school confirmed that in addition to the university-wide staff training, their school has what is called the "Wednesdays Event” which addresses the specific needs of their academics. The topic of the event is suggested by the academics themselves, and the training is supported by the organisation learning and development team in terms of quality assurance. Evidence of this type of intervention is absent in other faculties. In addition, evidence also confirmed that despite the availability of lots of training programmes and opportunities at case study B, the institution did not make appropriate provision for time for academics to attend such trainings because of the current workload they have.

Mann (1996) shares a widely accepted view about training and development as well as the importance of evaluating learning and training interventions by putting forward that, "with the huge investment in developing training strategies and funding the same, the question is no longer "should we train" but rather "is the training worthwhile and effective?" (p.14). Findings from both institutions indicated that this is not the case. Thus, both case studies are still lagging behind what Mann suggested, due to the lack of attention given to the measurement, assessment, and evaluation of the worthwhileness and effectiveness of the trainings they have in place via mainly feedback received from the training participants. CIPD (2021) supported that, top-performing learning organisations are four times more likely than the average to use training analytics to shape their future learning and training strategy and the services they deliver to align with wider organisational needs. Unlike what is presently obtainable in the case study institutions, where the majority of training interventions currently offered are created to meet the operational needs of the universities, external statutory obligations or regulatory requirements, to meet job needs (which are occasionally irrelevant), and to primarily satisfy internal or external training needs. Additionally, the quality of training programmes varies amongst different faculties, divisions, and departments of the institutions and those who organise them. This study revealed that academic assumptions about staff training in both case studies are similar. Training inventions in both institutions are mainly targeted at achieving the universities short-term strategic objectives and meeting statutory requirements. Interviewees in both institutions also stressed the need for training opportunities to focus not just on the short-term needs of the institution but also the long-term business needs of the institution as well as the personal, professional, and career development needs of academics.

5.10.5 Evolving issues in the case study organisations

One of the key objectives of this research is to identify the different ways in which academics in case study institutions attempt to achieve their institution's expectations in the context of NPM. Apart from the various practices discussed in the preceding sections of this chapter, findings from both case studies indicated that mentorship and management style are key to career management, development, and growth, as well as the performance success of academics.

5.10.5.1 Mentorship

Mentoring is a development approach that involves a mutual one-to-one relationship in and/or outside an organisation between an advanced career incumbent and a beginner aimed at promoting the career development of both parties (Healy and Welchert, 1990). The relationship is based on using one-to-one conversations to enhance an individual’s skills, knowledge, employability, proficiency, or work performance, and the skills of questioning, listening, clarifying, and reframing that are associated with mentoring (Ragins, Cotton, and Miller, 2000; and CIPD, 2023). Mentoring can be classified as either formal or informal. While formal mentoring relationships are developed by organisations to match more knowledgeable and experienced colleagues (mentors) with inexperienced, developing individuals or proteges (mentees) (Burgess, van Diggele and Mellis, 2018; Żuchowski, Casalino and Murat, 2022). Informal mentoring is a relationship that develops spontaneously between two people (mentor and mentee) with the aim of gaining insight, knowledge, skills, developing proficiencies, friendship, and support from each other. It is important to note that either of both parties can initiate the informal mentoring relationship (Nemanick, 2002; Inzer, and Crawford, 2005; Wronka, 2015).

Findings from Case Study A indicated the important roles formal and informal mentoring play in the career development of staff. Empirical data validates the beneficial effects of mentoring, whether formal or informal, internal or external, on individuals' academic career development and growth, job performance, role success, mental health and well-being, and ability to make sound decisions within challenging circumstances. Under the direction of the institution's Learning and Organisational Development Team, the official mentoring initiative in case study A is known as the "gold staff mentoring programme". Any employee of the organisation, including academics at all levels, who would desire support for their professional growth can apply for the programme. Evidence from the institution indicated that, the formal mentoring scheme has helped numerous colleagues gain new perspectives, insights, and tools for managing work-life balance and planning how to achieve their long-term career goals, given the increase of workloads and work demand at the institution in recent years. On the part of formal mentors, evidence also indicated that many of them were proud of the impact they are having on the career development and lives of their allocated mentees, the opportunity to meet other people they would have met, and the impact the scheme has on their career in terms of being able to evidence mentoring skills and knowledge when applying for a new role.

Despite the benefits accrued to formal mentoring, as evident in case study A, the finding also indicated that informal mentoring seems to be more beneficial to academics at all levels of the institution, as it develops naturally without a structured framework and is based on personal connections and mutual interests. As a result, most academics opted for informal mentoring instead of formal mentoring because they believe it offers them more benefits, flexibility, mutual choice, an open-ended relationship that is more long term, less accountable, and covers a wider range of issues (ranging from career guidance to personal/work-life issues) based on personal connection and common interest and value when compared to a formal mentoring scheme. In summary, though informal mentoring seems to be more appealing at case study A, findings revealed how either formal or informal provides a range of benefits for academics ranging from improved career, job performance, career growth (for instance there are evidence of how mentoring enable staff to get on the publication ladder, switch areas of specialisation as well as collaborate for projects and research fundings/grants), professional development, work-life balance, personal and mental well-being, retention to motivation. Given the amount of attention the university's management pays to mentoring in relation to the important impact it has played in academics' career progression, mentoring appears to be a highly important but undervalued component of TM at the institution.

Unlike case study A, case study B does not have an organisational-wide formal mentoring programme in place for staff, including academics. However, evidence indicated how unstructured guidance, advice, and support from more experienced faculty either within or outside their institution, based on mutual personal relationships and interests (informal mentors), has helped academic careers in terms of career development and growth, research, teaching, work-life balance issues, and other personal needs. Findings indicated informal mentorship gave academics the platform to develop professionally, academically, and attain leadership and management growth within and outside the institution. For instance, there was evidence of how informal mentors from previous employment still help with publication. Findings also revealed how informal mentorship helped with identifying the teaching potential in a colleague that was formally in a research track only as associate research and guided her towards her career aspirations (with testimony of her now being a professor in the teaching, research, and administration tracks). Thus, informal mentorship has served as an essential coping mechanism for academics in case study A in the context of NPM and should be recognised as one of the essential practices of TM in HEIs.

Regardless of the absence of formal mentoring at case study B, senior colleagues also acknowledged how they have used informal mentoring to build their professional relationship with junior colleagues. Thus, evidence from the institutions shows how informal mentoring has been of great help in the current circumstances obtainable with the institution, though not as structured as formal mentoring but very valuable to mentees. Findings revealed that formal mentoring is usually too structured and does not meet the personal, developmental, and career goals of individual mentees in most cases, as the objectives of the relationship are more aligned with what the business needs and what the organisation wants. In addition, evidence from the institution indicated that formal mentors are not usually flexible. As a result, informal mentorship has been a crucial coping strategy for academics in case study B within the context of NPM, and it needs to be acknowledged as a fundamental practice of TM in HEIs.

5.10.5.2 Impact of Line Manager

Apart from mentoring, another recurring issue that emerged from the findings of this study, despite not being part of the initial focus of this research, is the role of line managers in the implementation and success of TM practices. Findings from both case study organisations continued to point to the key role that top management and line managers play in determining their motivation and commitment to TM initiatives and their job in the context of NPM. Evidence from both institutions also resonates and aligns with the academic literature and scholars' findings of how line managers transform TM practices and frameworks into actual employee outcomes, stimulate talent performance, and enact TM practices not only in private sector organisations but also in public sector institutions (Hirsh, 2015; Kehoe and Han, 2020; Kravariti et al., 2022).

Evidence from both case study institutions reflects the characteristics of the different types of management styles (authoritative/exploitative; authoritative/benevolent; consultative; and participative) (CMI, 2015; Armstrong and Taylor, 2017) and how the styles adopted by different line managers at different points in time in their institution influence their commitment and motivation to work. For example, findings from case study A indicate how important effective communication and consultation are to academics at all levels and to the past success of the institution. Data from the institution also indicated how effective communication and consultation have depreciated since the current management took over in 2013.

Findings suggest that the prominent type of management style in the institution currently, most especially at the top management level, is autocratic and/or unitary, where top management and faculty leadership take decisions without consideration of the input of their faculties. Evidence indicates that such management styles are not sustainable in an institution like theirs and will not foster a culture of creativity and innovation, thereby failing to develop and inspire academics effectively. Findings also indicated that the current management and leadership, which filter down from above, lack openness and effective communication could lead to high turnover, lack of trust, misunderstanding, lack of commitment, and dissatisfaction.

Findings from Case Study A also indicated how the current management style could enable faculties to develop their careers, given that their line managers are tasked with the responsibility of managing their performance and development review (P&DR). Evidence indicated there have been changes in line managers of faculties over the years, how faculties have experienced different management styles with the different line managers, and how the different managers and the style of management they adopted have impacted their roles. Findings at the institution indicated that supportive line managers are crucial in an institution like theirs to foster an environment that encourages collaboration and innovation. For example, evidence from the institution shows that a participative manager who fully trusts their subordinates, obtains input, opinions, ideas, and feedback from them, and is supportive as well as including the same in the setting and implementation of objectives and task execution, can motivate and stimulate faculties to contribute to increasing research productivity and the overall performance and success of the institution.

On the other hand, evidence from the institution revealed that authoritative/exploitative managers that give orders and directives without seeking the opinions of their subordinates as well as use punishment and fear to drive performance due to a lack of confidence and/or trust may hinder faculties in their role, including research pursuits, collaboration, and innovation, as well as potentially leading to burnout, talent attrition, a decrease in research productivity, and the overall performance and success of the institution. This suggests that the influence of inappropriate management and/or line manager styles in institutions such as case study A, which is a research-focused university, goes beyond its impact on the day-to-day management to significantly influence the research, teaching, and administrative output of faculties as well as the overall success of the institution.

Similarly, to case study A, findings from case study B indicated how management and/or line managers can impact TM processes and practices through their participative or authoritative management style, supportive or unsupportive management structure, provision of conducive or unconducive working environments, ability to facilitate skill and career development, skill to promote employee engagement, and capacity to align organisational, team, and individual goals. Evidence from the institution revealed that management support or line manager empathy can boost TM practices effectively, while ineffective management and an unsupportive line manager can affect the overall quality and effectiveness of the operationalisation of TM practices and experience. Findings from the institution also indicated how poor line management can impact talent growth, retention, engagement, commitment, motivation, performance management, and productivity negatively. Evidence of critical testimonies of how individual academics felt under different managements and/or line managers during the period they have spent in the university so far indicated clear differences in their experience due to the management style adopted by their various line managers. One would expect HEIs that are teaching institutions to adopt better practices.

Findings from case study B also indicated that the management style adopted by the different management and/or line managers in terms of allocation of workload, communication, recognition of performance, and career development did vary. And because of the nature, context, and size of the institution, the roles of management at all levels, most especially the line managers, are even more crucial because they directly impact talents, as it is easier to see the value of individual academics within their unit, department, and school or faculty rather than the university wide. Evidence also indicated how effective consultative and/or participative line managers provided clear expectations, offered opportunities for networking and collaboration, supported career advancement and professional development, understood the importance of work-life balance, were empathic, served as informal mentors, and recognised and/or rewarded good performance. In contrast, findings from the institution also indicated how authoritative and/or autocratic as well as bad line managers can be very rigid and/or indifferent in their management style, which may limit opportunities for communicating expectations clearly, prospects for career advancement and growth, mentorship opportunities, recognition, as well as hinder networking and collaboration opportunities.

Evidence from case study B also indicated that being a teaching-focused university, the institution requires management and line managers with consultative and/or participative management styles who can trust and have confidence in their subordinates and seek their inputs, opinions, ideas, and feedback (most especially from the experience with students either directly or indirectly in class) for decision-making as well as the setting and implementation of objectives and execution tasks. This aligns with the findings of Deem (1998), Dearlove (2002), and Wolf and Jenkins (2021), who suggested that a listening and supportive management and/or line manager is essential in identifying, engaging, and nurturing the talents of faculties, including by recognising the individual strengths, providing CPD opportunities for teaching methodologies and effective pedagogy, fostering collaboration and networking among colleagues, and creating a positive and conducive working environment. Findings from the institution indicated that having a supportive line manager can contribute to faculty retention, while having an unsupportive manager can impact staff morale negatively, thereby leading to faculty retention problems and turnover issues. Therefore, the type of line managers adapt can impact faculties in teaching-focused institutions either positively or negatively, beyond administrative responsibilities to determining the students experience, outcome, and satisfaction and the institution's performance success.

Thus, the finding conforms with scholarly literature that suggests line managers have great impact on employees as a result of how TM practices, initiatives and inventions are implemented (Broucker and De Wit, 2015; Gjerde and Alvesson, 2020; Bleiklie, 2020; Kehoe and Han, 2020; Kravariti et al., 2022); in this instance, academics in the context of NPM.

5.11 The similarities and differences between the two case study institutions in terms of themes

This section presents a summary of case-by-case findings using a thematic analysis methodology (Braun and Clarke, 2013) derived from the most recurring themes in NVivo software. The similarities and differences between the two case study institutions in terms of the empirical findings are summarised in Table 5.5 and discussed in subsequent pages:

Table 5.5: The summary of empirical findings from case study institutions.

Findings	**Case study A**	**Case study B**
Definition of talent	- Exceptional characteristics demonstrated by individual academics in the areas of research, teaching and administration that support the institution to achieve its strategic goals and positively contribute to the growth of the organisation. - All academics in the case study are believed to be talented academics.	- The ability to disseminate knowledge to students and the outside world, create knowledge by doing research, engage the industry, and be good administrators. - Not all academics in the case study are believed to be talented academics.
Understanding of approach to TM in the world of Higher Education – 1	- Talent in the academic world of case study A can be a result of practice and development over time (nurture) that academics have acquired, which makes them excellent performers and achievers in research, teaching and administration or it can be seen as a demonstration of exceptional innate natural abilities (nature) or as comprising of both nature and nurture components.	- Evidence indicates that talent includes a range of abilities and skills that could either be innate or acquired, or a blend of both. For example, one can learn to be a good teacher/lecture through education and training interventions. - This view suggests that while talent can include innate natural ability (nature), it can also be developed over time through various developmental interventions and acquired experience (nurture) in one's chosen career, in this case as an academic.
Understanding of approach to TM in the world of Higher Education – 2	- More inclusive approach - Opportunities for all in terms of nurturing, training, developing and promotion. Such opportunities apply to all academics across all levels, departments, divisions, schools and faculties. - Objective approach: views talent from an organisational perspective and needs. Of the opinion that academic talents are resources that	- More exclusive approach - The focus is to develop and promote academics that are high performers, achievers, and those with potential to fill key pivotal positions. - Objective approach: the aim of TM is to meet the institution's goals and objectives. The focus is the alignment of academic talents with the institution's strategic needs.

	it can recruit and develop to meet its strategic goals and objectives. Do not place emphasis on individual development and growth but that of the business. For instance, the institution occasionally prioritises the recruitment and development of specific skills that are crucial for its success, even if it is to meet short-term needs.	With emphasis on the identification, developing, rewarding and retaining specific academics with capabilities and competencies that are essential for the success of the institution. The approach here is business-centric to ensure the institution has the right talent in the right roles at the right time, not workforce centric. No strong emphasis on the personal development and growth of individual academics.
Experience of TM Practices - 1 (*Individualism replaces a structured TM programme*)	- Evidence suggests that the development of TM practices at the institution has led to the emergence and growth of individualism rather than collectivism/collegiate culture that used to be the norm at the institution. - TM at the institution involves a loosely knit management framework in which individuals are expected to take care of themselves in terms of performance, personal and career development. - It is important to note that despite the growth of individualism at the institution, which is a pro-exclusive TM approach, the inclusive TM approach is still more prominent; thus, one could conclude the approach to TM in the institution is hybrid.	- Evidence of several individualist practices that focus on high performers and/or high-potential individuals/academics in their TM approach. - Evidence of individualist practices that required individual academics to manage their professional, personal and career development themselves. - There is some evidence that the institution has processes in place to engage and develop all academics, but the core group receives priority. Thus, one can conclude that the approach to TM in the institution currently is blended, with more alignment to the exclusive approach.
Experience of TM Practices – 2 *(Performance Management)*	- Evidence of limited and partially standardised performance management practices.	- Evidence of the emergence of standardised performance management practices.

	- Though there are the presences of performance management practices in the institution (for instance, P&DRs), such practices are not standardised across all levels, departments, divisions, schools and faculties of the institution. For example, it can be very formal in some units and informal in others. There is still a high level of self-management and investment in individuals at the institution, which suggests that stewardship-based mechanisms and an inclusive approach to TM are still hugely in practice in case study A.	- The introduction of the ACF at the institution to replace its previous PDR system is evidence of a gradual move towards a more standardised performance management process and move away from the stewardship mechanism. However, as of the time of data collection, the ACF, for example, is still not standardised across the institution. Nevertheless, once fully implemented, it will move the institution closer to more exclusive and/or directive-based TM mechanisms.
Experience of TM Practices – 3 *(Career Management)*	- Evidence of individualised and ad hoc career management practices. - Evidence indicates that though career management practices have evolved significantly at the institution over the years, they lack transparency, and there is no well-established structure, standard, or formal requirements to manage and evaluate the career development and progression of all academics. - Individuals are responsible for their career development.	- Evidence of individualised and emergent career management practices. - Evidence indicates that there are some transparent efforts by the management to support the career development of academics through the introduction of the ACF, but it is not compulsory for academics and managers to use the framework as at the time of data collection, only optional but open to all academics. - Individuals are still mainly responsible for their career development.
Experience of TM Practices – 4 *(Staff training)*	- Evident of varieties of trainings opportunities offered at the institution. - Approach to staff training might also differ among the various faculties, schools, division and	- Evidence of a very good amount of training activities in place. - The approach to staff training is mainly standardised across all schools and faculties.

	department that makes up the institution. - Mainly to meet the business needs (for instance research focused) and statutory requirement of the institution in general. - Management not concerned about the quality and impact of most of the trainings. - Interviewees sees the trainings as a mere tick box exercise.	- Mainly to meet the business needs and statutory requirements of the institution. - Evidence of inability to access training opportunities due to workload. - The management is not concerned about the quality and impact of trainings. - Interviewees of the opinion that most of the trainings are simply tick-box exercises
Experience of TM Practices – 5 (*Mentorship)*	- Evidence of formal and informal mentorship. - Evidence suggests that formal mentoring involves experienced academics appointed by the institution providing formal and structured guidance, advice, and support to less experienced faculty within the institution. While informal mentorship is usually based on personal relationships and interests, unlike formal mentoring, which is strictly formal. This process encompasses experienced academics providing unstructured guidance, advice, and support to less experienced faculty either within or outside the institution. - Evident suggests that formal and informal mentorship should be encouraged among academics.	- Informal mentoring is very evident among interviewees. - This process encompasses experienced academics providing unstructured guidance, advice, and support to less experienced faculty either within or outside their faculty or institution. - It was evident that informal mentorship is more effective than formal mentorship and should be promoted.
Experience of TM Practices – 6 *(Line Management)*	- Management and leadership approaches can either boost TM practices positively or impact them negatively.	- The impact of line managers' management and leadership styles in TM processes and practices was

	- While effective line managers could enhance TM positively as well as inspire and motivate academics, ineffective management and unsupportive line managers can affect the overall quality and effectiveness of the TM practices and experience as well as lead to academic talent attrition.	very evident from the experience of interviewees. - Interviewees suggest that participative and supportive management and leadership styles of line managers can boost TM practices effectively, while ineffective management and unsupportive line managers can affect the overall quality and effectiveness of the TM practices and experience of academics.

Given the differences between both institutions in terms of their historical background, reputation, tradition, ethos, strategic goals and priorities, focus (research and/or teaching), level of funding and resources, impact of NPM and managerialism, flexibility towards diversity, size, percentage of tenured staff, etc., they happen to have some similarities and differences in their conceptualisation and operationalisation of talent and TM in the context of NPM from HEIs' academic perspectives, as indicated in Table 5.5.

Based on the empirical findings obtained from the qualitative research using interviews and documentation techniques, it is also interesting to note that despite the differences between both institutions in terms of their approaches to TM, they happen to have a high level of similarities in their conceptualisation of talent. However, the divergence in their conceptualisation of talent is what the ability or talent should be in, as this is influenced by the distinct nature (e.g., research-focused and teaching-focused) of both institutions. For instance, evidence from both institutions indicated that, while talent can include innate and natural ability (nature), it can also be developed over time through various developmental interventions and acquired experience (nurture) in one's chosen career. However, what was different between both institutions is what the innate or nurtured ability should be. While evidence from case study A being a research-focused institution indicated the ability to include research methodology, data analysis, ethical research practices, publication skills, grant writing and proposal ability (for securing funding for research projects), possess effective communication and presentation skills (to be able to present in academic events including seminars, conferences, symposiums, etc.), capacity to network and collaborate with interdisciplinary teams, peers, and external institutions and partners, literature review (to gain knowledge of existing literature and identify the gaps that require further research), and of course mentorship. Case study B interviewees indicated that the abilities include pedagogical knowledge and skills, learner-centred teaching, technological integration, curriculum development, assessment and constructive formative and/or summative feedback necessary for effective evaluating learners performance, classroom management, being able to respond to the varied learning styles of students (with the world becoming a global village and HEIs attracting students from diverse backgrounds), the ability to engage in CPD, pastoral and mentorship skills, and of course effective communication.

With regard to innate ability, findings from case studies A and B show considerable convergence in the conceptualisation of talent as a natural ability. This conform with the notion held by some HRM practitioners and scholars that talent is largely an innate ability. Findings from both institutions indicated that academics define academic talents as people who are naturally curious, critical thinkers, problem solvers, able to absorb, retain, and recall complex information, communicators, able to adapt to changing circumstances, and gifted in research and analysis. It implies an aptitude for a particular activity, such as an innate capacity to share knowledge and/or advance knowledge in the HE industry. For example, some people are naturally outgoing, engaged, and good speakers. In the particular sphere of their talent, in this case academia, these aptitudes or proficiencies allow the possessors to rise beyond the rest of their peers and/or colleagues. This viewpoint asserts that, some people (for instance, some academics) will always perform better than others owing to their innate and/or natural ability, even in the presence of the same level of education, training, developmental intervention and experience (Buckingham and Vosburgh, 2001; Davies and Davies 2010; Meyers, van Woerkom, and Dries, 2013; Kravariti and Johnson; 2019; Dries, 2022). Consequently, during the internal and external talent acquisition process, institutions search for or should such aptitude.

With regard to talent as mastery of skills, findings from academics in both institutions suggests that talent might be conceived as both nurtured, learned and made abilities and skills; nevertheless, the learned abilities, skills, competences, aptitude, and experience required by the two universities varied somewhat. The perspectives held by academics from the two case studies aligned with existing literature that defines talent as the mastery of knowledge, skills, capacity, and ability that individuals acquire and develop through a gradual process of systematic and intentional intervention, learning, experience, and practice (Michaels et al., 2001; Arvey et al., 2006; Ulrich, 2007; Cheese, Thomas and Craig, 2008). In case study A, academic talent refers to individuals with nurtured expertise in research methodology, data analysis, ethical practices, publication skills, grant writing, effective communication, networking, literature review, and mentorship, securing funding for research projects and securing funding for interdisciplinary teams. In case study B, academics suggests nurtured essential skills and competencies, such as pedagogical knowledge, learner-centred teaching, technological integration, curriculum development, assessment, classroom management, diverse learning styles, CPD engagement, pastoral and mentorship skills, and effective communication, can enhance one's talents and effectiveness in teaching-focused institutions, may lead to high performance and successful careers such institutions.

The divergence in what are to be nurtured is influenced by the nature of both institutions as mentioned in Chapters 2. Whilst case study A is more research focused institution, case study B is more teaching focused institution. However, academics from both institutions shared the opinion of nurture, which is consistent with scholars who define talent as developed and/or taught abilities and skills necessary for an individual to fulfil their full potential and contribute to an organisation (Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries, and González-Cruz, 2013; Meyers, van Woerkom, and Dries, 2013; Kravariti and Johnson; 2019; Dries, 2022). For instance, academics from the two case study universities acknowledged that earning a PhD is the first step towards academic talent. Achieving a PhD require training, education, communication, time management, and real-world and/or experience.

With regard to commitment and motivation, academies in the two case studies show substantial convergence in their conceptualisation of talent. The findings from the case studies indicate that dedication and motivation are critical qualities for an academic in their current position and organisation. This is because they act as a coping mechanism for the inadvertent effects of NPM in HEIs, which have significantly changed faculty members' workloads, academic career paths, and occupational roles (Broucker and De Wit, 2015; Börnfelt, 2023). The opinions expressed by academics of the case study institutions are consistent with the body of literature that characterises talent as the commitment, devotion, motivation and dedication, interest, and enthusiasm that a person demonstrates at work as well as the observable intrinsic qualities that a person possesses and which add to the institution's overall performance (Ulrich, 2007; Meyers, van Woerkom, and Dries, 2013; Thunnissen and Van Arensbergen, 2015; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019). Though both case study institutions emphasise the importance of commitment and motivation by academic talent, significant divergence appears in what the commitment and motivation should be on. In case study A, commitment and motivation focus on conducting impactful research, publishing in reputable journals, obtaining research grants, sharing findings, leadership responsibility, collaboration, and continuous professional development. In case study B, commitment and motivation are directed towards a student-centred teaching environment, engaging sessions, passion for the academic role, and innovative teaching methods and resources. Overall, commitment, dedication, motivation, interest and enthusiasm are fundamental characteristics of an academic talent.

With regard to talent as fit between an individual's talent and the context within which he or she works, academics in both case studies also show substantial convergence in their opinions of talent as fit between an individual and work context. The significance of matching a person's knowledge, skills, aptitude, competence, proficiencies, and qualities with the job description, person specification, work team, and employment context was underlined by academics from both case studies. As a result, factors including organisational, job, and team fit are crucial. This perspective is consistent with academic and professional literature (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Meyers, van Woerkom, and Dries, 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and González-Cruz, 2013) that defines talent as the fit between an individual's talent and the environment in which they work. However, due to their different strategic focuses, the two case study institutions have different definitions of what are fits. As a result, a fit will be assessed by matching a candidate with the role, organisational context and appropriate time. This is because a person who excels in an institution that prioritises teaching may find it difficult to succeed in one that emphasises research (Coulson-Thomas, 2012). The perspectives from both case study institutions emphasise on the importance of the alignment between an individual's qualities and the job profile as well as the role's setting institutions.

In terms of the TM approach, the qualitative data evident that the approach adopted at the case study institutions diverges in the level of resources, mechanisms, and attention they dedicated to either inclusive or exclusive TM approaches. Case study A, which is a member of Russell Group and a more research-focused institution, happens to be more inclusive in its approach to TM. The institution dedicates more attention and resources to inclusivity and stewardship-based approaches. While case study B, which is a member of the Alliance Group and a more teaching-focused institution, is more exclusive in its approach to TM. The institution devotes more attention and resources to exclusivity, control, monitoring, and incentive mechanisms.

Evidence from both cases indicated further observable differences between their approaches. While case study A, which is a research-focused university, is more inclusive in their approach to TM, with more stewardship-based mechanisms in place, case study B, which is a teaching-focused university, is more exclusive in nature, with more performance management mechanisms and metrics in place. For instance, findings indicated that case study A believes that all academics recruited at the institution are high performers and possess the required potential to function effectively as academics. In contrast, evidence in case study B indicated that not all colleagues are high performers and/or possess the potential or attributes required to function effectively as academics. This is surprising because, even though both institutions are in the same sector and within the UK, their approaches to TM differ. In other words, this suggests that while the research focus institution is more inclusive in their approach to TM, the teaching focus institution is more exclusive. Thus, it will be interesting to find out if this is applicable to similar institutions within the HE sector to further clarify the reasons for the discrepancy between the approaches to TM in both institutions. In addition, despite case study B being a public sector organisation, it is surprising to find out that exclusive TM practices are implemented and accepted in the institution, which contradicts the suggestion of scholars (Thompson, 2017; Boselie and Thunnissen, 2017), who acknowledged that inclusive TM better suits public sector organisations.

In terms of similarity, it is important to note that the research participants (academics) in both institutions emphasised the need for an inclusive approach to TM because of its link with the stewardship-based mechanism and support for collegial culture. However, some academics in both institutions acknowledged the drive of their institution to move towards an exclusive approach to TM, including the use of performance-based metrics and short-term measurable KPIs to monitor and encourage the quality of teaching and research because of external pressures such as NPM, funding issues, REF, TEF, OFS, competition for students, NSS, student satisfaction, etc. Thus, it is assumed that HEIs across the UK, as a result of the NPM movement and pressures from external agencies and regulations on them, will continue to increase their use of exclusive approaches to TM, such as performance-related rewards, rather than more reliance on stewardship-based mechanisms and intrinsic rewards. Though most academics from both institutions have also argued that it will be extremely difficult or impossible to implement a total exclusive approach to TM in their institutions given the nature of the HE sector as a citadel of research and innovations. Another similarity in both institutions in recent years in terms of approach to TM is the investment of more resource and time in designing, planning, implementing, and managing TM mechanisms that are more performance management related.

In terms of academics' experience of TM practices in the context of NPM. The variations in the experience of talent and TM in both case study institutions reflect the views of literature and scholars who suggested that organisations apply different practices, mechanisms, and approaches to talent and TM, and that this is greatly influenced by their context (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015; Thunnissen, 2016; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019; Thunnissen, van Arensbergen and van den Brink, 2021). However, what is common between both institutions is the acknowledgement of the shift from the previous traditional, collegiate culture and soft line management practices, which reflect a sense of community and collaboration among academics and faculties, to a more individual-centric, self-directed culture and 'hard' line management mode with emphasis on economy, effectiveness, and efficiency because of NPM. Findings also indicated increased workload and higher expectations from faculties, as well as more emphasis on individualised performance management and evaluation, autonomous recognition of contributions, personalised developmental activities, and self-directed career paths and/or development among academics in both institutions.

Evidence from case study A also indicated that over the last ten years the use of quantitative performance indicators to measure the institution's outputs rather than the previous use of bureaucratic procedures and reliance on input control. Similarly, in case study B, there has been more focus on outputs and outcome controls than on processes and inputs, which was the focus before the introduction of NPM in HEIs. Therefore, documentation evidence from both case study institutions clearly indicated the increase in the use of quantitative performance indicators to measure outputs of not only the institution, faculties, and schools but individuals (such as academics at all levels, unit heads, associate deans, deputy deans, deans, DVCs, VCs, etc.) rather than the previous use of bureaucratic procedures and reliance on input control, which were the focus of the institutions, unlike what was obtainable before the emancipation of NPM in UK HEIs. The main justification for these changes in strategic direction evident in both institutions' documents is the need to focus more on performance output and results instead of input and processes. The similarities and differences in the conceptualisation and operationalisation of talent and TM in both institutions are further explored in the next section.

Evidence from both case study institutions also suggests that the performance management systems they currently have in place are partially developed. For instance, the P&DR system in case study A is currently partially and loosely implemented due to the institution's deeply rooted tradition, bureaucracy, and collegiate culture, and as a result, the research findings suggest that the current practices lack clear expectations, are not clearly aligned with the institution's strategic goals, and do not always meet individual developmental needs. They also rely heavily on quantitative metrics and lack regular feedback. In convergence with the finding in case study A, evidence from case study B indicated that the ACF, PDR, and PPC meetings, which are essential components of the PDR system, allow academics to set performance goals, receive feedback, clarify job purpose, and record objectives. However, the outcomes of the meetings are mostly favourable to the organisation, with activities like attending conferences not approved or funded. This study suggests that addressing these issues and strengthening the processes could lead to improved performance management systems in both institutions.

In terms of career management, evidence from both case study institutions suggests that they do not provide enough support or encouragement for career growth and development, leading to a surge in new career types such as boundaryless and protean careers. The mechanisms both institutions currently have does not place high value on adaptation, innovation, networking, collaboration, and a readiness to explore new subjects. In case study A, the effectiveness of initiatives like appraisal systems, staff training and development units, and P&DR systems is not well established, leading to academics relying on boundaryless and protean career management practices. There is also a lack of transparency and well-established requirements on career management measures available for academics at the institution. In contrast, case study B has more visible, open, and supportive career management activities in place, such as mandatory training and development programs, management skills masterclasses, employee apprenticeships, and the ACF. However, barriers to career development and progression include unrealistic workloads, lack of financial support, insufficient networking opportunities, clear succession plans, poor work-life balance, lack of career path planning, fair recognition of efforts and promotion, absence of formal mentorship and coaching programs, and insufficient opportunities for training and development programs that meet personal career advancement needs.

Evidence from both case study institutions recommends a shift towards a more shared and collaborative approach to career management in HEIs, which acknowledges the benefits organisations can derive from a mutual responsibility and relationship (between employees, leaders, and/or line managers, and the organisation) for career management. Such practices should recognise the benefits accrue from an organisation investing in the career advancement and professional development of its human capital. Which will be driven through fostering a supportive work culture that promotes continuous learning, development, and retention of skilled, proactive, engaged, motivated, and committed workforce. Such programme should also align with the overall strategic goals and objectives of the institution. The above can be achieved by having a career management programme and/or plan in place that is characterised by career counselling, succession planning, individualised development plans, career-planning workshops, continuous learning opportunities, internal recruitment, coaching and mentoring programmes, effective performance evaluation and feedback, outplacement and preretirement programmes, dual-ladder systems, acknowledges and reward achievements, supportive work environment, promote work-life balance, creation of pathway programmes, support for networking activities, assessment centre for the appraisal of individual’s competences, encourages adaptability and flexibility, with line managers playing a pivotal role. Hence, career management practices in both case studies are still in their ad hoc stage, with barriers such as unrealistic workloads, lack of financial support, poor work-life balance, lack of career path planning, insufficient line manager support, unethical bias, etc., as obstacles to effective career management systems.

Furthermore, findings from both case study institutions indicated that they have numerous trainings and development activities, including compulsory training schemes for new academic staff and lots of well-designed training inventions for existing staff. However, most of these trainings are focused on achieving the university's short-term strategic objectives and business needs rather than meeting the institution's long-term business goals and personal, professional, and career development needs of the academics. Thus, staff are not motivated to access them due to their business-focused nature. While evidence from case study A indicates that the institution makes appropriate provision for time and resources for academics to attend trainings, evidence from case study B indicates that the institution does not make appropriate provision for time for academics to attend trainings due to the current workload. Findings in Case Study B also indicated that there is a lack of sufficient financial provision and support available for academics to attend external trainings. There was also evidence of variation in staff training among the various faculties, schools, divisions, and departments, with some addressing both the institution and academic needs in case study B.

Additionally, evidence from both institutions acknowledged that mentorship (either formal or informal) provides a range of benefits for academics at both institutions in the context of NPM and is seen as one of the most essential practices of TM in the current context of HEIs. While case study A has a formal mentoring programme in place, case study B does not. However, evidence from case study B (and testimonies from some research participants in case study A about their personal experiences) indicated that informal mentoring seems to provide more benefits for career development, advancement and success, personal and mental well-being, staff retention, motivation, and commitment, as well as recruitment. Thus, mentoring (either formal and/or informal) appears to be an essential silent component of TM at both case study institutions.

Finally, there is agreement about the significance line managers have on their subordinates in both case study institutions. Evidence from both cases suggests that the era where work is coordinated by mutual adjustment, often labelled collegiality, and in a democratic decision-making process in HEIs is over. Thus, findings from both case study institutions indicate that public administrators and line managers have increasingly questioned the power of academics at all levels of their careers and continued to stress the need for higher efficiency, effectiveness, increased quality, economy and cost-cutting. The line of command and top-down decision-making are emphasised in both cases, though more pronounced in case study B. Collegial decision-making tends to be diminished, and faculties are also getting more administrative tasks. In addition, findings indicate that the power given to line managers has lower quality work and has led to stressful working conditions due to the ways the line managers are implementing NPM principles and TM initiatives. What has been observed in both case study institutions by academics in recent years is the gradual move away from stewardship-based mechanisms and practices.

5.12 Talent management approaches using the theoretical perspective of stewardship theory

Following an analysis of the TM processes designed and implemented by both case study institutions and a review using the stewardship theory theoretical framework. The study discovered that the case study institutions used a mixed approach to TM that leans either more in the direction of exclusivity or inclusivity (which is more in line with stewardship theory) when developing and implementing their TM practices, processes, and activities. None of the case study institutions had elements of a pure inclusive or pure exclusive approach to TM.

The academics of both institutions frequently mentioned in their interviews that the institutions plan to place more emphasis on monitoring, control, and incentive mechanisms in the future due to the pressures to perform and the performance management mechanisms placed on UK HEIs by external forces (such as REF, TEF, NSS, the OfS B3 metrics and various national and international league tables) because of NPM. However, several academics expressed dissatisfaction, particularly in case study A, about the TM mechanisms being introduced in their institution that are exclusive in nature. They claimed that the increased pressure from their employers as a result of the external forces mentioned above was forcing them to focus more on quantifiable and measurable performance data rather than their primary responsibility of providing quality education, teaching, and research for their institutions, students and beyond.

Based on the research findings of this study, it is anticipated that institutions will continue to shift away from stewardship-based approaches and more towards the use of monitoring, command and control mechanisms of TM. Such as targets setting, performance measures, and individualised performance reviews, as well as extrinsic rewards mechanisms, like performance-related pay, which are in line with the kind of TM mechanisms that have previously been classified as transactional and, in most cases, short-term focused. Some academics suggested that such an approach is alien to the university community, will have a negative impact on their wellbeing and student satisfaction, and will be resisted.

It is also fascinating to observe that, even in cases where academics technically embraced the anti-stewardship-based and exclusive approach that is being introduced in their institutions (such as P&DRs, PDRs, ACF, etc.), they acknowledged that the implementation of such practices differs across various units, departments, divisions, schools and faculties. Academics generally in both universities despised mechanisms linked to exclusivity, individual performance appraisals, targets, metrics and extrinsic reward systems like performance-related compensation. Instead, they preferred the stewardship-based inclusivity approach, which focusses on what is meaningful for their institution and staff as well as performance reviews that occur at the group level.

Academics in both case study institutions believed that their organisations have stewardship procedures in place (high-trust procedures were noted), though the extent to which this is present varied between both institutions and among units, departments, divisions, schools and faculties. They also emphasised how, the implementation of NPM principles in their institutions has led to greater emphasis on individualism, individual performance reviews, REF, TEF, OfS indicators, increased power of line managers' and their leadership style, etc., have influenced the various processes and activities of TM. A collaborative and supportive culture, a high degree of trust, empowerment, autonomy, collectivist options and interest, effective communication, employee engagement and honour relationships are just a few examples of the work-related stewardship mechanisms that the research participants appreciated and would like to be sustained in their institutions.

5.13 Justifications for the Adoption of TM Practices in HE Sector

The discussion in Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis enables the understanding of TM in HEIs by drawing out facts among concepts and viewing TM as a concept and practice associated with how NPN is being implemented in public sector organisations via the lens of stewardship theory (Thunnissen and Buttiens, 2017; Clarke and Scurry, 2017; Kravariti et al., 2022). Thus, the conceptualisation of TM entails the management and cost associated with talent acquisition, development, performance management, reward, engagement, relations, and retention to achieve strategic objectives and meet future business needs (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Silzer and Dowell, 2010; Collings, 2014; CIPD, 2023).

High-performing and high-potential incumbents in the above definition refer to the workforce that is key to achieving the current or future strategic business objectives and that would be difficult to replace should they leave in the already heated labour markets (Michaels et al., 2001; Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Al Ariss, Cascio and Paauwe, 2014). This study employs stewardship theory as a framework to understand TM in HEIs in the context of NPM because it can be linked to one of the main reasons why a particular approach and practice are implemented, developing and adopted by HEIs (Franco-Santos, Rivera, and Bourne, 2014; Boselie and Thunnisssen, 2017; Blom et al., 2020; Kravariti et al., 2022) and the case study institutions. For instance, the introduction of appraisal at key career stages, the removal of tenure-ship, more emphasis on staff training and development, performance management, more focus on outputs and outcome controls, the increase in individualism and/or competition and reduction in collegial relationships among academics, the introduction of ACF ratings, etc. are recent occurrences within the case study institutions.

The inclusive and exclusive approach to TM identified in both case study institutions in this chapter indicates that human capital and/or academics are considered essential resources required for the actualisation of the institutions' current and future strategic objectives as well as a source of competitive advantage that is now eminent among public sector organisations (HEIs) because of NPM. The elements of enabling competitive advantage have come through more strongly now through the more stringent efforts towards building a strong academic reputation for academic excellence, contribution to research output and innovation, industry collaboration and connection, global partnership and collaboration, quest for positive student experience and satisfaction, offering of innovative programmes and courses, focus on graduate careers, employability, and entrepreneurship, promotion of inclusivity and diversity in the staffing and recruitment of students, as well as investment in cutting-edge facilities and resources. Thus, for public sector organisations to effectively achieve their strategic objectives and remain competitive in the current and future local, national, and global business environment, they need to be very strategic in their investment in resourcing, development, performance management, reward, engagement, and retention of talented employees (Garrow and Hirsh, 2008; Iles, 2008; Sparrow and Marram, 2015).

The traditional bureaucratic structures of public sector organisations were known for their uncompetitive nature, but NPM principles and models aim to shift them towards greater competition through performance management measures, incentives, and short-term contracts. This has increased competition among institutions and between the public and private sectors, including competing for talents and meeting customer needs. NPM believes that applying business-orientated and result-driven principles can result in more effective, efficient, and proactive delivery of public services (Pollitt, 1993, 1998; Hood, 1998; Thunnissen and Buttiens, 2017; Shepherd, 2018).

Case study A has a five-year strategic plan (see Chapter 5, Section 5.1) in place they hope will take them into their third century as well as help them deliver benefits to society and the environment and to protect their unique status as an open place of inquiry and challenge in a competitive global business environment. The foundation of the strategic plan remains their three core goals of research and discovery, teaching and learning, and social responsibility. The institution acknowledged its people as one of the main elements of achieving its three core goals in their strategic plan document. Thus, the institution stressed the importance of implementing an optimal talent attraction, development, reward, and retention approach to attracting, nurturing, and retaining the best people from diverse backgrounds globally. Therefore, effective, economical, and efficient TM seems to be one of the key means by which the institution intends to successfully actualise its strategic plan priorities and core goals.

Case A assumes that all its academics and/or staff contribute to the achievement of its strategic goals and delivery of public services, therefore practices an inclusive approach to TM. Given the very volatile nature of HE sectors globally, it is presumed that undifferentiated performance management and/or appraisal ranking/rating, as well as open opportunities for training, development, and reward across all levels of the institution, will enable them to meet the needs of their different stakeholders as well as achieve their strategic plan priorities and core goals (Glenn, 2012; Thunnissen and Buttiens, 2017).

Similarly, case study B also perceives effective, economical, and efficient TM as essential for its ten-year strategic plan of educating the next generation, developing the skills, aptitude, and knowledge required for the next industrial revolution, and working with local and global public and private sector organisations to address societal challenges. However, the interviewees and documents of the institution echoed that operating locally and globally in a sector that is very competitive requires identifying, rewarding, and investing in talents who can contribute positively to the actualisation of the institution's strategic plan through a transparent framework they can aspire to (see Chapter 5, Section 5.9). The institution's new ACF, for instance, is used to benchmark the performance of academics as well as set meaningful objectives in a transparent and equitable way, like KPIs obtainable in private sector organisations. Unlike case study A, this institution believes that to remain competitive, increase their market share, and meet the needs of/and satisfy their customers, they need to invest in, recognise, and reward their talented academics across different career levels, phases, and specialities, as well as different subject areas (Tansley et al., 2007; Devins and Gold, 2014). Therefore, practice a more exclusive approach to TM.

The application of NPM principles and models has become a valuable framework to understand the debates about performance, human resource, and TM within organisations (Glenn, 2012; Thunnissen and Buttiens, 2017). Despite evidence from the case study institutions indicating that the adoption of TM practices is influenced by the introduction of NPM in the HE sector, which is now largely driven by economy, efficiency and effectiveness, business and result-orientated approach, competition and marketisation, performance management, customer-centric focus, high level of adaptability and flexibility, and entrepreneurial mindset, further evidence showed that individual institutions' factors also play a key role in the type of TM approach and practice adopted in both institutions.

Findings suggest that apart from NPM, case study A's TM approach is influenced by the institution's type, research focus, funding, research excellent framework, national research policies, faculty development, ethical considerations, regulatory compliance, global challenges, interdisciplinary research demand, international collaboration, technological advancements, UKRI open access policy, and public engagement. These factors all play a crucial role in the design and implementation of TM systems and practices.

Unlike case study A, apart from NPM, the TM approach and practices adopted by case study B are also driven by the type of institution it is, which is a more teaching-focused institution. Therefore, NPM is manifesting in the case study B by increased emphasis on issues such as quality of teaching and learning, assessment and evaluation guided by framework such as the TEF, REF, KEF, NSS, OfS B3 metrics, etc. as these impact the institution's funding, ranking and reputation, current and future student demographic composition, changing expectation of students, technological advancements in digital learning, national policies on higher education, the various accreditation and professional recognition of the various courses, departments and faculties, advancement in pedagogical approaches and practices, the drive for international students, ability to attract, develop, reward and retain high faculty, focus on widening of access to HE, the strategic goal of developing the skills and knowledge needed to capitalise on the next industrial revolution in terms of focusing on employability and career development, the focus on promotion of equity, diversity and inclusion, and of course its ability to communicate with the local, partners and industries. For example, for the institution to remain competitive and continue to motivate talented academics at all levels of their career, the institution introduced the ACF, which it believes will enable it to identify, inspire, and grow their own talent.

Hence, despite the identification of other factors besides NPM necessitating the application of different TM approaches and practices in the case study institutions above, the fact remains that some of the factors mentioned also relate to principles and models of NPM. For instance, the need for community engagement, the impact of government policies at the local, regional, and national levels, the emphasis on the quality of services provided for students, the emphasis on employability, access to and availability of research funding and grants, etc. are all influenced by NPM.

5.14 Summary

The chapter explored the key findings of this research in terms of the similarities and differences between the two cases in the context of literature, theoretical framework and empirical evidence. It focuses on meeting the main research objective on how academics in the HEIs view and experience talent and TM practices in the context of NPM. In case studies A and B, academics define academic talents as people who are naturally curious, critical thinkers, problem solvers, able to absorb, retain, and recall complex information, communicators, adaptable to changing circumstances, and gifted in research and analysis. These aptitudes allow individuals to rise above their peers and colleagues, even in the presence of the same level of education, training, developmental intervention, and experience. Talent in HEIs can also be conceived as both nurtured and learned abilities and skills. This chapter highlights the importance of understanding talent in HEIs and its relationship with organisational, job, and team fit. By focusing on these factors, organisations can better understand and develop their talent and ensure success in their respective fields. The research proposes talent as an attribute of individuals as "relevant" and "useful," viewed as relevant and/or useful (innate or nurtured) proficiencies + dedication + match.

Findings in this chapter indicated, significant differences in the way academics experience TM practices in both case study institutions due to their different backgrounds, focus, and strategic objectives. The research findings show that TM practices and approaches in case study A are conceived as inclusive, sharing characteristics with good human resource management practices. Academics in institution A claim that TM practices help all faculty members pinpoint their areas of expertise and competency and assist them in developing their careers both inside and outside the institution. This viewpoint raises the possibility that case study A treats all academics equally and views them as "talent." In contrast, findings from case study B indicate that the approach to TM is more exclusive in nature and in line with NPM principles and practices. The exclusive approach focuses on workforce segmentation and identifying high-potential and high-performer employees who can significantly impact organisational performance and success. This approach suggests that organisations should identify, develop, train, reward, and retain high-potential and high-performer employees to enable them to contribute to and influence organisational performance and success. Hence, this research highlights the importance of understanding talent definitions and TM strategies within organisations and HEIs to ensure the best fit for academics.

The study reveals that NPM has led to a shift from traditional, collegiate culture, inclusive, stewardship-based mechanisms and "soft" line management practices to a more directive-based, exclusive, control, monitoring, individual-centric, self-directed culture and "hard" line management mode. This has had a negative impact on HEIs, with faculty members now having heavier workloads and higher expectations. As a result, performance management procedures are limited and partially developed, with the primary objective of top management and line managers at both institutions being the progressive integration of NPM principles. The findings from this chapter indicate that organisations do not sufficiently support or encourage their employees' professional and career development. This has led to the rise of new career models, such as boundaryless and protean careers, which result in adaptability, self-directed learning, and individual liberty. This chapter find that, high performer and high potential academics in the case study institutions rely heavily on mentorship and their line manager support. In addition, mentorship provides a range of benefits for academics, enabling them to achieve their expectations for employers in the context of NPM. Findings in this chapter denoted that, line managers play a key role in executing TM initiatives and practices. Their style of leadership can have an impact on the motivation and commitment of subordinates and colleagues in the context of NPM. Participative management styles are more effective in managing academic staff, and they transform TM initiatives into actual employee outcomes, stimulate talent performance, and enact TM practices in private and/or public sector institutions.

Thus, this chapter demonstrated that individualism, limited and partially developed performance management practices, ad hoc career management practices, staff training, formal and informal mentorship, and the type of line manager were the primary characteristics of the TM practices observed by academics as NPM reform cut through their institutions. Furthermore, despite the convergences and divergences in how academics in case study institutions conceptualise talent, TM, and TM operationalisation, this chapter suggests that academics favour inclusive, long-term orientation, and stewardship-based mechanism approaches to TM. However, due to the increased influence of NPM and directive TM systems, which focus on academic short-term measurable success, these approaches are under danger, and in some institutions, exclusive and directive TM approaches are increasingly being utilised to improve academic performance. In summary, the interviewees illustrate that for HEIs to remain centres of research, innovation, and teaching excellence, the inclusive and stewardship-based approach to TM, rather than the exclusive, control, monitor and directive approach to TM, is more appropriate for managing academic talent.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The overarching aim of this research is to comprehend how academics in the HEIs view and experience talent and TM practices in the context of NPM. This chapter first provides answers to the research objectives with the contributions to knowledge. This is followed by the conceptual, empirical, and managerial contributions. The chapter concludes with the research limitations and directions for future research.

6.1 The Answers to the Research Objectives and Contributions to Knowledge

6.1.1 To explore how talent is conceptualised by academics in case study institutions

The first objective of this research focusses on the conceptualisation of talent, which resonates with major debates in the object approach TM literature as to whether talent is: (i) natural ability; (ii) mastery of systematically developed skills (experience); (iii) commitment and motivation; and (iv) as a fit between an individual's talent and the context within which he or she works (Gallardo-Gallardo et al. 2013; Devins and Gold 2014; Thunnissen and Van Arensbergen, 2015; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019; Dries, 2022). By adopting the object approach and the theoretical framework developed in Chapters 2 and 3, the two case studies in this research have been explored. Table 5.4 presents the summary of the general findings of the conceptualisation of talent in the cases from five aspects in the context of NPM. The findings are presented in the subsections below.

6.1.1.1 Natural ability

With regard to the conceptualisation of talent as a natural or innate ability, the research findings conform with the notion held by some HRM practitioners and scholars that talent is largely an innate ability. Findings indicated that academics define academic talents as people who are naturally curious, critical thinkers, problem solvers, able to absorb, retain, and recall complex information, communicators, able to adapt to changing circumstances, and gifted in research and analysis (see Section 5.12.1.1). It implies an aptitude for a particular activity, such as an innate capacity to share knowledge and/or advance knowledge in the HE industry. For example, some people are naturally outgoing, engaged, and good speakers. In the particular sphere of their talent, in this case academia, these aptitudes or proficiencies allow the possessors to rise beyond the rest of their peers and/or colleagues. This viewpoint asserts that, some people (for instance, some academics) will always perform better than others owing to their innate and/or natural ability, even in the presence of the same level of education, training, developmental intervention and experience (Buckingham and Vosburgh, 2001; Davies and Davies 2010; Meyers, van Woerkom, and Dries, 2013; Kravariti and Johnson; 2019; Dries, 2022). Consequently, during the internal and external talent acquisition process, institutions search for or should hunt for such aptitude.

6.1.1.2 Mastery of systematically developed skills (experience)

With regard to talent as mastery of skills, the research findings suggests that talent might be conceived as both nurtured and/or learned abilities and skills, nevertheless, the learned abilities, skills, competences, aptitude, and experience required by different organisation might somewhat vary (see Section 5.12.1.2). The perspectives held by the interviewees aligns with existing literature that defines talent as the mastery of knowledge, skills, capacity, and ability that individuals acquire and develop through a gradual process of systematic and intentional intervention, learning, experience, and practice (Michaels et al., 2001; Arvey et al., 2006; Ulrich, 2007; Cheese, Thomas and Craig, 2008).

For instance, the learned abilities, skills, competences, aptitudes, and experiences required by a research focused institution include research methodology, data analysis, ethical practices, publication skills, grant writing, effective communication, networking, literature review, and mentorship, securing funding for research projects and securing funding for interdisciplinary teams (see Sections 5.10 and 5.12.1.2). While for a teaching focused institution include pedagogical knowledge, learner-centred teaching, technological integration, curriculum development, assessment, classroom management, diverse learning styles, CPD engagement, pastoral and mentorship skills, and effective communication, can enhance one's talents and effectiveness in teaching-focused institutions, may lead to high performance and successful careers such institutions (see Sections 5.6 and 5.12.1.2).

The research illustrated that the divergence in what are to be nurtured is influenced by the nature or type of institution or organisation as mentioned in previous Chapters (2 and 5). For instance, the nature of the case study institutions for this research varied. Whilst case study A is more research focused institution, case study B is more teaching focused institution.

However, all the research interviewees shared the opinion of nurture, which is consistent with scholars who define talent as developed and/or taught abilities and skills necessary for an individual to fulfil their full potential and contribute to an organisation (Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries, and González-Cruz, 2013; Meyers, van Woerkom, and Dries, 2013; Kravariti and Johnson; 2019; Dries, 2022). For example, academics from the two case study universities acknowledged that earning a PhD is the first step towards academic talent. Achieving a PhD require training, education, communication, time management, and real-world and/or experience (see Sections 5.6, 5.10, and 5.12.1.2).

6.1.1.3 Commitment and motivation

With regard to the conceptualisation of talent as commitment and motivation, the study findings indicate that dedication and motivation are critical qualities for an academic role and the organisation. This is because they act as a coping mechanism for the inadvertent effects of NPM in HEIs, which have significantly changed faculty members' workloads, academic career paths, and occupational roles (Broucker and De Wit, 2015; Börnfelt, 2023). The opinions expressed the research participants are consistent with the body of literature that characterises talent as the commitment, devotion, motivation, dedication, interest, and enthusiasm that a person demonstrates at work as well as the observable intrinsic qualities that a person possesses, which add to the institution's overall performance (Ulrich, 2007; Meyers, van Woerkom, and Dries, 2013; Thunnissen and Van Arensbergen, 2015; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019).

Though all interviewees emphasise the importance of commitment and motivation by academic talent, significant divergence appears in what the commitment and motivation should be on. While in the research focused institution, commitment and motivation focus on conducting impactful research, publishing in reputable journals, obtaining research grants, sharing findings, leadership responsibility, collaboration, and continuous professional development (see Sections 5.10 and 5.12.1.3). In the teaching focused institution, commitment and motivation are directed towards a student-centred teaching environment, engaging sessions, passion for the academic role, and innovative teaching methods and resources (see Sections 5.6 and 5.12.1.3). Overall, the study findings indicate that commitment, dedication, motivation, interest and enthusiasm are fundamental characteristics of an academic talent.

6.1.1.4 Fit between an individual's talent and the context within which he or she works

Finally, regarding the conceptualisation of talent as fit between an individual and work context, the study findings strongly support the matching of a person's knowledge, skills, aptitude, competence, proficiencies, and qualities with the job description, person specification, work team, and employment context (see Section 5.12.1.4). As a result, factors including organisational, job, and team fit are crucial. This perspective is consistent with academic and professional literature (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Meyers, van Woerkom, and Dries, 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and González-Cruz, 2013) that defines talent as the fit between an individual's talent and the environment in which they work.

However, due to the different strategic focus organisations have, they might have different definitions of what the fits between the individual and work context should be. As a result, a fit will be assessed by matching a candidate with the role, organisational context and appropriate time. This is because a person who excels in a university that prioritises teaching may find it difficult to succeed in one that emphasises research (Coulson-Thomas, 2012). This study highlights the importance of the alignment between an individual's qualities and the job profile as well as the role's setting institutions (see Section 5.12.1.4).

6.1.1.5 Submission from research findings:

This research promotes the conversation around talent definitions in the context of talent as an object, which in turn advances TM strategies inside organisations and HEIs specifically. It does this by providing new insights into TM. The research proposes talent as an attribute of individuals as “**relevant**” and “**useful**”. In short talent can be viewed as: Talent = relevant and/or useful (innate or/and nurtured) proficiencies + dedication + match.

It is important to note that, this claim is consistent with academic literature, which states that, **Talent** = Competence **x** Commitment **x** Contribution (Ulrich and Smallwood, 2012 p.60). However, this research adds ***relevance*** and ***usefulness*** to the algebraic equation.

Relevant innate or nurtured proficiency refers to useful innate and/or nurtured qualities such as ability, aptitude, skills, knowledge, proficiency, capacity to communicate knowledge, possession of research methodology, critical thinking, academic administration, etc. Dedication means being committed and motivated (intrinsic drive) to deploy the qualities necessary to achieve optimum performance and potential within an organisation. Match suggests that such qualities must fit the contextual needs, team, and environment of an organisation.

The above is expected considering suggestions by scholars about the adverse effects and likely hostile impacts NPM principles might have on the TM of academics in HEIs (Broucker and De Wit, 2015; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2017; Ortlieb and Weiss, 2018; Bleiklie, 2020; Börnfelt, 2023).

6.1.2 To examine how talent management is conceptualised by academics in the case study institutions

The second objective of this research focus on the conceptualisation of TM which also resonates with major debates in subject approach to TM literature as to whether TM approach is: (i) inclusive (talent understood as the entire workforce of an organisation) and (ii) exclusive (talent understood as an elite subset of an organisation's population) (Preece et al., 2010; Tansley, 2011; Thunnissen and Van Arensbergen, 2015; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019).

The short answer to the second objective is that there are significant differences in the way academics experience TM practices (in terms of subject approach). This confirms the findings from academic and professional literature, which indicates that, the way TM is conceptualised and implemented is determined by different variables such as type of organisation, nature of work to be done, industry, sector, and what it is for, i.e., contextual factors that differ from one organisation to the next (Tansley et al., 2007; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020; Kravariti et al., 2022; Collings, Vaiman and Scullion, 2022; Kravariti, Jooss and Scullion, 2023). With interviewees working in institution with different backgrounds, focus, and strategic objectives, the study findings indicated significant divergence in the research participants conceptualisation of the TM practices and approaches obtainable in their institutions.

This has implications for academic careers, as it is important for individuals looking to pursue an academic career in universities to know which type of institution aligns with their career aspirations. The research findings indicated that institutions that belong to the Russell Group and/or a red brick university (established in the late 19th and early 20th centuries) that are more research-focused are more inclusive in their approach to TM. While institutions that belong to the Alliance Group, which is greatly influenced by the Robbins Report of 1960, that promote huge expansion of higher education places and are more teaching-focused, are more exclusive in their approach to TM. Findings also suggest that universities need to be open about their approach in order to attract the type of academics that best fit their institution. This will also enable academics to seek employment at an institution that best suits their talent in order to progress in their career.

6.1.2.1 Inclusive (talent understood as the entire workforce of an organisation)

The research findings show that TM practices and approaches in the Russell Group, research-focused institution is more inclusive. The strategy shares characteristics with what is known as good human resource management practices (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Sparrow et al., 2014). Interviewees claimed that the TM practices help all faculty members to pinpoint their areas of expertise and competency and assist them in developing their careers both inside and outside the institution (see Section 5.12.2.1), which is consistent with stewardship theory but inconsistent with the directive performance management systems and principles of NPM.

This claim is consistent with academic and professional literature that argues that most public sector organisations have adopted an inclusive approach as their dominant TM strategy (Thunnissen and Buttiens, 2017; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019; Cross Walker, 2020; Collings, Vaiman and Scullion, 2022). This viewpoint raises the possibility that research-focused institutions treat all academics equally and views them as "talent." According to this approach, a more agreeable, cohesive, and driven work atmosphere can be attained by treating every employee in the company fairly (Gallardo-Gallardo et al. 2013; Swailes, Downs and Orr, 2014; Swailes, 2020). This approach aligns with stewardship theory, which states that businesses that prioritise inclusive behaviours have lower levels of occupational stress among employees. In turn, strong employee well-being is linked to high productivity, high quality, competitive advantage over competitors, low staff turnover and high revenue for the institution (Davis, Schoorman, and Donaldson, 1997; Harnandez, 2012; McCormack et al., 2013; Franco-Santos, Rivera, and Bourne, 2014; Boselie and Thunnissen, 2017). As mentioned in section 6.1.2, the research-focused institutions might best suit academics who intend to follow research track/trajectory.

6.1.2.2 Exclusive (talent understood as an elite subset of an organisation's population)

Despite the Alliance Group, a more teaching-focused institution being in HE and public sector, this study findings indicated that the approach to TM is conceived as more exclusive in nature and in line with NPM principles as well as inconsistent with the principles of stewardship theory (see Section 5.12.2.2). The exclusive approach focuses on workforce segmentation and identifying high-potential and high performer employees who can significantly impact on organisational performance. This approach suggests that organisations should identify, develop, train, reward and retain the high-potential and high performer employees to enable them to contribute to and influence the organisation performance and success (Tansley et al., 2007; Gallardo-Gallardo et al. 2013; Devins and Gold, 2014; Collings et al., 2017; O'Connor and Crowley-Henry, 2019). High performance and potential are crucial to this approach of TM and aligns with NPM principles.

The claim is inconsistent with some academic and professional literature that argues that most public sector organisations have adopted an inclusive approach as their dominant TM strategy (Thunnissen and Buttiens, 2017; Kravariti and Johnson, 2019; Cross Walker, 2020; Collings, Vaiman, and Scullion, 2022). However, the research findings indicate that the principle of NPM which suggest that public sector organisations should be run in the same manner as private sector organisations (Broucker and De Wit, 2015; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2017) is becoming more obvious in some public sector institutions, particularly HEIs. As mentioned in Section 6.1.2, the teaching-focused institutions might best suit academics who intend to follow teaching track and/or trajectory.

6.1.3 To establish how case study institutions academics' experience TM practices in the context of NPM

6.1.3.1 Growth of Individualism

This study reveals that NPM has caused a shift from the previous traditional, collegiate culture, "soft" line management practices, sense of community and collaboration among academics to a more individual-centric, self-directed culture and "hard" line management mode with an emphasis on economy, effectiveness, and efficiency in HEIs (see Section 5.12.4.1). The conform with the findings of some scholars and HR practitioner literature that argues that NPM has some negative impact on public sector organisations (Dnes and Seaton, 2001; Hood and Dixon, 2016; Boselie and Thunnissen, 2017; Brunetto et al., 2018; Bleiklie, 2020). Findings also show that faculties now have heavier workload and higher expectations (see Sections 5.4.3 and 5.9.2). Additionally, there is currently greater focus on individualised performance management and evaluation systems, directive monitoring and control processes, autonomous contribution recognition, individualised developmental activities, and academics' self-directed career paths and/or development in UK HEIs (see Section 5.12.4.1).

6.1.3.2 Limited and Partially Developed Performance Management Practices

A key finding from the research is that performance management procedures which is a key component of TM is limited and only partially developed in HEIs. These showed that the degree of performance management procedure in HEIs have been significantly impacted by their contemporary context, structure, size and collegiate culture (see Sections 5.4.2, 5.8.2, and 5.12.4.3). The primary objective of top management and line managers in institutions is the progressive integration of NPM principles, which prioritise effectiveness, efficiency, economy, and market-driven orientation over best practice performance management activities. This finding conforms with academic literature which suggests that the focus of NPM is to promote managerial, effectiveness, and efficiency principles in public sector organisations. NPM is also linked to the drive to increase pressures for accountability and the need to provide value for money services to the public (Culie et al., 2014; Broucker and De Wit, 2015; Broucker, De Wit and Verhoeven, 2018; Kravariti et al., 2023). While the Alliance Group and teaching-focused institutions seems to be acting more in accordance with NPM principles, both types of institution (research- focused and teaching-focused) are impacted by NPM.

6.1.3.3 Ad hoc Career management Practices

The study finding is also consistent with verdicts in scholarly and professional literature, which indicates that organisations do not sufficiently support or encourage their employees' professional and career development (De Vos and Cambré, 2017; Donohue and Tham, 2019; Van der Heijden et al, 2022). This has led to the rise in new career models in the case study institutions, such as the boundaryless career (which includes staff turnover) and the protean career (Herrmann, Hirschi and Baruch, 2015; Kim, 2017; Ortlieb and Weiss, 2018; Tomlinson et al., 2018; Pudelko and Tenzer, 2019).

Additionally, findings indicated that boundaryless and protean career has resulted in adaptability, self-directed learning, and individual liberty, allowing flexibility and a satisfying academic experience for faculties (see Section 5.12.4.5). Findings also reveal that to be successful as academics now means to pursue diverse research interests, to participate in lifelong learning and pursuing personal development over conventional career paths (see Section 5.12.4.5). This finding conforms to academic and professional literatures that suggest employees are now more holistic about their academic development (Browning, Thompson and Dawson, 2017; Sutherland, 2018; Zacher et al., 2018).

6.1.3.4 Staff training

The finding is that HEIs have quantity training in abundance for both new and existing academics (see Section 5.12.4.7). This confirms with academic existing academic literature that suggest that universities in the UK have invested a lot of resources in the design of training programmes for its existing and new academic staff (Nicholls, 2014; Robson and Mavin, 2014). However, interviewees indicate that most of the trainings offered and made available are primarily focused on fulfilling the university's short-term strategic objectives and business needs, as well as statutory, legal, and/or regulatory requirements, rather than catering to the academics' needs for professional, personal, and career development as well as the institution's short- and long-term business needs (see Section 5.12.4.7).

6.1.4 To explore ways in which academics in case study institutions attempt to achieve their institution’s expectations in the context of NPM

Exploring the various strategies used by interviewees to meet institutional expectations in the context of NPM is one of the main objectives of this study. Findings reveal that high performer and high potential academics in HEIs relies heavily on mentorship and their line manager support as indicated in Chapters 5.

6.1.4.1. Mentorship

The study findings reveal that mentorship (either formal or informal) provides a range of benefits for academics that enable them to achieve their expectations for the employers in the context of NPM (see Sections 5.5.1, 5.9.1 and 5.12.5.1). There were numerous faculty testimonies about how career relationships, networks, and discussions they had either with or through their informal and/or formal mentors enabled them to excel in their role and career in the context of NPM. This confirms academic and professional literature argument of the important role mentorship plays in personal, professional and organisational development of staff (Wronka, 2015; Burgess, van Diggele and Mellis, 2018; CIPD, 2023).

6.1.4.2 Line manager support

The research finding illustrate the key role line managers play in executing TM initiatives and practices in HEIs. Evidence from the research participants acknowledge the impact and influence line managers' style of leadership can have on the motivation and commitment of their subordinates and/or colleagues in the context of NPM (see Sections 5.5.2, 5.9.2, and 5.12.5.3). Findings from both institutions confirm that participative management styles are more effective in managing academic staff. This is consistent with stewardship theory, which recognises transformation and shared leadership in organisations' where strategic priorities are addressed and agreed upon by the various stakeholders through involvement, engagement, collaboration and dialogues (Davis, Schoorman, and Donaldson, 1997; Harnandez, 2012; McCormack et al., 2013; Franco-Santos, Rivera, and Bourne, 2014; Boselie and Thunnissen, 2017). The research finding conforms with academic and practitioner literature on how line managers transform TM initiatives, practices and frameworks into actual employee outcomes, stimulate talent performance, and enact TM practices in private and/or public sector institutions (CMI, 2015; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020; Kravariti et al., 2023).

The final research objective was to explore how talent and TM are conceptualised and experienced by academics in UK HEIs in the context of NPM. The key findings indicated that individualism, limited and partially developed performance management practices, ad-hoc career management practices, staff training, formal and informal mentorship, and the type of line manager were the main attributes of the TM practices observed by academics as NPM reform cut through their institutions. In addition, the research reveals that there are some levels of similarities and differences in the way academics in various UK HEIs conceptualise talent, TM and TM operationalisation. Likewise, academics are more likely to prefer inclusive, long-term orientation, and stewardship-based mechanisms approaches to TM; however, due to the increased influence of NPM and directive TM systems, which focus on academic short-term measurable performance, these approaches are under threat, and in some institutions, exclusive and directive TM approaches are increasingly being used to influence academics performance. However, the research finding imply that for HEIs to remain centres of research, innovation and teaching excellence, the inclusive and stewardship-based approach to TM, rather than the exclusive, control and directive approach to TM, is more appropriate for the management of academics' talent.

6.2 Conceptual and Empirical Contributions

The current research makes a significant conceptual contribution by defining talent in the HE sector. The research draws on academics and practitioners' literature as well as qualitative methodological analysis of primary data from case studies to clarify the meaning of talent (see Chapters 2, 4 and 5) in UK HEIs. Employing this approach laid a strong foundation for analysing the concept of talent and arriving at a proposed definition of talent in higher education sector. As evident in Stahl et al. (2007, p.4), "a select group of employees-those that rank at the top in terms of capability and performance-rather than the entire workforce". This view (Stahl et al., 2007) is supported by Downs and Swailes (2013, p.269) who added that, "A more qualitative definition of talent is that it is the current capability or future potential of an employee to deliver exceptional performance in relation to what the organisation wants to achieve. If this small group were to leave the organisation, then its departure is assumed to have a disproportionately adverse effect on organisational performance".

Drawing on TM literature was a crucial source of information that demonstrates that talent occurs in a small number of people with the skills needed to make a difference in a particular sector of human endeavour (Stahl et al., 2007; Downs and Swailes, 2013; Collings et al., 2017; O'Connor and Crowley-Henry, 2019). The researcher contends that emphasis needs to be on utilising the competencies of people who exhibit extraordinary talent (whether innate or nurtured), who are committed, helpful, and motivated, and who suit the team, environment, and contextual needs of a specific organisation or institution. Also, as exceptional talent is becoming more widely acknowledged as the primary source of long-term competitive advantage in high-performing businesses, TM ought to play a significant management function in public sector establishments and HEIs (Hiltrop, 1999; Collings et al. 2019; Adeosun and Ohiani, 2020; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020; and CIPD, 2023), most specifically in the current context of NPM (Thunnissen and Buttiens, 2017; Kravariti et al., 2022).

Another contribution of this study is an attempt to redress the lack of comparative TM studies within the UK HE context (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013) without much consideration for national dimensions. The research revealed significant aspects of TM that may not otherwise be evident in a monocultural context (Kravariti and Johnson, 2019). For example, the different background and strategic focus of the case study institutions and the different cases within both cases represent an important dimension of the conceptualisation of TM. There is also evidence to show that elements of the field and/or faculty of interviewees play a key role in shaping the conceptualisation of talent and TM. For example, the research-focused institution seems to always believe all academics are talents, while the teaching-focused institution believes order wise. More evidence of the impact of NPM on TM practices are also apparent in case study B. These findings indicate that the background, context, and strategic focus have an influence on the conceptualisation and operationalisation of TM (see Chapter 5), despite the influence of NPM in both cases.

This research also provides empirical evidence that attempts to bridge the gap between organisational practice and academic interest in the field of TM. Findings reveal that HE institutions adopt different approaches to TM (inclusive and exclusive) as well as apply diverse TM practices (see Chapter 5 Sections 5.12.2.1 and 5.12.2.2). The identification, deployment, development, reward and retention of talented employees were key features of the TM processes operationalised in the case study institutions. Findings also confirm that the conceptualisation of TM varies between both cases. While evidence in case study A indicate more inclusive approach to TM, findings from case study B indicate more exclusive approach to TM. This confirm the argument of academics and professional literature which suggest that the way TM is conceptualised varies among organisations (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Sparrow and Makram, 2015; Kravariti and Johnston, 2019; CIPD, 2023). A contribution of this study is that the differences can be positioned and applied in a particular performance management component (for example, the ACF framework in case study B and the formal mentorship programme in case study A) that underpins the organisation's talent philosophy.

This research contributed to an essential research gap by responding to the calls for greater attention to contextual factors and advancing the limited knowledge about the extent to which TM concepts, ideas and practices may have applicability in achieving broader organisational goals in public sector organisations (Holbeche, 2011; Reilly et al., 2014; Poocharoen and Lee, 2013; Boselie and Thunnissen, 2017; Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020; Thunnissen, van Arensbergen and van den Brink, 2021; Kravariti et al., 2023). This is an essential area given the multiplicity challenges public sector organisations, particularly HEIs, face in managing their workforce, performance, and global competitiveness in the context of NPM. Thus, this study proposes a concise definition of talent and highlights the conceptualisation and operationalisation of TM in public sector organisations, particularly in

HEIs. It is therefore proposed that talent in the public sector could be defined as talent = relevant and/or useful (innate or/and nurtured) proficiencies + dedication + match.

Further contribution of this study to public sector TM is the varying degree of TM approach in the sector. While the research-focused institution, for example, is pro-inclusive, the teaching-focused institution is pro-exclusive. Thus, it can be concluded that most public sector organisations currently use a hybrid or blended approach to TM, with a drift towards an exclusive approach due to the constant change and dynamism of today's business environment, the spread of NPM in the sector, and the global war for talent (Poocharoen and Lee, 2013; Randall, 2017; Khan, 2019; Thunnissen and Buttiens, 2017; Kravariti and Johnston, 2019). Moreover, this research contributed to public sector TM by highlighting the key role line manager support plays in the design and execution of TM practices in public sector organisations. Thus, the research suggests that the type of management and leadership styles a line manager adopts greatly impact the implementation of the TM initiatives, activities, and practices as well as have either positively or negatively on their colleagues and/or subordinates (Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2020; Kravariti et al., 2023).

Additionally, while a lot of study has been done on TM in the last two decades, little has been done to understand the experiences of employees regarding TM. (Stahl et al., 2012; Cappelli and Keller, 2014; Thunnissen and Van Arensbergen, 2015; Björkman, Smale and Kallio, 2022). The majority of research has concentrated on the organisational interest in TM from the perspectives of top management, line managers and HR practitioners. These perspectives represent a narrow, limited, and distorted notion of talent and TM. This study contributes by taking an approach that aims to comprehend TM from the viewpoints of employees (academics at various stages of their careers and trajectories). Thus, finding in terms of conceptualisation of talent is that while talent according to empirical evidence refers to its object approach (i.e., talent as natural ability; talent as mastery; talent as commitment; talent as fit), talent according to the analysis of the documentation reviewed in the case study institution refers to the subject approach (i.e., talent as all people; talent as some people).

Furthermore, although many academics, practitioners and entrepreneurs attach interest to TM as a means of identifying, developing, rewarding and retaining human capital, however, very little is known with respect to the effect of NPM on academic talents and TM practices. There is limited empirical research that explores the impact of NPM on TM initiatives as well as effect on human capital (Thunnissen, 2016; Kravariti and Johnston, 2019). This study makes two contributions to the understanding of the TM practices in the context of NPM: first, it explored how employees are experiencing TM initiatives in the context of NPM and secondly, it investigated how employees are coping with the demand of TM initiatives in the context of NPM.

Lastly, there is a scarcity of empirical research on how organisations assess their own practices or the effects their TM practices, like training and development activities, have on their employees, with regard to the explicit question of the assessment of TM practices and initiatives. Thunnissen (2016) claims that there is very little empirical research on the true efficacy of TM methods. This research seeks to close the gap by investigating how TM initiatives are assessed. Findings confirm that there is lack of, or effective mechanism in both cases to assess the effectiveness of TM practices or initiatives they have in place in the context of NPM. For instance, findings revealed that feedback are rarely sorted from employees who participated in the various training and development opportunities available in both cases (see Section 5.12.4.7). Findings also revealed that if this was merely a tick box exercise which contradicts what one would expect in the context of NPM, given its principles. As a result, such practice does not abide to the NPM principles.

6.3 Managerial Contribution

The aim of the research is to comprehend how academics in the HEIs view talent and TM practices in the context of NPM. The empirical findings highlight issues and difficulties that organisations are likely to encounter when adopting, putting into practice, and maintaining TM initiatives, approaches, and practices. Four major findings that support the management of TM issues and challenges in practice are examined:

First, there is significant evidence that TM initiatives is used to manage talented employees. However, evidence also indicated that employees are not aware of the actual criteria they are required to meet to benefit from their efforts and commitment to their organisation (see Chapters 5). Thus, especially in the case of career progression and advancement, there is a need for transparent and unambiguous information regarding the TM initiatives, approach, and essential criteria employee are required to meet. This is a significant contribution of the research to management practice. For instance, in case study B, despite a lecturer stating that he has met all the requirements for promotion to the level of a senior lecturer, he has been waiting for four years for the promotion to come. Therefore, a sense of lack of equity and transparency is evident in the promotion process of the institution. This research thus proposes that having a clear definition of academic talent, as indicated in the first paragraph of Section 6.2, will reduce the problem of a lack of transparency and honesty on the part of managers as well as promote trust on the part of academics.

Secondly, the critical role of line managers in the TM has implications for managerial practice. The way line managers implement the various practices and initiatives of TM in the context of NPM may have unintended consequences. The management and leadership styles they exhibit may have positive or negative implications for the organisation, their colleagues, and/or subordinates. Therefore, there is a need for line managers to review their management style and relationship with their colleagues and/or subordinates (for instance, in line with their participation style of management), which is in line with stewardship-based performance management mechanisms to ensure that it is to the benefit of their organisation.

Thirdly, a further managerial contribution is the revelation that mentorship (mostly informal mentorship) is an important practice that could be used to promote employees' development and retention in the current context of NPM. Therefore, there is a need for management to encourage and promote mentorship programmes across all levels of their organisation.

Another significant addition to managerial practice is giving academics enough time to devote to their professional and career growth. Findings from all the cases reveals that academics' increased workload in recent years as a result of NPM has left them with little time for activities that will advance their careers. Numerous academics have been forced to ponder entirely altering their institution, industry, function, contract, or vocation as a result of this. Scholars who have achieved success, for example, admit how much of their personal time they had to devote to this endeavour and how it affected their work-life balance. It is imperative that management make the investment of allocating considerable time for the purpose of this because it may not be viable in the long term to underinvest in academics' careers and professional development.

Finally, even though the findings indicated that the cases are very good at providing training activities, However, three things are important for management to consider. First, provide adequate time for employees to attend such trainings. Second, ensure that some of the trainings are not just organisational needs-specific but also individual employee-focused. Third, request constructive feedback after such trainings to access their quality and value for money.

6.4 Research Limitations and Future Research Agenda

This research has some limitations. For example, expenses, duration and the COVID-19 pandemic (during the data collection period) are some of the limitations. It could, however, be expanded in a few different ways as part of future research agenda.

This study's primary focus is on UK HEIs which creates opportunities for expanding the research to an international context and comparing the ways that talent and TM are conceptualised in HEIs in relation to NPM or other education sectors, like the further education sector, for a more comprehensive understanding. It is also recommended that as less developed nations start to feel the effects of NPM, greater focus be given to them.

Another limitation is that the research participants do not include HR practitioners and top management, who may have provided a broader perspective and opinion of their conceptualisation of talent and TM in HEIs in the context of NPM in the cases. Thus, the inclusion of other stakeholders such as top management and HR practitioners in future research is recommended.

In the future, the research could be expanded into a large-scale longitudinal study using mixed research methodology, which would combine quantitative and qualitative techniques for data collecting and analysis. In this case, the research participants could include more stakeholders such as the faculties, top management and HR practitioners. Surveys, for instance, could be used to offset the drawbacks of semi-structured in-depth interviews and documentation reviews to get a bigger data set and prevent sample bias. Academic literatures suggest that mixed methods enable the researcher to integrate or combine rigorous quantitative and qualitative research methods to draw on the strengths of each (Creswell, 2014; Bryan and Bell, 2015; Myers, 2020). Mixed-method approaches will allow the researcher to use a diversity of methods, combining inductive and deductive thinking and offsetting the limitations of exclusively quantitative and qualitative research through a complementary approach that maximises the strengths of each data type and facilitates a more comprehensive understanding of the issues and potential resolutions (Tashakkori, 2010; Easterby-Smith et al., 2012; Saunders et al., 2019). Mixed methods produce a more robust description and interpretation of the data, make quantitative results more understandable, or understand the broader applicability of small-sample qualitative findings (Creswell, 2014b; Myers, 2020).

In addition, future studies can also look at how organisations identify, develop, and retain talent using the notion of talent, which is defined as "relevant innate or/and nurtured proficiencies + dedication + match" (see Section 5.12.1.4).

Furthermore, the research findings indicated that mentoring plays a significant role in the career advancement of academics. Hence, this research also supports the need for future research on the perceptions and views of academics regarding TM and mentorship in HEIs.

Finally, given the mixed findings from the cases in this research and the evidence indicating the various changes that have occurred in the cases in recent years as a result of NPM, more research exploring the applicability of exclusive approach to TM in other public sector organisations will also be an interesting and important aspect of future research agenda.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Research Ethics Approval Letter

University of Salford MANCHESTER

Research, Innovation and Academic Engagement Ethical Approval Panel

Doctoral & Research Support
Research and Knowledge Exchange,
Room 827, Maxwell Building
University of Salford
Manchester
M5 4WT

T +44(0)161 295 7012

www.salford.ac.uk/

19th November 2018

Precious Oseki

Dear Precious,

RE: ETHICS APPLICATION SBSR1819-06: The Rhetoric and Reality of Talent Management in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs): A Comparative Study of United Kingdom (UK) and Nigeria Education Institutions.

Based on the information that you provided, I am pleased to inform you that your application SBSR1819-06 has been approved.

If there are any changes to the project or its methodology, please inform the Panel as soon as possible by contacting SBS-ResearchEthics@salford.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely,

David Percy

Professor David F. Percy
Chair of the Staff and Postgraduate Research Ethics Panel
Salford Business School

Appendix 2: Interview Questions for Academic Staff

Interview Questions for Academic Talents

Job title: ____

Length of service: ______________________________Date: _____________________

Recruitment into the role

- What is your role in this institution?
- What attracted you to work here?
- How did you hear about your current role/position vacancy?
- How were you selected for your role?
- What do you find useful about the recruitment and selection process you went through?
- To what extent have your expectations been met by your employer? If not, why and how does this impact on your relationships with the organisation?

The meaning of Talent and Talent Management

- What is your opinion about academic talent? What does it mean to you?
- Do you think everyone have the capacity/ability to be talented academic (high potential or high performer academic)? If so, in what ways? (Probing question: Would you say all your academic colleagues/staff are talented? If so, in what ways? If no, what are your reasons?)
- Do you think it is ethical to differentiate between talented (high potential/ high performer) and non-talented (low potential/poor performer) academics? If so, in what ways? If not, what are your reasons?

Relationship with the organisation

- In what ways do you think your organisation values your contribution to the success of your department/faculty/institution?
- Did your line manager discuss with you the institution's/faculty's/department's expectations when you joined?
- How does your line manager/management engage/involve you in issues relating to your role and the department?
- Have there been any discrepancies between your expectations and those of your employers? If so how has this impacted on your performance?
- How does the interaction between you and your line manager/management affect your commitment to the institution?
- Do you have time to discuss your performance and concerns with your line managers?

Career Development

- What is important to you in terms of career development?
- How are your career development and aspirations managed here? (Probing question: In what ways do your line manager and management listen to your demands/acknowledge your contribution? Quality conversations)
- How satisfied are you with career development opportunities within this institution?
- What types of staff training and development activities occur here and what is the rationale for them? (Probing question: To meet current job needs or to develop the individual?)
- Is the organisation concerned about the impact of any training and development programme you partake in? (Probing question: Any measurement? Any follow up?)
- How does the way the institution deals with your training and development needs and career ambitions impact on your level of commitment to the institution?

Rewards

- What matters most to you in terms of reward (Probing question: why?)
- How well does the organisation match what you would like to experience in relation to this?
- How does the reward package/system in place affect your commitment to the institution?

Overall commitment

- How likely is it that you will be with the organisation in 2 to 5 years' time, and why?
- What improvements would you like to see in the way talented academic or high potential or high performing staff are being managed?

Appendix 3: Interview Question for Line Managers

Job title: ____

Length of service: _________________________________Date: ______________________

Recruitment into the role

- What is your roles in this institution?
- What attracted you to work here?
- How did you hear about your current role/position vacancy?
- How were you selected for your role? What did you find useful about the selection process you went through?
- To what extent have your expectations been met by your employer? If not, why and how does this impact on your relationships with the organisation?
- In what ways are you involved in the recruitment and selection of your academic staff?

The meaning of Talent and Talent Management

- How do you define “talent” (“high potential” or “high performer”) in your organisation?
- In your opinion, do you think everyone have the ability to be talented (“high potential” or “high performer”)? If so, in what ways? (Probing question: Would you say all your academic staff are talented? If so, in what ways? If no, what are your reasons?)
- In what ways do your organisation categorise their academic staff?
- Do you think it is ethical or fair to differentiate between talented (high potential/ high performer) and non-talented (low potential/poor performer) academics? If so, in what ways? If not, what are your reasons?
- What is your opinion about academic talent (Who is an academic talent?)? What does it mean to you?
- In your opinion, what are the characteristics of an academic talent (“high potential” or “high performer” academic staff)?
- How do you manage your talented (“high potential” or “high performer”) academic staff?

Relationship with the organisation

- In what ways do you think your organisation values your contribution to the success of your department/faculty/institution?

- How does the interaction between you and the management of your institution affect your commitment to the institution?
- How often do you engage/involve your talented academic staff in issues relating to their role? (Probing question: How do you communicate the expectation of your institution to your talented academic staff?)
- In what ways do you communicate the concerns of your academic talents to management?
- In what ways do you manage the discrepancies between the department/faculty/institution expectations and that of your academic talents?

Career Development

- What is important to you in terms of career development?
- What types of staff training and development activities occur here and what is the rationale for them? (Probing question: To meet current job needs or to develop the individual?).
- How satisfied are you with career development opportunities within this institution?
- How do you manage the career development and aspirations of your talented academic staff?
- How do you communicate the training and development needs of your talented academic staff to management?
- Is the institution concerned about the impact of any training and development programme in place here? (Probing question: Any measurement? Any follow up?).

Rewards

- What matters most to you in terms of reward and why?
- How well does the organisation match what you would like to experience in relation to this (reward)? (Probing question: how does the reward package/system in place affect your commitment to the institution?)
- How do you recognise the contributions of your talented academic ("high potential" or "high performer") staff?

Overall commitment

- How likely is it that you will be with the organisation in 2 to 5 years' time, and why?
- In your opinion what are the major constraints to talented (high potential or high performer) academic staff retention in your institution or HEIs?
- What improvements would you like to see in the way talented academics retention are being managed here?

Appendix 4: Invitation Letter One

University of Salford MANCHESTER

<u>Participant Invitation Letter for Research in Talent Management in Higher and Further Education Institutions</u>

Dear,

By way of introduction, my name is Precious Oseki, and I am a PhD research student at University of Salford Business School. I would like to invite you to take part in my research titled, "The Rhetoric and Reality of Talent Management: A Comparative Study of United Kingdom (UK) Higher and Further Education Institutions".

As partial fulfilment of my doctorate degree I am carrying out a study amongst academic staff members and line managers within Universities and Further Education Colleges under the supervision of Dr Kathy Hartley and Dr David Beech. The purpose of the research is to determine whether talent management strategies, particularly strategies designed by UK HE and FE Institutions to retain academic talents (the rhetoric), are evident, and if not, what are the actual practices in use (the reality).

Participating would involve taking part in an online interview (via Zoom) with me, which would be for about an hour.

Participation is of course voluntary, and your input would be very much appreciated. All interviews will be anonymous and treated in the strictest confidence, with the data being used for this research only.

Please find attached copies of the Participant Information Sheet, Participant Informed Consent Form, Research Ethics Approval Letter, Interview Questions and Interview Guide for Participant.

I would be grateful if you could reply as soon as possible indicating your willingness to participate. I intend to conduct the interviews anytime/day from …………………. to ………………... Please, kindly let me know what day and time is convenient for you, if you are able to help. Should you require any clarification please do not hesitate to contact me on (+44) 07853166511.

I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you very much for your anticipated consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Precious Oseki

Doctorate Student (University of Salford)

Appendix 5: Invitation Letter Two

University of Salford MANCHESTER

<u>Participant Invitation Letter for Research in Talent Management in Higher and Further Education Institutions</u>

Dear,

By way of introduction, my name is Precious Oseki, and I am a PhD research student at Salford Business School, University of Salford. I would like to invite you to take part in my research titled, “The Rhetoric and Reality of Talent Management in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs): A Comparative Study of United Kingdom (UK) and Nigeria Education Institutions”.

As part fulfilment of my Doctorate degree, I am carrying out a study amongst managers, human resource professionals and academic staff members within universities, under the supervision of Dr Kathy Hartley and Dr David Beech. The purpose of the research is to determine whether talent management strategies, particularly strategies designed by UK and Nigerian HEIs to retain academic talents (the rhetoric), are evident, and if not, what are the actual practices in use (the reality). Participating would involve taking part in an interview with me, which would be for around 1 hour.

Participation is of course voluntary, and your input would be very much appreciated. All interviews will be anonymous and treated in the strictest confidence, with the data being used for this research only.

Please find attached copies of the Participant Information Sheet, Participant Informed Consent Form, Research Ethics Approval Letter and Interview Guide for Participant.

I would be grateful if you could reply by not later than …………. indicating your willingness to participate. Should you require any clarification please do not hesitate to contact me on (+44) 07853166511.

I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you very much for your anticipated cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Precious Oseki

Doctorate Student (University of Salford)

Salford Business School

University of Salford

Greater Manchester

United Kingdom

M5 4WT

P.E.Oseki@edu.salford.ac.uk

+44(0)7853166511

Appendix 6 : Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research study as part of a PhD programme which aim to determine whether talent management strategies, particularly strategies designed by UK and Nigerian HEIs to retain academic talents (the rhetoric), are evident and if not, what are the actual practices in use (the reality).

Before you decide to participate it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please if you require any clarification or information do not hesitate to ask me. Take time to decide whether or not to take part.

Who will conduct the research?

Precious Oseki, Salford Business School, University of Salford, Maxwell Building, 43 Crescent, Salford, M5 4WT, United Kingdom.

Title of the Research

The Rhetoric and Reality of Talent Management in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs): A Comparative Study of United Kingdom (UK) and Nigeria Education Institutions

What is the aim of the research?

The aim of this research is to determine whether talent management strategies, particularly strategies designed by UK and Nigerian HEIs to retain academic talent (the rhetoric), are evident and if not, what are the actual practices in use (the reality).

The existing literatures on Talent Management (TM) shows a number of theoretical and practical areas that require further investigation. Tansley et al. (2013) for instance suggested that certain geographies are under-represented in the TM literatures. Nigeria seems to be among such countries, most especially in terms of how they conceptualise the phenomenon (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015).

Secondly, comparative work on TM is also limited, both between/among developed countries or within developed countries (Kubler and DeLuca 2006; Edwards and Smiths 2010; Van Den Brink et al., 2013), with no studies directed to drawing a comparison between developed (e.g. UK) and less developed countries (e.g. Nigeria).

Thirdly, there is little empirical work since much of the work on TM has been conceptual (Thunnissen et al. 2013). This research is expected to present new evidence on the rhetoric and reality of TM in HEIs in Nigeria and UK, by investigating and comparing the nature and extent of TM related activities, particularly academic talent retention strategies in UK and Nigeria HEIs.

Finally, a number of researchers have put forward that organisations may have adopted a talent management strategy in principle but in reality, such programme has been mere formality (Tansley, Kirk and Tietze, 2013; Van den Brink, Fruytier and Thunnissen, 2013; Swailes, Downs, and Orr 2014; Collings, Mellahi and Cascio, 2017). Therefore, the gap between the organisation's intentions and the reality/actual implementation of TM practices becomes an important research area which requires further research.

Why have you been chosen?

You have been invited to participation because you are either in a leadership/managerial position or a current member or former member of staff. Participants will be drawn from three other institutions in Nigeria and the United Kingdom.

What would you be asked to do if you took part?

Your involvement in the study entails being interviewed by the researcher for about 1 hour. With your consent, interviews will be recorded to ensure an accurate record.

What will happen to the data collected?

The interviews with participants will be recorded, transcribed and analysed as part of the PhD study. Identifying information will not be included in the transcripts. Transcripts will be accessed by the researcher and the supervisory team only.

How will confidentiality be maintained?

It is important to note that transcribed data will be kept separate from personal identifiers. All electronic data will be password protected or encrypted. Should there be any paper based transcripts or documents these will be kept in locked cabinets. All information related to the study will be kept for a maximum of 5 years, after which they will be destroyed by shredding, deletion or other appropriate means.

What will happen if you do not want to take part or if you change your mind?

Participation is voluntary. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time during the interview or soon after the interview is completed without giving a reason and without detriment to yourself.

Will you be paid for participating in the research?

Participation in the study is voluntary such that no payment or compensation is paid for your time.

What is the duration of the research?

The interview is scheduled to last approximately one hour.

Where will the research be conducted?

Where possible the interview will take place within your university premise. Where this is not possible, alternative arrangements can be made.

Will the outcomes of the research be published?

Findings from this study will form part of a PhD thesis. Dissemination will be by way of publications or conference presentations. In each case, any direct quotes reported from interviews will be anonymous.

Who has reviewed the research project?

The project has been reviewed by the University of Salford, Business School.

Contact for further information.

If you need further details, please contact either the researcher or supervisory team:

Researcher: Precious Oseki - P.E.Oseki@edu.salford.ac.uk

Supervisor: Dr Kathy Hartley - K.A.Hartley@salford.ac.uk

Appendix 7: *– Informed Consent Form*

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that I agree to participate in the study to be carried out by researcher Precious Oseki titled:

The Rhetoric and Reality of Talent Management in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs): A Comparative Study of United Kingdom (UK) and Nigeria Education Institutions

I further declare that I understand the purpose of the research, that it will be used as part of a Doctorate programme, that it will be stored and accessed solely by the researcher and that it will not be disclosed. I also understand that it can be used for research output based on such research and that my anonymity will be guaranteed.

By making this declaration, I understand that I am allowing the researcher to use the information I am providing him for the purpose of this research and its output and I am also aware that I can pull out of the research at any time.

Name:…………………………………………………………

Signature:…………………………………………………….

Date:…………………………………………………………

Appendix 8: Interview Guide

University of Salford MANCHESTER

Interview Guide

Preamble

My name is Precious Oseki, a PhD student at the University of Salford investigating the Rhetoric and Reality of Talent Management in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs): A Comparative Study of United Kingdom (UK) and Nigeria Education Institutions. I have a number of questions to ask you about your experiences. There are no right or wrong answers. I am interested in what you have to say. Your name will not be used in any of the write ups, interpretation and analysis of the research and I will make sure that any statement used cannot be associated with you. The interview with you will be recorded in order for me to be able to transcribe it later. I want to reassure you that no one apart from me and my research supervisors will gain access to recorded tapes and transcription.

Key concepts: Please see below key concepts associated with the research that will serve as a guide for discussion. I have also provided a list of what are usually considered talent management components. The list is to be used as a guide because it is not exhaustive.

Talent(s): Downs and Swailes (2013, p. 269) define talent as, "the current capability or future potential of an employee to deliver exceptional performance in relation to what the organisation wants to achieve. If this small group was to leave the organisation, then its departure is assumed to have a disproportionately adverse effect on organisational performance". Schiemann (2014, p.282) put forward that it is "the collective knowledge, skills, abilities, experiences, values, habits and behaviours of all labour that is brought to bear on the organisation's mission". CIPD (2018) added that, **"Talent** consists of those individuals who can make a difference to organisational performance either through their immediate contribution or, in the longer-term, by demonstrating the highest levels of potential".

Talent management: "Talent management is an integrated set of processes, programs, and cultural norms in an organization designed and implemented to attract, develop, deploy, and retain talent to achieve strategic objectives and meet future business needs" (Silzer and Dowell (2010, p. 18). "…the systematic attraction, identification, development, engagement, retention and deployment of those individuals who are of particular value to an organisation, either in view of their 'high potential' for the future or because they are fulfilling business/operation-critical roles" (CIPD, 2018).

Talent management components: usually include recruiting, selection, promotion, placement, assignments, on boarding, assimilation, retention initiatives, reward and recognition programs, training, development, learning opportunities, coaching, mentoring, leadership and executive education and development, performance management, career planning and development, high potential identification and development, employee diversity efforts, succession management and planning, organisational talent management reviews, measurement and evaluation of talent management efforts (Silzer and Dowell, 2010).

Appendix 9: List of documents collected and analysed for Case Study A

No.	Documents Collected	Information Provided in the Documents
1	Recruitment and Selection Policy	Contains key information about the stages in recruiting and selecting for a post and references to supporting documentations.
2	Policy and Procedure on Contracts of Employment	Contains information about the types of contracts that the University uses for different working arrangements and explains the use of fixed term contracts and permanent contracts and the potential redundancy/termination arrangements that apply as well as and references to supporting documentations.
3	Interview Expenses Policy	Contains information about how the institution reimburse reasonable interview expenses, as defined by criteria set out in the documents where a candidate is attending a job interview within the UK and from abroad.
4	Market Pay Policy	Contains information about how the institution reacts to the external labour market conditions most especially during situations where scarce skills and expertise can command higher salaries than the maximum provided under the current pay and grading structure. The document contains information on the procedure for the Allocation of Market-Related Payments as well as the monitoring and review of such situations.
5	Additional selection methods documents	Contains information about the various selection methods used by the institution which ranges from interview, assessment centres, presentations, role

		play, group exercises, practical tests, psychometric tests, to in-tray exercises.
6	Appointment panels constitution guidance and Guidance for recruiting academic staff.	Contains information on expected appointment panel constitution. It is mandatory that panel members have received training in Equality and Diversity issues as well as Recruitment and Selection. Where practicable appointment panels should reflect diversity, as well as a range of experience and expertise. Therefore, it is recommended that where possible the panel should include: a broad age range; representation from ethnic minority colleagues; a nominee from an independently associated area i.e. another faculty/school or department; and Selectors of both sexes. The panel should consist of no less than two and no more than five people and must normally include the line manager for the post concerned.
7	Five stages to recruitment	Contains information on the stages of recruitment in the institution which includes Identifying and preparing; Attracting candidates; Shortlisting and screening; Selection; and offer and welcome.
8	Recruitment flow chart	Contains information about the recruitment and selection process of the institution and all documents required at each stage. It also advises those involve in the process to allow at least 12 weeks in their planning for the process for fulling a vacant position.
9	Roles and Responsibilities of those involved in Recruiting and Selecting staff	Contains information about the roles and responsibilities of those that will be involve throughout the recruitment and selection process and acknowledged that there are many colleagues

		who work together to ensure the process is completed effectively.
10	Vacancy Management Procedure	Contains information on how the institution is taking responsible actions to avoid creating payroll cost problems and to ensure that they are able to continue to invest in the appointment of high calibre individuals to progress their strategic agenda.
11	Probationary Arrangements for Newly Appointed Academic Staff	Contains information about the probation process and period of all new academic staff and stressed that the arrangements can be modified on a case-by-case basis (with the approval of Vice-President and Dean) to take account of previous experience at their institution or another University or Higher Education Institute which can also include waiver of probation where this is considered to be appropriate. Issues regarding the purpose of probation, the period, Interruption to the Probation Period, Arrangements on appointment, Progress subsequent to appointment and Selection of a Mentor were addressed in the document.
12	Security of Employment Policy	Contains information about how the institution will promote and enhance the principles of security and diversity of employment.
13	Flexible Working Policy and Procedure	Clarifies the institution's approach to flexible working arrangements which is in accordance with the ACAS code of practice and guidance on handling requests to work flexibly in a reasonable manner and references to supporting documentations.

14	Staff Training and Development Policy	The documents set out the institution's commitment to the current and future development of staff skills, expertise, and ability in support of the institution's faculty/school strategy; other strategic and operational plans; and the job and career related aspirations of individual members of staff. The policy stressed that, "Staff training and development is the responsibility of all staff in the University". And as a guideline for resourcing purposes, it recommended that at least 5 working days per annum is set aside for individual staff involvement in learning and development activities according to individual needs and requirements.
15	Performance and Development Review Guidance notes for Reviewees, Reviewers and Senior Reviewers	Contains information on the measures the institution has in place to support each and every individual in improving their performance to the best of their abilities and fulfil their professional aims and ambitions.
16	Right to Request Training Policy	This policy sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an employee making a request in relation to study or training and how to have the request considered as well as the conditions that applies.
17	Academic Leave Policy	Contains information about academic leave which are paid leave that allows members of academic staff an opportunity for professional development in a way that would not otherwise be possible within the normal course of the academic session. The academic staff is released from normal duties for a period to undertake research or other forms of professional study. The aim of the policy is to: provide a regular opportunity for academic staff to

		have periods of uninterrupted, focused study; provide opportunities to enable a project to get off the ground, to come finally to fruition or to provide an indispensable foundation for future work as well as references to supporting documentations.
18	Career break policy	Contains information about the opportunity available to all staff who wish to take extended (unpaid) career break and already have more than two years continuous service at the University.
19	Re-grading policy and procedure	Contains information about the framework within which to facilitate the re-grading of roles in a fair, consistent and equitable manner across the institution.
20	Redeployment Policy	Contains information on how it enables staff to be redeployed to suitable posts within the institution.
21	Promotion policy and procedure	Contains information about the revised criteria for all routes levels Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Reader and Professor promotion
22	Rewarding exceptional performance policy and procedure	Contains information about how exceptional performance is recognised and rewarded within the institution.
23	Special leave policy	Contains information about occasion members of staff of the institution may encounter domestic crises which demand their attention and that in such circumstances it is reasonable to provide special leave with pay or unpaid leave in addition to normal holiday entitlement. The policy contains process staff need to follow in order to get such leave.

24	Equality and diversity policy	Contains information on the culture of diversity within the institution's community and how they are providing a dynamic working and learning environment, where all members are valued for their contribution and individuality.
25	Pay Protection Policy	Contains information on how the institution promotes and enhances the principles of security and diversity of employment as outlined in the Security of Employment Policy and other polices.
26	Sickness policy	Contains information on the supports that are available to employees that are absence due to ill health and the steps that the University will take to monitor and manage absence.
27	Shared Parental Leave policy	Contains information on how parents will be able to share a pot of leave and can decide to be off work at the same time and/or take it in turns to have periods of leave to look after their child.
28	Retirement policy	Contains information about the framework for workplace discussions on retirement. The institution currently has no fixed retirement age and employs people of all ages, adhering to the principles set out in the Equality and Diversity Policy.
29	Pre-retirement leave policy	Contains information on how it enables staff to be redeployed to suitable posts within the institution.
30	Management of stress at work	Contains information on how the institution prevents stressful working conditions from arising in the first place and the process taken to manage stress.

31	Consensual Relationships Policy	Contains information on the acceptable treatment and guide behaviour in such situations.
32	Visa costs and loan policy	Contains information on the visa costs and Loans for dependant visas and immigration Health Surcharge Policy
Other documents	The university recruitment and selection policy procedure, Interview questions, Roles and Responsibilities of those involved in Recruiting and Selecting staff, Vacancy approval procedure, staff training and development policy, Right to request training, academic leave policy, special leave policy, career break policy, Rewarding Exceptional Performance policy, Rewarding Exceptional Performance Guide, REP Application form, Consensual Relationships Policy, Contracts of Employment Policy, death-in-service-policy, Equality and Diversity Policy, Flexible Working, Honorary Policy, Internal Secondment Policy, Interview expenses policy, Management of Stress at Work, Market Pay Policy, Pay Protection Policy, Pre-retirement leave terms, Probationary Arrangements for Newly Appointed Academic Staff, Redeployment Policy, Re-grading Policy, REP Policy & Nomination, Retirement Policy, Security of Employment Policy, Shared Parental Leave policy, Sickness Policy, Visa Costs and Loan Policy, and staff retention policy. See Appendices 9 for more information.	

Appendix 10: List of documents collected and analysed for Case Study B

No.	Documents Collected	Information Provided in the Documents
1	Staff turnover document requested via Freedom of information (FOI) request.	The document contains data about academic staff turnover rate at the institution.
2	Company Handbook - Your guide to working with us	Contains outlines policies and procedures that individuals need to be aware of as an employee of the institution.
3	Academic Role Descriptions and Expectations of Academic Standards	Contains information about the comprehensive set of descriptions for substantive academic roles and non-substantive academic roles at the institution. It also provides information about the responsibilities of academics across schools and colleges at the institution as well as ensures that the roles and responsibilities of academic staff align correctly with the institution's strategy.
4	Recruitment Process guide	Contains key information about the stages in recruiting and selecting for a post and references to supporting documentations and forms
5	Job Detail Template for all academic related roles in the institution.	Contains information about the purpose of each role (ranging from professorial to lecturer positions), persons' specification including the qualification requirements, background and experience, knowledge, skills and competences required.
6	Supporting Statement and Shortlisting Briefing guide	Contains information about the rationale for introducing the candidate supporting statement template and new hiring manager shortlisting form and basic guidance on how they should be used.

7	Resourcing plan and timetable template	Contains information about the institution's recruitment timeframe, stages and the various activities involve in the process.
8	Manager's Recruitment guide	Contains summarised information about the institution's recruitment process mainly to serve a quick refresher for managers.
9	Induction pack	Contains key information ranging from pay, holiday, performance management, grievance to leaving the company.
10	Probation Policy and Procedure -	Contains information about the institution's approach to probation for new colleagues. For example, 1 year for Grade 7 and above and 6 months for Grade 6 and below.
11	Code of practice for the welcoming and orientating of colleagues.	Contains information about four key stages of on boarding, local induction, university welcome and orientation and probation review.
12	Professional Development Review (PDR) Scheme Process Guidance for staff.	Contains information that help staff to think about the process from a reviewee's perspective.
13	Professional Development PDR Process - Guidance for managers.	Contains information that help managers to think about the process from a reviewer's perspective.
14	Professional Development Review (PDR) Scheme Template.	Contains information about what need to be recorded for the individual professional development within a 12-month period.
15	Information about the University Development Portal.	Contains information about the different training and development activities/programme available for both new and existing staff. There are lots of trainings and information about coaching/mentoring, working in Higher

		Education, presentation skills, wellbeing and diversity and so on.
16	Academic Career Framework Workbook.	Contains information about the support available for colleagues on how to deliver the best teaching, research, enterprise and leadership through trainings and development activities tailored not only to the University's requirements but also to an individual's career aspirations.
17	Academic Career Framework Team session Leader's guide.	Contains information about the support those with people leadership/management responsibility (Directors, Heads of, Subject leads, Programme Leaders etc.) in completing the Academic career framework session with your team members.
17	Employee Apprenticeships (fully funded) Guidance for employees on what apprenticeships are, how to express an interest and the conditions of funding.	Contains information about the support available for staff to achieve the following qualification and the process and requirement to access it. Associate Project Manager (L4 Cert HE Project Management Consultancy); Chartered Manager (L6 BSc Hons Business and Management); Senior Manager (L7 Master of Business Administration); Senior Manager (L7 MSc Leadership and Management); and Digital and Technology Solutions (L7 MSc Digital Technologies)
18	Employee Apprenticeships (fully funded) Guidance for Line Managers.	Contains information for line managers on apprenticeships as a development option for existing employees and the process involve.
19	Professorial Review Policy.	Contains information about the Professorial Review Procedure in the institution including the

		timetable for Process and information about the various bands.
20	Managers' programme documents /platform.	Contains information about the development support, experiential learning opportunities and supports with networking and growth available to help managers manage people, departments and projects. It also contains information about the institution's Management Skills Masterclasses.
21	The institution behaviours guide.	Contains information about TEN behaviours which have been identified from a cross section of colleagues across the University as those which are the most effective in helping the organisation all to achieve the University's Industry Collaboration Zone (ICZ) strategy.
22	Avoidance of Redundancy/ Redundancy Policy and Procedure.	Contains information about what the institution is doing to maximise job security for all employees within the organisation, what they will do if it is necessary to make staff reductions, including by redundancy and how the procedure in place will ensure a fair, equitable and transparent process for all employees affected by organisational change.
23	Redeployment Principles Policy and Procedure.	Contains information about what the institution is doing to maximise job security for all employees within the organisation, what they will do if it is necessary to make staff redeployment into suitable alternative roles elsewhere in the University.
Other documents	Academic Roles Manual, the recruitment and selection policy and procedure, Manager's recruitment guide, Shortlisting Form, Supporting Statement and	

	Shortlisting Briefing, Resourcing Plan Timetable Form, Resourcing plan-timetable, Assessment and Selection Candidate guide and record, Practical assessment candidates form, Recruitment Infographic, A useful guide to Mentoring, Probation Policy and Procedure, Welcome code of practice for managers, Newsletters, Reimbursement of Relocation and Removal Expenses Procedure, Redeployment Policy, Casual appointment recruitment process, Various Job Detail Template for Academics ranging from Lecturer to Professor, Avoidance of Redundancy Policy, Fixed Term Contract Guidance, Fixed Term Contracts Appeal Procedure, Equality Impact Assessment, Chairs Assessment Interview guide, Appointing Hourly Paid Academics to Fractional Academic Post, 2020 Annual Inclusion and Diversity report, Reward statement, Reward Procedure for appeal against regrade outcome Policy, Reward Regrade Appeal Form Template, Salary Protection Policy, the university Pension Changes FAQs, Regrade procedure, Regrade Application Form, Professorial Appointments and Promotions Procedure, Pay Award FAQs, Merit Award Policy, Merit Award Nomination Form, Higher Education Role Analysis (HERA) - The Questionnaire Guidance (2020), HERA Scoring at the institution Guidance, HERA Job Evaluation 14 Elements for role analysis Guidance, Candidate Guidance to Professorial Promotions Process, Benefits Plus Childcare Voucher Scheme, Salary Scale LW, Annual Leave Entitlements, Additional Annual Leave 2021, Academic Career Framework (ACF) colleague workbook, ACF team session Leaders examples, copy of ACF training day slides, ACF worksheet - Leaders guide to ACF session, Apprenticeship Guidance, Employee Apprenticeship Expression of Interest and Approval Form, Employee Apprenticeship Line Manager Guidance, Funding trainings, New Colleagues Training, Professorial Review Policy, The institution Behaviours guide, the organization manager programme, the university Managers Brochure, the university academic staff Skills - Personal career journey, document on Skills -Protecting You and the University, a review of the institution's Your Development Portal.

Appendix 11: Themes and codes in NVivo12

Name	Files

- Conceptualisation of talent in HEIs
  - Ability to contribute to the institution
  - Ability to generate insightful new knowledge
    - Ability to refresh and renew
  - Ability to work collaboratively
  - Academic talent
  - Academic talent of become a professor of doing research
  - Achieved expectations
  - Analytical part of being talent
  - Big thinker
  - Build team
  - Can be defined by various criteria
  - Capacity to teach
  - Commitment
  - Could be developed
  - Credible as a researcher
    - Acceptable research record
    - Counting citations
    - Successful academic publications
    - Writing and publications
  - Credible to the business
  - Current achievements
  - Depends on what the job is
  - Differentiation
  - Doing good academic work
  - Engagement blunder
  - Everybody has some talents
  - Everybody here can improve
  - Everyone in the academic community I work is a talent
  - Excellent teacher and researcher
  - Exceptional talent potential
  - Expectation are higher now
  - General intelligent in a wide range of tasks and scenarios and occup
  - Getting funding for projects
  - High level of enthusiasm about the job
  - Highly committed
  - How to retain and attract projects
  - Human Capital brought to bear
  - Inherent in a person

- Intellectual challenge
- Intelligence
- It is difficult to predict people's capability
- It is thought of in different ways by different people
- Like writing
- longer time trajectory potential
- Look for strong performance
- Looking for facts
- Luck
- Non talented academics gets find out and don't last
- Not everyone can be an academic
- Open to change
- Original ideas
- Pain thinker
- Passion
- Peer reviewed journals
- Perceived as above average by their academic peers
- PhD thesis is the first step
- Quality of publications
- Rare to find someone who is good across
- Research focused, Teaching focused, or both

- Self organisation and inintellectual ability
  - Intellectual ability
  - Self-organisation and administrative skill
- Significant contribution to field
- Some people will be better than others
- Successful research project
  - The rigor of research proposal
  - Very strong research performance
  - Leadership role in research
- Talent
- Talented in one thing or the other
- Teaching expirence
- There are many ways of being an excellent teacher
- There is no one perfect way of being talent
- They are unique in the system
- Usefulness of cleverness
- Very good in communicating

- Very hardworking, very selective, pretty focused
- You have to learn
- Winning respect for the school
- Willing to take chances
- Willing to make mistakes
- what you know
- Look for strong performance

Name	Files
Opinion on Talent Management in HEIs	
A lot of PM around publications now	
An excuse for not developing everybody	
Annual performance review	
Annual round for professor promotions	
Budgetary constraints	
Career Development	
Career development changes over the years	
Career progression structure	
Civic university	
Clear criteria for recruitment	
Clearer expectations	
Coaching	
Conception about collegiate	
Doesn't work well in university environment	
Eminent supervisor	
Engagement and involvement	
From temporary job	
Get find out during selection process	
Importance of Talent Management	
Indirect exclusive TM	
Individualism takes the place of corporate structure	
Informal structure	
More inclusive	
No emphasis on training and development	
Performance Development Review	
Performance Management	
Rationale for training and development	
Research track academics less supported	
Restructing and reorganisation	

Reward structure		
Self developing		
Succession plan		
Talent pool		
Talent retention strategy		
Tcatical mechanism		
Teaching evaluation		
The impact of Age Demography		
The new ref regulation		
Things are very transactional		
Too big to foster talents		
Transactional relationship		
Unethical as a permanent situation		
Unfair differentiate		
Unstructured situations		

Name	Files
Perceive and experience TM practices	
A very harsh climate now	
A sponsor	
Being recognised as talent	
Commitment is with immidiate group	
Concern about impact of training	
Congresses	
Creaming off few people	
Discrepancies between expectations from both parties	
Email	
Exclusive TM do not promote retention	
Exclusive TM is probably very dangerous	
Exploitation of early career academics work	
Got my degree there	
Guardian education supplement	
he head of the unit sent me the advert	
How you are trying to do it	
I knew more than the interview panel	
I knew someone on the interview panel	
I was looking for a job and this came up	

- I knew someone on the interview panel
- I was looking for a job and this came up
- Informal Career Development
- Interview Panel
- Invited to apply
- It is important to understand the reasons for good and bad preform
- jobs.ac.uk
- Learn new langauage
- Make you do things to make sure you still have the job
- Management by objective
- Monthly meetings
- More independence as you get to the of your career
- Narrowness of expectation around publication
- New academic programme
- No cap on promotion
- Organisation's expectations
- Peer review of teaching
- People disappearing
- Positions
- Presentation and interview
- Pressure on students scores

- Previously worked in the institution
- Professors review
- Quarterly Resource Meetings
- Quarterly school board meeting
- Reading books
- Recruitment procedure
- Ref-able
- Reflective practice
- Relatively flexible
- Shadowing
- Some to develop the individaul
- Staff training
- Statutory trainings
- Tension between rhetoric and reality
- The interview didn't give me information about the role
- The interview was quite warm
- The only way you get valued is by putting yourself forward
- There is commitment at local level
- Through a senior colleague

- Through discussion and sitting on committee
- Through internal advert
- Through PhD Course
- Through recommendation
- Through senior academic using me to do the work
- Tick box exercise
- Times Higher Education Supplement
- To learn about subject area
- To meet the need of the job and institution
- Top down management style
- University website
- Who you know

Name	Files
Factors that influences the intention to leave or stay	

- A good friend
- A lot of freedom
- Affects my commitment to participate in academic administaration
- Age
- Alignment of personal and organisational aspirations
- Being able to change, refresh and renew
- Being asked to serve in important committees
- Being happy
- Being in income
- Building a support network
- Career currency
- Comfortable pay
- Commute to work
- Competition
- Compliment
- Constraint on what you like to do
- Criteria for promotion
- Depend on existing management style
- Developing staff and students

- Fair and open communication of opportunities
- Family link to job
- Feedback from students as reward
- Feeling valued
- Flexibility

Getting promoted
Good colleagues
Good communication
Good pay
Good support
Good working team
Health problem
Heavy work load
Honorarium
How they grade and pay you
How you fit in
Hygiene factors
I am use to it
I don't want to learn rules of another institution
I feel relatively safe here
I was lonely when I started
Impact on the world
Inadequate staffing
Inform group and close collaborators
Informal mentorship
Infrastruture to do work

Intellectual stimulation
Interesting job
Interesting project
Interesting trainings
Interesting work
Interferance with family life
Involvement in developing trainings
Issues with selection criteria
Keen cyclist
Lack of capacity in some aspects of administration
Lack of consultation
Lack of job security
Lack of objective measurement
Lack of patient to get promoted
Lack of training budget
Learning from colleagues

- Length of service
  - Expirence and length of service
  - Lenght of service affects relationship with line manager
- Less salary and remuneration
- Level of hindrance
- Limited feedback on performance
- Looking to do something different
- Making a difference
- Meeting people
- Mental Challenge
- More career development opportunities in rapidly developing fields
- More internal development
- More pay
- More research
- Motivation
- Not looking to develop career
- Offer development opportunities
- Offered opportaunity to work in different schools
- Opportunities for career development
- Opportunity to attend conferences
- Opportunity to make money

- Opportunity to work from home
- Pay dot
- Pension
- Poaching by other institutions
- Presence of career academics in your area
- Pressure of publishing in certain journals
- Private life away from work
- Problem of potential poaching
- Professional network outside the institution
- Promotion
- Promotion and progression
- Psychological Contract
- Recognition
- Redundancy
- Reference group
- Relationship with line manager
- Relationship with organisation
- Reputation of the institution
- Research collaboration
- Resist time consuming jobs
- Respect from colleagues

- Respect of audience I teach
- Right climate
- Right culture
- Satisfying job
- Shortage of jobs
- Shortage of Nursing and health academics
- Social network
- Stage of career
- Strike
- Structural barriers
- Support from senior colleagues
- Supportive colleagues
- Teaching load
- The diversity of the institution
- The impact of training and development on commitment
- The location of the job
- The vision of the institution
- Through feedback
- Time
- Time off for sabatical study leaves
- To reengage with colleagues

- Trade union
- Trust of choice
- Unpaid labour
- Value contributions
- Variety
- what you are trying to know
- Wanted to move into interdisciplinary environment

Name	Files
Suggestions for improvement	
By saying thank you	
Tacit appreciation	
Demand for high salary	
Employee engagement	
Encourage and nurture	
Through encouraging them to apply for award	

- By nurturing them
- By providing advice
- Help young colleagues
- By working with them
- Academic apprenticeship
- By writing with people
- Intern Programme
- Regular tutor training
- Ethical to provide right support for talent to flourish
- Bring in young stars
  - Less focus on bring in stars
  - Rising star programme

- Informal support and mirroring
  - Informal monitoring and Corridor conversations
  - Being on the Executive
  - Early academic career advice
- Less performance management
- Listen to advise and comments
  - Conversations

  - Rising star programme
- Informal support and mirroring
  - Informal monitoring and Corridor conversations
  - Being on the Executive
  - Early academic career advice
- Less performance management
- Listen to advise and comments
  - Conversations

  - By finding appropriate balance
  - By selling the ideas
  - Regular team meetings
    - Face to face communication
    - One to one meeting
- Mentorship
- Through promotion
- Working and rolling contract

Appendix 12: The study's main themes, second-order themes and some indicative direct quotations for each.

Main/Emergent themes	Cluster Themes/ Subthemes	Indicative direct quotations
Individualism replaces a structured TM programme.	- Soft line management process - A collegiate culture - Academic resistance to corporate type TM process.	<Files\\Participant 1 - Institution A> - § 11 references coded [6.82% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.56% Coverage ● I think what has happened in universities from my perspective is that there is individualism and that takes the place of corporate structure such as talent management programmes, you are very much your own person. Reference 2 - 0.43% Coverage ● So, there is no corporate support. The assumption is that you just carry on and do it yourself. Reference 3 - 0.41% Coverage ● So, moving back to your subject talent management is individualised with a strong expectation that you would move up that academic ladder. Reference 4 - 0.56% Coverage ● Very little. I just go back to this thing that is up to you, it is a very autonomous job. We work in teams in certain circumstances but very often is individual and it is a transactional relationship really. Reference 5 - 0.87% Coverage ● So again, very informal, not structured, not institutional we are reasonable closed, friendly closed group and there have been example of when have been ill and the support just jumped in, so I think this is a good climate to be in but in terms of formal structure of career development and talent management they don't exist. Reference 6 - 0.78% Coverage ● So, I think the support is there but again I just need to reinforce the inform nature of structures here, you know. They are all like semi-autonomous little tribes that manage themselves, you know there is no this like strict line of accountability that goes to the top is rather diffuse. Reference 7 - 1.04% Coverage ● I think some people like structure and some people like freedom. I am sort of between the two, I appreciate the freedom. I will give you an example. Hmm… the marking I have got to do on Friday I can do anytime, so I could have Monday off, but I have got to do Sunday. The level of autonomy that you have is a sort of indication that is up to you to sort out your own career development Reference 8 - 0.35% Coverage

		• I think is down to individual cultures, I think this university is far busy about worrying about other things to think about me. Reference 9 - 1.07% Coverage Is just one that requires a little thought before I say anything – It doesn't matter because I know what is like… if somebody offer me a post in another university or perhaps or a consultancy firm who say we have a structure sets of activities to develop your career and your abilities then I probably take it but I don't see that happening because I believe most universities are sort of the same. Reference 10 - 0.40% Coverage • It will need a major overhaul of the system and manpower process of the universities, is a very lasses-fair system and a very individualise system. Reference 11 - 0.36% Coverage • Personally, I will go back to possible thing I have said earlier that is probably down to the individual to manage themselves more. <Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [0.29% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.29% Coverage • I think generally people find a way to show their talent in the university and they are allowed to do that and encourage to do that. <Files\\Participant 2 - Institution A> - § 8 references coded [2.43% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.13% Coverage • So, I think individuals will have to manage their own career to some degree. Reference 2 - 0.10% Coverage

		• Nobody was taking responsibility of what was happening to me Reference 3 - 0.17% Coverage • We have a line manager discussion every year but to be honest I don't, I am a very independent person. Reference 4 - 0.44% Coverage • You know report of research, teaching, plans, and things like that and development, but they are not a line manager in a sense that they give me orders and I am not actually producing any work output for them, for that person, whoever that person is at that time. Reference 5 - 0.18% Coverage • So, I am not doing anything which I have a line manager in the school. I have sort of created that if you like. Reference 6 - 0.60% Coverage • The only project which I largely control is the student consultancy project, 60 projects, 20 for charities, 20 for small businesses in the UK and 20 for international businesses outside the UK. Obviously I have no boss in running that but there are other people running the administration, the marketing, and there is no one person that does the whole thing Reference 7 - 0.33% Coverage • I think I am basically quite satisfied. Hmm… If I had wanted a very structured life and I had gone to the bottom of the career track I mean, I am sure the university would have guided me very well. Reference 8 - 0.47% Coverage • So again, is a trade, is a relationship between different departments, no boss there, nobody design that experience, nobody is over seeing it, if the formal Head of Maths work into the classroom with his eyes closed, if I have to stop I will stop. Is nothing like an appraisal system

		<Files\\Participant 3 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.25% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.25% Coverage • they may be doing a lot of things, but it might be individualised what they do <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 13 references coded [4.34% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.90% Coverage • I remember in the more recent one that this person which I have worked with quite a lot say how he felt that the organisation let me down in some ways. What I think that is about is that actually you may get on to this, but I am just been honest here I am not trying to be boastful or anything I am quite capable of doing very high-level work and the university didn't particularly enable me to do that. Reference 2 - 0.54% Coverage • there isn't anybody telling you that and also it is a very individualistic type of place so actually you are expected to, the expectation is that individuals will make their own way rather than they will be guided and supported to do things. Reference 3 - 0.11% Coverage • although the guy did say you might be put forward Reference 4 - 0.38% Coverage • You must put yourself forward for promotion there a bit more support within the smaller group here but by and large as I said it is a very individualistic culture here. Reference 5 - 0.38% Coverage • We don't really have line managers as we are organised, we don't really those but a colleague anyway to discuss those but is not really about the university's expectations.

		Reference 6 - 0.15% Coverage • Is Alan’s business really whether he has a project to be working on. Reference 7 - 0.39% Coverage • there are limit to that as I say because I think is, there is this sort of individual emphasis on about actually is the individual that gets ahead rather than the fully a team Reference 8 - 0.05% Coverage • but it only goes so far Reference 9 - 0.50% Coverage There is no talent management that I am aware if you call is talent management, there is no you know there is that there, you know really your career is down to you terms to be the slogan here, “your career is down to you”. Reference 10 - 0.32% Coverage • No, that’s purely up to me what training I go on. I mean you do report it in this annual review, or you can do but it has never been discussed. Reference 11 - 0.27% Coverage • They meant be a discussion about what future training you want to go on but in my experience that is very much up to you. Reference 12 - 0.16% Coverage • Nobody has really said to me I think you ought to go on that training.

		Reference 13 - 0.18% Coverage • I will be the one to say I think I need to go on this training, I will go on it. <Files\\Participant 8 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [0.30% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.30% Coverage so then obviously you set yourself targets to achieve those things you need to do if you want to be a professor. <Files\\Participant 9 - Institution B> - § 3 references coded [1.74% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.72% Coverage • The admission role I am left to my own devises where we do have some senior persons who just contact us but because we do our job well, we do really hear much of those people. Reference 2 - 0.49% Coverage • Is more often just group email we are not really identifies individually for many things is more group communication. Reference 3 - 0.54% Coverage Yes, I think the organisation expectation is more accomplish the job and as long nothing goes wrong, drastically wrong that's it.
Limited/partially developed TM practices.	- Performance related conversations (annual review/discussion)	<Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 3 references coded [2.90% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.31% Coverage

	- Professional role related training (career related) - Corporate practices training (mandatory, induction etc).	• And then we have what I call Personal Development, they have just changed the name that is why I am hesitating. Every year we have something that was until recently when we have Personal Development Review with your line manager and that is an opportunity to at the beginning of the year you set the objective for yourself for the year and you have a discussion with the line manager at the end of the year you review what you have done and your line manager has to say how they think you are doing you know so if you are doing ok, the line manager will say that and write it down so that's important Reference 2 - 1.03% Coverage • Oh, line manager … hmm so the…I have a line manager for personal development, and they will, when I meet with that person, that person will if they have been told will firstly emphasis certain things the institution is interested in. So, for example our school senior management team decided earlier this year that we need more researching income so they have told line managers to tell staff we need to be getting more research income so that will come through that way Reference 3 - 0.56% Coverage • Generally, the personal development review is much more about me as an individual what I am doing and whether or not I have any specific problem, you know do I need support, have I met any barriers or hindrances, what have my achievement been over the year <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [0.36% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.20% Coverage So, as I say is that annual process, which is meant to get you to reflect, there is no hmm Reference 2 - 0.16% Coverage • the annual development review process I think that could be done better. <Files\\Participant 7 - Institution b> - § 4 references coded [3.34% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.44% Coverage

		No, I would say we have but we are that strict. We do a lot of work around the PDR and identify people who have got hmm... Reference 2 - 0.58% Coverage in three ways, obviously the Professional and Development Review (PDR) systems which is the formal system of the university that nobody likes but that is there. Reference 3 - 1.70% Coverage So, most of that is done through the PDR system where we will identify people who really need to be pushed. And that will then be raised by their line manager usually with the director to say this person is really interested and clear about a research track for example, so we will ask allocate them to a mentor to do that. So, it is very much define by what their needs are and I think we are getting that bit right, I think we are definitely getting that bit right Reference 4 - 0.62% Coverage • Other than that, you go through your PDR systems and your manager will notice comments by students and other staff members about you and that will feed into any discussion. <Files\\Participant 8 - Institution B> - § 5 references coded [3.92% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.64% Coverage • Also, we have what is called the PDR process within the university so Professional Development Review (PDR) I think it is called. So each year every member of staff have a review with their line manager where you set out your goals for the year so obviously over the period all the time I have been working every year I have had a review of my career and my goals and my career and what I want to do have been discussed in every single one of those so that is why it was clearly identified in a number of years ago, I was in this particular point, I was in a position to go for professorship if I did these things Reference 2 - 0.33% Coverage

		• And obviously the stages before that if you want to do those things, there is this PGR process to enable you to do that. Reference 3 - 0.37% Coverage • So I think he saw in me, the things I did not see in myself so when I had my PDR, he would say Alison I think you should work toward this. Reference 4 - 0.22% Coverage • I think for me the PDR process have been very very helpful and very facilitative. Reference 5 - 1.36% Coverage • In terms of performance if we talk about professors, professors have review every two years, as I said there is a performance review is not always very clear what to achieve, there is some sort of performance criteria but is not always very clear and we are measured again those criteria and if do above and beyond those criteria then we get a pay raise, we meet the criteria we just stay on the same pay and if don't meet the criteria we get told off and to do better but you certainly don't get pay raise. *Training and Development* <Files\\Participant 2 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.18% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.18% Coverage • They are lots of statutory ones, you have things like interviewing, and research ethics and things like that. <Files\\Participant 3 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.51% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.51% Coverage

		• You might need to take the Equality and Diversity Training before you sit on the Employment panel. Those are the kind of compulsory training you have to do. <Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 4 references coded [3.42% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.18% Coverage • How long, how long a list should I give you (he laughs). Hmm staff gets induction course which gives them an overview of everything, you know teaching, learning, ethics, research, administration, Hmmm the University of Salford when they come, hmmm there is training available for online teaching, training available for supervising doctorial research students, there is training available for using the software for application and all of the applicant systems, there are available for how to run programme boards and that kind of things. Reference 2 - 0.79% Coverage • There is training available for research methods, there are training available for research bidding, there are training available for research writing, there is even training available for management, particularly intermediate and senior levels of management, so that's just a short summary of whatever that is there so yes there is a lot of training available. Reference 3 - 0.43% Coverage • In fact my colleague joke that I have been to all the training that have been offered by the university. I haven't but I did go to a lot of trainings in the first ten years of my time at Salford. Reference 4 - 1.02% Coverage • Hmm well I think the fact that all of these opportunities is available, is positive quality of the university and I know I can look for that training if I need it and that support so the availability is a positive factor to continue to work at Salford. So I know if I need training on this I can find it if they got it. And I can go to it and be ok. So I think it is very positive in that regard. I may not go now too much of it but is good to know that it is there. <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [3.95% Coverage]

		Reference 1 - 2.77% Coverage • Too much to list really. I mean one of the really really good strength of the university here is Staff Development Unit. So pretty much anybody can get develop on anything they feel like. You know Time management, difficult conversations, Leadership, Finance, Financial Management, Recruitment and Selection, you know you name it. There is very general, generic kind of development you can get within sort of specific development focus on different types of research, teaching, how to I mean all those things I mean basically anything. Reference 2 - 1.18% Coverage • Hmmm we gather them at the end of the annual performance review process. Eliciting training needs is part of performance review. And we have the training needs as part of the performance review and work out how to deliver them. <Files\\Participant 7 - Institution b> - § 4 references coded [2.30% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.28% Coverage All the university ones, we also run programmes for staff training, we call them the Wednesdays event. We do them Wednesday afternoons just for an hour. And is as a result of the staff asking us if some development could have so we have them in everything ranging from how the finance of the university work because some people have no idea to pedagogy Reference 2 - 0.72% Coverage New ways of teaching, stuff from the library, how to deal with complaints, how to deal with complements, we utilise a lot of the work with the OD teams in the central university so quality assurance Reference 3 - 0.21% Coverage So that is what we have on top of the university courses. Reference 4 - 0.09% Coverage To attend training courses

<Files\\Participant 8 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [1.44% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.44% Coverage

> We have formal process within the school, if you want to go for conference, if you want to go on a training programme. There is a process you need to follow, there is a form you need to fill in, and there is a committee to say why you want to go, how is going to affect your career, how it's going to impact on the school, what it is going to contribute to and then a committee will divide if they are going to pay for you or you can go but you fund it yourself or something like that so there are mechanism you can tap into to do that.

<Files\\Participant 9 - Institution B> - § 8 references coded [7.92% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.39% Coverage

- The university puts a lot of activities on. The problem we have got I don't know, is that we don't have the time to go to them or the capacity to go to them. So, it might be a full day or two full days or it might be in a lunch hour down the road when we are trying to swizz tutorials in because our students don't have all summer off.

Reference 2 - 0.97% Coverage

- Our students only have six weeks holiday a year, 6 to 7 weeks. So, they are always around, or we are always dealing with something which is very different to other courses, so we don't have the capacity to go off to a training sessions.

Reference 3 - 0.67% Coverage

- So, although there are a lot of things on like help to get your work published you can't actually fine the time to go to them so there is a problem there as well.

Reference 4 - 0.68% Coverage

- HEA (Health Education Academy) runs different workshop on how to improve the student experience. It took two days. How you can make it easier. That was a full day.

		Reference 5 - 1.51% Coverage • There is earlier career researching group. I can't get, I have joined them, but I can't get to any of the meetings, and they are asking volunteers to be on different groups they are linked with, I don't have the capacity to that. So, they are there especially if it relates to research, but they are not accessible by us a lot of the time because we are just so busy. Reference 6 - 0.79% Coverage • Is mainly I think to tick the university boxes such as for the ref in the future if you have the research framework and different elements in relation to meeting the university goals I think? Reference 7 - 0.68% Coverage • I think the objective is to tick the university boxes to show they are putting them on but whether the staff attend or not is a different matter completely. Reference 8 - 1.22% Coverage • Hmm… the only one was the external one there, Health Education Academy. And they came back to us again and again for a bit more feedback and it was things like have you managed to make changes we discussed you know like, and everyone is like no we have not had chance but in-house stuff nothing. <Files\\Participant 1 - Institution A> - § 3 references coded [2.00% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.02% Coverage • No idea, I don't really know. But I know one thing, If really want to go for PGCE I could but all those things that might develop my career I can pick off the shelve and engage with but part of it for me is firstly is it the best use of my time to do a full PGCE at 58 I am not sure I am busy learning how to do what I am doing at the moment well to think about progress further. <Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [0.44% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.44% Coverage

		• They only know this people have done the training we hope that things have got better because it will become very complicated to do that to identify the effectiveness of training on academic performance. <Files\\Participant 2 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.52% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.52% Coverage • Very high I suppose. I deeply respected the fact that the university respected me and had to send me as their representative and let me stay there for two years rather than 1 year even though we were not going to make a lot of money selling degrees to IBM so as it shows if wasn't a long time industry anyway. <Files\\Participant 1 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [1.40% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.96% Coverage • So it doesn't registered with anybody. All that need to happen is that on my CV I have got a paper published in at ISRPM (International Society of Research and Public Management) in Prague whenever in 2014 or something it was. But it doesn't register, there is no sort of secret file on me (mentioned his name), is another ticking of box, it doesn't happen. Reference 2 - 0.44% Coverage • They don't f******* care about what I am doing in Prague and why should they. I wouldn't, I wouldn't care about me that much I would just let them get on with it. <Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 2 references coded [1.23% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.63% Coverage • They are at one level because many of these things now you are asked to evaluate how they were when you finish them, was it useful, what we could have done better. So yes, they are concern and they measure it that way. And they will also ask for general feedback on how things have worked Reference 2 - 0.60% Coverage

		• but they don't have any mechanism for actually monitoring it and tracking it by which I mean they don't follow academic staff to look for what training they have taken and then see if that training has significant, measurable significant impact on their career development.
Individualised/Ad hoc career development practices.	- Self-driven career development - Individual opportunities (training programmes, funding) - Informal learning (on the job) - Constraints on self-development (time, funding etc).	*Self-driven career development* <Files\\Participant 1 - Institution A> - § 7 references coded [6.38% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.34% Coverage • I used to go more of those things I use to present papers in Prague and Vienna and then it just stopped, and I don't know why so, is my responsibility as much as anything else. Is certainly not the responsibility of the head of group although every year we have a formal chat about my career opportunities then I say I am too busy learning the roles of being a lecturer to be worried about advancing beyond that I still have a lot of work to do to learn to be better in what I am doing at the moment Reference 2 - 0.19% Coverage • They are not you might have gathered that by now. It's all up to you. Reference 3 - 1.49% Coverage • Not really. Hmm…Why… I don't think is, is not what your topic is about, the mere fact that it is individualised and not institutionalised and there is no support can leave you in limbo and there isn't any really much of it down to you, if I was to go back to the place I worked in London (An institute), there will be an expectation of progression based on ability and achievement and structured support for you to do that and in a short space of time, 6 years I became one of the management team of the institution (The Tavistock institute, London). Reference 4 - 1.03% Coverage • The level of autonomy that you have is a sort of indication that is up to you to sort out your own career development so part of it is my fault because I haven't and I don't see the clear blue water of space in front of me where I could actually introduce things that will be purely for my own career development unless I get this sabbatical because it just come at you, you know.

		Reference 5 - 1.04% Coverage • So not really satisfying but some of it is down to this expectation that it is up to you. So opportunities are there but perhaps knowledge of them, the ability of them, you know I can go up to a conference at Harvard next year I have an allowance of £2000 to spend on what I like as long is within reasonable boundaries, it never get spent. I might obviously order three books per year. Reference 6 - 0.93% Coverage • I don't see in the last how many years, how many years is it, 8 years that have got in my career that career development is a serious issue with me. It sort of ends here, factoid and I am fine with that. I did all my challenges in my 20s and 30s. I got my PhD box A no corrections, fantastic piece of work and everything was down hell after that. Reference 7 - 0.36% Coverage • Personally, I will go back to possible thing I have said earlier that is probably down to the individual to manage themselves more. <Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [0.35% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.35% Coverage • For me is to make, well to maintain a level of productivity both in teaching and research and hopefully to continue to improve that quality as things move forward <Files\\Participant 2 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [1.22% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.74% Coverage • Is change over the years. It's now up to you. There were some which were for to develop the individual. For example, the university allowing me to go for year to a Crebbin full time in Belgium. That one year was with arm side big investment, risk investment and my personal development, it paid off I am luck and I emerged a

		much more international, much more sophisticated, city wise person because I worked inside very major companies as important being as amazon or somebody else now. Reference 2 - 0.48% Coverage • So you can say they have the door they opened it they let me go through it hmm and they let me stay another year which city and my family and financial circumstances and the Israel one was a good investment learning global business near the very top and helping to train its best people. <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 5 references coded [2.90% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.84% Coverage • It really depends on what you mean, in terms of personal development then there are some courses here I have been on some of them over the years some of which is quite useful most of them aren't that useful in that the courses I tend to cover are more specialist courses or the particular types of research I am doing hmm but I have had some opportunities to go on some of those Reference 2 - 0.50% Coverage • I have gone to some courses as I say you feel limited because you have to ask every time even if it is £5 you have to ask for it like a book they will most say yes as it happens, but you feel in my case demeaned by doing that. Reference 3 - 0.36% Coverage • In terms of career development there isn't really, there isn't really anything for me I don't think the organisation provides to support career development such. Reference 4 - 0.48% Coverage • Is probably about having a good proposal so I have written some which weren't successful, so you could say I think I am quite good at writing proposals, you could say that I could perhaps develop in that area

		Reference 5 - 0.71% Coverage • I think they could, I think there is training now, there is a bit more training, a bit more should we call it quality assurance, I think they need to continue to do that and to improve, make sure CDR (Career Development Review) are of better standard I think that would be good. I think those are the two things really. *Personal development* <Files\\Participant 5 - Institution A> - § 3 references coded [2.70% Coverage] Reference 2 - 2.27% Coverage Not very because they are narrowly defined because it is research led university so for those staff who are more of a teaching focus if they can feel there is though there is much in terms of career development. Reference 3 - 0.22% Coverage Not that interested. <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [1.82% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.08% Coverage • What matter to me in terms of my career right now is the support that I get from senior colleagues most senior colleagues I would say so that, knowing the time I am doing the right things for the organisation Reference 2 - 0.74% Coverage • know that what I am doing is valued by the organisation and fit with the organisational strategy. I suppose that is the most important thing. <Files\\Participant 7 - Institution b> - § 2 references coded [2.41% Coverage]

		Reference 1 - 1.81% Coverage • We will move beyond and say can we bring somebody as a teacher fellow and develop them, can we bring in clinical skill teacher and develop them within the next year or two, so we start them at lower grade but then pushing them forward, getting them unto training courses, getting them, unto various qualifications, if they need so that enhance their work and then they will be in a better position. So in away what we are trying to do if we can is to beginning to grow the next generation of staff. Reference 2 - 0.60% Coverage they are move onto this academic career framework which will kind of be there to help people get things through but I am not quite sure yet that it is at that stage <Files\\Participant 8 - Institution B> - § 3 references coded [1.47% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.56% Coverage All the ideas will go on a Career Plan, obvious we a big kind of organisation we have a new structure in our school at the moment and within the new structure I kind of have a new role in that new structure. Reference 2 - 0.26% Coverage • I am perfectly satisfied but I think that is because I have taken opportunities as they come up. Reference 3 - 0.66% Coverage • I think there are things there and I think there are people to talk to. I think I am kind of opportunistic, I don't plan, I didn't plan my career, apart from saying in 10 years' time I want to retire is the only time I have ever planned my career <Files\\Participant 9 - Institution B> - § 3 references coded [3.64% Coverage]

		Reference 1 - 0.35% Coverage • My career development I would like to be able to do some writing, publications, PhD. Reference 2 - 0.66% Coverage So probably not managed well I would think in view of the fact that I have expressed an interest in it. So, perhaps not as well managed as it could have been. Reference 3 - 2.63% Coverage • I suppose in the minute not because the other option is Senior Lecturer which you may have spoken to other people about. Senior Lecturer you have to tick lots of boxes to become a Senior Lecturer I have no capacity to do that at this point and the demands they put on the Senior Lecturers are just as ridiculous as they are putting on the Lecturers. So at the minute I just have to be alright where I am until I decide where I am going to go if I want to change job, change university, but just not sure. I actually do really like my job but they are, what you are asking me are the little things that are regaling me at the minute so. <Files\\Participant 1 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.92% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.92% Coverage I particularly love, one of the things is that, there is a lot of informal career development just through your competence increasing by doing the job itself, you know this undergraduate programme I am on, is a bit scary because is a bit new so is another opportunity for me to spread my experts and wings with a new different set of people. <Files\\Participant 7 - Institution b> - § 1 reference coded [0.97% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.97% Coverage And the third thing is being on the Executive, is about being there and say if you want talk, informal meeting, informal coaching and informal support, mirroring, what we do and actually saying you are doing well, keep at it because some people just find it difficult.

		Constraints on self – development (Time, funding, etc.) <Files\\Participant 1 - Institution A> - § 6 references coded [4.47% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.84% Coverage • What I would like to do is more research but I haven't time to write any bids, you know proposal to get funding therefore nothing has dropped in my lap. So, I am also taking advantage next year of study leave, sabbatical for six months so that I can write up some of the research I have done sitting on the shelve. Reference 2 - 0.27% Coverage • Time, time to do what I want to do rather than what I have to do that's why I am going on sabbatical. Reference 3 - 1.31% Coverage • Time, ability to manage time to do those things that will develop my career. You could argue that the experience of the years I have been a lecturer and also to certain extend the years previous to when I change over contract is career currency and is valued but the publications is an objective concrete example of your ability to be part of the academic community and is very hard to that when you have a teaching load that will probably take four out of five days out of your week. Reference 4 - 1.03% Coverage • Therefore, part of it is just space and time to think and I only read books when I have to, and this is ridiculous. I have a lot of them in the shelve, some of them are still in the cellophane, they are there just in case I need them, they are not there to read fully and that is one of the simplest forms of career development just gaining knowledge and you don't just have the time. Reference 5 - 0.52% Coverage • I am going out on these days and that must be approved by our head of division. Of course she is going to approve it, you know she doesn't have enough time to do the things she's got to do.

		Reference 6 - 0.50% Coverage • I know I could probably go to 12 conferences a year if I want to, if I have the time, the door is open for them through greater opportunities, hmm… but I don't have the time to take it. <Files\\Participant 2 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.36% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.36% Coverage • the university wouldn't have allowed me enough time and rope to educate myself overtime in mathematics which is finally my greatest pleasure in the research I have being doing with maths in the last 10 years or so. <Files\\Participant 3 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.22% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.22% Coverage Well, yes and no. I mean, I mainly at the moment I use my own time. <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 3 references coded [0.81% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.13% Coverage • The university doesn't allow enough time for that to happen. Reference 2 - 0.33% Coverage • Again, there is no time allowance to do that I am expected to somehow bring in income but not to spend any time to do that so that is very difficult. Reference 3 - 0.35% Coverage

		• The other things is to give people time. If you expect people to publish to need to give them time to write in view we are not given the opportunity to write <Files\\Participant 5 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.42% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.42% Coverage • And time off for sabbatical study leaves. <Files\\Participant 7 - Institution b> - § 1 reference coded [0.13% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.13% Coverage • Perhaps have some extra study leaves *Funding* <Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 3 references coded [2.32% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.74% Coverage • Hmm the one area where I think I feel I am a bit limited is because the university does not have a lot of money to support research networking, and is very important for your research career to be able to organise meeting or bring in high profile speakers for projects you are working on and …….. doesn't have a lot of money for that. Reference 2 - 0.58% Coverage • That is just the nature of the institution and so in that sense some of the important work that can go on to build an institution's research profile and help individuals researchers like me maintain their profile that money isn't available and so we can't do that. Reference 3 - 1.01% Coverage

		• Hmm and that's the, I think the only structural limitation that I can find really that one. And is not a particular line manager. Is just that the funds aren't available and so that is the way it is. You compare with universities like Oxford, Cambridge, Manchester, they can organise international seminar fly in five (5) very high profile scholars and they will get a large attendance and a lot of attentions we don't just have that kind of money at ………… <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [1.40% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.40% Coverage Hmmm …. that's difficult. Hmm I don't feel particularly constrained in management. I feel but they are budgetary constraints which influence what you can do in terms of recruitment and retention and that's
Explanations for the way TM is operationalised	- Culture of academia (traditions) - Nature of role - a range of distinct aspects to being an academic - Structure of HEIs and profession itself - Differences in HEI types - Lack of consultation and limited employee involvement - Top-down management style - Structural barriers - Indirect exclusive TM - Inclusive TM - Heavy workload - Performance management and development review - Anti-collegial culture.	<Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 6 references coded [5.25% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.91% Coverage • In teaching the distinction are mainly made through students' feedback, and so teachers are evaluated by what they call module evaluation questionnaires which students are allowed to towards the end of the course. Hmmm teaching programme are evaluated by the national students' survey but that's not at individual level and of course some, there are prizes or recognitions or merit for being an outstanding teacher which the university will award from time to time which recognise particularly good work in that area but that's how that happen. • In relations to research you know people who manage to obtain more research funding, who get more publications out, in high quality journals they are going to be given more recognition for their research more time in their workload for that and so those things lead to some differentiation in terms of the quality of the work. Reference 2 - 1.22% Coverage • Would it be ethical to do that…hmmm? I think it will depend on your philosophy of institutional climate and organisation. So, there is quite a strong sense in the University of …………………… which is share across all UK universities that people should be rewarded specifically on their individual performance so you will difference in academic level, lecturer, senior lecturer, at professorial level there is even a difference in the amount of salary is awarded according to what research income, how many publications, how many PhD students and so on and so forth.

Reference 3 - 0.38% Coverage

- Here at ……………….., there is more of a sense that you should not, they have to be recognition, there ought to be recognition of some difference in the level of performance ok.

Reference 4 - 0.51% Coverage

- And the recognition is partly through institutional mechanisms such as what workload you are given for research or for teaching, things like merit for teaching, things like promotions, and for professors' even salaries you know so.

Reference 5 - 0.85% Coverage

- Do I think is ethical hmmm you know actually, I prefer the older system where everybody at the same level earn the same amount, because I see so many colleagues who are so worried about who is getting what out of the organisation and is somebody getting more than me and those tensions, they are not necessary very good for cooperation and collaboration and for individual wellbeing either.

Reference 6 - 0.38% Coverage

- So, I can understand the individualistic ethics here at university of ……………………., my own sought of preference from previous experience is for a more egalitarian kind of ethic.

<Files\\Participant 2 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [0.65% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.17% Coverage

- The university was that poor in developing talent in those days (he laughs), it wouldn't happen now.

Reference 2 - 0.48% Coverage

		• if you think you are managing a very structured and definite situation, you have a very narrow set of objectives which some people at the university like to manage that way the plain fact is that if the world changes an half and the ridicule your policy is not going to be a good thing. <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [1.63% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.95% Coverage • There is more of that now in that the university dose now provide a sort of training events around let's say promotion, about what they are looking for, what criteria and so on, those sort of opportunities didn't exist before, and what should I say, there were written criteria which you could look at but the application and criteria was somewhat different so actually there was hmm I think is probably still the same in theory Reference 2 - 0.68% Coverage we do provide a few things like a bit of guidance on promotion, we provide training opportunities, there are some training opportunities, although as I say some of them I got to go and beg to be funded for them I can't just say I have got my allowance for this year so I can go and do that course so here <Files\\Participant 1 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.83% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.83% Coverage • The other level of that is that we have a Head of Group and is a revolving role amongst the professors and every year I will sit down with whoever is the head of the group and make plan for the following year in terms of what I will like to do but it end up being a conversation of what I am expected to do. <Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [0.47% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.47% Coverage • Yes, we have three meetings a year with our line managers, start of the year to set objectives, middle of the year to see how things are going and end of the year to see how is gone and what you want to do next year.

		Inclusive or Exclusive TM <Files\\Participant 1 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [1.26% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.26% Coverage • I would like to say so. It just means, it just brings the question, why are you thinking within the academic community that I work in, it is a prerequisite. You have to have the ability to argue and debate with your students on a level that they expect to have a great deal of background knowledge in a certain area and be able to express it eloquently, so it is meaningful to people on the receiving end. I think it is a prerequisite that gets find out in interview. <Files\\Participant 2 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.12% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.12% Coverage • Pretty well, there is nobody here who isn't not talented, I would say. <Files\\Participant 3 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.66% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.66% Coverage • No, we assume that all staff, everybody we recruit is capable of going up to the level of professor, it doesn't really mean that actually happens with everybody because lots of things happens along the way <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 3 references coded [1.10% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.28% Coverage • So, in term of the ability to become better academics well here everybody can improve so there are two aspect to this isn't it. Reference 2 - 0.06% Coverage

		• Everybody is got talent here Reference 3 - 0.75% Coverage • We have a lot of relative old experience staff like me so I am 55 but that will be typical of people working here with that sort of age, so we do have talent we have be working here quite a long time or working in academia quite a long time in our particular group which is about twenty of us here in this part of the business school <Files\\Participant 3 - Institution A> - § 6 references coded [2.76% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.54% Coverage • I don't. I don't particularly like this term talent, so personally I wouldn't use. Everybody has some talents, so it implies that some people have talent and others don't. Reference 2 - 0.37% Coverage • I don't like it as if Talent applies to certain group of people and not to others, I am sorry everybody has talents Reference 3 - 0.50% Coverage • I don't like the term as we manage the talent and that means the other people are defined as lacking talent right. That is why I am objecting to the term. Reference 4 - 0.11% Coverage • Obviously, everybody have a talent Reference 5 - 0.37% Coverage • But this notion that we can define a group of people as talent and others lacking talent I find a bit objectionable.

		Reference 6 - 0.87% Coverage • I wouldn't actually like to call the person who do like writing as being not talented they probably more talented in lots of different things to have get where they have got to even if they for example didn't like writing probably show that they have the talent to do it <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.54% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.54% Coverage • Someone that I have just supervised, he is looking to do a sort of research straight policy, I think he's better in research straight policy than pure research. So, I think you can see that people have different talents perhaps different scopes <Files\\Participant 5 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [1.10% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.60% Coverage • Generally, in the society everyone has something to offer. Reference 2 - 0.50% Coverage • Well, because everybody has something to offer <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.15% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.15% Coverage • I think everyone has talent <Files\\Participant 8 - Institution B> - § 2 references coded [1.51% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.86% Coverage

- I think it will depend on your role, you know the academic role are split so effectively you have teaching role, you have research role, there is leadership roles, and there are management roles. You can be talented in anyone of those things but is unlikely that you are going to be talented in all four of those things.

Reference 2 - 0.66% Coverage

- I think is in their own way. I think everybody is an individual. I will say to my children you need to run your own race**.** I think everybody has got a talent; some people might have more than one talent, but I think everybody is good at something.

<Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.28% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.28% Coverage

- So in term of the ability to become better academics well here everybody can improve so there are two aspect to this isn't it.

<Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 7 references coded [4.23% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.17% Coverage

- And your criteria in the first place probably discriminate against some people

Reference 2 - 0.24% Coverage

- So, I will say is probably very dangerous to have something that is exclusive in terms of developing people

Reference 3 - 0.72% Coverage

- People should have opportunities to develop I think that's the ideal so that all people should have the opportunity later and how did they don't end up progressing again there could be lot of reasons for that which might not have something to do with talent it could have to do with other reasons why they don't progress.

Reference 4 - 0.22% Coverage

- I mean you can…I think you can classify and categories people, but I think is unlikely to be fair.

Reference 5 - 0.88% Coverage

- the hidden biases that people have so you know things like structural inequality and so on so you know you could take... you could say actually talent let's call it talent management could be a way of addressing that, so you could have, I know it is illegal but you could have you can't have positive discrimination but you can have positive action, you can have positive action to help to so for

Reference 6 - 0.70% Coverage

- Example typically high levels of academia are like in most male dominated organisations, white dominated, I don't know about other aspects so you could say actually we need to take action to address that we are going to particularly support women to progress so that we have the females' ones like that here.

Reference 7 - 1.30% Coverage

- Hmm to support people from minority community to progress and so on, so that could be perhaps around, that could mean something different for them so I suppose is you can be selective in that sense but I don't see it to be about exclusion is about trying to enable everybody to progress recognising that there are barriers for people and so trying to remove barriers for people so if it is viewed in that way I can understand that rather than something which is about selecting some people to progress and the other people not to progress in some way I don't think that will be right

<Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [1.70% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.61% Coverage

- No, no, no, I mean if you mean in sort of label people no. That's interesting well I am not aware of that in a thing.

		Reference 2 - 1.09% Coverage • I think one have to be very, very careful that one is using the right sort of metrics over the right period of time to identify, I would say exceptionally talented people, I supposed to talented to non-talented. <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 7 references coded [4.23% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.17% Coverage • And your criteria in the first place probably discriminate against some people Reference 2 - 0.24% Coverage • So, I will say is probably very dangerous to have something that is exclusive in terms of developing people Reference 3 - 0.72% Coverage • People should have opportunities to develop I think that's the ideal so that all people should have the opportunity later and how did they don't end up progressing again there could be lot of reasons for that which might not have something to do with talent it could have to do with other reasons why they don't progress. Reference 4 - 0.22% Coverage • I mean you can…I think you can classify and categories people, but I think is unlikely to be fair. Reference 5 - 0.88% Coverage • The hidden biases that people have so you know things like structural inequality and so on so you know you could take... you could say actually talent let's call it talent management could be a way of addressing that, so you could have, I know it is illegal but you could have you can't have positive discrimination but you can have positive action, you can have positive action to help to so for Reference 7 - 1.30% Coverage

		• Hmm to support people from minority community to progress and so on, so that could be perhaps around, that could mean something different for them so I suppose is you can be selective in that sense but I don't see it to be about exclusion is about trying to enable everybody to progress recognising that there are barriers for people and so trying to remove barriers for people so if it is viewed in that way I can understand that rather than something which is about selecting some people to progress and the other people not to progress in some way I don't think that will be right <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [1.70% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.61% Coverage • No, no, no, I mean if you mean in sort of label people no. That's interesting well I am not aware of that in a thing. Reference 2 - 1.09% Coverage • I think one have to be very, very careful that one is using the right sort of metrics over the right period of time to identify, I would say exceptionally talented people, I supposed to talented to non-talented. *Lack of consultation* <Files\\Participant 3 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [0.47% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.26% Coverage Lack of consultations with senior staff since 2013 and that has affected everybody Reference 2 - 0.20% Coverage That was done without any consultations with senior staff so. <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [1.70% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.70% Coverage

		• Oh, oh definitely so if I did not feel appreciated valued or thought that I could not support decisions of senior colleagues, the university senior management I would not have the commitment to the organisation that I have. I feel very strongly committed to the organisation actually and is because of the leadership. *Heavy workload* <Files\\Participant 1 - Institution A> - § 5 references coded [4.32% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.26% Coverage • Possible because I have been quite heavily over worked, I haven't taken all the opportunities I should have taken. I get email everyday about conferences and if it was up to me I probably go to more of them, I probably have gone to more because I am a member of BAM (British Academy of Management) they run workshop every month some of them are useless to me but I use to go more of those things I use to present papers in Prague and Vienna and then it just stopped Reference 2 - 1.39% Coverage • the thing is that the next step up for me would be senior lecturer and those people have been appointed to the role of senior lectureship seems to do ok, those people who get promoted to the role of senior lectureship position have hell to pay because it is overwhelming the amount of administration, if you are a Programme Director and I thought I am not actually that interested because it looks terrible the pressure and long hours you have to put in when you are senior because I think that's the tipping point Reference 3 - 0.39% Coverage • I think the workload is ok, is a bit heavy but is enough to get through. Is not impossible. At senior level, senior lectureship it looks worse. Reference 4 - 0.74% Coverage • I have been really focused on just the day to day and I think this is quite common, lecturer overload is really quite common, and I am not saying I am terrible overloaded but there is little space to think about your career development and that's why we have sabbaticals.

		Reference 5 - 0.55% Coverage • Is like water, you know you stand in a pool of water or two feet of water and try and keep your feet dry. It just flows in and no matter where what stage of the year you are at, there is always something. <Files\\Participant 3 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [1.90% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.58% Coverage I think there were problems where people think they had too much work to do to meet the research expectations, so there is a mismatch between what is expected and what is possible Reference 2 - 1.32% Coverage To be honest no, I mean I have always done too much I mean and the problem what happens is that academics tend to carry on doing too, too much because the things they will have to drop are the most interesting and important things so Hmmm but you are developing things outside, your impact outside which is not mandatory but is the bit that is slightly interesting but universities they support more than they <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [0.29% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.14% Coverage • I don't know if I can attend them or not, because I am too busy Reference 2 - 0.15% Coverage • So I think what the university demands is unfair and unrealistic. <Files\\Participant 5 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.27% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.27% Coverage

		Not to run big department. <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [2.42% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.69% Coverage • And also discuss ok if you take this on what would we need to take away from you so that you don't have too many, so much work, yeah. Reference 2 - 1.73% Coverage • Well, I think is ok, I think is ok because the thing that is there is very rarely binary in that way, is very rarely not all the staff feel the same about something and the management feel a different way about something hmmm you know whether workload or whatever is it is usually some staff are ok with it and minority aren't usually. <Files\\Participant 8 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [0.09% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.09% Coverage • There is too much expected of us. <Files\\Participant 9 - Institution B> - § 9 references coded [13.90% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.14% Coverage • because we don't have the capacity to write well because we are teaching mass numbers and we are increasing our numbers forever which is why I can't build on my talent or even get going on writing because I am too busy teaching, prepping, doing admission and everything else. Reference 2 - 1.11% Coverage

		• The amount of additional work to recruit these students to the university is excessive but the university target are income generation and success, and if you don't bring the right students in you don't, you don't have income generation and you don't have the success. Reference 3 - 1.77% Coverage Because we are taking so many extra students on now because we have all increased our numbers and we are not taking extra staff our workload has impacted and because our workload is greater we are missing things and we are not being able to give very little thing the attention it need because we have got so many on that go at once and that does cause a problem. So it impact on the quality of the work we are, I am producing. Reference 4 - 1.40% Coverage • I am fully committed if not over committed to this institution and I have actually realised that I am burning out so in getting retired and I actually need to easy/hiss up a bit because I am just constantly checking emails at home, at weekend, at night and I can't keep up with my workload and if I keep on going like this is not healthy. Reference 5 - 1.70% Coverage • So, I have actually just got to make this resolution recently that I am got to put them down and just have a massive email instead of trying to constantly clear them up all the time. Something is got to give with me now because I am working extremely hard and nobody everybody is just giving us more and more and not giving us the additional staff. So is impacting on my motivation really almost health really. Reference 6 - 2.63% Coverage • I suppose in the minute not because the other option is Senior Lecturer which you may have spoken to other people about. Senior Lecturer you must tick lots of boxes to become a Senior Lecturer I have no capacity to do that at this point and the demands they put on the Senior Lecturers are just as ridiculous as they are putting on the Lecturers. So, at the minute I just must be alright where I am until I decide where I am going to go if I want to change job, change university, but just not sure. I do really like my job, but they are, what you are asking me are the little things that are regaling me at the minute so. Reference 7 - 1.25% Coverage

		So that's why we run let's get people publish let get them… hmmm there is some demands from lecturers but then they can't get to them because the workload, so some people have requested them, I like them you have I said I will like to do those things but I find out that I have got no time to do it so. Reference 8 - 0.85% Coverage If we continue to be overload with workload and keep increasing number which is what is happening, and we haven't received an adequate financial reward and staff aren't in place then I would have moved on. Reference 9 - 2.05% Coverage So if nothing changes I won't be here, if something does change then I will still be here. Hmm… I have even looked at… my friend worked at ……….. College and she keeps asking me to apply for jobs there and I know is not the same financial reward but if the staff I have not really look at staff circumstances, staff reward and staff numbers or anything like that but I will potentially move for less money to be in a less stressful overloaded staff environment that we are in at the minute. *Career progression structure* <Files\\Participant 8 - Institution B> - § 4 references coded [2.76% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.28% Coverage There is a career progression structure that academics should know about, is promoted by the university. Reference 2 - 0.70% Coverage So, if you are working in the academia, I think is your responsibility to find out what the actual structure is but all universities will have a structure and a means of progressing up through that structure, so I have literary progress up through that structure. Reference 3 - 0.89% Coverage I started off as a Research Fellow, then I got a job here as a lecturer, progress to senior lecturer, you look at what you need to achieve for those things for your career, you achieve them, you are reviewed then

		you go up, and when you get to a professor, it is slightly different, you go through I external review process as well. Reference 4 - 0.89% Coverage In terms of my PGR Director role, again I have been working within the school, I did my PhD when I was working within the school, I shared an office with a colleague who was a PGR Director and I kind of learnt how to do PGR, while sharing an office with her. When she moves on to another role, I was natural progression for that role. <Files\\Participant 3 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [1.99% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.46% Coverage They need to be made to understand that this is doable, you have the capacity but you need these more publication so that will take probably a number of years to achieve that. You need to identify what is the criteria to achieve promotion. For example, not having complete supervising a PhD student to completion can be used as a reason not to promote somebody so it is important people need to know and made aware that they should take on PhD students. Reference 2 - 0.52% Coverage Therefore, making people aware of what the criteria are, that is slightly wider than they think which is just publications so that is how I will support people. <Files\\Participant 8 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [0.86% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.86% Coverage I think there need to be some way of looking across but then you kind of know that is the game you are coming into and that is what you are going to be assessed on in looking across when you going to be appointed as professor you know those are the kind of things you need to hit/meet to be appointed in the first case.

Explanation for the conceptualisation of talent as usefulness and relevant.	- Very strong research performance and ability to communicate same. - Quality of publications, ref-able, counting citation and impact on the world - Usefulness of cleverness - Exceptional pedagogical skills. - Experience and gifted in your field - Successful funding application, research projects and publications (being in income) - Self-organisation and administrative skills - Ability and willingness to self-develop, refresh and renew - Ability to develop original ideas and generate new insight - Relevant, fit and match the institution's strategic goals and trajectory focus - Highly committed - Credible as a teacher, researcher, administrator or to the business	<Files\\Participant 2 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [0.73% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.45% Coverage • But whether that cleverness good for all task, whether the cleverness can put in a form the university can need, that people can benefit from, the student can benefit from, in my view a separate question, the person can be talented but yet be useless, that's for sure. Reference 2 - 0.28% Coverage • The plain reality is how you fit in and what you actually do, where you contribute and so forth is much more important than the title and the money or anything else. <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 4 references coded [1.09% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.21% Coverage • I suppose in an applied discipline like mine is also about that knowledge been useful and used Reference 2 - 0.37% Coverage • so is not just necessarily esoteric knowledge but a stuff that actually prove useful in our case Health to help develop better organisation and management and so on. Reference 3 - 0.26% Coverage • So I do think that is important but they call the …I am putting in inverted comma here with my fingers "Impact Agenda" Reference 4 - 0.25% Coverage • but the end of the day I suppose you have to perform and meet the criteria in order to be promoted within here

	- Winning respect for institution.	<Files\\Participant 5 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [1.32% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.58% Coverage And the suit of what they have to offer really and yeah Reference 2 - 0.74% Coverage One who is able to apply those contributions in a classroom setting? <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.68% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.68% Coverage • then they kind of fit with the organisation needs, so hmm it depends on what the post was whether it kind of fit with what we needed <Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 5 references coded [3.43% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.93% Coverage Oh… good question. Well obviously, for me it means that somebody combines several qualities, one is knowledge of specialist area of research, secondly, they have critical and creative skills, so they are not simply repeating stuff, they are creating and critiquing stuff, and thirdly along with that good organisation and communication skills because you need that both in the area of teaching but also in the area of research. Reference 2 - 0.76% Coverage And academic talent thus includes therefore the need to be able to lead or contribute to different teaching and research initiatives because universities are not like for example factory making cars or something

		like that. Each kind of institutions requires knowledge of the work that is going on, knowledge of the people and their personalities so. Reference 3 - 0.48% Coverage Yes academic talent, the most talented academics they are very good teachers, they are very good researchers, but also I think they need to be very good administrators as well or have a good sense of how academia works. Reference 4 - 0.54% Coverage • there is an argument for saying somebody who is, who can combine some of the quality of research and good research and good teaching would be an all-rounder let put it like that, they will be a more talented academic, I am not sorry not talented Reference 5 - 0.72% Coverage • There is this different between people who do specialise in one thing and people who are a bit more all-round let put it like that, they are good in teaching, they are good in research, and they are actually good in contributing to the administration process of both teaching and research, yeah or the bureaucratic process yeah. <Files\\Participant 7 - Institution b> - § 6 references coded [4.32% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.00% Coverage For me it is about student centred, seeing your reason and purpose about giving the students high quality experience and that being your primary focus of what you do. But I think is also about being aware of the environment around you. So, is having an entrepreneurial spirit? Reference 2 - 0.92% Coverage

		Having an entrepreneurial spirit, an enquiry mind, an ability to push limits, push boundaries and places and really suppose for me, what will make somebody talented is that they are change agents, so people that are not afraid of changing the status quo Reference 3 - 0.80% Coverage So that goes back to what I said earlier having that disruptor. Being able to say this is not working anymore or we can try something different. That to me is very keen and clear, that what talent mean for me I think. Reference 4 - 0.67% Coverage they weren’t perfect probably there where people on that list who were a little bit more suited to the job but what she brought was exactly, she brought absolutely enthusiasm for change Reference 5 - 0.60% Coverage That she wouldn't be static, that she would be a disruptor, that she will bring the talent she brought from her current industry which is Health Care into Education Reference 6 - 0.34% Coverage But you know she will bring something of an enthusiasm of that questioning mind so absolutely. <Files\\Participant 8 - Institution B> - § 12 references coded [5.42% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.55% Coverage You need to have demonstrated leadership, and you need to have demonstrated excellence so, that is a kind of role so you do teaching, you do research and you need to demonstrate leadership in those things. Reference 2 - 0.36% Coverage • He will be somebody that have clear ideas, somebody that have clear ideas and very competent in whatever they have been employed to do.

		Reference 3 - 0.22% Coverage • Somebody that will be going above and beyond what they have been contracted to do. Reference 4 - 0.13% Coverage • Somebody that thinks out of the box a little bit. Reference 5 - 0.06% Coverage • Somebody who stands out. Reference 6 - 0.77% Coverage • So, I think is very hard, I think we need a lot of different talents to make an organisation, I don't think we could describe what we want an academic talent to be…it will be a very remarkable person if he was all in one, if you could be a talented teacher, leader, researcher and manger. Reference 7 - 0.38% Coverage • You mean in general? *Yes*. I am sure there are lots of talented academics out there, whether they get the space to achieve that full potential. Reference 8 - 1.02% Coverage • To me I think it is about being the best you can and standing out in whatever you are good at. It would be somebody that stand out in some academic way. So, it could be in terms of their research performance, but it could in terms of their teaching performance, or it might be in a way they demonstrate leadership within the university or within the school or something like that. Reference 9 - 0.13% Coverage

- Hmm… they should be inspirational towards others.

Reference 10 - 0.10% Coverage

- So, if I say is somebody that stands out

Reference 11 - 1.19% Coverage

- For example, if we took research, Then you say a talented researcher, it will somebody that write well, that publishes, high quality papers, that is going to change within discipline what a high quality paper look like, they also do things in a very rigorous way, they should be good in communicating their research to others, so that others go wow that's a really brilliant piece of research and it should just be to those that understand this.

Reference 12 - 0.50% Coverage

- For example, if it was Physics, they should be able to inspire other people and get their message across to other people to understand whatever, bits of physics they are really good at.

<Files\\Participant 9 - Institution B> - § 3 references coded [2.49% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.43% Coverage

- Academic talent to me in a university, my opinion are people who are very academically intelligent, they are doing the PhD, they are progressing, they can write a paper, they can write articles like that rapidly, they just come across as intelligent all the time. It might be a very likened perception but that's how I perceive academic talent.

Reference 2 - 0.38% Coverage

- I think if you can do both, I think if you can do both… I am only visualising it from here

Reference 3 - 0.68% Coverage

		• I think somebody who can balance both very well are probably the top of their group really and teach well and being academically able or research able I suppose. <Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 3 references coded [2.80% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.91% Coverage • I mean here, the university itself has identified there is a teaching trajectory, there is a research trajectory, so one need to know, I can think of people who are outstanding researchers, they are not doing any teaching, they might be good teachers, they might not thinking some cases they might not and there are outstanding teachers who are not doing research and they might not be particular good in research Reference 2 - 0.70% Coverage • Hmm... there can be distinction between people that are more focused on teaching or people who are more focused on research or people who are more focused on the bureaucracy of teaching or the bureaucracy of research within those the distinction around quality, there are distinction in quality which are made sometimes Reference 3 - 1.20% Coverage • In teaching the distinction are mainly made through students' feedback, and so teachers are evaluated by what they call module evaluation questionnaires which students are allowed to towards the end of the course. Hmmm teaching programme are evaluated by the national students' survey but that's not at individual level and of course some, there are prizes or recognitions or merit for being an outstanding teacher which the university will award from time to time which recognise particularly good work in that area but that's how that happen. <Files\\Participant 3 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.61% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.61% Coverage • People who have the capacity not just to do the job as a lecturer but hurry to go on to being a Senior Lecturer and to Professor. So, one is looking for that longer time trajectory potential

		Making a differences <Files\\Participant 1 - Institution A> - § 3 references coded [2.24% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.20% Coverage • The third thin will be making a difference. To help everyone of those people who gives me something to put on my shelve some which you can't probably see but if you wish just look at it, that is the hand of Fatima and is from an Israeli who I coached through a PhD, that was tremendously fulfilling because that person is now got a PhD and his future is different from when he started so that making a different bit of the job is very important. Reference 2 - 0.38% Coverage • I don't want to move; I am happy where I am but the really satisfying thing is seeing people changing and making a difference to those people. Reference 3 - 0.66% Coverage • I will tell you something, I am not going to count them but there are over 15 MSc dissertations over the shelve, they are all supervised by me, and they all passed and that just the ones I have got, that makes a difference, that's ok with me. <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.04% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.04% Coverage • Making a difference <Files\\Participant 8 - Institution B> - § 2 references coded [0.87% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.14% Coverage I would like to say you are told you don't have a job. And it will depend on because with the professorial band there are three bands. Within each band there are different pay scales, there is A, B and C and there

		is an incremented scale within each band. And as you get up the bands the things you must achieve are harder. *Fit with institution* <Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [0.23% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.23% Coverage • I was just thinking about how I will fit in and I am pleased to say I was able to fit in very well so they. <Files\\Participant 2 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.07% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.07% Coverage • but the plain reality is how you fit in <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.38% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.38% Coverage • Is about trying to understand the organisation you are in and how to do well in it and how to work through it, I think that takes a long time here to try to understand it <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [0.57% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.38% Coverage • I will try and find roles that will fit, that would be a good fit for them Reference 2 - 0.19% Coverage • So how well I fit in an organisation

<Files\\Participant 9 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [0.47% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.47% Coverage

- I didn't have lots of expectations other people move for the benefits of the company I move because it suited me.

<Files\\Participant 2 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [1.36% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.70% Coverage

- It is very important that we find particular the stars, the excellent people who will go far, you can always predict who will be but you can detect who is becoming good and really try to help them to learn and develop and understand what is happening to them and make sense of what they are what they are saying and what they do and how the world is responding to it so that they may be more effective in contributing.

Reference 2 - 0.65% Coverage

- The three successful consultancy projects is very much in that area again, they are quite talented people but they are nowhere near the ideal of looking into a company and tear it apart, no ideal of what to look for, no ideal of what to understand during a meeting, how to decode the body language, the comments that they do and don't get from the other side, when they feel uncomfortable.

<Files\\Participant 9 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [0.62% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.62% Coverage

- No is just that your question today relates to things that are affecting me at the minute so is just a very relevant conversation I do like my job.

<Files\\Participant 1 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.17% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.17% Coverage

		• I think non-talented academic staff get find out and don't last. <Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [1.73% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.73% Coverage • I think if somebody has no talent for anything I think the university will has mechanism for reflecting that, if it becomes really, really problematic then they might get to point which the academic or the university employee who is an academic will say you know what this job is not for me I am not getting on very well and there may be occasionally the time when, we have had, since the time I have been in Salford at least once where they had one to reduce the number of academics working in a subject area, they indicate you may have 15 lecturers, the say well we have got 12 posts so you 15 you have to reapply for the 12 posts of course that will a way in which generally, some people just generally be annoyed and leave but others may not be successful but those are rare occasions so. • <Files\\Participant 3 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.24% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.24% Coverage So, I am not saying everybody can be an academic or ought to be an academic. <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 4 references coded [1.26% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.36% Coverage • I will summarise if you are thinking about people who are already in an organisation…It is obvious to me that some people are not well suited to an academic career Reference 2 - 0.10% Coverage • Maybe they want to be bricklayer or something. Reference 3 - 0.29% Coverage

		• To me is obvious that they will be well advised not to pursue an academic career, I don't think academic career is for everyone. Reference 4 - 0.51% Coverage • So one guy I think, he was actually from Saudi Arabia and he has gone back to a government job there I don't think he was well suited to research career. He did a PhD here, but I don't think he was looking to do a research career. <Files\\Participant 5 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.40% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.40% Coverage • Sometimes the job isn't right for them <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [1.63% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.63% Coverage • No, no, I think they are, there will always be people who you recruit who turn out to have less ability or less potentials than you expected, yeah, yeah there will be and actually in Nursing generally there is a relatively lack of high performing academics certainly in research terms, they are very hard to find. <Files\\Participant 9 - Institution B> - § 2 references coded [2.68% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.50% Coverage • I don't feel I am personally. I feel I am a good teacher; I feel I am good practically and I feel I can get information across to people, but I think the university itself (which is probably a further question) focuses on people who can get a doctorate, who can write fabulous papers, rather than all those other skills that keeps the university running smoothly.

		Reference 2 - 1.18% Coverage • No all of them no. No all of them I would say three, perhaps half can write the way I perceive academic talent to be a great writer the other half are more of robust lecturers who can teach well but they still think academia, they still talk about writing papers rather than teaching. *Quality of publication* <Files\\Participant 1 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [1.06% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.06% Coverage • But the ones who really push the boundaries and impress people in terms of the quality of their publications for example are those people who have that intellectual capacity so it is that and not much else whether there is a balance between them whether you ascend what you might call purely academic track or whether you take on administrative roles requires different talent and abilities. <Files\\Participant 2 - Institution A> - § 10 references coded [2.75% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.22% Coverage • What is currently getting published because that is the greatest task, publish or you perish they use to say in the academic journals. Reference 2 - 0.20% Coverage • And in a much-focused way pursue the advancement of the subject, writing successive papers, in the scientific literatures. Reference 3 - 0.35% Coverage • So is a machine for making a career that's the talent that probably is the fastest ways of getting promoted to professor and that is also what the universities probably most wants from most of its academics.

		Reference 4 - 0.12% Coverage • Because universities themselves will be judged by counting publications Reference 5 - 0.18% Coverage • then how they get accepted by larger group in the academic circle side which will be mainly by publication Reference 6 - 0.19% Coverage • the ultimate test will always be they publishing, is their work going through the most rigorous filter then, Reference 7 - 0.22% Coverage • I tick the box about how many recently good publications better than most of my colleagues I discover, so that's a box to tick here Reference 8 - 0.31% Coverage • And they are simple saying good ok, good publications you know, holding up respect for our department and our school and the wider university to some degree, that's as far as it goes. Reference 9 - 0.37% Coverage • now I am still getting academic publication, more than most of my colleagues I think they need the minimum over the next research period, and I already got 5 or 6 which is amazing, which gives the maths guys more than me, Reference 10 - 0.59% Coverage • If I wanted to get academic promotion fast, I would have done more academic writing than do more real work in business and have been looking at business beyond a certain point is not actually improving your

		brain there is a point in which it become a performance set and if you mass produce a performance set that's not the best way to use your time. <Files\\Participant 3 - Institution A> - § 5 references coded [2.60% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.75% Coverage • I would like to go further so it is a question of trying to see behind the publications and to see if somebody that is got original ideas and the commitment to research. That I think it is necessary in research intense universities. Reference 2 - 0.08% Coverage • I have got my publications Reference 3 - 0.64% Coverage We are working in trying to encourage early and mid-career academics to step to take a lead on projects, they have justified concerns whether that takes them away from publications that is the key. Reference 4 - 0.66% Coverage The expectation about publication is more across the school, I mean obviously it helps that we have many people in our institution that are good publishers but in a way that comes under this teaching group Reference 5 - 0.46% Coverage The Divisional Head role makes sure everybody has publications ready for the ref. We help but is not really my responsibility to manage it. <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 3 references coded [0.73% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.26% Coverage

		• when it comes down to it all the rise of it is not important, if you don't have that you are not going to be promoted Reference 2 - 0.39% Coverage • So in terms of getting promotion, I am very clear about what is required to get promotion now that is what is required plus in my case is also something about bring in income Reference 3 - 0.08% Coverage • Well certain types of publications <Files\\Participant 5 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.44% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.44% Coverage publications are considered very important <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.07% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.07% Coverage • Publications <Files\\Participant 8 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [0.70% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.70% Coverage • For example, if we took research, then you say a talented researcher, it will somebody that write well, that publishes, high quality papers, that is going to change within discipline what a high-quality paper look like, they also do things in a very rigorous way <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 5 references coded [1.91% Coverage]

		Reference 1 - 0.29% Coverage • Secondly is even more narrow because they tend to take the journals as a proxy for the quality of the paper and that's just nonsense. Reference 2 - 0.36% Coverage • So, and its what's the word, it pressures people into publishing certain journals irrespective of what is appropriate, so it has various undesirable side effects Reference 3 - 0.26% Coverage • The institution expects from me that I will be ref-able which mean I can be submitted for the next research framework Reference 4 - 0.12% Coverage • these are typically highly regarded journal articles Reference 5 - 0.88% Coverage • As it happens I have those but that's something difficult to control as an individual and the expectation are unrealistic because I as I say we don't have any time for study leave, we actually do have anytime for writing at all in my post yet the expectation is that will somehow come about through funding, that might have applied in the past when a lot of funding was through Research Councils
Accounts of the impact of mentorship	- Informal mentorship, support and mirroring - Input of early academic career advice and intern programme	<Files\\Participant 1 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.84% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.84% Coverage

	- Role of formal mentorship structure - Professional network outside the institution - Important of corridor conversations, encouragement and nurturing - Informal group and close collaboration - Learning from colleagues.	• No, because I didn't expect much anyway, I have been in the universities for a very long time, I know what it is like, is not doggy dog, is not competitive, because you can basically ascend and develop your career with help from potential supportive colleagues and mentors but it's sort of up to you, you know. <Files\\Participant 2 - Institution A> - § 9 references coded [2.88% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.17% Coverage • In the same way an efficient academic is somebody who can smartly identify may be getting good mentors Reference 2 - 0.17% Coverage • Mentorship is extremely important and mutual choice between the person being mentored and the mentor. Reference 3 - 0.03% Coverage • Is partly mentorship Reference 4 - 0.40% Coverage • I suppose wise senior colleague and kind person will have to mentors those below and will want to understand if they are working with the right group or there is somebody else that might be better to work with, with different sort of skills. Reference 5 - 0.56% Coverage • that one word triggered a year or two activities but most of them paid off but he didn't mentor me in a reactive sense but with I insight I can see that it was good advice and it was what I needed few times when I took it really helped me but he didn't push it through, he didn't he just say it then we go away and do something else Reference 6 - 0.35% Coverage • he was a guy who almost everything he said to me in two or three sentences over the years were gold, I ignored it, I didn't benefit, were I took it led me to much more than what I would guess of at that time.

		Reference 7 - 0.56% Coverage • But I didn't get much of mentorship, he never pointed me at research, or sort of gave me a goal of doing research papers, we would have done it, he had quite some research papers, we might have done it, had a few research papers, it was the worst thing, I wouldn't say it is worse, I discovered at one time I might have mentioned it Reference 8 - 0.18% Coverage • Like I said I have never had a strong academic mentor at any point in the first 30, 40 years of my career. Reference 9 - 0.45% Coverage • I mean those are very hard things to do because if you have a mentor that will give you all that you wouldn't want to move beyond them. On the other hand if you need them and if you are not getting them already then nobody is going to be able to read them from the book. <Files\\Participant 3 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.15% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.15% Coverage Every probation have a supervisor and a mentor <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.67% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.67% Coverage • Hmm so let's say I mean what I will need, I mean there are stuff like mentoring programme, there is a mentoring programme you can get a mentor if you like to discuss things with and they can, you know they have more experience and they might be able to advise you about stuff I haven't taken that up. <Files\\Participant 5 - Institution A> - § 3 references coded [2.11% Coverage]

		Reference 1 - 0.24% Coverage Mentoring opportunities and giving, identifying opportunities for them to develop Reference 3 - 1.31% Coverage Signposting them to courses or initiatives they might be involve in which will be learning opportunity and there is a lot. <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 5 references coded [4.03% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.59% Coverage Well, I would say get good mentorship from people who understand nursing academic careers or have academic careers. Reference 2 - 0.20% Coverage I think mentorship is really important. Reference 3 - 0.18% Coverage Hmm I think is probably mentorship Reference 4 - 2.04% Coverage I do quite a lot of formal mentorship as well and the value of formal mentorship I think it is frequently outside your of institution it might even be way back with somebody you wouldn't even, if you do it for a formal scheme, mentorship scheme you get the potential to be mentored by people you wouldn't meet normally in your day to day life who would really give you a different perspective. Reference 5 - 1.03% Coverage

		Hmm I think you need both, but I think is a balance I am very much enjoying people formally who I have nothing to do with within their work life, I don’t even work with them in the same institution. <Files\\Participant 7 - Institution b> - § 2 references coded [1.18% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.51% Coverage She need development you know there is no two ways about it, there is no why she going not need to be developed and need to be mentored well Reference 2 - 0.67% Coverage We will be thinking for some people around coaching and mentoring in a formal way so that people we see as somebody who could bring something to the team, we could think about coaching. <Files\\Participant 1 - Institution A> - § 4 references coded [2.53% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.13% Coverage • Previous experience when I was much younger researcher at Cranfield School of Management, my first proper job after my master’s the experience with my supervisor felt like talent management but wasn’t formally, it was mentorship. So, I have very mix feeling of leaving that institution because I felt somebody was looking after me, but it was a one-on-one relationship because we got on and I worked hard for that person. Reference 2 - 0.89% Coverage • He tried to get me interested in doing a management development work you know teaching consultancy; at that time, I saw myself as a pure psychologist and wasn’t interested in the commercial management spend behind management development, but he was interested in put me on a master’s course in management development. Reference 3 - 0.23% Coverage • But that person recognised something in me whatever it was and wanted to develop me.

Reference 4 - 0.29% Coverage

- You may see pockets of mentorship like have heard of examples but as I say it is very informal one on one.

<Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 3 references coded [2.65% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.64% Coverage

- You know informal advice from trusted senior colleagues or even peers hmm. So I think informal mentorship adds for everyone

Reference 2 - 1.40% Coverage

- I think you get a certain perspective from colleagues but informal mentorship we generally seek out informal mentorship from people we feel is quite comfortable with and already know so I think they are probably quite likely to be people who will challenge us very much.

Reference 3 - 0.61% Coverage

- Well, I didn't really have any formal mentorship really. I have not have formal mentorship so I have only had informal

<Files\\Participant 8 - Institution B> - § 5 references coded [4.06% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.34% Coverage

- So I think you will be good at this or I think you be good at that so he was very good at doing that so one of his expectations was, so one of the things he suggested was I think you will be a good teacher or I think you will be a good lecturer and at the time I was a Researcher and I had a Research contract but he identified that and felt I will make a good teacher then he guided me towards the opportunity so that I can do some lecturing and things like that so I think I have been very fortunate

Reference 2 - 0.52% Coverage

		• Yeah… but not formal mentorship. I have never had any formal mentorship. I don't like formal mentorship. So yes mentorship. It is mentorship really and guidance from others. Informal mentorship. Reference 3 - 0.52% Coverage • I think is a bit of both, individuals should be able to identify what their talents are but in my case I wasn't good at seeing them people have always see things in me which I don't see myself. Reference 4 - 0.92% Coverage • I didn't say when I was 25 that by the time I was 40 I want to be a professor. I have never planned my career in that way. Is only when I get to certain points I get people say to me why don't you do this, or you are almost there if you do this, this. Then I will say ok I like that idea, I will go and develop myself to take that opportunity. Reference 5 - 0.75% Coverage • I do it informally actually. There is a mentorship scheme within the school. Some people have signed up to the formal mentorship scheme. I prefer to mentor people informally. So, if I have a colleague who come to talk to me about something then I will give them informal mentorship <Files\\Participant 7 - Institution b> - § 1 reference coded [0.99% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.99% Coverage • I do a lot of informal monitoring, what I call corridor conversations you can of meet people you talk to people find out what they are doing give them a bit of advice, ask them to come and see you if they want, and just try to support some of their ideas and developments. <Files\\Participant 2 - Institution A> - § 5 references coded [1.73% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.09% Coverage • All occasion they will listen to advice and comments.

		Reference 2 - 0.22% Coverage • So I think in that simple way you just sense whether your voice is counting in a certain subset of the academic debate is going on. Reference 3 - 0.44% Coverage • Just being listened to selectively about some stuff, some of the time and some people changing some of their thinking and direction, at least you will know you are the one suggesting possibly there is evidence base that you contributed to that is what it is about Reference 4 - 0.41% Coverage • Yeah, I guess you know at least you know your advice is not going to be ignored, you know very occasionally your advice will be effectively as for and sometimes you know certain you say is getting round the system, through the background people. Reference 5 - 0.57% Coverage • Sometimes I know is me, they can't identify that effect but I know is me that has made the effect. Is like children growing up you don't own your children, if they do stuff you like you are pleased but you can't control them, they don't owe you any particular gratitude for what you try to do for them they got to create their own lives. <Files\\Participant 3 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.62% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.62% Coverage • To some extent how they treat you in the sense that whether they ask for your advice and considering that you are the responsible person for taking the decisions for contributing to decisions

Relationship with Line Manager	- Quality of evaluation, performance development review and feedback - Management style/approach - Fairness - Open communication, listen to advice and comments - Encouragement, nurture and motivation - Offer and support development activities - Recognition and tacit appreciation - Respect for colleagues - Involvement	<Files\\Participant 3 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.36% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.36% Coverage I have been differentially committed depending on who's been in the management and where is the management been. <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [1.76% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.96% Coverage • I mean the thing that will make me leave would be if there was a sort of change of management culture that make me feel negatively about all the thing, I have said I feel positive about. Reference 2 - 0.80% Coverage • So, if the senior leadership of the faculty and the university change in a way that I would feel uncomfortable with that will be what will make me leave. <Files\\Participant 9 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [0.93% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.93% Coverage • The expectation and we discussed all the role, good strong preceptorship period, probation period, since a few changes of senior have made, they have impacted on how appreciated we are, and recognise for what we are doing. *Listen to advice* <Files\\Participant 2 - Institution A> - § 5 references coded [1.73% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.09% Coverage

		• All occasion they will listen to advice and comments. Reference 2 - 0.22% Coverage • So, I think in that simple way you just sense whether your voice is counting in a certain subset of the academic debate is going on. Reference 3 - 0.44% Coverage • Just being listened to selectively about some stuff, some of the time and some people changing some of their thinking and direction, at least you will know you are the one suggesting possibly there is evidence base that you contributed to that is what it is about Reference 4 - 0.41% Coverage • Yeah, I guess you know at least you know your advice is not going to be ignored, you know very occasionally your advice will be effectively as for and sometimes you know certain you say is getting round the system, through the background people. Reference 5 - 0.57% Coverage • Sometimes I know is me, they can't identify that effect but I know is me that has made the effect. Is like children growing up you don't own your children, if they do stuff you like you are pleased but you can't control them, they don't owe you any particular gratitude for what you try to do for them they got to create their own lives. <Files\\Participant 3 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.62% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.62% Coverage To some extent how they treat you in the sense that whether they ask for your advice and considering that you are the responsible person for taking the decisions for contributing to decisions <Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 3 references coded [2.83% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.46% Coverage

		• Yes so, it was fairly simply at that time fourteen years ago was not quite as complex as now but yes, when I did come in, they did say can you teach this, can you teach that, there is an opportunity of this that Reference 2 - 0.74% Coverage • In relations to Research I was attached to a Research Centre, and I met the Director of Research, and we talk about what I was going to do, and he talked about how the Research Institute work and how I could contribute and how the research institute would recommend Research allocation for me, so yeah it was pretty clear as clear it could be. Reference 3 - 1.63% Coverage • To give you an example, the university design a project for making industry collaboration zones may be five years ago and it was a huge project with special funding, and it was designed to roll out across the institution to bring changes to teaching and to research and it had its own group of staff. Many colleagues looked at that and just thought how do we fit this in with everything else we are doing and how do we make this changes, there were some unrealistic expectations there, is this something for us or is it something for senior management to say they are making big changes in the university so I think there were a lot of confusion about that project not a great deal of commitment beyond going to meetings listening about things <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [0.63% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.40% Coverage • I will always discuss things with people before I would just give people role Reference 2 - 0.23% Coverage • I will always discuss with them, absolutely. <Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 9 references coded [5.22% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.59% Coverage

		• I mean, one is that it looks at the students' report on the module or modules that I lead and so occasionally you would sit here in a meeting that you know the module you have led have being well received by the students, so the mechanism of module evaluation is one way. Reference 2 - 0.57% Coverage • In relation to research we are allocated workload for our research productivity and so I feel as if with the allocation that I have they recognise that I am doing you know a good researcher and I am productive and so the managers are recognising what I do there. Reference 3 - 0.50% Coverage • The general remuneration of the university is not the money. Hmmm never was, it hmm… what matter most to me is the recognition of the work that I do. It doesn't have to be constant; it doesn't have to be high profile recognition. Reference 4 - 0.33% Coverage • Just for me the reward for working for the university is to think that the university recognises that I contribute to what the institution does yeah. Reference 5 - 0.64% Coverage • And so that's an important reward if the institution was completely oblivious to that or that I got the sense that they didn't care about what I did, that hmm they didn't value what I did you know it does not the case of criticising what I have done is just being absolutely silent about it. Reference 6 - 0.63% Coverage • Do whatever you, in the case of you do whatever still you never feel as if there is any sense or recognition of your contribution then that will be very alienating. That's not the case, that's not the case, the university does recognise from time to time the contribution one makes, yeah. Reference 7 - 0.32% Coverage

		• I can answer it in a negative sense if there was never any attention to or recognition of what I as an individual do then I will be dissatisfied. Reference 8 - 0.95% Coverage • But there is attention to what I do both through the personal development review, through the feedback from students, through feedbacks from colleagues, feedback from line managers, hmm and as I say I am not fishing for that I don't want people to boast my ego or anything like that I just like to feel that I am contributing and I am hopefully making a difference and so for me is just important that is acknowledge from time to time. Reference 9 - 0.69% Coverage • I think the environment the culture of recognising people for what they do which is strong at Salford is also important, so you see that from senior managers, from middle managers and from junior managers. There is an environment of congratulating, thanking people for what they have done and so on and so forth. <Files\\Participant 2 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.38% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.38% Coverage • I am not actively chasing anymore from the university. I am not begging the university to pay me more, but I think I did apply they would but with my standard of life I am not interested in that if I have got the recognition <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [0.87% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.18% Coverage • Where is a lack of recognition and understanding for people on my type of post? Reference 2 - 0.69% Coverage

		• I think it has improved to some extend so there is for example staff on other post like teaching post, they suffer because the organisation didn't really recognise what they were doing didn't value it that has changed to some extent in recent years hmmm staff on my post things hasn't really change but anyway. <Files\\Participant 5 - Institution A> - § 3 references coded [1.55% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.52% Coverage Acknowledgement of the quality of work that we do Reference 2 - 0.55% Coverage By personal acknowledgement of the good work, they do Reference 3 - 0.49% Coverage Much more recognition of the good work they do <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [0.80% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.74% Coverage • I personally feel very valued. Hmm I am very happy about how the university deals with me and communicate its appreciation and everything else. Appreciated! <Files\\Participant 9 - Institution B> - § 7 references coded [4.51% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.64% Coverage • So, I don't feel that valued by the university in the way that a small amount of praise will make a huge difference, a small amount of recognition will do.

		Reference 2 - 0.81% Coverage • Sometimes that limited recognition does means your expectations are flatten a little bit instead of, you know we motivate ourselves quite a lot to, we all work hard than we need to get thing done. Reference 3 - 0.97% Coverage The university just thinks right they have done it, that's it. I think sometimes a thank you wouldn't go miss. So we have different, they just want the job done, we want to do better, progress better but we are constantly battling it. Reference 4 - 0.50% Coverage • Not so much my performance but my motivation it has and it sound like a complaint session this and it's not meant to be. Reference 5 - 0.67% Coverage • Reward I would like to receive some praise and some thanks and that's simply because it is nice to be appreciated and there isn't any. Is a big thing for me that. Reference 6 - 0.20% Coverage • So, my two things are the thank you could be nice. I might just say, if you wanted one word recognition. Hmm we are not we are working at a high level with no recognition, with no thanks, no appreciation for what we are doing. <Files\\Participant 1 - Institution A> - § 4 references coded [3.08% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.13% Coverage • Previous experience when I was much younger researcher at Cranfield School of Management, my first proper job after my master's the experience with my supervisor felt like talent management but wasn't

		formally, it was mentorship. So I have very mix feeling of leaving that institution because I felt somebody was looking after me but it was a one on one relationship because we got on and I worked hard for that person. Reference 2 - 0.56% Coverage • Very little. I just go back to this thing that is up to you, it is a very autonomous job. We work in teams in certain circumstances but very often is individual and it is a transactional relationship really. Reference 3 - 0.62% Coverage • Hmm a bit. If we had got a hierarchy in this group, then is just me as a lecturer and Head of Group who is a professor, well, two are approachable, I won't think of approaching one of them for career advice or development advise. Reference 4 - 0.77% Coverage • Mm… the time would be given to me if I was in danger. I do believe that if there was a point that I really felt completely overwhelmed I could talk about. So I think the support is there but is informal support. Which can lead to more formal support in terms of people covering for you. <Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [0.42% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.42% Coverage • I generally your question is an interesting one because I don't actually demand many things I just get on and do my work. So but I do think that line managers listens if I raise something yeah. <Files\\Participant 9 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [1.07% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.07% Coverage

		Exactly. She does listen, she does try, she is not strong as the manager that recruited me who would go to the senior management again, and again and again. She only goes to the top one who knocks her back down, she can't get pass her/them for some reasons. <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 2 references coded [1.01% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.38% Coverage • the right support being in place from senior people in the organisation. Reference 2 - 0.63% Coverage • What matter to me in terms of my career right now is the support that I get from senior colleagues most senior colleagues <Files\\Participant 8 - Institution B> - § 2 references coded [1.28% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.48% Coverage • but it wasn't just about my expectations I think, I have had people in the right way say you can do this. You know we think you will be good at this let's give you this opportunity. Reference 2 - 0.79% Coverage Hmmm I think in a positive way. In a very positive way. I will be honest when I didn't get the university role in the first time after 20 years, I looked for another job. It was the first time I didn't feel supported in the organisation. So for the first time in 20 years, I looked for another job. <Files\\Participant 5 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.73% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.73% Coverage Through encouraging them to apply for exceptional performance awards. <Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 1 reference coded [1.68% Coverage]

		Reference 1 - 1.68% Coverage • I think hmm whether positive or negative it strengthens my commitment to the institution. That may sound strange if it is positive if you are into PDR and you get a feedback such as 'you are doing a good job Chris' that's great, or you get a letter or message which says this is really good, well of course you feel very hmm, you feel very gratified by that will make you feel very motivated to continue working, if it were to say we think you might do this or we think you should do this or do that hmm I will be may be motivated to work to do that because we know as member of staff that no nobody have job for life if we consistently fall below expectations standard we are at risk of being put into remedial set of measures so one is trying to work against that. <Files\\Participant 5 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.17% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.17% Coverage through feedback <Files\\Participant 6 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.32% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.32% Coverage • So I hmm give them verbal feedback and emails feedback mainly. <Files\\Participant 8 - Institution B> - § 5 references coded [3.10% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.00% Coverage The Dean if I do have a one to one, she uses to be very open to me. There was a instance last year where I applied for a senior role within the university and I wasn't successful in getting that and she was very good with the feedback and tried to put the things that weren't in place and was told why I didn't get the job and I was trying to make sure that's been addressed. Reference 2 - 0.44% Coverage

		So she has been very good at that and my actual line manager have been very good at the same, in doing the same thing so I am about to move to a new role actually. Reference 3 - 1.21% Coverage I have had very good feedback particularly from my line manager. Hmm… the Dean particular we are quite a big school now, Dean is quite remote but even though she is remote, she has given me the opportunity to say for example, if an opportunity comes from the university wide community, she send me an email to say I think Alison I think you will be good at this and I can tell that is addressing one of the gap she knew from the feedback she gave me. Reference 4 - 0.29% Coverage • I think you let them know they are contributing to the wider university target and they are doing a good job. Reference 5 - 0.16% Coverage • So you need to tell people that they are doing a good job. <Files\\Participant 7 - Institution b> - § 1 reference coded [1.81% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.81% Coverage • I was at the University of ……………….., and the Dean there she was fantastic, she felt my Talent need to be pushed beyond the Principal Lecturer role I have had and she was encouraging me to go for an Assistant Head in her school but at the same time she has seen this job and she knew the Dean very well and she said that will be perfect for you is a big school with a complex issue, multidisciplinary and she spoke to the Head of the school (Dean) and encourage me to apply and thankfully I got the job. <Files\\Participant 10 - Institution B> - § 2 references coded [2.45% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.06% Coverage

		• There are some senior managers who seems disconnected with the day to day work, the work we do, not in school level necessarily but who seems to myself and others to be bureaucrat who are interested in managing and making a career for themselves out of this and we are being directed to do one thing or another and they are usually not motivating in terms of their…what happens Precious is that you lose motivation to follow a particular plan or proposal that they are bring forward. Reference 2 - 1.39% Coverage • I will just be look warm let put it like that about some of these proposals because they don't seems to resuscitate well with the kind of models of teaching and research that we are involved in and they seems to be driven from the top down and so I can think of a couple of examples where we have had major proposals and not just myself but others you know we thought ok well this is somebody who you know, senior manager who want to do this and they want to try and change things radically but what they are saying doesn't seem to fit very well with everything else we are doing there is the clash there but I am not averse to change. <Files\\Participant 4 - Institution A> - § 1 reference coded [0.18% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.18% Coverage • So is a very top-down management style here which many staff are not happy with.