

School principals' implementation of institutional talent management for teachers



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ABSTRACT

The domain of educational leadership has progressively acknowledged the significance of institutional talent management in promoting teacher development and improving overall educational results. The domain of educational leadership has progressively acknowledged the significance of institutional talent management in promoting teacher development and improving overall educational outcomes. This research paper aims to explore and evaluate the degree to which school principals in Jordan engage in institutional talent management practices for teachers. Institutional talent management is a crucial aspect of educational leadership that can significantly impact the professional growth and performance of teachers. The study investigates the current state of talent management in Jordanian schools, identifies the prerequisites for successful implementation, and examines the challenges faced within the existing educational system. Generally, most participants saw that there is no specific system for talent management at the education system.



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1. Introduction

The field of educational leadership has increasingly recognized the importance of institutional talent management in fostering teacher development and enhancing overall educational outcomes. This study focuses on the practices of school principals in Jordanian schools concerning talent management for teachers. The term Talent Management emerged, focusing on attracting, developing, and retaining talented individuals. Over time, this management approach evolved into a system applied across various departments in contemporary institutions. It is considered a strategy for development and change, recognized as an irreplicable source of strength due to its contribution to ensuring growth, continuity, and innovation [1]. Consequently, Talent Management gained prominence as a modern methodology and philosophy for handling talents, enhancing their role in both operational processes and the selection, attraction, and development of internal and external talents. The aim is to establish an internal reservoir that includes talented individuals, preparing future leaders to enhance work quality and achieve high performance across various types of institutions in society [2]–[4]. The significance of talent management lies in guiding institutions toward innovation by inspiring members to be creative and innovative, forming productive teams, reducing turnover rates, and establishing a strong institutional identity. Andrianova *et al.* emphasized these points [5]. Wahba *et al.* assessed talent management in private Jordanian universities, finding moderate application levels and proposing enhancements like an organized talent management department and strategic plans for talent selection [6]. Jimoh investigated talent management's impact on organizational performance in private Nigerian universities, highlighting its influence on organizational support and job performance, with organizational support mediating this relationship [7]. Al Harbi explored talent management strategies at King Khalid University, emphasizing their importance and proposing a conceptual framework [8]. No significant differences were found based on gender, academic rank, or position. Razeih focused on talent management application in Saudi emerging universities, revealing challenges like inadequate funding and brain drain [9]. No significant

differences were found based on demographic variables. Omotunde and Alegbeleye studied talent management practices in university libraries in southwest Nigeria, finding average levels and establishing a positive relationship with job performance despite challenges like inadequate funding and brain drain [10]. Mohamed Jais *et al.* explored talent management development in Malaysian higher education institutions, identifying leadership competency groups and their positive impact on talent management and sustainable performance [11]. Mahmoodi *et al.* proposed a model to enhance talent management at Islamic Azad University in Iran, highlighting effective implementation components like talent recruitment and promotion [12]. In summary, these studies collectively contribute to the understanding of talent management practices, their application, and the challenges faced in various educational contexts. They provide insights into strategies to enhance talent management effectiveness and underscore the importance of talent management in promoting organizational performance and sustainable leadership. This study aims to assess the extent to which school principals in Jordan engage in institutional talent management for teachers, identify the essential prerequisites for successful implementation of talent management, and explore the challenges faced in implementing talent management practices within the Jordanian educational system. The following questions will guide the investigation; (1) Question One: What is the current level of engagement in institutional talent management for teachers?; (2) Question Two: What are the essential prerequisites for successfully implementing institutional talent management for teachers?; (3) Question Three: What challenges are encountered in the application of institutional talent management for teachers? These questions seek to gain insights into the practices, requirements, and challenges associated with institutional talent management for teachers in Jordanian schools.

This study holds significant importance in light of the increasing challenges facing the education system in Jordan and the community's aspirations for enhancing institutional talent management for teachers. By analyzing teachers' perceptions of the institutional talent management in Jordan, this study will provide valuable insights contributing to guiding educational policies towards achieving sustainable improvement in the institutional talent management. The results of this study can contribute to identifying strengths and weaknesses in the current educational system regarding institutional talent management, shedding light on challenges that may hinder the realization of teachers' aspirations and the evolution of education in Jordan. Additionally, this study has the potential to enhance collaboration and partnerships between public and private sectors. With a better understanding of teachers' perceptions and expectations, encouraging more effective cooperation and fruitful partnerships aimed at improving the institutional talent management and fostering development in the educational environment becomes feasible. Limitations refer to the shortcomings or external influences that the researcher cannot control [13]. The limitations of the current study lie in a set of difficulties that emerged during the study's implementation and have been addressed to minimize their impact on the study's procedures, including; (1) Time period for qualitative study participant responses, coordinating with qualitative study participants to choose a suitable time and place for conducting interviews; (2) Transcription of qualitative data from interviews, handling the transcription of qualitative data resulting from interviews.

Talent Management: Talent is defined as a distinctive set of capabilities, experiences, knowledge, skills, and behaviors possessed by employees to achieve the organization's goals [14]. Goffee and Jones characterize talented individuals as those with knowledge, skills, and abilities that provide exceptional added value to the organization's resources [15]. Talent Management is defined as a system that focuses on attracting talents and developing them through organized training programs with the aim of obtaining high-capacity and competent outputs and retaining them to achieve excellence for the organization [1]. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) in the United Kingdom defines it as the organized attraction, development, and retention of employees with unique abilities who are considered the organization's greatest value [16]. Salih describes it as a set of processes aiming to formulate a strategy focusing on planning the current and future needs of the institution for talented individuals [17]. This involves attracting and diagnosing the current talent quality within the organization at all levels. The process includes development, enrichment, objective criteria, sustainable development programs, talent retention, and creating conducive conditions, encouraging incentives for assignment, and managing their career path. Kaliannan *et al.* view Talent Management as a set of interconnected activities where the organization systematically attracts, recruits, develops, and retains individuals to achieve sustainable strategic organizational success [18]. Operationally, Talent Management involves a set of planned procedures for managing its highly potential and experienced teachers. These procedures aim to utilize their talents to enhance the education system competitiveness at the local, regional, and global levels. The dimensions of

Institutional Talent Management at the education system include talent attraction and recruitment, talent development and enrichment, talent performance evaluation, and talent retention.

2. Method

Research Design: The study adopted a qualitative approach due to its suitability for the study's purposes. In-depth interviews exploring challenges and prerequisites.

2.1 Study Population and Sample

The study population includes all male and female teachers enrolled in the graduate studies programs (Master program in educational administration, and Higher Diploma Program in Educational Administration) at the Hashemite University for the academic year 2023/2024, first semester, totaling 35 teachers. The study sample was purposefully selected to align with the study's objectives.

- **Qualitative Data Sample (Participants) and Characteristics:** In line with the objective of this qualitative study, the qualitative sample is not intended for generalization but rather for enrichment [19]. According to researchers, qualitative studies may use purposeful sampling as a method for selecting participants. Purposeful sampling involves intentionally selecting participants to enrich the depth and enhancement of the researched topic [20]. The literature indicates that purposeful sampling is a common method for participant selection in qualitative research. This method is based on the researcher's judgment and expectation that the chosen participants will contribute to achieving the research goals and addressing its questions [21]. Creswell noted that the purposeful sample does not necessarily have to be large in number [19]. Its challenge lies in the idea of selecting cases rich in information (information-rich cases) and the extent to which participants contribute to enriching the data. The intended sample derives its strength from how much it contributes to enriching the study's data, achieving its objectives within the theoretical framework, and addressing the research question through diverse details obtained by the researcher on core issues related to the study's subject [19], [22].
- **Qualitative Data Analysis:** For the analysis of qualitative data, the study employed Thematic Analysis, a method that aids in discovering, identifying, and interpreting important themes within the data. This type of analysis is versatile and can be utilized with diverse data obtained from various sources such as interviews, documents, and social media, or data aimed at addressing research questions that explore people's opinions and thoughts [23]. Thematic analysis involves organizing and categorizing data into groups or themes that help clarify and create a meaningful understanding. Through the aforementioned steps, three primary themes were identified; (1) Current State of Institutional Talent Management in Your School: What is the current level of engagement in institutional talent management for teachers in your school?; (2) Requirements for Implementing Institutional Talent Management: What are the essential prerequisites for successfully implementing institutional talent management for teachers?; (3) Challenges Facing the Implementation of Institutional Talent Management: What challenges are encountered in the application of institutional talent management for teachers within our educational system?

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Question One: What is the current level of engagement in institutional talent management for teachers?

Current Practices: Evaluate the degree of engagement in talent management activities among school principals. The qualitative analysis of the responses of these participants revealed diverse perspectives on this reality. Generally, most participants saw that there is no specific system for talent management at the education system. For example, one participant stated,

"There is no explicit clarity for talent management at the education system; it is practices carried out by each education directorate" (Participant A21).

Similarly, another respondent (Participant A4) expressed,

"Talent management is not present at the school or education system as a specific term or structure, but it is embedded in the education system's values

as implicit procedures within educational system and some practices."
(Participant A4)

Another respondent commented,

"I don't think there is a talent management system at the school or education system" (Participant A19).

Another respondent (Participant A2) expressed,

"For me, as a vision and policy for attracting and recruiting talents, this is something missing. I haven't seen an explicit mention of talents in the education system or school strategic plan." (Participant A2)

In a similar vein, Participant A5 mentioned,

"There is no clear policy or vision, even in the strategic plan. I haven't come across talent management or the specific mention of a talented person or talent in the plan." (Participant A5)

In terms of developing and enriching talents, a participant shared, respondent (Participant A20) expressed his opinion on the dimensions of talent management, stating,

"From my perspective, there is nothing in the organizational regulations at the education system level that indicates the recruitment of talented academics or specific attention to them, or even encouragement for them to stay or retain them, or motivate them, as something written or as instructions issued to the colleges with the rest of the instructions sent to us at the beginning of the academic year." (Participant A20)

In terms of evaluation, all participants affirmed the school and education system use of standardized criteria and evaluation methods for its teachers. For example, one respondent commented on this issue, stating,

"Unfortunately, the evaluation is uniform for all employees. It is purely administrative. Even the evaluation criteria do not contain anything that clarifies what could be specific to evaluating the talented, as a criterion or standard for evaluation, or attempts to highlight or assess their talent" (Participant A7).

Respondents (Participant A11, A20, A14, A21) indicated that the education system employs standardized measures for everyone, and there are no specific clear criteria for evaluating the teachers based on their talent. Instead, there are general criteria shared by the talented and others without specific classification. Participant A3 affirmed this idea, saying,

"In my opinion, all teachers in the education system are evaluated in the same way and according to the same criteria." (Participant A3)

In contrast, Participant A6 expressed a different opinion, saying,

"I cannot tell you that there are clear and embedded criteria for evaluating the talented teacher. Instead, there are general criteria that apply to everyone. So why doesn't the education system establish evaluation criteria in which employees' initiatives are included and are among the primary evaluation criteria?" (Participant A6).

Most participants highlighted different perspectives on this reality, emphasizing that there is no specific system for talent management at the education system. This underscores the need to build a talent management strategy that aligns with the education system's visionary leadership. This aligns with findings from various studies conducted in different countries, such as the study by Jimoh [7], which revealed the need for Nigerian institutions to implement talent management in their systems, and the study by Mohammed *et al.* [24] conducted in Australian institutions. Similarly, a study by Ateris applied to Egyptian institutions recommended the necessity of building a talent management strategy in those institutions [25]. Bradley also stressed the importance of implementing talent management at all organizational levels in institutions [26].

3.2. Question Two: What are the essential prerequisites for successfully implementing institutional talent management for teachers?

Prerequisites for Implementation: Identify and analyze the essential requirements for effective talent management. One of the respondents emphasized the importance of having a supportive environment, stating,

"The existence of a supportive and stimulating environment, where there is a movement of interest in talent, propels us towards generating ideas and developing our talents and skills. Creating a complete and integrated environment within the education system encourages the talented to emerge" (Participant A7).

Another respondent affirmed this by saying,

"If a person reaches a certain talent, whether through his personal abilities or institutional support, but in the end, if there is no supportive or nurturing environment for this talent, there will be a decline in what he possesses of talent" (Participant A2).

Another participant (Participant A10) added that the presence of an attractive and supportive environment helps in exploring additional talents and skills, especially in the technological field. Some participants looked at the supportive environment for talents in terms of the opportunities it provides for continuous learning and training. They also considered how it encourages faculty members to continue developing their skills and acquire new ones. One participant expressed this perspective, saying,

"Embracing these talents by creating a center to nurture and discover them, providing them with scholarships, similar to what international education systems do in nurturing talented teachers. These talented individuals will be the first pillar in advancing the schools and education system" (Participant A14).

Another respondent (Participant A13) stated,

"We must plan well so that we have a clear program to refine the talents of this category or have a training and qualification system that supports the category of talented teachers." (Participant A13)

Administrative and organizational requirements emerged as one of the most important requirements, as indicated by the analysis of participants' responses. Several participants emphasized the need for a dedicated department or specific management for talent attraction and discovery. One participant (Participant A7) stated,

"Having a talent management department, organizational procedures, and an organizational structure shaped according to the talents required by the education system "ministry of education" for educational, research, and administrative purposes, with clear mechanisms for attracting and developing talents." (Participant A7)

Participant A1 confirmed this by saying,

"Ministry of Education possesses many talents; it is like a large incubator for talents in the country, whether for teachers, students, or administrative staff. However, we only need someone to manage it or the existence of a special unit to manage it." (Participant A1)

In this regard, one participant (Participant A13) indicated,

"If we have a department or a talent section, it will have the right to discover these talented individuals or grant authorities to any department with clear criteria." (Participant A13)

Another participant (Participant A5) mentioned that implementing talent management at Ministry of Education intentionally requires the existence of a unit managing this issue. He justified the importance of having this unit by saying,

"It will enhance attention to academic talents, and there will be constant communication between this unit and other entities for periodic follow-up."
(Participant A5)

Another participant (Participant A11) emphasized this requirement, stating,

"When a unit for talent management is established at the Ministry of Education and suitable individuals to lead it are found, and there are many of them at the Ministry of Education, they will take the initiative." (Participant A11)

Additionally, Participant A9 suggested the creation of a unit, either in the Human Resources Department or a committee for talented individuals, or a department for nurturing talents at the Ministry of Education. This department could be called the Talented Individuals Department, focusing on or being included in the directorates of educations. The results of this question clarified that the weak participation of teachers in decision-making at the education system has led to their departure and non-retention. This finding aligns with the study by Ibrahim and Saad [27] and the study by Ateris [25], both of which emphasized the importance of adopting participation systems in decision-making as a sub-requirement for the attractive environment. From another perspective, the emergence of an attractive environment as a requirement for implementing talent management will also contribute to enhancing the current state of development and enrichment that appeared in the current study to a moderate extent, according to the study sample. This is consistent with the results of studies by Ibrahim [28], Amin [29], which explained that organizing workshops, developing training programs on talent management and its strategies in the institution, and providing formal specialized training for talent development within the education system are necessary requirements for talent management.

3.3. Question Three: What challenges are encountered in the application of institutional talent management for teachers?

Challenges in Implementation: Explore and categorize challenges faced by school principals in implementing talent management practices. The study sample highlighted the diversity of administrative and organizational challenges as the core of any problems occurring within the education system and schools, and most participants spoke about them. For example, Participant A11 commented on this issue, stating,

"The administrative and organizational environment at the ministry of education and schools has many branches, whether related to the organizational structure, teaching burdens, multiple committees, or the lack of teachers' participation in decision-making and the ideas they present. The school environment has many issues that confront this talented individual, limiting their talent and creativity." (Participant A11)

One of the participants emphasized this by saying,

"The absence of a specific department for this category, the difficulty of establishing it in the education directorates, becomes permanent and not temporary so that the Ministry of Education can care for them and then retain them, preventing them from going and attracting them from other external entities outside the Ministry of education" (Participant A7).

The results indicated that financial challenges are among the most significant obstacles facing the implementation of institutional talent management at the Ministry of Education. One of the participants (Participant A5) pointed this out, stating,

"The financial aspect was one of the obstacles that hindered the activation and support of many initiatives in the past period." (Participant A5)

The predominant feature in participants' responses addressing cultural challenges lies in the mindset of leadership, the lack of clarity regarding the nature of talent and talent management, or a disbelief in it. For instance, one participant (Participant A13) commented on this, saying,

"We really need to address the issue directly. We must first understand what creativity and talent are by the top leadership in the Ministry of Education in terms of readiness, management, and facilitation." (Participant A13)

Supporting this opinion, some excerpts from participants include:

"The mentalities of some administrative leaders do not comprehend talent and do not know what the talented minds of teachers, especially those who manage the financial aspect of the schools, produce. When I presented my idea, which is a creative one, those minds still do not realize the importance of the creative idea for the advancement of the school or Ministry of Education" (Participant A11).

Also, the legislative and legal challenges are related to the legal regulations and legislations that the education system is obligated to adhere to, such as laws associated with the official working hours, salaries, leaves, transparency, justice in the distribution of opportunities, rewards, promotions, and appointments. For example, one participant (Participant A18) stated,

"Some laws and regulations imposed on the education system pose a challenge in my opinion. The education system has a unified salary schedule, a unified promotion system, a unified leave system, and a unified work system. How can you motivate and support the talented individuals when you treat them equally?" (Participant A18)

The absence of a dedicated talent management structure in the education system's organizational hierarchy, the lack of talent management planning in the education system's policy, the education system's large size, and the diversity of its specialties, the low integration and collaboration between some departments, the multitude of tasks for teachers encompassing education, administrative, and supervisory roles, the daily work routine, the weak communication and interaction between management and teachers were identified as challenges. The sample supported what some previous studies have indicated regarding the organizational and administrative challenges facing the implementation of talent management [24], [30], [31].

4. Conclusion

As a conclusion, this research paper aims to contribute to the broader discourse on educational leadership and talent management by shedding light on the practices of school principals in Jordanian schools. Understanding the current state, prerequisites, and challenges will inform strategies for improving institutional talent management and, consequently, teacher development and overall educational quality. Therefore, the researchers provide recommendations for enhancing institutional talent management practices in Jordanian schools and education system.

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Declarations

- Author contribution** : The author solely conducted all aspects of this research, including the conceptualization, methodology, data collection, analysis, and interpretation of results. The author also undertook the writing, reviewing, and editing of the manuscript, ensuring its academic rigor and coherence.
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