



Developing a Measurement of Talent Engagement in Thailand

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Abstract

This study was performed with the aim to test the reliability and validity of a talent engagement scale in Thailand based on an academic literature review. In order to accomplish this, quantitative data collection methods were adopted and all necessary steps in developing the questionnaires were implemented. The present study makes extensive use of primary data gathered from two well-known organizations based in Thailand, one which operates in the public sector, while the other represents the private sector. These two organizations were selected based on talent definition and the presence of a talent management system. The public organization chosen utilizes the High Performance and Potential System (HiPPS) program, and CP All Public Company Limited serves as the private organization for this study. For the pilot test, 100 subjects were tested by the alpha coefficient to develop the first draft of the questionnaire. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was then used with 350 subjects to test whether the theoretical-based factor in HRD roles in talent management, personal factor, and organization factor are predetermined factors to determine the talent engagement. The results confirmed that the appropriateness of the talent engagement measurement is fairly reliable and valid.

Keywords: Talent, Talented Employee, Talent management, Antecedents of Employee Engagement, Talented Engagement

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การพัฒนาแบบวัดความพูดพันของคนเก่ง ที่มีต่อองค์กรในประเทศไทย

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บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษาเรื่องการพัฒนาแบบวัดความผูกพันของคนเก่งที่มีต่อองค์กรในประเทศไทย เป็นการวิจัยเชิงบรรยาย ที่มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อสร้างแบบวัดความความผูกพันของกลุ่มคนเก่ง โดยออกแบบและพัฒนาแบบวัดจากการศึกษาแนวคิดทฤษฎี งานวิจัย รวมถึงเอกสารต่างๆ ที่เกี่ยวข้อง งานวิจัยใช้ข้อมูลปฐมภูมิที่รวบรวมมาจากสถาบันที่มีชื่อเสียงในประเทศไทย ในกลุ่มภาครัฐและภาคเอกชน เกณฑ์ในการตัดเลือกกลุ่มตัวอย่างมาจากการคำนิยามของกลุ่มคนเก่งและกระบวนการบริหารกลุ่มคนเก่ง โดยภาครัฐได้ตัดเลือกระบบข้าราชการผู้มีผลลัมภ์ที่สูง (HiPPS) ของ สำนักงาน ก.พ. และในภาคเอกชนได้ตัดเลือกระบบการบริหารคนเก่ง ของ บริษัท ซีพี ออลล์ จำกัด (มหาชน) เป็นกลุ่มศึกษา ที่ข้อคิดเห็นได้ผ่านการตรวจพิจารณาเพื่อความเที่ยงตรงของเนื้อหา (Content Validity) จากทั้งอาจารย์ที่ปรึกษาและผู้เชี่ยวชาญ จากนั้นจึงนำแบบวัดดังกล่าวมาทดลองนำร่อง (Pilot Test) กับกลุ่มทดลองจำนวน 100 คน ที่เป็นกลุ่มคนเก่งใน HiPPS 50 คน และใน บริษัท ซีพี ออลล์ 50 คน เพื่อทดสอบความเชื่อมั่นของแบบสอบถาม (Alpha Coefficient) จากนั้นการวิเคราะห์องค์ประกอบเชิงยืนยัน (Confirmation Factor Analysis) เป็นเครื่องมือทดสอบการยืนยัน ทฤษฎีบทบาทของพัฒนาทรัพยากรมนุษย์ (HRD Roles) ในกระบวนการจัดการคนเก่ง (Talent Management) ปัจจัยส่วนบุคคล (Personal Factor) และ ปัจจัยส่วนองค์กร (Organization Factor) ส่งผลต่อความผูกพันของกลุ่มคนเก่ง (Talent Engagement) หรือไม่ โดยใช้กลุ่มตัวอย่าง 350 คน ผลการวิจัย พบว่า แบบจำลองการวัดบทบาทของพัฒนาทรัพยากรมนุษย์ ในกระบวนการจัดการคนเก่ง ปัจจัยส่วนบุคคล และปัจจัยส่วนองค์กรมีความสอดคล้องกับกลไกสืบต่อของกลุ่มคนเก่ง

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Rationale and Problem Statement

In the current competitive market, the emphasis has been shifting away from focusing on the product, and instead moving towards attempting to attract the people that are seen as assets. This has been largely due to the societal transformation from the Industrial Era to the Era of Intellectual Capital, (Dychtwald et al., 2006: 9-11) in which companies are now competing based on the skills of their employees. Thus, organizations are endorsing the fact that attracting and retaining the best and the brightest employees leads to their' success (Smith, 2007). This trend, "Talent," started to emerge when Michaels et al. (1997) published the results of their research in "War of Talent." In both that article and subsequent research, academics and practitioners found that the loss of talented employees causes enormous damage to an organization because it has invested heavily in this group of people. For that reason, numerous organizations have begun to place importance in the processes that evaluate their human capital in order to identify their talented employees.

"Talents" are defined as the groups of capable people who possess certain special abilities in combination with a willingness to display creativity and to demonstrate their potential to resolve problems unlike others (Goldsmith & Carter, 2010: 3). There is overwhelming evidence which reveals the monumental impact that the group of talent has on the development and efficiency of organizations (Heinen & O'Neill, 2004: 67; Lewis & Heckman, 2006; Dries & Pepermans, 2007: 94-98). "Talent management" is defined as a systematic and dynamic process of discovering, developing and sustaining talent (Davies and Davies, 2010: 419-421). The development process is the main role of the HRD field and is a vital part in talent management (Burbach & Royle, 2010: 422-423). Much research had found that the development process can retain talented employee and creates loyalty and engagement with the organization for as long as possible (Hatch & Dyer, 2004; Yapp, 2008; Bhatnagar, 2008:20).

Ulrich (1998: 126) states that the success of organizations comes from three essential qualities of employees: competence, commitment or engagement, and contribution. Thus, it is important to be aware that performance does not depend solely on the competence or cognitive skill of employees, but also on how employees

respond emotionally to their work and organization. Therefore, engaged employees can help an organization achieve its mission, execute its strategy, and generate important results. The more highly engaged the employee, the more likely he or she will say positive things about the organization, thereby contributing to the development of a positive employer brand. These employees regularly exert a greater level of effort, potentially influencing variables such as service quality, customer satisfaction, productivity, sales and profitability and also opt to remain within the organization which minimizes turnover. (Hughes & Rog, 2008: 750).

In addition, there are several conditions other than the development process which can affect the state of engagement. Rich et al. (2010: 625) states that influencing factors to employee engagement should be in place before both scholars and practitioners can reap the benefits of engaged employee, while Wppard and Shuck (2011) argue that different organizations need to create employee engagement culture in different ways, using different strategies and methods that are unique to their organization. It is important that an organization builds the confidence of employees and demonstrates their support for them by creating a good workplace for their talents.

Those organizations that are intent on becoming competitive must rely on talented and dedicated employees according to Kerr-Phillips and Thomas (2009: 1). The latest idea regarding talent management is “Talent Engagement,” which is defined as the degree to which a talented employee is engaged and passionate about work, leading to an increase in an organization’s performance; however, before the development process can be initiated both in either a Western or Thai context, an organization must first confront the problem of identifying the talent group. Therefore, there is an issue that should be discussed is identifying talented people in Thai context. In addition, this study found that there were many problems concerning academic and practitioner perspective between a Western and Thai context which identified talents differently. Consequently, the use of Western research studies to implement in Thai contexts in order to identify the group of talent in an organization could be misleading.

It can be seen that organization engagement is an essential part of any business and ought to be introduced and developed. There have been various

employee engagement researches in a Western context (Kahn, 1990; Maslach et al., 2001; Harter et al., 2002; Saks, 2006); however, studies regarding organization engagement in Thailand have mostly involved measuring the levels of engagement and the research into various factors which influenced engagement between workers and their organization. Typically, these studies focused on studying a sample of the population who were employees from numerous organizations, often dividing the study into different work levels, occupation or industries. Yet, it has been found that few have been done in studying the engagement of their talented employees. If an organization were to concentrate only on development and fail to consider the antecedent factors that motivate people to work, then this would affect talent engagement and potentially risk losing those employees.

This study makes extensive use of primary data gathered from two well-known organizations both in public and private sectors based in Thailand. These two organizations were selected based on talent definition and the presence of a talent management system. The public organization chosen utilizes the High Performance and Potential System (HiPPS), developed by the Office of the Civil Service Commission (OCSC). The HiPPS program is a human resource development plan in order to systematically prepare the high potential government officials for further advancement. The private organization chosen is CP All Public Company Limited, which has implemented a “Talented Program” into its human resource development strategy. Drawing on data from a quantitative survey of 350 talented employees, this study aims to test a construct of reliability and validity on a talented engagement measurement scale, created based on the findings of theoretical-based literature review.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Talent

Although there has been substantial research undertaken on talent as a human resource initiative, most people are rarely precise about what is meant by the term ‘Talent’ within an organization (Howe et al., 1998: 399), which demonstrates that there are different perspectives in defining talents based on different paradigms. For this reason, there is no universal definition of ‘Talent.’ In order to understand the

terminology of 'Talent', this study categorizes the definition into different perspectives focused on particular people, to a set of characteristics, environment and statement of need or outcomes.

Talent Definition

While there is no single definition of the concept of 'Talent,' there are some characteristics to which a consensus has been readily reached. One approach to explain talent is to regard it as a quality that was built-in to the character of that individual since birth, or an innate talent. Lunn (1995: 8) explained the definition of talent from the aspect of a specific attribute of intelligence. It is a characteristic that allows the person to accomplish a better and more complete result at each task as a consequence of their normal natural behavior without making a special effort. This view of talent coincides with the definition described according to the Official Thai Dictionary that defines it as a special gift or exceptional quality apparent in a person since birth. Furthermore, the definition in the Cambridge University Press (2003) also gives support to the idea that talent is a person's ability that arises naturally especially if that ability is rarely seen in others. However, there are some arguments beyond innate talent as to whether it can be conceived only at birth.

Another view is that talent is entirely dependent upon context. Context could be understood as the social and economic environment as well as the organization and its specific needs. According to Barab and Plucker (2002: 173-175), who are both educational psychologists, have observed that factors from the environment, especially education and training, can cause talent to emerge. It can be seen that talent emerges from ability as a consequence of an individual learning experience (Gagne, 1995).

There are many studies in business management fields that have taken various different approaches to analyzing talent by looking at both the performance together with the potential (Heinen & O'Neill, 2004). According to Lewis and Heckman (2006: 141), talent should not only display high performance but should also demonstrate high potential as well. High potential employees are described as those who are recognized by senior management as persons with the prospect to fulfill an executive function within the company (Cope, 1998; Dries and Pepermans, 2007).

Due to these reasons, those defined as 'talented' must possess both these qualities because a person who currently displays good performance does not ensure that they can function effectively in the future. A showing of high potential serves as a better guarantee for good performance in the future.

From a management perspective 'talents' are people who are more successful than others both in terms of achieving objectives and the quality of their work; they are able to operate at a faster pace with more accuracy and efficiency in comparison to the average workforce (Ready and Conger, 2007: 1-2). Talents attempt to showcase their skills and capabilities during the assigned tasks in the work environment; therefore, it is often found that "talent" in many organizations constitutes the leadership or part of the management that helps drive the company towards success in their goals. Referring to managerial viewpoint in talent leadership, Harvard Business School researchers found that "talent" refers to the skills and competency of good leadership, setting examples as good role models, or the ability to motivate and inspire others (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelord, 2001: 5). Berger and Berger (2004) noted that the characteristics of "talents" are that they are outstanding in their work and inspire others to achieve the same exceptional results. In the same way, Phillips and Roper (2009: 7) observed that the word 'talent' is now being more narrowly defined as a core group of leaders, technical experts and key contributors who can drive their businesses forward. Consequently, in order for companies gain the benefits of their talents' abilities, the talents must possess the right level of capability and hold the same principles and values as the organization, setting themselves as a good example for those who triumph in their work life.

In summary, the various definitions and analyses can be characterized by the commonly-defined attributes of 'talents.' While there are some different perspectives from various fields to define the term 'talent', it can be concluded that 'talents' have a character which is distinctive and different but is also be beneficial to their work when compared with the average workforce. They are creative, able to inspire and support their coworkers, and hold themselves highly accountable especially in the matters that are work-related. Thus, they are determined to succeed in the goals and targets set by the company. Due to uncommon nature of special characteristics,

organizations ought to ensure that the retention of this group of people is necessary to maintain this group of people and make use of their potential and capabilities as much as possible.

The studies and research presented in this literature review have revealed wide and numerous definitions of 'talent' from many different perspectives based on the background of those studies. All the viewpoints are important in their particular fields; however, this study will focus on the definitions of talent that relate to the creation of talent leadership, which is essential across all types of business; as such, certain organizations have created their own definition. The HiPPS system has divided the type of high performance and potential public workers in to four subtypes, which are the specialist type, the expert type, the manager type and the superstar type. The objective of HiPPS is to develop young talented civil servants who are highly capable and prepared for both management leadership and academic leadership. While CP All also regards talents as the group of people who have the potential to take leadership roles, the organization assesses their conduct by evaluating their performance in their existing roles. This group is then subsequently developed further with the intention to fill executive roles in the future.

Talent Management

Talent management emerged when as the Human Resource (HR) profession became a more important strategic partner (Chuai et al., 2008: 902-903). In the past, HRM grew from the term 'personnel management,' which could be described as the processes involved in managing employees in organizations. Personnel management focuses on day-to-day activities rather than strategic planning. Subsequently, the Human Resource Management field rapidly developed because organization realized the importance of human capital and believed that HRM can contribute to organizational performance (Tichy et al., 1981: 51).

In the early 1980's continuous emphasis on the involvement of HRM strategy became more popular as a result its success in business with organizations bringing about the integration of HRM into the business strategy as well as the adoption of HRM at all levels of the organization. In order to prove HR professionals' credibility in becoming a strategic partner, several labels have been employed to describe

the tasks this group performs including personnel management, human resource management and strategic HRM. Many implications of this group have been established such as talent management. However, there are several researchers who debated whether talent management represents old techniques, which have simply been re-invented (Abrahamson, 1991: 606-609).

Some researchers argued that talent management includes nearly every one of the traditional functional areas of HRM. This commonality between talent management and HRM is also found in the normative literatures, which identify that both labels have emphasized placing the right people into the proper roles (Chuai, et al., 2008: 905). Nevertheless, there are differences between talent management and HRM. According to Stainton (2005), talent management is only one part of HRM. It focuses more directly on certain groups of people by the management, whereas HRM focuses on the management of all employees within the organization. It can be seen that HRM is concerned with the execution of separate functional areas such as recruiting, training, development and assessment. Its focus is not on individuals but on the successful fulfillment of each function. On the other hand, the basis of talent management is people, namely the 'talents,' therefore, management functions are linked tightly around them. Chuai et al. (2008: 908-909) concluded that talent management is a logical result of the further development of HRM. It is not something completely different and separated from HRM, but rather a type of management developed and evolved from the foundation of HRM, which can be more valuable as a strategic business partner in order to align to the business goals of the organization with individuals.

The analysis into what is meant by 'talent management' from various sources such as research, books, and academic literature has led to many interesting definitions. D'Annunzio-Green (2008: 807) defined talent management as a holistic approach to human resource planning aimed at strengthening organizational capability and driving business priorities using a range of HR interventions; these include a focus on performance enhancement, career development and succession planning. Additionally, many practitioner constitutions defined talent management in difference perspectives. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) (2006) described talent management as the systematic attraction, identification,

development, engagement, retention and deployment of those individuals with high potential who are of particular value to an organization. Therefore, talent management is arguably being positioned by some as the latest weapon in the HRM arsenal, in the ongoing struggle to elevate the practice of HRM to one of strategic importance. The development process is merely one element of the talent management process which is in the HRD field. This process has a direct influence on the commitment and engagement that employees have to their organization. Human Resource Development professionals must use their knowledge to assess and find the needs of their organization and the importance of each in order to recognize which individuals to develop, using what kind of method and what objectives to attempt to achieve from the development process (D'Annunzio-Green, 2008: 815).

Training is the planned intervention that is designed to enhance the determinants of individual job performance (Chiaburu & Teklab, 2005). However, it is vital to be aware of the differences in individuals in terms of their history, background, knowledge and needs. As an aside, although many researchers have suggested that training programs are vital to organizations, Knoke & Kalleberg (1994: 537) have observed that training programs are often first to be discarded. The trend to cut training programs during poor economic times seems shortsighted, if, in fact, training does affect job proficiency or relieve workplace conflict. Several authors have also written about the importance of employee development; employees who are committed to learning showed a higher level of job satisfaction which, in turn, has a positive effect on their performance (Sahinidis & Bouris, 2008: 64). Moreover, training and education have been shown to have a significantly positive effect on job involvement, job satisfaction, and organization commitment (Karia & Asaari, 2006: 34).

D'Annunzio-Green (2008: 815) has noted that the line manager has a crucial role in developing talent. There was a shared understanding that the process takes time, yet there was also a concern that the management would not allow sufficient time to achieve this. Therefore, research into literature which observed past experience found that line manager must understand the importance of developing talent in order to further increase the potential in talented group (Ready & Conger, 2007: 73). Should the line manager have this awareness, they can then elevate the value

of human capital within their organization and build the confidence of talented employees in their own abilities to be ready for growth and become future leaders of the organization.

In a Thai context, HiPPS is based upon the idea that talent management is to recruit highly capable personnel then develop, motivate, delegate and emphasize retention so to allow them to reach their maximum potential in the field suited to their individual skills. Thus, HiPPS integrates the American concept of talent management that talent should be identified, retained, and developed effectively. The system has identified talent in the pool of civil servants and provided appropriate motivational rewards, such as faster career growth and more attractive salary increments. Civil servants selected into the system will be deployed within their organizations to work and learn from the job via a predefined path. In summary, HiPPS could be considered as an integrated system that is comprised of five sub-systems: the selection system, the position system, the development system, the performance appraisal system, and the rewards system. Much like CP All, this talent development program is based on the idea of talent management, which is to select highly capable personnel and assist them in reaching their maximum potential. The duration of the program is 18 months, and it is a combination of Western science and Eastern methodologies.

Engagement

In recent years, there has been a great deal of interest surrounding employee engagement. Many have claimed that employee engagement predicts employee outcomes, organizational success and even financial performance such sales and profit (Harter et al., 2002: 271; Baumruk, 2004). Many organizations believe that employee engagement is a dominant competitive advantage and thus have been drawn to its reported ability to solve challenging organizational problems such as workplace performance and productivity amid widespread economic decline (Macey and Schneider, 2008: 7-8). Employee engagement has become the new buzzword for HRD departments. It interrelates to all functions in a business and aligns HR and management policies to the business' culture and objectives. Nonetheless, it has been reported that employee engagement is on the decline and there is a deepening disengagement among employees today (Bates, 2004; Richman,

2006). Therefore, it is imperative that HRD scholars and practitioners develop research agendas and practical strategies on the forefront of these emerging issues.

Most research into employee engagement had used the term employee 'commitment' until 1990 when the term 'engagement' was first proposed by Kahn. The work was first established in Kahn's article, "Psychological Conditions of Personal Engagement and Disengagement at Work." It has since become widely used until today. According to Kahn (1990: 700), engagement can be defined as "the simultaneous employment and expression of a person's 'preferred self' in task behaviors that promote connections to work and to others, personal presence, and active full role performance."

After Kahn's research, numerous studies related to employee engagement were published (Maslach et al., 2001; Harter et al., 2002; Sak, 2006; Shuck, 2011). Moreover, practitioners continued to study employee engagement meaning among organizations. Some consulting firms have conducted research and developed models of employee engagement from new perspectives by trying to adapt the models to business type in both the private and public sectors. This is to propose options of improvement for businesses and increase their capability to utilize employee engagement leading to business success, its well-being, increase in profitability and boost its worker's morale (Towers, 2005).

In summary, the presence of employee engagement is well researched and widely accepted, and it has been grounded in empirical evidence. For example, numerous studies suggest that the presence of higher levels of employee engagement significantly reduce turnover intentions (Maslach et al., 2001; Saks, 2006; Shuck et al., 2011). Moreover, Donahue (2001, cited in Bhatnagar, 2008: 646) emphasized the credo of "heads, hands, and hearts," with the term "Hearts" meaning passion, a person's intrinsic motivation, which is the essence of employee engagement. In addition, empirical evidence suggests that the presence of high levels of employee engagement is also thought to enhance job performance, task performance, organizational citizenship behaviors, productivity, discretionary effort, affective commitment, continuance commitment, levels of psychological climate and service mindedness (Richman, 2006; Fleming & Asplund, 2007; Rich et al., 2010, Christian et al., 2011).

Several theses and dissertations have been carried out surrounding employee engagement in a Thai context. Firstly, Sumrankong (2004) who studied engagement in employees as a case study, "Developing the Measurement of Employee Engagement: A Case Study of Soomboon Group." The main objective was to create a measurement model to quantify the level of engagement in employees that belonged to the various companies in Soomboon Group. The research was based upon documentary research together with data collected from field research that consisted of management interviews and work processes from within the organization. The information formed the basis on which a questionnaire was created to be used in the development of the measurement model. The result was highly reliable at 0.8927. The high reliability score together with the comprehensiveness of the test groups allows a developed test to be used as a data collection tool that was valuable for the organization.

Suwannavey (2006) attempted to further develop the employee engagement model. During the literature review, the researcher discovered that while there had been many studies involving employee engagement; they had merely focused on measuring the level of engagement among employees in each organization. None had explicitly mentioned the antecedents of employee engagement to organization. Therefore, in this study, the main objective was to propose development model for employee engagement, so that it could be used to guide and adapted to numerous organizations in their own development. This study was documentary research, which involved analyzing previous research and academic literature surrounding the subject matter. Conclusions were made based on the analysis of the literature in order to conceptualize the Employee Engagement Model and also to present the methodologies to strengthen the engagement in employees with their organization. In this study, the researcher found that the opportunity to advance in job and career is a factor that can heavily influence whether employees opt to stay with an organization, because if an individual felt a lack of opportunity for growth it would cause negative emotions or feelings of job instability. It is, therefore, essential for the organization to communicate growth opportunities to their employees, which is aligned with Greenberg (2004), who researched employee satisfaction and engagement, and mentioned that one of the influencing factors that affects engagement in

employees and employee retention is the organization's ability to create opportunities for their employees to grow and make progress in their career. In addition, the employee's ability to contribute in the decision-making process can create engagement because employees' involvement and opinions, especially in their assigned tasks, allow them to feel a sense of pride that they were fully involved. Furthermore, the organization's openness to opinions on how the company is run and decision-making demonstrates its recognition for their employees. Lastly, the employees' feelings of being appreciated have the potential to increase their effectiveness. Thus, when employees acknowledge the fact that they are an important part of the organization they fully commit to their responsibilities, and, in addition, find ways to self-improve in order to help their work to meet its objectives and goals.

Antecedent to Employee Engagement

Wollard and Shuck (2011) developed a conceptual model of the known antecedents to employee engagement, which is shown in Table 1. Their study utilized a structured literature review and a total of 265 abstracts were reviewed. This model identified antecedents on two levels, namely, individual antecedents and organizational antecedents. Individual-level antecedents were defined as constructs, strategies, and conditions that were applied directly to or by individual employees and that were believed to be foundational to the development of employee engagement. Organizational-level antecedents were defined as constructs, strategies, and conditions that were applied across an organization as foundational to the development of employee engagement and the structural or systematic level. Table 1 identifies both individual and organizational antecedents as well as indicating which antecedents are empirically or conceptually driven as identified in the review of literature.

Table 1: Individual Level and Organizational Level Antecedents of Employee Engagement

Individual Antecedents to Employee Engagement	Organizational Antecedents to Employee Engagement
Absorption ^a	Authentic corporate culture ^a
Available to engage	Clear expectations ^a
Coping style	Corporate social responsibility ^a
Curiosity	Encouragement
Dedication ^a	Feedback
Emotional fit	Hygiene factors
Employee motivation	Job characteristics ^a
Employee/work/family status	Job control
Feelings of choice & control	Job fit ^a
Higher levels of corporate citizenship ^a	Leadership
Involvement in meaningful work ^a	Level of task challenge ^a
Link individual and organizational goals ^a	Manager expectations ^a
Optimism	Manager self-efficacy ^a
Perceived organizational support ^a	Mission and vision
Self-esteem, self efficacy	Opportunities for learning
Vigor ^a	Perception of workplace safety ^a
Willingness to direct personal energies	Positive workplace climate ^a
Work/life balance ^a	Rewards ^a
Core self evaluation ^a	Supportive organizational culture ^a
Value Congruence ^a	Talent management
Perceived Organizational Support ^a	Use of strengths ^a

Source: Wollard and Shuck (2011) Antecedents to Employee Engagement: A structure review of the Literature, *Advance in Developing Human Resources*, 13(4), p. 429-466.

Another research study from Shuck et al. (2011) developed the model of employee engagement and disengagement, which is shown in Figure 1. The researchers collected documents, conducted semi-structured interviews, and recorded observations at a large multinational service corporation. Post-data collection and content analysis were used to interpret engagement efforts and experiences. The model is comprised of two factors, the environment and the person. The environment is the reflection of all items in the environment such as the people, the physical space, the climate, etc. The person is the reflection of everything about the individual such as emotions, personality, physical traits, family, etc. These elements interact and produce either engagement and/or disengagement, which depending on whether negative or positive results. In this study, Shuck et al. (2011) found that environmental and personal elements interact to create either an engaging or a disengaging culture. The environment is composed of both tangible and intangible elements. Tangible elements are relationships with co-workers and supervisors as

well as organizational procedures. Intangible elements are trust, cooperation, being free from fear, community, attachment and learning. The person is composed of internal and external elements. The external elements are defined as items that affected the person but were manifested outside of the person and visible to others. The external elements include, for example, the person's family and their health. Internal elements are feelings and emotions such as confidence, trust, motivation, feelings of value, a desire to learn, ownership and the need for challenge.

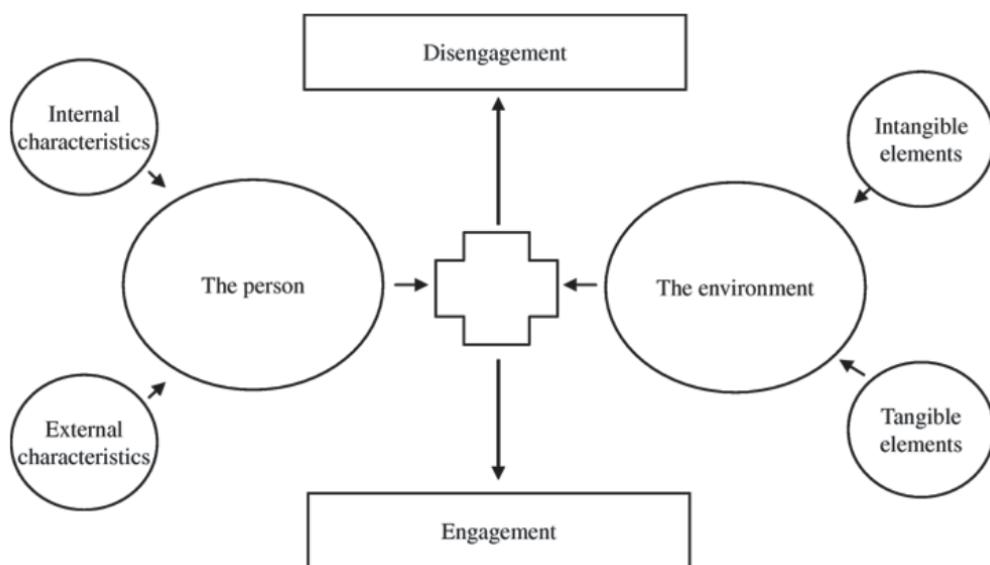


Figure 1: Emerging Model of Engagement and Disengagement

Source: Shuck et al. (2011) Exploring employee engagement from the employee perspective: implications for HRD, *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 35(4), p. 300-325.

The model suggested that, depending on the interaction between the person and the environment, engagement and disengagement could be a potential output. Furthermore, this model suggested that no single factor can alone contribute to the creation of engagement or disengagement at work. For example, a hostile workplace climate (i.e. an environmental factor as categorized by Kahn, 1990) must be perceived as such by the employee (i.e. a personal factor by Maslow, 1970). Thus, engagement or disengagement from this model was a holistic experience, perceived and then interpreted through the lens of each individual based on their own experience,

rationales and view of their context. Thus, the development of engagement could be affected by a variety of variables.

Based on an extensive literature review, the researcher proposed the conceptual model shown in Figure 2. The model proposes several relationships among these constructs which are explicitly stated to be tested. The constructs included in the model and their relationships will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

HRD role of talent management emerged from the literature reviews which consist of career development (Bhatnagar, 2008) and quality of supervisor (Ready & Conger, 2007). Shuck et al. (2011) stated that one of the most important aspects in talent management is the developing process that is directed by HRD roles. Moreover, Bhatnagar (2007) noted that the leaders play an important role in talent management. Empirically, the role of managers has been explored in extant, most notably from research using the satisfaction-engagement approach (Shuck, 2011). According to Hughes and Rog (2008) talent management ensures that organizations can successfully acquire and retain essential talent, who are considered to be thus engaged. Talent management is integral to engaging employees in the organization. This ability has become a primary determinant of organizational success (Morton, 2005).

Wolland and Shuck (2011: 433) mentioned that there are two levels of antecedents which are organization-level and personal-level. Organization-level antecedents are “constructs, strategies, and conditions that were applied across an organization as foundation to the development of employee engagement and the structural or systematic level”, whereas, individual-level antecedents are “constructs, strategies, and conditions that were applied directly to or by individual employees and that were believed to be foundational to the development of employee engagement”.

Literature reviews have argued that organization factors emerged from employer brand (Hughes & Rog, 2008) and its environment. Employer brand represents an organization's reputation as an employer. HRM interest in employer branding is due to the contemporary power of brands. HR's continuing search for credibility and increasing interest in employee engagement has coincided with tight labor market conditions (Jenner and Taylor, 2009). Ambler and Barrow (1996: 187)

first applied the concept of brand to HRM, viewing the employer as the brand and the employee as the consumer/customer. They define employer branding as “the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company”; employer branding therefore provides both instrumental (economic) and symbolic (psychological) benefits to employees. Moreover, environment consists of organizational culture (Sarangi & Srivastave, 2012), workplace climate (Dollard & Bakker, 2010), and good relationships with co-workers (Suwannavey, 2006).

Many empirical studies have investigated the enormous role of personality and individual factors of an employee's life both inside and outside of the workplace (Wollard and Shuck, 2011: 433). The perception by employees of organization support such as talent management system as a strategic tool to support employee growth have also been linked to the development of employee engagement as antecedents (May et al., 2004). Personal factors emerged from security (Bhatnager, 2008), pride (Doh et al., 2011), freedom (Mengue et al., 2012) and equity (Saks, 2006). In other words, the emotional perceptions are linked to the development of employee engagement. The combination of benefits different from others, reward based on performance and opportunity to participate in organization activities are all elements of personal factors.

The driving force behind the popularity of employee engagement is that it has positive consequences for organizations. As indicated earlier, there is a general belief that there is a correlation between employee engagement and business results (Harter et al., 2002). Its importance is highly regarded in many organizations and human resource professionals, especially when it comes to retaining talented people, creating loyalty, motivation, passion, engagement and an ongoing future with the organization. Additionally, empirical research has reported that engagement can predict outcomes. For example, engagement has been found to have positive influence on retention to stay (Bhatnagar, 2008). Consequently, employee engagement has a substantial impact on employee productivity and talent retention lastly; Saks (2006) found that engagement was positively related to OCB.

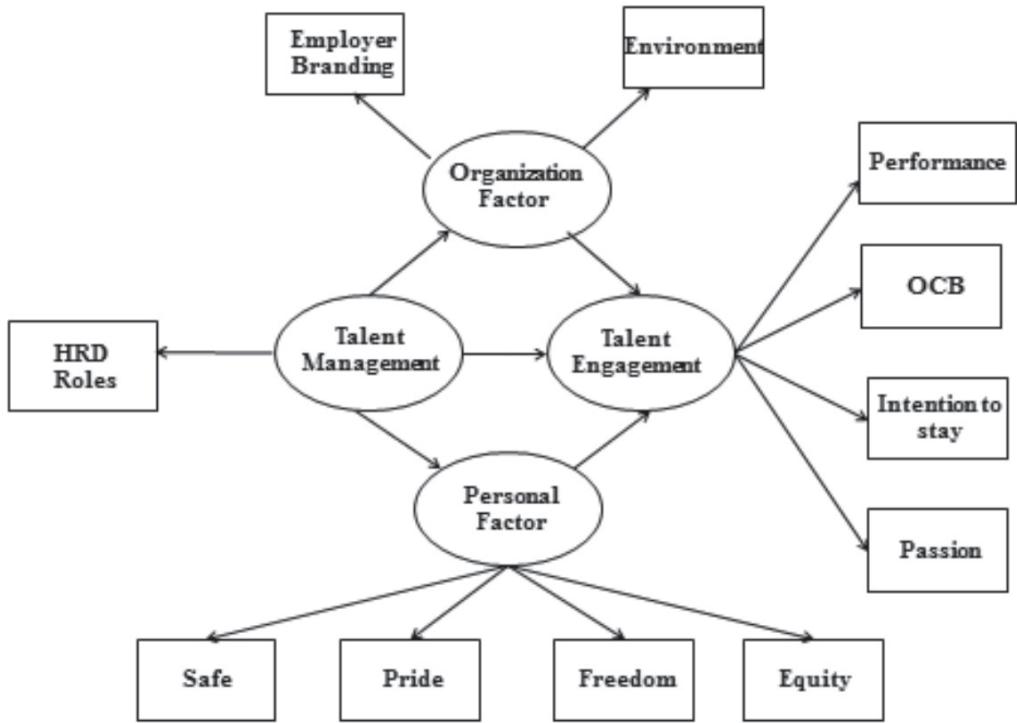


Figure 2: Conceptual Frameworks for the Study of Talent Engagement in Thailand

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study is to test the construct validity of a talent engagement measurement scale in Thailand.

Research Methods

Sample and Procedure

The data was collected from two independent samples of talented employees in HiPPS (public sector) and CP All (private sector). The number of talents in HiPPS and CP All are 255 and 177, respectively. Since the number of the total population is relatively small, this study utilizes the whole population. However, some questionnaires that were used in this study had been developed through literature review and adapted from previously developed and used instruments.

For the content validity of the instrument, researcher consulted a number of professors in the school of Human Resource Development, the National Institute of Development Administration. The pilot testing for validity and reliability of the questionnaire was then conducted after receiving approval from the committee. The author conducted the test on 50 talents in HiPPS and 50 talents in CP ALL to evaluate validity and reliability.

In order to develop a standardized instrument or a valid and effective research-based questionnaire to collect data from talent in HiPPS and CP All, the research procedure is: 1) review the existing literature related to talent, talent management, engagement and antecedents of employee engagement, 2) develop a preliminary questionnaire to define talent engagement that is appropriate for HiPPS and CP All's context 3) pilot testing of the questionnaires was done with IOC for content validity, Cronbach's Alpha for reliability. 4) the analysis technique used in this study was confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is used when researchers have some knowledge about the underlying structure of the construct they want to investigate (Pett et al., 2003) and to confirm a pattern of relationship "predicted on the basis of theory or previous analytic results" (DeVellis, 2003: 103).

Results

After setting the objective and hypothesis for conducting the research, review research-based evidence was needed in terms of the conducting questionnaires that can be used to identify employee engagement factors in talent employees in OCSC and CP All. Then, existing literature related to employee engagement, antecedents in employee engagement, talent, and talent management was searched and then reviewed. A number of existing studies were reviewed in order to initially develop questionnaires to measure talent engagement. A questionnaire was used to collect data; the majority of the queries are closed-ended questions. The content of the questionnaire items was directly tied to the major themes that emerged from the literature review.

After having developed the questions from studying the literature review, this researcher used item-objective congruence (IOC) to test content validity. The content experts who were invited to perform the IOC process had specific

knowledge about the matter, were familiar with the study and understand their organization's culture. After the analysis of the IOC results, changes were made according to the suggestions of the experts and advisor. After performing the content validity assessment, the researcher developed a questionnaire draft for pilot testing. The questionnaire had 93 items which was divided into five parts. The questions in Part 1 consisted of 7 close-ended questions related to personal information. The questions in Part 2 were 15 closed-end questions with regards to human resource development and talent management in organizations. The questions in Part 3 consisted of 47 closed-end questions regarding participant's perception toward their organization and the supporting factors that influence their engagement with the organization. The questions in Part 4 are 22 closed-end questions which asked the respondent to evaluate their level of engagement toward their organization. Finally, Part 5 was made up of two questions asking for the respondent's suggestions as to how to improve the level of talent engagement.

Reliability was tested for consistency and stability. Coefficient alphas were used to determine the reliability of scales and the overall instrument. The Cronbach's Alpha is a test reliability technique that requires only a single test administration to provide a unique estimate of the reliability for a given test and it is the tool that ensures that there is no correct or incorrect answer to each item (McMillan, 1996). A Cronbach Alpha above 0.90 is considered to be highly reliable, and those between 0.79 and 0.89 are moderately reliable (Borg & Gall, 1989). Correlation coefficients below 0.60 generally indicate a test is inadequate or at least has a weak reliability (Cronbach, 1951).

The coefficients α for all constructs and sub scales are provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Coefficient α for all Constructs and Sub-scale (n = 97)

Item	<i>Coefficient α</i>
HRD Role	0.919
Personal Factor	0.972
• Job Safety	0.901
• Pride	0.952
• Freedom	0.905
• Equity	0.933
Organizational Factor	0.942
• Employee Branding	0.877
• Environment	0.930
Talent Engagement	0.967
• OCB	0.896
• Passion	0.950
• Intention to Stay	0.928
• Performance	0.870

As shown in Table 2, the internal consistency reliabilities for all of the constructs HRD role, personal factor, organization factor and talent engagement – as assessed by Cronbach's alpha coefficient, exceeded level of .70 (from $\alpha = .87$ to $\alpha = .95$). Thus, the measures tended to be reliable. Additionally, this study also assessed the internal consistency for each sub-dimension of the measurement-four dimensions of personal factors measure, two items of organization factors measure and four items of talent engagement measure. The results also demonstrate that the measures for four factors were reliable instruments in this context (coefficient alpha ranges from .87 to .96).

As a result of these tests, the questionnaire after pilot testing has been modified. In Part 2, one question was deleted leaving a total of 14 questions. One question was deleted and one question was revised in Part 3 giving the section 46 questions. Finally, in Part 4, there were three questions which needed to be adjusted, but the overall number of questions remained the same with 22 questions after measure reliability. The results have shown that questionnaires developed for the purposes of this study are suitable to measure the talent engagement in Thailand. In conclusion, the questionnaire that has been refined can be implemented as a tool to collect high-quality data for the organization and can be considered as a standardized, valid and effective research-based questionnaire to collect data. The final version of the questionnaire was used to collect data from 350 talented employees in HiPPS and CP All.

Results of the correlation analyses for all variables are provided in Table 3. According to Table 3, there was a statistically significant relationship with the antecedents. As expected, there was a significant and positive correlation among the antecedents of HRD roles, personal factor and organization factor. However, talent engagement showed few statistically significant relationships with antecedents except passion.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Matrix for all Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	1													
2	.81**	1												
3	.70**	.79**	1											
4	.74**	.83**	.80**	1										
5	.12*	-.01	.28**	.11*	1									
6	-.03	-.16**	.18*	-.04	.71**	1								
7	-.06	-.17**	.10	-.01	.60**	.64**	1							
8	-.07	-.23**	.09	-.04	.69**	.71**	.83**	1						
9	-.14**	-.27**	.01	-.09	.63**	.70**	.77**	.83**	1					
10	-.01	-.11*	.13*	.02	.65**	.70**	.69**	.75**	.77**	1				
11	-.04	-.16**	.15**	-.03	.71**	.77**	.73**	.78**	.76**	.75**	1			
12	-.03	-.16**	.03	-.07	.53**	.58**	.50**	.51**	.53**	.54**	.64**	1		
13	-.06	-.21**	.07	-.06	.70**	.71**	.68**	.71**	.76**	.67**	.74**	.67**	1	
14	-.06	-.21**	.07	-.05	.61**	.73**	.74**	.77**	.76**	.69**	.74**	.47**	.74**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

1 = OCB

2 = Passion

3 = Intension to stay

4 = Performance

5 = Employer branding

6 = Environment

7 = Safe (Clear of career growth)

8 = Pride (Benefit different from other)

9 = Pride (Reward based on performance)

10 = Pride (Opportunity to participate with organization's activity)

11 = Freedom (Autonomy to work)

12 = Freedom (Work life balance)

13 = Equity (Procedural Justice)

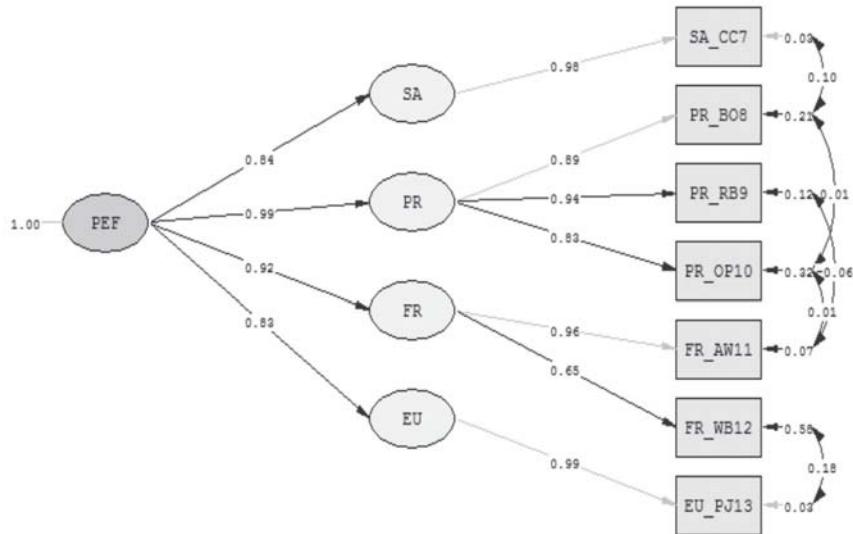
14 = HRD Role

In this study, the results of both the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's test of Sphericity were acceptable, allowing the researcher to proceed with the factor analysis: HRD Roles was shown the KMO (0.848) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (chi-square = 1196.225, sig = 0.000), Personal Fit was shown the KMO (0.957) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (chi-square = 9965.092, sig = 0.000), Organizational Fit was shown the KMO (0.935) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (chi-square = 4579.479, sig = 0.000), and Talent Engagement was shown the KMO (0.962) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (chi-square = 7436.620, sig = 0.000). The measurement models were assessed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988), using the program LISREL 9.1 (Joreskog & Sorbom, 2005). A confirmatory factor model, also called a "measurement model" was identified to determine whether the latent variables were defined. The main focus of the measurement model is to evaluate the reliability and validity of each construct. Moreover, while CFA indicates the relationships among observed variables underlying the latent variables, the structural model specifies relationships among the latent variables (Schumaker & Lomax, 2004). Model specification is the first step in analyzing a confirmatory factor model by developing a theoretical model (Schumaker & Lomax, 2004). In this study, the measurement model consisted of three constructs: Personal Factor, Organizational Factor, and Talent Engagement, which were then assessed.

To examine the model fit, several fit indices were used, including chi-square (χ^2), chi-square/df (χ^2/df), The other indices included the two most important indices: the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), as recommended by Coovort and Craiger (2000). In addition, the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), which is commonly considered in CFA's, the Normed Fit Index (NFI), the Non-normed Fit Index (NNFI), and the Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) were used to assess the quality of the variance-covariance matrices. The cutoff values of indices are described in Table 4.

Table 4: Overall Fit Indices of SEM Model

Index	Cutoff Values	Authors
χ^2/df	<5 and >1	Bollen (1989)
RMSEA, root mean square error of approximation	<0.05 good well 0.05~0.08 reasonable 0.08~0.10 tolerable	Browne and Cudeck (1989)
CFI, comparative fit index	>0.90	Bentler and Bonnett (1980)
GFI, Goodness of fit index	>0.90	Bentler and Bonnett (1980)
NFI, Normed fit index	>0.90	Hoyle (1995)
NNFI, Nonnormed fit index	>0.90	Bentler and Bonnett (1980)
RMR, root mean square residual	<0.1	Chin, Gopal and Newsted (1997)



Chi-Square=13.23, df=7, P-value=0.06670, RMSEA=0.050

Figure 3: The Results of Construct Validity of the Personal Factor

Model Fit Indices	Results of Model Fit	Assessments of Model Fit
Chi-Square	13.23	Acceptable
Degree of Freedom	7	Acceptable
RMSEA	0.0504	Good Well
CFI	0.998	Acceptable
GFI	0.989	Acceptable
NFI	0.996	Acceptable
NNFI	0.995	Acceptable
RMR	0.0197	Acceptable

Figure 3 demonstrates that the CFA Model of personal factor yielded high goodness of fit indices. It shows, chi-square = 13.23, degree of freedom = 7, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.0504, a comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.998, normed fit index (NFI) = 0.996, nonnormed fit index (NNFI) = 0.995, and root mean square residual (RMR) = 0.0197. However, recommended values for GFI above 0.85 are also acceptable (Hadjistavropoulos, Frombach, & Asmundson, 1999; Hair et al., 1998). These results indicate that the model fits the data as hypothesized well. In Figure 3.2, to compare factor loading of all sub-scales can show that pride has the highest factor loading (0.99), then freedom (0.92), safe (0.84) and equity (0.83) respectively

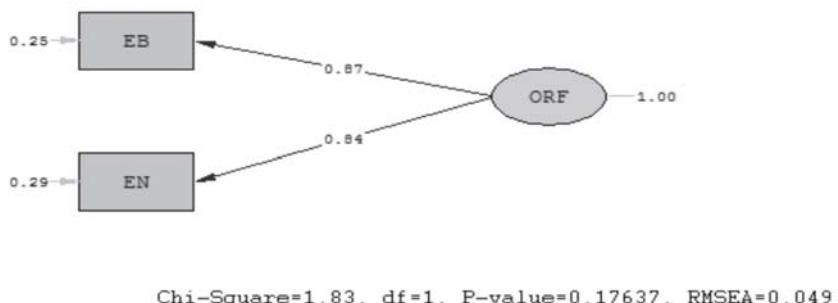


Figure 4: The Results of Construct Validity of Organization Factor

Model Fit Indices	Results of Model Fit	Assessments of Model Fit
Chi-Square	1.828	Acceptable
Degree of Freedom	1	Acceptable
RMSEA	0.049	Good Well
CFI	0.995	Acceptable
GFI	0.995	Acceptable
NFI	0.989	Acceptable
NNFI	0.995	Acceptable
RMR	0.0165	Acceptable

Figure 4 demonstrates that the CFA Model of organization factor yielded high goodness of fit indices. It shows, chi-square = 1.828, degree of freedom = 1, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.049, a comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.995, normed fit index (NFI) = 0.989, nonnormed fit index (NNFI) = 0.995, and root mean square residual (RMR) = 0.0165. However, recommended values for GFI above 0.85 are also acceptable (Hadjistavropoulos, Frombach, & Asmundson, 1999; Hair et al., 1998). These results indicate that the model fits the data as hypothesized well. In Figure 3.3, to compare factor loading of all sub-scales can show that employer branding has the highest factor loading (0.87) then environment (0.84).

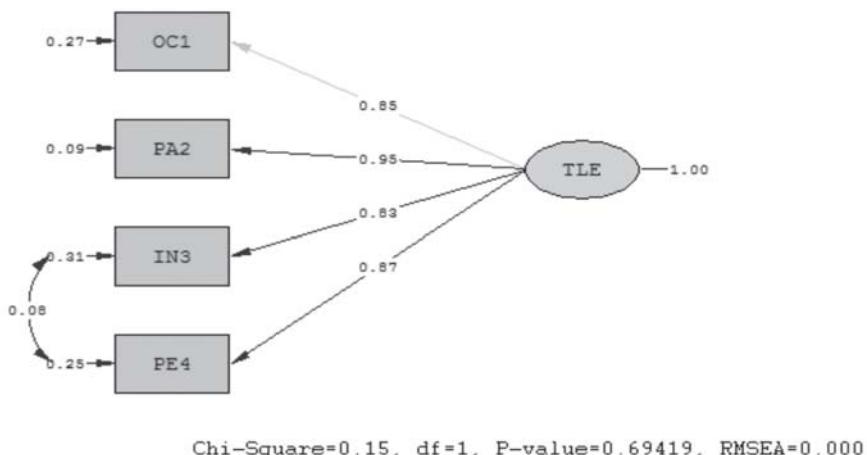


Figure 5: The Results of Construct Validity of Talent Engagement

Model Fit Indices	Results of Model Fit	Assessments of Model Fit
Chi Square	0.155	Acceptable
Degree of Freedom	1	Acceptable
RMSEA	0.0	Good Well
CFI	1	Acceptable
GFI	1	Acceptable
NFI	1	Acceptable
NNFI	1	Acceptable
RMR	0.00212	Acceptable

Figure 5 demonstrates that the CFA Model of talent engagement yielded high goodness of fit indices. It shows, chi-square = 0.155, degree of freedom = 1, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.0, a comparative fit index (CFI) = 1, normed fit index (NFI) = 1, nonnormed fit index (NNFI) = 1, and root mean square residual (RMR) = 0.00212. However, recommended values for GFI above 0.85 are also acceptable (Hadjistavropoulos, Frombach, &Asmundson, 1999; Hair et al., 1998). These results indicate that the model fits the data as hypothesized well. In Figure 3.4, to compare factor loading of all sub-scales can show that passion has the highest factor loading (0.95), then performance (0.87), OCB (0.85) and intention to stay (0.83) respectively.

Discussion

The construct of employee engagement has been a source of interested for both practitioners and professionals. A number of questionnaires have been developed to measure this construct and used on an internationally basis. However, the employee engagements questionnaires which are exclusively developed only for the group defined as 'Talented' have not been developed yet. The results of this study provide support for the validity and reliability of the questionnaires as an acceptable measure of talented engagement.

Pilot tests were conduct to ensure the existence of high reliability. The final internal consistencies (i.e., coefficient α) of all constructs are provided in Table 2, and every construct has reliability estimates, ranging from 0.355 to 0.910. However,

items that have a low coefficient have been subsequently revised. As expected, the development process and quality of supervisor are elements of the talent management process which as seen as part of the responsibility of the HRD field. D'Annunzio-Green (2008: 815) described this process as having a direct influence on the commitment and engagement that employees have to their organization. Moreover, there are two antecedent factors, Personal Factor and Organizational Factor. Personal Factor consists of Job Safety, Pride, Freedom and Equity. Organizational Factor is made up of employer branding and environment. All constructs in HRD Roles, Talent Management, Personal Factor and Organizational Factor capture the significant components of the talented engagement construct as described by Shuck et al. (2011). The construct validity of the talented engagement scale was further examined through a CFA that examined the fit of a theoretical-based model of talent engagement. Based on the results of both coefficients and CFA, it appears that the talent engagement measurement is a fairly reliable and valid measurement instrument that effectively reflects talent engagement in the assessment of talent management system, personal factor and organizational factor.

In conclusion, this study offered both academic and practical benefits by proposing a developed questionnaire to measure engagement for the talented group. The questionnaire was developed from the results of the existing literature review and followed all the necessary steps in order to ensure that it was both valid and reliable. By empirically confirming what has been already generally accepted, the results of this study could be instrumental in the advancement of future empirical talented engagement research. Moreover, the benefits in this study will allow top management and organization to understand the approach in which they can develop engagement of talented employees to the organization.

Despite its contributions, the present study has at least two important limitations. First, the population consisted of particular organizations, and the number of population is quite small, which could affect the generalizability of these results. However, because of the definition of "talent" is the primary focus of the High Performance High Potential system, it would seem fit to selected samples at this preliminary stage. Nevertheless, future research should determine whether the results found here generalize other samples of interest. Second, while the current

study assessed the antecedents of employee engagement and divided into two factors based on literature reviews, there were factors that are not included in this study such as personality, job fit and leadership. Therefore, future research should add more factors in the talent engagement model.

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