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TARANDIĞIMIZ INDEXLER



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İÇİNDEKİLER

Yıl: 2019 / Cilt: 21 Sayı: 2

SIRA	MAKALE BAŞLIĞI	SAYFA NUMARALARI
1	Araş. Gör. Irmak AKSOY Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ebru TOLAY “Psikolojik Güçlendirmenin Değişime Yatkınlık Üzerindeki Etkileri”	5
2	Doç. Dr. Elbeyi PELİT, Öğr. Gör. Esra KATIRCIOĞLU “Turizm İşletmelerinde İnsan Kaynakları Yönetimi Açısından Sendikal Faaliyetler ve Sorunlar Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme	25
3	Dr. Muhammed Esat ERDOĞAN “Developing A Scale of Talent Management: A Study on Telecommunication Professionals in Turkey”	51
4	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Oğuzhan AYTAR “Endüstri 4.0 ve Bu Paradigmanın Örgüt Yönetimi Üzerindeki Olası Etkileri”	79
5	Dr. Mehmet Fatih KARACABEY, Dr. Kıvanç BOZKUŞ “Psikolojik Sağlamlığın, Tükenmişlik, İş Tatmini ve Örgütsel Bağlılığa Etkisi: Suriyeli Göçmenlerin Türkçe Öğretmenleri Üzerinde Bir Uygulama”	95
6	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Elif Tuğba DOĞAN “Güvencesiz Çalışma ve Mücadele Biçimleri Açısından José Luis Valle'nin Workers (İşçiler) Filminin Değerlendirilmesi”	115

DEVELOPING A SCALE OF TALENT MANAGEMENT: A STUDY ON TELECOMMUNICATION PROFESSIONALS IN TURKEY¹

YETENEK YÖNETİMİ ÖLÇEĞİ GELİŞTİRİLMESİ: TÜRKİYE'DE TELEKOMÜNİKASYON PROFESYONELLERİ ÜZERİNE BİR ÇALIŞMA

Dr. Muhammed Esat Erdoğan²

ÖZET

Bu çalışma yetenek yönetimi ölçeği geliştirerek mevcut literatüre değerli bir katkı sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Literatür taraması ve uzman geribildirimleri sonrasında yazar yirmi altı maddeden oluşan beş dereceli Likert tipi ölçek geliştirmiştir. İlk olarak, İstanbul'da telekomünikasyon sektöründe çalışan 134 katılımcı örnek üzerinde bir pilot çalışma yapılmıştır. Anket, pilot çalışma sonuçları ile akademisyen ve uzman görüşlerine göre yeniden gözden geçirilmiş ve gerekli düzeltmeler yapılmıştır. Toplam 751 telekomünikasyon çalışanı işyerlerindeki yetenek yönetimi uygulamaları üzerindeki algılarına dayanarak ankete yanıt vermiştir. Anket verileri üzerinde faktör yapısını bulmak için faktör analizi kullanılmıştır. Açıklayıcı faktör analizinin sonucu olarak, iki maddede hariç tutulmuş ve toplam varyansın %67,3'ünü açıklayan dört faktörlü bir yapı çıkartılmıştır. Her bir faktörde yer alan maddeler birbirleriyle oldukça ilişkilidir. Bu faktörler şu şekilde adlandırılmıştır: 1. Eğitim ve gelişim, 2. Kariyer yönetimi, 3. Çalışan seçimi ve işe alım, 4. Performans yönetimi. Ölçeğin güvenirliği 0.951 olarak gerçekleşmiştir. Bu dört faktör tutarlı ve güvenilirdir. Doğrulayıcı faktör analizdeki uyum indeksleri, dört faktörlü yetenek yönetim modelinin yeterli düzeyde uyum gösterdiğini ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yetenek, yetenek yönetimi, ölçek geliştirme, telekomünikasyon profesyonelleri

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ABSTRACT

This study is expected to make a valuable contribution to the existing literature by developing a scale of talent management. After reviewing the literature and getting expert feedback, the author developed a five-point Likert type scale that consisted of twenty-six items. Firstly, a pilot study was conducted on a sample of 134 participants who work in the telecommunication sector in Istanbul. The questionnaire was reviewed and necessary corrections were made according to the results of the pilot study and the opinions of academicians and experts. A total of 751 telecommunication employees responded to the questionnaire based on their perceptions on talent management practices in their workplaces. Factor analysis was used to find the factor structure on the survey data. As a result of exploratory factor analysis, two items were excluded from the scale and a four-factor solution was extracted that explained 67.3% of the total variance. The items that were included in each factor were quite relevant. These factors were labeled as 1. Training and Development, 2. Career Management, 3. Employee Recruitment and Selection, and 4. Performance Management. The reliability of the scale was 0.951. The four factors were consistent and reliable. The fit indexes in the confirmatory factor analysis showed that the talent management model with four factors indicates a reasonable fit.

Keywords: Talent, talent management, scale development, telecommunication professionals

INTRODUCTION

We are living in an era where business environment is changing so fast. Business markets have changed rapidly and become more competitive. Technological changes and the pace of innovation are expanding at an accelerating rate. The demand for qualified “knowledge workers” continues to increase in the newly created jobs. It is essential to fill new positions that require complex skills in new industries. Human and intellectual capital is the key strategic resource in today’s economy. Building human capital is the main source of competitive advantage (Barlett & Ghoshal, 2002). As Professor Klaus Schwab, the Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum, states that “The success of any national and business model for competitiveness in the future will be less based on capital and much more based on talent.” He defines this transition as “moving from capitalism to talentism”. Organizations have obliged to conduct and strengthen effective talent management practices.

The topic of talent management continues to receive a high level of attention as “talent deficit” is growing in today’s world. The workforce trends such as unfavorable demographic changes, rapidly aging population and increasing mobility have increased interest in talent management. Talent management has become widespread intention of the researchers and the practitioners. It is generating increased concern in both academic circles and professional life. In recent years, it has been one of the most discussed issues in human resource (HR) management theory. According to the findings of a research project, talent management is one of the most important HR areas and among the highest priorities (BCG, 2014).

The biggest challenge that companies confront is to retain talented employees, according to the Human Resource and Salary Survey conducted by Randstad (2017) with 233 decision makers from companies operating in different sectors in Turkey. 41.2% of the participants responded that the main challenge of HR was “retaining the best employees” and 39.1% of them responded “managing salary expectations” as the second biggest challenge. While “attracting talent” settled in the third place with 38.2%, “increasing performance and productivity” was the fourth main challenge with 37.3%. One fourth of the participants responded that “creating and maintaining a good working environment” was the main HR challenge. According to the results of the survey, the most important factors for attracting talented employees were having a strong employer brand, offering a competitive salary package and a strong value employee proposition. Uncompetitive salaries and weak corporate reputation were among

the most important reasons for the inability to attract talented people. This study gives guidance and important ideas about the HR trends and some of the leading talent management practices. Organizations should take into account the challenges and implement talent management practices effectively in order to attract and retain high talented employees.

Importance of the Study

A good research requires a good measurement and appropriate measurement instruments are necessary for theoretical progress. There are some instruments to measure talent management practices. Chen (2012) developed a strategic talent management practice scale including five subsystems of strategic job identification, competence training, performance evaluation, development, compensation and benefits. Snell and Dean (1992) explored the issues related to selective staffing, comprehensive training, developmental performance appraisal, equitable reward systems. Bae and Lawler (2000) used highly selective staffing and extensive training scales adapted from Snell and Dean (1992). Sun, Aryee, & Law (2007) developed a scale that consist of 27 items to measure the high-performance human resource practices regarding selective staffing, extensive training, internal mobility, employment security, clear job description, results-oriented appraisal, incentive reward, and participation. Oehley (2007) made a study by using talent management scale that had 8 sub-dimensions: (1) displaying a talent management mindset, (2) attracting and recruiting talent, (3) identifying and differentiating talented employees, (4) developing others, (5) establishing and maintaining positive relationships, (6) providing meaningful and challenging work, (7) remunerating and rewarding fairly, and (8) managing work-life balance.

The topic of talent management still remains lacking in empirical research (Collings & Mellahi 2009; Lewis & Heckman 2006) and there are not sufficient existing scales to measure talent management practices in organizations. The present talent management literature is conceptual and has a narrow approach. It mainly focuses on the description of talent management, the intended outcomes of talent management and talent management practices (Thunnissen, Boselie, & Fruytier, 2013). This study aims to provide a valuable contribution to the existing literature by developing a new scale to measure talent management.

The Buzzword: Talent Management

It is useful to look at what is meant by "talent" in order to understand "talent management". Talent identification is one of key aspects of talent management (McDonnell, 2011). According to a dictionary definition, talent is "a special ability or aptitude". It can be described as the combination of the concepts of "Triumph, Ability, Leadership, Easiness, New-Fangled, and Time" (Deb, 2005 p.19). The world "talent" became popular with McKinsey & Company consultants' survey in 1997 and the book called "The War for Talent" stating that "better talent is worth fighting for". According to this study, talent was defined as "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." (Michaels, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod, 2001) Talent management is "the implementation of integrated strategies or systems designed to increase workplace productivity by developing improved processes for attracting, developing, retaining and utilizing people with the required skills and aptitude to meet current and future business needs" (Lockwood, 2006). It can be defined as a management process in which "human resource" is located at the center that aims systematically to close the gaps between the needed skills and the available capabilities in order to cope with the difficulties

that the company is facing and to reach its goals by implementing its strategies into practice (Çırpan & Şen, 2009).

Talent is a vital thing in corporate performance. It has been frequently stated that people are the key organizational resource and the preeminent factor to achieving outstanding performance (Pfeffer, 1994; Delaney & Huselid, 1996). Heinen & Oneill, (2004) defined that talent management is not administrative human resource practice, it is also a critical business process. It is not about achieving specific turnover rates or developing employees, nor is it about creating succession plans. It exists to support making money which is the organization’s overall objective in business (Cappelli, 2008). According to Cheese (2008), talent drives improvements in quality, productivity, customer satisfaction and innovation that in turn nourish the bottom-line results (Grobler & Diedericks, 2009). Talent management is one of the primary determining components for long-term organizational success and sustainability (Mcdonnell, 2011). The relationship between talent management and organizational performance/success has been studied by a number of researchers. According to the findings of these studies, effective talent management strategies and practices have a significant and positive relationship with organizational performance (Karunathilaka, Yajid, & Khatibi, 2015). Delaney & Huselid (1996) found positive links between human resources management (HRM) practices (staffing selectivity, training, incentive compensation) and organizational performance. Huselid, Jackson, & Schuler’s (1997) study also supported that HRM effectiveness is a potential source of competitive advantage and significantly associated with firm performance. Talent management practices also affect a variety of employee outcomes that influence the bottom line results (Karurı, 2015; Oladapo, 2014).

Talent management systems mainly focus on the discrete stages of the “Employee Life Cycle” (ELC). There are various ELC stages and several key elements of talent management but this study generally includes: employee recruitment and selection, performance management, training & development (T&D), and career management. Employee recruitment and selection is a set of processes of attracting and choosing the right candidates for job vacancies. It is very critical to make certain that “the right person is in the right job at the right time” (Jackson & Schuler, 1990). Employee selection process includes identifying the required candidate personnel and designing a pool of candidates through internal and external resources and selecting the most appropriate ones by using various methods. Talent can be found from two different sources –internal and external. Internal recruitment practice is one of the ways to build up a talent pool within an organization. With the development of a talent pool, the most successful performers and potentials are candidates for filling vacant positions. Talent pool can be acquired by incumbent employees. This method (internal talent pipeline) has some advantages. Todd Dewett and Liz Christensen, authors of ‘Leadership Redefined’ (Dewett & Christense, 2008) argued that “Rely more heavily on internal resources. To the extent that they exist, use internal professionals to develop and deliver training that is currently outsourced” (Adkins, 2010). However, external recruitment has also some advantages that it can provide fresh skills and perspective. It may also give advantage if the organization wants innovation and cultural change.

Every organization has its own unique set of talent requirements that are extremely important to reach the organizational success. Some organizations give enormous importance to attract and recruit employees, but put little effort into developing and retaining talent. Starting with the correct employee rather than trying to train an incapable person is one of the critical factors in superior success. According to Douglas Bray, a reputable pioneer in the field of organizational and industrial psychology, “If you have only one dollar to spend on either improving the way you develop people or improving your selection and hiring process, pick the latter” (Richard, Audrey, & Scott, 2011). Recruiting the right

person is more meaningful than trying to develop an inappropriate person within the organization. As Lyle Spencer (1990) states "Why try to teach a chicken to climb a tree, when you can hire a squirrel?" (Berger & Berger, 2004, p. 344) A CEO rejected management development programs by saying "Why should we develop people when our competitors are willing to do it for us?" (Cappelli, 2008). However, some organizations give considerable importance to learning, personel growth, and individual advancement. It is necessary for managers to analyze employees' training needs and to establish objective criteria in the process of determining these needs and to make a fair assessment in accordance with the equality of opportunity principle. Talent development programs must balance with the needs of individuals in order to achieve agile and high performing organizations. Otherwise, inconsistent training and development programs become time consuming and costly. Training and development practices should also be aligned to the business strategies and policies. From orientation programs to leadership development, the development practices include on-the-job experience intertwined with other learning opportunities. A talent development strategy should include the following elements (Davis, Cutt, Flynn, Mowl, & Orme, 2016): (a) assesment of capabilities, competencies, and potential, (b) training need analysis, (c) training programme, (d) impact assesment of the training programme

Training and development programs have been found to have greater impact on productivity. Success in T&D practices is measured in terms of gaining effective business results. Bartel's (1994) study showed the significant effects of employee training programs on productivity growth. Investments in T&D activities produce positive organizational and employee outcomes. The opportunities for the development of employees' talents are linked to employee engagement in the organization. Reduced allocation of training and development resources may result in low motivation and performance. An organization might be able to correct staffing problems by training employees (Shaw, Delery, Jenkins, & Gupta, 1998; Goldstein, 1980).

Performance management is a crucial part of talent management process. The right "dashboard" of measures and metrics helps organizations to monitor and maximize performance. You cannot manage talents unless you measure. The principle of "what gets measured gets done" is ascribed to Mason Haire in the following context: "What gets measured gets done. If you are looking quick ways to change how an organization behaves, change the measurement system" (Thompson, 2001, p.132). As Bill Gates, founder of Microsoft, states that "people behave as they are measured". Performance evaluation system is used in the organizations to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of their employees. One of the performance evaluation and development tools that has gained popularity is the 360-degree performance evaluation system. Peers, supervisors, subordinates, customers -if applicable-, and own self assessments complete the circle. It is a valuable measurement tool to observe employee job performance and can be very helpful for improving employees' performance. Most practitioners hold with an opinion that the use of more raters leads to more accurate results for performance appraisals (Church & Bracken, 1997). Besides, performance management models require an individual approach. One size does not fit all. Berger & Berger (2004) segmented an organization's workforce into four categories: Superkeepers (those who greatly exceeds expectations), Keepers (those who exceeds expectations), Solid Citizens (those who meets expectations), and Misfits (below-average performers).

Performance appraisals and giving feedback are critical that can lead to positive changes in the behavior of employees. This has become a growing trend to establish a culture for continuous learning and provide feedback for employees to improve performance. An effective coaching process plays an important role to guide employees in the performance evaluation progress. But ambiguous, lacking, or inconsistent feedback results undesirably. In many cases, employees become demotivated rather

than motivated, and so performance appraisals and feedback decrease rather than increase performance (Latham, Almost, Mann, & Moore, 2005). The review of actual and potential performance is also critical for developing a gap analysis. Performance evaluation processes provide guidelines in evaluating employee strengths and needs for training and development. These performance evaluation results are the basis for career plan and a part of career development. In order to discover talent in any organization, Waheed & Zaim (2015) proposed a model for talent management and career planning based on various evaluation criteria consisting of employees’ qualifications and performance. This substantially affects development, pay and career opportunities.

Career management is an important part of talent management. It can be defined as “attempts to influence the way the careers of one or more people develop” (Arnold, 1997, p.1). Career management is the support of the individual’s career plan with the organization’s career development tools (Özden, 2001). Career management can be grouped into two categories: organizational and individual career management. Sturges, Guest, Conway, & Davey (2002) defined that “organizational career management is largely planned and managed by the organization, in contrast, career self-management is under the control of the individual”. The latter “involves two main behaviors: one related to continuous improvement in one’s current job; developmental feedback seeking; and the other related to movement: job mobility preparedness” (Kossek, Roberts, Fisher, & Demarr, 1998). Developmental feedback is important for understanding performance and developmental needs. Job mobility preparedness is the level of being ready to take action on career opportunities. Many companies increasingly encourage their employees to involve in career self-management activities and become actively engaged in their own careers (Kossek, Roberts, Fisher, & Demarr, 1998). It is important that organizational and individual career planning should be in the same direction. Sturges, Guest, Conway, & Davey’s (2002) study confirmed that career self-management is also important for increasing formal career support such as training and development plan. Employees need to enhance career self-management activities in order to get organizational help in career management. There is a ‘vicious circle’ where career self-management reinforces organizational career management and vice versa.

Expectations and priorities are changing so fast and they vary from person to person. But employees have also many basic expectations like career development. They are more willing to manage their own career development. Managers are primarily responsible for implementing career management practices in organizations. They try to make effective career planning to meet the existing and future workforce needs. For increasing career ambitions of “high potentials” and “high performers”, long-term career planning and well-defined career paths are required. It is also required for organizations to offer career management practices equally to their employees. It is necessary to avoid subjective evaluations in the career management progress. It should be fair, transparent and impartial. It is also necessary for organizations to give importance to career management and offer career opportunities for many purposes such as improving employee engagement and lowering turnover rate. People-centered organizations use a variety of tools to motivate their employees. Career development opportunities increase the level of employee engagement. Employees have more positive feelings about their organizations with effective career management practices. Making career plans and creating career opportunities for the highly qualified workforce is also very important for talent retention. Chen, Chang, & Yeh (2004) asserted that the larger the gap between career development programs and career needs, the lower the level of job satisfaction and the higher the level of turnover intentions. Employees are more likely to stay in the organization when their career needs are satisfied.

Research Methodology

Data Collection

In this study, two types of data is used: (a) Primary data is gathered by content analysis from literature, academic articles and books. Gathered information is filtered by the author who is already an expert in HR practices. By this way, the topics to be included in the interviews (to be utilized by secondary data) are determined. (b) Secondary data is provided from the interviews with seven HR managers (from three major Turkish telecommunication companies) who have expertise on talent management issues in Turkey. These experts contributed to the study by reviewing, suggesting and validating the items of talent management that are defined at the end of primary data collection and analysis. The questionnaire was originally developed in English and then translated into Turkish.

The research method in this article is empirical in order to test validity and reliability of the questionnaire. This study includes two data sets that the participants rated the defined items in a 5-point Likert Scale. A pilot study was conducted on a sample of 134 participants who work in the telecommunication sector in Istanbul, Turkey. After that, 1422 questionnaires were distributed to blue & white collar workers, and a total of 751 telecommunication employees participated to the second survey in the regions of Istanbul, Kocaeli, and Sakarya.

Scale Development

This study was based on the following systematic seven-step process for scale development and analysis to produce reliable and valid scales (Hinkin, Tracey, & Enz, 1997): 1- Item Generation (Create items), 2- Content Adequacy Assessment (Test for conceptual consistency of items), 3- Questionnaire Administration (Determine the scale for items, and an adequate sample size, administer questions with other established measures), 4- Factor Analysis (Exploratory to reduce the set of items and confirmatory to test the significance of the scale), 5- Internal Consistency Assessment (Determine the reliability of the scale), 6- Construct Validity (Determine the convergent and criterion-related validity), 7- Replication (Repeat the scale-testing process with a new data set)

The study was based on a systematic process to produce reliable and valid results in order to design a new scale. Deductive scale development method was used as a guide for generating items. This approach to item development requires an extensive study on relevant literature. The content adequacy of the items was reviewed by experts and academicians. Seven experts on HRM issues discussed the item pool that was composed of thirty-nine items. Based on the opinions of experts and the review of the existing literature on talent management practices, a new instrument that contains twenty-six items was developed. Each item in this instrument was designed to measure a practice that is directly related to the sub-concept of talent management. These items were created to assess four major dimensions of talent management: employee recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management, and career management.

The new scale to measure talent management was designed on the basis of the review of existing literature and the pilot study results. The opinions of experts and academicians were also taken into account to define the various key dimensions of talent management. The questions in the survey are related with the following twenty-six items:

1- *Person-Job Fit in Employee Selection*: Person-Job Fit refers to the matching the knowledge, skills and abilities of employees to the demands and characteristics of jobs (Edwards, 1991). There must be

a fit between job applicants and jobs. Employees should be assigned to the positions that their competencies match with job requirements. A selection error can be very costly. The fit of individual skills to the requirements of a job is associated with a number of outcomes, considering job performance and job satisfaction (Caldwell & O’Reilly, 1990).

2- *Integration of Recruitment Process and Corporate Goals:* This implies a strategic workforce plan that is intertwined with corporate strategy and organization’s business objectives. It is the main source of talent management practices. Any good talent strategy has to be aligned with a company’s business strategy. As a company’s business strategy shifts, talent needs will also change with time (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2006). To be successful, companies must tie their hiring efforts and activities to the firm’s business strategy. Right workforce skills and competencies must be put in place in order to implement business strategy and goals.

3- *Ability to attract talented employees:* Companies compete for attracting talented employees. It is not easy to attract talented people in today’s dynamic and competitive work environment. Attracting “A players” is critical to organizational success and performance. According to the findings of Ewerlin’s (2013) experimental study, employer attractiveness is influenced by the contents of global talent management programs.

4- *Competency-based employee selection:* Selecting people with the right set of skills and competencies is very critical to perform well. You cannot reach correct destinations with wrong people. As Collins (2001, p.42) said “Great vision without great people is irrelevant”. Great managers employ someone not simply for his or her experience, determination and intelligence but they select for talent (Coffman & Molina, 2002).

5- *Internal resourcing:* Internal recruitment is one of the ways to build up a talent pool. This refers to filling the vacant positions through a talent pool of high potential incumbents. Todd Dewett and Liz Christensen, authors of ‘Leadership Redefined’ proposed to rely more heavily on internal resources (Dewett & Christense, 2008). Finding high potential talents through the organization gives signals to current employees that if they improve their skills and knowledge they would be candidates for the upper positions. The internal recruitment may also increase the morale of the existing employees.

6- *Transparent employee selection process:* Transparency is a must. This reinforces the employees’ perceptions of justice about organizational policies and process. Transparency in the recruitment process is a key driver to reach business success, increase employee engagement, and reduce turnover.

7- *An act of nepotism in employee selection (reverse scale):* This reflects favoritism in selecting employees and can cause a negative effect and lower employee morale in the workplace. It is very detrimental and erodes the reputation of the organization.

8- *New-hire orientation programs:* Organizations that have successful orientation programs provide new staff members to understand their jobs and feel comfortable in their new work environment. These programs contribute that employees are properly oriented and trained upon joining the organization.

9- *Adequate training opportunities:* It is necessary to provide employees adequate opportunities in order to gain and develop the knowledge and abilities that are required for their jobs. Most popular metrics are the time employees are trained and the percent of payroll spent on training (Forman, 2006). Reduced allocation of training and development resources may result in low motivation and

performance. An organization might be able to correct staffing problems by training employees (Shaw, Delery, Jenkins, & Gupta, 1998; Goldstein, 1980).

10- Competency-based training and development programs: The goal of competency-based training programs is to identify the competencies, measure and close skill gaps that are needed for increasing individual and organizational performance. Competency-based training opportunities should be offered to develop employees and individual development programs should be organized for long-term organizational success.

11- Mentoring and coaching: Talent management programs should be supported by mentoring and coaching activities. Once-a-year performance reviews are not sufficient for employees' development. Coaching is an ongoing process. Managers have responsibilities to talk frankly with employees about their progress and give feedback about their responsibilities. Mentoring employees and allowing them to use and develop their strengths lead to a highly motivated workforce.

12- Fair training opportunities: All employees have to benefit from training opportunities fairly to enhance their knowledge, skills and abilities. Companies should abide by the principles of organizational justice and give equitable opportunities to their employees. Otherwise employee perception of fairness erodes and that leads to demoralize them.

13- Positive impacts of training and development programs on business results: Effective training and development programs have positive impacts on the business outcome. With these programs, employees in talent pool become more effective in their jobs and that affects organizational performance. Bartel's (1994) study showed the significant effects of employee training programs on productivity growth. Training and development programs must balance with the needs of individuals in order to achieve agile and high performing organizations. Inconsistent training and development programs become time consuming and costly.

14- Retaining key position back-ups: Identifying the managerial and technical key positions and retaining unique talents in the organization is crucial to execute the organization's growth plan. It is necessary to distinguish between the talented people who are in key positions and the others who have no significant contribution in achieving the desired results. Competencies should be developed for critical jobs to ensure success.

15- Effective performance management systems: Performance evaluation system is used in the organizations to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of their employees. Effective performance management systems are reliable, consistent, fair, and efficient systems that enable to track the performance of employees, departments and organizations. They foster career development and keep turnover rate low. Mone and London (2010) noted that effectively applied performance management supports organizations to create and maintain high levels of employee engagement that results in higher levels of job performance.

16- Objective and measurable performance metrics: Performance management should be based on objective criteria and measurable goals. The intended goals should be defined clearly and measurable objective criteria should be established for these clear-cut goals (Baltas, 2013 p.34). The goal setting theory claims that there is a positive and direct relationship between the clarity of the organizational goals and performance.

17- Setting clearly defined expectations: Clarity of expectations is one of the most basic of employee desires and needs. Employees must clearly know about performance targets. Clarity of organizational objectives is required for actively involvement of employees. Pfeffer (1998) suggested an extensive sharing

of performance information throughout the organization. As pointed out by the chairman of Mattel Inc., “People can’t and won’t do much for you if no one in the organization knows what’s going on, what you expect of them, and what the future holds.” Setting and clarifying the expected outcomes on the basis of organizational goals is important to develop an effective talent management structure.

18- Role of performance management on career development: Performance management is the primary basis for career development. In other words, “The principles behind performance management are career management and better performance.” (Armstrong & Baron, 2005, p.20) Employees need to understand their role in achieving performance targets and the link between performance management and career progress. Performance evaluation results are the basis for career plan and a part of career development. In order to discover talent in any organization, Waheed & Zaim (2015) proposed a model for talent management and career planning based on various evaluation criteria consisting of employees’ qualifications and performance.

19- Performance-related pay and bonuses: Performance based compensation is important when determining an employee’s earnings. Linking pay and bonuses to individual performance is critical for organizational success. Fair and competitive wages, compensation and incentives motivate and encourage employees to stay in an organization for a longer period. There is an old saying “if you pay peanuts you get monkeys” that means offering a low salary and benefits do not attract and retain talented employees. Unfairness in pay and reward systems is one of the key factors that damage trust and engagement.

20- Capability and potential assessments: Talent management requires both performance appraisal and potential identification processes. Potential and performance items are not the same thing. Potential appraisal is the essence of performance management. Capability and potential assessments are means of understanding the capabilities and potential of employees. The main focus should be on assessing the potential and capability of the person for the vacant position. One of the responsibilities of managers is to help employees improve their capabilities and potentials.

21- Providing career development opportunities: The opportunities for career movement are very important in order to attract and retain key employees. Downe & Loke (2008) and Melcrum (2007) pointed out the importance of career development opportunities on engagement levels. Opportunity for job advancement is the most significant factor influencing employee retention (Oladapo, 2014).

22- Designing career paths structure: Every organization has to establish well defined career paths in order to retain talented and qualified employees. Lack of a defined structure for promotion and career development causes talented employees to lessen. Career paths needs to be defined properly in order to manage and retain highly talented employees and high performers/potentials.

23- Transparent career management practices: Effective career management approach requires being transparent and open. Creating a more transparent approach to career progression is the basis for fair talent management system. Transparency in succession planning motivates employees.

24- Motivating top performers with career management practices: Effective career management practices lead talented employees to be motivated and integrated with the organization by giving confidence for their career prospects. Chen, Chang, & Yeh (2004) asserted that the larger the gap between career development programs and career needs, the lower the level of job satisfaction and the higher the level of turnover intentions. Employees are more likely to stay in the organization when their career needs are satisfied.

25- *Person – Job Fit (reverse scale)*: Satisfying the needs of employees and similarity between the abilities of employees and the requirements of job exists when person-job fit occurs. The best fit between employees and jobs is the key component of a company's "life cycle". Person-job fit is very essential for both the job seekers and the organization. It is very critical to make certain that "the right person is in the right job at the right time" (Jackson & Schuler, 1990). According to the findings of O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell (1991) person-organization fit is significantly related to intentions to leave and job satisfaction.

26- *New internal career opportunities*: This refers to creating new career opportunities to incumbent employees. Schweyer (2004, p.20) pointed out that "The first step in talent management is to gain a solid understanding of the internal workforce". There is a Turkish proverb saying "He who guards the lodge eats up the soup". The main question is whether the required talents for maintaining the company's presence are within the organization or not. Companies use internal sources mainly for the reasons of saving time and money, improving productivity and morale, reducing training time, and facilitating succession planning (Slezak, 2012).

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed by using IBM SPSS 20 statistics program. Factor analysis was used to find the factor structure on the survey data. The quantitative analysis of survey data includes descriptive statistics, factor analyses, reliability and validity analyses, and correlational analyses. Data was also analyzed by the application of structural equation modeling (SEM) techniques. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted and model fit indexes were examined.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in order to develop a valid and reliable measurement instrument. It was used as an initial step in order to determine the usefulness of the defined items, clarify any confusion, minimize errors and make necessary revisions based on the sample results. A sample of 134 employees participated to the pilot study in Istanbul, Turkey. Reliability analysis and factor analysis were conducted on the pilot study data. The factor loadings of the items were checked. According to the pilot study results, the four-factor solution for talent management variable explained 66.7% of the total item variance. Cronbach's alpha value (0.929) was greater than the acceptable level of 0.7. Internal consistency represented that items have enough in common. Construct validity provided that this developed measurement instrument is consistent with the related theoretical concept of talent management. It was seen that one of the reversed item developed for talent management scale had a negative item-total correlation value. This highly ambiguous item was checked and revised. According to the results of the quantitative pretest, conceptually inconsistent and overlapped items were deleted, some of the items were modified, and ambiguous wordings were amended. Some of the items were added in the instrument to measure it accurately. Statements became clear and simple as short as possible.

Results

Sample Profile

A total of 751 telecommunication employees responded to the questionnaire. Of the respondents, 69.4% was men and 30.6% was women. The average age was 33.5 years. Educational levels revealed

that the majority (87%) of the participants had an associate degree or higher qualification. Only 2% of the participants graduated from elementary or secondary school. 11.2% had a high school degree, and 43.7% had an associate degree, 32.1% were university graduates, and 11% had a master’s degree. 68.8% of the participants were married and 31.2% of the participants were single. The average work experience in the current company was 8.4 years and 20.1% of the participants were having managerial positions. The mean of tenure in the current position was 5.3 years. Most (80.1%) had been in their current position longer than one year. About 20% of respondents were outsourced employees and had no managerial positions. More than half of them (55.3%) were working at operational departments. 37% of them were at commercial departments and the remaining of them (7.7%) were working at the departments of support services.

Reliability and Factor Analyses

Item-total correlation coefficients were used as a criterion for initial assessment. They show whether each item measures the same thing in the scale. According to some researchers, item-total correlation values should be more than 0.3 (Pallant, 2011). The item-total correlations of seventh question (Q7- This organization constitutes an act of nepotism when recruiting candidates) and twenty-fifth question (Q25-My job/position is not equivalent to the skills and talents that I possess) were lower than 0.30. The results supported what Schriesheim, Eisenbach, & Hill (1991) stated that reversed items often have lower item-correlations than regular items. These items were excluded from the study. After removing these two items, factor and reliability analysis were conducted again with the remaining twenty-four items.

The results of the factor analysis of talent management scale were shown in Table-2. In order to examine the requirements for Principal Component Analysis (PCA), the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (KMO) and Bartlett’s test of sphericity were used. Results of the tests were satisfactory. KMO value was 0.953 and the result of Bartlett’s test of sphericity ($p=0.000$) indicated that the set of variables was homogenous and the requirements for conducting PCA analysis were met. An explanatory factor analysis was conducted by using Varimax rotation. A four-factor solution was extracted with eigenvalue over 1.00 that explained 67.3% of the total variance. The items that were included in each factor are quite relevant. These factors were labeled as ‘Training and Development’, ‘Career Management’, ‘Employee Recruitment and Selection’ and ‘Performance Management’ according to the items that were included. Item 18 “Q18-The performance management system plays an important role in employees’ career development” that was also related with performance management loaded on the factor of “Career Management”. The cumulative percentage of the total variance explained was 67%. Each item had a factor loading above 0.50. Cronbach’s alpha value was 0.951 for the overall talent management scale; 0.920 for training and development, 0.911 for career management, 0.902 for employee recruitment and selection, and 0.799 for performance management. The values are listed below in Table-1. Because Cronbach’s coefficient alpha values were greater than 0.70, we had support on the internal consistency of the items justifying their use in a summated scale. This showed that four factors were consistent and reliable.

Table 1: Reliability Analysis of the Measurement Instrument

Factors	Item Numbers	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Training and Development	7	0.920
Career Management	7	0.911
Employee Recruitment and Selection	6	0.902
Performance Management	4	0.799

Table 2: Results of the Factor Analysis of Talent Management Scale

Factors	Items	Factor Loading	Variance Explained (%)	Cronbach's Alpha
Training and Development	Q9- This organization provides adequate training opportunities in order to develop employees' talents.	.846	19.855	0.920
	Q10- Talent development programs are applied with determining the competency-based training and development needs of employees.	.819		
	Q13- Training and development programs have positive impacts on business results.	.724		
	Q8- New-hire orientation training programs are conducted to new employees.	.724		
	Q12- Training and development opportunities are presented fairly.	.704		
	Q11- Managers provide feedback and guide about ongoing employee development	.635		
	Q14- The necessary training is provided to employees in order to retain key position backups.	.632		
	Career Management	Q22- There is a designed structure that determines the following career progression of every employee		
Q21- There are opportunities for career advancement in this organization		.776		
Q23- Career management practices (promotions, appointment etc.) occur in a clear and transparent way in this organization.		.743		
Q24- Career management practices motivate top performers in this organization.		.726		
Q26- This organization offers new career opportunities with presenting job opportunities within the company		.642		
Q20- Employees' capability and potential assessments are executed for their career development		.612		
Q18- The performance management system plays an important role in employees' career development		.509		

Factors	Items	Factor Loading	Variance Explained (%)	Cronbach's Alpha
Employee Recruitment and Selection	Q2- Employee selection is aligned with the corporate strategy, business goals and targets.	.792	16.975	0.902
	Q1- This organization selects the right people into the right jobs.	.761		
	Q3- Once an employee leaves this organization, the organization has the ability to fill the gap with talented employee	.718		
	Q4- This organization selects the best candidate for the vacant position based on skills and talents	.707		
	Q6- Evaluation process in recruitment is clear and transparent.	.702		
	Q5- This organization has sufficient talented employees to fill crucial positions.	.572		
	Q15- This organization has an effective performance management system in place.	.751		
Performance Management	Q17- I know what is expected of me about performance measures determined for the performance period	.708	11.980	0.799
	Q16- Performance targets based on objective measurable criteria are used in this organization.	.702		
	Q19- Employees' salaries and bonuses differ according to their performance.	.653		

Total Variance Explained: 67.308%
Cronbach's Alpha: 0.951
KMO: 0.953; X²: 11760.758; df:276; p-value: 0.000

Correlation Analysis

The strength of the relationship between talent management factors is shown in Table 3. Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted. The results confirm that all factors have a strong relationship with each factor ($r > 0.5$ level). There are significant and positive correlations between talent management factors. Career management had the strongest relationship ($r=0.668$) with employee recruitment and selection. The least correlation was between performance management and employee recruitment & selection, with a coefficient 0.540.

Table 3: Correlations between Talent Management Factors

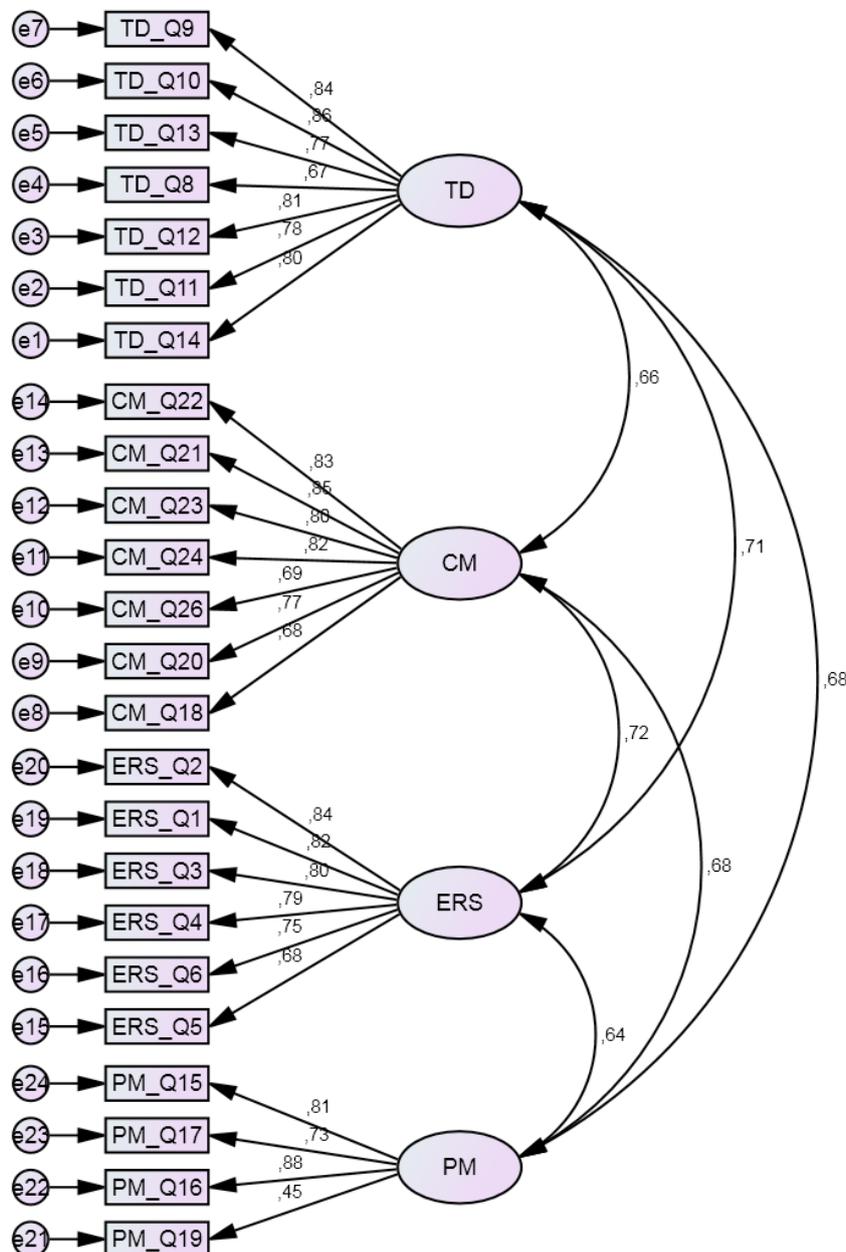
Factors	1	2	3	4
1- Training and Development	-			
2- Career Management	.616**	-		
3- Employee Recruitment and Selection	.667**	.668**	-	
4- Performance Management	.580**	.623**	.540**	-

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

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

A CFA was conducted to assess the model fit (See Figure-1). The model fit indexes were found as follows: χ^2 :1221.028 (df: 246, p: 0.000), χ^2/df (CMIN/df):4.964, RMSEA: 0.073, NFI: 0.904, TLI: 0.904, CFI: 0.922. The results provided the suggested minimum value greater than 0.90 for NFI, TLI, and CFI. Hu & Bentler (1999) proposed a cutoff value close to 0.95. RMSEA value (0.073) less than 0.08 was regarded to indicate an acceptable fit of the model (McDonald & Ho, 2002; Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008). A ratio of around five or less (4.964) was acceptable for χ^2/df (chi-square / degree of freedom) value (Wheaton, Muthen, Alwin, & Summers (1977, p.99). Considering the model fit indexes above, the results confirmed that the talent management model with four sub-constructs indicates a reasonable fit.

Figure 1: Confirmatory Factor Analysis



(TD: Training and Development, CM: Career Management, ERS: Employee Recruitment and Selection, PM: Performance Management)

Conclusions and Discussions

This study aims to provide a valuable contribution to the existing literature by conducting an empirical study on talent management. In order to find out the factors of talent management, an instrument was developed by the author. Talent management has a number of processes that involves a set of activities. This study has touched on four dimensions of talent management: Employee recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management, and career management. An extensive study was conducted by analyzing the data from telecommunication sector in Turkey. Firstly, a pilot study was conducted on a sample of 134 participants. For the study, data was collected from a number of 751 telecommunication employees in Istanbul, Kocaeli, and Sakarya by distributing the self-administered questionnaire to the respondents.

This study indicates that the instrument has demonstrated reliable and valid results. Results of the KMO statistic and Bartlett’s test of sphericity were satisfactory. A four-factor solution that explained 67.3% of the total variance was extracted from PCA analysis. Each item had a factor loading above 0.50. Cronbach’s alpha value was 0.951 for the overall talent management scale. For each factor, Cronbach’s coefficient alpha values were greater than 0.70. Internal consistency represented that items have enough in common and each item measures the same thing. This showed that four factors were consistent and reliable. The statistical analyses indicated highly important, significant and strong correlations between talent management factors. The model fit indexes (χ^2/df (CMIN/df):4.964, RMSEA: 0.073, NFI: 0.904, TLI: 0.904, CFI: 0.922) confirmed that the talent management model with four factors indicates a reasonable fit.

This study is important for both researchers and practitioners. The findings of this study are also beneficial for companies especially HR departments. HR departments are primarily liable for supporting the strategy and managing talent management programs. Managing human capital effectively is a critical issue for leaders and HR professionals in organizations. But, talent management is so critical and vitally important that cannot be only left to the initiative of human resource department and managers (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2006; Baporikar, 2016, p.24). It requires the involvement of all management levels from the top to the bottom of the organization, but in particular it needs more support and attention from top management. A talent management system that is not supported by top management is not expected to be successful. Top management must evaluate talent management practices as important for the entire company and allocate enough time and attention.

Effective talent management practices lead to positive organizational and employee outcomes that also pave the way for positive financial and business results. Huselid, Jackson, & Schuler (1997) pointed out that there is a significant relationship between HRM practices and organizational performance. Therefore, organizations have to develop and execute long-term and stable talent management strategies and programs. They should be more concerned on talent management practices for winning “the war for talent”.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

The scale of talent management that was developed for this study demonstrated reliable and valid results. These scale items would be suitable for use in future research. However, there are several limitations of this study that should be recognized. Further studies should help to shed additional light on how talent management practices interact with other factors and different dimensions that were not included in this study. Alternative perspectives and new insights are essential for not only profit

organizations but also non-profit and public organizations in different contexts. The new perspectives would be valuable for the development of theoretical framework in the field of talent management.

This study provides an empirical research by using of self-administered questionnaire. The limitation of this research was the limited number of telecommunication employees in Istanbul, Kocaeli, and Sakarya. However, the influence of talent management might differ from one workplace to another and from industry to industry. One size does not fit all for talent management practices. Other sectors might give different results. It is also vital to consider cultural differences. Therefore, it should be replicated with different samples in different sectors in other parts of Turkey and the world.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I–Questionnaire in English

Talent Management Scale

Employee Recruitment and Selection

1. This organization selects the right people into the right jobs.
2. Employee selection is aligned with the corporate strategy, business goals and targets.
3. Once an employee leaves this organization, the organization has the ability to fill the gap with talented employee.
4. This organization selects the best candidate for the vacant position based on skills and talents.
5. This organization has sufficient talented employees to fill crucial positions.
6. Evaluation process in recruitment is clear and transparent.
7. This organization constitutes an act of nepotism when recruiting candidates (*Reversed scale*)

Training and Development

8. New-hire orientation training programs are conducted to new employees.
9. This organization provides adequate training opportunities in order to develop employees' talents.
10. Talent development programs are applied with determining the competency-based training and development needs of employees.
11. Managers provide feedback and guide about ongoing employee development.
12. Training and development opportunities are presented fairly.
13. Training and development programs have positive impacts on business results.
14. The necessary training is provided to employees in order to retain key position backups.

Performance Management

15. This organization has an effective performance management system in place.

16. Performance targets based on objective measurable criteria are used in this organization.

17. I know what is expected of me about performance measures determined for the performance period.

18. The performance management system plays an important role in employees’ career development.

19. Employees’ salaries and bonuses differ according to their performance.

Career Management

20. Employees’ capability and potential assessments are executed for their career development.

21. There are opportunities for career advancement in this organization.

22. There is a designed structure that determines the following career progression of every employee.

23. Career management practices (promotions, appointment etc.) occur in a clear and transparent way in this organization.

24. Career management practices motivate top performers in this organization.

25. My job/position is not equivalent to the skills and talents that I possess (*Reversed scale*)

26. This organization offers new career opportunities with presenting job opportunities within the company.

Appendix II– Questionnaire in Turkish

Yetenek Yönetimi Ölçeği

Çalışan Seçimi ve İşe Alım

1. Çalışmakta olduğum kurum doğru işlere doğru insanları seçmektedir.
2. Çalışanların işe alımları kurum stratejisi, işletme amaç ve hedeflerine uygun şekilde yapılmaktadır.
3. Çalışmakta olduğum kurum, bir çalışan ayrıldığında yerini dolduracak yetenekli çalışanları et-kileme/çekme becerisine sahiptir.
4. Çalıştığım kurum boş pozisyon için en iyi adayı becerilerini ve yeteneklerini dikkate alarak seç-mektedir.
5. Çalıştığım kurum bünyesinde önemli/kritik pozisyonları dolduracak yeterli yetenekli çalışanlara sahiptir.
6. Çalışanların işe alımlarında değerlendirme süreci açık ve şeffaftır.
7. Çalıştığım kurum işe alımlarda adam kayırma (ayrımcılık) yapmaktadır.

Eğitim ve Gelişim

8. Kuruma yeni alınan çalışanların oryantasyonları, işe uyum eğitimleri yapılmaktadır.
9. Çalışmakta olduğum kurum çalışanlarının yeteneklerini geliştirmek için yeterli eğitim fırsatları sunmaktadır.
10. Çalışanların yetkinlik bazlı eğitim ve gelişim ihtiyaçları belirlenerek yetenek gelişim program-ları uygulanmaktadır.
11. Çalıştığım kurumda yöneticiler çalışanların gelişim durumları ile ilgili geribildirimde bulunup yol gösterirler.

12. Çalıştığım kurumda çalışanlara eğitim ve gelişim fırsatları adil bir şekilde sunulmaktadır.
13. Çalıştığım kurumdaki eğitim ve gelişim programlarının iş sonuçları üzerine olumlu etkisi olmaktadır.
14. Çalıştığım kurumda gerekli eğitimler verilerek yetenekli çalışanların yedeklemeleri yapılmaktadır.

Performans Yönetimi

15. Çalıştığım kurumda etkin performans yönetim sistemi (performans değerlendirme) uygulanmaktadır.
16. Çalıştığım kurumda performans hedefleri ölçülebilir objektif kriterler üzerinden takip edilmektedir.
17. Çalıştığım kurumda dönemsel olarak belirlenen performans hedefleri ile ilgili benden ne beklediğini bilirim.
18. Çalıştığım kurumdaki performans yönetim sisteminin, çalışanların kariyer ilerlemelerinde önemli bir rolü vardır.
19. Çalıştığım kurumda çalışanların gösterdiği performansa göre ücret ve/veya prim ödemelerinde farklılıklar bulunmaktadır.

Kariyer Yönetimi

20. Çalıştığım kurumda kariyer gelişimi için çalışanların yetkinlik ve potansiyel değerlendirmesi yapılmaktadır.
21. Çalıştığım kurumda kariyer ilerlemesi için fırsatlar bulunmaktadır
22. Çalıştığım kurumda her çalışanın sonraki kariyer ilerlemesini belirleyen tasarlanmış bir yapı vardır.
23. Çalıştığım kurumda kariyer yönetimi uygulamaları (terfi, tayin vb.) açık ve şeffaf bir şekilde olmaktadır.
24. Çalıştığım kurumdaki kariyer yönetim uygulamaları üstün performans gösteren çalışanları motive etmektedir.
25. Çalıştığım iş/pozisyon sahip olduğum beceri ve yeteneklere uygun değildir.
26. Çalıştığım kurum, kurum içi iş fırsatlarını paylaşarak çalışanlarına yeni bir kariyer fırsatı sunmaktadır.