



Development and Validation of a Framework to Identify High Potential Employees in Organizations

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to develop and validate a multidimensional framework for identifying high-potential employees (hi-pots) to support succession planning and leadership development in organizations. A sequential exploratory mixed-methods approach was employed. In the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews with seven organizational leaders were conducted to identify key traits and behaviors of hi-pots. The subsequent quantitative phase involved 276 managerial employees who responded to a newly developed measurement scale. The data were subjected to statistical validation to reinforce the proposed model. The validated framework comprises three dimensions: Foundation, growth, and career. The foundation dimension includes inherent traits such as optimism and sociability. The growth dimension, encompassing promotability, adaptability, and proactiveness, showed the strongest predictive power for leadership readiness. The career dimension involves performance-based competencies like technical proficiency and time management. Among these, the growth dimension emerged as the most influential for leadership potential. Organizations can utilize this framework for structured talent identification, improving leadership pipelines, and strategic HR planning.

Keywords: Career Development, Employee Engagement, High Potential Employees, Succession Planning, Talent Management

JEL Classifications: M12, J24, M51

1. INTRODUCTION

High-potential employees (HIPOs) are a hot topic for HR management in today's dynamic and competitive business world. By definition, HIPOs are people with talent, engagement, and ambition who can work in more difficult leadership functions (Silzer and Church, 2009). This may enhance the business's growth, innovation, and sustainability in discovery and development (Ready et al., 2010). In times of globalization and technological scale, firms must build strong leadership pipelines and retain top talent, making the identification of HIPO an important strategic activity (Collings and Mellahi, 2009). However, very few firms, despite their importance, can find and develop HIPOs through evidence-based approaches.

Identifying and locating HIPOs is one thing, but accomplishing this task is complicated due to corporate culture, industry needs,

and geographical influences (Mäkelä et al., 2010). HIPOs in technology-intensive industries are likely to emphasize innovation and agility, while in more established industries, operational excellence and stability may prevail. HIPO models maintain their efficacy across many organizational settings with the inclusion of contextual subtleties. Sourcing and developing HIPOs bear strategic implications and impact organizational performance immediately, rather than just being Human Resources engagements. Management of HIPOs enhances financial performance, employee engagement, and marketplace agility (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Zulfikar, 2024). By linking HIPO identification frameworks with key organizational strategic goals, companies can therefore better position themselves for expending development efforts on talent.

Identification frameworks of HIPO are very rare, and existing HIPO identification frameworks are mostly invalid, unreliable,

and not contextually flexible. The reliance of most organizations on subjective appraisals or narrow measurements will not be able to capture the complexity of high potential. For instance, traditional methods might focus too much on past success without adequately considering future potential or fit with the organization (Church and Rotolo, 2013). This lack of common frameworks provides difficulty in comparison and restricts the generalizability of findings across businesses and locations. Due to this challenge, there is indeed a huge gap for a clear, verified, and integrated frame of modern talent management, leadership, and organizational behavior that would enhance the identification and further development of a HIPO within an organization.

Effective HIPO identification technique creation and validation are crucial to corporate performance and talent management. With proper identification, organizations may engage more in employee development, align people with strategic goals, and mitigate leadership deficiency risks. A fair and transparent HIPO identification technique will also boost employee trust and engagement (Dries, 2013). The study intends to address these gaps in talent management academic literature and assist practitioners uncover insights to guide organizational capabilities.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Foundations

High-potential people are systematically identified and developed in businesses through a rich theoretical base. In Figure 1 there are five important theories—human capital theory (HCT), resource-based view (RBV), competency theory, career development theory (CDT), and transformational leadership theory—that are critical to understanding the basis of the study on personnel management and employee performance. These concepts provide a fertile ground for developing systematically a talent management program that enables nurturing employee development, creativity, and leadership.

2.1.1. Human capital theory (HCT)

Becker’s (1964) Human capital theory primarily focuses on investing in individuals’ KSAs for improved organizational performance. Employees are treated within this framework as strategic assets who can be trained and educated to improve productivity and competitiveness. Talent management focuses on programs promoting individual potential. According to Desta et al. (2022), expenditures on HCM positively affected employee engagement and performance. Fareed et al. (2016) suggested that HPWS organizations effectively manage human resources for competitive advantage, indicating that talent management approaches need to build continuous learning, leadership development, and skill upgrades to maximize employee potential.

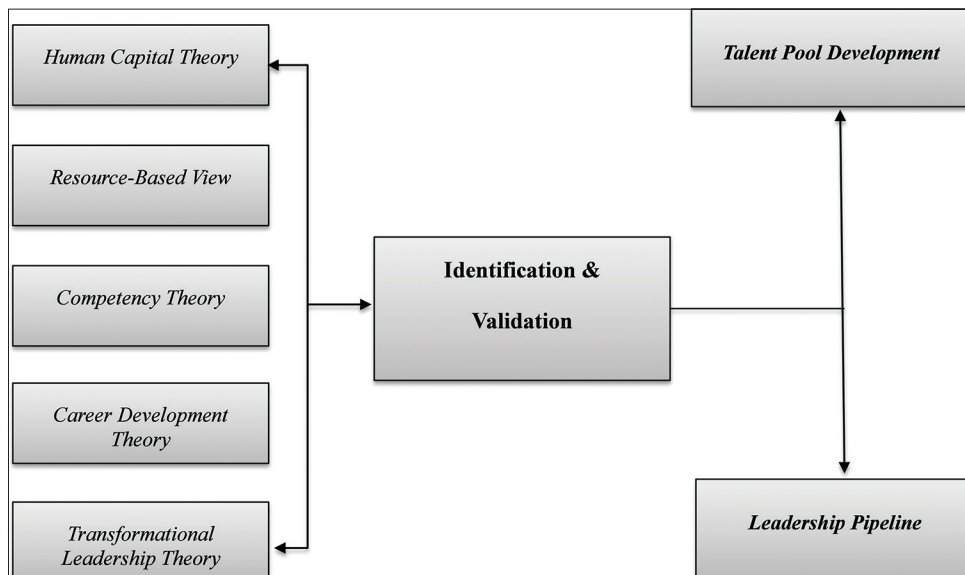
2.1.2. Resource-based view (RBV) theory

Barney understood in 1991 that the firm’s resources and competencies form the basis of its competitive advantage. Rare, valuable, inimitable, and non-substitutable skills (VRIN) are important in successfully contending organizations according to RBV (Taher, 2012). Talent management that identifies and develops these employees is, therefore, vital for organizational success. High-potential employee initiatives at RBV tend to increase the retention of talent by advancing careers and leadership. Colbert (2004) showed that wise HRM supplemented by talent identification based on RBV propels employee performance while providing agility to the entire organization. Chahal et al. (2020) also studied competence mapping integration with RBV, where an organization that gets competent in employees is found highly competitive in business.

2.1.3. Competency theory

Boyatzis' in 1982 developed Competency Theory asserts that leadership, emotional intelligence, and problem-solving abilities affect employee success. Competency-based approaches examine behavioral traits, technical capabilities, and leadership training to identify high-potential candidates. Companies may link

Figure 1: Theoretical framework



Sources: Self-prepared by author

staff development strategies to business goals via personnel management competence models (Boyatzis, 2008). Career advancement and succession are probable for employees with good flexibility, strategic thinking, and leadership potential. Krishnan’s (2013) results suggest that transformational leadership may motivate individuals to fulfill their potential in competency-based talent identification. Singh et al. (2020) also identified competency-based assessment as a green HRM technique that integrates sustainability-driven capabilities into leadership selection.

The integration of these five key theories provides a strong foundation for designing structured talent management frameworks. Organizations can effectively:

- Identify high-potential employees using competency-based assessments
- Align career development with organizational goals and leadership succession planning
- Leverage human capital investments to drive innovation and business growth
- Utilize transformational leadership to foster a culture of mentorship and leadership development.

By implementing these theories in talent management, organizations can build strong leadership pipelines, retain top talent, and gain a competitive edge in today’s dynamic business environment.

2.2. Current Models of HIPOs and their Limitations

2.2.1. The 9-box model

The 9-box model finds its application widely across succession planning by several organizations. In terms of performance and potential, workers are categorized into nine slots, for example, in Figure 2 “Rough Diamond,” “Key Player,” “Consistent Star,” etc. It is simple, and flexible, yet adheres to company goals. Biases might easily creep in, as the placements are all determined by administrative judgments. Treating performance and potential together on one axis

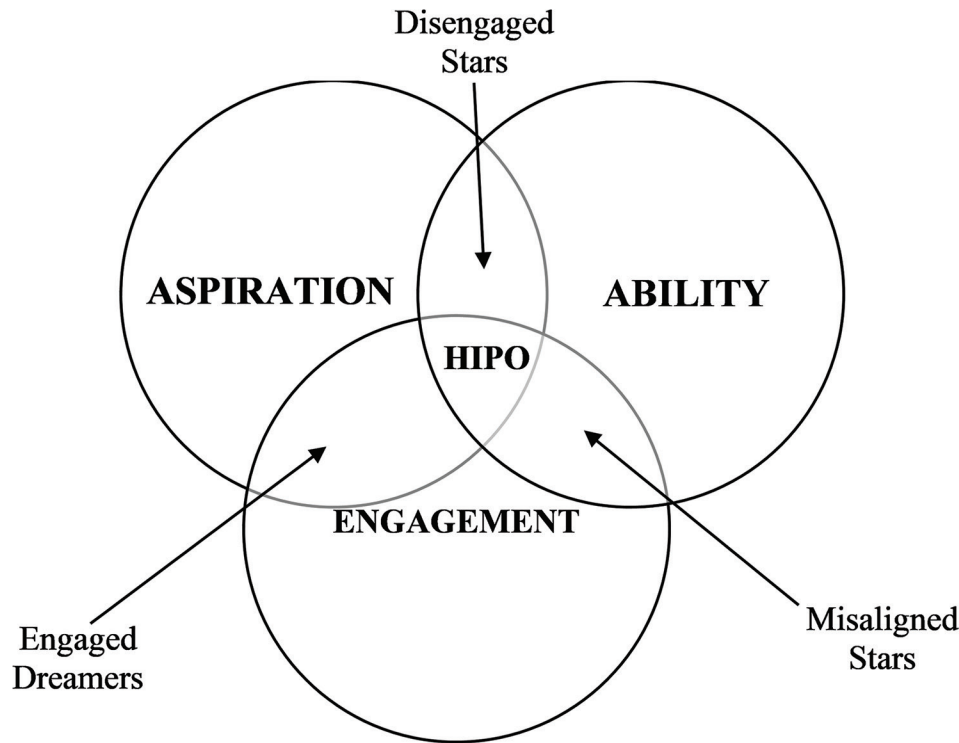
is an oversimplification. No real-time data is found to be tracking individuals. 9-box model, irrespective of great popularity, has serious disadvantages: First, biased and inconsistent management judgments are utilized to position personnel in the grid, making it subjective. The waxing and waning may not happen without consequences in under-diagnosability and over-diagnosability whenever performance exceeds potential or the management simply cannot assess possibilities accurately. The technique, therefore, further distorts the complex performance-potential link. Nevertheless, since the criteria are independent, the model simplifies how employee potential influences performance and vice versa. This static model assesses an employee in isolation and does not consider growth, so the model is incapable of illustrating dynamic tracking or change.

2.2.2. CLC high-potential model

Figure 3 presents the three key constructs of the CLC High-Potential Model used to evaluate HiPos: aspiration, ability, and engagement. The assessment of these constructs relies on psychological parameters, reflecting the evolving practices of modern organizations. As workplaces become more dynamic, with non-linear career paths and diverse workforce expectations, evaluating employees becomes increasingly complex. It is hard to quantify things like ambition and involvement that aren't physical unless they are backed up by clear and disciplined ways to do so. A densely human-oriented paradigm has the potential to brush aside culture-specific or context-specific issues. There is no consistent mechanism to measure how employees evolve, thereby providing limited predictive power. While most elements fall under the CLC high-potential model, many pose difficulties in application. Abstract qualities like desire and skill or involvement go beyond measurement by ordinary means. Aspirations and involvement are dependent on business culture, happiness with work, and accompanying personal circumstances. The model emphasizes the aforementioned qualities but usually takes little heed to external contextual factors or role-related difficulties impinging upon performance and employee development. A secondary limitation:

Figure 2: 9-box model



Figure 3: CLC high-potential model

Lags in longitudinal tracking. It identifies the high potentials but does not clarify their development and performance monitoring; thus, justifying its long-term success becomes an issue.

2.2.3. Human capital theory

Investments in employee productivity through education and training are fundamental to Becker's human capital theory from 2008. The model indicates that learning and development can be termed an eternal continuum, hence the need to invest in human capital for the success of any organization capable of scaling and generalizing to every worker. However, its theoretical drawback is its sweeping generality, tending to focus more on productivity-enhancement avenues than on differentiating general workforce high-potential employees while never considering potential over-performance or individual motivation or traits for the identification of HIPO.

Figure 4 shows human capital theory is highly valuable to the employment of the human growth processes; it is not specific enough to pinpoint employees with high potential. Elements mainly concern education and training, but ignore passion, leadership, and adaptability, making identification of HIPOs problematic. It emphasizes productivity while overlooking the critical gap between potential and performance, Therefore, the entire effort for identifying talents and nurturing them for eventual leadership or strategic appointments becomes futile.

HIPO and talent management studies have left their leap-based gaps, and importantly, earlier models like the 9-box model were a simplification of the key elements, and stock assessment relied more on subjective assessments, leaving no unified framework to detect and accommodate HIPO features. Flexibility, engagement, and creativity may be considered characteristics and even essential

for being HIPO (Gelens et al., 2014; Kyndt et al., 2009). Empirical testing of these dimensions has yet to occur across organizational contexts, casting doubt on the practical relevance and consistency of the measures. Relationships among these characteristics and their total effects on the identification of HI-PO are poorly defined, thus constraining the field's practicality. Most of the evaluations, furthermore, are a snapshot evaluation of a given point in time without tracking development over time. Furthermore, concepts such as human capital theory do not differentiate HIPO employees from the rest of the labor force. Recent studies, posit that organizational and environmental factors affect HIPO potential, proposing structures to establish interaction between individual and environmental factors.

Here are the objectives of the study:

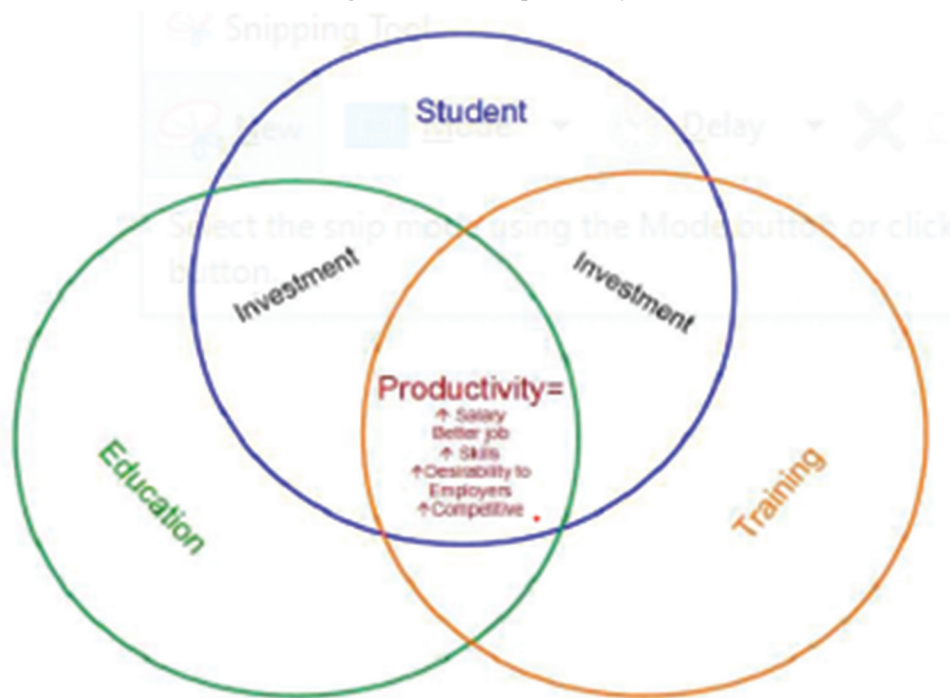
- Obj1: To develop a framework of the characteristics of hi-pots employees
- Obj2: To identify and validate the dimensions of the characteristics of hi-pots employees
- Obj3: To examine the relationship between dimensions and hi-pots employees.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A three-phase sequential exploratory mixed-methods design was employed. Phase 1 explored and developed a thematic model of high-potential workers across sectors. Phase 2 developed a checklist based on those qualities identified, and Phase 3 statistically validated the Hi-Pot framework.

3.1. Sample and Procedure

The research followed American Psychological Association ethics. Before data collection, participants were informed of the study's

Figure 4: Human capital theory

Source: Becker (2008)

goals, roles, and rights and gave informed permission. Phase 1 data were acquired from seven organizational executives (five men and two women) using purposive sampling with the following inclusion criteria: (1) 15+ years of experience (2) People manager experience (3) Understanding and speaking English. Based on the hi-pot literature, we created a semi-structured phase 1 interview plan. Telephone and in-person interviews lasted 30-60 min. These interviews were thematically analyzed to identify high-potential employee attributes.

In phase 2, a checklist was developed in English to assess the characteristics of hi-pots based on the fundamental themes identified in phase 1. The checklist employed a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Very Important (5) to Not At All Important (1) to quantify the importance of the identified hi-pot characteristics. This checklist was converted into an online form, preceded by a detailed description of the research objectives and an informed consent form that participants could accept or reject by selecting the appropriate option. Access to the checklist was restricted to those who provided informed consent.

Phase 3 data was collected through online forms from a sample of 276 employees in managerial positions, comprising 89 women (32%), 187 men (67.3%), and 0.7% who preferred not to disclose their gender. The data collected through the three phases were designated exclusively for research, maintaining confidentiality. The data were anonymized before analysis to maintain confidentiality.

3.2. Measures

For Phase 1, we developed a semi-structured interview schedule following a scoping review and expert validation. The schedule comprised 15 questions and probes aimed at exploring participants'

insights on succession planning practices, methods for identifying high-potential employees, and perceptions of hi-pots. Participants were queried about specific practices within their organizations and characteristics of hi-pots, including their age groups and performance levels. Experiences working with high-potential employees and thoughts on informing them of their status were also discussed. Concluding questions encouraged participants to share any additional insights or queries regarding high-potential employees.

The checklist developed in phase 2 for phase 3 data collection was based on the identified themes from Phase 1. The checklist was designed to gauge the perceived importance of traits for hi-pots among managers across sectors. It comprised 62 items representing characteristics like innovative thinking, accountability, agility, and proactivity. Managers were asked to rate the significance of these traits using a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from "Not Important" (1) to "Very Important" (5).

3.3. Analysis

We analyzed the Phase 1 data using thematic analysis based on Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework. We transcribed and repeatedly read all interviews to identify recurring concepts describing hi-pot characteristics. Systematic coding was conducted manually, generating initial codes. These codes were then grouped into broader themes based on their shared meaning, using the Silzer and Church framework for reference.

In phase 3, we utilized IBM AMOS 27 to conduct structural equation (latent measurement) modeling to assess the structural validity of the thematic network model developed in phase 1. Prior to model testing, we evaluated the internal consistency of the items in the checklist using Cronbach's α . The hypothesized

relationships between observed and latent variables were defined based on the themes identified in Phase 1. We examined the factor loadings of each item in the checklist to its corresponding domain and assessed potential multicollinearity between the domains using a correlation. All items indicating high covariances, which could potentially affect model fit, were identified and eliminated with the aid of modification indices.

4. RESULTS

The section presents results which are followed by their subsequent analysis. The results were grouped into three categories which included demographic data and research goals and research hypotheses. The goals and hypotheses include a table where the results' explanation is provided.

Table 1 demonstrates the demographic profile of the respondents. The study results show that the population exhibits diversity across all demographic categories. The sample consisted of 67.4% men 31.9% women and 0.7% of participants who chose not to share their gender information. The age distribution, 22.8% were under 25 years, 31.2% were between 25 and 40 years, 22.5% were between 40 and 55 years, and 23.6% were above 55 years. The distribution of years of experience is as follows: 24.3% have below 5 years, 19.9% have 6-10 years, 13.8% have 11-15 years, 8.0% have 16-20 years, and 34.1% have more than 20 years. Ultimately, 33.3% were IT and consulting sectors, 14.1% were from the manufacturing and FMCG sectors, 24.3% were from the healthcare and public services sectors, 14.5% were from the education and media sectors, and 13.8% were from other sectors. Leadership indicated that 96.0% are leaders, and 4.0% are not leaders. This comprehensive representation of all demographics provides a balanced foundation for the investigation.

4.1. Results based on Objectives

- Obj1: To develop a framework of the characteristics of hi-pots employees.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

S. No.	Demographic characteristics	Category	n	%
1.	Gender	Man	186	67.4
		Woman	88	31.9
		Prefer not to say	2	0.7
2.	Age	Below 25 years old	63	22.8
		25-40 years old	86	31.2
		40-55 years old	62	22.5
		Above 55 years old	65	23.6
		Years of experience	Below 5 years	67
3.	Years of experience	6-10 years	55	19.9
		11-15 years	38	13.8
		16-20 years	22	8.0
		Above 20 years	94	34.1
		4.	Organization Sector	IT and consulting
Manufacturing and FMCG	39			14.1
Healthcare and public services	67			24.3
Education and media	40			14.5
Others	38			13.8
5.	Leadership	Yes	265	96.0
		No	11	4.0

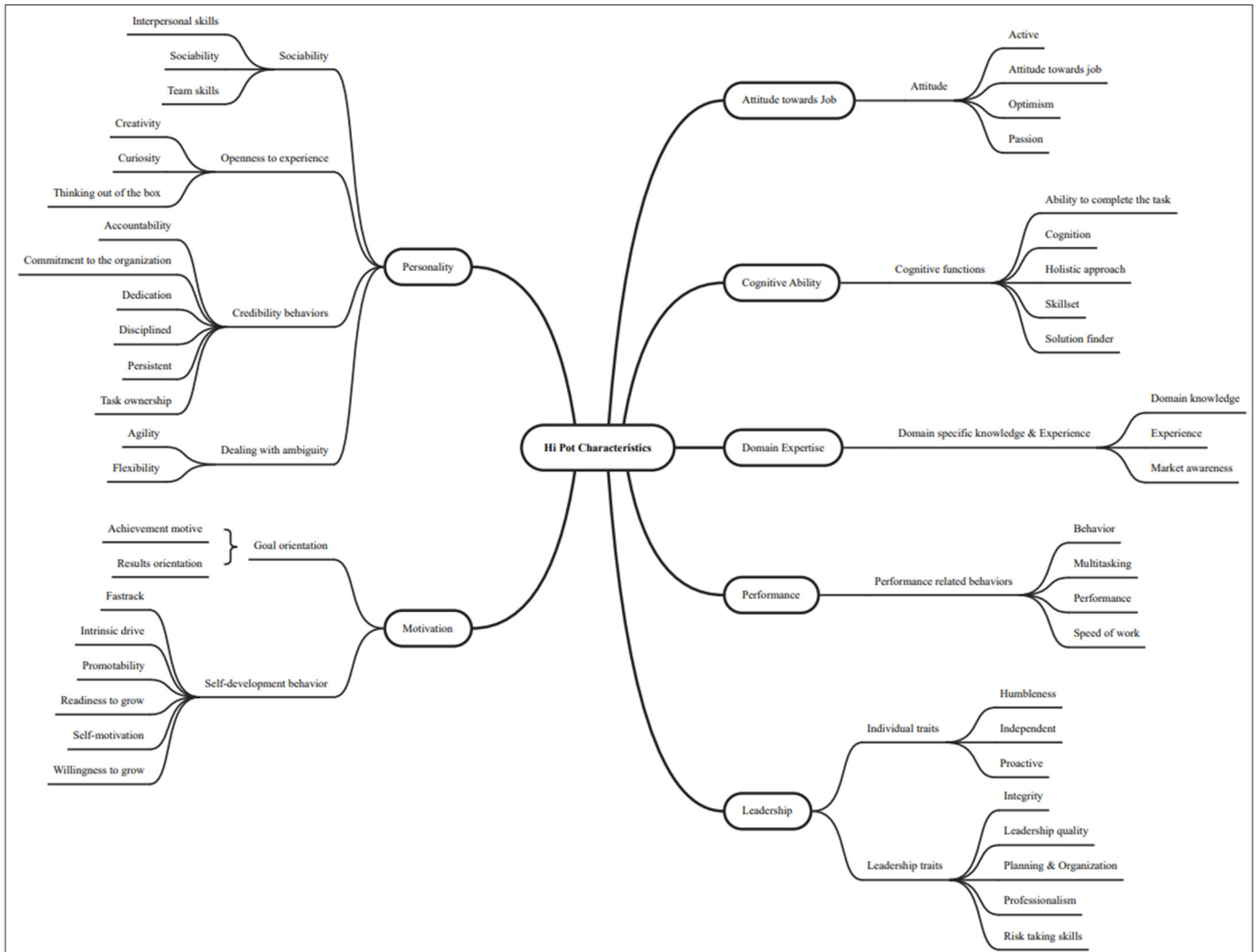
Figure 5 represents the basic, organizing and global themes that were derived from Phase 1. A total of 395 initial codes using in-vivo and descriptive inductive coding of the transcripts. After refining by the removal of the duplicates, there were 46 codes, which were triangulated and confirmed with the deductive coding method. While categorizing these codes based on their shared sense, 12 basic themes were formed. These basic themes were then organized under 7 overarching themes. The themes were attitude towards job, cognitive ability, domain expertise, performance, leadership, motivation and personality. These themes were then arranged under the global theme – Hi-Potential individual's characteristics, to establish Attride-Stirling thematic network model.

The model begins with personality as its first layer, which shows how people relate to others through their ability to develop social connections and their openness to experience and their trustworthy behavior and their capacity to withstand uncertain situations. People who display strong social skills can build relationships through their sociability and teamwork abilities, while their creativity and curiosity enable them to adapt to changing situations. People who demonstrate credibility through their disciplined behavior and accountable work conduct themselves in a way that builds trust, while their ability to adapt and take risks shows their skill in handling uncertain situations.

The internal driving force of motivation enables people to maintain their performance throughout an extended period. Achievement motive and results orientation which represent goal-oriented behaviors show outcomes as their central focus whereas self-development behaviors demonstrate continuous growth through learning activities. HiPo individuals demonstrate their capacity development through intrinsic motivation and growth potential because they pursue self-improvement without any need for outside motivation. The work attitude of employees demonstrates their emotional state and mental connection to their professional responsibilities. Employees who express strong opinions and demonstrate active participation in their work show deep connections to their job activities which results in greater commitment and extra effort. Cognitive ability functions as the mental capacity needed to execute tasks successfully. People can manage complicated assignments effectively because they possess logical reasoning abilities together with problem-solving expertise and a solution-focused approach. This dimension assists with decision-making while it boosts ability to adapt under difficult circumstances. Domain expertise demonstrates how essential specific knowledge and real-world experience are for achieving success in a certain field. Market knowledge together with domain expertise enables individuals to implement their skills in actual work environments. This dimension connects theoretical knowledge to its real-world implementation.

All performance results show what happens when all dimensions of a system work together. The ability to work effectively at all times with high output shows through the workers' practice of multiple tasks and their work output speed. This measurement provides an assessment of HiPo capabilities. The model's highest stage of development showcases both personal and managerial skills through leadership capacity. The ethical and behavioral foundation

Figure 5: Basic, organizing, and global themes



of individual traits is built on integrity and independence while leadership characteristics of planning, professionalism, and risk-taking exhibit the power to guide others. The model shows that HiPo individuals possess a complete mix of personal qualities and cognitive abilities and work-related skills. The continuous process of developing high potential abilities becomes evident through the interconnected nature of these dimensions.

Table 2 shows the identification of the final characteristics of high-potential employees following a systematic approach that merged qualitative categorization and research-oriented statistical analyses to narrow down a wider pool of attributes to finer, sharper, and more significant sets of traits. The whole process started with the identification of a comprehensive list of potential characteristics and ended with the selection of the final dimensions into which high potential would enter.

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to identify the underlying factor structure of the items associated with the constructs. Table 3, shows the factor loadings (β), standard errors (S.E), and regression weights (B) for each item under the first-order and second-order factors. Foundation Dimensions (FD),

Growth Dimensions (GD), and Career Dimensions (CD) were identified as the three principal factors to describe the desirable characteristics of the high-potential employee (HiPos) conception. Each dimension included a set of core traits that are indispensable in the processes involved in identifying, developing, and keeping such employees within the organizational context. FD constitutes the foundation traits of HiPos, for example, sociability ($\beta = 0.71$), desirable attitude to jobs ($\beta = 0.68$), optimism ($\beta = 0.66$), and a systemic approach ($\beta = 0.66$). Notably, sociability is the most important trait among them all, signifying the interrelation of people in collaboration and teamwork. Important traits of optimism and holistic thinking ($\beta = 0.55$) drive the high value given to a positive mind and strategic thinking to form a strong foundation for growth and performance. The Growth Dimensions (GD) are attributes requisite for a high-potential employee's advancement to higher responsibilities and leadership roles. Under this dimension, the most important ingredient is promotability ($\beta = 0.69$), which is meant to emphasize that these employees are prepared to take higher positions. The research shows that proactiveness ($\beta = 0.60$), multitasking ($\beta = 0.57$), and professionalism ($\beta = 0.56$) function as vital attributes to demonstrate their capacity to adapt and handle multiple challenging assignments. The HiPo employees exhibit

Table 2: Interview experts table

Organizing theme	Experts
Attitude towards jobs	High potential employees now are very proactive (J) They always have a passion for working (A) They cannot sit quietly, they will be very proactive (S) Very passionate about what they do (MG)
Cognitive ability	Level of speed is something, higher than what other people have like normal people have (J) People who can think rationally (D) The first part is in terms of skill set and attitude etc., which is what we normally look at in terms of his competency (SP)
Domain expertise	They also contribute a lot to their self-development; learning is very high (A) When people want to grow and if they want to constantly improve then definitely, they should be very good learners (GS) He should be able to look at changes that could happen inside the system to make this company survive in the market (SP)
Performance	Performing very well in a particular area (J) High potential is a person who shows performance, consistent performance (A) Kinds of people are always prompt; they deliver their goods promptly (GS) They will always be well ahead of the competition (S)
Leadership	Kind of initiatives they take, in the leader's absence how do they react to the situation or how do they coordinate with other departments (D) He should be a people's man. He should be a people's leader (GS) He should also be the person who is ready to take ownership and challenge (SP)
Motivation	People who can take up many challenges, people who don't give any excuses (D) the fire has to be there (GS) These are the fast-track people who will often come and ask you what is next for me. Why don't you give me a new task? I want to do something new (S) He/she should be aspirational and motivated. I think they should have aspirations and they should be self-motivated (MG) These guys are willing to take the risk. Okay, I may lose but I will learn. I know how to correct myself. That's the positivity that drives them (SP)
Personality	They are very good in relationship with others (A) They value everyone, they follow things, high in creativity (A) His interpersonal skills are more important (GS) The first thing is that they will be very agile and they will be very mobile. Agility will be very high. Risk-taking will be very high (S) High-potential employees go and survive in any industry, anywhere, any place, or any team because of other skills and also because they are adaptable (MG)

two different qualities through their traits because they can meet organizational objectives while showing their leadership abilities. Career Dimensions (CD) seek to identify performance traits that contribute to career success which leads to job proficiency. Doing the best ($\beta = 0.66$) and a strong skill weightage ($\beta = 0.63$) represent the most impacting traits in this respect as signs of the magnitude

of distress caused by the necessity of delivering outstanding results while in constant development of competencies. Market awareness ($\beta = 0.55$), time management ($\beta = 0.51$), and interpersonal skills ($\beta = 0.49$), among the few others, really underline how HiPo employees manage to have high performance along with high adaptability to dynamic environments through their exceptional abilities.

Overall, it is sociability and promotability that are the most powerful traits across dimensions. These insights can better inform how organizations can build specific development programs for high-potential employees. Organizations can use such validated dimensions to identify, train, and retain personnel with the capabilities to drive organizational success and innovation.

- Obj3: To examine the relationship between dimensions and hi-pots employees.

Model fit indices: RMSEA = 0.047, LO90 = .038, HI90 = .055; GFI = 0.906; CFI = 0.927; TLI = 0.919; IFI = 0.928; $\chi^2/df = 1.609$; SRMR = .049; PNFI = .749; PCFI = .836.

Table 4 shows the analysis finds a close relationship between the three dimensions, namely foundation dimensions (FD), growth dimensions (GD), and career dimensions (CD), and the aggregate attributes of high-potential (Hi-Pot) employees. Of the three dimensions, growth dimensions (GD) exert the highest influence ($\beta = 1.04$), indicating attributes such as promotability, proactiveness, multitasking, and professionalism as major determinants of the selection and development of high-potential employees. Foundation dimensions (FD) would still appear to hold a strong relationship with the selection criteria ($\beta = 1.00$), which suggests that core attributes like sociability, optimism, systematic thinking, and positive attitude toward work might represent fundamental characteristics that can be developed. Similarly, career dimensions (CD) contribute significantly to the Hi-Pot profile ($\beta = 0.96$), thus reflecting the importance of these performance-oriented characteristics in terms of high-quality output, skill sets, and market awareness toward ensuring success and sustained growth. Thus, all three dimensions contribute significantly; however, the defining factor, particularly as displayed in growth dimensions, would be the ability to grow and readiness to lead known Hi-Pot employees.

Table 5 indicates that the structural equation model designed to assess the characteristics of high-potential (Hi-Pot) employees is a good fit. With RMSEA = 0.047 (90% CI: LO = 0.038, HI = 0.055), it fits closely to the data, as it is below the cut-off criterion of 0.05. However, GFI = 0.906 indicates an acceptable level of fit. CFI = 0.927, TLI = 0.919, and IFI = 0.928 all exceed the recommended cutoff of 0.90, providing further evidence of the strength of the model. With a χ^2/df ratio of 1.609, which is within the criterion (≤ 2) to indicate a good fit, it signifies a very slight deviation of the observed from the predicted data. The SRMR = 0.049 is well below 0.08, and the PNFI = 0.749 and PCFI = 0.836 substantiate a balanced but parsimonious model. With these results, the model is thus confirmed to fit the data well, is the best specification of the structure, and is valid and reliable for analyzing the dimensions of Hi-Pot employees.

Table 3: Validation of the dimensions table

I order		II order	B	S.E.	β
Creativity (HP10)	<---	Foundation dimensions (FD)	1.00	--	0.50**
Desirable attitude towards the job (HP14)	<---	Foundation dimensions (FD)	1.54	0.20	0.68**
Independent (HP27)	<---	Foundation dimensions (FD)	1.13	0.19	0.45**
Optimism (HP36)	<---	Foundation dimensions (FD)	1.48	0.19	0.66**
Sociability ((HP51)	<---	Foundation dimensions (FD)	1.69	0.21	0.71**
Systematic approach (HP55)	<---	Foundation dimensions (FD)	1.40	0.18	0.66**
Thinking holistically (HP58)	<---	Foundation dimensions (FD)	1.24	0.18	0.55**
Active (HP4)	<---	Growth dimensions (GD)	1.00	--	0.52**
Agility HP5)	<---	Growth dimensions (GD)	0.76	0.12	0.45**
Fit for higher responsibilities (HP20)	<---	Growth dimensions (GD)	1.26	0.17	0.61**
Multitasking (HP35)	<---	Growth dimensions (GD)	1.23	0.17	0.57**
Passion (HP38)	<---	Growth dimensions (GD)	0.77	0.13	0.41**
Proactive (HP42)	<---	Growth dimensions (GD)	1.13	0.15	0.60**
Professionalism (HP43)	<---	Growth dimensions (GD)	0.95	0.13	0.56**
Promotability (HP44)	<---	Growth dimensions (GD)	1.51	0.18	0.69**
Aligning oneself to the domain (HP6)	<---	Career dimensions (CD)	1.00	--	0.43**
High quality output (HP24)	<---	Career dimensions (CD)	1.07	0.18	0.50**
High quantity output (HP25)	<---	Career dimensions (CD)	1.51	0.24	0.57**
Interpersonal skills (HP29)	<---	Career dimensions (CD)	1.03	0.18	0.49**
Market awareness (HP34)	<---	Career dimensions (CD)	1.36	0.22	0.55**
Perform the best (HP39)	<---	Career dimensions (CD)	1.66	0.25	0.66**
Positioned at the second line (HP41)	<---	Career dimensions (CD)	1.40	0.23	0.55**
Skillset (HP49)	<---	Career dimensions (CD)	1.33	0.20	0.63**
Time management (HP60)	<---	Career dimensions (CD)	1.06	0.18	0.51**

Table 4: Correlation table

II order	Path	III order	B	S.E.	β
FD	<---	Hi-pots	0.91	0.14	1.00**
GD	<---		1	--	1.04**
CD	<---		0.8	0.13	0.96**

Figure 6 structural equation model is a representation of the covariation between the higher-order construct “H” (high-potential employees) and its three latent dimensions: Foundation dimensions (FD), growth dimensions (GD), and career dimensions (CD). There is a great effect of “H” on FD ($\beta = 1.00$), GD ($\beta = 1.04$), and CD ($\beta = 0.96$). Strong effects have been indicated by the highest GD. The foundation dimension consists of traits taken from the foundations, such as creativity and optimism, with sociability (0.71) taking the most. GD consists of growth-oriented characteristics like promotability (0.69) as well as agility. Career dimensions relate to skills about the career, such as performing well (0.66) and skillset (0.63). They are HP10 to HP60 which are the observed variables mapped into their respective dimensions. The error terms capture the unexplained part of the variances ($e1-e29$). Overall, the model provides a clear picture of how Hi-Pot constructs connect with its dimensions and particular employee attributes within a solid framework for understanding high-potential characteristics.

5. DISCUSSION

The study considered foundation and career along with growth for constructing and validating a paradigm for the identification of high-potential workers (hi-pots). Findings suggest that those dimensions shape high-potential employees in different but intertwined ways. The strength of the growth dimensions ($\beta = 1.04$) would seem to give weight to qualities such as

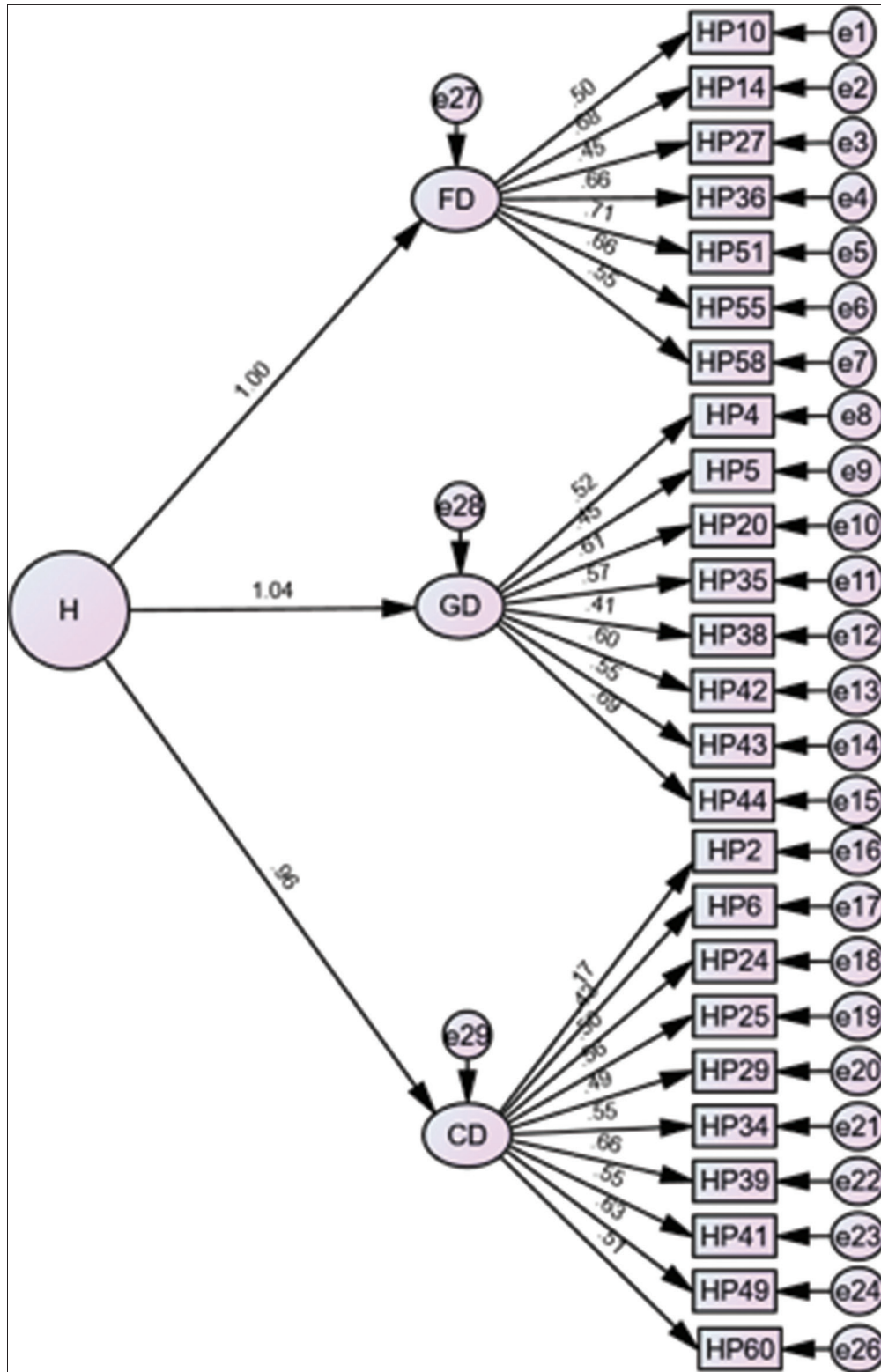
promotability and proactiveness. The proven model has sociability optimism and methodical thinking as foundation dimensions for further development. The career dimensions stress performance-oriented criteria like skill set and market knowledge for high achievement in the long run. Combining many characteristics in one empirically verifiable paradigm fills a big gap in research. The model does incorporate potential and performance, unlike former models which included engagement, leadership potential of employees, or stages of development only. That greatly improves talent identification while laying a basis for training and development.

5.1. Implications for Practice

This means of practical consequence is the relevance for strategic talent management. Organizations can apply the dimensions validated for operationalization:

- Targeted identification: Use human resource professional development frames to find people with those basic attributes parents or dreams to improve interpersonal skills as flexibility and promotability may suggest that they are potential leaders.
- Tailored development programs: Wherever training interventions are intended to target improvement of current performance and development for future potential, ability, and opportunity must always go together.
- Dynamic succession planning: According to the data, the model offers a continuum from the more general abilities to the higher professional ones that allow firms to trace employees' career paths across time.
- Data-driven decisions: The result is that managers will be able to make decisions regarding talent management more objectively off the data, hence less biased than when it is evaluated subjectively, using verifiable scales of measurement and taxonomic structures between dimensions.

Figure 6: Structural equation model



Grounded in theory and providing practical implementable tools for organizations to upgrade their leadership pipelines and performance, the present study fully grounds its discourse on talent management.

Table 6 shows that this research provides a new paradigm informed by empirical studies that circumvent some of the older methodologies. Foundational features, growth attributes, and career-specific competencies give a much fuller picture of high-

potential individuals and helpful insights for talent management academics and practitioners.

6. CONCLUSION

The current research developed and assessed a unified system that identifies high-potential employees (HiPos) through three stages

Table 5: Goodness of model fit indices

RMSEA	LO90	HI90	GFI	CFI	TLI	IFI	χ^2/df	SRMR	PNFI	PCFI
0.047	0.038	0.055	0.906	0.927	0.919	0.928	1.609	0.049	0.749	0.836

Table 6: Comparison related studies

Citation	Title	Key findings	Research gap	How the study filled the gap
Almotawa and Shaari (2020)	Validation of employee engagement framework	Digital competence and workplace spirituality greatly impact employee engagement; job satisfaction somewhat mediates.	Prioritized healthcare staff engagement above talent management and high-potential identification.	In this study, an extensive structure outlines and assesses the qualities of high-potential employees across sectors as a worthy extension of engagement.
Dries and Pepermans (2012)	How to identify leadership potential: development and testing of a consensus model	To evaluate leadership potential, created a four-quadrant model (analytical skills, learning agility, drive, and emergent leadership).	Did not distinguish performance from potential or provide a coherent, empirically verified paradigm.	The study blends foundation, growth, and career to uncover intrinsic efficiency, improving talent evaluation operations.
Martharine (2022)	Study protocol: Development and validation of a framework on the personality characteristics of high-potential employees (hi-pots)	Proposed an experimental sequential design to construct a hi-pots personality theory.	The technique was descriptive and needed empirical validation and a solid methodological basis.	To improve operational relevance, the framework was empirically tested using multi-phase mixed methods, notably structural equations modeling.
Goda and Sudo (2022)	Development and validation of a five-level developmental model for new graduate employees	Created a five-level apprenticeship scheme to monitor fresh graduates' growth.	Specific to fresh graduates, restricting its usefulness to a multi-level talent pool.	The study's approach includes qualities important to new and seasoned workers throughout career phases and sectors.
Pretti et al. (2021)	Development and validation of a future ready talent framework	Developed a work-related talent model integrated learning, stressing stakeholder consensus.	Mostly focused on work-integrated learning and lacked empirical confirmation.	An empirically validated paradigm that integrates numerous high-potential personal attributes makes it easier to use in everyday organizational settings.
Nikolova et al. (2014)	Work-based learning: Development and validation of a scale measuring the learning potential of the workplace (LPW)	Develop a psychometrically sound multi-dimensional measure to evaluate workplace learning capacity.	Lacked high-potential personnel identification and talent management practices.	Learning potential is one of several criteria used to discover high-potential people and compare them to talent management and leadership development.

which include Foundation, Growth, and Career development. The research results demonstrate that high-potential worker profiles develop through various contributions from different assessment dimensions. Growth Dimensions in general, predict the leadership preparedness based on consideration of promotability, proactiveness, and flexibility. The Foundation Dimensions begin with sociability and optimism which together with methodical thinking form the foundation needed for all future development. The Career Dimensions sustain their quality through performance-related assessment elements which include market knowledge and technical expertise. The study establishes a connection between corporate management theory and talent management practices which remain unaddressed in current research. The research develops scientifically validated multidimensional frameworks which help organizations identify employee potential. The system enables organizations to identify specific talent needs while providing tools for succession planning and leadership development and organizational strategy implementation. The system improves upon narrow model restrictions by using a comprehensive approach which examines both natural characteristics and performance-related skills.

6.1. Limitations

The present research study contains limitations which exist in addition to its existing strengths. The researchers selected specific sectors and geographic regions to conduct their study. The current research study because it used cross-sectional design only captured high potential traits which existed at that specific moment in time without showing how those traits developed throughout the participants' professional lives. The research failed to investigate other elements which include both organizational culture and market conditions in addition to statistical data.

6.2. Future Research

The future studies will examine high-potential characteristics because they will track organizational dynamics over an extended period. The framework's external validity will improve when researchers obtain data from various sectors located in different areas who have different cultural backgrounds. The process of identifying high-potential employees gets affected by three factors which include economic conditions technology advancements and work demands. The research will use digital analytics together with AI technologies to develop a framework which will help organizations adapt to their current business requirements. The

research shows how high-potential individuals function yet the study needs additional research to create a complete model which will improve talent management for the evolving business environment.

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