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Employee Satisfaction as a Mediating Variable between Talent Management and Organizational Performance

Devi Alviani^{1*}

Riky Perdana²

¹ Department of Management, Faculty Economy and Business, Universitas Padjadjaran, Bandung, Indonesia

Email : devi22006@mail.unpad.ac.id

² Department of Management, Faculty Economy and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Riau, Pekanbaru, Indonesia

Email : rikyperdana@umri.ac.id

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Abstract

The current literature exhibits notable gaps, driven by inconsistent empirical findings regarding the relationship between talent management and organizational success, alongside a shortage of empirical data from learning organizations within emerging markets. To bridge these gaps, this investigation explores the direct and indirect influences of talent management on institutional performance—hypothesizing employee job satisfaction as a key mediator, within an educational context. The target population encompassed both teaching faculty and administrative staff from senior high and vocational institutes throughout Riau Province. Of the 300 questionnaires distributed, 259 valid responses were retrieved, representing an 86.3% response rate. Data analysis was executed using partial least squares structural equation modeling via PLS 3.0 (SEM-PLS 3.0). The empirical results reveal that strategic talent management practices simultaneously enhance organizational performance and foster higher levels of employee satisfaction and commitment. In particular, when staff members feel recognized and supported by these initiatives, their job satisfaction increases. This heightened satisfaction, in turn, translates into sustained superior performance metrics that drive overall institutional success. Consequently, employee satisfaction functions as an essential mediating mechanism that strengthens the positive outcomes of talent management on organizational success, highlighting its critical importance in sustaining a productive and thriving workplace.

Keywords: Talent Management; Employee Satisfaction; Organizational Performance; Organizational Learning; Education

Abstrak

Temuan empiris yang tidak konsisten mengenai hubungan antara manajemen talenta dan kinerja organisasi, bersama dengan bukti terbatas dari organisasi pembelajaran di negara berkembang, mengungkapkan kesenjangan penting dalam literatur. Studi ini bertujuan untuk menguji pengaruh manajemen talenta terhadap kinerja organisasi, baik secara langsung maupun tidak langsung melalui kepuasan kerja karyawan, dalam lembaga pendidikan. Sampel terdiri dari guru dan staf administrasi dari sekolah menengah atas dan sekolah menengah kejuruan di Provinsi Riau. Dari 300 kuesioner yang didistribusikan, diperoleh 259 tanggapan valid (tingkat respons: 86,3%). Data dianalisis menggunakan SEM-PLS 3.0. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa praktik manajemen talenta yang diimplementasikan dengan baik berkontribusi terhadap peningkatan kinerja organisasi sekaligus mendorong tenaga kerja yang lebih puas dan terlibat. Ketika karyawan merasa dihargai dan didukung melalui praktik tersebut, tingkat kepuasan mereka meningkat. Pada gilirannya, tenaga kerja yang puas akan meningkatkan keberhasilan organisasi secara keseluruhan melalui peningkatan tingkat kinerja. Selain itu, kepuasan karyawan memainkan peran penting dalam memperkuat pengaruh positif manajemen talenta terhadap hasil organisasi, sehingga menegaskan pentingnya dalam menciptakan lingkungan kerja yang unggul dan berkinerja tinggi.

Kata kunci: Manajemen Talenta; Kepuasan Karyawan; Kinerja Organisasi; Pembelajaran Organisasi; Pendidikan

INTRODUCTION

The era of intense competition has made achieving organizational performance a crucial factor for the sustainability of an institution. One fundamental question that arises is: what elements contribute to improving and supporting human resource management practices? This often revolves around talent management strategies. Effective talent management is believed to be a key strategy in creating organizational stability and sustainability (Oltra and Vivas-López, 2013; Hassan et al., 2022). Talent management refers to a systematic set of procedures for identifying, developing, attracting, engaging, and retaining talented employees who provide a competitive advantage to the organization (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020). Research on talent management has grown significantly as organizations seek better practices to manage talent efficiently to achieve their strategic goals (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Hassan et al., 2022).

Organizations face various challenges in managing talented employees amid market instability and dynamic political changes (Schuler et al., 2017). Economic uncertainties, such as recessions or exchange rate fluctuations, can affect a company's financial stability, making it difficult to retain and develop top talent. Additionally, changes in government policies, such as labor regulations or shifts in political leadership, can impact HRM strategies. For example, in the technology industry, immigration policy changes in some countries can limit organizations' access to highly skilled global talent. Similarly, the banking sector often has to adjust its talent management strategies due to fluctuating monetary policies. Therefore, organizations need to develop adaptive and flexible strategies for managing talented employees.

Talented employees are seen as strategic assets that are necessary to accomplish company objectives (Scullion and Collings, 2011), despite the fact that a major obstacle to organizational growth is still the absence of essential skills and competences, especially in developing countries experiencing talent shortages (Horwitz et al., 2015). Prior studies have mostly concentrated on Western nations and individual-level evaluations of organizational performance, employee job satisfaction, and talent management strategies in particular business contexts, such as small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) and the banking industry (Xin et al., 2020; Ghani et al., 2022). As a result, exploration of the workforce in developing countries, including Indonesia, particularly within learning organizations, remains limited.

When educational institutions function as learning organizations, they markedly enhance instructional quality and knowledge accumulation, which subsequently accelerates overall performance (Kafetzopoulos et al., 2022). By utilizing strategic talent management frameworks, these institutions successfully cultivate a unified, shared vision that yields the cooperative synergy necessary to meet organizational goals (Jibril and Yeşiltaş, 2022). Research by Khairina and Games (2022) provides empirical backing for a powerful direct and indirect link between talent management methodologies and staff performance. Supporting this view, Octavia and Susilo (2018) note that employee outcomes improve systematically as talent management systems become more sophisticated. However, these insights contrast with the findings of Prasetya et al. (2016), who contend that talent management practices do not meaningfully impact employee performance metrics.

These conflicting results within the current literature point to a clear research gap requiring more extensive empirical exploration. Within the framework of high-performance work systems, employee satisfaction serves as a critical bridge connecting talent management practices to overall organizational outcomes (Chopra et al., 2024). Indeed, talent management initiatives exert a substantial influence on both the productivity and job satisfaction of the workforce (Jahangiri and Fard, 2017). Furthermore, satisfaction functions as a key mediating variable through which talent management strategies are transformed into sustained competitive advantages (Jibril and Yeşiltaş, 2022). Supporting this view, Luna-Arocas and Morley (2015) contend that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between talent management and individual work performance (Bashir et al., 2020). Similarly, employee satisfaction has been shown to partially mediate the interconnected relationships among empowering leadership, talent management, and employee performance outcomes (Nurimansjah et al., 2022).

In the context of high-performance work systems, job satisfaction acts as a vital link that connects talent management initiatives to broader institutional success (Chopra et al., 2024). Specifically, proactive talent management strategies profoundly impact both employee productivity and overall workplace satisfaction (Jahangiri and Fard, 2017). Moreover, satisfaction operates as a core mediating

element that enables talent management frameworks to yield durable competitive advantages (Jibril and Yeşiltaş, 2022). Aligning with this perspective, Luna-Arocas and Morley (2015) argue that job satisfaction serves as a mediator between talent management models and individual job performance (Bashir et al., 2020). Correspondingly, employee satisfaction partially mediates the complex dynamics linking empowering leadership and talent management practices to worker performance outcomes (Nurimansjah et al., 2022).

The inclusion of employee satisfaction as a mediator is crucial, as direct effects alone fail to fully capture the complex relationship between talent management and organizational performance. Failing to account for this variable leaves a gap in understanding how talent management practices actually drive better organizational outcomes, especially within learning organizations where employee sentiment and psychological reactions heavily dictate institutional success. When staff members recognize robust talent management initiatives, their job satisfaction typically rises, which in turn fosters superior organizational results. Consequently, employee satisfaction functions as an essential explanatory pathway that deepens the comprehension of how talent management ultimately enhances organizational performance.

The necessity of verifying the impact of employee satisfaction on employee performance within learning organizations remains critical, given the current lack of empirical research exploring this specific connection. This investigation is pressing because metrics for organizational performance, talent management, and employee satisfaction have traditionally been confined to corporate environments. Moreover, existing literature is heavily skewed toward commercial enterprises and Western settings, leaving a distinct shortage of empirical data regarding the mediating function of employee satisfaction inside learning organizations within developing nations. To bridge this empirical divide, the present study investigates the dynamics between talent management, employee satisfaction, and organizational performance within senior high and vocational high schools in Indonesia's Riau Province. The primary theoretical contribution of this work involves broadening the scope of talent management research into the domain of learning organizations and empirically validating employee satisfaction as a critical mediating pathway. Furthermore, this research modifies and refines the measurement frameworks of Annakis et al. (2014), Latukha., et al. (2022), and Lyria (2015) to suit Indonesian educational environments. These indicators will be constructed and rigorously evaluated for validity and reliability, thereby establishing specialized, contextualized assessment tools for future scholarship in learning organizations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory stands as a foundational framework within management and economic disciplines, asserting that individuals, by means of education, training, experience, and health—represent a distinct form of "capital" capable of optimizing productivity and organizational performance. Conceptually, this paradigm dictates that investments directed toward human resources generate tangible economic value at both the individual and enterprise levels. Within modern literature, human capital has evolved beyond the mere aggregation of knowledge and skills; it now comprehensively encompasses competencies, creativity, attitudes, and adaptive capacities that actively drive value creation and cultivate sustainable competitive advantages for organizations (Aman-Ullah et al., 2022).

Recent Scopus-indexed empirical research confirms that human capital shares a positive and statistically significant bond with institutional outcomes, primarily by driving progress in productivity, innovation, and operational processes. For example, a study published in the *Journal of Innovation & Knowledge* (2022) establishes that staff capabilities, specialized expertise, and practical skills directly bolster organizational outcomes (Aman-Ullah et al., 2022). Additionally, current literature reviews highlight that investing in human capital cultivation (particularly through structured training methodologies and strategic talent management systems) acts as a fundamental driver for achieving a durable competitive edge and optimizing both financial and operational performance indicators (Shinde and Singh, 2025). Consequently, Human Capital Theory offers a solid theoretical framework to explain the mechanisms through which strategic human resource initiatives generate organizational success within a highly competitive, knowledge-driven landscape.

Organizational Performance

Organizational performance is a key indicator that reflects organizational outputs relative to expectations (Singh and Arega, 2026). It is essential for measuring organizational success in achieving its objectives. Organizational goals are attained through performance evaluations related to the effectiveness and efficiency of managers in utilizing organizational resources (Pitafi et al., 2019). Organizational performance is reflected in increased workforce productivity, internal recruitment policies that enhance motivation and morale, structured succession planning, service quality, and organizational competitiveness (Lyria, 2015).

Employee Satisfaction

Employee satisfaction is closely associated with various work-related outcomes amid increasing job complexity. Employees with high levels of satisfaction tend to demonstrate stronger commitment, higher productivity, and a greater likelihood of remaining in their jobs (Barasa and Kariuki, 2025). Employee satisfaction is understood as a positive emotional state resulting from individuals' evaluations of their work experiences and job conditions (Barasa and Kariuki, 2025). Employee satisfaction is reflected in meaningful job variety, the degree of autonomy in task execution, the quality of social interactions, positive evaluations of overall job conditions, and a low intention to leave the organization despite the availability of alternative employment opportunities (Huang et al., 2020; Shah et al., 2024).

Talent Management

Strategic talent management represents a deliberate framework focused on attracting, recognizing, and cultivating staff members who possess the exact skills and competencies necessary to drive institutional achievement (Al-Romeedy et al., 2025). Operationally, organizations execute these practices by employing either an exclusive methodology that targets high-potential personnel, or an inclusive model designed to advance the professional capabilities of the entire workforce to meet collective goals (Meyers et al., 2020; Makumbe, 2025). From a conceptual standpoint, talent management functions as a multidimensional system encompassing talent identification, development, culture, attraction, and retention; these independent components operate collectively to improve worker performance and secure enduring organizational viability (Annakis et al., 2014; Farooq et al., 2017; Harsch and Festing, 2020; Mehmood et al., 2023; Al-Romeedy et al., 2025).

HYPHOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Talent Management Practices and Organizational Performance

Human Capital Theory posits that an organization's ultimate strategic asset is its workforce, which generates competitive advantage through the collective knowledge, skills, and competencies of its personnel (Becker, 1964). Viewed through this lens, talent management initiatives—including training, career progression, and compensation systems, represent critical investments that elevate human capital quality and directly enhance institutional outcomes. Contemporary studies confirm that investing in human capital yields substantial advancements in productivity, innovation, and overall market competitiveness (Crook et al., 2011; Kianto et al., 2017). These improvements directly support institutional objectives and bolster organizational success (Ali et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2019). Furthermore, talent management frameworks that prioritize development and retention, particularly regarding female talent, have been demonstrated to drive superior organizational performance (Latukha et al., 2022).

H1: Talent management practices have a positive and significant impact on organizational performance

Talent Management Practices and Employee Satisfaction

The connection between talent management practices and employee satisfaction can be comprehensively understood through the framework of Human Capital Theory. This perspective posits that personnel serve as vital strategic assets whose institutional value can be amplified via targeted investments in training, professional advancement, and compensation frameworks. Talent management initiatives (including career progression paths, work-life integration, and equitable remuneration) represent tangible corporate investments aimed at elevating human capital quality. When institutions offer robust growth opportunities and structural support, workforce members not only develop greater professional competence but also feel valued for their efforts, which directly elevates overall job

satisfaction (Maurya and Agarwal, 2018; Maurya et al., 2021). Furthermore, Human Capital Theory clarifies the psychological and economic dynamics driving this connection. Capital allocation toward training and skill cultivation (Lang Cheng, 2012) refines individual capabilities, fostering a sense of competence, relevance, and value within their respective positions. This internal validation strengthens intrinsic motivation and personal accomplishment, both of which serve as crucial pillars of job satisfaction. Additionally, well-executed talent management initiatives cultivate a supportive, growth-centric workplace climate (Dorta-Afonso et al., 2021), thereby solidifying employee perceptions of the organization's long-term commitment to their professional evolution.

H2: Talent management practices have a positive and significant impact on employee satisfaction

Employee Satisfaction and Organizational Performance

The connection between job satisfaction and organizational performance can be thoroughly understood through the lens of Human Capital Theory. Under this framework, personnel are conceptualized as strategic assets possessing intrinsic economic value, whose productivity levels and overall contributions are heavily shaped by the quality of resource investments made by the institution. Job satisfaction indicates how effectively these investments (whether directed toward the workplace environment, organizational culture, or professional growth systems) succeed in elevating the psychological and professional welfare of the workforce. When staff members experience high satisfaction, they tend to exhibit enhanced productivity, deeper loyalty, and a stronger alignment with institutional objectives, which collectively drive superior organizational outcomes (Veloso et al., 2021). Furthermore, employee job satisfaction serves as a mediating mechanism linking external factors, such as an organizational learning culture, directly to overall performance (Pantouvakis and Bouranta, 2013).

H3: Employee satisfaction has a positive and significant impact on organizational performance

Mediation of Employee Satisfaction on Talent Management Practices and Organizational Performance

Employee satisfaction functions as a critical bridge connecting talent management initiatives to overall organizational performance. According to Human Capital Theory, the influence of talent management on institutional outcomes is not merely direct; rather, it operates through internal psychological pathways such as workforce satisfaction. Well-executed talent management heightens job satisfaction by cultivating a supportive workplace climate and ensuring individual capabilities harmonize with organizational objectives. When institutions dedicate resources to personnel advancement, employees experience enhanced competence, greater recognition, and clearer career progression, which collectively elevate their professional contentment. Consequently, satisfied staff members bolster organizational results by means of superior knowledge retention, heightened operational efficiency, and intensified motivation (Dixit and Dean, 2018; Jaipong et al., 2022). This internal alignment ultimately yields superior performance outcomes driven by deeper organizational commitment and enhanced productivity (Harter et al., 2002; Karatepe, 2013). Furthermore, existing empirical literature confirms that job satisfaction serves as a significant mediating mechanism between talent management strategies and organizational performance metrics (Arocas and Morley, 2015; Jibril and Yeşiltaş, 2022).

H4: Employee satisfaction positively and significantly mediates the effect of talent management practices on organizational performance

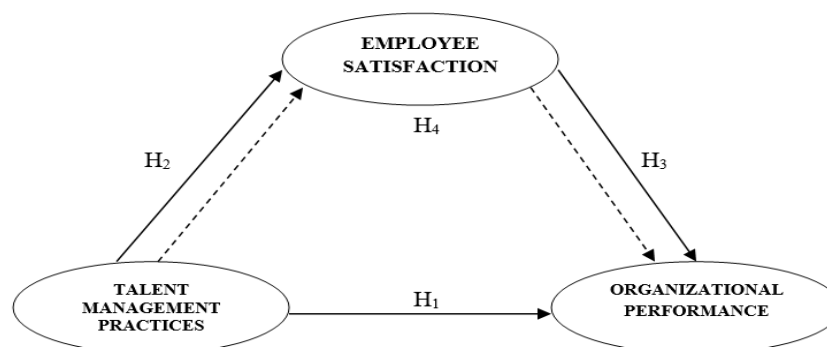


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach as this method is considered valid, reliable, and consistent in maintaining the confidentiality and anonymity of respondents (Abdelwahed et al., 2023). This approach is also effective in collecting data related to attitudes and behaviors while assisting in conserving researchers' time and resources (Azmy, 2019). The respondents in this study are teachers and staff of senior high schools and vocational high schools in Riau Province. As part of their culture and long-term success goal, these institutions place a strong emphasis on learning inspiration and information transfer for both professional and personal growth (Friedman et al., 2005). Additionally, secondary schools are viewed as institutions aimed at advancing growth through learning and continuously developing it in the future (Ponnuswamy and Manohar, 2016).

The target population for this investigation comprised teaching and administrative staff employed within senior and vocational high schools throughout Riau Province. Given that the precise population parameter was undisclosed, sample size calculation was guided by the framework established by Hair et al. (2019) posit that the minimum sample threshold for SEM-PLS analysis should span between 5 and 20 times the total number of measurement indicators included in the model. With 15 indicators utilized in this research, the recommended sample parameters ranged from 75 to 300 participants. To select respondents, a purposive sampling strategy was implemented, targeting individuals who met specific criteria aligned with the research goals—specifically, personnel actively engaged in institutional initiatives and talent management systems within their respective schools.

The data gathering phase extended over a six-month period, running from June through December 2025. From the initial 300 questionnaires distributed to respondents, 259 complete and valid instruments were recovered, resulting in an 86.3% response rate. This empirical data was then analyzed using SEM-PLS 3.0. To evaluate the primary constructs, measurement items were adapted from validated scales in existing literature, specifically incorporating instruments designed by Annakis et al. (2014), Latukha., et al. (2022), Huang., et al. (2020), Oehley (2013) and Lyria (2015). These items have also been used by other researchers in various contexts (Farooq et al., 2017; Al Aina and Atan, 2020; Saleh and Atan, 2021; Abu Afifa and Saleh, 2022; Jibril and Yeşiltaş, 2022).

Table 1. Operational Definition of Variables

Variables	Item	Adopted From
Talent Management Practices	1. The school uses available assessment tools to evaluate prospective teachers or new staff members who will join.	Annakis., et al. (2014) and Oehley, (2013)
	2. The school management provides motivation through up-to-date feedback to support my career development.	
	3. My fellow teachers/staff and I have received recognition from the school for being exemplary in our work.	
	4. The school provides clear job descriptions and performance standards to prevent boredom at work.	
	5. Attracting and retaining talent is a top priority for our school.	
Employee Satisfaction	1. My job offers a variety of activities that make me feel satisfied.	Huang., et al. (2020)
	2. I have sufficient freedom to perform tasks in my own way.	
	3. I am happy with the chances my employment gives me to engage with students and coworkers.	
	4. I am happy with my employment at the moment.	
	5. I wouldn't think of leaving my current work if another one came up.	
Organizational Performance	1. Talent management in this school has improved the productivity of teachers and staff.	Lyria, (2015)
	2. The school's internal recruitment policy helps boost the morale of teachers and staff.	
	3. Clear succession planning in this school has contributed to the effective achievement of educational goals.	
	4. Talent management in this school has driven improvements in the quality of educational services.	

5. We are confident that talent management strengthens our school's competitiveness both nationally and locally.

Source: Processed by author, 2026.

RESULTS

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Characteristics	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	152	58.56
	Female	107	41.44
Age	20–30 years	67	25.81
	31–40 years	127	48.88
	41–50 years	55	21.34
	51–60 years	10	3.97
Job Category	Administrative Staff	157	60.79
	Academic Staff	102	39.21
Work Experience	Less than 5 years	53	20.35
	6–10 years	120	46.15
	11–15 years	58	22.33
	More than 15 years	28	11.17
Region	Pekanbaru	198	76.30
	Other regions (Rokan Hulu, Rokan Hilir, Kuantan Singingi, and Kampar)	61	23.70
Total Respondents		259	100

Source: SPSS, 2026.

Demographic analysis indicates that male participants constitute the majority of the sample (58.56%), with females comprising the remaining 41.44%. In terms of age distribution, the most prominent cohort falls within the 31 to 40 age bracket (48.88%), followed by respondents aged 20 to 30 (25.81%), 41 to 50 (21.34%), and 51 to 60 (3.97%). Regarding professional roles, administrative staff represent the larger portion of the sample at 60.79%, while academic staff account for 39.21%. Evaluation of professional tenure reveals that the largest segment of participants (46.15%) possesses 6 to 10 years of service, followed sequentially by individuals with 11 to 15 years (22.33%), under five years (20.35%), and over 15 years of experience (11.17%). Geographically, a significant concentration of respondents (76.3%) is situated in Pekanbaru, while the remaining 23.7% are distributed across other municipalities, specifically Rokan Hulu, Rokan Hilir, Kuantan Singingi, and Kampar.

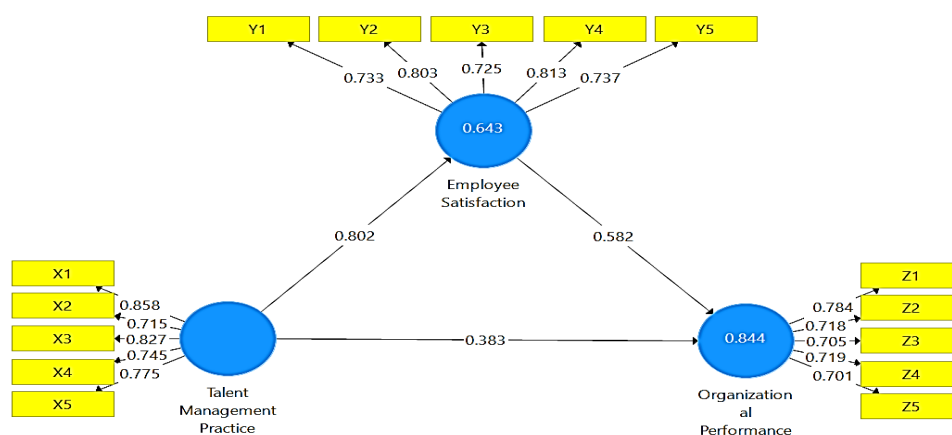


Figure 2. Outer Model

Source: Smart PLS, 2026.

Assessment of the measurement model (outer model) involved examining loading factors (LF), Cronbach's alpha (CA), composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). Methodological standards dictate that LF, CA, and CR values should surpass 0.70, whereas an AVE value above 0.50 is required to establish appropriate reliability and convergent validity (Hair et al., 2017). The statistical results presented in Table 1 demonstrate that the LF, CA, CR, and AVE parameters for every indicator successfully meet or exceed these required thresholds. Accordingly, the measurement indicators employed in this research are verified as both valid and reliable.

Table 3. Convergent Validity and Reliability

Variable	Indicators	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Talent Management Practice	X1	0.858	0.844	0.889	0.618
	X2	0.715			
	X3	0.827			
	X4	0.745			
	X5	0.775			
Employee Satisfaction	Y1	0.733	0.820	0.874	0.582
	Y2	0.803			
	Y3	0.725			
	Y4	0.813			
	Y5	0.737			
Organizational Performance	Z1	0.784	0.776	0.848	0.527
	Z2	0.718			
	Z3	0.705			
	Z4	0.719			
	Z5	0.701			

Source: Smart PLS, 2026.

The assessment of discriminant validity yielded satisfactory results, as the correlation of items within their assigned indicator was substantially higher than their correlations with other constructs. Consequently, these findings conclusively demonstrate that the measurement model exhibits robust discriminant validity.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity Test

Indikator	Employee Satisfaction	Organizational Performance	Talent Management Practice
X1	0,684	0,715	0,858
X2	0,570	0,596	0,715
X3	0,654	0,737	0,827
X4	0,565	0,595	0,745
X5	0,669	0,683	0,775
Y1	0,733	0,594	0,534
Y2	0,803	0,729	0,636
Y3	0,725	0,614	0,629
Y4	0,813	0,737	0,716
Y5	0,737	0,706	0,527
Z1	0,740	0,784	0,698
Z2	0,731	0,718	0,535
Z3	0,543	0,705	0,545
Z4	0,577	0,719	0,749
Z5	0,614	0,701	0,540

Source: Smart PLS, 2026.

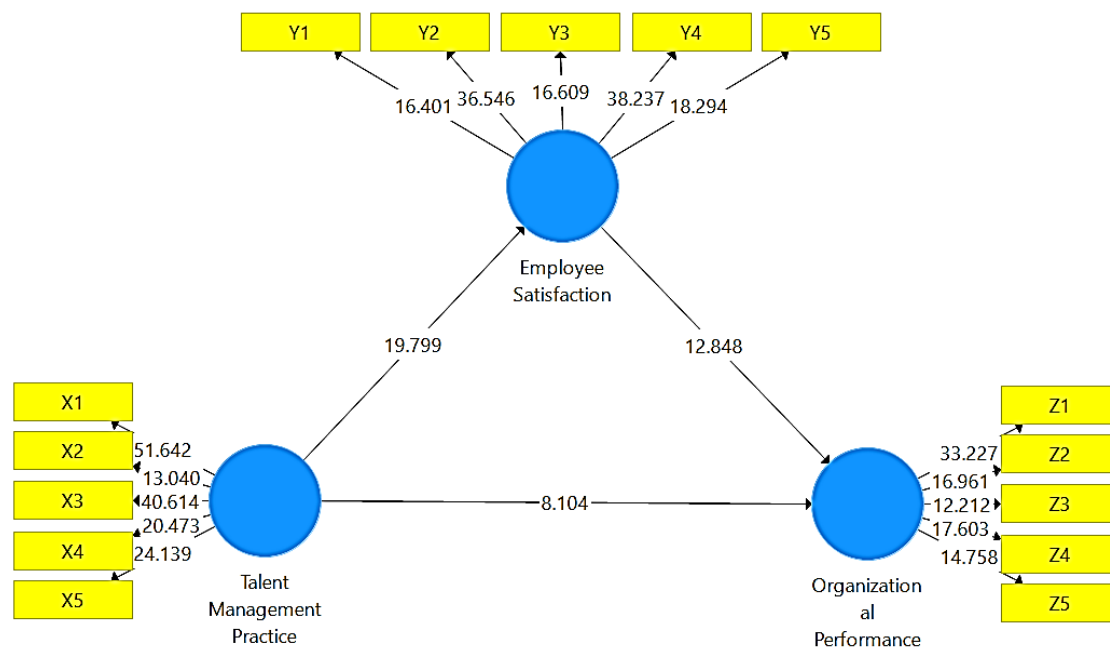


Figure 2. Inner Model

Source: Smart PLS, 2024

Bootstrapping analysis of the structural model provides R^2 values that demonstrate its predictive capabilities. In empirical research, R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, or 0.25 are traditionally classified as indicating strong, moderate, or weak predictive power, respectively (García-Machado and Martínez-Ávila, 2019). Within this study, talent management practices account for 64.3% of the variance in employee satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.643$). Furthermore, the joint effect of talent management practices and employee satisfaction accounts for 84.4% of the variance explained in organizational performance ($R^2 = 0.844$). These empirical outcomes confirm a highly robust relationship and substantial explanatory power among the investigated variables.

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing

	Path Coefficient	T Statistik	P Values
Employee Satisfaction -> Organizational Performance	0.582	12.848	0.000
Talent Management Practice -> Employee Satisfaction	0.802	19.799	0.000
Talent Management Practice -> Organizational Performance	0.383	8.104	0.000
Talent Management Practice -> Employee Satisfaction -> Organizational Performance	0.467	11.588	0.000

Source: Smart PLS, 2026.

The structural model analysis yielded empirical results that fully validate all proposed hypotheses. In particular, worker satisfaction displays a positive and statistically significant relationship with organizational performance ($\beta = 0.582$, $t = 12.848$, $p = 0.000$). Likewise, talent management frameworks exert a powerful, positive, and significant effect on employee satisfaction ($\beta = 0.802$, $t = 19.799$, $p = 0.000$). Moreover, talent management efforts sustain a direct, positive, and significant impact on overall organizational performance ($\beta = 0.383$, $t = 8.104$, $p = 0.000$). Lastly, the mediation assessment confirms that employee satisfaction functions as a significant intermediary connecting talent management systems to institutional outcomes ($\beta = 0.467$, $t = 11.588$, $p = 0.000$). These outcomes confirm that strategic talent management enhances organizational success through a direct route as well as an indirect sequence that maximizes workforce morale. Every structural link meets the required benchmarks for statistical significance, with all t-values surpassing 1.96 and all p-values remaining under 0.05.

DISCUSSION

Talent Management Practices and Organizational Performance

The empirical findings indicate that talent management frameworks exert a positive influence on organizational performance, confirming that the systematic execution of these systems enhances broader institutional outcomes. This outcome supports Human Capital Theory, which maintains that workforce personnel serve as critical strategic assets who generate a competitive edge through the accumulation of specialized knowledge, skills, and professional capabilities (Becker, 1964). The evidence demonstrates that prioritizing talent management initiatives represents a vital investment in human capital that directly accelerates institutional effectiveness and operational development. Accordingly, this research corroborates the utility of Human Capital Theory in explaining the structural relationship between talent management models and organizational success.

This suggests that educational institutions implementing structured talent management practices (such as using objective assessment metrics during hiring, offering actionable feedback for professional growth, and establishing incentive structures for high-achieving educators and administrative personnel) are better positioned to achieve superior performance metrics. Strategic talent management enables schools to secure and retain top-tier professionals, which ultimately elevates productivity, instructional quality, and institutional competitiveness. For instance, academic institutions that offer regular training and career progression pathways tend to cultivate more capable and driven educators. These instructors can provide higher-caliber teaching, which directly enhances student performance outcomes and institutional prestige. Furthermore, rewarding exceptional teachers and staff members with promotions or performance bonuses can increase workplace morale and retention, further optimizing overall organizational output. These insights align with existing literature indicating that well-executed talent management is essential for efficiently meeting institutional goals (Oehley et al., 2013; Latukha et al., 2022). For example, prior research by Oehley et al. (2013) establishes that organizations consistently deploying talent management practices achieve superior financial and operational results compared to peers that neglect these frameworks.

Talent Management Practices and Employee Satisfaction

The empirical data reveals that talent management initiatives positively influence job satisfaction, validating the premise that strategic talent administration elevates the overall professional fulfillment of the workforce. These results correspond with Human Capital Theory, which suggests that institutional investments in personnel through development opportunities, professional acknowledgment, and career support increase both the perceived value and psychological well-being of staff. Consequently, this research reinforces the theoretical position that talent management workflows not only expand employee competencies but also stimulate favorable affective responses, such as workplace satisfaction. Within this structure, the findings confirm that Human Capital Theory serves as a highly relevant lens for explaining the positive relationship between talent management designs and employee contentment. Operationally, when educational institutions implement robust talent management systems (such as providing transparent job descriptions, driving motivation through constructive performance evaluations, and rewarding exceptional contributions) educators and administrative staff display markedly higher job satisfaction.

This increased satisfaction stems from professional autonomy, meaningful peer and student interactions, and a distinct sense of organizational appreciation. For example, academic institutions that offer regular, constructive feedback help teachers feel valued and motivated to pursue ongoing professional growth. Furthermore, awards such as "Outstanding Teacher" or "Exemplary Staff" can bolster personal pride and workplace morale. Satisfied teachers and staff members are more inclined to remain loyal and enthusiastic in their daily responsibilities, which ultimately translates into enhanced school performance. These outcomes support prior investigations indicating that effective talent management frameworks substantially improve employee job satisfaction (Lyria, 2015; Huang et al., 2020). For instance, research by Huang et al. (2020) demonstrates that worker satisfaction increases significantly when organizations apply targeted talent management techniques, such as structured training and clear career progression pathways.

Employee Satisfaction and Organizational Performance

Empirical evidence establishes job satisfaction as a critical determinant that positively influences organizational performance, demonstrating that elevated levels of workforce contentment directly improve institutional outcomes. These findings substantiate Human Capital Theory, which posits that employees experiencing optimal psychological conditions and high work satisfaction are more inclined to maximize their capabilities and contribute effectively to organizational objectives. The data indicate that employee satisfaction functions as an invaluable intangible asset that bolsters organizational productivity and operational efficacy. Consequently, this study affirms the utility of Human Capital Theory in explaining the structural link between employee satisfaction and organizational performance. This indicates that educators and administrative staff who experience high job satisfaction display greater productivity and dedicate maximum effort toward achieving institutional goals.

Furthermore, elevated job satisfaction minimizes turnover intentions, thereby preserving human resource stability within educational institutions. For instance, teachers operating in a supportive and positive workplace environment show greater instructional enthusiasm, employ more innovative pedagogical methods, and build stronger rapport with students, which directly advances educational quality and student success. Similarly, satisfied administrative personnel execute operational tasks with greater efficiency, ensuring seamless institutional functionality. These outcomes align with established literature identifying job satisfaction as a paramount factor in optimizing organizational performance (Annakis et al., 2014; Farooq et al., 2017; Abdelwahed et al., 2023). For example, research by Farooq et al. (2017) underscores that job satisfaction exerts a significant positive impact on both individual productivity and overall organizational efficacy. These findings are further corroborated by High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) frameworks and expectancy theory, which maintain that elements such as job satisfaction and work-life quality critically dictate an individual's capacity for high-level workplace performance (Dorta-Afonso et al., 2021).

Mediation of Employee Satisfaction on Talent Management Practices and Organizational Performance

The empirical analysis indicates that job satisfaction serves as a crucial mechanism linking talent management practices to organizational performance, demonstrating that effective talent management enhances institutional outcomes by increasing employee contentment. These findings strongly support Human Capital Theory by confirming that organizational investments in talent management drive performance metrics not only directly but also indirectly through employees' psychological responses. The data reveal that employee satisfaction functions as an important mediating pathway that clarifies how talent management initiatives are translated into higher organizational performance. Thus, this study validates Human Capital Theory and reinforces the argument that organizational success depends not only on the objective competencies of personnel but also on their psychological well-being and professional satisfaction.

Consequently, talent management practices exert a significant indirect influence by enhancing the job satisfaction of teachers and administrative staff, alongside their direct impact on institutional outcomes. In other words, academic institutions that deploy effective talent management frameworks cultivate a satisfying workplace environment, which ultimately elevates overall organizational performance. For instance, educational institutions that offer targeted training and professional growth opportunities for educators not only augment their instructional capabilities but also foster a culture where staff feel valued and fulfilled. This heightened satisfaction, in turn, inspires teachers to expand their professional effort and contribute more meaningfully toward achieving the school's strategic goals.

These findings imply that there is sufficient freedom for teachers and staff in secondary schools to work according to their preferences and teaching styles. Their jobs offer a variety of interesting and challenging tasks, such as designing innovative learning materials, interacting with students, and collaborating with colleagues, which make them feel happy and motivated. Additionally, they are satisfied with the opportunities for social interaction provided by their work environment, whether with fellow teachers, staff, or students. As a result, they feel content with their current positions and are unlikely to consider leaving their jobs, even if better opportunities arise. Interestingly, talent management practices in these schools have been shown to boost the productivity of teachers and staff. Internal recruitment policies, such as promotions or special assignments, help improve their morale and work spirit. Furthermore, clear succession planning, such as preparing teachers or staff for future

leadership roles, contributes to the school's effectiveness in achieving its educational goals. The use of talent management has also been found to enhance the quality of educational services, and these schools believe that effective talent management practices will improve their competitiveness, both locally and nationally.

These results correspond with the empirical evidence presented by several researchers (Lyria, 2015; Jaipong et al., 2022), who have illustrated how targeted talent management techniques significantly and favorably enhance corporate outcomes and workforce contentment across diverse settings. Furthermore, the outcomes of this investigation find support in theoretical frameworks such as expectancy theory and High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS), both of which argue that systematic talent management architectures serve as critical drivers of worker satisfaction within learning organizations by shaping employee competencies and optimizing workplace environments. Additionally, intrinsic motivation prompts individuals to consistently pursue high levels of operational execution (Chopra et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that talent management practices play a vital role in advancing organizational performance, operating both directly and indirectly through employee satisfaction within learning organizations, specifically educational institutions in Riau Province. The empirical findings indicate that well-executed talent management initiatives enhance employee satisfaction, which subsequently drives superior organizational outcomes. These results reinforce Human Capital Theory by confirming that institutional investments in personnel via talent management frameworks simultaneously elevate psychological well-being and institutional effectiveness. Practically, the research highlights the necessity of adopting competency-based recruitment, clear career progression, and structured reward systems to cultivate workforce contentment and organizational performance. However, this study is constrained by its specific focus on senior high and vocational high schools in Riau Province, its reliance on cross-sectional quantitative data, and its relatively narrow selection of variables and sample size, which may limit the generalizability of the insights to broader educational landscapes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study offers actionable, practical recommendations. Leaders of educational institutions across Riau Province are encouraged to deploy talent management systems systematically and sustainably to optimize both workforce job satisfaction and institutional performance. Explicit strategies include the integration of competency-based recruitment models, structured career advancement tracks driven by targeted training and coaching, and equitable, performance-linked incentive frameworks. Furthermore, school leadership should actively assess and monitor employee morale using routine satisfaction surveys and structured feedback channels, allowing for more precise identification of the elements that drive workplace fulfillment. Consequently, elevating employee satisfaction must be treated not merely as a temporary benchmark, but as a strategic lever that accelerates overarching organizational performance, including instructional caliber, operational productivity, and innovation within the academic landscape.

This study offers several theoretical and methodological recommendations, suggesting that future research expand the current conceptual framework by integrating additional variables that could influence the dynamics between talent management, employee satisfaction, and organizational performance, such as transformational leadership, organizational culture, or employee engagement. Moreover, deploying more diverse methodological approaches, including longitudinal research designs or mixed-methods frameworks, is highly recommended to capture a more comprehensive understanding of how these variables interact over time. Future investigations should also extend the empirical scope to encompass alternative levels of education or broader geographical areas to improve the generalizability of the insights. Ultimately, these efforts will strengthen contributions to the evolution of strategic human resource management theory, particularly in clarifying how employee satisfaction serves as a mediating mechanism that translates talent management practices into enhanced organizational performance.

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