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Kontakt/Contact

ZBW – Leibniz-Informationszentrum Wirtschaft/Leibniz Information Centre for Economics
Düsternbrooker Weg 120
24105 Kiel (Germany)
E-Mail: [rights\[at\]zbw.eu](mailto:rights[at]zbw.eu)
<https://www.zbw.eu/>

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Chapter 10

Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

Marian Thunnissen^a and Paul Boselie^b

^aUtrecht University School of Governance/Fontys University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands

^bUtrecht University School of Governance, The Netherlands

Abstract

This final chapter of this book highlights and critically discusses some specific issues concerning talent management in the context of higher education raised in the chapters of this book. It recapitulates the transition higher education is going through. This transition started decades ago but was boosted by the movements of Open Science and Recognition and Rewards. It leads to a reorientation on the conceptualization of academic performance and subsequently also on the meaning of talent and talent management in academia. It points to a shift from an exclusive and performance orientation on talent, to an inclusive, developmental approach to talent management or a hybrid form. Yet, Thunnissen and Boselie state that there is a talent crisis in academia, and this crisis urges the need for more innovative ways of developing and implementing talent management practices. This chapter ends with some recommendations for further talent management research and practice.

Keywords: Talent; talent management; higher education; university; agency; inclusive talent management

Talent Management in Higher Education, 179–195



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Introduction

The contribution of higher education institutes is to provide high-quality academic education and to conduct high-quality scientific research, both with the aim to contribute to a strong knowledge society and to contribute to the resolving of big societal issues. These tasks are built on the efforts of people, that is, staff members – both academic and support staff – involved in education, research and societal impact (Kummeling et al., 2023). Academic performance and impact therefore depend heavily on the way higher education institutes identify, appreciate, develop and use of talent. In this book, we aimed to shed a light on talent management in the context of higher education. It gave an overview of how talent is defined in higher education, the implementation of talent management practices, how this is perceived by employees and its impact on academic performance, embedded in a multilevel and multi-actor view on the organizational context. It is this context that is highly subject to change, and therefore, we believe that the time has come to transform the talent management approach in academia. In this final chapter of this book, we will highlight and discuss some specific issues concerning talent management in the context of higher education raised in the chapters of this book. We will also present some recommendations for further talent management research and practice.

Academia in Transformation

We will start by discussing the specific context of higher education. Not only because the talent management literature has been criticized for lacking contextual awareness but especially because the organizational context in higher education is undergoing major changes, and these developments may have a significant impact on the definition of talent and on talent management. The dominant exclusive approach regarding talent in academia is deeply rooted in the origin of higher education. The first universities in Europe were established in the 11th century, and many of them evolved from the medieval cathedral schools. The first universities were staffed and attended by the elite and were schools for the privileged clergy and the nobility (Schippers, 2024). Around the late 18th century, the modern university arose, and universities were organized like Berlin's Humboldt University in which freedom and autonomy in finding new knowledge and deepening the understanding of the world were key values. It was, however, important to keep the outside world at a distance in order to protect the autonomy and independence of the scientist and scientific work. Like the medieval universities, the modern universities were only open for the select few. The baby boom after the Second World War was the starting point of a transformation in academia. In Chapter 2, Joop Schippers (2024) points at three major developments during the last couple of decades, all contributing to the opening of the university for society. First, it started with growth: on the one hand, growth in the number of students studying in higher education and, related to that, the growth of academic staff and, on the other hand, the growing need for higher educated people on the labour market. This led to the transition from a small-scale elite institution to broad training (and research) institute. Second, the socialization and democratization

of higher education since the mid-1960s is an important development. It started as a reaction to all kinds of student and staff protests regarding the control over higher education and resulted in increasing agency of various internal and external stakeholders in academia. Third, in later periods, government and administrative staff of universities started intervening in higher education with interventions based on New Public Management (Bryson et al., 2014), aiming to professionalize the institutes and their way of working and organizing. Although politicians in many countries see higher education as a ‘merit good’ which benefits the individual and society at large (Schipper, 2024), the governmental departments and administrators involved in higher education also found it important to provide this common good ‘product’ in a more efficient and effective way. The input–output attention with an emphasis on performance became dominant through what is sometimes called ‘managerialism’ (in line with New Public Management principles) and was denounced by critics (Deem, 2001; Teelken, 2012) for its misfit and impact on the core business of academia, being human development in terms of knowledge creation through research and knowledge sharing through teaching. Interestingly, instead of enhancing the contribution of higher education to society, Schipper (2024) argues that the professionalization led to a new form of distance between higher education and society, creating a world of procedures and funding streams that is hard to follow for an outsider. Moreover, the increasing importance of efficiency and operational excellence stimulated competition between scientists and institutes, which became embedded in systems, policies and structures and with a quite narrow focus on, in particular, research activities.

Chapter 2 also presents the rise of a fourth change: the recent movement of Open Science. This movement is triggered by both the needs and wishes of modern scientists to contribute to the big societal issues our society is confronted with, and the public demands to open up academia, to share the state-of-the-art knowledge with society and even to collaborate with society in developing new knowledge. De Haan et al. (2024) call this movement in Chapter 4 a transformative force, a paradigm shift as it emphasizes the importance of transparency and societal engagement as a core element of the academic process. It is a call for universities and academic staff to open up for society: not only to contribute to understanding the world around us by doing excellent research, like in the historic Humboldt university model, but also to take an explicit position in that society and to be actively involved in that world and in changing and improving it. De Haan et al. (2024) state that this movement may also represent a shift from ‘productification’ (publications, citations, impact factors, research grants, prizes and rankings) to ‘humanization’ (development and involvement of employees, students and other stakeholders inside and outside higher education), opening the door to good employership and healthy work conditions for everybody working and being involved in academia including students.

Although the Open Science movement is still relatively young (mid-2010s), the changes – at least in Europe – already seem to be irreversible. This may be due to the fact that the Open Science movement is embraced by and boosted by two powerful stakeholder groups. On the one hand, the policymaking and policy implementing bodies, such as governmental departments and national and

European funding organizations; organizations that played a significant role in adopting and implementing the aforementioned New Public Management principles, now have formulated new principles for open science and recognition and rewards and are developing new policies for funding in correspondence to those new principles. On the other hand, the movement comes from science itself: groups of academics, united, for example, in COARA and DORA, urging the need to reform academia. According to [DiMaggio and Powell's \(1983\)](#) new institutional theory, these two stakeholder group actions represent coercive mechanisms (in particular new governmental rules and procedures) and professional mechanisms through networks and coalitions of professionals. The combination of coercive and normative mechanisms is most likely not only contributing to isomorphism (homogeneity) of the higher education sector on open science and recognition and rewards but potentially also activates the third institutional mechanism defined by [DiMaggio and Powell \(1983\)](#) – mimetic mechanisms – meaning imitation as a result of uncertainty and fashion. Apparently, there is a momentum for institutional change towards open science, whereby the coercive, normative and mimetic mechanisms all seem to push to unity and shared commitment to open science. Several chapters in this book show the increasing resistance against the dominant focus on competition and performance (e.g. Chapters 5 and 7). We also see that higher education institutes as employers – the innovators, as [Boselie \(2024\)](#) calls them in Chapter 9 – are joining forces themselves, for example, in the Higher Education Leadership Initiative for Open Science and take first steps in cooperating on the human capital issues in academia. Nonetheless, there are also academics who have concerns regarding the Open Science movement ([Poot & Mulder, 2021](#); [Scienceguide, 2021](#); [Singh Chawla, 2021](#)). They fear the loss of academic freedom and independence in cooperating with stakeholders, the weakening of the competitive position of their university in the long term and the potential negative effect of broadening up performance goals on the careers of young academics. As [Schipper \(2024\)](#) states in Chapter 2, all these developments create tensions between the old traditions and the new demands put on higher education by society. [Thunnissen and Buttiens \(2017\)](#) published an article on the influence of institutional logics on talent management in the public sector. They found that academic talent management was subject to two major logics: the market-managerial logic related to New Public Management and the professional or science logic grounded in the academic traditions and academic community. The strategic tensions between the market-managerial logic and the professional logic have been described by [Scott \(2013\)](#) in his classic book on institutional theory. The potential tensions between the two logics are common in many public sector organizations in which professionals are employed such as hospitals, primary schools, secondary schools and military services. The Open Science movement could hint to the rise of a third logic: a 'social institution' or 'public service logic' representing the urge of academics and higher institutes to contribute to society ([Mountford & Cai, 2023](#); [Petrescu, 2019](#); [Upton & Warshaw, 2017](#)). This potential third logic (social institution or public service logic) increases the higher education complexity in times of transformations and will have an impact on talent and talent management.

Revaluation of Academic Performance

Moreover, the three logics (market-managerial, professional and social institution or public service logic) can be related to a multidimensional performance approach that acknowledges organizational goals, employee goals and societal goals. In Chapter 1, we mentioned the Harvard model of [Beer et al. \(2015, 1984\)](#) with its multi-stakeholder perspective on performance, highlighting the equal importance of employee, organizational and societal well-being as outcomes of talent management. As [de Haan et al. \(2024\)](#) position in Chapter 3, the Open Science movement is a reaction to the narrow definition of academic performance (with its accent on research excellence) and the lack of consideration for societal well-being. [De Haan et al. \(2024\)](#) call up for rethinking on the question on ‘what a university is for’. The Open Science movement may – at least in the higher education institutes that embrace the Open Science movement – lead to an expansion of the perception of academic performance, in which both research excellence (referring to organizational effectiveness) and impact (referring to societal well-being) are seen as performance outcomes. This still leaves employee well-being underexposed. Nonetheless, the Open Science movement and the steps taken regarding Recognition and Rewards are perceived by, in particular, early career academics as an improvement and a chance to improve the well-being of academic staff as well as a possibility to give room to more talents than the current accent on research excellence. There is, as we will argue later, a long way to go regarding the strengthening of employee well-being. Employee attraction and retention of highly motivated and qualified workers in higher education (both academic and support staff) is one of the major strategic challenges of universities worldwide, a theme that is even further challenged by contemporary labour market shortages due to demographic developments.

In Chapter 4, [Kramer and Bosman \(2024\)](#) discussed the impact of the Open Science movement on the debates on academic performance and, in particular, on performance assessment. Excellence and performance in higher education, both on the level of the individual academic and on the level of research groups or universities (e.g. the ranking lists), was and still is based on being the best in research. This subjective view on talent and performance is, as multiple chapters show, implicitly present in the mindset and behaviour of academics, academic managers and policymakers but also institutionalized in systems and procedures. The assessment of academic performance was also based on research criteria, and, as [Kramer and Bosman \(2024\)](#) point out, the use of a limited set of proxy indicators can lead to perverse incentives and side-effects. First, previous research shows that being excellent in research, visible in publications in high-impact journals and in acquiring research funds, became the core pillar for an academic career, and determined whether or not to get a tenure or a promotion ([van Arensbergen et al., 2014](#); [Van Balen et al., 2012](#); [van den Besselaar & Sandström, 2015](#)). In other words, research excellence opens the gate to a career in academia. As a result, scholars who excel in other areas such as education, leadership, professional performance or impact do not feel recognized for their efforts put in those activities, experience obstacles in their career progression or even decide to pursue a career outside

academia where they are able to deliver the societal contribution they aspire (see the chapter of Teelken et al.). Second, the increased funding of research based on external funds and the scarcity of academic positions has shaped a highly competitive work environment, in which individual performance is considered more important than the performance and contribution of the collective. It is, as the succeeding chapters of this book point out, this competitive work climate that is harmful for the well-being of many, in particular early career academics. Third, the premise was that research excellence was easy to ground in objective and good to measure criteria that would enhance a fair and equal treatment during selection and promotion processes. Yet, as [Kramer and Bosman \(2024\)](#) indicate, the used indicators are often not fit for the purpose and therefore do not contribute at all to creating fairness and justice. Hence, the popular journal impact factor (JIF) and the *h*-index are not suitable for HRM and therefore talent management activities (in particular recruitment and selection, performance appraisal and promotion) in higher education.

The call for rethinking on the question on ‘what a university is for’ ([de Haan et al., 2024](#)) leads to broadening of the assessment of performance, that is, including other aspects that are relevant in achieving performance, but also to deepening the assessment, in using performance assessments as a tool for strengthening learning and development on individual, team and organizational levels ([Kramer & Bosman, 2024](#)). Moreover, Kramer and Bosman also make a plea for giving voice to the people being assessed and to involve them in the assessment. This implies that the funding agencies and the top researchers currently involved in the peer assessments will have less control – you might even question if they have adequately represented the interests of the entire academic community or just of a small group, causing, what [Jensen and Meckling \(1976\)](#) call a ‘agency conflicts’ – while the early career academics and others involved in the broad spectrum of academic work will acquire more room and agency in defining and evaluating academic performance. Hence, the Open Science movement is building on a multiple stakeholder approach that acknowledges both internal and external stakeholders. This is in contrast to the aforementioned New Public Management developments, which implicitly incorporate corporate enterprise principles that emerged in the private sector in the 1970s and 1980s, including the shareholder approach proposed by [Jensen and Meckling \(1976\)](#) in what is known as Agency Theory. As a side note: the global financial crisis that emerged in 2008 with the fall of Lehmann Brothers led to an evaluation of the dominant shareholder model built on Agency Theory principles and a renewed focus on stakeholder approaches such as the Harvard model from the 1980s (see, e.g., [Beer et al., 2015](#)). In this book, Kramer and Bosman also plea for this renewed focus in academia. Both the learning culture and the agency have implications for the implementation of talent management in academia.

Broadening the Meaning of Talent

Several chapters (e.g. Chapters 4, 7 and 8) illustrate that most of the performance measures are based on criteria that fit just a small group of employees in higher

education: the male academic, with an excellent track record on research. This brings us to the topic of the definition of talent. In Chapter 1, we already mentioned that universities have an exclusive and performance-based talent management approach, with a narrow focus on the best performers in research. This is affirmed by all chapters in the book. Also, the preference for proven talent (Thunnissen & Van Arensbergen, 2015) or ‘merit’ (Van Engen & Kroon, 2024) above potential has been mentioned before. This book affirms that talent management in academia, with its accent on talent selection (Björkman et al., 2022; Nijs et al., 2024; Thunnissen, 2016), is mainly aimed at work force differentiation – identifying the talents from the non-talents – and only the selective few (read ‘happy few’) who display excellent performance are afforded with a tenure. Staff gets getting permanent contracts later and later in their academic career, resulting in talent pools at multiple levels (PhD, postdoc, assistant and associate professor level) in which those involved experience insecurity and increased pressure to perform.

However, this book also shows a new perspective on the conceptualization of talent in higher education. Despite the fact that the university has become more diverse in student population and in staff (although migrant populations are still underrepresented; (Schippers, 2024)), the implicit definition of talent in academia is still: ‘think talent, think male’ (Festing et al., 2015; Van Engen & Kroon, 2024). This is embedded in formal performance criteria and, in particular, in the actual implementation of the procedures and practices regarding talent identification, development and promotion, as is shown in Chapters 7 and 8 (Nijs et al., 2024; Van Engen & Kroon, 2024). Although the male dominance in the conceptualization of talent has been mentioned before (Daubner-Siva et al., 2017; Festing et al., 2015), it is an underexposed topic in talent management research.

Another contribution of this book is that it illustrates that the meaning of talent in a sector of industry can be subject to change due to developments in the institutional context. The chapters in this book, some more explicit and some more implicit, show that the exclusive, performance talent management approach in academia is starting to show cracks. The external developments and movements identified in this book call for a more balanced or hybrid approach to talent management in which the exclusive and the inclusive approach co-exist. There are several arguments for embracing the inclusive approach. In the first place, the broadening academic performance beyond the scope of research excellence entails the appreciation of multiple talents relevant to achieve the multiple performance domains of a university, such as the talents essential for high-quality education, professional performance and societal impact. It is harsh to note that currently – as the chapter of Teelken et al. (2024) shows – the academics who want to make a contribution to society are the ones leaving academia because their talents are not recognized and rewarded. More importantly, the inclusive approach gives room to a shift from assessing and developing talent at an individual level to a team-based talent approach. As Kramer and Bosman (2024) point out, it is not possible for one person to excel in all the performance domains, so therefore, it is important to have all the skills and knowledge present in the team. In the recognition and rewards transformation team, science and team spirit are central. The contribution to the team atmosphere or culture and to team performance

is considered essential in contrast to the past individual output focus. In higher education, contemporary employees are active in multiple teams that cover joint teaching, research and impact activities. In addition, both foregoing points imply a shift in focus from talents coming from the academic staff, to including support staff as well as the subject of a talent management approach in academia. In higher education, there is a gap between academic and support staff that needs to be bridged given the nature of contemporary academic work that requires cooperation and team spirit of everybody involved. Finally, the inclusive approach is more human-centred and focussed on increasing employee well-being, which is a concern for particular groups of employees.

The recent developments also provide arguments for maintaining the exclusive approach, in addition to the inclusive approach. [Collings and Mellahi's \(2009\)](#) argue that the starting point of talent management is the identification of the key positions that are crucial for the competitive position and performance of the organization and subsequently supply these positions with people having the best qualities to fulfil that position. One could argue that broadening up the scope of academic performance beyond research excellence also implies that there are key positions that are crucial in achieving the collective ambitions in education, leadership, professional performance and impact, such as a full professorship on education or on professional performance. 'Filling up the talent pipeline' for these positions by proactively selecting and developing the best performers in their area can be relevant. Also, the positions that enable the transition set in motion by the Open Science and Recognition and Reward movements can be seen as key positions. Think, for example, on the Open Science coordinator in the organization or the role that is crucial in the innovative collaboration with other higher education institutes; the innovators and leaders who are able to survive in the dynamics of inter-organizational collaboration and/or who are crucial in obtaining a critical mass in applying the innovation ([Boselie, 2023](#)). Finally, the 'best in class', defined in terms of full-professor position and research excellence, is not automatically a good academic leader. Leadership selection and development are essential and therefore a specific area of exclusive talent management in higher education. The Recognition and Rewards movement emphasizes the growing importance of both team spirit and leadership. Talent development of managers and leaders in academia requires personal development, organizational skills (e.g. leading a group of employees) and strategic capabilities (e.g. developing a new strategy for a group).

The Talent Crisis in Academia

The very small and exclusive interpretation of talent in academia is the breeding ground for a talent crisis in higher education. Finding proof of this is an important scientific contribution of this book, but from a human point of view, it is a major worry. The absence of a strategic talent management system is a concern. First, the focus is on a select bundle of talent management practices: the identification and selection of talent, on the one hand, and the assessment of performance of the academics in the 'talent pool', on the other hand. Although human development is a core activity of higher education, for the staff, there is

no intended talent development strategy (Nijs et al., 2024), leaving staff to rely on their own development efforts. Talent development for academic employees is mainly based on an unstructured and informal approach, in which the collegial system of academic peers plays a major role (role modelling, mentoring, peer feedback). Moreover, even in talent development, the main focus is on improving research performance. Second, multiple chapters (Kramer & Bosman, 2024; Van Beuningen, 2024; Van Engen & Kroon, 2024) show a lack of consistency and uniformity in the implementation of the talent management practices and policies (referring to the ‘actual practices’ of in the human resource management (HRM) value chain of Wright & Nishii, 2013). There are a lack of awareness and transparency, a lack of uniformity in the application and a lack of consistency between the various actors, which all leads to inequality and unequal opportunities. This is particularly detrimental for employees. However, third, it also creates a homogeneous workforce with little diversity which can be, in the long run, disadvantageous for the organization. Diversity in itself is high on the agenda in higher education, but in practice probably one of the most challenging workforce themes as highlighted by Kummeling et al. (2023). Indeed, almost no one opposes to diversity in academia, but the actual implementation is far from the ideal balanced situation. This is a big challenge for talent management in academia, not only with respect to contributing to more diversity but also to being aware that some talent management interventions might work against further diversity due to unintentional negative effects. In a recent publication by Leonelli (2023) on the Philosophy of Open Science, the author warns for the (unintended) risks of Open Science policies potentially reinforcing conservatism, discrimination, commodification and inequality. Despite the good intentions of Open Science, the efforts put into it, in particular, in the context of talent management in higher education, can work against higher purposes of public value creation. Leonelli (2023) therefore makes strong pleas for the quest for reliable and responsible open science practices including a deep understanding of local knowledge and their social context. From an HRM perspective, this links to the pleas for avoiding mimicry and copy-and-paste approaches between organizations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) and to invest in contextual approaches, because context matters, and to carefully handle the tension between contextual approaches and general equality principles.

Above all, alarming are the poor working conditions of early career academics. The review study by De Boeck et al. (2018) on employee reactions to talent management showed that despite the fact that many studies find evidence for positive reactions to talent management (by the talents), several studies also show that identification as talent carries significant risks, for instance, that employees who are identified feel under strong pressure to meet high-performance standards. The research presented in this book demonstrates that the high-performance work system with an emphasis on performance appraisal, promotion opportunities and performance-related pay through research success (publications, citations, impact scores and prizes as indicators for promotion) has become dominant and has overthrown employee involvement, autonomy and development in higher education. Hence, multiple chapters show that the negative effects prevail in the context of higher education, for both the talents and the non-talents. The dysfunctional effects of

an exclusive talent management approach (Anlesinya & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2020; Kwon & Jang, 2022) mentioned in Chapter 1 can also be observed in academia and lead to ethical issues. Chapter 6 (Teelken et al., 2024) and, in particular, Chapter 5 (Van Beuningen, 2024) point at the loneliness, the uncertainty, the lack of support, the pressure felt to perform extra-role behaviour in order to be able to continue to work in academia and the stress and burn-out symptoms young scholars experience due to a mismatch between demands and resources. The basic human needs to have autonomy, to be able to relate to and collaborate with others and the recognition and appreciation for one's skills and competence (Ryan & Deci, 2000) are at risk. Chapters 6 and 7 show inequality based on gender and systems that do not offer equal opportunities to all. Moreover, the study by Nijs et al. (2024) illustrates that the competitive work context prevents people from speaking out about their own development needs and acting accordingly. This indicates at the lack of a safe learning climate, while there is a great need to learn from each other and to improve quality (Chapter 4). All this leads to lower engagement, employee turnover and even, as Van Beuningen argues in Chapter 5, a mental health crisis in the early career stage. These findings at least urge the need to do more in-depth research on employee reactions to exclusive talent management approaches, including both the talents and the employees who have not been labelled as talents.

In both cases, the critical question can be asked whether good quality of employment, dignity and the enabling of dignified work are considered in the talent management approach in academia (Blustein et al., 2023; Burchell et al., 2014). The term 'decent work' is often used in the context of low-paid jobs at the bottom of the labour market, but the chapters (and the previous studies cited by the authors) hint at serious problems. The notion of 'the good employer' putting the well-being of the individual employee in terms of employment security, payment and development central, a notion that particularly fits the public sector (Boselie & Thunnissen, 2017), is not being respected in the universities under study in the book chapters. In our view, this argues for also considering employee well-being as an equal outcome in talent management policies at universities and designing talent management practices aimed at achieving that goal. This would imply including a broad spectrum of practices and activities aimed at enhancing development, engagement, job enrichment and job design, a learning culture, etc. This is an aspect of inclusion and diversity that is underdeveloped in HRM and talent management in higher education. See also the plea made by Leonelli (2023) on inclusion and diversity.

Room for Innovative Talent Management Practices

This book shows that talent management in academia is not a rational and linear process. The role of HRM in talent management is marginal, as talent management in universities is mostly the responsibility of the scientific community. In particular, middle and line managers play an important role in the implementation of talent management practices (Björkman et al., 2022; Thunnissen, 2016; Van den Brink et al., 2013), and as we may have observed in previous and current research, they are susceptible to subjective actions and behaviours in implementing talent management practices. The question arises whether this argues for

more structured and aligned talent management policies, procedures and systems, as depicted in the HRM (Wright & Nishii, 2013) or talent management value chain (Boselie & Thunnissen, 2017) presented in Chapter 1. Or do the dynamic times and the talent crisis in academia call up for more innovative approaches in developing and implementing talent management practices?

This book offers several opportunities for innovation in the talent management approach in higher education. The innovation in the conceptualization of talent has been mentioned before: the shift from the exclusive to a balanced (inclusive and exclusive) approach; from an individual- to a team-based perspective; from a performance-oriented to a development-based approach. An important contribution of this book is that ‘agency’ (Jensen & Meckling, 1976) might also be an innovative viewpoint in implementing talent management in the context of higher education. Instead of HR, management or the top scholars deciding on what talents should or should not do, the staff involved gets a say in what is important and what will be the practices and activities to achieve that. Trullen et al. (2020) have developed a cross-disciplinary view of HRM implementation that shows the dynamic and iterative nature of HRM implementation. This approach gives room to both agency and the dynamic context of higher education. Unlike in the Wright and Nishii’s (2013) linear model, Trullen et al. see HRM implementation as a dynamic process, in which practices keep evolving during an iterative implementation process, being modified and refined to be used more effectively. They also state that multiple actors with different (multidisciplinary) backgrounds need to be involved at the same time – including line management and employees – and that these actors actively interact with each other, devoting time and effort to move the practice in their desired direction (Trullen et al., 2020). It needs further exploration, in research and in practice, to find out if, how and how well, the active involvement of multiple actors indeed helps to increase the desired agency of academic staff and in addressing employee outcomes. According to the aforementioned Harvard model, employee influence (employee involvement, autonomy and opportunity to participate) is the most powerful HRM domain (Beer et al., 2015). This is also acknowledged in other theoretical frameworks such as the well-known AMO model* (Appelbaum et al., 2001) in HRM and the job demands–job resources model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018) in Health Psychology. Employee influence in combination with teamwork and team spirit as suggested by the Recognition and Rewards movement could be the next step towards a more open approach to talent management in higher education.

In addition, the question can be raised whether the responsibility for talent management goes beyond the responsibility of a single higher education institute in its role as an employer. The Open Science movement has been criticized because of its potential negative effects on the careers of early career scientists: what may be tolerated or even stimulated in one organization might be rejected by another academic employer. Chapter 9 shows that there are innovative coalitions and that

*AMO stands for employee abilities, employee motivation and employee opportunity to participate

cooperation exists, yet collaboration on human capital innovation is still in its infancy. Mainly policymaking bodies have the intention to collaborate, and even though their policies affect the academic careers, the talents are not hired by them. At the university level, there are alliances, but not yet cooperation in attracting, developing and retaining talent. Nonetheless, inter-organizational collaboration on talent management is an innovative approach and needs to be explored further in both practice and research. The Open Science movement could lead to an Open organization talent approach in which employees cross organizational boundaries including structural and strategic workforce exchange. This type of talent exchange can build on existing forms of (inter)national fellowships, although the existing fellowships are still mainly individualistic, research focussed and strongly linked to personal (often privileged) networks. Yet, institutional incentives such as the Dutch NWO Rubicon grants for postdoc researchers to do research projects at a university outside the Netherlands could be the basis for talent exchange on multiple domains including teaching and public engagement activities.

Future Research Directions

As mentioned in the introduction section, this book is focussed on higher education in Europe, in general, and in some chapters, in specific, on higher education institutes in the Netherlands. Although we believe that the Open Science movement is for universities worldwide a major force for transformation, we do think that the European institutional context differs from, for example, the United States or the Asian region. We therefore think that for a clearer and complete picture of talent management in higher education, more research in other countries and regions is required.

We are also aware that this book is focussed on a specific set of institutes in higher education, that is, the universities providing higher *academic* education. As Schippers pointed out in Chapter 1, in many countries, also institutes for higher *vocational* education exist (e.g. the Fachhochschule or Universities of Applied Science). In part, the developments ascribed in this book also apply for them. Although they have also been subject of New Public Management principles, this did not result in the prominence of research excellence. Providing high-quality and yet affordable education was their core business. In numerous European countries, many of these institutes are now transforming from an educational institute to a knowledge institute, as they have also picked up research (and currently also Lifelong Learning) as a primary task. Often, the systems and practices at the academic universities are taken as an example to organize the research activities at the higher vocational institutes. This book has shown that it is important to exercise restraint in imitating the hard performance-oriented approach to research excellence, because of its perverse effects on the work climate, the careers of researchers and, subsequently, on employee well-being. Our advice to higher vocational institutes is to learn from the lessons of the academic institutes but to walk their unique own path on increasing societal impact via education, research and lifelong learning. However, what works best and for whom in higher vocational education is hard to tell. Research on HRM and talent management

for staff members of higher vocational institutes is even scarcer than research on this subject in academia. It would be worthy to do more research in this specific set of organizations within higher education, since this will help higher vocational institute to address the issues they are confronted with.

The chapters in the book address the way the highly dynamic environment and the transformational changes universities are confronted with affect the talent management approach in academia. The mainstream talent management literature has a rather static view on the talent management process (Thunnissen et al., 2013; Thunnissen & Gallardo-Gallardo, 2017). More research on talent management in highly dynamic contexts is required. In particular, multilevel and longitudinal research might be helpful to explore if and how talent management changes and develops over time.

In Chapter 9, Paul Boselie explored how employers in ‘the war for talent’ start to unite and collaborate with each other, in order to change the talent management system at a sectoral level. This inter-organizational collaboration and ‘Open Organization talent approach’ is ground-breaking, especially in a context that can be characterized as highly competitive. We echo the aforementioned recommendation and stress the need for more research on inter-organizational collaboration and cooptition in talent management.

This book has illustrated some important issues regarding the ethics in talent management in such a highly competitive and exclusive work environment. Given this issue, we were delighted to take notice of an increase of research on ethics and talent management (Anlesinya et al., 2019; Anlesinya & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2020; Kwon & Jang, 2022), yet considering the issues addressed in this book, more research on this topic is required. Since many of the current publications are conceptual papers, we specifically call up for more empirical research on ethics and fairness and justice issues, in particular in relation to employee outcomes.

In the past, a considerable amount of academic research on talent management has been devoted to the identification and attraction of talent (Thunnissen & Gallardo-Gallardo, 2019). In practice, we see a trend from ‘buying talent’ to ‘making talent’ via talent development. Even though scholars have picked up the trend, the number of publications on talent development as well as on talent and career development is still limited (Gallardo-Gallardo & Thunnissen, 2022). More research on this matter is necessary.

Recommendations for Practice

Throughout this book, several recommendations for practice have been given. In conclusion, they can be summarized as follows:

- We advise the institutes that adhere the Open Science movement to contribute to a shift from an exclusive performance-oriented approach to talent to a combination of an exclusive and inclusive approach. In the inclusive approach, the talents underneath the TRIPLE model (this stands for: Team, Research, Impact, Professional performance, Leadership, Education) can provide guidance for broadening the scope. When adopting a team-based approach, it is important to develop and implement practices at strengthening the outcomes

on the team level and not just the individual outcomes. The TRIPLE model and the Open Science movement may also help to identify the key positions in the organization, which is relevant in the more exclusive talent approach.

- Not measuring performance – even in the broad sense of open science – but strengthening the quality of work regarding education, research, professional performance and societal impact and creating a learning climate should be the core principle of performance evaluations and quality systems. This may help in tearing down the highly competitive performance culture. Also, role models may be relevant in this case. Moreover, when measuring performance, we suggest the application of ‘meaningful metrics’ that are linked to (1) the specific context (often the discipline) and (2) the strategic choices made by the institute in terms of ambitions and goals and to use metrics that are developed in cooperation with the ones involved in the activities.
- This book shows a shift from the dominance of organizational well-being (organizational effectiveness) to including societal well-being as an outcome of talent management in academia. Yet, over the past decades, employee well-being has been under severe pressure. We therefore urge to explicitly add employee well-being as a goal of the Open Science and Recognition and Rewards movements. Recognition and Rewards already integrated the concept of meaningful work, yet the book chapters show that more steps need to be taken in order to secure quality of work and a decent work environment; also job security, work–life balance, connection with colleagues and offering development and learning opportunities to everyone need to be integrated into the ideas of Open Science and Recognition and Rewards.
- We also urge to investigate whether the inclusive approach is really that inclusive and gives room to the selection and development of the ‘not-so-usual suspects’, such as females and employees with a migrant background.
- The Open Science transformation is a bottom-up movement, with a lot of scholars actively engaged and committed. When it comes to developing and implementing new talent management practices, it is also worthy to actively involve them and to let them interact in pilots. With ‘them’, we mean both the innovators and the critics, as this may also be a way to increase mutual understanding.
- Our final recommendation is to follow up the first steps taken on the innovative coalitions and coopetition in Open Science and Recognition and Rewards. It might be a way to solve some of the critical issues in the transformation. It is also very innovative for competitors on the academic labour market to collaborate on human capital issue. In this way, universities will set an example for other employers.

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