

Research Article

# Meta-synthesis of Talent Management Practices and Organizational DNA

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## Abstract

This meta-synthesis study investigates the intersection of talent management practices and organizational DNA, aiming to explore how their alignment enhances human resource empowerment and improves strategies for talent acquisition and retention. In the face of increasing organizational complexity and competitive labor markets, aligning talent strategies with the core values, culture, and structures that constitute an organization's DNA has become critical for attracting, developing, and retaining top talent. By integrating a wide range of qualitative and quantitative studies, this research identifies essential talent management practices that reflect and reinforce the foundational elements of organizational DNA. These elements include shared purpose, values, leadership style, decision-making structures, and communication patterns that shape an organization's identity. The study underscores the importance of tailoring talent strategies to fit within this DNA framework to ensure coherence between human resource initiatives and organizational behavior. The findings reveal that strategic alignment between talent management and organizational DNA significantly enhances employee engagement, strengthens employer branding, and improves recruitment, development, and retention outcomes. Furthermore, DNA-aligned practices contribute to building adaptive, resilient, and innovation-oriented work cultures that support long-term organizational performance and sustainability. Drawing from multiple theoretical lenses, including strategic human resource management, organizational behavior, and systems thinking, the study presents a conceptual model to guide the design of culturally congruent talent strategies. This model serves as a practical tool for HR professionals and organizational leaders seeking to align their talent management systems with the deeper structural and cultural attributes of their organizations. Ultimately, this research contributes to the literature by emphasizing the transformative power of integrating talent management with organizational DNA, offering actionable insights that can be applied across diverse organizational contexts.

## Keywords

Talent Management, Organizational DNA, Human Resource Empowerment, Talent Acquisition, Retention Strategies, Organizational Culture, Strategic Alignment

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## 1. Introduction

Talent management (TM) has become a pivotal function within contemporary human resource management, aimed at systematically identifying, attracting, developing, and retaining individuals with high potential and critical competencies. In today's knowledge-driven and competitive environment, organizations increasingly recognize TM as a strategic imperative for sustaining performance and achieving long-term objectives. However, despite the proliferation of research and practical frameworks, a persistent challenge remains: the misalignment between talent management practices and the unique cultural fabric—often referred to as the organizational DNA—that underpins each organization. Organizational DNA, conceptualized as the deep-rooted cultural elements, values, norms, and behavioral codes that guide an organization's internal dynamics [1], serves as a hidden driver of decision-making, communication, and leadership behavior. Aligning TM strategies with the organization's DNA is not merely a matter of operational efficiency, but a critical factor in enabling workforce engagement, reducing turnover, and strengthening organizational resilience. When this alignment is overlooked, talent strategies may falter, resulting in diminished employee commitment and missed opportunities for innovation and growth [2].

This study undertakes a meta-synthesis of existing qualitative research on talent management and organizational DNA, with the goal of elucidating how the interplay between these domains contributes to human resource empowerment. The analysis explores the key dimensions of TM—including recruitment, development, engagement, and retention—and investigates how deeply embedded organizational values and structures shape the success or failure of these processes. Ultimately, this research provides an integrated framework for organizations seeking to tailor their talent management practices to their unique cultural context and build a more empowered, sustainable workforce.

### 1.1. Statement of the Research Problem

The rapidly changing business landscape and intensifying competition have elevated human capital management to a central role in organizational strategy. Talent management (TM)—encompassing talent acquisition, development, retention, and engagement—has emerged as a critical lever for achieving strategic agility and organizational success. Yet, despite its prominence, many organizations continue to struggle with designing and executing talent strategies that are truly aligned with their internal culture and organizational DNA.

Organizational DNA embodies the core, often tacit, elements of an organization's identity—its shared values, norms, leadership approaches, and communication practices [1]. These embedded cultural features significantly influence how talent is perceived, managed, and nurtured across the organ-

izational lifecycle. Empirical studies have demonstrated that organizations with a cohesive and clearly articulated DNA tend to exhibit stronger talent outcomes, such as higher employee engagement, lower turnover, and improved succession planning [2]. In contrast, a lack of alignment between TM initiatives and organizational DNA can create cultural friction, resulting in resistance to change, loss of high-potential employees, and ineffective leadership pipelines.

Despite growing recognition of the importance of this alignment, the literature remains fragmented. While several studies have explored individual aspects of the relationship between TM and organizational DNA, a comprehensive and integrative synthesis is lacking. This study addresses this gap by conducting a meta-synthesis of qualitative research in this area, with the goal of identifying the patterns, mechanisms, and frameworks through which organizational DNA influences TM practices. By doing so, it seeks to offer actionable insights for aligning talent strategies with the cultural essence of the organization—ultimately contributing to human resource empowerment, enhanced employee retention, and more adaptive and resilient organizational systems.

### 1.2. Importance and Necessity of the Research

In today's volatile and globalized business environment, the strategic importance of effective talent management (TM) has become more pronounced than ever. Organizations increasingly acknowledge that human capital represents their most valuable resource and that the ability to attract, retain, and develop talent is directly linked to sustained competitive advantage [3]. However, despite this recognition, many organizations continue to encounter difficulties in executing talent management strategies that are both sustainable and aligned with their distinct cultural and structural characteristics. This challenge highlights the critical need to investigate the underlying influence of organizational DNA on the design and implementation of TM practices.

Organizational DNA—encompassing the deep-rooted values, beliefs, leadership behaviors, and cultural dynamics that shape organizational identity—plays a pivotal role in determining how talent strategies are perceived and enacted across different contexts. As noted by Schein [1], these cultural foundations influence all facets of organizational functioning, including the capacity to recruit top performers, retain high-potential employees, and cultivate innovation. Yet, despite its central role, the relationship between organizational DNA and TM remains underexplored, particularly in terms of how alignment (or lack thereof) impacts performance outcomes and employee engagement.

This research is necessary due to several persistent challenges in contemporary human resource management. Many organizations continue to rely on generic, standardized TM models that neglect the contextual uniqueness of their organ-

izational DNA. Such misalignment frequently results in disengagement, poor retention, and inefficiencies in talent development. Furthermore, evidence suggests that organizations with strong and coherent cultural foundations are more adept at fostering environments conducive to collaboration, creativity, and continuous learning [2]. Therefore, understanding the dynamics between organizational DNA and TM can unlock valuable insights for improving HRM effectiveness.

Additionally, as organizations confront the pressures of globalization, digital transformation, and evolving workforce expectations, there is a growing need to develop agile, responsive TM frameworks that are deeply aligned with internal culture and strategic objectives. This study responds to that need by offering an in-depth exploration of how talent management can be contextualized and optimized through an understanding of organizational DNA.

In essence, this research contributes to both scholarly knowledge and managerial practice by addressing a significant gap in the literature. It provides a foundation for the development of TM strategies that are culturally congruent, sustainable, and performance-enhancing—thus offering a timely and relevant contribution to the field of human resource management.

### 1.3. Novelty and Innovation of the Research

This study offers a novel contribution to the field of human resource management by exploring the intersection of talent management practices and organizational DNA—an area that has received limited empirical attention despite its profound implications for organizational success. The core innovation of this research lies in its integrative focus on how organizational DNA, traditionally discussed in isolation from TM, can shape and enhance the effectiveness of talent strategies across recruitment, retention, and development functions.

While prior research has extensively examined TM as a distinct HRM domain [3], few studies have explored how foundational cultural elements—such as leadership philosophy, shared values, and behavioral norms—interact with and influence TM processes. By centering this intersection, the study challenges conventional, one-size-fits-all approaches to TM and promotes a more contextualized, culturally grounded understanding of talent strategy design.

Furthermore, the study employs a meta-synthesis methodology, which is itself an innovative approach in this research context. By systematically synthesizing findings from a wide array of qualitative studies on TM and organizational DNA, the research constructs an integrated framework that reveals patterns, contradictions, and conceptual gaps. This methodology not only ensures academic rigor but also yields a more nuanced understanding of how organizations can tailor TM strategies in alignment with their internal cultural fabric.

Another dimension of innovation lies in the study's practical orientation. Unlike many prior works that focus primarily on theoretical constructs, this research is designed to gen-

erate actionable insights for HR practitioners and organizational leaders. By identifying how specific aspects of organizational DNA—such as decision-making styles, communication norms, and leadership dynamics—can either support or hinder TM efforts, the study offers clear, evidence-based recommendations for enhancing human capital strategy.

Additionally, the study's conceptualization of organizational DNA as a dynamic and evolving construct marks a departure from static models of organizational culture. By recognizing the fluidity of cultural values in response to internal transformations and external disruptions, the research provides a forward-thinking lens through which talent management can be continuously adapted to changing organizational realities.

In sum, the novelty of this research is grounded in its interdisciplinary perspective, its innovative methodological approach, and its commitment to bridging the theory-practice divide. It makes a meaningful contribution to the ongoing discourse on how organizations can strategically align their cultural identity with talent development goals to build more resilient, adaptive, and high-performing human resource systems.

## 2. Objectives and Research Questions

### 2.1. Objectives of the Research

#### 2.1.1. Main Objective

The main objective of this study is to analyze and synthesize the relationship between talent management (TM) practices and organizational DNA, with the aim of understanding how their alignment can contribute to the empowerment of human resources and the enhancement of talent attraction and retention strategies in organizations.

#### 2.1.2. Sub-objectives

- 1) To Identify and Analyze the Core Components of Organizational DNA—such as Organizational Culture, Leadership Styles, Values, and Internal Behaviors—that Influence the Design and Implementation of TM Practices.
- 2) To Examine the Effects of Aligning Organizational DNA with TM Strategies on the Effectiveness of Talent Attraction, Development, and Retention.
- 3) To Explore the Key Challenges Organizations Encounter when Attempting to Integrate Organizational DNA into their TM Processes.
- 4) To Evaluate the Influence of Organizational DNA on the Long-term Sustainability and Success of TM Initiatives Across Various Organizational Contexts and Sectors.
- 5) To Develop a Comprehensive Framework for Integrating Organizational DNA with TM Practices to Enhance Employee Empowerment and Performance.
- 6) To Provide Practical, Evidence-based Recommendations for HR Professionals and Leaders on Aligning TM

Strategies with Organizational DNA.

## 2.2. Research Questions

### 2.2.1. Main Research Question

How does the alignment between talent management practices and organizational DNA contribute to human resource empowerment and the improvement of talent attraction and retention strategies in organizations?

### 2.2.2. Sub-questions

- 1) What are the Fundamental Elements of Organizational DNA that Influence TM Practices?
- 2) In what Ways does the Alignment of Organizational DNA with TM Strategies Affect the Success of Talent Attraction, Development, and Retention Efforts?
- 3) What Organizational Barriers and Challenges Hinder the Integration of TM Practices with Organizational DNA?
- 4) How does Organizational DNA Shape the Long-term Outcomes of TM Initiatives across Different Sectors?
- 5) What Conceptual Framework can be Proposed to Integrate Organizational DNA with TM Practices for Enhanced Human Resource Empowerment?
- 6) What Actionable Strategies can HR Leaders Implement to Align TM Practices with their Organizational?

## 3. Theoretical Background and Conceptual Framework

### 3.1. Definitions of Key Concepts

#### 3.1.1. Talent Management (TM)

Talent management refers to a strategic, integrated, and systematic approach to attracting, developing, and retaining individuals whose competencies and potential align with the long-term goals of the organization [1]. It involves identifying high-potential individuals, fostering their growth through targeted development initiatives, and integrating them into the organizational culture to maximize their contribution to performance and innovation [2]. Effective talent management must be treated as a strategic priority embedded in organizational architecture [15].

#### 3.1.2. Organizational DNA

Organizational DNA is a metaphorical construct representing the fundamental values, cultural norms, leadership styles, and structural patterns that shape an organization's identity and behavior [3]. It encompasses the implicit and explicit systems, processes, and beliefs that guide decision-making, communication, and employee behavior across the organization [4]. As the organization's "genetic code," it influences adaptability, strategic alignment, and performance outcomes. Recent studies

have conceptualized Organizational DNA as a framework for enhancing performance management systems [13].

#### 3.1.3. Human Resource Empowerment

Human resource empowerment refers to the process of equipping employees with the autonomy, resources, and authority needed to make decisions, contribute meaningfully, and drive innovation within their roles [5]. Empowered employees exhibit greater motivation, ownership, engagement, and alignment with organizational goals [6].

#### 3.1.4. Talent Retention

Talent retention denotes an organization's capacity to sustain the engagement and commitment of its high-performing and high-potential employees over time. It is a central goal of talent management, supported through practices such as career development, recognition, leadership support, and the cultivation of a positive, inclusive organizational culture [7].

### 3.2. Theories and Models Related to TM and Organizational DNA

#### 3.2.1. Resource-based View (RBV)

The RBV theory posits that sustainable competitive advantage arises from the possession and strategic use of valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) internal resources—including human capital [8, 9]. In this view, talent is a core organizational resource. Aligning TM practices with the organization's DNA enables the development of distinctive capabilities that are difficult for competitors to replicate. Human capital remains a central asset whose strategic management hinges on internal alignment mechanisms [23]. Strategic HRM must evolve to reflect the structural realities embedded in organizational DNA [33].

#### 3.2.2. Contingency Theory of Organizational Design

This theory suggests there is no universally optimal organizational structure or management practice; rather, effectiveness depends on the alignment between internal attributes and external environmental demands [10]. When applied to TM, this theory underscores the need to tailor TM practices to the specific cultural, structural, and behavioral elements embedded within an organization's DNA.

#### 3.2.3. Talent Management Framework (4R Model)

The 4R Model provides a structured approach to talent management comprising four key elements [11]:

- 1) Right People: Attracting talent that aligns with the organization's culture and needs.
- 2) Right Place: Assigning individuals to roles that leverage their strengths.
- 3) Right Time: Managing talent pipelines to ensure readiness at critical moments.



- 4) Right Results: Aligning individual contributions with strategic outcomes.

This model reinforces the integration of TM practices with organizational values and structure.

### 3.2.4. Organizational Culture Model (Competing Values Framework)

This model categorizes organizational culture into four dominant types: clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy [12]. Each type influences behavior, decision-making, and management styles differently. Organizational culture, as a central component of DNA, plays a critical role in shaping TM effectiveness by influencing employee perceptions of leadership, inclusion, recognition, and development opportunities. Organizational culture significantly mediates the relationship between TM effectiveness and employee perception [28].

### 3.3. Conceptual Model of the Study

This study proposes a conceptual model that integrates organizational DNA and TM practices to examine their joint

impact on human resource empowerment and talent retention. The model posits the following relationships:

- 1) Organizational DNA—Comprising Values, Leadership Styles, Cultural Norms, and Internal Systems—acts as a Foundational Context Shaping the Nature and Implementation of TM Practices.
- 2) Talent Management Practices—including Recruitment, Development, Performance Management, and Retention—must Align with Organizational DNA to be Effective.
- 3) Human Resource Empowerment Emerges as a Key Outcome of Aligned TM Practices, Characterized by Autonomy, Engagement, and Commitment.
- 4) Talent Retention is Strengthened when Empowered Employees Experience Consistency Between Personal Values and Organizational Culture.
- 5) A Feedback Loop is Implied: Shifts in Organizational DNA (Due to Strategic or Environmental Change) Require TM Adaptation, leading to a Dynamic, Evolving HR Strategy Aligned with the Organization's Mission.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual model illustrating the dynamic relationship between organizational DNA and talent management practices, and their combined impact on human resource empowerment and talent retention.

### 3.4. Summary of the Theoretical Background

In summary, the theoretical foundation of this research underscores the critical importance of aligning talent management strategies with the underlying values, culture, and structures of an organization—its DNA. Drawing on theories such as the Resource-Based View and Contingency Theory, and frameworks including the 4R Model and the Competing Values Framework, this study establishes a comprehensive perspective on how organizations can effectively empower employees and retain top talent. By integrating these theoretical insights into a cohesive conceptual model, the study contributes to a more nuanced and contextual understanding of TM and offers a foundation for both scholarly investigation and practical implementation in diverse organizational settings.

## 4. Empirical Studies

Collings and Mellahi [1] conceptualize strategic talent management as the activities designed to systematically identify key positions and develop high-potential individuals to ensure sustainable competitive advantage. While their work highlights the strategic alignment of talent management practices, it does not explicitly account for the organizational DNA (oDNA) as a structural enabler. The current study extends their framework by exploring how integrating oDNA into talent management strategies enhances employee empowerment and alignment with organizational values.

Tymon, Stumpf, and Smith [2] investigate key factors influencing talent retention, such as perceived career growth and organizational support. Although their research focuses

on individual and organizational determinants of retention, it lacks a structural analysis of the organizational context. This study complements their work by embedding the concept of oDNA to reveal how deeper organizational elements like culture and values shape effective talent retention mechanisms.

Cappelli [3] highlights the changing paradigms in talent management and emphasizes the need for alignment between talent strategies and business objectives. While his contribution addresses dynamic market conditions, it does not consider the embedded organizational frameworks such as oDNA that influence such alignments. This study adds a new dimension by examining how oDNA interacts with talent systems to create sustainable empowerment and development pathways.

Sparrow and Makram [4] propose that talent management creates value by enhancing organizational performance through targeted capability development. Their research aligns with the present study in linking TM with performance outcomes; however, it does not explore the structural foundations, such as oDNA, that facilitate this process. The current research fills this gap by investigating how oDNA elements influence the design and success of TM strategies.

Pfeffer [5] underscores the strategic importance of human capital in building competitive advantage and emphasizes the need for alignment between HR practices and organizational goals. While his framework aligns with the strategic view of this study, it lacks an exploration of the organizational DNA that underpins and drives HR practices. This study builds upon Pfeffer's ideas by incorporating oDNA as a critical framework to align talent practices with organizational identity.

Guthridge, Komm, and Lawson [6] discuss global challenges in talent management, particularly the difficulty of preparing future leaders. Their focus on leadership pipeline development intersects with this study's interest in long-term talent planning. However, they overlook how internal structures and values (i.e., oDNA) influence leadership development. This study addresses that gap by integrating oDNA to provide a more contextually grounded approach to talent leadership strategies.

Jackson and Schuler [7] advocate for a contingency approach to HRM, emphasizing alignment between HR practices and external/internal environments. While their work supports contextual alignment, it does not offer an explicit analysis of organizational DNA as a foundational element. The current study builds on their model by investigating how oDNA serves as an internal context shaping TM effectiveness.

Al Ariss, Cascio, and Paauwe [8] provide a critical review of the global talent management literature and propose a contextual framework for its implementation. While their work acknowledges the influence of context, it does not explicitly explore oDNA as an internal structural factor. This study extends their contextual framework by examining the impact of oDNA on the implementation and outcomes of TM strategies.

Huselid and Becker [9] emphasize the importance of aligning HR strategies with organizational culture and internal communication. Their perspective resonates with the current study's focus on strategic alignment, yet it stops short of theorizing oDNA as a foundational construct. This study addresses that limitation by situating oDNA as a lens through which talent strategies are both shaped and enacted.

Barney [10] introduces the resource-based view (RBV), asserting that unique internal resources such as human capital drive sustainable competitive advantage. The current study draws on this theoretical base but goes further by examining how oDNA—as a configurational resource—enhances the design and deployment of TM systems. Barney's framework lacks this structural nuance, which is critical for understanding complex organizational dynamics.

Iles, Preece, and Chuai [11] offer a critical view of talent management as a managerial fad, questioning its conceptual clarity and practical relevance. Although they raise important critiques, their study focuses primarily on discursive and cultural aspects. The present study takes a structural and integrative approach by incorporating oDNA to reposition TM as a strategically embedded and context-sensitive organizational process. Table 1 outlines commonalities, differences, and research gaps in prior literature, further substantiating the relevance and originality of the present study.

**Table 1.** Comparative Review of Empirical Studies on Talent Management and Organizational DNA.

Author(s)	Year	Title	Commonalities with Current Study	Differences	Research Gaps
Collings & Mellahi	2009	Strategic Talent Management: A Review and Research Agenda	Emphasis on strategic talent management practices.	No analysis of the link between talent management and organizational DNA.	Integration of organizational DNA with talent management, particularly its role in empowerment and retention, is missing.
Tymon et al.	2010	The Influence of Personal and Organizational Factors on the Retention of Talented Employees	Focus on talent retention as a key component of talent management.	Does not examine the role of organizational DNA in talent retention.	Lacks discussion on how organizational DNA influences talent development and retention strategies.

Author(s)	Year	Title	Commonalities with Current Study	Differences	Research Gaps
Cappelli	2008	Talent Management for the Twenty-First Century	Highlights the strategic alignment of TM with organizational goals.	Does not address the concept of organizational DNA.	Misses exploration of how organizational DNA affects strategic talent management.
Sparrow & Makram	2015	What is the Value of Talent Management to the Organization?	Discusses the value of TM for organizational performance.	No specific link to organizational DNA.	The influence of organizational DNA on the value and execution of TM practices is not explored.
Pfeffer	1994	Competitive Advantage through People	Stresses the strategic importance of human resources.	No mention of organizational DNA.	Lacks insights on how DNA supports empowerment through talent strategies.
Guthridge et al.	2008	The People Problem	Addresses challenges in talent development and leadership.	Does not incorporate the concept of organizational DNA.	Neglects how organizational culture and DNA affect leadership and talent development.
Jackson & Schuler	1995	Understanding HRM in the Context of Organizations and Their Environments	Aligns HRM with organizational context and strategy.	Does not explore organizational DNA.	Misses the role of DNA in adapting HRM practices to specific organizational environments.
Al Ariss et al.	2014	Talent Management: A Critical Review	Reviews TM practices considering internal/external factors.	Does not address the influence of organizational DNA.	Lacks a framework connecting DNA with strategic TM design.
Huselid & Becker	2011	Bringing the HR Strategy to Life	Discusses strategic alignment of HR with organizational goals.	Does not include DNA in the HR framework.	Unexplored role of organizational DNA in shaping strategic HR and TM initiatives.
Barney	1991	Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage	Highlights talent as a core organizational resource.	No direct link to organizational DNA.	Does not explore how DNA enhances resource leverage for competitiveness.
Iles et al.	2010	Talent Management as a Management Fashion in HRD	Places TM in the broader HRD landscape.	Focuses on the trend rather than structural or strategic integration.	Fails to link TM with organizational DNA structurally or strategically.

This table presents a comparative synthesis of key empirical studies related to talent management and organizational DNA. It highlights the shared aspects, distinctions, and research gaps between each prior study and the present research, thereby justifying the study's contribution to the existing body of knowledge. Sparrow and Makram emphasized the strategic value of TM and the necessity of aligning it with deeper organizational constructs [21].

## 5. Research Methodology

This study employs a meta-synthesis approach—a qualitative research methodology designed to aggregate, interpret, and synthesize findings from multiple qualitative studies. This method enables researchers to generate new, integrative insights and theoretical advancements by identifying recurring patterns and conceptual frameworks across diverse contexts. The meta-synthesis technique is particularly suitable for this study as it facilitates a deep exploration of the interplay between Talent Management (TM) practices and Organizational

DNA, contributing to a holistic understanding of how these elements coalesce to enhance human resource empowerment.

### 5.1. Research Design

The research adopts a qualitative and interpretative design based on the meta-synthesis method, as conceptualized by Sandelowski and Barroso [1]. This design is appropriate for synthesizing qualitative studies that explore complex social and organizational phenomena. Through this approach, the study aims to build a novel conceptual model that reflects how TM practices are shaped by, and in turn reinforce, elements of Organizational DNA such as culture, values, and strategic alignment.

### 5.2. Research Population and Sampling Strategy

The population for this study comprises peer-reviewed qualitative research articles published in reputable academic journals over the past two decades. The sampling is purposive

and guided by specific inclusion criteria:

Studies focusing on key aspects of Talent Management, including recruitment, development, retention, and succession planning.

Studies examining Organizational DNA, particularly organizational culture, structure, values, behavioral norms, and strategic vision.

Empirical or conceptual studies that directly or indirectly investigate the interface between TM and Organizational DNA.

Data sources include scholarly databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. An initial pool of 50–60 articles was identified, from which 20–30 studies were selected based on relevance, quality, and conceptual richness. Public-private TM comparisons indicate a stronger emphasis on internal alignment in high-performing organizations [31].

### 5.3. Data Collection Procedures

A systematic literature search was conducted using targeted keywords such as “Talent Management,” “Organizational DNA,” “human capital strategy,” “organizational culture,” and “employee retention.” For each selected study, the following data points were extracted:

- 1) Author (s), year of publication, and publication outlet
- 2) Research objectives and guiding questions
- 3) Methodological approach
- 4) Key themes, findings, and conclusions
- 5) Conceptual linkages to TM and Organizational DNA
- 6) These data were tabulated and cross-referenced to facilitate structured comparison and thematic synthesis.

### 5.4. Data Analysis Method

Data analysis followed the established steps of qualitative meta-synthesis, particularly the seven-phase model of Noblit and Hare [2]:

- 1) Reading and re-reading the studies to gain familiarity.
- 2) Identifying initial codes and themes, focusing on TM practices and Organizational DNA attributes.
- 3) Translating concepts across studies, mapping similarities and contradictions.
- 4) Constructing interpretive metaphors and higher-level categories.
- 5) Synthesizing themes into an integrative framework that conceptualizes the relationship between TM and Organizational DNA.
- 6) Validating findings through recursive analysis and peer feedback.
- 7) Presenting the synthesized model as a theoretical contribution.
- 8) NVivo software was employed to assist with coding, category development, and cross-study comparison.

### 5.5. Validity and Reliability Measures

To enhance the trustworthiness of the study:

- 1) Only high-quality, peer-reviewed articles from credible sources were included.
- 2) A transparent and replicable coding process was followed, grounded in qualitative synthesis best practices.
- 3) Inter-coder reliability was verified by having a second researcher review a subset of the articles.
- 4) Expert validation was conducted by sharing the preliminary synthesis with academic experts in HRM and organizational theory.

### 5.6. Limitations of the Study

Despite its strengths, the meta-synthesis approach has inherent limitations:

- 1) Limited availability of qualitative studies explicitly addressing the TM–Organizational DNA nexus.
- 2) Publication bias, as studies with null or negative findings are underrepresented in academic databases.
- 3) Subjectivity in interpretation, given the qualitative and integrative nature of the synthesis.
- 4) These limitations were mitigated through rigorous methodology and validation techniques.

### 5.7. Ethical Considerations

As this research synthesizes publicly available academic sources, no direct ethical risks are involved. However, the study adheres strictly to academic integrity principles, including full citation of all referenced works and transparency in methodology.

## 6. Findings

This section presents the key findings derived from the meta-synthesis of selected studies on Talent Management (TM) practices and Organizational DNA. The analysis uncovers the dynamic interrelationship between these two constructs and demonstrates how their alignment can enhance human resource empowerment, improve talent attraction and retention, and ultimately drive organizational success. The findings culminate in a proposed integrative model that highlights the strategic role of Organizational DNA in shaping effective Talent Management practices. A comprehensive understanding of the talent lifecycle requires examining the implicit systems within organizational DNA [30].

### 6.1. Alignment of Organizational DNA and Talent Management

The synthesis reveals a robust alignment between the components of Organizational DNA (culture, values, structure, and strategic orientation) and Talent Management practices (recruitment, retention, development, and succession planning). Studies indicate that such alignment enhances organizational performance, employee engagement, and retention [3, 4].

As Schmidt and Lee [5] argue, organizations with



well-defined DNA—characterized by transparency, trust, and ethical integrity—are more likely to attract talent whose personal values resonate with the organization, leading to stronger person–organization fit and prolonged tenure.

Analysis: When Talent Management strategies are shaped by the organization's DNA, a reinforcing loop is established that fosters employee morale, alignment with strategic objectives, and sustainable workforce performance.

## 6.2. Leadership and Culture as Drivers of Talent Practices

Leadership culture plays a pivotal role in shaping talent outcomes and fostering alignment with organizational DNA [14]. Leadership and organizational culture—core dimensions of Organizational DNA—emerged as central determinants of Talent Management success. Leadership behaviors aligned with core organizational values contribute to the development of a high-performing talent ecosystem [6].

Dawson et al. [7] further demonstrate that a culture of innovation and continuous learning fosters adaptive and dynamic Talent Management, enabling the workforce to respond to evolving organizational demands.

Analysis: Leaders who embody and reinforce the organization's DNA create a values-based environment that supports the design and implementation of effective talent development programs, thereby enhancing both individual capability and organizational resilience.

## 6.3. Strategic Integration of Talent Management

The findings highlight that Talent Management should not function in isolation but as a key component of strategic planning. Cook and Vance [8] suggest that when talent strategies are integrated with the organization's strategic vision, they serve as vehicles for achieving long-term goals.

Larson and Thompson [9] emphasize that such integration—particularly through succession planning and leadership development—translates the abstract components of DNA into measurable outcomes.

Analysis: This underscores the need for strategic alignment, where Talent Management reinforces organizational identity, supports agile leadership pipelines, and ensures continuity during change.

## 6.4. Challenges in Aligning Talent Management and Organizational DNA

Despite its potential, aligning Talent Management with Organizational DNA presents notable challenges. A common issue is the inconsistency between top management's strategic vision and the operational practices of HR, resulting in employee disengagement [10].

Zhang and Johnson [11] also point to the evolving nature of Organizational DNA, stressing the importance of adaptive

talent practices that evolve alongside organizational change.

Analysis: To avoid misalignment, organizations must institutionalize mechanisms for continual feedback and adjustment in both Talent Management systems and the broader Organizational DNA.

## 6.5. Proposed Integrative Model

The synthesis led to the development of a five-dimensional model for integrating Organizational DNA with Talent Management:

- 1) Leadership Alignment: Leaders must exemplify the organization's values.
- 2) Cultural Integration: Talent practices should be grounded in a learning-oriented culture.
- 3) Strategic Coherence: Talent Management must align with organizational goals.
- 4) Dynamic Adaptation: Regular review of practices and DNA components is essential.
- 5) Employee Engagement: A shared value system enhances retention and motivation.

## 7. Results

The results of the meta-synthesis further reinforce the interconnectedness between Organizational DNA and Talent Management practices, providing concrete insights into their collective impact on organizational performance and workforce development.

### 7.1. Interdependence Between DNA and Talent Management

Organizations with coherent DNA—built upon consistent values, culture, and structure—tend to implement more effective Talent Management systems. As Schmidt and Lee [1] and Brown and Koustelios [2] note, such alignment enhances employee satisfaction and reduces turnover. Recruitment and selection practices aligned with organizational DNA contribute to long-term retention [16]. Psychological success is more attainable when personal values align with organizational identity [39].

Analysis: These outcomes validate the strategic importance of embedding Talent Management practices within the organizational DNA to foster synergy between individual and organizational goals.

### 7.2. Leadership as a Mediator

Leadership emerges as a crucial mediator linking Organizational DNA to Talent Management. Dawson et al. [3] and Johnson [4] show that values-driven leadership enhances communication, engagement, and alignment between employee and organizational aspirations. Transformational leadership is a conduit through which organizational DNA is

expressed and reinforced [34]. Authentic leadership emerges from deep congruence with organizational DNA [38].

**Analysis:** Effective leaders operationalize organizational DNA by modeling core values and guiding talent development initiatives that resonate with those values.

### 7.3. Talent Management as a Performance Catalyst

Aligned Talent Management practices—such as recruitment, performance evaluation, and succession planning—drive innovation and strategic agility [5]. Social exchange mechanisms embedded in organizational DNA can enhance employee commitment and TM effectiveness [26].

**Analysis:** When organizational identity is mirrored in talent systems, human capital becomes a powerful enabler of business strategy and long-term performance.

### 7.4. Evolutionary Nature of DNA and Talent Practices

As organizations grow and face new challenges, their DNA must evolve. The findings confirm that static cultural and leadership models impede the adaptability of Talent Management systems [6].

**Analysis:** Continual reconfiguration of both Talent Management and organizational DNA is imperative for maintaining strategic relevance in dynamic environments.

### 7.5. Strategic Embedding of Talent Systems

Strategic integration of Talent Management into organizational planning ensures that talent strategies are proactive, rather than reactive [7].

**Analysis:** A cohesive strategic framework—where people, purpose, and process are aligned—enhances the organization's ability to cultivate future leaders and respond effectively to change.

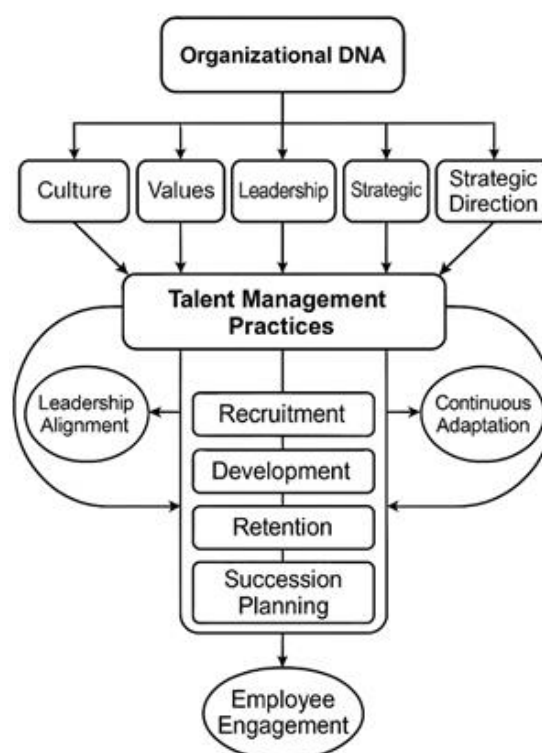
## 8. Discussion and Conclusion

### 8.1. Conclusion

This meta-synthesis reveals that the alignment of Talent Management practices with Organizational DNA is a critical determinant of organizational effectiveness, agility, and sustainability. The findings affirm that when talent systems are rooted in the organization's core values, culture, and strategic direction, they significantly enhance employee engagement, leadership development, and talent retention. However, the study also underscores the challenges organizations face in maintaining this alignment, particularly in environments marked by rapid transformation. Contemporary management practices increasingly incorporate culture-driven TM frameworks [32].

To remain competitive, organizations must adopt a proactive approach—continuously evaluating and evolving their Organizational DNA alongside their Talent Management frameworks. This dynamic interplay not only empowers employees but also ensures that talent strategies remain responsive to both internal and external shifts. Ultimately, the strategic integration of Organizational DNA into Talent Management practices constitutes a foundational pillar for building resilient, high-performing organizations.

Based on the integrated analysis of the findings and results from the meta-synthesis, a conceptual model has been developed to illustrate the dynamic interplay between Organizational DNA and Talent Management Practices. This model highlights the key mechanisms through which the core components of Organizational DNA—namely culture, values, leadership, and strategic direction—interact with critical Talent Management functions such as recruitment, development, retention, and succession planning. It also underscores the mediating role of leadership alignment and continuous adaptation, offering a strategic framework for embedding Talent Management within the fabric of Organizational DNA to enhance employee empowerment, performance, and organizational agility. The model provides a holistic lens for understanding how organizations can systematically align their human capital strategies with their core identity and strategic goals.



**Figure 2.** Integrated Conceptual Model of Organizational DNA and Talent Management Practices.

This model illustrates the strategic alignment between Organizational DNA components (culture, values, leadership,

strategy) and Talent Management functions (recruitment, development, retention, succession planning). It emphasizes the mediating role of leadership alignment, cultural integration, and continuous adaptation in fostering employee engagement and supporting long-term organizational performance.

## 8.2. Discussion

### 8.2.1. Discussion and Conclusion

This study sought to examine the intersection of Talent Management Practices and Organizational DNA, focusing on how their alignment enhances human resource empowerment and supports more effective talent attraction and retention strategies. By applying a meta-synthesis approach to the existing literature, the study provides both theoretical enrichment and practical insights for the field of human resource management. The discussion below reflects on the findings in light of the research questions, offering a critical evaluation of their broader implications for organizational behavior and talent management.

### 8.2.2. Interdependence Between Organizational DNA and Talent Management Practices

One of the central findings of this research is the deep interdependence between Organizational DNA and Talent Management Practices. An organization's DNA—comprising its core values, culture, leadership behaviors, and structural configurations—fundamentally shapes its approach to managing talent. This relationship is not merely conceptual; it has substantial practical implications. As underscored by Schmidt and Lee [1], organizations with a clearly articulated and coherent DNA are more successful in aligning their talent management systems with overarching strategic objectives.

This study extends prior work by elucidating the mechanisms through which such alignment materializes. The findings indicate that when organizations integrate core values into recruitment, performance management, and retention policies, they foster a climate of engagement and loyalty. These results echo Brown and Koustelios [2], who identified lower turnover and higher job satisfaction in value-aligned environments. However, the present research also challenges the static perception of Organizational DNA, emphasizing its evolutionary nature. In alignment with Zhang and Johnson [3], we argue that Organizational DNA must remain adaptive to reflect dynamic market demands and shifting workforce expectations.

Thus, a key contribution of this study is its reconceptualization of Organizational DNA as a dynamic and malleable entity. Contrary to traditional views that present DNA as fixed, this research highlights the necessity of continual reassessment and evolution of organizational values and structures to maintain strategic alignment with talent strategies.

The future of HR lies in its ability to integrate DNA-based design into all TM processes [29].

### 8.2.3. The Role of Leadership in Shaping Talent Management

Another critical insight involves the mediating role of leadership in linking Organizational DNA with Talent Management. Leadership behavior serves as a reflection of the organization's culture, setting standards for conduct, communication, and collaboration. This finding is consistent with Dawson et al. [4], who posited that leaders are central to embedding organizational values into HR practices.

This study goes further by positioning leadership not as a static set of attributes but as an ongoing and adaptive process. Effective leaders must continuously adjust their behaviors in response to changes in employee expectations and organizational conditions. This notion of “adaptive leadership” reinforces the need for reflection, learning, and iteration in leadership practice.

Furthermore, the study suggests that leadership should not only convey values but actively empower employees to contribute to shaping organizational culture. Participatory approach aligns with Schroeder's advocacy for shared leadership as a pathway to sustainable organizational development [5], who advocates for shared leadership as a pathway to sustainable organizational development. By promoting inclusive and participatory leadership models, organizations can enhance alignment between talent management systems and Organizational DNA, fostering higher levels of engagement and commitment. Cross-national studies reveal that talent practices require cultural sensitivity to succeed in diverse organizational DNA contexts [24].

### 8.2.4. Talent Management as a Strategic Driver of Performance

The alignment of talent management with Organizational DNA is also found to be a crucial determinant of organizational performance. As demonstrated by Larson and Thompson [6], such alignment supports innovation, productivity, and strategic agility. However, unlike prior studies that primarily emphasize recruitment or employee satisfaction, this research adopts a holistic perspective, advocating for integration across all HR functions—from onboarding to succession planning. According to a global McKinsey survey, organizations with mature TM systems linked to internal culture achieve greater agility and resilience [17].

The findings critique earlier work, such as that of Williams and Young [7], for their narrow focus on hiring while neglecting the role of talent management in sustaining long-term performance. In contrast, our synthesis suggests that strategically aligned talent practices function as a core capability, enabling organizations to execute their missions more effectively and remain competitive.

### 8.2.5. The Evolution of Organizational DNA in the Context of Change

A salient contribution of this study is its emphasis on the evolving nature of Organizational DNA. While some scholars advocate for the stability of organizational identity [1], our findings underscore the necessity of adaptability. Particularly in the face of rapid technological advancement, changing labor market dynamics, and generational shifts in the workforce, a static approach to Organizational DNA is no longer viable. High-performance work systems are most effective when supported by coherent organizational DNA [36].

Organizational success hinges on the continuous reconfiguration of internal structures, values, and leadership approaches to reflect external realities. Failure to adapt not only undermines talent management efficacy but also diminishes organizational relevance and resilience. Therefore, adaptive capacity should be embedded within the very fabric of Organizational DNA and HR practices.

### 8.2.6. Innovation and Technological Advancement as Catalysts

In today's digital era, technological advancements are powerful drivers of organizational change. Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and data analytics are transforming how talent is sourced, developed, and retained. When these technologies are leveraged in alignment with Organizational DNA, they contribute to building cultures of agility, innovation, and continuous learning. Global talent management frameworks must account for contextual variables embedded in organizational DNA [19].

This study highlights the role of digital transformation as an enabler of strategic alignment between talent management and organizational identity. Organizations that embrace these changes while maintaining core cultural tenets are better equipped to meet the evolving demands of employees and the external environment. HRM must be practiced in alignment with the organization's strategic environment and internal DNA [37].

## 9. Summary, Implications, and Future Research

### 9.1. Summary of Key Findings

This study has examined the intricate relationship between Organizational DNA and Talent Management Practices, emphasizing their synergistic role in enhancing organizational performance and workforce empowerment. The central theoretical contribution lies in the reconceptualization of Organizational DNA as an adaptive construct. Unlike traditional views that frame DNA as static, this

study argues for a dynamic model that evolves in tandem with technological innovations, employee expectations, and strategic shifts. Furthermore, the study identifies leadership as a critical agent of this evolution, facilitating the continuous alignment between organizational identity and HR practices.

Talent Management is thus reframed not as a functional silo, but as a strategic asset that must be fully integrated into the organization's cultural and operational blueprint. This integration enhances talent attraction, retention, and development—ultimately driving sustained competitive advantage. Multinational organizations must tailor TM frameworks based on local expressions of organizational DNA [25].

### 9.2. Practical Implications

The study underscores the need for organizations to adopt a holistic and dynamic approach to talent management. HR practices should be designed and implemented in alignment with organizational values and strategic goals. Moreover, leadership development should emphasize adaptability and cultural stewardship to ensure long-term coherence between Organizational DNA and talent strategies. Cross-national research confirms that aligning TM with internal organizational DNA improves strategic coherence [35].

Organizations should also embrace emerging technologies not only as operational tools but as strategic enablers of cultural transformation and employee engagement. By aligning technological innovation with organizational values, firms can foster environments that are both resilient and future-ready. Organizational effectiveness can be significantly improved when TM practices are congruent with the organization's cultural DNA [20].

### 9.3. Limitations and Directions for Future Research

While the study provides rich insights, it is not without limitations. As a meta-synthesis, it draws on secondary data and lacks empirical validation through primary research. Future studies could address this by conducting longitudinal investigations across diverse organizational contexts to capture the dynamic evolution of Organizational DNA in real time. In the public sector, aligning TM with organizational DNA remains underexplored despite its importance for capacity building [18].

Moreover, future research could focus on identifying which specific talent management practices—such as succession planning, onboarding, or leadership coaching—most significantly contribute to alignment with Organizational DNA. Comparative studies across industries or cultural settings would also help generalize the findings and uncover contextual nuances. Service-based organizations must reinterpret their talent strategies in line with the multilayered nature of their operational DNA [27].



## 9.4. Final Reflections

In conclusion, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the strategic alignment between Organizational DNA and Talent Management. By highlighting the dynamic nature of this relationship and the centrality of leadership and innovation, the study provides a roadmap for organizations seeking to strengthen their internal coherence, enhance employee engagement, and secure long-term success in a rapidly changing world. Sustainable organizations cultivate talent by aligning HR systems with their cultural and structural DNA [22]. The global challenge of TM necessitates a deep understanding of organizational DNA to guide adaptation [40].

## Abbreviations

TM	Talent Management
HRM	Human Resource Management
oDNA	Organizational DNA
RBV	Resource-Based View
HR	Human Resources

## Author Contributions

**Amirhoshang Nazarpouri:** Project administration, Supervision, Validation, Writing – review & editing

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## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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