

**THE DETERMINANTS OF TALENT RETENTION
IN THE THAI PUBLIC SECTOR**

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**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (Development Administration)
School of Public Administration
National Institute of Development Administration
2010**

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May 2010

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation	Determinants of Talent Retention in the Thai Public Sector
Author	Pornrat Sadangharn
Degree	Doctor of Philosophy (Development Administration)
Year	2010

The study aims at analyzing the determinants of talent retention in the Thai public sector. The main objective of this study is to investigate the empirical evidence concerning practical talent management and its outcomes in the civil service system. It also aims at understanding the major factors affecting talent retention in the Thai public sector. In order to achieve such objectives, this study focuses on the following: 1) studying the level of talent retention among HiPPS members, and 2) examining the factors determining the talent retention in the Thai public sector, which are HR practices, talent engagement, and the related context; namely personal, organization, and job characteristics.

This study focuses on the individual level by employing the mixed methods design. In the quantitative section of the paper, 218 government officials from 52 government agencies who participate in the HiPPS are the population of this study. Since the number of the population is not huge, all of them can participate the research without sampling chosen. In the qualitative section of the paper, key informants are those that were HiPPS members but that have currently resigned or have transferred from their previous public agencies. Limitations of available data and time constraints made the interviewing possible at 60 percent. After obtaining the two sets of findings, a parallel mixed data analysis was utilized as the strategy for analysis.

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions can be drawn;

1. The findings indicate a low level of talent retention among HiPPS members. Even though they agree with HR practices in the HiPPS and also engage in both the organization and their job, they do not intend to stay in the public sector until retirement.
2. HR practices do not significantly correlate with talent retention.
3. Both organizational and job engagement are significantly associated with talent retention ($r=.645$, $r=.409$; $p < 0.01$, respectively). This indicates that the higher level of engagement, the higher the level of retention.
4. There is no significant relationship between HR practices and talent engagement.
5. Talent engagement does not mediate the relationship between HR practices and talent retention.
6. Among personal factors, only education background shows a negative significant relation with talent retention ($t=-2.684$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that the higher education, the lower the retention.
7. There is no relationship between organizational characteristics and talent retention.
8. There is no relationship between job characteristics and talent retention.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe large debts of gratitude to many people who supported me in the completion of this dissertation.

First of all, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to the Dissertation Committee: Associate Professor Dr. Fredric W. Swierczek, Professor Dr. Pichit Pitakthepsombat, and Associate Professor Dr. Chindalak Vadhanasindhu, for their constructive comments and valuable suggestions. I also would like to thank Dr. Bruce Leeds for his kind support in editing this dissertation.

Sincere thanks go to all HiPPS members for their generous contribution to helping me complete the data collection process and for providing me with other insightful information.

I also would like to express my appreciation to the OCSC officials who supported me with a great deal of beneficial information.

Special thanks are given to my dearest husband, Somsak Sadangharn, who always provides me with great supportive help, encouragement and the greatest love.

Last but not least, I am deeply grateful to my beloved family, particularly, my parents, who had no chance to see my success.

Pornrat Sadangharn

July 2010

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces and frames the research project. First of all, it is framed in terms of the importance of talent retention. Contributions to organizations and the problem that most organizations are not well-managed in this arena are illustrated as the significance of the problem. In order to understand this issue, investigation of the factors affecting talent retention was required. Thus, the practices of Human Resource Management (HRM), which are seen as one of the key determinants, are elaborated. Talent engagement, which is assumed to be a mediator between talent retention and HR practices, is also included.

Moreover, the research objectives, the scope of the study, operational definitions, the benefits of the study, and the organization of the study are also provided in this chapter. In brief, the purpose of this chapter is to provide a guide to the nature and structure of the argument being constructed in this dissertation.

1.1 Statement and Significance of the Problem

1.1.1 Significance of Talented People

In order for any kind of an organization to run successfully, as Herman (1999: 1) states, human elements are essential. One need is good leadership at the top and, for best results, throughout the organization. A second need is for good management. Third, there must be a team of people with knowledge, skills, aptitudes, and attitudes to perform at a sufficiently high level of production to accomplish the organization's mission. Cascio (1992: 5) also claims that "Organizations are managed and staffed by people. Without people, organizations cannot exist."

However, people in organizations perform and deliver differently, Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod, (2001: 127) have classified people in organizations into three groups: "A" players define the standard for exceptional performance by

consistently delivering results and inspiring and motivating others; “B” players are solid performers who meet expectations but who may have limited upward mobility; and “C” players deliver barely acceptable results.

“A” players or “talented people” in this study can be referred to by various terms. Goffee and Jones (2007: 72) call them “clever people”. These people are the handful of employees whose ideas, knowledge, and skills give them the potential to produce disproportionate value from the resources their organizations make available to them. With similar meaning but in different terms, Seldeneck (2004: 169) names those people as “superkeepers.” He defines superkeepers as “people high in potential and performance who also personify the organization’s value-creating competencies,” while Morton (2004 quoted in Hughes and Rog, 2008: 744) indicates that “individuals who have the capability to make significant difference to the current and future performance of the company.”

Whatever they are called, scholars agree that a talented workforce is a crucial human asset of organizations. Lunn (1992: 13) suggests the value of talented people by proposing an HR strategic formula in terms of the following equation;

$$\text{“Talent x (Reward + Expectation + Investment) = People Productivity”}$$

He also stresses that it is necessary to give the talent element a higher value than the other components and that this can be raised to the power of 2 since talent equals profit. Interesting findings show that top talented managers over five years of working increased their profit by 166 percent while only 55 percent of low talented managers could do this (Lunn, 1992: 45-46). Rueff and Stringer (2006: 95) also demonstrate that the talent valuation accounts for an 8 percent increase in an organization’s market value. Moreover, Groysberg, Sant and Abrahams (2008: 41) postulate that talent computer programmers are more productive than average ones by a ratio of eight to one, while the top one percent of inventors is five to ten times as productive as average inventors. The significance of these results is not only in the effect on the profitability of the company but also in its impact on day to day operational management (Lunn, 1992: 47).

Talented people are then viewed as the source of competitive advantage (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod, 2001: 6; Stone, 2002: 72; Hughes and Rog, 2008: 743; Srivastava and Bhatnagar, 2008: 253.) It is increasingly recognizing that

human capital is a source of value for firms and shareholders as talented people are rare, valuable, and difficult to substitute. Organizations that better attract, select, and retain these talented workers perform better than those that do not (Cairncross, 2000 quoted in Srivastava and Bhatnagar, 2008: 253). As a result, the talent issue is fast gaining top priority for organizations across countries. However, organizations also face three crucial forces; namely, mobility of talent, mobility of capital, and mobility of knowledge (Charan: 2006 quoted in Bhatnager, 2008: 19). This makes managing talent even more difficult.

1.1.2 The War for Talent

As mentioned earlier, competition among organizations for high performers has emerged. It is known as “The war for talent.” This phrase was coined by McKinsey & Company in 1997 during the economic boom of the mid-to-late-1990s (Stone, 2002: 6). During that period, organizations experienced high turnover, or attrition, as employees and even new hires moved from one job to another for the most challenging and financially rewarding work available to them. Stone (2002: 21) claims that this study brought to the business press’s attention the seriousness of the shortage of talent worldwide. To illustrate this situation, data according to a survey based on 33,000 employers from 23 countries reveal that 40 percent of them had difficulty in finding and hiring the desired talent and approximately 90 percent of nearly 7,000 managers indicated talent acquisition and retention were becoming more difficult (Axelrod, et al. 2001 quoted in Srivastava and Bhatnagar, 2008: 254).

In the war for talent, it also demonstrates awareness by leadership of the companies surveyed that performance and competitiveness could only be achieved via better talent—in other words, talent was the means to competitive advantage. Losing high performers also charges organizations since turnover can cost between \$7,500 and \$12,000, not counting salary, for the least technical hourly job (Stone, 2002: 72). Somaya and Williamson (2008: 29) reveal similar data, indicating that turnover costs have been estimated to be 100-150 percent of the salary of the high-performing employee with unique skills. Organizations also lose from worker turnover because employees are repositories of human capital and an organization’s knowledge, skill and know-how. In order to emphasize the importance of talent retention, it is noted

that “The loss of high performers cost more than money. It tends to impair the organization’s memory, dilutes the ability to perform, and compromises the will to win” (Stone, 2002: 23).

Therefore, trends for talent management, talent wars, talent raids and talent shortage, talent metrics retention, and concerns for talent strategy are expressed in the literature across various countries like the U.S., the U.K., Australia, Japan, China, India and across Asia (Yeung, 2006; Ruppe, 2006; Dunn, 2006; Chugh and Bhatnagar, 2006; Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Lewis, 2005; Branham, 2005; Bennett and Bell, 2004 quoted in Bhatnagar, 2007: 640). In this aspect, Yapp (2009: 5) points of the importance of managing talented people in the following:

“In an environment that remains highly competitive for talent, organizations are driven to invest in talent activities not only to meet immediate resourcing needs, but also to secure a sustainable pipeline of leadership for the future. Failure to invest in talent can have negative consequences relating to immediate HR issues, such as attraction and retention, as well as having a knock-on impact on business outcomes, such as productivity, quality, customer service and, ultimately, the organization’s brand, reputation and livelihood.”

However, most organizations have not managed talent effectively. Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod (2001: 8-9) show the manager’s perceptions of how well their company manages talent as follows:

“It’s not that companies aren’t aware there is a war for talent: 72 percent of respondents strongly agreed it is critical their companies win the war for talent. However, companies haven’t yet taken sufficient action: only 9 percent are confident that the actions they are taking will lead to stronger talent pool.”

This finding is affirmed by the survey based on 33,000 employers from 23 countries, 40 percent of whom had difficulty in finding and hiring the desired talent

(Manpower Inc., 2006 quoted in Srivastava and Bhatnagar, 2008: 254) and approximately 90 percent of nearly 7,000 managers indicated that talent acquisition and retention were becoming more difficult (Axelrod, 2001 quoted in Srivastava and Bhatnagar, 2008: 254).

1.1.3 Requirement of Talent Retention

In order to promote talent retention, proper HR practices is required. In this sense, Schiemann (2009: 10-11) presents the interesting findings from research conducted by the Metrus Institute in partnership with the American Society of Quality—that firms receiving high scores in managing their human capital are more than twice as likely to be the top third of their industry in financial performance compared to those that manage labor poorly. If the average small business earns a 10 percent profit, the best practice information suggests that it could be earning as much as twice that, and firms in the top 25 percent on key people practices are losing far fewer of their top performer: 8 percent on average compared to 18 percent in low people-practice businesses.

He also reveals that the quality provided to customers is substantially higher with highly engaged and capable people that are aligned with their customers. Companies in the top quarter of firms on those people factors have over twice the chance of being in the top third in quality among their competitors. As the competition gets tougher, top quality firms are retaining and growing their customers far better; low quality firms are seeing significantly reduced financial results or dropping out. Typically, 15 to 30 percent of an employee's time is wasted in low or no-value activities, for example, low priority e-mail, meetings without action, socializing, phone calls, because of misalignments of one type or another. Employees do not understand the organization's goals or policies, and their values are not in concert with organization's, or they get themselves involved in activities that are not as meaningful or productive. As an academic advisor suggested, they may be working hard, but not smart (Schiemann, 2009: 10-11).

Similar findings are found in the study of the LBA Consulting Group, which examined organizations that had survived and prospered, and those that had failed, over a 25-year period. The results of the study suggested that six human resource

conditions had to be met. These conditions were: a performance-oriented culture, low turnover (particularly in premium employee groups), a high level of employee satisfaction, a cadre of qualified replacements, effective investment in employee compensation and development, and the use of institutional competencies in employee selection and performance evaluation processes. The successful organizations focused on proactively and systematically managing their human resources along these lines. The organizations that failed took a more casual, traditional approach. Based on these findings, in order to optimize an organization's ability to achieve sustained excellence, it must recognize the need for proactive talent management and have a systematic way of accomplishing the activity (Berger and Berger, 2004: 3). This indicates that HRM is related to talent retention.

However, Legge (1995 quoted in Gill, 1999: 10) explains that there is not one language of HRM but two: utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism HRM. Gill (1999: 4) explains that utilitarian instrumentalism stresses the "resource" aspect of HRM. It stresses HRM's focus on the crucial importance of the close integration of human resource policies, systems, and activities with business strategy. From this perspective human resources are largely a factor of production, an expense of doing business rather than the only resource capable of turning inanimate factors of production into wealth. In contrast, developmental humanism places emphasis on the "human" and is associated with the human relations school of Herzberg and McGregor. Whilst emphasizing the importance of integrating HR policies with business objectives, the developmental humanism model focuses on treating employees as valued assets and as a source of competitive advantage through their commitment, adaptability, and high-quality skill and performance.

Another concern of retention is engagement. Many scholars claim that there is a linkage between employee engagement and talent retention. Srivastava and Bhatnagar (2008: 254) claim that "with better talent acquisition, employee engagement improves and so does the productivity." The reason is because employee engagement is seen as a key to the retention of talent (Glen, 2006 quoted in Bhatnagar, 2007: 640).

Employee engagement is an area in which the lead has been taken by practitioners (Parsley, 2006; Baumruk et al., 2006; Woodruffe, 2005; Gallup Management Journal, 2006; Bennett and Bell, 2004; Hay Group, 2002 quoted in Bhatnagar, 2007: 641) and also is an area where rigorous academic research is required (Cartwright and Holmes, 2006; Joo and Mclean, 2006; Luthans and Peterson, 2002 quoted in Bhatnagar, 2007: 641). It is important to study engagement because it is linked to positive individual and work-related outcomes (Burke, Koyuncu, Jing, and Fiksenbaum, 2009: 7).

There has been a great deal of interest in employee engagement. As Macey, Schneider, Barbera and Young (2009: xv) state, “Rarely has a term that presents a ‘soft’ topic resonated as strongly with business executives as employee engagement has in recent year.” Jack and Suzy Welch also claim the following:

“Employee engagement first. It goes without saying that no company, small or large, can win over the long run without energized employees who believe in the mission and understand how to achieve it.” (Macey, Schneider, Barbera and Young, 2009: 1)

Macey et al. (2009: 36) suggest that engagement is comprised of two dimensions: the “feel” and the “look” of engagement. For the first one, engagement is the aggregate energized feeling one has about one’s work that emerges as a product of feelings of urgency, focus, intensity, and enthusiasm. Furthermore, the engaged employee feels not only energized but competent, and this sense of competence emerges from both his own experiences and conditions of work provided for him by his company. It is presumed that the feeling of engagement results in behavior that others would characterize as being engaged and it is that behavior to which we next turn (Macey et al., 2009: 27). Those behaviors then are seen as the look of engagement. Persistence, proactive role expansion, and adaptability are all features of engagement behavior that, in the aggregate, connote performance above and beyond typical or normal expectations. Importantly, engagement is not just more performance, but performance that is persistent, adaptable, self-initiate, and/or involves taking on new responsibilities (Macey et al., 2009: 35).

Therefore, many have claimed that employee engagement predicts employee outcomes, organizational success, and financial performance (Bates, 2004; Baumruk, 2004; Harter et al., 2002; Richman, 2006 quoted in Saks, 2006: 600). Data from the SHRM Conference in 2006 report the result of a new global employee engagement study showing a dramatic difference in bottom-line results in organizations with highly-engaged employees when compared to organizations whose employees had low scores. The study, gathering data from surveys of over 664,000 employees from around the world, analyzed three traditional financial performance measures over a 12-month period, including operating income, net income, and earning per share (EPS). Most dramatic among its findings was the almost 52 percent gap in the on-year performance improvement in operating income between organizations with highly-engaged employees versus organizations whose employees have low engagement scores. Therefore employee engagement begins with an on-board program and is essentially a part of human capital pipeline or talent pipeline (Bhatnagar, 2007: 645).

Moreover, engaged employees can provide a competitive advantage to organizations, as explained by the resource-based view (RBV) of the firm. The RBV points out that organization can develop a sustained competitive advantage only by creating value in a way that is rare and difficult for competitors to imitate. These engaged employees fall within those criteria and become strong organizational assets for sustained competitive advantage (Joo and Melean, 2006 quoted in Bhatnagar, 2007: 645).

In sum, it can be concluded that both talented employees and employee engagement are crucial factors of any kind of organization. They both concern the soft side of HR practices. They also facilitate competitive advantages and other positive contributions to organizations. Martin-Chua (2009: 35) states that people at Philips believe that “Talent x Engagement = Performance⁵”.

Consequently, it has been suggested to integrate them together as talent engagement. Even though this term is rarely mentioned, the Employer’s Association has defined it as “the broadest of all HR-based recruiting strategies. It attempts to integrate the traditionally independent HR functions like recruiting, retention, employment branding, internal redeployment, workforce planning, diversity, etc. into

one coordinated function in order to increase its impact” (The Employer’s Association, 2010: paragraph 2). Similarly, this study employs this term as a managing approach which encourages talented employees to become engaged in their organization and job.

However, it has been reported that engagement is on the decline and that there is a deepening disengagement among employees today. It has even been reported that the majority of workers today, roughly half of all Americans in the workforce, are not fully-engaged or they are disengaged—leading to what has been referred to as an “engagement gap” that is costing the US businesses \$300 billion a year in lost productivity (Bates, 2004; Johnson, 2004; Kowalski, 2003 in Saks, 2006: 600).

Data from Gallup’s engagement ratio, which is a macro-level indicator of an organization’s health, show the proportion of engaged to actively-disengaged employees where in average organizations the ratio of engaged to actively disengaged employees is 1.5:1. In world-class organizations, the ratio of engaged to actively-disengaged employees is near 8:1 (Gallup 2010a: Paragraph 4).

Actively-disengaged employees are less productive, less profitable, less loyal, less likely to provide excellence customer service, and are often disruptive on the job. They can be an all-pervading destructive force. Unhappy with their work situation, these employees insist on sharing their misery with colleagues, often showing their negative attitudes. Obvious signs of disengagement are resignation, absenteeism, and “a loud voice of dissent” (Tarrant, 2005: 1-2).

The topic of engagement has also been widely studied in the Thai context. Recent studies attempt to investigate the relationship between employee engagement and many determinant factors. The “Employee Engagement Study,” which was conducted by exploring concepts, theories, knowledge-based research and measurement samples from various secondary sources, i.e., academic books, databases from global websites, reveals that those factors to be studied are the personal factors, job character factors, organizational style factors, work experience factors, and environment factors (Abidej Niriangramaya and Wanida Thammathaworn, 2005: 75). Similarly, a study by Saks (2006: 613) suggests there are several avenues to consider. There are other variables that might also be important for both job and organizational engagement. For example, human resource practices such

as flexible work arrangements, training programs, and incentive compensation might also be important for engagement.

Thus investigation of these factors, whether they are related to talent retention, is worth undertaking, particularly in the Thai public sector. Therefore, the next part of the present study provides a picture of what has been done in the Thai public sector.

1.1.4 Talent Retention in the Thai Public Sector

In the Thai public sector, government agencies also face difficulty in terms of talent retention. Brain-drain problem is one of the crucial issues in a bureaucratic system. Kriengsak Chareonwongsak (2008: paragraph 5) states the following:

“A Brain Drain situation is happening in Thailand as well, where a proportion of top people are turning to work in the private sector where they can earn much more than they can in state departments. Some go to work for foreign universities where they receive more benefits and resources than they would in the state system in order to develop scholarly work.”

The reasons for resignation are various, and empirical evidence from Office of the Civil Service Commission (OCSC) shows that many high performers leave the public sector. Three thousand, eight hundred and thirty-eight civil servants resigned from the public sector during the years 1992 to 1994. Almost half of them were those that work in insufficient areas such as health care, and the science and technology. The main reasons for the resignations concern the value of working in the public sector, particularly from the viewpoint of the new generation, and low incentive (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 1995: 151-171).

Another finding derives from Kamthorn Pruksananonda, Virul Pornpatkul, Krirkyos Jalayondeja, Lucksanun Rattanakooha, and Komontip Dulyakasem (2003: (3)), who conducted research to determine the factors affecting physician turnover in public hospitals in Thailand. It was revealed that job satisfaction and organizational commitment were the strongest determining factors of the physicians' turnover.

According to Wanee Sriphen (1995: (b)), the factor that contributes most significantly to the resignation of academic and semi-academic officers at King Monkut's Institute North Bangkok is salary and benefits. The other factors are administrative policy, work environment, interpersonal relations, and recognition, while the least factor was pride in being government officers.

Thus, retaining high performers who work in crucial tasks is one of many challenges in the Thai public sector. In order to manage these talented officials, the OCSC then introduced the High Performance and Potential System (HiPPS). This project was initiated based on the concept of talent management, which comprises selection, retention, development, motivation, and delegation of talented government officials. The main purpose of the HiPPS is to help these people to utilize their maximum potential in their assigned job and to ensure that these talented officials will act as the drivers in the government sector (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 13).

The selection process of the HiPPS is sophisticated and is designed to ensure those qualified individuals are selected. Approximately only 2 percent of government officials in each agency are appointed to join the system. In the development process, the HiPPS developed talented officials according to the workplace learning method. Job rotation, coaching, and systematically training was provided. This was done under a minimum-standard time frame, monetary and non-monetary rewards, as well as an effective performance appraisal system. In addition, career path planning by an experience accumulation framework (EAF) was included to complete the system (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009: 14-15).

It can be seen that the HiPPS is aligned with Lunn's approach (1992: 12). He states that effective human resource strategies require organizations to have the ability to, firstly, recruit talent—this will inevitably entail organizations jettisoning conventional selection and recruitment systems as they come to terms with the fact that talent by its nature is always going to be in short supply. Secondly, rewarding and recognizing high performance should be carried out: the requirement is for a more imaginative and comprehensive system for rewarding and recognizing high performance. Thirdly, the right expectation should be created—organizations in the future need to understand more effectively and respond to individual expectations at

work. The challenge is to enable the key motivators of responsibility, achievement, and feeling of self-worth to become common currency throughout the organization rather than the preserve of the minority, accomplished in an environment where the manager builds productive relationships with all employees. Finally, investment in employees should be consciously done: this will involve organizations providing higher-quality training and development and improved career management. The net result will be that in addition to increasing the organization's skill base, it will be better equipped to retain its best performers.

The HiPPS has been implemented since 2004. From then until 2009, 229 government officials from 52 government agencies have participated in the system (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 130-133). Many studies have been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the project but rarely touch on major determinants influencing talent retention. Therefore, the present study investigates whether talent retention has resulted from these HR practices.

This study is then emphasizes investigation of the situation of managing talented government officials. Since they are the core group which has a high impact on the country's development, making them retain to a bureaucratic system is one of the biggest challenges in the Thai public sector today.

1.2 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study was to investigate the empirical evidence concerning practical talent management and its outcomes in the civil service system. It is aimed at understanding the major factors affecting talent retention in the Thai public sector. In order to achieve such an objective, this study focuses on the following aspects:

1.2.1 To study the level of talent retention among HiPPS members

1.2.2 To examine the factors determining the talent retention in the Thai public sector, which are HR practices, talent engagement, and related contexts; namely personal, organization, and job characteristics

1.3 Scope of the Study

This study emphasizes HRM only in the Thai public sector because government officials play a crucial role in public administration. The total size of the civilian workforce is 1.94 million persons or 5.16 percent of the labor force (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009a: 1). In fiscal year 2009, the government allocated 211,254.1 million Baht for management of human resources in the public sector (Bureau of the Budget, 2009: 20-22). Therefore, it is interesting to investigate how these resources are utilized and what benefits are gained in terms of the HR perspective.

However, the entire public sector is too large to study, so this study's scopes is ordinary civil servants that work in 20 government ministries in the civil service sector since this is the major part of the public sector.

1.4 Operational Definitions

1.4.1 Talent Retention

Talent retention is intention to work for the public sector until retirement. On the other hand, it can be seen from the low level of turnover intentions.

1.4.2 Human Resource Management (HRM)

HRM is the effective management of people at work. It examines what can or should be done to make working people more productive and satisfied (Ivancevich and Hoon, 2002: 4). The models to be studied are:

1.4.2.1 Utilitarian Instrumentalism

Utilitarian instrumentalism is concerned with the effective utilization of employees (Guest, 2002 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005: 534-535) and emphasizes the quantitative, calculative, and business strategic aspects of managing the "head count resource" in as "natural" a way as for any other economic factor (Storey, 1987 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005: 534-535). It stresses HRM's focus on the crucial importance of the close integration of human resource policies, systems, and activities with business strategy.

1.4.2.2 Developmental Humanism

Developmental humanism is concerned with increasing employee commitment, participation, and involvement (Legge, 1995 quoted in Gill, 1999: 4). It focuses on treating employees as valued assets and as a source of competitive advantage through their commitment, adaptability, and high-quality skill and performance.

1.4.3 Talent Engagement

An approach to talent management which focuses on making talented employees engage in their organizations and jobs is defined. In this study, it is referred to as the engagement level of government officials in the HiPPS project.

1.5 Benefits of the Study

1.5.1 Academic Benefit

In terms of the HR model, this study will provide more empirical evidence of utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism, which are rarely investigated, especially in the Thai context. The findings on the relationship between talent retention and HR practices can offer the best potential answers to certain questions in people management.

This study proposes the term “talent engagement” as the integration of talent management and employee engagement by linking the two concepts of HR knowledge. It also aims at proving that this emerging HR concept is not just rhetoric but can be carried out in real practice. The findings from this research will provide empirical evidence of talent engagement which will make a number of contributions to this new and emerging area.

However, for the questions that are beyond the scope of this study, it is expected that this research will serve as a foundation for future exploration.

1.5.2 Management Benefit

The findings in this study will enable practitioners to better utilize HR practices. It is expected to be revealed whether HR practices are on the right track.

Since the government has allocated a lot of resources in HR practices, it is useful to see the alignment between what is expected and what is derived.

Moreover, this study also supports empirical data on talent retention which can provide constructive recommendations for the public sector. Government agencies can clearly review the effectiveness of their HR strategies while HR functions can clearly identify their role and the pluralist needs of government officials be met. In terms of prevention practices, the findings will predict the future scenarios that will result from current implementation. This will allow government agencies to proactively face their future. In sum, it is expected that this study will lead to sophisticated HR design and practice, especially in utilizing proper HRM in the public sector.

1.6 Organization of the Study

The overview of this research is presented in this chapter. This part provides the reasons for conducting this research, which comprise the significance of talent retention, the objectives of the research, and the context of the study. The benefits of the study in both academic and management aspects are also provided.

A literature review is provided in chapter 2. It includes the literature on talent retention and HR models. Details, definitions, and related findings on talent retention, employee engagement, and HR practices are elaborated. Then, the linkage between HR practices and talent retention is analyzed in the form of a proposed conceptual framework. The hypotheses which are expected to be proved are also provided in this chapter.

The research methodology is described in Chapter 3. In order to answer the research questions, mixed methods are used as the main research methodology. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are illustrated. The quantitative method is employed to test the determinants influencing talent retention.

To make the findings from the quantitative part more concrete, the qualitative method is then used to confirm those research results. This part will be done by in-depth interviewing those that were in the HiPPS.

Chapter 4 presents the analysis part of the study and the findings. The results from both the quantitative and qualitative methods are revealed as the empirical evidence from this research. Statistical tools, both descriptive and inferential measurement, are employed to test the proposed hypotheses. The findings from the quantitative part of the study, mostly in statistic terms, will be affirmed by the in-depth interviewing in the qualitative part. The data analysis will be presented in this part.

Chapter 5, the final chapter, concludes with suggestions on what steps public agencies might take in support of the implementation of talent engagement, including the call for increased use of research evidence in informing HR practices. Further studies on this related topic are also provided.

1.7 Summary

This chapter provides an overview of the study, beginning with the significance of talented people and their contribution to the organization, followed with the significance of employee retention. Then the major determinants influencing talent retention, especially HR practices, are presented.

The Thai public sector is also of concern in this emerging issue; the HiPPS was therefore introduced by the OCSC as a talent management initiative. Then the level of talent retention among HiPPS members is studied and the factors determining talent retention in the Thai public sector are examined.

Drawing from the above arguments, the reminder of this chapter presents the research objectives, the scope of the study, operational definitions, the benefits of the study, and the organization of this dissertation.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter reviews the relevant literature related to talent retention, beginning from a basic review of talented people and their contributions to organizations; then the significance of talent retention is elaborated.

As the determinant influencing talent retention in this study, the literature on HR practices is reviewed. Talent management accompanies the concept of utilitarian instrumentalism, and developmental humanism HR is elaborated on in this section of the study. Talent engagement is reviewed since it is seen as the mediator between HR practices and talent retention.

Last, an argument for talent retention in the Thai public sector is proposed as the conceptual framework of this study where the hypotheses to be tested are also included.

2.1 Talent Retention

2.1.1 Talented People and their Contributions to Organizations

It is obvious that people and how we manage them are becoming more important because many other sources of competitive success are less powerful than they once were (Cascio, 1992: 585; Pfeffer, 1994: 6; Macey et al., 2009: xv). To illustrate this, Lawler III (2008: 1) refers to the result of a recent survey of senior executives from all over the world:

“Fifty-five percent of respondents to the survey reported that they expect to spend more time on people management than on technology in the next three years. More than 85 percent of the

respondents said that people are vital to all aspects of their company's performance particularly their top strategic challenges: increased competition, innovation, and technology.”

Interestingly, the data also reveal the two most important management challenges. The first is recruitment of high-quality people across multiple territories, particularly as competition for top talent grows more intense, and the second is improving the appeal of the company culture and work environment (Lawler III, 2008: 1). Rueff and Stringer (2006: 2, 4) support the idea that quality talent is always scarce. The more organizations can put the right person with right attitude, experience, and skills in the right place at the right time, the better off the business will be.

2.1.1.1 Definitions of Talented People

In order to identify the talented people in organizations, a number of definitions of talented people have been raised. Michaels, Handfield-Jones, and Axelrod (2001: xii) state that talent is the sum of a person's abilities—his or her intrinsic gifts, skills, knowledge, experience, intelligence, judgment, attitude, character, and drive. It also includes his or her ability to learn and grow. Similarly, Lunn (1992: 25) defines talent as the capacity to achieve a near perfect performance. It results in desired spontaneous behavior and is a natural ability, not primarily acquired through effort.

Talented people can be referred to by various terms. Huselid, Becker, and Beatty (2005: 54-55) use the term “A” Player to describe those that are talented by classifying people in organizations into three groups. “A” players define the standard for exceptional performance by consistently delivering results and inspiring and motivating others; “B” players are solid performers that meet expectations but who may have limited upward mobility; and “C” players deliver barely acceptable results (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod, 2001: 127). Details on the criteria of “A” players are shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 “A” Players

DIMESION	“A” PLAYER CRITERIA
Overall talent level	Top 10% of those in this salary level
Vision	Facilitates the creation and communication of a competing and strategically sound vision.
Intelligence	130 or higher IQ; “a quick study;” able to rapidly perform complex analyses
Leadership	Initiates needed change; highly adaptive and able to “sell” the organization on change
Drive	Passionate; extremely high energy level; fast paced; 55+ hour workweeks
Resourcefulness	Impressive ability to find way over, under, around, and through barriers; invents new paradigms
Customer focus	Extremely sensitive and adaptive to both stated and unstated customer needs
Coaching	Successfully counsels, mentors, and teaches each team member to “turbo-boost” performance and personal/career growth
Team building	Creates focused, collaborative, results-driven teams; energizes others
Track record	Exceeds expectations of employees, customers and shareholders
Integrity	“ironclad”
Communication	Excellent oral/written skills

Source: Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod, 2001: 127.

Goffee and Jones (2007: 72) call “clever people.” These people are the handful of employees whose ideas, knowledge, and skills give them the potential to produce disproportionate value from the resources their organizations make available

to them. In similar meaning but in different terms, Seldeneck (2004: 169) named these people as “superkeepers”. He defines superkeepers as “people high in potential and performance who also personify the organization’s value-creating competencies.”

Dibble (1999: 18-19) identifies employees that should be retained as those that have “talent” and are “contributors.” They are employees that make a difference to customers, other employees, and shareholders/ boards/ constituents. He also claims that these employees demonstrate various characteristics, which are breadth as well as depth of technical/functional knowledge, customer service, creativity, continuous learning, flexibility, self-direction, and commitment to the organization’s success.

Morton (2004 quoted in Hughes and Rog, 2008: 744) indicates that “individuals who have the capability to make significant difference to the current and future performance of the company.” Buckingham and Vosburg (2001 quoted in Hughes and Rog, 2008: 745), however, believe that everyone can be talented if the HRM function can maximize the talent of all employees. So, they claim that “talent is inherent in each person, one individual at a time.”

Thai scholars such as Somboon Kulvisertchana (2006: 10) define talented people as comprised of three components: high performance, high potential, and high ethical professionalism.

Arporn Puvitayaphan (2007: 45-46) explains the meaning of talented people in two ways. The first is specific characteristics or gifts which differ from others. These are personal attributes which are behind the iceberg of competency model; namely, self concept, traits, motives, and attitude/value. The second component in her view is that talented people should perform and behave well. She also includes the ethical dimension in her definition.

Wasita Ritbumroong (2004: 3) claims that talented people possess knowledge, capability and skills at the excellence level, as well as the potential to develop themselves in the future.

From the above definitions, talented people in this study are comprised of three crucial perspectives.

1) High potential and high performance

Talented people differ from others because they have high potential to perform outstanding results. This makes them good at work.

2) Good interpersonal skills and team-oriented

Talented people cannot solely work alone. Present working context requires teamwork. Interpersonal and communication skills are acquired to fulfill their success. This makes them good in working with people.

3) High ethical professionalism

Talented people must follow ethical standards. Morality and integrity are the essence of their working life. This makes them good for society.

2.1.1.2 Contributions from Talented People

Schiemann (2009: 15-20) explains why talented people are crucial for organizations by showing ten important trends that have high impact on organizations' future, which are the following:

1) Global competition

It is an economic truism that the pattern of supply and demand has a decisive effect on the destiny of nations, markets, and companies. With global barriers coming down and technological reach expanding, there are far more supplies offering more products than customers can consume. Many businesses are about to be jolted by new and varied competitive faces.

2) A change in labor supply and demand

In aggregate, there are an insufficient number of people to fill the number of jobs that were required to "fuel the demand" from organizations.

3) Uneven distribution of talent

Look for niche shortages; some professions, like nursing, scientists, and engineers have experienced worldwide shortages.

4) Managing diverse workforces in diverse places

Talent will increasingly be managed globally, requiring strong and broad skills, coupled with appropriate sensitivities to different religious practices, ethnic backgrounds, lifestyles, modes of learning, and expectations of what work is.

5) Skill and mind shifts

Individuals and organizations alike need to think about new competitive success factors, as technical, accounting, programming, legal, and other skilled jobs are being automated or deployed to lower-cost locations, and critical remaining ones need to be staffed and managed in different ways.

6) Technology

Technology and systems enable people to manage human capital in far more effective ways. The implications for the talent leader is that many of these techniques will provide more profound information enabling faster, more effective decisions using fewer resources; a competitive advantage for those who can leverage technology the best.

7) Leadership succession gaps

Many organizations are already suffering from a lack of top leadership talent, and the gap will only increase in the future. Those that mismanage these smaller talent pools will be forced to buy highly priced external talent, with higher failure rate—estimated as high as four out of five hires at the senior level.

8) The cost of “talent mistakes” is growing

As strategic talent becomes scarcer in many industries and jobs, and as human capital becomes a larger portion of overall corporate assets in many industries, the cost of “talent mistakes” will increasingly take its toll on the bottom line. Organizational managers will need to be more precise in defining their most strategic talent needs and more effective in acquiring them. The quality of onboarding, training, developing, and coaching talent will be crucial to retaining it.

9) Paucity of human capital measure

In the average service organization, 80 to 95 percent of the total real assets—those invested in people—never appear on the balance sheet. And when measures do exist for an organization’s talent, they are often “tactical and rearview metrics” which do not adequately capture the value of the workforce.

10) Low readiness for change

While some firms are building models to project needed workforce size, few are prepared for the talent gaps that are around the corner, and fewer still have carefully determined which jobs are strategically critical. Among

those that understand and accept “the flood of changes” that are ahead of them, few have sufficient plans, measures, or processes in place to reach higher ground in time. Huge numbers of employees will soon be displaced, so there is little time to prepare for the inevitable transition.

Organizations are therefore interested in acquiring and retaining talented people for many reasons. One of them is that they are certainly critical to innovation, change, and high performance. Talent that brings needed expertise and ideas to corporations is fundamental to innovation, as is talent that accepts change and that is capable of learning and executing new processes. “The right talent is the fundamental building block when it comes to creating an organization capable of innovating and changing and using this as a source of competitive advantage” (Lawler III, 2008: 5).

Rueff and Stringer (2006: 95) demonstrate the talent valuation, which accounts for an 8 percent increase in the organization’s market value. Moreover, Groysberg et al. (2008: 41) postulate that talent computer programmers are more productive than average ones by a ratio of eight to one, while the top percent of inventors is five to ten times as productive as average inventors.

Lunn (1992: 46) claims that “talent equals profit” and shows the data of profit growth performed by three groups of managers as follows:

High talent	plus 37 percent
Average talent	plus 4 percent
Low talent	minus 7.6 percent

He also illustrates a comparison between the productivity of the top one percent performers compared with the average and the bottom one percent. The findings of the study comparing the complexity of jobs are shown in Table 2.2. It is revealed that the top one percent performers exhibit higher productivity than the average and the bottom performers at every level of job complexity.

Table 2.2 The Productivity of the Top One Percent Performers

THE TOP ONE PERCENT PRODUCTIVITY VS AVERAGE PRODUCTIVITY	
Low complexity	The top performs 52% better than the average
Medium complexity	The top performs 85% better than the average
High complexity	The top performs 127% better than the average
THE TOP ONE PERCENT PRODUCTIVITY VS BOTTOM PRODUCTIVITY	
Low complexity	The top performs 300% better than the bottom
Medium complexity	The top performs 1,200% better than the average
High complexity	Low performers cannot learn the job at all

Source: Lunn, 1992: 13.

From this empirical evidence, it can be seen that talented people contribute a number of benefits to organizations. The capability of talented people is appointed as one of core characteristics of people equity in Schiemann's viewpoint (2009: 27-28). He claims that people are important as equity in organizations. According to the people equity's model, there appear to be three common people factors that repeatedly influence business success; namely, alignment, capability, and engagement. The three key elements of people equity are depicted in Figure 2.1.

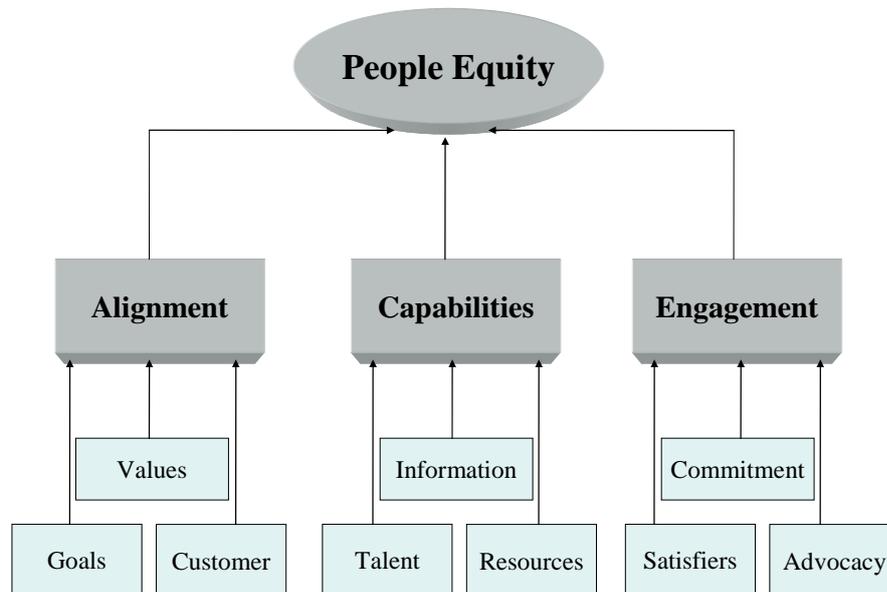


Figure 2.1 Key Elements of People Equity

Source: Schiemann, 2009: 28.

Figure 2.1 shows that the three components of people equity are comprised of sub-components. Vertical alignment is the extent to which employees are connected to or have “a line of sight” to business strategy and goals. Value alignment includes the connectedness of employee’s behaviors with organizational values. Horizontal alignment is the extent to which work units are effectively aligned with one another to deliver high value products or services to customers (Schiemann, 2009: 28-30). Capabilities capture the extent to which the organization effectively develops talent, information, and resources to increase customer value. Engagement is the extent to which employees are willing to go beyond the minimum requirements of their role to provide additional energy or to advocate for their organization to others as a great place in which to work or invest. When the three factors of people equity are at a maximum strength, people work at peak performance, often with the most personal fulfillment (Schiemann, 2009: 28-30).

As talented people perform differently from others, Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod (2001: 22) have proposed a new ethics of managing

people, as seen in Table 2.3. It can be seen that the new ethics value talented people and suggest that organizations sophisticatedly manage them.

Table 2.3 The Ethics of People Management

THE OLD ETHICS	THE NEW ETHICS
We invest in all our people equally.	Some people are more talented and perform much better than others, and we invest in them accordingly.
We give best performers a little more money than average performances.	We give best performers a lot more money.
I know he is a “C” player, but we have to be fair to him—he has been working for a long time.	We have to be fair to the twenty people working under “C” player.
Managers do not need pats on the back.	Managers, like everyone else, need to know they are valued.
Ethical managers do not talk about others behind their backs.	Managers have a responsibility to discuss with the people in their organization.
Undifferentiated praise motivates the masses.	Differentiated drives individual and company performance.

Source: Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod, 2001: 22.

As a result, the talent issue is fast gaining top priority for organizations across countries (Charan, 2006 quoted in Bhatnagar, 2008: 19). As mentioned in Chapter 1, the Thai public sector also realizes the importance of talent and initiated the HiPPS as innovation in talent management in government HR practices.

Whatever they are called, talented people, “A” players, super keepers, or high performers, they are very crucial human assets of organizations. There is no doubt then why organizations try very hard to retain these people.

2.1.1.3 Challenges of Talent Retention

Retention of talented people is then perceived as one of the key challenges in present management arena. Fiegley (2006 quoted in Srivastava and Bhatnagar, 2008: 253) claims that “competition and the lack of availability of highly talented and skilled employees make finding and retaining talented employees a major priority to organizations.”

This fact is supported by the report of The Ken Blanchard Companies (2007: 4), which reports that selecting and retaining key talent has reminded solidly in second place for five consecutive years. The 2007 corporate issues survey illustrates top management challenges, as presented in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4 Top Management Challenges

ISSUES	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2010
1. Developing potential leaders	74%	58%	58%	63%	64%	56%
2. Selecting and retaining key talent	55%	55%	53%	57%	62%	66%
3. Creating engaged workforce	47%	48%	48%	53%	54%	43%
4. Customer royalty	46%	45%	41%	41%	48%	46%
5. Reducing costs	58%	49%	50%	45%	43%	40%
6. Succession plan	48%	36%	34%	42%	38%	41%
7. Employee flexibility/responsiveness	39%	44%	35%	39%	26%	27%
8. Increasing innovation	32%	31%	32%	36%	25%	33%

Source: The Ken Blanchard Companies, 2007: 4.

There are a number of factors that should be considered in any talent retention. One of commonly held myths is “turnover is the flip side of retention” (Schiemann, 2009: 223). Consequently, the main aspect of this part of the study emphasizes turnover intentions. However, absenteeism is also added.

Focusing on absenteeism and turnover, Blau and Boal (1987 quoted in Fenton, 1995: 3) suggest that the relationship between absenteeism and turnover depends on the type of employee. For some employees, absenteeism and turnover represent independent forms of withdrawal. For example, some employees reserve absences for medical causes only. For these employees, absenteeism would be expected to be independent of a decision to voluntarily leave an organization. In contrast, for other employees, absenteeism and turnover may represent a progression of withdrawal behaviors. In this latter instance, employees seeking to withdraw from the organization may begin with increased absenteeism and progress toward the decision to leave permanently. One explanation for the mentioned process, offer by Blau and Boal is that these employees may use absenteeism for career enhancing purposes, ranging from excused absence for training to the use of unexcused absences for job seeking, prior to actually quitting the organization.

Bycio (1992 quoted in Fenton, 1995: 3) offers an alternate explanation for the progression of withdrawal model in his meta-analytic analysis of absenteeism and job performance. According to this model, frequent absences may lead to supervisory, labeling of the employee as lazy, a troublemaker, or as deviant. Subsequent low performance evaluations may, in turn, propel the employee toward even higher levels of absenteeism and, eventually, turnover.

According to the progression of the withdrawal model, one would expect a positive relationship between absenteeism and turnover since absenteeism is seen as one coping mechanism for dealing with job dissatisfaction—a coping mechanism that will be replaced by turnover should absenteeism fail to alleviate the distress (Fenton, 1995: 3). Despite the large body of literature regarding turnover, relatively little research exists on the relationship of turnover to other behavioral outcomes, most notably absenteeism (Fenton, 1995:1). As mentioned in the ELETRI Knowledge Network (2010: paragraph 1), much research exists on the factors affecting absenteeism and turnover. As might be expected, almost all of the factors affecting absenteeism also affect turnover. Therefore, the rest of this part of the paper will discuss the literature, mostly regarding turnover, but absenteeism is also implied.

The cost of absenteeism and turnover is estimated by the Business Roundtable (1989: 3), which indicated that “A conservative estimate of the direct cost

effects of absenteeism and turnover, based only on clearly identifiable costs, indicates that 9 percent reduction in project labor costs is attainable on a typical job.” This study also examines the very important variable of job satisfaction, and how it affects attendance and turnover. The responses show that:

1) Job dissatisfaction tended to influence absenteeism rates more than turnover rates.

2) Quality of supervision and an understanding of company goals were the most important job-satisfaction factors affecting absenteeism.

3) Considering quitting was the most accurate indicators of job satisfaction for all age categories, geographic regions.

4) At the size of job increased, job satisfaction decreased.

(The Business Roundtable, 1989: 9)

Macey et al. (2009: 143) detailed the expenses associated with turnover by distinguishing separation costs, replacement costs, and training costs as follows:

1) Separation costs

(1) Exit survey or interviews

(2) HR system updates

(3) Severance pay

2) Replacement costs

(1) Job postings or advertisements

(2) HR system updates

(3) Interviews, testing, and assessment

(4) Staff meetings for decision making

(5) Travel and relocation expense

(6) Post-employment internal notifications

(7) Employment medical exams and background checks

3) Training costs

(1) New employee on-boarding and orientation

(2) Formal training

(3) Job-specific instructional costs

These costs have been estimated to represent 100-150 percent of the salary of the high-performing employee with unique skills. Organizations also lose from worker turnover because employees are repositories of human capital—an organization’s knowledge, skill and know-how (Somaya and Williamson, 2008: 29).

Wingfield and Berry (2001: 3) also reveal a number of drawbacks from turnover. Firstly, high turnover often leaves customers and employees in the lurch; departing employees take a great deal of knowledge with them. This lack of continuity makes it difficult to meet an organization’s goals and to serve customers well. Secondly, replacing employees costs money. The cost of replacing an employee is estimated as up to twice the individual’s annual salary, and this does not even include the cost of lost knowledge. Thirdly, recruiting employees consumes a great deal of time and effort, much of it futile. There is not only one organization vying for qualified employees, and job searchers make decisions based on more than the sum of salary and benefits. Lastly, bringing employees up to speed takes even more time. When organizations are short-staffed, it is often necessary for people to put in extra time to get the work done.

In terms of drivers of absenteeism and turnover, data from the U.S. Bureau of Statistics reveal that 55 percent of the U.S. employees think often of quitting or plan to quit within a year. The average public company was losing half its employees every four years. Efforts at retention were not very successful. Only 9 percent in the Bureau of Statistics survey felt comfortable with their results. Moreover, a survey by the American Management Association found that about 40 percent of respondent firms still had plans to create new jobs in the coming 12 months. Further, when asked about available talent, 46.7 percent used the term “scarce” rather than “abundant” or “adequate” to describe the situation.

Interestingly, the issue seems not to be about the “warm bodies” to fill lots of new and existing jobs, but rather skilled and high performers to fill critical positions—from high tech to retail and sales to skilled managerial spots (Stone, 2002: 50). This is supported by the data from Somaya and Williamson (2008: 29), which indicate that from the beginning of 2005 to the end of 2006, companies lost nearly 30 percent of their human capital. Schiemann (2009: 151) also shows many interesting statistical data. For example, a Yahoo survey reveals that 47 percent of the U.S.

workers are ready to “jump ship” at the next opportunity or plan to change jobs within 12 months. In another study, 52 percent of workers are interested in leaving their jobs; 75 percent of those within 12 month. Thirty-four percent of those workers would not recommend their employer to others. And 45 percent cited a lack of potential for career growth. The U.S. Job Retention Poll conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management and the Wall Street Journal reveals that more the 75 percent of employees are looking for new jobs. And in a Towers Perrin study, disgruntled employees either quit or leave—or they quit and stay.

It was found that the factors affecting absenteeism include: job satisfaction, workers’ personal factors, safety, organizational factors, and management. Similarly, the factors that impact workers turnover are job satisfaction, workers’ personal factors, organizational factors, job performance, and management (ELETRI Knowledge Network, 2010: paragraph 1-2). It can be seen that most factors effecting absenteeism are like those of turnover.

Stone (2002: 59-60) also discusses the findings of the Hay study, where good performers were found to leave because they saw no link between their pay and performance. They complained that there was no growth or advancement opportunities, their work was not seen as important, nor were their contributions recognized and valued by others. They were not able to use their natural talents, and they were often supervised by managers who created “toxic work environments.”

Schiemann (2009: 227) reveals the drivers of employee turnover, as shown in Table 2.5. The drivers are categorized based on the three components of people equity: alignment, capabilities, and engagement, as explained earlier.

Table 2.5 Frequent Drivers of Employee Turnover

ALIGNMENT	CAPABILITIES	ENGAGEMENT
▪ Fuzzy future	▪ Lack of information or resources	▪ Job and organization satisfaction
▪ Supervisor-subordinate misalignment	▪ Talent mismatch - Insufficient skills or training - Overqualified for role	▪ Organizational commitment
▪ Role ambiguity	▪ Shortage of employees or talent in unit	▪ Interesting and challenging work
▪ Reward mismatches	▪ Lack of innovation	▪ Low trust or respect
▪ Silo wars, often creating role conflict	▪ Insufficient management support	▪ Unfair or inconsistent treatment of employees
▪ Misalignment with customers and market	▪ Poor growth or learning opportunities	▪ Low tolerance for diversity
▪ Values and style misalignment		▪ Insufficient recognition
▪ Alignment of personal needs with organizational requirements (for example flexibility)		▪ Low job security or safety ▪ Poor communication

Source: Schiemann, 2009: 227.

To make why people leave clearer, Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod (2001: 129) drew on the material from McKinsey & Company's War for talent 2000 Survey, as shown in Figure 2.2. It should be noted that most respondents reported that "insufficient career advancement opportunities" made them resign from their organization while "better wealth-creation opportunity elsewhere" rank second.

It was also revealed that the third ranked reason for resignation was “don’t feel valued by the company” and “insufficient reward or recognition.” However, stress from work and low performance of their supervisors was the least factor in terms of their resignations.

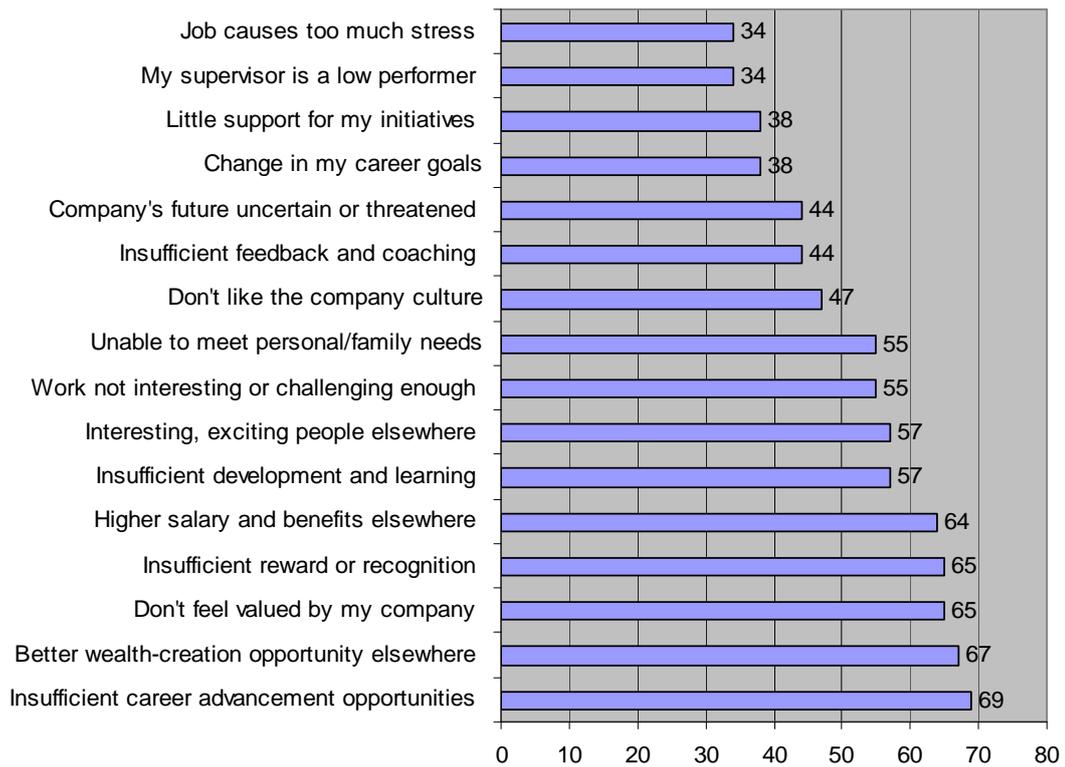


Figure 2.2 Reasons Why People Leave

Source: McKinsey & Company’s War for talent 2000 Survey, quoted in Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod, 2001: 129.

In the Thai public sector, data from the OCSC (2006) illustrate the resignations in civil service, which have trended to increase year by year. Table 2.6 presents the number of resignations during 2004-2006.

Table 2.6 Resignations from Civil Service during 2004-2006

FISCAL YEAR	NO.OF RESIGNATIONS	TOTAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS	PERCENTAGE
2006	3,136	362,307	0.87
2005	1,819	360,103	0.51
2004	1,896	361,814	0.52

Note: Data collected from www.ocsc.go.th, 2006.

Data from the OCSC (2009a: 9) also shows that the most resignations occurred at the Ministry of Health (61%). As is known, the public sector is facing a brain drain problem in the health sector, where medical doctors and nurses are key performers in this area. The reasons for the resignations are various; empirical evidence from the OCSC shows that many high performers have left the public sector. Three thousand, eight hundred and thirty-eight civil servants resigned from the public sector during the years 1992-1994. Almost half of them were those that worked in insufficient areas such as health care and the science and technology. The main reasons for the resignations concerned the value of working in the public sector, particularly from the new generation's view (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 1995: 151,171).

Another finding comes from Kamthorn Pruksananonda, Virul Pornpatkul, Krirkyos Jalayondeja, Lucksanun Rattanakooha, and Komontip Dulyakasem (2003: (3)), who conducted research in order to determine the factors affecting physician turnover in the public hospitals in Thailand. It was revealed that job satisfaction and organizational commitment were the strongest determining factors of the physicians' turnover. According to the findings of Wannee Sriphen (1995: (b)), the factors that contributed most significantly to the resignation of academic and semi-academic officers at King Monkut's Institute North Bangkok were salary and benefits. The others were administrative policy, working environment, interpersonal relations, and recognition, while the least factor was pride of being a government officer.

As Sullivan (2007: 42) states, not all employees are equal and the loss of high performers is much more damaging than the loss of low performers. Therefore, if there is no proper policy or practice to retain these kinds of people, the Thai public sector may face serious problems in the near future.

2.1.2 Retention Strategy

Therefore, there seems to be a need for a strategy to discourage highly-loyal people from participating in job turnover, certainly the most talented within the organization. Scholars have attempted to find out what factors can retain these people. Hay Consulting also sees the need for a new covenant, one that promises employees the tools to help them grow and advance because they care about their employees' career growth. The first step is to identify problems within the culture, work relationships between employees and their supervisors, and compensation and benefits programs, respect for senior management, and professed opportunities to grow and advance. Just as companies at this juncture in time need to assess market strategy and product performance, they need to survey the commitment and enthusiasm of their best people (Stone, 2002: 58).

One study of people's motivation in organizations investigated the perception of workers and their supervisors. The results were dramatically different. Clearly, the supervisors responding to the survey did not have a realistic understanding of what really motivated their people (Herman, 1999: 48). Table 2.7 presents the motivation gap between workers and supervisors. The first three important motivations from worker's view are "full appreciation for work done," "feeling 'in' on things," and "help of personal problem," respectively. Those factors all concern the soft side of people in the organization. In contrast, supervisors in this study value "good wage" as the most important motivation factor, followed by "job security" and "promotion and growth" as the second and third ranked. Details are illustrated in Table 2.7.

Table 2.7 Motivational Factors in Organizations

MOTIVATIONAL FACTOR	WORKERS' RESPONSE	SUPERVISORS' RESPONSE
Good working condition	9	4
Feeling 'in' on things	2	10
Tactful disciplining	10	7
Full appreciation for work done	1	8
Management loyalty to workers	8	6
Good wages	5	1
Promotion and growth	7	3
Help of personal problems	3	9
Job security	4	2
Interesting work	6	5

Source: Herman, 1999: 48.

Similar results were found in the Thai public sector. Pornrat Sadangharn (1997: 41) also found a motivation gap, where 62.5 percent of government officials in the OCSC expected to gain “the sense of achievement” while 80 percent of the executives used “recognition and praise.” This study shows the gap between intrinsic and extrinsic reward.

A study by Hay in the early 1990s, referred to by Stone (2002: 58-59), identified three factors of importance for retention: partnership or involvement of employees in decisions, employability or opportunity to ensure career security if not job security, and cafeteria-styled compensation and benefits programs, where a more recent study by consulting firms identified some factors of importance to employees worthy of further investigation within each company, as follows:

- 1) Employees want a competent leader with “a game plan”—not just a “nice person” in charge.

2) Employee training and development programs mean little to employees if they are not given the chance to practice the knowledge and skills they acquired from them. Training then needs to be relevant and needs to be used to broaden experience.

3) Compensation is less a factor in retention and more in recruitment; that is, employees are less likely to look for a job because of their compensation, but are more likely to accept a job offer based on the level of compensation offered.

4) Compensation is not an issue within the hi-tech industry; rather, retention is highest among companies that are most successful in accommodating employees' work-life balance.

In order to retain the young generation, Dychtwald, Erickson and Morison (2006: 117) claim that employers must provide three basics, corresponding to what employees insist on:

1) A thoroughly engaging workplace, featuring collegiality, teamwork, fun and, most fundamentally, democratic participation.

2) Ample opportunity to learn and grow, including assignments that expand skills and the mobility to try one's hand at a variety of activities.

3) Attentive management, where the direct manager not only appreciates individual employees' points of view but also attends to the employees' need and progress and explicitly encourages—and is accountable for—retention.

Pritchard (2008: 17) suggests that giving consideration to creating a strong and attractive employer brand can engage potential employees. Understanding joiners can ensure they want to say, stay and strive, and similarly, working on ways to keep the most valued staff happy is crucial for retention.

Glen (2006: 38) claims that “employee retention and motivation can be achieved more elegantly and effectively by focusing on a broader set of retention/motivation elements.” The predictors include: organizational process, role challenge, values, work-life balance, information, stake/leverage/reward/recognition, and management.

It is quite conceivable that, for example, certain employee groupings may be primarily motivated by their personal stake in the business, career leverage, rewards, and recognition, whilst other groupings may be motivated by a combination of role

challenge, organization values, work environment, and so on. Often, homogenous employee groups (e.g. R&D team vs. distribution team) will exhibit significant engagement and motivational differences, given differences in team structure, differing developmental expectations, business constraint areas, and so on (Glen, 2006: 40).

Stone (2002: 52) presents key factors that can retain employees in the organization. Money was not perceived to be a deciding factor. Even among technical personnel, it plays little part in putting an end to turnover intentions. According to a ComputerWorld survey of 500 IT professionals, it is showed that these personnel “would trade a big bonus for flextime, greater intellectual challenge, and training.” (Stone, 2002: 520).

In attempting to provide a comprehensive picture of talent aspiration, Michaels, Handfield-Jones, and Axelrod (2001: 42-43) proposed the term “Employee Value Proposition: EVP.” EVP is the holistic sum of everything people experience and receive while they are part of company—everything from intrinsic satisfaction of the work to the environment, leadership, colleagues, compensation, and more. In order to describe the propositions that talented people value, they note that the following:

“Talented people want the big money and all the perks. More important, though, they want to feel passionate about their work, excited by their jobs, enrich by their career opportunities, uplifted by the company’s leaders, assured by the depth of its management, and inspired by its sense of mission. They’ll work hard but they want to be fulfilled. If they’re not fulfilled, they’ll be inclined to leave.”

From all of literature review, it can be seen that there are various factors affecting employee retention. For example, motivation factors in Herman’s study, motivation gap in Pornrat Sadangharn’s findings. Interesting notion is most of retention factors concern the soft side of the people. Understanding their expectation and design tools to serve them is proposed by the Hay group. It also includes the EVA point of view.

2.2 HR Practices

To extend the understanding of talent retention, this study emphasizes HR practices as a major factor influencing retention. However, Legge (1995 quoted in Gill, 1999: 10) explains that there is not one language of HRM, but two, "utilitarian instrumentalism" and "developmental humanism." In this part of the study, two models of HR are elaborated and a summary of their differences is provided.

2.2.1 Utilitarian Instrumentalism

As mentioned previously in chapter 1, utilitarian instrumentalism stresses the "resource" while developmental humanism emphasizes the "human" aspect. Legge (1995 quoted in Gill, 1999: 4) indicates that utilitarian instrumentalism focuses on the crucial importance of the close integration of human resource policies, systems, and activities with business strategy. From this perspective human resources are largely a factor of production, an expense of doing business rather than the only resource capable of turning inanimate factors of production into wealth. HR is viewed as passive, to be provided and deployed as numbers and skills at the right price, rather than the source of creative energy.

Utilitarian instrumentalism HRM is as "calculative and tough minded" as any other branch of management, communicating through the tough language of business and economics. This emphasis on the quantitative, calculative, and business-strategic aspects of managing the "headcount" has been termed human asset accounting (Storey, 1987 quoted in Gill, 1999: 4). The utilitarian instrumentalism approach has some kinship with scientific management, as people are reduced to passive objects that are not cherished as a whole people but assessed on whether they possess the skills/attributes the organization requires (Legge, 1995; Vaughan, 1994; Storey, 1987; Drucker et al., 1996; Keenoy, 1990 quoted in Gill, 1999: 4).

To conclude, utilitarian instrumentalism is only concerned with the effective utilization of employees (Guest, 2002 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005: 534-535) and emphasizes the quantitative, calculative, and business strategic aspects of managing the head count resource in as "natural" a way as for any other economic factor (Storey, 1987 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005: 534-535).

2.2.2 Developmental Humanism

On the other hand, Harvard university academics have introduced a new compulsory component of HRM into their MBA syllabus and have reinforced this so-called “Harvard Model” with influential books and articles (Beer et al., 1984; Walton, 1985; Walton and Lawrence, 1985 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005: 534-535). This concept stresses that HRM should lead to employee commitment. It should not simply be used as a means to employer objectives of improved productivity and profits because “the fulfillment of many employee needs is taken as a goal rather than merely a means to an end” (Walton, 1985 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005: 534-535). Legge (1995 quoted in Gill, 1999: 4) refers to developmental humanism as a method of “releasing untapped reserves of human resourcefulness” by increasing employee commitment, participation, and involvement. Employee commitment is sought with the expectation that effectiveness will follow as second-order consequences.

In theory, developmental humanism fulfils employee needs as an end in itself, and the favorable attitudes generated from the use of “appropriate” HRM practices (Guest, 1997 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005: 534-535) together with “communication, motivation and leadership” (Storey, 1987 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005: 534-535) result in commitment to the organization and improved performance.

Walton (1985 quoted in Gill, 1999: 4-5) suggests that "a model that assumes low employee commitment and that is designed to produce reliable if not outstanding performance simply cannot match the standards of excellence set by world-class competitors" and discusses the choice that managers have between a strategy based on imposing control and a strategy based on eliciting commitment. Similarly, Kane et al. (1999: 496) distinguish the differences between these two models of HRM by using the phrase “situational contingent approach” and “developmental humanist approach” but the content is almost the same. Table 2.8 summarizes the differences in the concept of utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism.

Table 2.8 The Concept of Utilitarian Instrumentalism and Developmental Humanism

REFERENCES	UTILITARIAN INSTRUMENTALISM	DEVELOPMENTAL HUMANISM
Gill (1999: 12)	<p>Stresses HRM's focus on the crucial importance of the close integration of human resource policies, systems, and activities with business strategy. From this perspective human resources are largely a factor of production, an expense of doing business rather than the only resource capable of turning inanimate factors of production into wealth.</p> <p>HR are viewed as passive, to be provided and deployed as numbers and skills at the right price, rather than the source of creative energy.</p> <p>The focus is on the "resource" in HRM.</p>	<p>Whilst emphasizing the importance of integrating HR policies with business objectives, the focus is on treating employees as valued assets and a source of competitive advantage through their commitment, adaptability, and high quality skill and performance.</p> <p>Employees are proactive rather than passive inputs into productive processes, capable of development, worthy of trust and collaboration, which are achieved through participation. The stress is on generating commitment via communication, motivation, and leadership.</p> <p>The focus is on the "human" in HRM.</p>

Table 2.8 (Continued)

REFERENCES	UTILITARIAN INSTRUMENTALISM	DEVELOPMENTAL HUMANISM
Edgar and Geare (2005: 535)	It is concerned with the effective utilization of employees and emphasizes the quantitative, calculative, and business strategic aspects of managing the head count resource in as “natural” a way as for any other economic factor.	It fulfils employee needs as an ends in themselves, and the favorable attitudes generated from the use of “appropriate” HRM practices together with communication, motivation, and leadership, resulting in commitment to the organization and improved performance.
Kane et. al. (1999: 496)	<i>Situational contingent approach</i> It is closely aligned with what is often termed “strategic HRM.” In these instances, HRM is closely linked with business strategy. Accordingly, it views employees as “a resource to be used dispassionately and in a formally rational manner.”	<i>Developmental humanist approach</i> Effective HRM is seen necessarily to involve a focus upon fostering employee motivation, commitment, and development.

Truss et al. (1997 quoted in Gill, 1999: 12-13) examined the factors that determine whether organizations are using the utilitarian instrumentalism or developmental humanism models of HRM, as presented in Table 2.9.

Table 2.9 Utilitarian Instrumentalism and Developmental Humanism

Determination by Truss et al.

UTILITARIAN INSTRUMENTALISM	DEVELOPMENTAL HUMANISM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Integration of HR and business strategy including performance management techniques such as appraisal ▪ Control over setting work targets ▪ Organizational flexibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training received by employees and employee's perception of training as promotion opportunities ▪ Communication and trust between management and staff

Source: Truss et al. (1997 quoted in Gill, 1999: 12-13).

However, it is found that there is a gap between these two HR models. In a study of utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism models of HRM, Truss et al. (1997 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005: 536) concluded that even if the rhetoric of HRM is developmental humanism, the reality is almost always utilitarian instrumentalism, with the interests of the organization prevailing over those of the individual.

Another study of Gill (1999: 40-41) also supports the main hypothesis that rhetoric would align most strongly with developmental humanism and reality would align with utilitarian instrumentalism. This study found that organizational rhetoric is developmental humanism with a focus on treating employees as valued assets and as a source of competitive advantage through their commitment, adaptability, and high-quality skill and performance. Whilst an annual report analysis concluded that organizational rhetoric was developmental humanism, an analysis of Australian workforce surveys indicates that reality is utilitarian instrumentalism. That is, organizations are using an instrumentalist utilitarian model of workforce management.

Edgar and Geare (2005: 536) claims that the developmental humanism model of HRM, as stated previously, suggests a relationship exists between the use of “appropriate” HRM practices and positive employee attitudes, and while theoretically these relationships remain poorly developed (Guest, 1997, 2001 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005: 536), a number of attitudes are nonetheless widely considered to be an outcome of developmental humanism. For example, levels of job satisfaction, which is the affective perception that results from the achievement of desired outcomes (Harber et al., 1997 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005: 536), are found to be related to levels of HRM practice (Guest, 2002; Ting, 1997 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005: 536). High levels of employee commitment have also been found to be related to the use of “appropriate” HRM practice (Guest, 2002 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005: 536) and result from investing in HRM practices which benefit employees. For example, the provision of opportunities for training and skill development benefits the employee by equipping him or her with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to function autonomously and responsibly (Guest, 2002 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005: 536). Furthermore, it improves retention and enables them to cope with change in the work environment (Guest, 2002 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005: 536).

From above literature review, it seems that the developmental humanism model is more related to retention than utilitarian instrumentalism. If the public sector emphasizes utilitarian instrumentalism too much, huge budget and resource allocation may not result in retention, especially those that are high performers. However, this kind of study has not been done before in the Thai public sector and there is a limited number to be reviewed. Therefore, this study aims at investigating empirical evidence surrounding this issue.

2.2.3 HR Practices in Talent Management

Basically, talent management was initially designed to improve the process for recruiting and developing people with the required skills and aptitude to meet organizational needs. The various aspects of talent management are recruitment, selection, on-boarding, mentoring, performance management, career development, leadership development, replacement planning, career planning, and recognition and

reward (Romans and Lardner, 2006; Heinen and O'Neill, 2004; Scheweyer, 2004 quoted in Bhatnagar, 2007: 641).

Hughes and Rog (2008: 743) state that the term “Talent Management” has only lately emerged in the HRM lexicon. Like the term “engagement” and other popularity HRM trends, a precise definition remains somewhat elusive. The followings are collected definitions from both academic and practitioner points of view.

Berger and Berger (2004: 4) reveal similar ideas of managing talent that an organization should focus on following three outcomes:

- 1) The identification, selection, development, and retention of superkeepers (or talented people)
- 2) The identification and development of high-quality replacements for a small number of positions designated as key to current and future organization success
- 3) The classification of and investment in each employee based on his/her actual and/or potential for adding value to the organization

Their four-step process of talent management system is:

Step 1 Develop assessment tools and scales

- (1) Develop competency definitions and measurement scales
- (2) Establish a performance appraisal definition and measurement scales
- (3) Establish a “talent potential forecast” definition and measurement scales
- (4) Apply the measurement scales to each job

Step 2 Develop training and development application tools

- (1) Create a coaching guide
- (2) Assemble a directory of the best training and development programs organized by competency
- (3) Create a directory of top books associated with each competency

Step 3 Evaluate each employee using assessment tools

Step 4 Prepare action reports

- (1) Create a “bench strength” summary
- (2) Create individual talent competency development forms

Rueff and Stringer (2006: 80) suggest talent community building according to the talent spin cycle, which is presented in Figure 2.3.

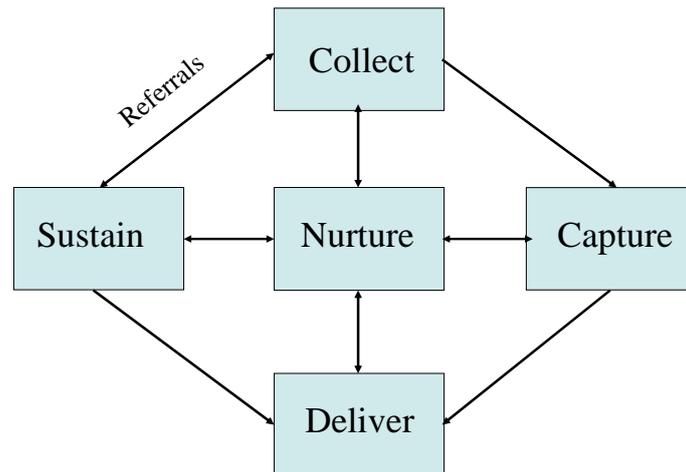


Figure 2.3 The Talent Spin Cycle

Source: Rueff and Stringer, 2006: 80.

The talent spin cycle is a continual process of collecting new talent prospects, forming relationships with them, and either qualifying them for delivery into the organization or maintaining the relationships over time so that organizations can consider them for future opportunities (Rueff and Stringer, 2006: 80).

Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod (2001: 10-11) offer a strategic view of the levers every organization should pull to attract, develop, assess, excite, and retain highly talented employees. They identify five imperatives that companies need to act on if they are going to “win the war for managerial talent” and make talent a competitive advantage: embrace a talent mindset, craft a winning employee value proposition, rebuild recruiting strategy, weave development into the organization, and differentiate and affirm people in the organization.

Phillips and Roper (2009: 8) propose a talent management framework which consists of five key elements: attracting, selecting, engaging, developing, and retaining employees. The details of each element are:

1) Attracting

The responsibility to recruit “top-tier people” is often left up to the recruiter’s ability to source and screen for the bright talent. This task not only takes time, but also requires financial investment, especially if an executive search firm is used. An organization needs to be creative when developing a recruitment strategy (Phillips and Roper, 2009: 10).

2) Selecting

Traditional hiring practices such as examining resumes, checking references, and conducting interviews are becoming more obsolete, not to mention the fact that the subjective nature of evaluating resumes and answers to interview questions makes these practices less reliable and exposes companies to more legal ramifications. It is becoming more common to include an objective measure of performance, such as psychological assessment, in combination with other recruitment tools in order to improve a company’s chance of matching the right person to the job (Phillips and Roper, 2009: 11).

3) Engaging

Attracting and selecting talent are only the start and can appear to be the simplest of the phases. Although pay and benefits may initially attract employees, “top-tier organizations” have now realized the importance of employee engagement (Phillips and Roper, 2009: 11). Engaged employees are not difficult to spot in an organization. They are high-impact people: the “go-to” people in the company. They are willing to go “the extra mile” to help the customer and usually understand how this effort makes a difference to the bottom line (Gostick and Elton quoted in Phillips and Roper, 2009: 11). Details of engagement are provided later in the next part of this chapter.

4) Developing

Employees at all job levels value learning; however, people in small companies value learning more than those in larger ones and those employees that work more than 50 hour per week show above-average preference for learning.

People in professional and business services, information and technology, and construction show a significantly above-average preference to learn and grow than workers in other industries (Dychtwald et al., 2006 quoted in Phillips and Roper, 2009: 13). Therefore, it is better for the organization over the long haul to have employees trained and have supervisors and mentors dedicated to talking to employees about their performance (Wagner and Harter, 2006 quoted in Phillips and Roper, 2009: 13).

5) Retaining

Employee retention is closely linked to an organization's performance management system. It is recommended that a compensation package clearly articulate expectations of performance, skill requirement, experience, and behavior. This system should be designed to drive top performance at every skill level within the organization (Phillips and Roper, 2009: 13).

Among the most important factors driving employee retention are opportunities to develop and advance in their careers. This is not simply having a deep bench of ready and available talent should an employee decide to move on; it involves having a succession planning process focused on long-term organizational implications and sharing that with employees (Phillips and Roper, 2009: 14).

Like other scholars, Schiemann (2009: 45) also states that HR systems, which include talent acquisition, talent development, and talent retention, are one of the core drivers of people equity. Details on each HR system follow:

- 1) The talent acquisition systems focus on identifying, recruiting, and selecting qualified talent. Another key aspect of talent acquisition, especially in the area of talent scarcity, is "employer branding"—developing an image that enables an organization to become the employer of choice for the qualified candidate.

- 2) The talent development systems support employees through their life cycle; the initial orientation and acculturation of new employees. Training focuses on both new and future skills and knowledge. Performance management deals with alignment, ensuring that each employee has clear goals and performance feedback that is designed to optimize value for both the organization and the employee. Finally, the reward systems support both talent acquisition and development, providing an

attractive incentive for potential employees as well as helping to motivate and focus current employees.

3) Talent retention is supported by effective recognition and rewards, strong positive communication systems, learning and growth systems, and effective supervisory behaviors.

In addition to the above explanations of talent management, Lewis and Heckman (2006 quoted in Hughes and Rog, 2008: 744) identify three primary conceptions of the term. The first is that talent management is comprised of a collection of typical human resource department practices such as recruiting, selection, development, and career and succession management. The second conception focuses on predicting or modeling the flow of human resources throughout the organization, based on such factors as workforce skills, supply and demand, and growth and attrition. The final conception focuses on sourcing, developing, and rewarding employee talent.

Since the HiPPS is viewed as talent management in the Thai public sector, this study employs each HR practice in the HiPPS as the antecedent variable. The analysis is illustrated later in the next section.

2.2.4 HR Practices in the HiPPS

Considering HRM in the Thai public sector, the utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism model can be analyzed based on the HiPPS project. The OCSC introduced this project based on the concept of talent management. It is comprised of selecting, retention, development, motivation, and delegation of talented government officials. The main purpose of the HiPPS is helping these people to utilize their maximum potential in their assigned job and to ensure that these talented officials will act as the drivers in the government sector (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 13).

The key main objectives of the HiPPS are attraction, retention, and motivation of talented people to work in the public sector, systematic and consistent development of high performers, and planning of future leaders in the bureaucratic system (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 15).

A number of talent management practices are applied in the HiPPS. They can be categorized into four: recruitment and selection, development, performance management, and motivation. Figure 2.4 provides the overview of HiPPS.

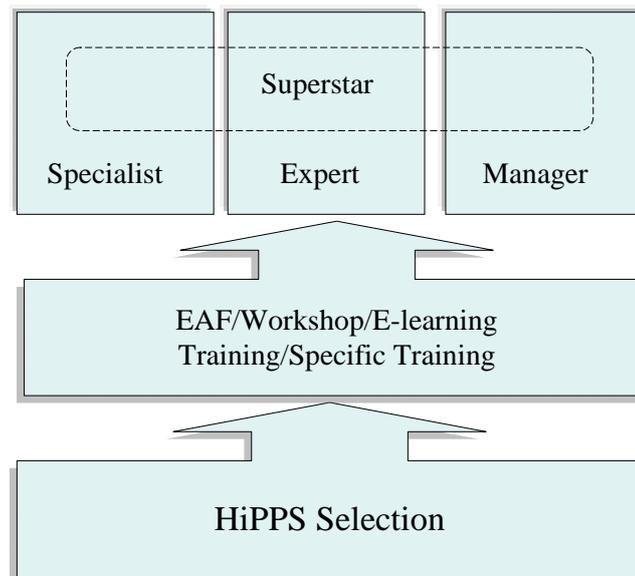


Figure 2.4 Overview of the HiPPS

Source: Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 25.

2.2.4.1 Recruiting and Selecting

Only civil servants that hold the following qualifications are eligible to participate in the HiPPS;

- 1) posting at level 4 or 5
- 2) graduating with a bachelor degree or higher
- 3) working in the public sector at least one year, and
- 4) average performance record at “very good” level

In the selection process, two steps of screening talented people are employed. For the first step, each government agency has a role in selecting high performers and proposes a short list to the OCSC. After that, an assessment center is done by the OCSC. In this step, a number of assessment tools are used such as bio-

data screening, performance assessment, in-basket exercise, simulation exercise, and interviewing (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 51-52).

2.2.4.2 Development

Development in the HiPPS differs from general training in the bureaucratic system. In the HiPPS, a proactive and accelerate development mechanism is utilized via integrative development techniques. Coaching, assignment, on-the-job and off-the-job training, job rotation, and visit study are examples.

Talented officials in the HiPPS are expected to hold 5 core competencies, which are achievement motivation, service mind, expertise, integrity, and teamwork. The OCSC then takes the responsibility for developing these core competencies. In addition, core skills such as coordination, presentation, problem solving, and official writing are provided. Scholarship and networking are also supported. These tools are finally integrated as the individual development plan (IDP).

The Experience Accumulation Framework (EAF) is the prominent development tool in the HiPPS. It is a directive approach toward developing high performance officials. The conditions of EAF are:

- 1) Government agencies are required to design the EAF for their high performers in the HiPPS. The EAF time frame is approximately 7-8 years.

- 2) Under this time frame condition, the EAF should be flexible in allowing high performers to experience various kinds of working contexts. Job rotation within their agencies, joint projects, and secondment are examples.

- 3) The assignment of talented people under the EAF must be more challenging and complicated than for other civil servants at the same level (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 57-60).

Moreover, coaching and mentoring are introduced. High performers in the HiPPS also learn from their coach. Their supervisors are assigned as the coaches in this system. The coach should help the high performers in crucial work aspects such as feedback dialogue and action plans, follow-up reviews, and performance appraisals. Meanwhile senior civil servants, level 6-7, are assigned to be the mentors. These mentors facilitate the working life of the high performers in this system. In this sense, encouraging and supporting high performers in the aspect of understanding the

organization's culture, attitude toward work, and confidential building are the duties of mentors (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 64).

2.2.4.3 Performance Management

HiPPS emphasizes all processes of performance management, from planning to reward. In the planning process, performance agreement is designed based on the EAF. Result-oriented approach is utilized. Specific key performance indicators and targets are agreed upon. In the monitoring process, feedback is consistently provided by their supervisors, coaches, and mentors. Then, regarding performance appraisal, high performers are expected to gain a performance score not lower than the level of 80-89 percent. The result of the performance appraisal is linked to reward and determination from the system. If the performance is under the set standard, they will not be eligible to join the system. If they perform well, rewards are provided (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 65-68). Details of reward allocation are explained in 2.2.2.4.

2.2.4.4 Motivation

Special promotion quota of a salary increase is one of the rewards from the system (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 69). Career path is another practice of motivating talented officials. They are planned to be posted at a higher level according to a certain time condition. There are four types of high performers in the HiPPS: specialists, experts, managers, and superstars. The specialist type is the specific area where the official illustrates excellent performance. The expert type is for those that are excellent performers in at least 2 specific areas. The manager type, as its name suggests, is for those that hold potential in management. Lastly, superstars exhibit high flexibility and high mobilization since they can be promoted as more than one type of high performer. (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 22-25).

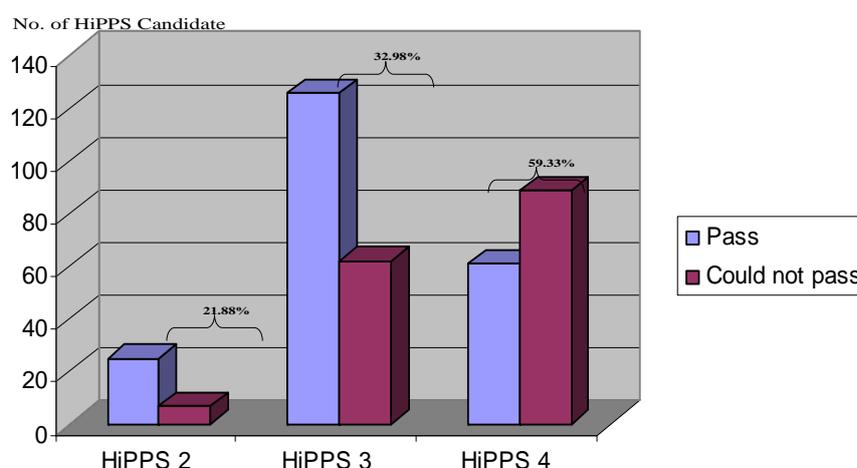
From 2003 to 2009, there was significant progress in the HiPPS. Table 2.10 illustrates almost a 20-fold expansion in terms of participating agencies. Notice that this project was voluntarily based, and the data thus show that public agencies are more interested in this system.

Table 2.10 Progress of the HiPPS

DIMENSION	YEAR 2003	YEAR 2009	GROWTH RATE
Number of participating agencies	4	80	19 times
Number of HiPPS officials	26	229	7.8 times
Number of related people that are trained and developed	Less than 50	Less than 500	9 times

Source: Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 103.

In terms of efficiency in the selection process, the survey carried out by the OCSC reveals that 97 percent of respondents agree that the selection process should comprise 2-step selection: both the host agency and the OCSC. In addition, data show that only 52 government agencies (from total 126 agencies) are running the HiPPS. There are 73 positions that are holding the EAF. The average EAF/agency is 1.4 (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 106). Figure 2.5 present the number of officials that passed and could not pass the selection process. It can be seen that the entrance rate continuously increases from 21.88, 32.98 and 59.33 percent, respectively.

**Figure 2.5** Number of Government Officials in the HiPPS Selection Process

Source: Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 104.

The number of HiPPS participants are 229 officials from 52 public agencies. Table 2.11 presents details on both the number of officials and the name of agencies. This is the entire population of this research.

Table 2.11 Number of the HiPPS Participants

NO	PUBLIC AGENCIES	HIPPS				TOTAL
		<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	
1	Office of the Consumer Protection Broad			1		1
2	The Secretariat of the Cabinet		2	1		3
3	Office of the Royal Development Projects Broad			1		1
4	Bureau of the Budget			4	5	9
5	Office of the National Economic and Social Development Broad			7	1	8
6	Office of the Public Sector Development Commission			6	5	11
7	Office of the Civil Service Commission	3	5	3	4	15
8	Office of the Permanent Secretary of Finance Ministry			4		4
9	The Department of Comptroller General			2		2
10	The Department of Thai Custom			7	2	9
11	The Department of Treasury				6	6
12	The Department of Excise			1		1
13	Office of the State Enterprise Policy			3		3
14	Office of the Public Debt Management			2	2	4
15	Office of the Fiscal Policy	2	4	3		9
16	Office of the Permanent Secretary of Tourism and Sports Ministry			1		1

Table 2.11 (Continued)

NO	PUBLIC AGENCIES	HIPPS				TOTAL
		<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	
17	The Department of Social Development and Welfare			2		2
18	Office of the Permanent Secretary of Social Development and Human Security Ministry			4		4
19	Office of the Permanent Secretary of Agricultural and Cooperatives			3	2	5
20	The Department of Rice				2	2
21	The Department of Royal Irrigation			9	4	13
22	The Department of Fisheries			7		7
23	The Department of Land Development				5	5
24	The Department of Land Transport			4		4
25	The Department of Civil Aviation				3	3
26	Office of the Transport and Traffic Policy			1		1
27	The Department of Mineral Resources			2		2
28	The Department of Pollution Control				1	1
29	Office of the Natural Resources and Environment Policy and Planning			1		1
30	Office of the National Statistical of Thailand			2	2	4
31	Office of the Permanent Secretary of Energy Ministry	1	2			3
32	The Department of Mineral Fuels	1	1	2	1	5
33	The Department of Energy Business	1	3	1		5
34	The Department of Alternative Energy Development and Efficiency	1	1	4	1	7
35	Office of the Energy Policy and Planning		3	1	1	5

Table 2.11 (Continued)

NO	PUBLIC AGENCIES	HIPPS				TOTAL
		<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	
36	The Department of Science Service			7		7
37	The Department of Mental Health			4	2	6
38	Office of the Permanent Secretary of Interior Ministry				4	4
39	The Department of Provincial Administration			5		5
40	The Department of Lands			2		2
41	The Department of Intellectual Property			3		3
42	The Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning			1		1
43	The Department of Legal Execution				3	3
44	The Department of Collections			3		3
45	Office of the Permanent Secretary of Science and Technology Ministry			1	1	2
46	The Department of Science Service			3	3	6
47	Office of the Permanent Secretary of Education Ministry			3		3
48	Office of the Basic Education Commission			2		2
49	The Department of Diseases Control				6	6
50	Office of the Food and Drug Administration			3	3	6
51	The Department of Industrial Works				2	2
52	The Department of Primary Industries and Mines				2	2
	Total	9	21	126	73	229

Source: Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 131-133.

Considering HR practices in the HiPPS, it can be seen that both utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism are implemented. The analysis is done based on the assumption of each model. HR practices which concern utilitarian instrumentalism such as selection of the HiPPS, workforce planning, and so forth, are seen as the utilitarian instrumentalism HR practices. In contrast, those focuses on developmental humanism such as the IDP, job rotation, and recognition represent the developmental humanism model. Table 2.12 presents the analysis of HR practices in the HiPPS.

Table 2.12 Analyzing HR Practices in the HiPPS

HR PRACTICES	UTILITARIAN INSTRUMENTALISM	DEVELOPMENTAL HUMANISM
1. Recruitment and selection process	✓	
2. Flexible positioning based on performance	✓	
3. Workforce planning for future leadership	✓	
4. Competency-based management	✓	
5. Needs analysis for competency assessment	✓	
6. Performance agreement with KPI	✓	
7. Result oriented approach	✓	
8. Special promotion quota for salary increase	✓	
9. Performance appraisal	✓	

Table 2.12 (Continued)

HR PRACTICES	UTILITARIAN INSTRUMENTALISM	DEVELOPMENTAL HUMANISM
10. Individual career development plan		✓
11. Experience-Accumulated Framework: EAF		✓
12. Individual Development Plan: IDP		✓
13. Challenging assignments		✓
14. Coaching and mentoring		✓
15. Job rotation		✓
16. Government scholarship		✓
17. Network and connection building		✓
18. Recognition as high performers		✓

2.3 Talent Engagement

With change and restructuring inevitable in many organizations, one of the biggest challenges currently facing organizations is employee engagement. As well as the ongoing focus on recruiting new talent, a further challenge lies in ensuring that existing staff are focused, engaged, and thus retained (Pritchard, 2008: 15). Jack and Suzy Welch suggest:

“Employee engagement first. It goes without saying that no company, small or large, can win over the long run without energized employees who believe in the mission and understand how to achieve it” (Macey et al., 2009: 1).

The concept of engagement has naturally evolved from past research on high involvement, empowerment, job motivation, organization commitment and trust. And

obviously, all organizations want their employees to be engaged in their work (Bernthal, 2010: 1). Following are details of employee engagement:

2.3.1 Definitions of Employee Engagement

Robinson et al. (2004 quoted in Saks, 2006: 601) state that employee engagement has been defined in many different ways and that the definitions and measures often sound like other better-known and established constructs, like organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. In some circumstances, engagement is seen as similar to the old fashioned word motivation (Schiemann, 2009: 154).

In the study of Abidej Niriangramaya and Wanida Thammathaworn (2005: 8), engagement has a similar meaning to commitment and they refer to the same thing in this study. Strellioff (2003 quoted in Salwana Hasanee, 2007: 8) explains that engagement and commitment are the same thing. By collecting a number of engagement and commitment definitions, Salwana Hasanee (2007: 11) concludes that these two words are not different and that they can replace each other.

In contrast, Macey et al. (2009: 36) suggest that engagement should be distinguished from organizational commitment. One critical distinction is that commitment has many facets that reflect passive rather than active attachment, and commitment connotes attachment to the organization but not the enthusiasm, urgency, and intensity we feel that characterizes the feeling associated with engagement. However, the latter view is more elaborated on by a number of scholars.

Engagement from Schiemann's point of view goes beyond employee satisfaction with or commitment to one's job or organization. It includes the level of advocacy on the part of employees for their organizations as great places to work, purchase from, and even invest in. The definition of engagement from this point of view is comprised of three criteria:

- 1) It would capture both positive feelings about the organization as well as a level of energy or excitement that leads employees to exert more effort or go beyond the basic job requirement. It would not, however, include basic personality traits that may make some people more engagement-prone than others.

2) It would be predictive of important employee behaviors, such things as discretionary behaviors that go above and beyond the minimum, leading to higher performance or adaptive behaviors such as creative problem-solving and decision-making that would affect organizational results such as productivity, customer loyalty, or profitability.

3) It can be influenced by actions that organizations and supervisors, in particular, can take.

In this view, engagement is defined as the level of that special energy or advocacy and typically operationalizes an engagement index as a combination of satisfaction, commitment, and advocacy (Schiemann, 2009: 155). Figure 2.6 provides the details as explained.

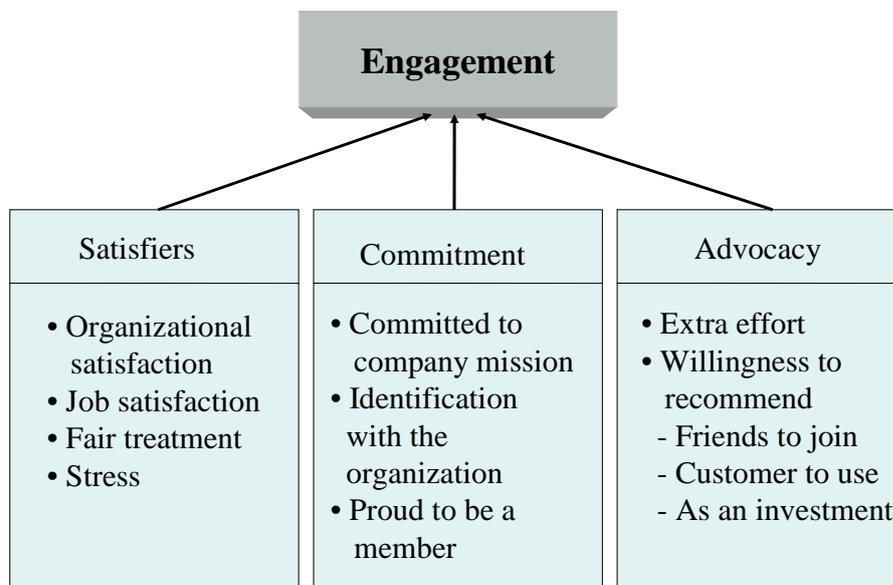


Figure 2.6 Components of Engagement and Examples of Each

Source: Schiemann, 2009: 155.

These three components can be viewed as an engagement pyramid, as in Figure 2.7. Schiemann (2009: 157-158) explains how the pyramid reflects the level of engagement in the following:

“...Employees increase their overall level of engagement by first being satisfied with their job and organization, then being committed to their work, supervisor, and organization, and finally, they reach a level of high engagement, in which they are energized and ready to advocate on behalf of their unit or organization. Below certain levels of job security or respectful treatment, no amount of job enrichment or growth opportunities, or even a cool brand, will create organizational advocates or those willing to put in discretionary effort. When people are satisfied with basics and have developed commitment, the advocacy drivers tend to be the ones that create a buzz or energy in an organization that observers can tangibly feel.”



Figure 2.7 Engagement Pyramid

Source: Schiemann, 2009: 157.

Macey et al. (2009: 7) define employee engagement as an individual's sense of purpose and focus energy, evident to others in the display of personal initiative, adaptability, effort, and persistence directed toward organizational goals.

Rothbard (2001 quoted in Saks, 2006: 601) also defines engagement as psychological presence but goes further to state that it involves two critical components: attention and absorption. Attention refers to “cognitive availability and

the amount of time one spends thinking about a role,” while absorption “means being engrossed in a role and refers to the intensity of one’s focus on a role.”

Schaufeli et al. (2002 quoted in Saks, 2006: 601) claim that engagement is “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption.” They further state that engagement is not a momentary and specific state, but rather, it is “a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior.”

Pritchard (2008: 16) proposes that employee engagement can be usefully defined in terms of “say, stay, strive,” which are detailed as follows:

Say: This is a measure of how likely an employee is to be an advocate of the organization. Would they recommend working there to a friend? Would they sing your praises as an employer?

Stay: Commitment is a key, so it is vital to measure your employee’s loyalty to the business. Do they plan to remain in the company? How long do they envisage working there for?

Strive: Are your employees more than just satisfied with doing their work well? This area measures whether employees would be prepared to go “over and above” the call of duty to ensure organizational success.”

Macey et al. (2009: 10) propose four principles of creating an engaged workforce. These high performance work practices address four key factors, each of which relates to what is considered a fundamental principle of engagement. Specifically, engagement follows when:

- 1) Employees have the capacity to engage
- 2) Employees have a reason or the motivation to engage
- 3) Employees have the freedom to engage, and
- 4) Employees know to engage

Kahn (1990 quoted in Saks, 2006: 601) defines personal engagement as “the harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally

during role performances.” Personal disengagement refers to “the uncoupling of selves from work roles; in disengagement, people withdraw and defend themselves physically, cognitively, or emotionally during role performances.” Thus, according to Kahn (1990 quoted in Saks, 2006: 601), engagement means to be psychologically present when occupying and performing an organizational role.

From the above engagement definitions, it can be seen that many of them refer to personal psychology. However, this study is more attracted by Kahn’s definition, which is based on the social exchange theory, which Kahn (1990 quoted in Saks, 2006: 603) explains as follows:

“... employees feel obliged to bring themselves more deeply into their role performances as repayment for the resources they receive from their organization. When the organization fails to provide these resources, individuals are more likely to withdraw and disengage themselves from their roles. Thus, the amount of cognitive, emotional, and physical resources that an individual is prepared to devote in the performance of one’s work roles is contingent on the economic and socioemotional resources received from the organization.”

This study then employs two types of employee engagement, job and organizational engagements, which follow from the conceptualization of engagement as role related (Kahn, 1990; Rothbard, 2001 quoted in Saks, 2006: 603); that is, it reflects the extent to which an individual is psychologically present in a particular organizational role. The two most dominant roles for most organizational members are their work role and their role as a member of an organization. Therefore, the model explicitly acknowledges this by including both job and organizational engagements. This also follows from the notion that people have multiple roles and as suggested by Rothbard (2001 quoted in Saks, 2006: 603-204), as well as May et al. (2004 quoted in Saks, 2006: 603-204), research should examine engagement in multiple roles within organizations.

2.3.2 Contributions of Employee Engagement

The experience of engagement has been described as a fulfilling, positive work-related experience and state of mind (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Sonnentag, 2003 quoted in Saks, 2006: 607) and has been found to be related to good health and positive work affect (Sonnentag, 2003 quoted in Saks, 2006: 607). These positive experiences and emotions are likely to result in positive work outcomes. As noted by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004 quoted in Saks, 2006: 607), engaged employees likely have a greater attachment to their organization and a lower tendency to leave it. What an engaged workforce looks like is described by Macey et al. (2009: 6-7) as follows:

1) Employees will think and work proactively. Engaged employees anticipate opportunities to take action and actually do take action in ways that are aligned with organizational goals.

2) They will expand their own thinking about what is necessary as job demand shifts and expands their roles to match these new demands. Engaged employees are not tied to a job description. Rather, they are focused on the goals they are trying to achieve and that are consistent with the success of the organization.

3) Employees actively find ways to expand their own skills in a way that is consistent with what is important to their roles and organizational mission. Engaged employees take ownership for their personal development, not just for their own sake but so that they can contribute more effectively. Employees see their own self-interest in skill development as consistent with what is good for the organization but do more than think about this—they do it. So, this self-development behavior is not seen as a matter of ultimate self-sacrifice but as what makes sense in a relationship between employee and employer; engagement is not just about what one can do but what one can give.

4) Employees persist—even when confronted with obstacles. Engagement matters most when things are not easy to do, are not going according to plan, and/or when situations are ambiguous and call for a matter of trust on both sides.

5) They will adapt to change. A key characteristic of an engaged workforce is employees who adapt when circumstances require it. This can take shape in different forms, but the key is that they respond to the uncertainty that is inherent in

a changing business environment and they actively embrace change, indeed sometimes proactively suggest change.

From those prominent characteristics of the engaged employee, scholars have claimed that employee engagement predicts employee outcomes, organizational success, and financial performance (Bates, 2004; Baumruk, 2004; Harter et al., 2002; Richman, 2006 quoted in Saks, 2006: 600).

Moreover, engaged employees can provide a competitive advantage to organizations, as explained by the resource-based view (RBV) of the firm. The RBV points out that organizations can develop sustained competitive advantage only by creating value in a way that is rare and difficult for competitors to imitate. These engaged employees fall into those criteria and become strong organizational assets for sustained competitive advantage (Joo and Melean, 2006 quoted in Bhatnagar, 2007: 645).

Macey et al. (2009: 2-3) illustrate the superior financial performance from an engaged workforce as shown in Figure 2.8, which presents evidence from their research based on 65 firms across diverse industries, revealing that engaged employees demonstrate superior financial performance in terms of Return on Asset (ROA), profitability, and shareholders.

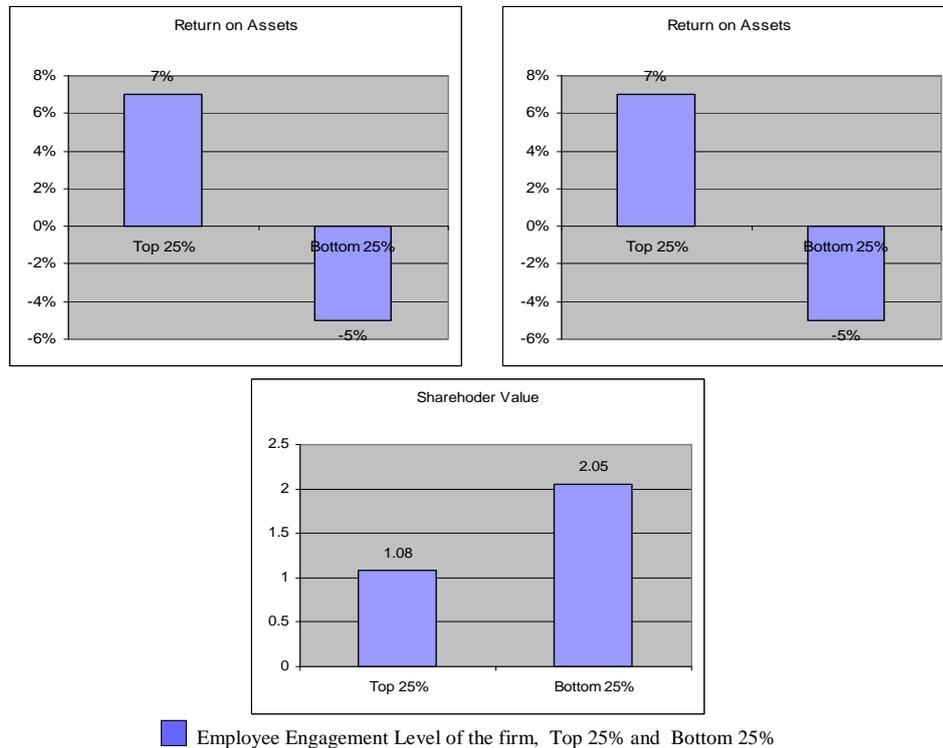


Figure 2.8 Engagement and Financial Performance

Source: Macey, Schneider, Barbera and Young, 2009: 3.

Supported by the statistical data from various cases, Schiemann (2009: 152-153) presents the importance and impact of engagement on important business and personal outcomes in the following.

1) A 2007 study across 40 global companies by Tower Perrin found that firms with the highest percentage of engaged employees not only had higher retention of their most valued employees, but also collectively increased operating income 19 percent and earned per share 28 percent year to year. By contrast, the companies with the lowest percentage of engaged employees showed year to year declines of 33 percent in operating income and 11 percent in earning per share.

2) Using engagement survey items that measure commitment and work effort, Caterpillar, the construction-equipment manufacturer, discovered that performance related to these items in one of its European plants led to nearly \$9 million in annual savings from reduced turnover, absenteeism, and overtime. It also

found that in an Asia pacific plant these same items led to 70 percent increase in output in less than four months. Furthermore, Caterpillar reduced grievances by 80 percent in a unionized plant and reported higher customer satisfaction and operating results at other locations, all related to high scores on engagement items.

3) Intuit, the software powerhouse—using engagement survey items such as being proud to work for the company and motivated to go above and beyond what is expected—found that higher-engaged employees are 1.3 times more likely to be high performers than less-engaged employees, and they are 5 times less likely to voluntarily leave the organization.

4) The Molson Brewing Company found interesting correlations between engagement and safety and accidents, reporting that highly-engaged employees were five times less likely to have a safety incident or lost-time accident. Molson reported saving over \$1.7 million in safety-related costs in 2002 because of stepped-up engagement efforts. Molson also reported large differences in sales performance between high- and low-engaged sales personnel.

Providing reasons why engaged employees create such superior performance, Macey et al. (2009: 8-9) explain their concept of engagement with both antecedents and consequences as an “employee engagement value chain.” In figure 2.9, it can be seen that the antecedents in the work environment are those that facilitate, permit, and allow employees to be engaged. Engagement has two important facets, one psychological and the other behavioral. The psychological has all to do with the way people feel focused, intense, enthusiastic, and the behavioral has all to do with what they do: they are persistent, adaptable, and proactive (Macey et al., 2009: 8-9).

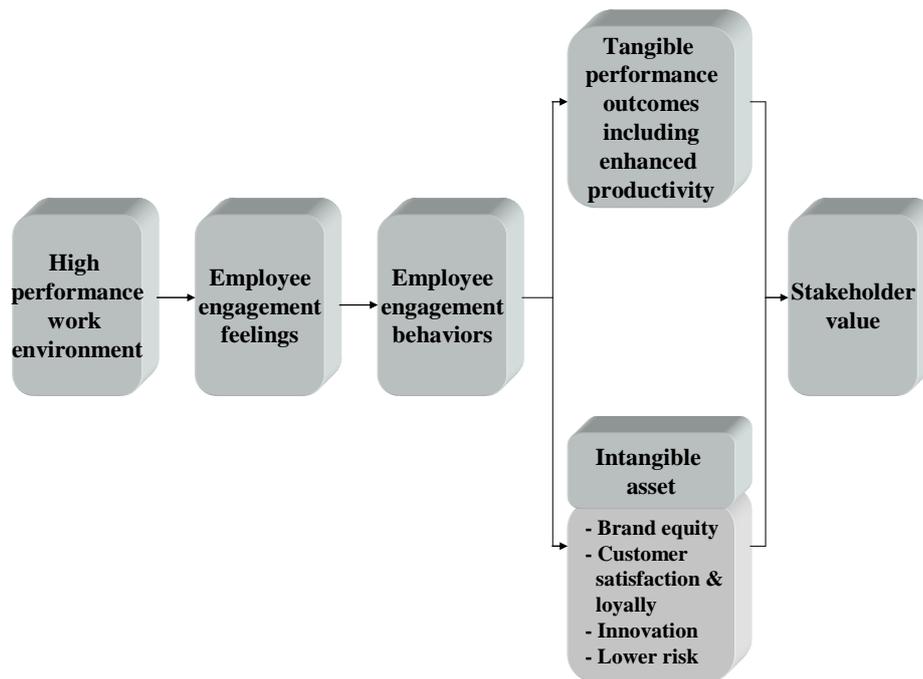


Figure 2.9 Employee Engagement Value Chain

Source: Macey, Schneider, Barbera and Young, 2009: 8.

Engagement provides the bases for creating tangible outcomes such as enhances performance, and a set of intangible assets including customer loyalty, intellectual capital, and brand image. Also, engagement serves to lower the risk profile of the organization. This happens because employees are more dedicated to creating value for the company, more consistent in their interactions with customers and other stakeholders, and less likely to leave organization. All these in turn impact cash flow and ultimately shareholder value (Macey et al., 2009: 8-9).

The benefits of engaged employees were also revealed at the SHRM Conference in 2006, where the results of a new global employee engagement study were revealed, showing a dramatic difference in bottom-line results in organizations with highly-engaged employees when compared to organizations whose employees had low scores. The study, gathered from surveys of over 664,000 employees from around the world, analyzed three traditional financial performance measures over a 12 month period, including operating income, net income, and earning per share (EPS). Most dramatic among its findings was the almost 52 percent gap in the one year

performance improvement in operating income between organizations with highly-engaged employees versus organizations whose employees had a low engagement score (Bhatnagar, 2007: 645).

On the other hand, low engagement affects organization in many ways. It has been reported that employee engagement is on the decline and that there is a deepening disengagement among employees today (Bates, 2004; Richman, 2006 quoted in Saks, 2006: 600).

Gallup's engagement ratio reveals the proportion of engaged to actively-disengaged employees; in average organizations, the ratio of engaged to actively-disengaged employees is 1.5:1, while in world-class organizations, the ratio of engaged to actively-disengaged employees is near 8:1. Actively-disengaged employees erode an organization's bottom line while breaking the spirits of colleagues in the process. Within the U.S. workforce, Gallup estimates this cost to be more than \$300 billion in lost productivity alone. In stark contrast, world-class organizations with an engagement ratio near 8:1 have built a sustainable model using Gallup's approach. As organizations move toward this benchmark, they greatly reduce the negative impact of actively-disengaged employees while unleashing the organization's potential for rapid growth (Gallup, 2010a: Paragraph 4).

Disengagement has also a big impact on the economy. Gallup estimates that the lower productivity of actively-disengaged workers costs the Thai economy as much as 98.8 billion Thai Baht (\$2.5 billion U.S.) each year (Gallup, 2005: Paragraph 4). A similar Gallup study in Singapore found that a percentage of Singaporeans are actively disengaged from their work, costing Singapore \$4.9 billion U.S. (193 billion Thai Baht) annually (Gallup, 2005: Paragraph 5). Figure 2.10 shows the engagement index by country.

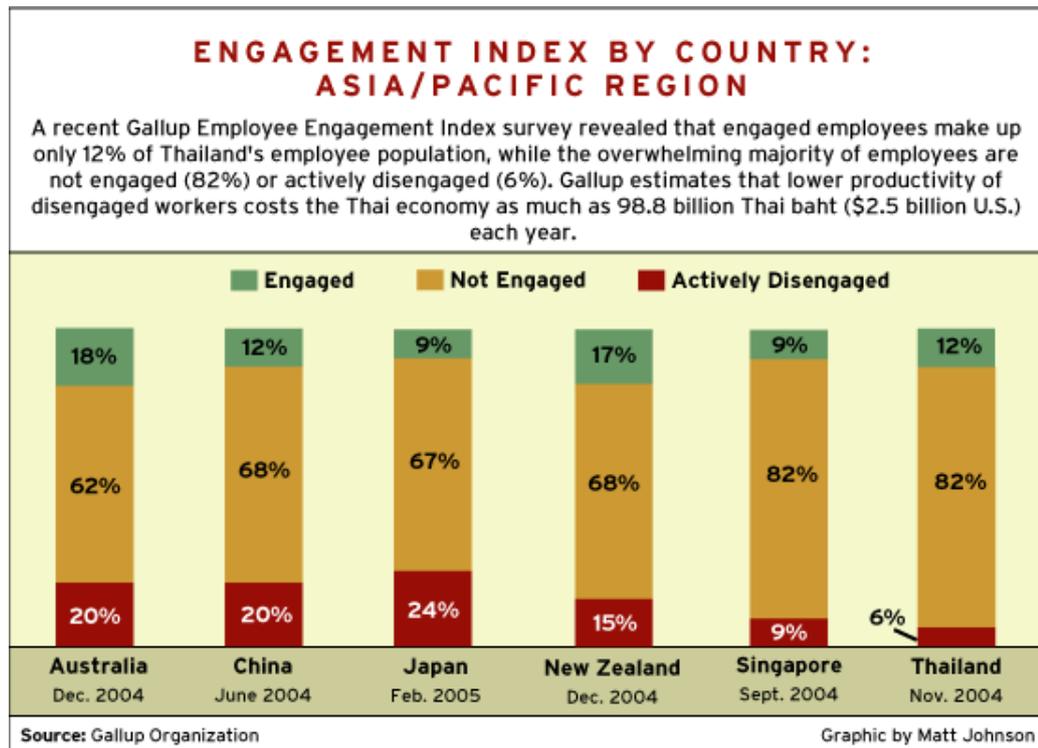


Figure 2.10 Engagement Index by Country: Asia/Pacific Region

Source: Gallup, 2005: Paragraph 6.

It can be seen that the percentage of engaged-employees are ranges from 29 percent in the U.S. to 9 percent in Japan and Singapore; the percentage of actively-disengaged employees ranges from a low of just 6 percent in Thailand to a high of 31 percent in France. Only Singapore, however, matches Thailand's level of not-engaged employees (also 82 percent); these levels are 15 percentage points higher than in Japan, where the percentage of not-engaged employees is 67 percent (Gallup, 2005: Paragraph 6).

Similar findings are also found in Australia; Tarrant (2005: 1) reports that 20 percent of employees are actively disengaged at work with an estimated cost to the economy of \$ 31.5 billion per year. In contrast, only 18 percent of Australian workers are engaged at work, while 62 percent are in “the bland no man’s land” of being just “not engaged.” Also in Germany, a study published by Gallup reveals that only 13 percent of the German workforce is committed to the job, and 20 percent is actively

disengaged (Gallup, 2010b: paragraph 1). To conclude, all mentioned countries' employees are not engaged rather than engaged, including Thailand.

The causes of disengagement are various. Eckersley (2005 quoted in Tarrant, 2005: 2-3) reveals that the common drivers of disengagement in organizations include the quality of working relationships, the ways in which they are rewarded and recognized, and the organizational structure, for e.g. empowerment and accountability, and work-life balance.

Tarrant (2005: 3) claims that there are two essential factors affecting employee engagement, as discussed in the following:

“Recognising the need of individuals within the broader workplace context is the popular theme among those grappling with the engagement/disengagement conundrum. Within this are two essentials: the need for employees to have a voice in the organisation; and the need to be promoted on merit, rather than skills or experience. Training managers to identify and meet those need is crucial.”

According to the concept of people equity, Schiemann (2009: 37) presents the impact of the low level of three key elements of people equity: alignment, capabilities, and engagement, as shown in Table 2.13. From this it can be summarized that alignment often predicts goal attainment, productivity, and financial performance most directly. Capabilities often have the strongest connection to customer outcomes, while engagement is typically the strongest predictor of employee turnover and discretionary effort at work (Schiemann, 2009: 37).

Table 2.13 The Business Impact of Low Alignment, Capabilities, and Engagement

LOW ALIGNMENT	LOW CAPABILITIES	LOW ENGAGEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confusing brand promise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unable to meet customer requirement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low external or internal customer satisfaction due to disengaged workers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Many urgent but not important activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High rework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low productivity due to mediocre energy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Non-competitive costs due to misdirected energy, talent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High warranty or guarantee claims because of product deficiencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Top talent loss when market conditions permit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Burnout or talent loss-working hard, but not smart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overstaffing to meet standards or customer requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deadwood: unmarketable employees retire in place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overstaffing, to compensate for time lost on low-value activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low customer relationship scores, lower customer retention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low referrals of new talent from existing workforce
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low teamwork, high conflict across interdependent units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employee/supervisory burnout, turnover because of performance shortfalls with customer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cynical or apathetic culture

Source: Schiemann (2009: 37).

2.3.3 Measuring Employee Engagement

In order to measure employee engagement, organizations need to ask for employee opinions and feedback in multiple ways. Standardized engagement metrics can be derived from employee opinion surveys. These can be used in conjunction with formal and informal meetings, employee focus groups, and manager/supervisor

interviews, along with performance measure to continually assess progress toward employee engagement (CUNA HR/TD Council, 2005: paragraph 3).

Among various assessment tools, the one that is best known is the assessing through engagement survey. A number of surveys have been proposed. In this part of the present study, samples of the engagement survey are illustrated. Schiemann (2009: 158-159) proposes a quick engagement check, as presented in Table 2.14.

Table 2.14 Quick Engagement Check

SAMPLE ENGAGEMENT ITEMS	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
I am satisfied with this company as a place to work.	1	2	3	4	5
In my work unit, you can feel high energy and excitement.	1	2	3	4	5
I would recommend this organization to a close friend or colleague as a place to work.	1	2	3	4	5
I am treated with respect and dignity.	1	2	3	4	5
My immediate manager inspires the best in people.	1	2	3	4	5
In the past three months, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.	1	2	3	4	5
Total Engagement Score (add up your score for all six questions)					

Source: Schiemann (2009: 159).

Another famous engagement survey is the Q12 by the Gallup, a 12-question survey that identifies strong feelings of employee engagement. After 80,000 in-depth interviews with managers in over 400 companies, the Gallup Organization says that measuring the strength of a workplace can be simplified to the following questions (Gallup' 12 questions: paragraph 1). Table 2.15 presents details on the 12 questions.

Table 2.15 Gallup 12 Questions to Measure Employee Engagement

GALLUP 12 QUESTIONS TO MEASURE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
Do you know what is expected of you at work?
Do you have the materials and equipment you need to do your work right?
At work, do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?
In the last seven days, have you received recognition or praise for doing good work?
Does your supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about you as a person?
Is there someone at work who encourages your development?
At work, do your opinions seem to count?
Does the mission/purpose of your company make you feel your job is important?
Are your associates (fellow employees) committed to doing quality work?
Do you have a best friend at work?
In the last six months, has someone at work talked to you about your progress?
In the last year, have you had opportunities at work to learn and grow?

Source: Workforce Management, 2010: paragraph 2

The results from the survey show a strong correlation between high scores and superior job performance (Workforce Management, 2010: paragraph 2). Alternatively, organizations might create their own engagement survey. Creating a survey to measure engagement and the work environment conditions that support it requires organizations to think differently and break from past survey traditions that measure employee satisfaction or even commitment. There are important practical implications of focusing on what drives engagement as opposed to what drives satisfaction (Macey et al., 2009: 89). Table 2.16 illustrates sample survey items to measure engagement.

Table 2.16 Sample Survey Items to Measure Engagement

ENGAGEMENT ITEMS	EXAMPLES OF SURVEY QUESTION
Items that measure engagement feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I feel confident that I can meet my goals. ▪ I am excited about how my work matters to our team and the company. ▪ Time goes by very quickly when I am at work. ▪ I find it is very easy to stay focused on what is most important to accomplish at work.
Items that measure engagement behaviors (generic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The people in my work group fix little problems before they become major issues. ▪ The people here look for ways to improve the way we work. ▪ The norm here is to stay with a problem until you get it solved. ▪ The people here take on new responsibilities as the need arises.
Items that measure strategic engagement behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The people I work with maintain their focus on coming up with new products and services even when they encounter potential distractions. ▪ The people I work with maintain their focus on proposing new ways to reduce cost and to be more efficient even when they encounter potential distractions.

Table 2.16 (Continued)

ENGAGEMENT ITEMS	EXAMPLES OF SURVEY QUESTION
Items that focus on the connection between work and strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is a clear link between what I do and organizational objectives. ▪ I have a good idea of what my company is trying to accomplish.
Items that focus on creating the employee capacity to engage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I have been adequately trained to do my job. ▪ My supervisor helps me to develop confidence in my own ability to do my job well. ▪ My supervisor sets challenging but achievable goals.

Source: Macey, Schneider, Barbera and Young, 2009: 102.

Another engagement survey is found in the study of Saks (2006: 617); he employs short and clear questions on job and organization engagement. The survey is shown in Table 2.17.

Table 2.17 Job and Organizational Engagement Survey in Saks' Study

JOB ENGAGEMENT
I really "throw" myself into my job.
Sometimes I am so into my job that I lose track of time.
This job is all consuming; I am totally into it.
My mind is often wanders and I think of other things when doing my jobs. (R)
I am highly engaged in this job.

Table 2.17 (Continued)

ORGANIZATIONAL ENGAGEMENT
Being a member of this organization is very captivating.
One of the most exciting things for me is getting involved with things happening in this organization.
I am really not into the “goings-on” in this organization. (R)
Being a member of this organization make me come “alive.”
Being a member of this organization is exhilarating for me.
I am highly engaged in this organization.

Source: Saks (2006: 617).

It can be seen that engagement provides various organizational benefits, but it can occur through the efforts of individual employees, which makes employee retention a critical issue for employers. A number a research studies have shown employee engagement to be positively associated with intent to remain with one’s organization (Hackman and Oldham, 1980; Harter et al., 2002; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004 quoted in John and Harter, 2005: 79). Jones and Harter (2005: 79) support this idea and state the following:

“With respect to employee turnover, the positive association between job satisfaction and intent to remain with one’s organization has long been established in the literature (e.g. Koch and Steers, 1978; Mobley, 1977; Price, 1977), so it is not surprising that employee engagement would also be positively related with intent to stay.”

In contrast, as mentioned before, actively-disengaged employees are less productive, less profitable, less loyal, less likely to provide excellent customer service, and are often disruptive on the job. They can be an all-pervading destructive force. Unhappy with their work situation, these employees insist on sharing their

misery with colleagues, often showing their negative attitudes. Obvious signs of disengagement are resignation, absenteeism, and loud dissent (Tarrant, 2005:1-2). Similar findings are illustrated in Rendall (2010: 4); high turnover, tardiness, absenteeism, low morale, low productivities, conflict, and miscommunication are the contributions of disengagement.

2.3.4 Integration of Talent Management and Employee Engagement

In order to make talented employees engage in organizations, talent management is usually employed. Bhatnagar (2007: 645) claims that practices that support talent management also support employee engagement. The following is what he concludes.

“Effective talent management policies and practices demonstrate commitment of human capital, resulting in more engaged employees and lower turnover. Consequently, employee engagement has a substantial impact on employee productivity and talent retention.”

From Bhatnagar’s point of view and based on all of the literature discussed above, it can be concluded that both talented employees and employee engagement are crucial factors in any kind of organization. They both concern the soft side of HR practices. They also facilitate competitive advantages and other positive contributions to organizations. So, it is suggested to integrate them as talent engagement.

Even though term “talent engagement” is rarely mentioned, The Employer’s Association has defined it as “the broadest of all HR-based recruiting strategies. It attempts to integrate the traditionally independent HR functions like recruiting, retention, employment branding, internal redeployment, workforce planning, diversity, etc. into one coordinated function in order to increase its impact” (The Employer’s Association, 2010: paragraph 2).

The Human Capital Institute (2010: paragraph 13) has stated that talent engagement represents the extent to which the workforce identifies with the company, is committed to it, and provides discretionary effort so that it can be successful.

Engagement is a key leading indicator of high performance workplaces, improved employee productivity, and subsequent turnover.

Some scholars define talent engagement as a process of identifying talented people and coaching them the future leadership opportunities within an organization (Microsoft, 2006 quoted in Naples, 2006: 5). Talent engagement involves coaching, feedback, mentoring, and developing priority for an individual's development. Senior-level leaders must embrace a mindset that establishes a gold standard for talent development in an organization as it changes and grows (Falmholtz and Randel, 2000; Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod, 2001 quoted in Naples, 2006: 6). Similarly, this study employs the term "talent engagement" as a managing approach which encourages talented employees to engage in their organization and job.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

In this part of the study, the conceptual framework is designed based on the findings of previous research and the literature review. Figure 2.11 shows the conceptual framework of this study. Details of variables in this study are as follows.

2.4.1 Talent Retention

Since talent retention is a core issue in this study, it is designed to focus on the flip-side of talent retention. Turnover and absenteeism intentions are determined as the dependent variables.

2.4.2 Determinant Factors of Talent Retention

2.4.2.1 HR Practices

Testing the relationship between HR practices and talent retention is addressed. This part aims at testing whether utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism relate to talent retention. The two models of HR practices are categorized based on analyzing HR practices in civil service, as seen in Table 2.12.

2.4.2.2 Talent Engagement

Talent engagement is employed as a mediating variable. As stated in the literature review, it is categorized into two types: engagement in the organization and engagement in the job.

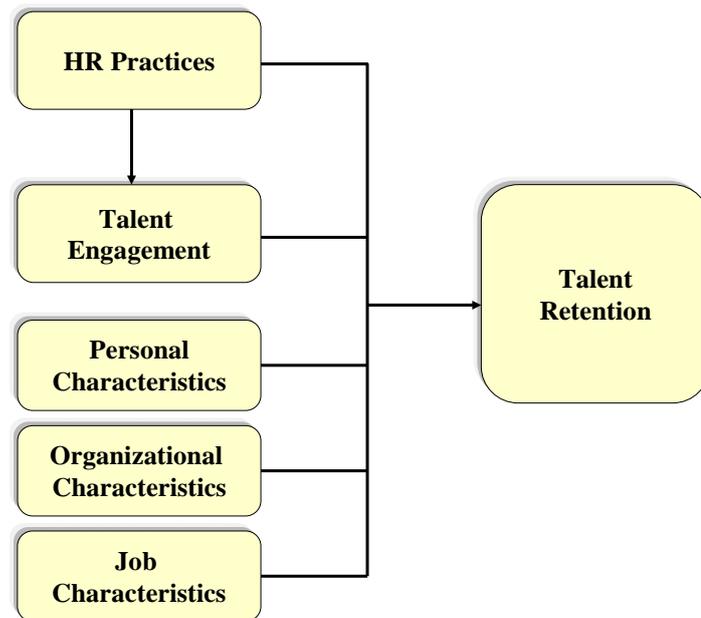


Figure 2.11 Conceptual Framework

In addition, testing of the relationship between personal characteristics and talent retention is addressed in order to investigate whether they influence talent retention in the public sector. To make this study more fruitful, organizational and job characteristics are determined as another independent variable. Organizational characteristics are defined by considering the Ministry where HiPPS members are working. Similarly, job characteristics are categorized by their job families.

2.5 Hypotheses

According to the conceptual framework and the literature review, the following are the tested hypotheses.

H1: HR practices are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

H2: Talent engagement is more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

H3: HR practices are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent engagement.

H4: Talent engagement is more likely to mediate the relationship between HR practices and talent retention.

H5: Personal factors are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

H6: Organizational characteristics are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

H7: Job characteristics are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

2.6 Summary

This chapter reviews the literature relevant to talent retention. The first part presents the definitions of talented people in organizations and explains why they are the source of organizational competitive advantage. Because of their immense contributions, a war for talent has emerged. HR practices, which are introduced in terms of talent management, have also emerged. Another core issue is employee engagement. Engagement definitions and the benefits from employee engagement are provided, including the assessment of employee engagement. Since both talented people and employee engagement are crucial factors for organizations, talent engagement is proposed as an approach to helping talented people engage in their organizations and in their jobs.

According to the concept of talent management, a number of HR practices are introduced. In this part of the study, the utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism of HR models are categorized. The prominent characteristics of these two models can be simply considered from their focus point. Utilitarian instrumentalism focuses on the “resource,” side while developmental humanism focuses on the “human” arena. Therefore, HR practices in the HiPPS are analyzed based on these concepts.

The conceptual framework of this study was designed based on the findings of previous research and the literature reviewed. The dependent variable in this study is talent retention. HR practices and talent engagement are core determinants to be tested. Talent engagement is also assumed to be the mediator between the relationship between HR practices and talent retention. In addition, the testing of the relationships between personal characteristics and talent retention is addressed in order to investigate whether they influence officials in terms of their retention in the public sector. In order to make this study more fruitful, organizational and job characteristics are also determined as another independent variable in this study. This chapter ends with a discussion of the hypotheses to be tested.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter details the methodology utilized to research the determinants of talent retention. It begins with the explanation of the mixed methods and then divides the methodology into two main parts: the quantitative and qualitative procedures.

This study is primarily a survey research, relying mainly on the collection and analysis of primary data collected through questionnaires. The quantitative method is employed to examine the major factors influencing talent retention in the Thai public sector. In order to gain breadth and depth of understanding of the determinants of talent retention, the qualitative method was then used to confirm those research results. This part of the study was carried out by in-depth interviewing individuals that were in the HiPPS. Finally, a parallel mixed data analysis was employed as a strategy for analyzing the two sets of findings.

3. 1 The Mixed Methods Design

The mixed methods design is employed in this study. This method focuses on collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study. In this methodology, the researcher can expand an understanding from one method to another. Alternatively, they may converge or confirm findings from different data sources (Creswell, 2003: 210). Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009: 33) also claim that there appear to be three areas where the mixed methods research is superior to the single approach designs. First, it can simultaneously address a range of confirmatory and exploratory questions with both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Secondly, it provides better (stronger) inferences. Lastly, it provides the opportunity for a greater assortment of divergent views.

In research design, the mixed methods combine elements of both quantitative and qualitative orientations and require creativity and flexibility in their construction. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004 quoted in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009: 138) describe the characteristics of the mixed method:

“A tenet of mixed methods research is that researchers should mindfully create designs that effectively answer their research questions; this stands in contrast to the common approach in traditional quantitative research where students are given a menu of designs from which to select. It also stands in stark to the approach where one completely follows either the qualitative paradigm or the quantitative paradigm.”

This research is then designed to employ this method because there is limited empirical research in this area of study; thus intensive exploration and findings confirmation are strongly required.

In the quantitative section of this study, it is employed to fulfill the research objectives by testing the proposed hypotheses, which are:

H1: HR practices are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

H2: Talent engagement is more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

H3: HR practices are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent engagement.

H4: Talent engagement is more likely to mediate the relationship between HR practices and talent retention.

H5: Personal factors are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

H6: Organizational characteristics are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

H7: Job characteristics are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

On the other hand, qualitative data analysis was also employed in this study. Since it is predominantly inductive in nature, it involves arguing from particular facts or data to general themes or conclusions. A key feature of analytic induction is negative case analysis, which involves searching for cases that do not fit the expected or established pattern in the qualitative data so the one can expand or adapt the emerging hypothesized relationships (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009: 251). Therefore, confirmation of the model was utilized in the qualitative section by employing the in-depth interviewing method with individuals in the HiPPS. Details of the research design are illustrated in Figure 3.1.

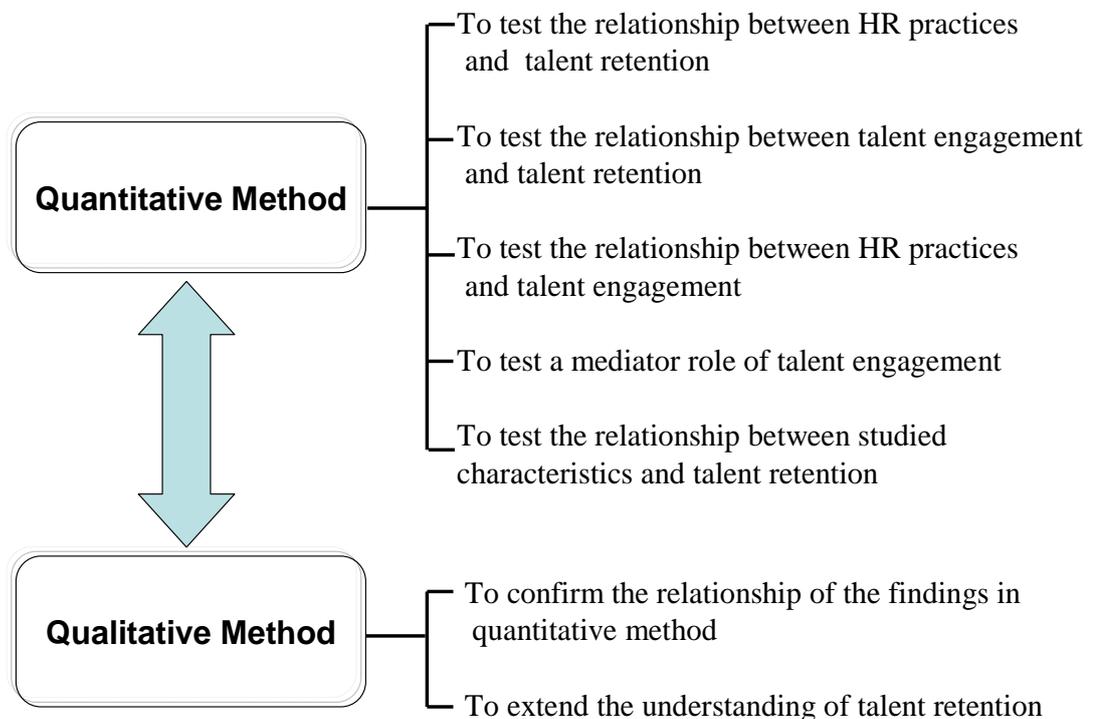


Figure 3.1 The Research Design: the Mixed Methods Approach

According to Creswell (2003: 211), the implementation of the mixed methods is “either that the researchers collect both the quantitative and qualitative data in phase (sequentially) or that they gather it at the same time (concurrently).” In this study, both qualitative and quantitative approaches are employed at the same time because it is not necessary to set the leading or lagging phase. Data from both methods are finally analyzed and concluded together.

3.2 Quantitative Approach

According to Edgar and Geare (2005: 536), if the developmental humanism model of HRM has validity, then there should be a clear relationship between the experience of developmental humanism practices and positive employee attitudes (reflecting that their needs are being met) and increasing employee commitment, as well as improved productivity. Consequently, it is expected that there should be a positive relationship between developmental humanism practices and talent retention in this study. Unit of analysis, the operational definition, population and sampling, measurement, and data collection and data analysis are described as follows.

3.2.1 The Unit of Analysis

This study focuses on the individual level by aiming at the analysis of the factors affecting talent retention in the public sector. Therefore, assessing the level of retention of talented civil servants in the HiPPS is focused on.

From 2003 to 2009, 52 from 126 of government agencies participated the HiPPS project. In total 229 government officials were included in the process. Eleven of them, however, resigned or transferred from their agencies (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 103,106,133). Therefore, the total number of HiPPS members in this study was 218. This study defined these officials as talented people in the bureaucratic system. Therefore, investigating their engagement, both in the job and the organization, was the unit of analysis.

3.2.2 Operational Definitions

The operational definitions of each variable are illustrated in table 3.1. Talent retention as the dependent variable, while the determinants of talent retention were HR practices, talent engagement, and other characteristics of the respondents. It should be noted that talent engagement was also seen as the mediator in this research.

Table 3.1 Operational Definitions

VARIABLE	DEFINITION	MEASUREMENT
<u>Dependent:</u>		
Talent Retention	Opinion toward intention to remain in the public sector	Ordinal
<u>Independent:</u>		
HR Practices	Approach of HR in managing people in organization <i>Type of HR practices</i> - Utilitarian instrumentalism - Developmental humanism	Ordinal
<u>Mediator:</u>		
Talent Engagement	The harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles <i>Type of engagement</i> - Organizational engagement - Job engagement	Ordinal

Table 3.1 (Continued)

VARIABLE	DEFINITION	MEASUREMENT
<u>Independent:</u>		
Personal characteristics	The personal characteristics of the HiPPS members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender - Age - Educational background - Years of working in the public sector 	Category
Organizational Characteristics	Group of ministries in the Thai public sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Central government agencies - Economic ministries - Social and development ministries - Public governance ministries 	Category
Job Characteristics	Job family of HiPPS members	Category

3.2.2.1 Talent Retention

As discussed in chapter 2, there is a need for keeping high performers in the public sector. Retention of government officials in the HiPPS is expected. The opinion of HiPPS members regarding intention to remain in the public sector until retirement is therefore the core aspect of the study. And because retention is the flip-side of turnover, the reverse dimension of retention is also tested.

3.2.2.2 HR Practices

HR practices, with two models, are determined as the antecedent variable. According to the analysis of HR practices in Table 2.12, the HR practices of both utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism are employed as independent variables. A summary of HR practices is provided in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 List of HR Practices

UTILITARIAN INSTRUMENTALISM	DEVELOPMENTAL HUMANISM
1. Recruitment and selection process	10. Individual career development plan
2. Flexible positioning based on performance	11. Experience Accumulated Framework: EAF
3. Workforce planning for future leadership	12. Individual Development Plan: IDP
4. Competency-based management	13. Challenging assignments
5. Need analysis for competency assessment	14. Coaching and mentoring
6. Performance agreement with KPI	15. Job Rotation
7. Result oriented approach	16. Government scholarships
8. Special promotion quota for salary increase	17. Network and connection building
9. Performance appraisal	18. Recognized as high performers

3.2.2.3 Talent Engagement

Since talent engagement is defined as the factor that mediates the relationship of HR practices and talent retention, it is then tested as the mediator variable. Talent engagement in this study is categorized in two ways: engagement to the organization and engagement to the job.

3.2.2.3 Other Characteristics

As indicated in table 3.1, the personal characteristics are gender, age, educational background and years of working in the public sector. In the aspect of organizational characteristics, the group of ministries was employed. Table 3.3 presents the details of the organizational characteristics in this study.

Table 3.3 Organizational Characteristics

GROUP OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES	NAME OF MINISTRIES
Central government agencies	- Office of the Prime Minister - Other independent agencies
Economic Ministries	- Ministry of Finance - Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives - Ministry of Energy - Ministry of Commerce - Ministry of Transport - Ministry of Industry - Ministry of Tourism and Sports - Ministry of Labor
Social and development Ministries	- Ministry of Social Development and Human Security - Ministry of Culture - Ministry of Education - Ministry of Public Health - Ministry of Information and Communication Technology - Ministry of Science and Technology - Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
Public governance Ministries	- Ministry of Interior - Ministry of Justice

The organizational characteristics were determined by the ministry where HiPPS members worked. Eighteen of 20 ministries participated in the HiPPS. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence were not involved in the project (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 2009b: 125-129). Those 18 Ministries can be categorized, based on the nature of their work, into 4 groups, as illustrated in Table 3.3.

Job characteristics were grouped by job family in the Competency Manual, which was introduced by the OCSC. Job family is categorized based on the nature of work. The criteria of work are analyzed by considering target customers/stakeholders regarding the position and expected results. Therefore, the jobs in each family share some common characteristics, objectives, and results. There are in total 18 job families in the civil service (Office of the Civil Service Commission, 1994: 8-9).

Table 3.4 Job Characteristics

JOB FAMILY
1. Advisory
2. Policy and planning
3. Study and research
4. Law enforcement
5. Public communication and promotion
6. Public education and development
7. Caring service
8. Cultural and artistic vocational skill services
9. Public governance
10. Conservation
11. Others

However, some job families were not used in this study since the HiPPS targeted only knowledge workers. The supportive group, therefore, for example, general support, technical support, and the executive group were not included. In addition, the jobs in the ministries that had not participated in the HiPPS, such as public relations, were not counted. Therefore, only 11 job families acted as the studied factor in this research. Table 3.4 illustrates the list of job characteristics.

3.2.3 Population and Sampling

A total of 218 government officials from 52 government agencies constituted the population in this study. Since the size of the population was not huge, all of them participated in the research without a sampling chosen. As the study emphasizes the intention of the HiPPS participants to remain in the public sector, the unit of analysis was the individual level.

3.2.4 Measurement

According to Jackson (2003: 36), the type of measures used can be classified into four basic categories: self-report measures, tests, behavioral measures, and physical measure. Self-report measures were the core measurement tool in this study. This kind of measurement is typically administered as questionnaires or interviews to measure how people report on what they act, think, or feel. The details of the measurement are elaborated on as follows:

3.2.4.1 Scale Construction

Scale construction employs behavioral self-report measures. Jackson (2003: 36) states that this typically requires people to report how often they do something. Thus, a set of questionnaires is required. In this study, a five-part questionnaire constructed. Like other questionnaires, the first part consisted of demographic data. Next was perception toward HR practices. The third was engagement assessment, whereas intention to resign and absenteeism constituted the fourth part. Open-ended questions were the last part.

In part 1 of the questionnaire, the general demographic data of participants were asked for, including gender, educational background, age, and

working period in the public sector. Moreover, both job and organizational characteristics from Table 3.3 and 3.4, were also added in this part.

The perceptual measure in the second part was designed based on the practices of HRM in table 3.2. An 18-item scale consisting of statements about HR practices was used to assess the model of HR practices (nine items for each model). Respondents were asked to indicate, using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, the extent to which they considered each practice occurring in their organization.

In measuring talent engagement in the third part of the questionnaire, an adapted form of Saks' study (2006: 617) was utilized. An 11-item scale consisting of statements about organizational engagement and job engagement was utilized. Examples of questions are: I am strongly desire to work at this agency, I am so pound to work in this agency, or I sacrifice myself for my work.

Talent retention, in the fourth part, is applied from Colarelli's (1984 quoted in Saks, 2006: 609) three-item scale. A sample item is, "I will work at this organization until retirement," while "I always search for an opportunity to work anywhere else" represents the reverse question. Participants respond to all items on the above scales using a five-point Likert-type scale with anchors 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Details of the questionnaire are presented in Appendix A.

Because this questionnaire is redesigned and required to translate to the Thai version, testing the reliability and validity before distribution was required.

3.2.4.2 Development of measures

The measurement development process was employed to generate the items to measure the construct in this research. In order to gain high content validity and construct reliability, measurement development comprised the following steps.

First of all, the questionnaire was initially theory-based designed. A pool of items that captured the domain of each research construct in the conceptual framework was collected from the reviewed literature. In some cases, translation into the Thai language was required. Each statement in the item pool was sophisticatedly designed by using a bureaucratic writing style. At this stage, consulting with current government officials was also addressed.

Second, in order to ensure that the measurement as truthful or genuine, content validity was employed. Jackson (2003: 44) explains that content validity is the extent to which a measuring instrument covers a representative sample of the domain of behaviors to be measured. Therefore, asking experts to assess the questionnaire was an approach to establishing validity. The experts in this study comprised two academic lecturers in HRM subjects from different universities and two experts from the OCSC.

After the first draft of questionnaire was approved by the academic lecturers from the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA) and Sri Pratum University, it was sent to two Human Resource Development officers at the OCSC. One of them had directly responsibility for the HiPPS project while another was an HR Specialist. From their suggestions, various areas were amended, such as increasing utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism HR practice items based on HiPPS practices, rewriting some sentences, and adding more specific questions in the open-ended part. The questionnaire was revised until all of them were agreed on.

Third, a pilot test was conducted in order to determine the reliability of the measurement instruments and to identify potential problems that might occur during the data collection. Reliability refers to whether a measuring instrument is consistent or stable (Jackson, 2003: 39, 41). Sudman (1976 quoted in Jitlada Amornwatana, 2008: 101) notes that the size of a sample for a pilot test should be 20-50; consequently, 50 questionnaires were distributed to government officials who held similar qualifications in the HiPPS. The respondents for the pilot test were government officials who were met by chance during the testing period. Only those that worked at level 3-6 and were of age 25-40 years were asked to fill out the questionnaire. They were from various agencies such as the OCSC, The Office of the Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC), The Department of Mineral Resources, and others agencies.

Thirty-two questionnaires were responded to. Only 29 of 32 cases were complete and processed by SPSS version 13. It was revealed that the reliability coefficient of this questionnaire was .856, as illustrated in Table 3.5. According to Cronbach (1951 quoted in Jitlada Amornwatana, 2008: 106), it is suggested that an

alpha coefficient of 0.7 be considered the minimum threshold. Therefore, this questionnaire was reliable.

Table 3.5 Reliability Statistics of the Questionnaire

VARIABLES	ITEMS	CRONBACH'S ALPHA
HR Practices		
Utilitarian instrumentalism	Part 2 No.1-9	.880
Developmental humanism	Part 2 No. 10-18	.926
Talent Engagement		
Organizational Engagement	Part 3 No.1-4, 6	.917
Job Engagement	Part 3 No.7-9, 11	.801
Talent Retention		
	Part 4 No. 2-4	.721
All 34 items*		.856

Note: * Reverse questions included

3.2.5 Data Collection

In collecting data, this research involved three steps. First, gaining approval for the research was made by informally asking permission from the OCSC followed by official letters. Second was using a rapport technique with those that work as process owners of the HiPPS. This step was very important to the study. It not only benefited the up-coming interviewing in the qualitative part, but would facilitate the questionnaire distribution. Finally, the distribution of the questionnaire was accomplished.

Only after obtaining reliable and validity were the research questionnaires electronically sent to all of the HiPPS participants' e-mail addresses. At this stage, a number of e-mails were returned. Within that week, only 11.3 percent of the total participants had completed the questionnaire and replied. During the next week, a follow-up reminder message was sent. However, the response rate was less than 30

percent. A month later, a check list of returned questionnaires was made. Face to face and telephone contact with the HR officers in some agencies were done. Finally, after two and a half months, a total 82 questionnaires or 37.6 percent were replied to.

According to the acceptable response rate by e-mail survey, 40 percent is seen as the average while 50 and 60 percent are good and very good, respectively (Instructional Assessment Resource, 2010: paragraph 6). In this study, the response rate of 37.6 percent was close to the average acceptable rate; therefore the data analysis was conducted.

3.2.6 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed by Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) program version 13. Both descriptive and inferential statistic tools were employed. The statistical methods used in this study were:

3.2.6.1 Descriptive statistics, which included frequency, percentage, mean, minimum, maximum, and standard deviation. These were for describing the characteristics of the respondents. Scale measurement of retention level was seen from the percentage distribution. More than 50 percent indicates talent retention. This criterion was also employed to measure the level of agreement about HR practices and talent retention.

3.2.6.2 Cross-tabulation was employed to test the hypotheses of the relationship between independent variables (HR practices, talent engagement, and personal/organizational/job characteristics) and talent retention.

3.2.6.3 Correlation Coefficients were used to explain the relationship between each independent variable and talent retention. The correlation coefficient r measured the linear relationship in each hypothesis. A value of r near 0 indicates little correlation between attributes; a value near +1 or -1 indicates a high level of correlation.

3.2.6.4 Multiple Regressions was utilized to determine the predictor for talent retention. Adjusted R^2 reflects the prediction power of the independent variable regarding talent retention. The value of .50 or higher indicates a large impact on talent retention.

3.3 Qualitative Approach

Aiming at hypothesis confirmation, in-depth interviewing was employed at this stage. The operationalization of this approach is explained in terms of purposefully selected site, data collection and data analysis.

3.3.1 The Purposefully Selected Site

In doing qualitative research, Creswell (2003: 183, 185) suggests that identification of the specific strategy of inquiry that will be use is very crucial. Miles and Huberman (1994 quoted in Creswell, 2003: 185) suggest that four aspects of the purposefully-selected site should include the setting, actors, event, and process. The details of the purposefully-selected site are explained as follows:

3.3.1.1 The Setting

In this section of the paper, talent retention was focused on, designed to investigate the reasons for engagement or retention by aiming at whether HR practices really link to those occurrences.

3.3.1.2 The Actors

Key informants at this stage were those that were HiPPS members but that had currently resigned or transferred from their previous public agency. The data record from the OCSC shows that 11 officials had left the HiPPS. Three of them resigned, two of them transferred to other public agencies, and the rest voluntary quit the HiPPS but were still working in the public sector. As a result, only the first two cases were counted in this study since they implied job/organizational disengagement.

3.3.1.3 Event

Creswell (2003: 185) explains the event as “what the actors will be observed or interview.” The data which were expected from the actors included their belief concerning HR practices and talent engagement. The in-depth interviewing technique was employed.

3.3.1.4 Process

According to Huberman (1994 quoted in Creswell, 2003: 185), process can be defined as “the evolving nature of events undertaken by the actors within the setting.” Process in this sense is the process of how HiPPS members engage in or

disengage from their job/organization. Understanding the process is required to find the root causes of the retention.

3.3.2 Data Collection

Morgan (1998 quoted in Denzin and Lincoln, 2000: 835) states that “the two major techniques used by researchers to collect qualitative data are participant observation and individual interview.” In order to choose the interviewing technique, Fontana and Frey (1994 quoted in Punch, 2005: 169-170) use a three-way classification of structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviewing, and they apply that to individual and group interviews.

This study employed the individual semi-structured pattern. This method is in between the structured and unstructured. The reason was that both aspects were required for this study. For the structured one, there were obvious questions to be asked such as opinions about HR practices, the impact of HR practice in engagement, and so on. Questions about absenteeism and reasons for resignation required, however, an unstructured format which would enable the informants to disclose their answer. This study was then designed to employ the semi-structured interviewing method. Details of the interview question are presented in Appendix B.

Even though description lays the basis for analysis, analysis also lays the basis for further description. Dey (1993: 30) explains this in the following:

“Through analysis, we can obtain a fresh view of our data. We can progress from initial description, through the process of breaking data down into bits, and seeing how these bits interconnect, to a new account based on our reconceptualization of the data. We break down the data in order to classify it, and the concepts we create or employ in classifying the data, and the connections we make between these concepts, provide the basis of fresh description.”

The data analysis part in this study is not different from other qualitative research where coding and memo writing are utilized while collecting and analyzing the data. But the more important part is the method of analysis. According to Neuman

(2000: 426), data analysis means “a search of patterns in data—recurrent behaviors, objects, or a body of knowledge.”

The collected data in this study were analyzed in terms of description, classifying, and connecting. According to Dey (1993: 31-38), the first step of qualitative analysis is to develop thorough and comprehensive descriptions of the phenomenon under study. This description encompasses the context of action, the intentions of the actor, and the process in which the action is embedded. Qualitative analysis often aims to provide “thorough” descriptions in each of these areas.

He also explains that contexts are important as a means of situating action, and of grasping its wider social and historical import. This can require the following: detailed descriptions of the social setting within which action occurs; the relevant social contexts may be a group, organization, institution, culture or society; the time frame within which action take place; the spatial context; the network of social relationships, and so on (Dey, 1993: 32). Regarding intentions, he claims that there is a strong emphasis on describing the world as it is perceived by different observers. Therefore, qualitative analysis is usually concerned with how actors define situations, and explains the motives which govern their actions to ensure that the findings relate to the intentions of the actors (Dey, 1993: 36). An orientation toward process is the third characteristic of descriptions. The idea of process is bound up with the idea of change, and the circumstances, conditions, actions and mechanisms through which change comes about (Dey, 1993: 38).

The second step of qualitative analysis is classification. Dey (1993: 31-38) claims the following:

“Without classifying the data, we have no way of knowing what it is that we are analyzing. Nor can we make meaningful comparisons between different bits of data. It would be wrong to say that before we can analyse data, we must classify it, for classifying the data is an integral part of the analysis: it lays the conceptual foundations upon which interpretation and explanation are based.”

Description and classification are not ends in themselves; connection is the final stage of this analysis. One common method of making connections is identifying associations between different variables. Once the data are classified, regularities, variations and singularities in the data can be examined (Dey, 1993: 47).

To conclude, Dey claims that the core of qualitative analysis lies in the related processes of describing phenomena, classifying them, and seeing how our concepts interconnect (Dey, 1993: 30).

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009: 251), however, argue that qualitative data analysis is iterative, involving a back-and-forth process between data collection and data analysis. Therefore, data collection often continues while the analysis is ongoing. This study was then designed to examine and reexamine previously collected data and to use different analytic strategies to ensure that the hypotheses had been adequately tested.

Maximizing reliability and validity are just important in qualitative research as they are in quantitative research (Miles and Huberman, 1984 quoted in Jitlada, 2008: 118). In order to maximize the validity of this part of the study, Miles and Huberman's (1984 quoted in Jitlada, 2008: 118) suggestion was followed, that the participants' responses should be accurately reported and represented and multiple sources of information be used to triangulate the qualitative data. Therefore, in order to enhance the validity of the findings, a triangulated approach was employed by interviewing those that had voluntarily quit the HiPPS project but that still worked in the public sector. Moreover, interviewing OCSC officials that were responsible for the HiPPS project was also carried out. Lastly, in order to ensure that the analysis was reliable, a final draft of this research was sent to all key informants for approval.

3.4 Strategy for Analyzing the Mixed Methods Data

After obtaining two sets of finding, the parallel mixed data analysis was employed. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009: 266) claim that this strategy is probably the most widely used in human sciences, and it has been associated with other design concepts, such as triangulation and convergence.

Parallel mixed data analysis involves two separate processes: quantitative analysis of data, using descriptive/inferential statistics for appropriate variables, and qualitative analysis of data, using thematic analysis related to relevant narrative data. Although the two sets of analyses are independent, each provides an understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. These understandings are then linked, combined, or integrated into meta-inferences (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009: 266).

Figure 3.2 presents the process that occurs in the parallel designs with their attendant parallel mixed analyses.

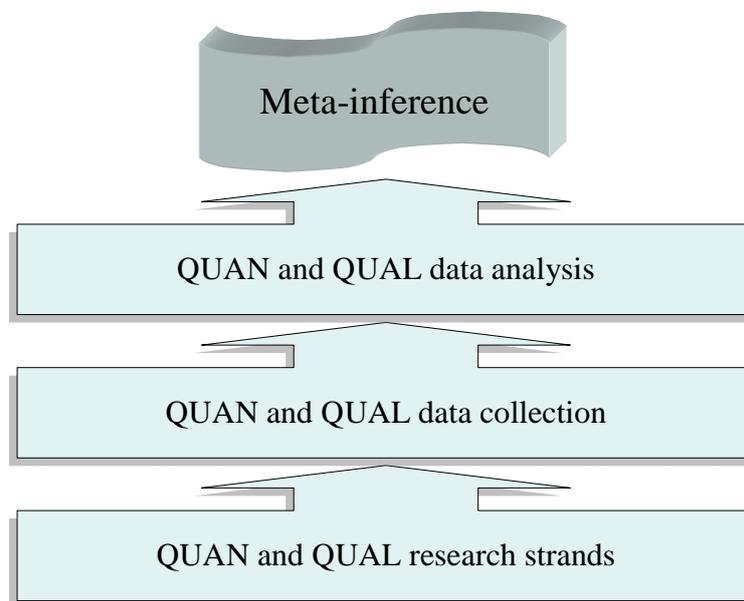


Figure 3.2 Parallel Mixed Data Analysis

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009: 266) explain details of the process that:

“1. Quantitative and qualitative research strands are planned and implemented to answer related aspects of research questions regarding the same phenomenon. There are at least two parallel and relatively independent research strands, one with quantitative questions and the other with qualitative questions.

2. Quantitative and qualitative data collection procedures occur in parallel and separate manners.
3. Quantitative and qualitative analysis procedures then follow in parallel and separate manners. The quantitative data analyses generate inferences regarding the quantitative-oriented questions, while the qualitative data analyses are used to generate inferences regarding the qualitative-oriented questions. Some informal ‘cross-talk’ between strands may occur during analysis.
4. Inferences made on the basis of the results from each strand are then integrated or synthesized to form meta-inferences at the end of the study. These meta-inferences are conclusions generated through an integration of the inferences that were obtained from both strands of the study”

3.5 Summary

This chapter provides details on the methodology utilized to research talent retention in the public sector. Mixed methods research focuses on collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study, and this method was employed in this study. This method was designed to expand understanding from one method to another.

The quantitative approach was employed to fulfill the research objectives by testing the proposed hypotheses in chapter 2. The study focuses on the individual level by investigating HiPPS participants points of view. Since the size of the population was not large, all 218 government officials from 52 government agencies were the target of this research. A set of questionnaires was designed as the scale construction. Content validity and reliability were examined before distribution via e-mail. After that, the collected data were analyzed by SPSS version 13. Both descriptive and inferential statistic tools were employed.

In the qualitative part of the study, in-depth interviewing was utilized. Key informants at this stage were those that were HiPPS members but that had currently

resigned or had transferred from their previous public agency. Description, classifying, and connecting were employed to analyze the collected data. The findings from both methods were finally analyzed using parallel mixed data analysis by linking, combining, or integrating the findings into meta-inferences.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH RESULTS

In this chapter, the results of the data analysis are presented. The data are collected and then processed in response to the proposed research questions. Since the dissertation employs the mixed method, it is then illustrated in two main parts. The first deals with testing the proposed hypotheses by the quantitative approach, while the second one concerns the findings confirmed by the qualitative method. Finally, meta-inference is utilized.

4.1 Findings from the Quantitative Approach

4.1.1 Demographic Data

Table 4.1 presents an overview of the demographic data. Fifty-eight point five percent of the respondents were female, while the rest, 41.5 percent, were male. Most of them, or 70.7 percent, graduated with a master's degree. In terms of respondents' age, 57.3 percent were 30-35 years, and no respondent reported being over 40.

According to the work year, most of them, or 59.8 percent, have been working in the public sector for 4-6 years; followed by 18.3 and 15.9 percent at 1-3 years and 7-9 years, respectively. Only 6.1 percent of them reported that they had worked for the government sector more than 10 years. Thus, it was noted that most of the respondents were a Generation Y.

Table 4.1 Demographic Data of Respondents

Variables	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Male	34	41.5
Female	48	58.5
Total	82	100.0
Educational Background		
Bachelor's degree	16	19.5
Master's degree	58	70.7
Doctoral degree	8	9.8
Total	82	100.0
Age		
Below 30	23	28.0
30-35	47	57.3
36-40	11	13.4
Missing	1	1.2
Total	82	100.0
Years of working in public sector		
1-3	15	18.3
4-6	49	59.8
7-9	13	15.9
More than 10	5	6.1
Total	82	100.0

Table 4.1 (Continued)

Variables	Number	Percentage
Organizational Characteristics		
Central government agencies	21	25.6
Economic ministries	36	43.9
Social and development ministries	18	22.0
Public governance ministries	7	8.5
Total	82	100.0
Job Characteristics		
Advisory	12	14.6
Policy and planning	32	39.0
Study and research	20	24.4
Law enforcement	15	18.3
Public communication and promotion	2	2.4
Public education and development	7	8.5
Caring services	6	7.3
Conservation	1	1.2
Others	18	22.0
Total	82	100.0

According to their job and organizational characteristics, it was found that most of them, 43.9 percent, worked for the ministries in the economic sector while 25.6 percent and 22.0 percent worked in central government agencies and social and development ministries, respectively. Only 8.5 percent of them worked for public governance ministries. Since the component of the economics sector is large, 8 ministries with 112 HiPPS participants, it is not surprising that the response rate was the highest. Similarly but regarding a different dimension, the smallest population was

found in public governance agencies (only 2 ministries with 15 participants); thus the response rate in this sector was the lowest.

In terms of job characteristics, the data show that most respondents or 39.0 percent worked in the policy and planning. Twenty-four point four percent of them were in study and research, and 18.3 percent were in law enforcement. Only 1 respondent had a conservation job. The data also revealed that there were no respondents in two job families; namely, cultural and artistic vocational skills and public services governance.

4.1.2 Talent Retention

In order to examine the level of talent retention, percentage distribution was accumulated by combining the percentage of “strongly agree” and “agree” in the direct items. In this case, the percentage of over 50 indicated the retention. In the reverse questions, the interpretation was done vice versa. The percentages of “strongly disagree” and “disagree” were combined and the value of over 50 indicated retention in the public sector.

Table 4.2 Percentage Distribution of Talent Retention

Retention	Strongly agree	Agree	Fair	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
If I am not seriously unable to work, I will not take a leave.	41.5	39.0	17.1		2.4	100.0 (82)
I always search for an opportunity to work anywhere else.(R)		4.9	8.5	26.8	36.6	23.2 100.0 (82)
I plan to work at this organization for a certain time, and will leave after that.(R)		8.5	13.4	29.3	30.5	18.3 100.0 (82)
I will work at this organization until retirement.		8.5	25.6	37.8	18.3	9.8 100.0 (82)
	\bar{x} = 3.61	Min=1.00	Max=5.00	SD= 0.76		

Table 4.2 shows a majority of 80.5 percent reporting that if they were not seriously unable to work, they would not take a leave, while only 34.1 percent revealed that they would work until retirement. This means that most of the respondents do not intend to be absented if unnecessary, but in the long term they do not intend to remain working in the public sector until retirement. In other words, a low level of talent retention was found.

It was also verified from the reverse questions that 59.8 and 48.8 percent disagreed with searching for an opportunity to work elsewhere, and planned to work at their current organization for a certain time, respectively. These findings also indicate that most of them were not actively searching for a new job but may leave the public sector in the future. To conclude, the findings show that the Thai public sector requires paying more attention to talent retention in order to prevent troubles workforce that may emerge in the future.

4.1.3 HR Practices

Table 4.3 presents the findings on HR practices, and it can be seen that respondents agreed with both utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism practices in the HiPPS since the percentage of every items was higher than 50 percent.

In the practice of utilitarian instrumentalism, a majority of 87.8 percent agreed and strongly agreed with result oriented approach in the HiPPS and flexible positioning based on performance. Eighty-six point five percent accepted workforce planning for future leadership, while 85.4 percent of respondents agreed with the idea of competency-based management. Eighty-four point one percent found that the recruitment and selection process in the HiPPS was well-designed. However, 62.2 percent reported that they fairly agreed with the notion of performance appraisal.

Table 4.3 Percentage Distribution of HR Practices

HR Practices	Strongly agree	Agree	Fair	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Utilitarian Instrumentalism						
Result oriented approach	39.0	48.8	8.6	2.4	1.2	100.0
	87.8					(82)
Flexible positioning based on performance	37.8	50.0	7.3	4.9	0.0	100.0
	87.8					(82)
Workforce planning for future leadership	51.1	35.4	9.8	3.7	0.0	100.0
	86.5					(82)
Competency-based management	35.4	50.0	11.0	2.4	1.2	100.0
	85.4					(82)
Recruitment and selection process in HiPPS	19.5	64.6	13.5	2.4	0.0	100.0
	84.1					(82)
Performance agreement with KPI	37.0	44.4	11.2	3.7	3.7	100.0
	81.4					(81)
Needs analysis for competency assessment	34.2	45.6	15.2	2.5	2.5	100.0
	79.8					(79)
Special promotion quota for salary increase	36.6	34.1	19.5	7.3	2.5	100.0
	70.7					(82)
Performance Appraisal	17.1	45.1	22.0	11.0	4.8	100.0
	62.2					(82)
	$\bar{x} = 4.07$	Min=1.00	Max=5.00	SD= 0.63		
Developmental Humanism						
Individual career development plan	56.2	37.8	1.2	2.4	2.4	100.0
	94.0					(82)
Experience Accumulated Framework: EAF	45.1	42.7	4.9	6.1	1.2	100.0
	87.8					(82)
Individual Development Plan: IDP	48.8	39.0	4.9	6.1	1.2	100.0
	87.8					(82)
Network and connection building	47.6	39.0	11.0	2.4	0.0	100.0
	86.6					(82)
Government scholarship	45.1	40.2	11.0	3.7	0.0	100.0
	85.3					(82)
Coaching and mentoring	39.0	42.7	9.8	6.1	2.4	100.0
	81.7					(82)
Challenging assignments	36.6	42.7	14.6	4.9	1.2	100.0
	79.3					(82)
Job Rotation	29.3	46.3	17.1	4.9	2.4	100.0
	75.6					(82)
Being recognized as high a performer	25.6	32.9	30.5	8.6	2.4	100.0
	58.5					(82)
	$\bar{x} = 4.15$	Min=1.00	Max=5.00	SD= 0.71		

In developmental humanism practices, most of the respondents, 94.0 percent, agreed and strongly agreed with the idea of individual career development plans, while 87.8 percent agreed with the idea of EAF and IDP initiatives. Eighty-six point six and 85.3 percent agreed with the idea of networking and government scholarship, respectively. Only 58.5 percent of respondents reported that they agree with the idea of being recognized as a high performer.

4.1.4 Talent Engagement

Table 4.4 illustrates the percentage distribution for talent engagement. It was found that respondents engage in both the organization and job but that there are more respondents that engage in the job than the organization.

In organizational engagement, a majority of 73.2 percent reported that they were proud of being members in their government agency, while 64.7 percent strongly desired to work at their organization. Sixty-four point two percent found that one of the most exciting things for them was getting involved with things happening in their organizations. These findings were confirmed by the reverse question: 46.9 percent of respondents disagreed that they were not interested in what was happening in their organization. However, only 49.5 percent revealed that working in their organization made them come alive. In sum, 64.7 percent reported that they were highly engaged in their organizations.

In terms of engagement in the job, 91.5 percent reported that they really “throw” themselves in their job and no respondents disagreed regarding this item. In terms of time allocation, 79.3 percent of respondents found that their job was all consuming; they were totally into it. Forty-six point four percent revealed that they very much concentrated on their job and sometimes it made them lose track. This also aligned with the reverse question, where 45.1 percent reported that they did not think of other things while they were working. In sum, 76.8 percent of them reported that they were highly engaged in their job.

In conclusion, the findings indicate a low level of talent retention. Even though they agree with HR practices in the HiPPS and also engage to both the organization and the job, they do not intend to stay in the public sector until retirement.

Table 4.4 Percentage Distribution of Talent Engagement

Engagement	Strongly agree	Agree	Fair	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Organizational Engagement						
I am so proud of being a member of this organization.	23.2	50.0	20.7	6.1	0.0	100.0 (82)
I strongly desire to work at this government agency.	15.9	48.8	28	6.1	1.2	100.0 (82)
One of the most exciting things for me is getting involved with things happening in this org.	16.1	48.1	32.1	2.5	1.2	100.0 (81)
Being a member of this organization makes me come alive.	12.3	37.2	40.7	8.6	1.2	100.0 (81)
I am really not into the "goings-on" in this organization. (R)	3.7	11.1	38.3	39.5	7.4	100.0 (81)
I am highly engaged in this organization.	15.9	48.8	26.8	8.5	0.0	100.0 (82)
	$\bar{x} = 3.73$	Min=1.00	Max=5.00	SD= 0.73		
Job Engagement						
I really "throw" myself into my job.	36.6	54.9	8.5	0.0	0.0	100.0 (82)
This job is all consuming; I am totally into it.	23.2	56.1	17.1	1.2	2.4	100.0 (82)
Sometimes I am so into my job that I lose track.	6.1	40.3	46.3	4.9	2.4	100.0 (82)
My mind often wanders and I think of other things when doing my jobs. (R)	2.4	9.8	42.7	39	6.1	100.0 (82)
I am highly engaged in this job.	25.6	51.2	17.1	4.9	1.2	100.0 (82)
	$\bar{x} = 3.89$	Min=1.00	Max=5.00	SD= 0.61		

4.1.5 Hypotheses Testing

4.1.5.1 Testing of H1: HR practices are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

Table 4.5 shows that HR practices do not significantly correlate with talent retention. HR practices in both utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism do not relate to the intention to remain or to resign.

However, a significant relationship can be seen between the two models of HR practices ($r=.813$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates the high association between HR practices in utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism.

Table 4.5 Correlation of HR Practices and Talent Retention

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3
1. Talent Retention	3.05	.413	1		
2. Utilitarian Instrumentalism	4.07	.627	.034	1	
3. Developmental Humanism	4.15	.714	.154	.813**	1

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

4.1.5.2 Testing of H2: Talent engagement is more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

Table 4.6 shows that both organizational and job engagement are significantly related to talent retention ($r=.645$, $r=.409$; $p < 0.01$, respectively). These findings indicate that HiPPS members that are engaged in the organization and job are likely to remain in the public sector. Moreover, a significant relationship can be seen between the two types of engagement ($r=.377$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that respondents with organizational engagement might also engage in the job and vice versa.

Table 4.6 Correlation of Talent Engagement and Talent Retention

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3
1. Talent Retention	3.05	.413	1		
2. Organizational Engagement	3.72	.731	.645**	1	
3. Job Engagement	3.91	.614	.409**	.377**	1

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

4.1.5.3 Testing of H3: HR practices are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent engagement.

Table 4.6 reveals that there is no significant relationship between HR practices and talent engagement. These findings indicate that provision of HR practices in the HiPPS do not lead to the engagement of the respondents.

Table 4.7 Correlation of HR Practices and Talent Engagement

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Utilitarian Instrumentalism	4.07	.627	1			
2. Developmental Humanism	4.15	.714	.813**	1		
3. Organizational Engagement	3.72	.731	.106	-.013	1	
4. Job Engagement	3.91	.614	.016	.057	.377**	1

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

4.1.5.4 Testing of H4: Talent engagement is more likely to mediate the relationship between HR practices and talent retention.

According to Baron and Kenny (1986 quoted in Saks, 2006: 612), three conditions must be met in order to establish mediation. First, the independent variable (HR practices) must be related to the mediator (talent engagement). Second, the mediator (talent engagement) must be related to the dependent variable (talent retention). Third, the significant relationship between the independent variable (HR practices) and dependent variable (talent retention) will be reduced (partial mediation) or will no longer be significant (full mediation) when controlling for the mediator (talent engagement).

Table 4.8 Regression Analysis Testing the Mediator Role

Variables	Talent Engagement		
	Org. Engagement	Job Engagement	
HR Practices			
Utilitarian Instrumentalism	.343	-.089	
Developmental Humanism	-.291	.130	
R ²	.016	-.919	
F	.649	.236	
Variables	Talent Retention	R ²	F
Talent Engagement			
Organizational Engagement	.416***	.134	.725***
Job Engagement	.240*		
HR Practices			
Utilitarian Instrumentalism	-.268	.024	1.995
Developmental Humanism	.372		

Note: * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$; and values in table are standardized β coefficients.

Table 4.8 reveals the multiple regression analysis for testing the mediator role of talent engagement. A relation in the first condition was not found since HR practices were not significantly related to talent engagement. However, the second condition was met; talent engagement was significantly related to talent retention ($R^2 = .134$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that talent engagement can predict the level of retention at 1.34 percent, the effect of which is not large. For the last condition, it revealed that there was no significant association between HR practices and talent retention. Therefore, the mediator role of talent engagement was not accepted.

4.1.5.5 Testing of H5: Personal factors are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

Personal factors, namely gender, age, educational background, and years of working in the public sector, were examined as to whether they were associated with talent retention. The analysis began from descriptive statistics using percentage distribution. In order to analyze the data, accumulation of percentage distributions was required. The percentages of “strongly agree” and “agree” were combined and indicated a high level of retention. Similarly, “strongly disagreement” was merged with “disagreement” to indicate a low level of retention, while “fair” represented the medium level. After providing the descriptive data, inferential statistics, namely multiple regressions, were employed to test the relationship between talent retention and these variables.

1) Gender and talent retention

The results from Table 4.9 show that there was a slightly difference between male and female retention. Thirty-five point three percent of males agreed that they would work until retirement, while 33.4 percent of females agreed with that. It can be seen that both genders were not retained at a high level.

Table 4.9 Talent Retention by Gender

Retention	High	Medium	Low	Total
Gender				
Male	35.3	41.2	23.5	100.0 (23)
Female	33.4	35.4	31.2	100.0 (47)

2) Age and talent retention

Table 4.10 presents retention by age of respondents. The majority of 38.3 percent of talented officials at the age of 30-35 indicated high retention. It can be seen that these three groups were not retained at a high level.

Table 4.10 Talent Retention by Age

Retention	High	Medium	Low	Total
Age (years)				
Below 30	30.4	43.5	26.1	100.0 (23)
30-35	38.3	36.2	25.5	100.0 (47)
36-40	27.3	36.4	36.3	100.0 (11)

3) Educational background and talent retention

The results from Table 4.11 indicate that HiPPS members that had a lower educational background showed a higher retention to the public sector than those that held a higher degree. Sixty-two point five percent of respondents that graduated with a bachelor's degree reported that they would work until retirement, while those that graduated with a master and doctoral degree agreed to do so only at 27.6 and 25.0 percent, respectively.

Table 4.11 Talent Retention by Educational Background

Retention	High	Medium	Low	Total
Educational Background				
Bachelor	62.5	37.5	0.0	100.0 (23)
Master	27.6	39.7	32.7	100.0 (47)
Doctoral	25.0	25.0	50.0	100.0 (8)

4) Years of working and talent retention

From Table 4.12 it can be seen that 60.0 percent of those that have been working for more than 10 years reported high retention. If this group of people is excluded because only 5 respondents participated, a trend of fewer years of working higher level of retention can be seen. The data show that 40.0 percent of respondents that had 1-3 years of work experience reported high retention, while those that worked for 4-6 and 7-9 years reported high retention at 32.6 and 23.1 percent, respectively.

Table 4.12 Talent Retention by Years of Working in the Public Sector

Retention	High	Medium	Low	Total
Years of Working				
1-3 years	40.0	26.7	33.3	100.0 (23)
4-6 years	32.6	42.9	24.5	100.0 (47)
7-9 years	23.1	38.5	50.0	100.0 (8)
More than 10 years	60.0	20.0	20.0	100.0 (5)

In terms of relationship testing, the findings from the multiple regression analysis revealed that educational background showed a negative significant relation to talent retention ($t = -2.684$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that the higher the education, the lower the retention. It was also revealed that the educational background of respondents explained a significant variance in talent retention ($R^2 = .064$, $p < 0.10$). This indicated that educational background could predict the level of talent retention at 6.4 percent. Data are shown in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13 Regression Analysis of Personal Factors and Talent Retention

Variables	Beta	t-value	Sig.
Gender	-.095	-.850	.398
Age	.167	1.462	.148
Educational background	-.325	-2.684	.009
Years of working	.028	.241	.810
	$R^2 = .064$	$F = 2.360$	$p = .061$

4.1.5.6 Testing of H6: Organizational characteristics are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

Table 4.14 shows the retention by organizational characteristics. It is seen that 36.1 percent of respondents in economics ministries reported a high level of retention while 33.4 percent of respondents from central government agencies and social and development ministries indicated high retention. Only 28.6 percent of those that work in public governance agencies revealed high retention. It is noted that the percentages of high retention in every group of ministries were less than 40, which indicated that the public sector cannot retain most talented officials.

In addition, the multiple regression analysis revealed that there was no significant relationship between organizational characteristics and talent retention ($R^2 = -.012$, $F = .004$, $p = .952$).

Table 4.14 Talent Retention by Organizational Characteristics

Retention	High	Medium	Low	Total
Central government agencies	33.4	33.3	33.3	100.0 (21)
Economics ministries	36.1	47.2	16.7	100.0 (36)
Social and development ministries	33.4	16.7	49.9	100.0 (18)
Public governance ministries	28.6	57.1	14.3	100.0 (7)

4.1.5.6 Testing of H7: Job characteristics are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

Table 4.15 presents retention by job family of respondents. The percentages of high retention in each job family are between 25.0-36.3 percent, which is a small proportion when compared with the entire number of respondents.

Table 4.15 Talent Retention by Job Characteristics

Retention	High	Medium	Low	Total
Advisory	25.0	25.0	50.0	100.0 (12)
Policy and Planning	34.6	42.3	23.1	100.0 (26)
Law Enforcement	36.3	45.5	18.2	100 (11)
Public Education, R&D	27.7	44.5	27.8	100.0 (18)
Others	33.3	40.0	26.7	100 (15)

It was revealed that 36.3 percent of respondents that work in law enforcement reported high retention, followed by those in policy and planning, and others at 34.6 and 33.3 percent, respectively. Only 27.7 percent of respondents in public education and research and development reported high retention. In addition, not different from organizational characteristics, the multiple regression analysis also illustrated that job characteristics were not associated with talent retention ($R^2 = .006$, $F=1.453$, $p=.232$).

A summary of the hypothesis testing is shown in Table 4.16. The findings reveal that the talent engagement and educational background of respondents were significantly related to talent retention, while the rest of the variables did not reveal such relationships.

Table 4.16 Summary of Hypothesis Testing

VARIABLES	TALENT RETENTION	NOTE
HR Practices		
- Utilitarian Instrumentalism	Rejected	
- Developmental Humanism	Rejected	
Talent Engagement		The mediator role
- Organizational Engagement	Accepted	between HR
- Job Engagement	Accepted	practices and talent
		retention was
		rejected.
Personal Characteristics		
- Gender	Rejected	
- Age	Rejected	
- Educational background	Accepted	
- Years of working	Rejected	
Organizational Characteristics	Rejected	
Job Characteristics	Rejected	

4.1.6 Comments and Suggestions from Open-ended Questions

In this section the answers from the open-ended questions are summarized. By asking the HiPPS participants to indicate the first three things that make them engage in their organization and job, the following was their answer.

4.1.6.1 Opinion of Organizational Engagement

By asking the HiPPS participants to indicate the first three things that make them engage to their organization, most (Mode=19) indicated that peers and colleagues were the first rank. Overall, it was also illustrated that peers and colleagues represented the most frequent answers to this question.

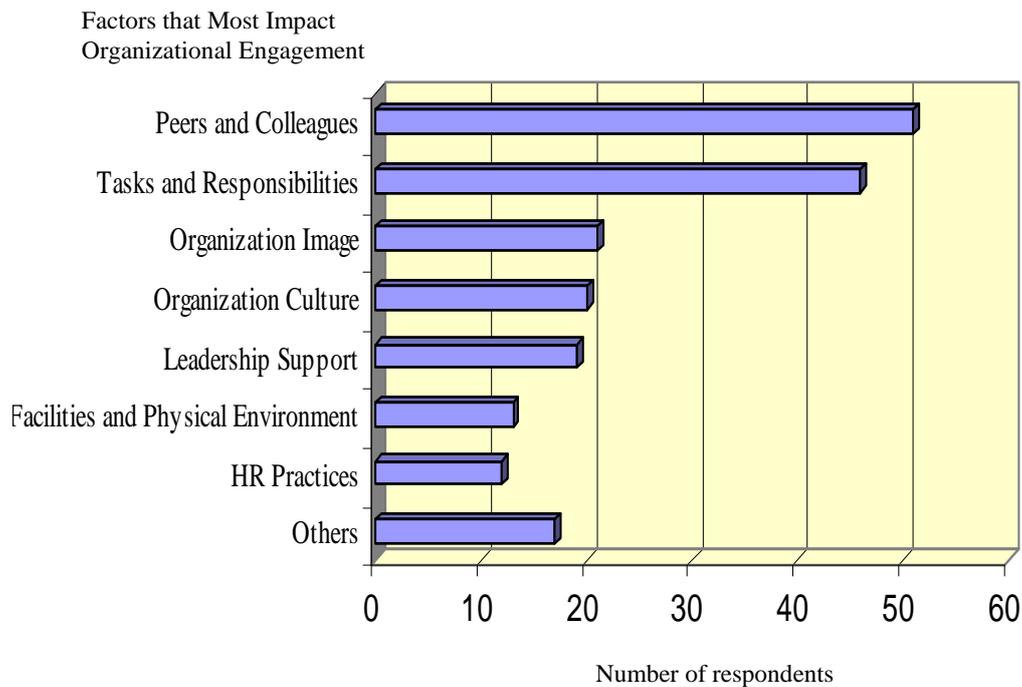


Figure 4.1 Opinion of Organizational Engagement

In Figure 4.1, it can be seen that 51 participants indicated peers and colleagues, followed by task and responsibilities (n=46), organizational image (n=21), organizational culture (n=19), and leadership support (n=19), respectively.

However, it is interesting to note that HR practices were not much valued as the most important factor of organizational engagement; only 12 participants indicated that training and development opportunity (n=6), welfare (n=3), career path (n=2), and monetary reward (n=1) were factors affecting their organization engagement.

4.1.6.2 Opinion of Job Engagement

Similar to 4.1.6.1, questions on job engagement were asked. Most participants (Mode=22) indicated that a challenging and interesting job ranked first. Details are provided in Figure 4.2.

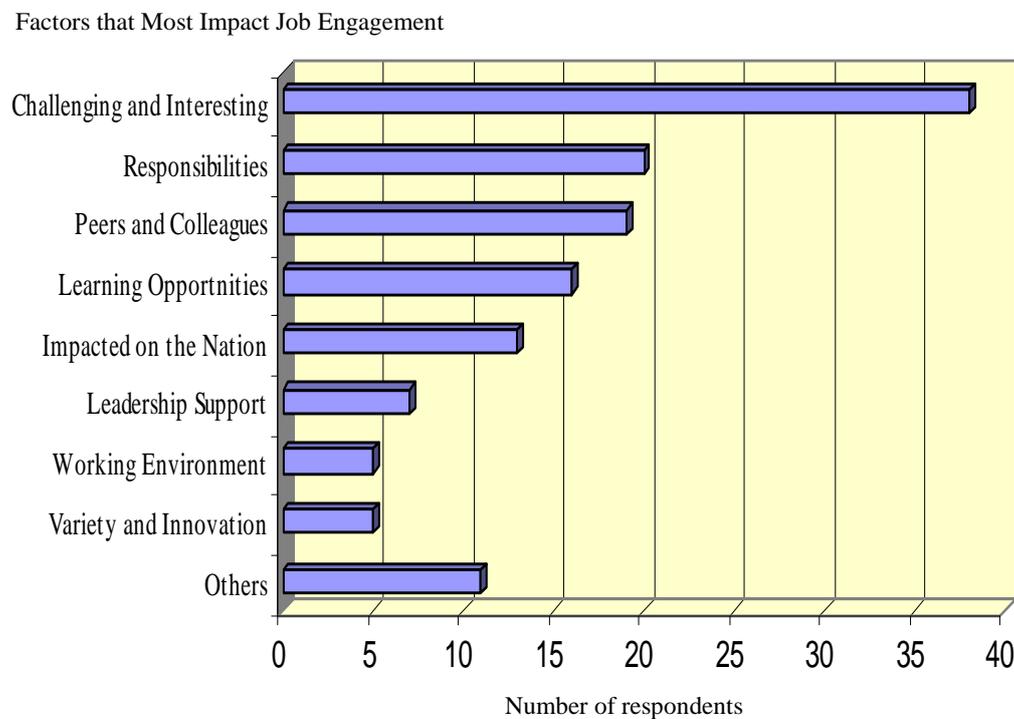


Figure 4.2 Opinion of Job Engagement

Overall, it was also illustrated that a challenging and interesting job was most frequently answered for this question. Figure 4.4 shows that 38 participants indicated a challenging and interesting job, followed with responsibilities in the assigned job (n=20), peers and colleagues (n=19), learning opportunities (n=13), and impact on the nation (n=13), respectively.

At this point, it can be seen that some factors, such as peers and colleagues, job assigned, and responsibility, influenced both organizational and job engagement. This verified the findings in the correlation analysis in 4.1.5.2.

4.1.6.3 Other comments and suggestions

The last part of the research questionnaire welcomed comments and suggestions. It was shown that the HiPPS participant was concern about the impact on national development (n=11) and was proud of success in his or her job (n=11). They also indicated that this is what they like (n=9) is what they graduated in (n=6). Only 2 of them suggested that the HiPPS project required some improvement. Details are illustrated in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17 Other Comments and Suggestions

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS	FREQUENCY
Working in the public sector encourages national development.	11
Proud of success, getting work done	11
It is what I like.	9
It is what I graduated in.	6
The HiPPS project requires more improvement.	2
Result oriented approach	1
It is a transformation period.	1
Good support	1
Serving target group	1
Desiring to improve organizational performance	1

4.1.7 Conclusion of the Quantitative Approach

The findings from this part provide empirical evidence of low-level talent retention in the public sector. Even though they agree with the HR practices in the HiPPS and also engage in both the organization and job, they do not intend to stay in the public sector until retirement. It was also found that the talent engagement and educational background of respondents were significantly related to talent retention, while the rest of the variables did not reveal such relationships.

The open-ended questions provided beneficial data: that the respondents perceived peer and colleagues as the first priority of their organization engagement, while challenging and interesting jobs led them to job engagement. These findings

also reaffirmed that HR practices did not play a crucial role in talent engagement and retention.

4.2 Findings from the Qualitative Approach

As stated in Chapter 3, key informants were those that were in the HiPPS. There was total of 5 persons in the interviewing list. Three of them resigned from the public sector and two of them had been transferred and currently work for other public agencies. Limitations regarding the available data and time constraints made the interviewing possible at 60 percent.

In addition, in order to enhance the validity of the findings, the triangulation approach by interviewing those that had voluntarily quit the HiPPS project but that still worked in the public sector was carried out. Moreover, interviewing the OCSC officials responsible for the HiPPS project was also carried out. Lastly, in order to ensure that the analysis was reliable, the final draft of this research was sent to all key informants for their approval. Table 4.18 presents the interviewing checklist.

Table 4.18 In-depth Interviewing Checklist

TARGET	REASON FOR TERMINATION FROM HiPPS	INTERVIEWING	NOTE
A	Resignation	✘	Contract information is not available
B	Resignation	✓	
C	Resignation	✓	
D	Transfer	✓	
E	Transfer	✘	Contracting number has been changed
(F)	Voluntary Quit	✓	Triangulation
(G)	Voluntary Quit	✓	Triangulation
OCSC Official		✓	Triangulation

Regarding research design, the collected data were analyzed in terms of description, classifying, and connecting. Following are the details of each aspect.

4.2.1 Description

Descriptions of three key informants are provided in terms of the context of action, the intentions of the actor, and the process in which the action was embedded. These three aspects of key informants, B, C and D, are illustrated as follows.

4.2.1.1 Informant: B

1) Context

B worked in a central government agency under the Office of the Prime Minister. Most of her work concerned policy formulation. She joined the public sector when she won a government scholarship. Thus, after earning a master's degree from the U.S., she had to work for the government at least 2 times of her study and she was assigned to work in this agency.

She said that she felt unhappy during the first stage of her work. The system was "red tape" and time consuming. She did not understand the work approach of those that were "deadwood" in the system since her work was completely done in a shorter period of time than others. Therefore, she had lot of free time to walk around and chat with friends. Moreover, she dared to speak out and express her opinion directly. From this manner, she realized that some groups of people disliked her style. As a confident working woman, she did not pay attention to that. As long as her supervisor was satisfied with her work and understood her working style, she felt it was not necessary to care what other people thought of her.

She also said that her first two years in this agency were not interesting. She took leave as she preferred and as long as it did not affect her job. After two years, she felt more comfortable with her working life. She stated that she did not change herself, but the people around her realized what she was like.

2) Intentions

Being an HiPPS member occurred to her when her senior colleague convinced her to apply to the HiPPS. She did not ignore his suggestion because she wanted to keep a good connection at work with him. She revealed that the development process in the HiPPS was interesting. It provided an opportunity to

explore and learn various kinds of work. She said that “it is a very good initiative in the public sector.” The selection process made her proud to be in the HiPPS since the process strictly screened workers, only genuinely talented people could pass the process. Moreover, she found that the HiPPS was truly a performance-based system.

However, resignation was also planned before hand. She intended to get married and go abroad after 4 years of working in this agency. Joining the HiPPS was not the key element to changing her plan.

3) Process

While participating in the HiPPS, she found that the implementation of some practices could not be carried out. For example, rotation was not done since the supervisor did not want her to be rotated. Her high performance attracted her supervisor too much. The HR department was another factor that could not keep pace with the HiPPS. She said that the system was well-designed, but that the HR officers did not act as key drivers. Again, bureaucratic process interrupted the progress of the HiPPS.

B said that being the HiPPS provided her a “special treatment” from executive leaders. She also stated that she deserved to get this reward since she worked harder and tougher than others. A monetary reward was allocated but it was not as important as being recognized as a high performer.

In terms of engagement, she revealed “not much” during the first two years. But after receiving challenging project assignments, she devoted herself to her assigned job. Before her resignation, she said that she was “very much” engaged in her job. Apart from that, she was getting familiar with her colleagues. This made her feel very happy before leaving the organization. However, her personal life was planned; she then resigned from the public sector.

After she resigned, she worked for many private companies. This made her realize that working in the government sector was her precious time since it was the time that she worked for the nation. Currently, she lives abroad with her husband and does not work for any organizations since she plans to be a mother in the near future.

4.2.1.2 Informant: C

1) Context

C was an engineer in an agency in the Agriculture and Cooperative Ministry. She had worked in this organization for more than 8 years. She revealed that she was not interested in a management position. She loved to do her technical engineering work and wanted to learn more about this profession. Unfortunately, her career was not the core function of this ministry. She felt that the agency was not paying much attention to non-core tasks. However, she said that she was lucky to work with a very generous supervisor. He supported her a lot and was the one that introduced the HiPPS to her.

Concerning the learning opportunities in this agency, she found a disappointing fact. She said that her senior colleague searched for a scholarship and applied on behalf of the agency. Acceptance was made but no engineering professional had gone abroad, even the one that initiated this project. She said sadly that executive officials took the scholarship and gave nothing back to the agency. Thus, she did not expect to get any development programs from this agency.

2) Intentions

As mentioned, C was asked to apply to the HiPPS by her supervisor. During the first stage, she did not understand what the HiPPS was. She said that “it is better than doing nothing.” She applied to the HiPPS because of it was her supervisor’s command.

Simultaneously, her aspiration for professional learning was very strong. She decided to do a master’s degree. Applying for a scholarship was not her choice since she could not rely on the agency. Taking an educational leave was not an attractive choice because she could not see career development in this agency. However, study abroad required a large amount of money. That was her only concern. Fortunately, at that time, Chulalongkorn University had introduced an international engineering program which was what she preferred to study. Thus, it was her perfect choice.

3) Process

During the HiPPS process, she enjoyed HiPPS networking. Meeting other HiPPS members made she feel more active. Training and seminars in

the HiPPS enabled her to see how fresh and alive other members were. As a matter of fact, she was not very much interested in the content of the training.

In terms of engagement, it is obvious that organizational engagement was not high. Asked about job engagement, she stated that it depended on the job assignment. Some jobs were boring, some were interesting. Overall, it was at a moderate level. “Only jobs that allow me to think and make decisions are fun while some assignments sent me out of Bangkok with nothing to do. That is so boring,” she explained. Due to low job and organizational engagement, she finally left the public sector.

At present, C has graduated with a master’s degree in a scarce branch of engineering. Her major of study is in high demand and attracts many employers. She is now working in a world-class company.

4.2.1.3 Informant: D

1) Context

D worked for an agency in the economic sector. She graduated with a master’s degree from the United Kingdom. Before joining the public sector, she used to work at a private company. Since her parents asked her to work in the government sector and she really wanted to do so, she then decided to be a government official. Until now, she has been in the public sector for approximately 4 years.

In her previous public agency, she was assigned to work in a newly-established section. This section was responsible for all policy and strategic issues of the ministry. She stated that no one wanted to do this work. As it was new, there was no supervisor at the middle level. Only 4 junior officials, who all graduated from abroad, worked in this section. This group of people was directly assigned and reported to the top executive, so she handled all of her work on her own. She felt that it was very challenging. She enjoyed the empowerment, but it was not aligned with her educational background. She said that it was more likely to be administrative work than economic work, which was the core function of this ministry. Since she was posted as a “Policy Analyst,” she also felt that it was difficult to have a chance to do other interesting things, especially the core function. “Its scope is too narrow,” she said.

2) Intentions

She applied to the HiPPS because the top executive asked all staff members in the strategic section to join this project. D was also interested in the HiPPS because of the opportunity for rotation. Learning opportunities in various kinds of job were very interesting. She also stated that the obvious career path was interesting. Being under a minimum time frame for advancing to the middle management level was good motivation for the young generations. However, she was still looking for opportunities to transfer.

3) Process

During her period of being an HiPPS member, she found that most of the government officials did not truly understand the HiPPS. Some thought that the HiPPS “could do everything.” In her opinion, HiPPS participants were not the cleverest people in the organization but they were those interested in the HiPPS initiatives. Clever people were not very much concerned about such initiatives since they could find their own way. However, it could not be argued that the HiPPS is a good project.

In terms of engagement, she scaled her engagement both regarding her job and organization at the moderate level. She said that her policy analyst position was too narrow to fulfill her career path in this ministry.

D wanted to transfer before a rotation occurred. She knew that there was a vacancy in her current agency. The position of “Economist” was what she expected. She preferred to transfer and to resume the status of HiPPS member. At this stage, she found a huge barrier. She said that the HR unit in her previous agency could not provide her with a clear answer: it was the OCSC project, she should ask the OCSC. On the other hand, the OCSC said that it depended on agency policy. However, it seemed that she could resume her HiPPS status. Unfortunately, almost a year passed with no clear solution. It was regrettable to her that she could not be an HiPPS participant again.

Currently, she is still looking for an opportunity to transfer or rotate to more interesting job. She is not high-engage in both current job and agency. It may not be the right matching. She finally told that “I may change my job again but

still work in the public sector. Working for the nation is what I want to do. It is not only because of my parent want me to do so”

4.2.2 Classification

The classification of the findings from the key informant interviews can be seen in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19 Data Classification

DESINATED CLASS	FINDINGS
Resignation and transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plans for personal life directly lead to resignation, such as marriage plans. - The policy of development, which is not aligned with personal aspiration, leads to resignation. Lack of opportunity to learn and develop is also lead to turnover intentions - Mismatching educational background and work content make key informants look for new jobs. - Complex processes and hierarchy in the government sector make key informants look for a more challenging context.
HR Practices in the HiPPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The HiPPS is a good project that encourages talented people to maximize their potential. - The selection process is well-designed. - Rotation is very attractive since it leads to opportunity to learn various kinds of jobs. - Career path is a good approach for promoting talented people.

Table 4.19 (Continued)

DESIGNATED CLASS	FINDINGS
Organizational engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenging assignments create the feeling of job responsibility. When work is done, intrinsic rewards, such as pride in success, are gained. It also prevents boring work. - Working for the nation creates a sense of value at work. - Pride in being a part of the country's development is linked to organizational engagement. - Understanding and recognition from supervisors encourage key informants to enjoy working at that moment. Empowerment is another key element of job satisfaction.
Job engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Friendship from those that work with key informants encourages good working circumstances. - Being a HiPPS member provides a chance to create networking for sharing and understanding the work context.
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The design of the HiPPS is introduced by the OCSC, but most implementation processes rely on the HR unit in each agency. It was found that these HR units do not keep pace with the OCSC. - HR units require more clear directions and details of implementation. - In some circumstances, there is over expectation toward HiPPS participants. - Clear communications are required.

The validity of the findings in Table 4.19 is derived from the triangulation. By interviewing (F) and (G), it was also revealed that job content was a crucial factor in their engagement. Both (F) and (G) are male. They decided to voluntarily terminate their work at the HiPPS for different reasons. (F) was not satisfied with his supervisor’s management style. He and his boss could not agree on the EAF. (G) faced difficulties when dealing with the HR unit. Both of them agreed that the HiPPS was a good project but struggled with implementation. In terms of engagement, they both replied that they highly engaged in their job since its contents were interesting. On the other hand, organizational engagement was at a moderate level. (F) planned to leave the public sector and study abroad in the near future, while (G) planned to stay at his organization until retirement since it was in his hometown.

4.2.2 Connections

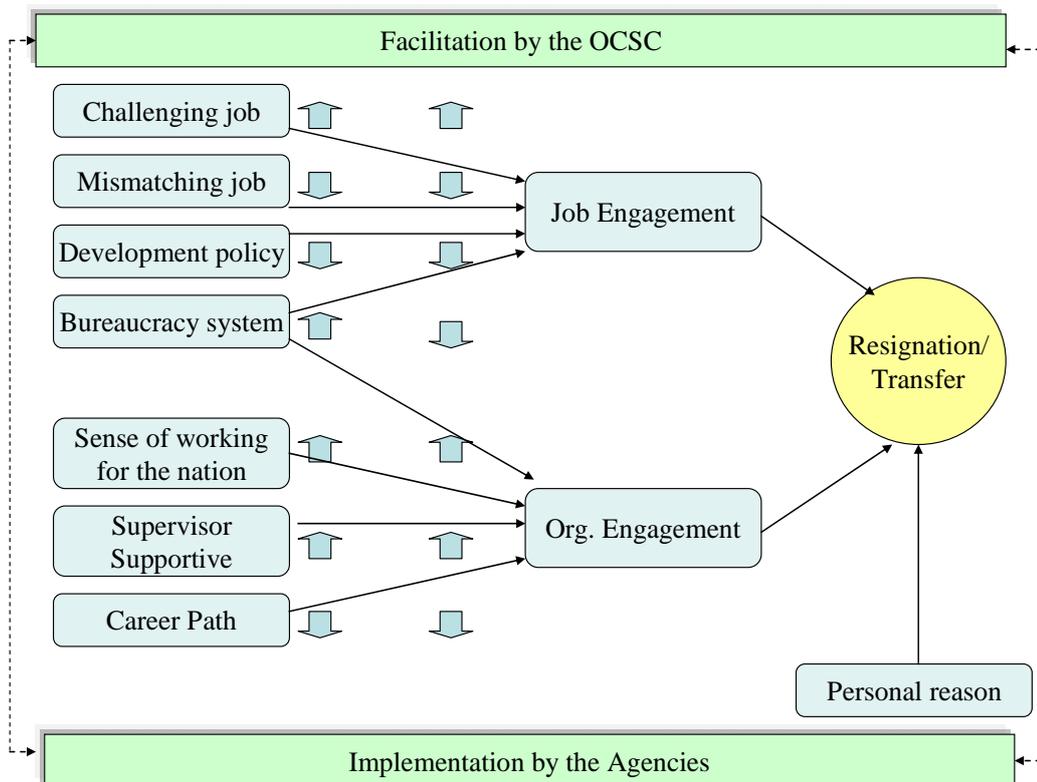


Figure 4.3 Connection of Findings from the Qualitative Approach

Figure 4.3 shows that all key informants agreed that the HiPPS was a good project but that it was not very much associated with their engagement. However, developmental humanism, such as rotation and career path, was more attractive than utilitarian instrumentalism. It was found that the content of assigned jobs was directly related to job engagement. Challenges and empowerment can lead to high job engagement. Mismatching of jobs and the bureaucratic system brought about low engagement in both the organization and the job. One key informant, however, revealed that mismatching was the core driver of her transferring.

In terms of organization engagement, a sense of working for the country was considered to be the core element of organizational engagement. Support from the supervisor also allowed high performers to engage in their organization. It is also interesting to note that the bureaucratic system, especially the complex process of work, was connected to both organizational and job engagement. Apart from that, dissatisfaction with development policy and personal reasons were key drivers of turnover intentions. Engagement could not interrupt their intentions, however. Lastly, there was no empirical evidence for the relationship between absenteeism and talent retention.

4.3 Parallel Mixed Data Analysis

The findings of both the quantitative and qualitative methods were then analyzed together. Table 4.20 displays the findings from both parts by showing the sameness and some diversion from each other. It can be seen that a number of findings were verified, such as more respondents engage in their job than the organization, they really “throw” themselves into their job, and respondents highly agreed with both the utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism practices of the HiPPS, and so on. Overall, there was no major contrast in any of the findings. The findings from both quantitative and qualitative approaches verify each other—they support each other. Therefore, the findings in this study were verified.

Table 4.20 Findings from the Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS	QUALITATIVE FINDINGS
<p>A majority of 80.5 percent reported that if they were not seriously unable to work, they would not take a leave, while only 34.1 percent revealed that they would work until retirement. This means that most respondents did not intend to be absent if unnecessary, but in the long term they did not intend to remain working in the public sector until retirement. In other words, a low level of talent retention was found.</p>	<p>Four out of 5 informants reported that if they were not seriously unable to work, they would not take a leave. Only one informant disclosed that she would take a leave at anytime she preferred if it did not affect her job.</p> <p>For those that still worked in the government agency, 2 out of 3 informants revealed that they would work in their agencies for a certain time and then leave after that. Only one informant said that he would work until retirement.</p>
<p>Respondents agreed with both utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism practices in the HiPPS since the percentage of each item was higher than 50 percent.</p>	<p>All key informants stated that the HiPPS was a good project that encourages talented people to maximize their potential.</p>
<p>In the practices of utilitarian instrumentalism, a majority of 87.8 percent agreed and strongly agreed with the result-oriented approach in the HiPPS and flexible positioning based on performance. In the developmental humanism practices, most respondents, 94.0 percent, agreed and strongly agreed with individual career development plans, while 87.8 percent agreed with EAF and IDP initiatives.</p>	<p>Selection processes are well-designed. Rotation is very attractive since it leads to opportunity to learn various kinds of jobs. Career path is a good approach for promoting talented people.</p>

Table 4.20 (Continued)

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS	QUALITATIVE FINDINGS
<p>It was found that respondents were engaged in both the organization and job but more respondents engaged in the job than the organization. Sixty-four point seven percent reported that they were highly engaged in their organizations, while 76.8 percent were highly engaged in their job.</p>	<p>It was revealed that all key informants were more engaged in their job than in the organization.</p>
<p>In terms of organizational engagement, a majority of 73.2 percent reported that they were proud of being members of their government agency, while 64.7 percent strongly desired to work at their organization. Sixty-four point two percent found that one of the most exciting things for them was getting involved with things happening in their organizations. These findings were confirmed by the reverse question; 46.9 percent of respondents disagreed that they were not “goings-on” their organization.</p>	<p>Challenging assignments created a feeling of job responsibility. When work was done, intrinsic rewards such as pride in success were gained. It also prevented boredom at work. Working for the nation provided a sense of value at work. Pride in being a part of the country’s development was linked to organizational engagement. Understanding and recognition from supervisors encouraged key informants to enjoy working at that moment. Empowerment was another key element of job satisfaction.</p>
<p>In terms of job engagement, almost all respondents (91.5 percent) reported that they really “throw” themselves into their job and no respondents disagreed with this item.</p>	<p>Friendship from those that worked with key informants encouraged a good working environment. Being an HiPPS member provided a chance to create networking for sharing and understanding the work context.</p>

Table 4.20 (Continued)

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS	QUALITATIVE FINDINGS
<p>H1: HR practices did not significantly correlate with talent retention. However, a significant relationship between the two models of HR practices can be seen ($r=.813, p <0.01$).</p>	<p>Key informants also revealed that HR practices were not the reason for resignation.</p>
<p>H2: Both organizational and job engagement were significantly related to talent retention ($r=.645, r=.409; p <0.01$, respectively). Moreover, a significant relationship between the two types of engagement can be seen ($r=.377, p <0.01$).</p>	<p>The relationship between organizational and job engagement can be seen.</p>
<p>H3: There was no significantly associated between HR practices and talent engagement. These findings indicate that provision of HR practices in the HiPPS do not lead to the engagement of respondents.</p>	<p>n/a</p>
<p>H4: Talent engagement did not mediate the relationship between HR practices and talent retention.</p>	<p>n/a</p>

Table 4.20 (Continued)

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS	QUALITATIVE FINDINGS
<p>H5: Among personal characteristics, the findings from the multiple regression analysis revealed that educational background showed a significant relation with talent retention ($t=-2.684$, $p < 0.01$). This indicated that the higher the education, the lower the retention.</p>	n/a
<p>H6: There was no relationship between organizational characteristics and talent retention.</p>	n/a
<p>H7: There was no relationship between job characteristics and talent retention.</p>	n/a
<p>Most participants (Mode=22) indicated that challenging and interesting jobs were ranked first in job engagement.</p>	<p>All key informants revealed that challenges and empowerment can lead to high job engagement.</p>
<p>It was shown that the HiPPS participants were concerned about the impact on national development ($n=11$) and were proud of their success in their job ($n=11$).</p>	<p>All key informants stated that a sense of working for the country was a core element of organizational engagement.</p>
<p>Most participants (Mode=22) indicated that challenging and interesting jobs were ranked first in job engagement.</p>	<p>All key informants revealed that challenges and empowerment can lead to high job engagement.</p>

Table 4.20 (Continued)

QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS	QUALITATIVE FINDINGS
n/a	All key informants reported that support from supervisors also allowed high performers to engage in their organization.
n/a	One key informant resigned for personal reasons.
n/a	All key informants stated that HR units in public agencies required a more proactive role in the HiPPS.

4.4 Summary

This chapter provides details on the data analysis and research results. Findings from both quantitative and qualitative approaches are separately analyzed and finally employed the parallel mixed data analysis.

The findings from the quantitative methods indicate a low level of talent retention. Even though they agree with the HR practices in the HiPPS and also engage in both the organization and the job, they do not intend to stay in the public sector until retirement. In terms of hypothesis testing, it was found that the determinants influencing talent retention were talent engagement; both organizational and job engagement were significantly related to talent retention ($r=.645$, $r=.409$; $p < 0.01$, respectively). This indicated that the higher the engagement, the higher the level of retention. Educational background was also significantly associated with talent retention ($t=-2.684$, $p < 0.01$). However, this was a negative relationship, which indicated that the higher the education, the lower the retention.

Regarding the qualitative method, it can be claimed that HR practices in the HiPPS were not directly relate to talent retention, even though HiPPS members agree that it is a good project. Mismatching of the job and bureaucratic system brought

about low engagement in both the organization and the job. Key informants revealed that mismatching was the core driver of transferring. Apart from that, dissatisfaction with development policy and personal reasons were key drivers in turnover intentions.

Lastly, the parallel mixed data analysis illustrated that the findings from both methods affirmed each other. In sum, it was verified that the public sector is facing challenges with talent retention. Effort to keep talented people is required.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This last chapter provides the research conclusions and discussion. It is categorized into 5 parts. Beginning the chapter with a summary of findings, conclusions derived from the mixed methods research are presented. The next session discusses the findings. The details of each factor related to talent retention are widely discussed based on the research results. Then the implications of the findings regarding both HR theory and practice are illustrated. And last are limitations of the study and recommendations for further research.

5.1 Summary and Conclusion

In the quantitative data collection, demographic data illustrated that 58.5 percent of respondents were female, while the rest, 41.5 percent, were male. Most of them, or 70.7 percent, graduated with a master's degree. In terms of respondents' age, 57.3 percent were at the age of 30-35 years and no respondents reported being over 40. According to the work year, most of them, or 59.8 percent, had been working in the public sector for 4-6 years, followed by 18.3 and 15.9 percent for 1-3 years and 7-9 years, respectively. Only 6.1 percent of them reported that they had worked with the government sector for more than 10 years. Thus, it is noted that most of respondents represented the Generation Y workforce.

According to their job and organizational characteristics, it was found that most of them, 43.9 percent, worked for the ministries in the economic sector, while 25.6 percent and 22 percent worked in central government agencies and social and development ministries, respectively. Thirty-nine percent worked in the policy and planning job family. Twenty-four point four percent of them were in study and research, and 18.3 percent were in law enforcement.

In the qualitative method, key informants were those who were in the HiPPS. There were a total of 5 persons on the interviewing list. Three of them had resigned from the public sector and two of them had been transferred and are currently working for other public agencies. Limitations from the available data and time constraints made interviewing possible at 60 percent, and 3 additional interviews for triangulation.

According to the research objectives, the following are the findings derived from this study.

5.1.1 The Level of Talent Retention among HiPPS members

It was revealed that a majority of 80.5 percent reported that if they were not seriously unable to work, they would not take a leave, while only 34.1 percent revealed that they would work until the retirement. This means that most of the respondents did not intend to be absented if unnecessary, but in the long term they did not intend to remain working in the public sector until retirement. In other words, a low level of talent retention was found. Concerning HR practices in the HiPPS, respondents agreed with both utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism practices in the HiPPS since the percentage in every item was higher than 50 percent. The findings also show that respondents were engaged in both the organization and job but there more respondents engaged in the job than in the organization.

In sum, the findings indicate a low level of talent retention. Even though they agree with HR practices in the HiPPS and also engage in both the organization and the job, they did not intend to stay in the public sector until retirement.

5.1.2 Factors Determining Talent Retention in the Thai Public Sector

The following are the findings from the hypothesis testing. HR practices, talent engagement, and other related characteristics, namely personal, organization and job characteristics, were examined.

5.1.2.1 H1: HR practices are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

It was found that HR practices did not significantly correlate with talent retention. HR practices in both utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism did not relate to the intention to remain or to resign. However, a significant relationship can be seen between the two models of HR practices ($r=.813$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates a high association between HR practices in utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism.

5.1.2.2 H2: Talent engagement is more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

Both organizational and job engagement were significantly related to talent retention ($r=.645$, $r=.409$; $p < 0.01$, respectively). These findings indicate that HiPPS members that engaged in the organization and job were likely to remain in their organization. Moreover, a significant relationship can be seen between the two types of engagement ($r=.377$, $p < 0.01$), which indicates that respondents with organizational engagement might also engage in their job and vice versa.

5.1.2.3 H3: HR practices are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent engagement.

There is no significant association between HR practices and talent engagement. These findings indicate that provision of HR practices in the HiPPS do not lead to the engagement of respondents.

5.1.2.4 H4: Talent engagement is more likely to mediate the relationship between HR practices and talent retention.

The testing of the mediator role by multiple regression analysis illustrated that a relation in the first condition of the mediator role was not found since HR practices were not significantly related to talent engagement. However, the second condition was met: talent engagement significantly related to talent retention ($R^2 = .134$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that talent engagement can predict the level of retention at 1.34 percent, where the affect is not large. For the last condition, it was revealed that there was no significant association between HR practices and talent engagement. Therefore, the mediator role of talent engagement was not accepted.

5.1.2.5 H5: Personal factors are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

Personal factors, namely gender, age, education background, and years of working in the public sector, were examined as to whether they can be associated with talent retention. The findings from the multiple regression analysis revealed that educational background shows a negative significant relation to talent retention ($t=-2.684$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that the higher the education, the lower the retention. It was also revealed that the educational background of the respondents explains a significant amount of the variance in talent retention ($R^2 = .064$, $p < 0.10$). It can therefore be explained that educational background can predict the level of talent retention at 6.4 percent.

5.1.2.6 H6: Organizational characteristics are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

The multiple regression analysis revealed that there was no relationship between organizational characteristics and talent retention.

5.1.2.7 H7: Job characteristics are more likely to have a positive relationship with talent retention.

The multiple regression analysis revealed that there was no relationship between job characteristic and talent retention.

A summary of hypothesis testing shows that talent engagement and educational background are significantly related to talent retention, while the rest of the variables revealed no such relationships.

In the qualitative section of the study, it was found that all key informants agreed that the HiPPS was a good project but that it was not very much associated with their engagement. However, developmental humanism, such as rotation and career path, were more attractive than utilitarian instrumentalism. It was found that the content of the assigned job was directly related to job engagement. Challenges and empowerment can lead to high job engagement. Mismatching of jobs and the bureaucratic system bring about low engagement in both the organization and the job. One key informant revealed, however, that mismatching was the core driver of her transferring.

In terms of organizational engagement, a sense of working for the country was seen as the core element of organization engagement. Support from the supervisor also allowed high performers to engage in their organization. It is also interesting to note that the bureaucratic system, especially the complex process of work, was connected to both the organization and job engagement. Apart from that, dissatisfaction with the development policy and personal reasons were the key drivers in turnover intentions. Engagement could not interrupt their intentions. Lastly, there was no empirical evidence for the relationship between absenteeism and talent retention.

The findings of both the quantitative and qualitative methods were then together analyzed by utilizing the parallel mixed data analysis. It was found that the findings from both parts showed both sameness and some expansion from each other. It can be seen that a number of findings were verified, such as more respondents engaged in their job than in the organization, they really “throw” themselves into their job, respondents highly agreed with both utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism HR practices in the HiPPS, and so on. Overall, there was no major contrast in any of the findings. They rather supported each other. Therefore, the findings in this study were verified.

5.2 Discussion of the Research Findings

5.2.1 HR Practices and Talent Retention

Because retention and turnover are typically viewed as organization-wide concerns, HR professionals are required to play a key role in their organization’s effort through the retention crisis. It is obvious that the public sector is facing challenges regarding talent retention and the OCSC has introduced the HiPPS as a talent management initiative by implementing a number of HR practices, including both utilitarian instrumentalism and developmental humanism. However, these practices do not seem to be associated with talent retention.

Considering carefully, the HiPPS practices are most prominent in selection and development. Sophisticated designs in the selection process were broadly accepted, which can be seen from both the quantitative and qualitative findings. All of

the practices in developmental humanism are concerned with potential development. The rest are related to performance management, for example, result oriented approach, performance agreement, performance appraisal, and special quotas for promotion. The implication which is derived from the in-depth interviewing revealed that these practices are more related to satisfaction with development opportunity than with retention. Therefore, an examination of the relationship between HR practices and talent retention did not reveal a relationship.

In order to encourage talent retention in the public sector, it is noted that retention is just one part of several components that combine to create an approach of talent management. Strategies and solid execution seem to be required to attack this problem. This study provides some empirical data of on why these talented people join organizations, what to stay, and what may prompt them to leave. Thus, proactive strategies of talent management are required in order to prevent upcoming troubles. Talent retention issue is so critical that the HR strategies that have worked in the past will no longer be adequate; proactive management is strongly required.

5.2.2 Talent Engagement and Talent Retention

Both organizational and job engagement were significantly related to talent retention ($r=.645$, $r=.409$; $p < 0.01$, respectively), which indicates that HiPPS members that engage in the organization and job are likely to remain in their organization. The findings also reveal that respondents were engaged in both their organization and job but that more respondents engage in the job than in the organization. This is a good sign for talent retention in the public sector.

Concerning the factors influencing level of engagement, answers from the open-ended questions revealed that “peers and colleagues” were most influenced by organizational engagement (Mode=19). In the qualitative section of the study, a sense of working for the country was the core element of organizational engagement. Support from the supervisor also allowed high performers to engage in their organization. In terms of job engagement, it was illustrated that challenging and interesting jobs were the most frequently answered for this question. Thirty-eight participants indicates challenging and interesting job, followed by responsibilities in the assigned job ($n=20$), peers and colleagues ($n=19$), learning opportunities ($n=13$),

and impact on the nation (n=13), respectively. The findings from the qualitative part also revealed that job assignment was directly related to job engagement. Challenges and empowerment can lead to high job engagement.

Moreover, it was also found that the bureaucratic system, especially the complex process of work, was connected to both organizational and job engagement. The mismatching of jobs and the bureaucratic system created low engagement in both the organization and the job.

To conclude, this study provides empirical data on the factors influencing talent engagement; namely, peers and colleagues, a sense of working for the country, support from the supervisor, challenging and interesting job assignments, and learning opportunities. These factors can be employed for the creation of strategies in order to encourage talent engagement in the Thai public sector.

5.3 Implications of the Findings

5.3.1 Theoretical Implications

Even though the findings reveal that HR practices in the HiPPS do not correlate with talent engagement or retention, a number of empirical facts regarding the theory of HR were verified. First, it was proved that HR practices in developmental humanism, which focuses on the “human” side of HRM, are effective motivational factors. The findings also revealed that career path, learning opportunity, and rotation are more attractive than other HR practices in the HiPPS. As Kane et al. (1999: 496) claim, this “developmental humanist approach” involves a focus upon fostering employee motivation, commitment, and development.

Secondly, the multiple roles of organization members resulted in a relation between the two types of talent engagement. The data showed a significant relation between organizational and job engagement ($r=.377$, $p < 0.01$). This aligns with the conceptualization of engagement as role related (Kahn, 1990; Rothbard, 2001 quoted in Saks, 2006: 603), indicating that the two most dominant roles for most organizational members are their work role and their role as a member of the organization. Therefore, their job and organizational engagement were significantly related.

Thirdly, “employer branding” of the public organization leads to organization engagement. The findings from both the quantitative and qualitative methods illustrate that HiPPS participants value the sense of working for the nation. A number of answers indicate pride in working in the area of the country’s development. Since employer branding plays a crucial role in the talent acquisition system (Schiemann, 2009: 45), it is a good sign for the public sector that talented people are willing to work for the country.

Next, it was confirmed that compensation is less a factor in retention and more in recruitment (Stone, 2002: 58-59). Acceptance of being a government official from the first day with a government compensation package seemed to indicate that a monetary reward was not the core factor influencing the individual’s decision to work in the public sector. Since monetary rewards were accepted, both findings from the quantitative and qualitative methods were verified: that monetary rewards were not the factor influencing their staying in the public sector.

Lastly, it was also found that employee engagement was positively associated with intent to remain with one’s organization (Hackman and Oldham, 1980; Harter et al., 2002; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004 quoted in John and Harter, 2005: 79). This was also verified by the finding that both organizational and job engagement were significantly associated to talent retention ($r=.645$, $r=.409$; $p < 0.01$, respectively).

5.3.2 Practical Implications

Regarding the talent engagement framework, Phillips and Roper (2009:11) state that attracting and selecting talent are only the start and can appear to be the simplest of the phases. The HiPPS then can be seen as the first step in talent management in the public sector. The next step of encouraging talent engagement is suggested by understanding more effectively and by responding to individual expectations from work.

At the individual level, research reveals that “peers and colleagues” of HiPPS members most influence their organizational engagement. Therefore, team building is recommended in order to encourage a positive working culture and organizational engagement. The research findings also showed that challenged in the assigned job

lead to job engagement. Therefore, more provision of supervisory knowledge and skills by their coaches and mentors is suggested. However, each talented person has his or her own aspirations, so the interpersonal skills of those that are around them are encouraged.

The HR Unit in each organization plays a crucial role in implementing HR practices. The findings showed that they require a more proactive manner in responding to HiPPS processes. Strengthening the coordination between the HR unit and the OCSC, especially regarding HiPPS practices, should be addressed.

At the organization level, Lunn (1992: 12) suggests: “the challenge is to enable the key motivators of responsibility, achievement and feeling of self worth, to become common currency throughout the organization rather than the preserve of the minority.” Thus, performance management, which emphasizes result-based approach, should be promoted. This would provide the ground rules for everyone in the organization. This performance management will lead to the perception that rewards are allocated based on performance, not because of being an HiPPS member. It is expected that this approach will facilitate the working life of HiPPS members and will prevent the wrong perception of HiPPS members.

Finally, in order to ensure that pipeline of leadership in the public sector is created, a talent spin cycle is considered. The talent spin cycle is “a continual process of collecting new talent prospects, forming relationships with them, and either qualifying them for delivery into the organization or maintaining the relationships over time so that organizations can consider them for the future opportunities” (Rueff and Stringer, 2006: 80).

During the last 7 years, the OCSC had introduced and promoted a number of HR practices in the HiPPS, but they are most concerned with talent acquisition and development. As mentioned, the HiPPS project is a first step in talent management. The next step of the OCSC, then, should emphasize sustaining or making talented people engage in the public sector. According to Ulrich (1997: 123-149), helping the HR unit to be an employee champion is suggested. Reducing demand, increasing resources, and turning demand into resources are recommended approaches. Examples of these approaches are challenging work, teamwork, fun at work, etc.

5.4 Limitations

5.4.1 The factors that were excluded from this study

As mentioned earlier, there are many factors that affect talent retention, such as personal factors, job character factors, organizational style factors, work experience factors, and environmental factors. Moreover, the reasons for resignation are various. Data from the OCSC show that, in 2006, among 3,136 government officials who resigned from the civil service system, reported that they preferred to work in other occupations (53.64 percent), which was the main reason. Other reasons were further education (17.76 percent), personal reason-family aspect (7.59 percent), and not specified (5.64 percent), respectively (OCSC, 2006: table 13). However, this study mainly focused on HR practices because there was limited research in this area. Limited resources and time constraints were additional reasons. Therefore, other variables were not explored, although it does appear that they could affect the results.

Another limitation of this study was the perspective adopted. Instead of trying to understand talent management in general, this study has been first and foremost limited to the retention perspective. This can thus also be seen as a limiting factor in this study.

1.5.2 Organizational Context

Each organization has its own context. Therefore, different organizations cannot be seen in the same pattern. This study focuses only on the civil service sector; therefore it cannot be concluded that what occurred in this study will necessarily occur in other organizations. Thus the findings in this study may be applicable only to a similar organizational context.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Study

Even though much progress has been made with regard to the implications of employee engagement, a limited number of talent retention studies have been carried out. This study serves as an essential starting point for building a more robust

empirical base that can significantly increase the knowledge in this field. Therefore, future research lies in the following areas.

This study does not examine the exact content of retention regarding various conditions and issues. More talent retention research is therefore needed, not only in civil service settings but also in any types of agencies in the public sector in order to create patterns that are scientifically sound and generally acceptable.

Since HR practices in the HiPPS are not significantly associated with talent engagement, discovering the antecedents of talent engagement is suggested. Other HR practices, such as fun at work, quality of work-life, or work at home, should be investigated. Apart from HR practices, the specific characteristics of engagement in the public sector, such as “sense of working for the country,” need to be examined.

Comparative study of engagement of 3 groups of people in organizations (“A”, “B”, and “C” players) is encouraged. Since any organization is comprised of these groups of people, proper HR practices should be sophisticatedly designed for each group of people.

Lastly, much research has found that engagement is related to turnover intentions. There are few reviews of those that are disengaged but prefer to stay in the organization. In the public sector, these groups of people are referred to as “dead wood.” Investigation of the antecedents and consequences of engagement is also suggested. This is another area that will broaden the understanding of engagement.

5.6 Summary

This last chapter concludes the findings from the research, revealing a low level of talent retention. Even though HiPPS members agree with HR practices in the HiPPS and also engage in both the organization and the job, they do not intend to stay in the public sector until retirement. It was also found that both organizational and job engagement are significantly related to talent retention, which indicates that HiPPS members that engage in the organization and the job are likely to remain in their organization. Moreover, educational background is negatively associated with talent retention: the higher the education, the less the retention.

The findings verify a number theoretical aspects, for example, HR practices which focus on the “human” side are effective motivational factors, the multiple roles of organization members resulting in a relation between the two types of talent engagement, and monetary rewards not being a key retention factor.

Recommendations are provided at every level, including the individual, the HR unit, the organization, and the OCSC, aimed at enhancing talent retention through better understanding and by responding better to individual expectations. However, there were some limitations to this study; therefore, suggestions for further research were provided. Expanding the scope of study and adding more variables have been suggested.

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Appendix A Questionnaire

Research Questionnaire Determinants of Talent Retention in the Thai Public Sector

Directions

This research questionnaire is a part of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Development Administration), School of Public Administration, National Institute of Development Administration. The objectives of this research are 1) to study the level of talent retention among HiPPS members, and 2) to examine the factors determining the talent retention in the Thai public sector, which are HR practices, talent engagement, and related contexts; namely, personal, organization, and job characteristics. The data derived from this research are for academic proposes only. No personal information will be disclosed.

Questionnaire Structures

- Part 1 Demographic Data
- Part 2 Opinion of HR Practices
- Part 3 Talent Engagement
- Part 4 Talent Retention
- Part 5 Open-ended Questions

Definitions

Talent Retention

It is the intention to remain in an organization. In this study, talent retention refers to the intention of HiPPS members to work for the public sector until retirement. On the other hand, talent retention can be seen from the low level of turnover intentions.

Human Resource Management (HRM)

HRM is the effective management of people at work. It examines what can or should be done to make working people more productive and satisfied (Ivancevich and Hoon, 2002:4). The two models of HRM in this study are:

Utilitarian Instrumentalism

Utilitarian instrumentalism is concerned with the effective utilization of employees (Guest, 2002 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005: 534-535) and emphasizes the quantitative, calculative, and business strategic aspects of managing the “head count resource” in as “natural” a way as for any other economic factor (Storey, 1987 quoted in Edgar and Geare, 2005:534-535). It stresses HRM's focus on the crucial importance of the close integration of human resource policies, systems, and activities with business strategy.

Developmental Humanism

Developmental humanism is concerned with increasing employee commitment, participation, and involvement (Legge, 1995 quoted in Gill, 1999: 4). It focuses on treating employees as valued assets and as a source of competitive advantage through their commitment, adaptability, and high-quality skill and performance.

Talented People

Key performers whom organizations prefer to retain. In this study, they are those in the HiPPS from 2007 to 2009.

Talent Engagement

An approach to talent management which focuses on making talented employees engage in their organizations and jobs is defined. In this study, it is referred to as the engagement level of government officials in the HiPPS project.

Part 1 Demographics Data Please copy ✓ and paste in front of your choice.

1. Gender

<input type="checkbox"/>	Male
<input type="checkbox"/>	Female

2. Educational background

<input type="checkbox"/>	Bachelor's degree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Master's degree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Doctoral degree

3. Age

<input type="checkbox"/>	Below 30
<input type="checkbox"/>	30-35
<input type="checkbox"/>	35-40
<input type="checkbox"/>	Higher than 40

4. Years of working in the public sector

<input type="checkbox"/>	1-3 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	4-6 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	6-9 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	More than 10 years

5. Current Job Family	
	Advisory
	Policy and Planning
	Study and Research
	Law Enforcement
	Public Communication and Promotion
	Public Education and Development
	Caring Services
	Cultural and Artistic Vocational Skill Services
	Public Governance
	Conservation
	Others (please specify.....)
6. Organization	
	Central government agencies <i>(Office of the Prime Minister, other independent agencies)</i>
	Economics Ministries <i>(Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, and Ministry of Labor)</i>
	Social and Development Ministries <i>(Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, Ministry of Science and Technology, and Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment)</i>
	Public Governance Ministries <i>(Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Justice)</i>

Part 2 Opinion of HR Practices					
Please indicate level of your agreement on the following items.					
HR Practices	Strongly agree	Agree	Fair	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Utilitarian Instrumentalism					
1. Recruitment and selection process in the HiPPS					
2. Flexible positioning based on performance					
3. Workforce planning for future leadership					
4. Competency-based management					
5. Need analysis for competency assessment					
6. Performance agreement with KPI					
7. Result-oriented approach					
8. Special promotion quota for salary increase					
9. Performance appraisal					
Developmental Humanism					
10. Individual career development plan					
11. Experience-Accumulated Framework: EAF					
12. Individual Development Plan: IDP					
13. Challenging assignments					
14. Coaching and mentoring					
15. Job Rotation					
16. Government scholarship					
17. Network and connection building					
18. Recognizing as high performers					

Part 3 Engagement Level					
Please indicate the level of your agreement on the following items.					
Engagement	Strongly agree	Agree	Fair	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Organizational Engagement					
1. I strongly desire to work at this government agency.					
2. I am so proud of being a member of this organization.					
3. One of the most exciting things for me is getting involved with things happening in this organization.					
4. Being a member of this organization makes me come "alive."					
5. I am really not into the "goings-on" in this organization.					
6. I am highly engaged in this organization					
Job Engagement					
7. I really "throw" myself into my job.					
8. This job is all consuming; I am totally into it.					
9. Sometimes I am so into my job that I lose track of time.					
10. My mind often wanders and I think of other things when doing my job.					
11. I am highly engaged in this job.					

5.3 Other opinions of talent retention

Thank you

Appendix B Interviewing Guide

Introduction: Self-introduction, name, and general affiliation

Purpose of Interview

To investigate the determinants of talent retention

Interview Outline

Talent Retention

What was your opinion of absenteeism at work while you were in your previous organization?

How did you make a decision to resign?

HR Practices

What is your opinion of HR practices in the government sector?

Could you please describe how you feel about result-based practices?

Could you please describe how you feel about the “soft side” of human practices?

Organizational Engagement

Could you please describe your feeling about working at the previous government agency?

What was your reaction to the events/activities within your previous organization?

Job Engagement

How did you manage your time while working in the previous organization?

Could you please describe how you feel about your previous job?

BIOGRAPHY

NAME	Pornrat Sadangharn
ACADEMIC BACKGROUND	Bachelor's Degree with a major in Cooperative Economics from Kasetsart University, Bangkok, Thailand in 1986 and a Master's Degree in Human Resource Management at Middlesex University Business School, London, the United Kingdom in 1998
EXPERIENCES	Organizational Development Management Manager at Thailand Productivity Institute in 2009 Human Resource Manager at Thailand Productivity Institute in 2008 Chief of Human Resource Department at Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency (Public Organization) in 2007 Public Sector Development Officer at the Office of Public Sector Development Commission in 2003-2006 Personnel Analyst at Office of the Civil Service Commission in 1993-2002 Training Officer at Cooperative League of Thailand in 1986-1992