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Investigate Attitudes towards Talent Management in an IT Organisation

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Abstract

IT Organisations are encountering challenges such as skill shortages, changing demographics, globalisation and changes in technology, which are impacting how talent is attracted, evaluated, developed and managed. Studies around talent management typically focus on the subject from an employer's viewpoint or from those who are already being actively talent-managed. This research contributes to closing the gap in the literature, as it examines talent management at all levels of an IT organisation and aims to create talent management scales.

Senior management seem to highly value talent management, but the appreciation of talent management may dilute down through the organisation. This prompts further questions, such as whether people face any barriers to talent management and who they feel is ultimately responsible for their development.

Using a quantitative analysis on an IT organisation, three scales were created; Perception of Talent Management, Barriers to Talent Management and Talent Management Responsibility.

Findings indicate that there are differences in the perception of talent management at various levels of the organisation. Interestingly, lower levels of the organisation have a higher perception of talent management, which is in conflict with the literature. Differences in perception were also found depending on the number of direct reports, but no differences were found between People Managers/Non People Managers, between Departments or by Age. Additionally, different levels of the organisation view talent management responsibility differently, while there were no differences identified in regards to barriers to talent management within the organisation.

Any talent management strategy would need to be driven from the top of the organisation to ensure consistency and alignment at all levels. Organisations need to be adaptive and plan ahead in order to remain competitive in the talent management domain.

KEYWORDS:

Talent Management, Talent Development, War for Talent, Perception of Talent Management, Barriers to Talent Management, Talent Management Responsibility

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Abbreviations

CIPD	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIO	Chief Information Officer
CSO	Central Statistics Office
G&A	General and Administrative
HR	Human Resources
HRD	Human Resource Development
IT	Information Technology
MNC	Multinational Corporation
PwC	PricewaterhouseCoopers

1.Introduction

According to CIPD (2014a), talent management is the “systematic attraction, identification, development, engagement, retention and deployment of those individuals who are of particular value to an organisation, either in view of their “high potential” for the future or because they are fulfilling business/operation-critical roles”.

There is no one definition for talent (Tansley, 2011; CIPD, 2007a; Florida, 2002; Michaels *et al.*, 2001), yet it would appear that talent management is a growing area of interest (PwC, 2014; Lewis and Heckman, 2006). In a CIPD report (2015a), it was stated, “what is clear is that organisations that fail to prioritise talent management risk losing out as demand for key skills escalates”. Over 70% of employers in Ireland have expressed concern over the skills gap and their ability to grow as a result of this (Accenture, 2013). Organisations are encountering new difficulties in the global workforce such as these skill shortages, changing demographics, globalisation and technological changes (Brightwater, 2014; Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2014; Accenture, 2013). The term “The War for Talent” first appeared in the McKinsey Quarterly report as a result of these difficulties (Chambers *et al.*, 1998).

While there is a constant demand for talent within the global workforce, this is particularly evident within the IT sector in Ireland with many organisations forced to look internationally for the skills required (Department of Justice and Equality, 2014a; Department of Justice and Equality, 2014b). These difficulties have forced IT organisations to consider different ways in attracting new employees and developing, retaining and engaging current employees (Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2014). Organisations in Ireland have been forced to recruit internationally with the number of work permits issued for the services industry, which includes the IT industry, having increased year on year (Department of Justice and Equality, 2014a).

Talent management covers all areas of the lifecycle of an employee including attracting, evaluating, developing and managing talent (Tansley *et al.*, 2007). Some examples include using employer branding for attracting talent (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004),

metrics for evaluating talent (CIPD, 2014b), succession planning for developing people (CIPD, 2014a) and performance management to manage talent (Tansley *et al.*, 2007).

The practice of talent management can face a number of challenges. Talent management can be either inclusive or exclusive, both with positive and negative consequences (Tansley *et al.*, 2007). Organisations may face restrictions around budgets (CIPD, 2015b). There can be issues applying and aligning talent management on a global basis (Guthridge and Komm, 2008). Business and HR leaders have cited that senior managers are spending insufficient time on talent management and line managers themselves can be a barrier for a high performer if they do not have the time to spend investing in them (Guthridge *et al.*, 2008). For talent management to be effective within an organisation, it must filter down from the top of the organisation (Ashton and Morton, 2005). It would appear CEOs, HR, line managers nor the individual themselves can be left accountable for the process; however, it must fall to each of these groups (Ready and Conger, 2003).

It has been questioned whether talent management is a management fad (Coulson-Thomas, 2012; Blass, Knights and Orbea, 2008), whether it is actually anything new when it encompasses areas (recruitment, retention, development etc.) that have been around for a long time (Adamsky, 2003) and whether HRD practice is susceptible to fads (Short, Bing and Kehrhahn, 2003; Swanson, 2001).

While most studies on talent management focus on the employer's perspective (CIPD, 2010) or senior managers and leaders who are already being actively managed as part of a talent pool (CIPD, 2010; Mellahi and Collings, 2010; Blass, Knights and Orbea, 2008), this study aims to contribute to closing the gap in the literature by examining how talent management is viewed all levels of the organisation using created talent management scales.

1.2. Research Objectives

The research will investigate the following research questions:

- How talent management is perceived at different levels (Entry Level/Specialists, Middle Management and Senior Management) of an IT organisation
- Examine whether there is a dilution of the importance of talent management from senior management down through an IT organisation

- Examine whether barriers are encountered at any level of the organisation
- Examine who people feel is responsible for talent management

1.3. Justification for Research

There appears to be a gap in the literature in regards to talent management, particularly in relation to how it is viewed from the employee's perspective (CIPD, 2010). Given the difficulties employers are currently facing within the employment market including skill-shortages, advancing technologies and changing demographics (Brightwater, 2014; Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2014; Accenture, 2013), research into talent management could add value if applied within an overall talent management strategy. In addition to this gap, there is also an extremely high demand for certain skills within the IT industry (Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2014), which are driving up the number of work permits being issued for these skill sets (Department of Justice and Equality, 2014a; Department of Justice and Equality, 2014b). Understanding talent management within an IT Organisation could potentially aid attraction, evaluation, developing and managing people (Tansley *et al.*, 2007).

There were no questionnaires identified within the literature that serve to understand the perception of talent management. As a result of this, a questionnaire will be designed in an attempt to create usable scales in regards to talent management.

1.4. Outline of the Study

This study is organised into six chapters:

- Chapter 1 gives a brief background to the study
- Chapter 2 explores talent management and identifies gaps within the literature
- Chapter 3 outlines the methodology used within this study
- Chapter 4 presents the results of this study
- Chapter 5 is a critical evaluation of the study, including practical implications
- Chapter 6 provides a conclusion to the study, including recommendations and financial/resource implications.

2.Literature Review

2.1. Talent Management

According to CIPD (2014a), talent management is the “systematic attraction, identification, development, engagement, retention and deployment of those individuals who are of particular value to an organisation, either in view of their “high potential” for the future or because they are fulfilling business/operation-critical roles”.

There are many definitions of talent throughout the literature. Michaels *et al.*, (2001) define managerial talent as “some combination of a sharp strategic mind, leadership ability, emotional maturity, communication skills, the ability to attract and inspire other talented people, entrepreneurial instincts, functional skills, and the ability to deliver results”.

Talent is defined as “individuals with high levels of human capital, measured as the percentage of the population with a bachelor’s degree or above” in a study completed by Florida (2002), who examined whether talent is attracted by diversity.

Tansley (2011) examines the notion of “talent” and the difficulties involved in defining talent within organisations. Tansley (2011) notes that there is no one definition of organisational talent; however, defining talent is a necessity to produce talent management practises. CIPD (2007) found that the definition of talent is organisationally specific, influenced by the nature and industry of the work and is dynamic. Ashton and Morton (2005) note the definition of talent within an organisation needs to be fluid, so that it can change along with business drivers. Michaels *et al.* (2001) discuss how talent can elude any description as it may be a case of “you simply know when you see it”. Similar to the term “talent”, the term “talent management” would appear to have no clear definition (Lewis and Heckman, 2006). Lewis and Heckman (2006) describe the lack of clarity around the definition, scope and goals of talent management as “disturbing” and argue that the perspectives that emerged from their review of the literature as unsatisfying.

Most studies are in agreement that there is no one definition for talent (Tansley, 2011; CIPD, 2007a; Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Ashton and Morton, 2005). Tansley *et al.*,

(2007) note that organisations should find their own meaning of talent as it can vary so much between companies and its management is most effective when linked to the corporate strategy.

The term “The War for Talent” first appeared in the McKinsey Quarterly report (Chambers *et al.*, 1998). It argued that talent is worth fighting for due to the difficulties in attracting and retaining good people, in particular executive talent (Chambers *et al.*, 1997). In a report on 289 organisations (see Figure 1 below), the top three objectives for talent management activities seem to be developing high-potential employees (56%), growing future senior managers/leaders (52%) and retaining key employees (38%) (CIPD, 2015b).



Figure 1: Which three of the following best represent the main objectives of your organisation’s talent management activities? (% of respondents with talent management activities) Source: (CIPD, 2015b, p21)

Talent management can either be an inclusive or exclusive process. Advantages to an inclusive model include encouraging development of everyone, a wider talent pool, a wider succession plan and can hone in on many talents across the workforce, while disadvantages include the cost spread on learning and development, increased competition for progression and people with essential skills may not be getting the specific development they require (Tansley *et al.*, 2007). An inclusive approach assumes all people within the organisation are talented and may benefit the company as a competitive advantage (Warren, 2006). In a recent report of 287 organisations, 54% include all staff in their talent management activities (CIPD, 2015a).

It has been argued whether an inclusive approach is most appropriate, as it has been predicted that 20% of the workforce contributes 80% of the value (Branham, 2005) and

assuming all people are talented is necessary for a competitive advantage (Warren, 2006). An exclusive approach is a targeted approach, defines clear resources (financial and non-financial), offers more in terms of individualised development and is easy to track, while disadvantages include the potential for reduced engagement of those outside talent pool, less diversity and potential to miss talent (Tansley *et al.*, 2007).

Talent management is a broad area that covers many activities. As shown in Figure 2 below, the three most commonly used talent management activities include high potential in-house development schemes (42%), coaching (40%) and mentoring and buddy schemes (33%) (CIPD, 2015a).

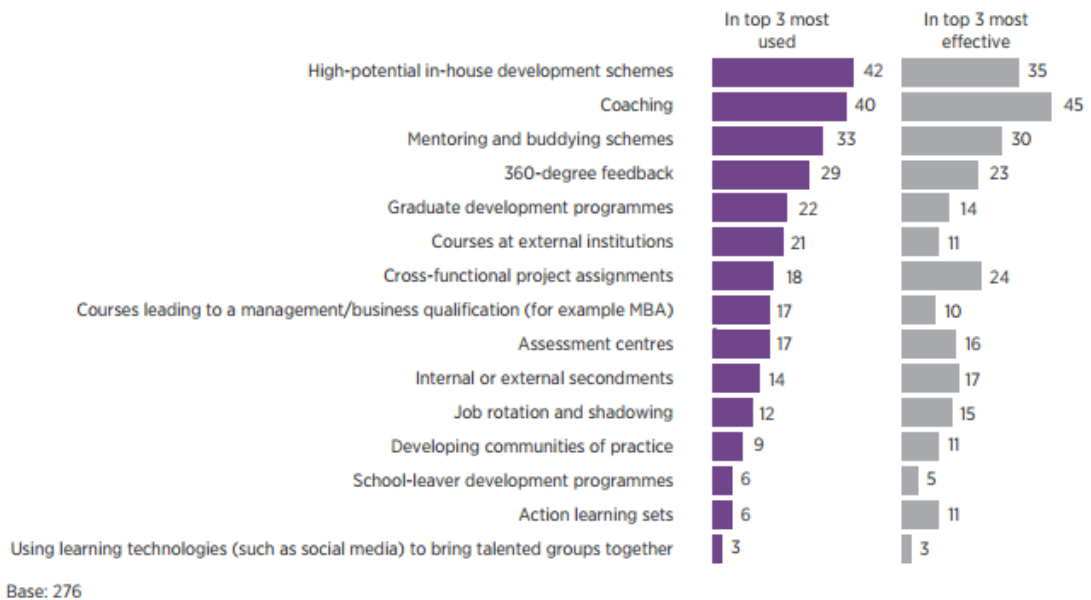


Figure 2: Which three of the following talent management activities are most used and most effective in your organisations? (% of respondents with talent management activities) Source: (CIPD, 2015b, p21)

2.2. The Talent Management Loop

The talent management loop consists of attracting, evaluating, developing and managing talent (Tansley *et al.*, 2007). In essence, this covers the full lifecycle of an employee.

2.2.1. Attracting

Employers are encountering new difficulties in talent management (Brightwater, 2014; Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2014; Accenture, 2013), which are particularly evident in the IT sector in Ireland (Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2014). Employers are attempting to find new ways to address these issues (Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2014) and the employer brand is just one way to promote what makes a company different and desirable as an employer (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). Attracting potential talent depends on how the applicant views the company and whether they share the same values of the organisation (Tansley *et al.*, 2007). Branding is typically focused on products and corporate brands (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). A brand may be considered among an organisation's most valuable assets and using this in human resource management attracts potential employees and engages current employees in the culture and strategy of business (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004).

CIPD (2007b) defines employer branding as a “set of attributes and qualities – often intangible – that makes an organisation distinctive, promises a particular kind of employment experience, and appeals to those people who will thrive and perform to their best in its culture”. The employer brand draws on the value proposition and the psychological contract. The value proposition may be seen as what an organisation stands for, requires and offers as an employer (CIPD, 2007b). The psychological contract may be seen as promises or expectations within the relationship between the employee and employer, as seen in Table 1 (CIPD, 2014d).

Research on the psychological contract shows that people want to work for companies with good employment practices and are inclusive where there is diversity and everyone feels valued and respected (CIPD, 2014c).

Table 1: Commitment Employers and Employees might make in an Employment Proposition. Adapted from CIPD (2014d)

Employees promise to:	Employers promise to provide:
Work hard	Pay commensurate with performance
Uphold company reputation	Opportunities for training and development
Maintain high levels of attendance and punctuality	Opportunities for promotion
Show loyalty to the organisation	Recognition for innovation or new idea
Work extra hours when required	Feedback on performance
Develop new skills and update old ones	Interesting tasks
Be flexible, for example by taking on a colleague's work	An attractive benefits package
Be courteous to clients and colleagues	Respectful treatment
Be honest	Reasonable job security
Come up with new ideas	A pleasant and safe working environment

Most people have heard of Google's employee benefits such as gourmet food, wellbeing initiatives, fitness classes, 80/20 rule to promote the employee's own innovations and "Xoogler" groups which are alumni support for ex-employees (D'onfro and Smith, 2014). People who work at Google are referred to as Googlers and the benefits openly state "we care about you AND your family" (Google, 2015). Google has overcome most of the issues with the skill shortages in Dublin by using its internally recognised brand to attract talent from 42 countries (Tansley *et al.*, 2007). This external branding aims to attract a particular population while also enhancing the brand itself (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). Social media has played a big part in this and been used to both build brands while attracting candidates (CIPD, 2013a).

All organisations have an employer brand, whether this was created intentionally or not (CIPD, 2015c). Employer branding is not a one-size fits all concept. For example, it would be extremely difficult to apply the employer branding that Google uses to another firm, as it may clash with the culture of the organisation. CIPD (2015c) recommends that

employer brands should be identified in a number of stages – 1) discovery, 2) analysis, interpretation and creation, 3) implementation and communication, 4) measurement, maintenance and optimisation.

Employer branding can be useful in recruitment, formation of the psychological contract, and aligning realistic job expectations (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). Employees can become extremely loyal to their employer through the brand and in turn this can increase organisational commitment and productivity (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004).

Employer branding can be costly and varies greatly between sectors. One example noted was that of a UK automotive brand who spend £47,000 on branding, but had an approximate return on investment of 290% (CIPD, 2007b).

In terms of attracting talent, the market shows that resourcing budgets and recruitment for most companies have declined over the past few years and companies have noted an increase in unsuitable candidates (CIPD, 2013a). Talent management budgets have not been as harshly affected, which suggests that companies have shifted to a talent management mind set with a particular focus on addressing retention (CIPD, 2013a).

2.2.2. Evaluating

Human capital is used to “describe people at work and their collective knowledge, skills, abilities and capacity to develop and innovate” (CIPD, 2014b). Human capital can be evaluated both quantitatively and qualitatively and can include areas such as workforce composition, recruitment and retention, skills, qualifications and competencies, performance management, employee relations and voice, pay and benefits, regulatory compliance and organisation development and design (CIPD, 2014b).

Bartlett and Ghoshal (2002) state that the HR function can develop a company’s human capital for sustained competitive advantage through strategic tasks known as building, linking and bonding. Building includes recruiting strategically for the best people at every level and managing out poor performers. Linking involves attracting those with a specialised skillset and ensuring that knowledge is managed and transferred. Bonding means developing the culture of the organisation to ensure an engaging and motivating environment to retain the talented employees.

Huselid (1995) found that investments in high performance work practices such as comprehensive employee recruitment and selection procedures, incentive compensation, performance management systems and extensive training are associated with lower employee turnover and greater productivity and therefore, greater financial performance.

Metrics are often used to measure and evaluate human capital and used for talent management initiatives (CIPD, 2014b). However, it can be argued that this may not be ideal as talent can be difficult to measure, as it is complex and deals with potential rather than performance (Mellahi and Collings, 2010). This can be particularly difficult in global talent management initiatives in Multinational Corporations (MNCs) whereby geographical and social distance may make those located at the headquarters of the organisation more visible to top management (Mellahi and Collings, 2010). Those located within the headquarters of an organisation may have more opportunities to become acquainted with top management as opposed to those with greater social distance limits, who may have a lesser chance of moving up the organisation (Mellahi and Collings, 2010).

Eric Schmidt (former CEO and current executive chairman of Google) discusses that there is a focus on metrics within talent, but the system within Google allows for talent to be discovered if someone is exceptional without any rules (Schmidt and Rosenberg, 2014). Schmidt goes on to say that these metrics focus on schools and GPA, while Google would hire someone exceptionally interesting without any of these requirements (Schmidt and Rosenberg, 2014). Facebook take the same approach where individuals do not require a college degree for a particular role and instead focus on the ability someone has rather than a necessary college degree (Sullivan, 2013a).

Lewis and Heckman (2006) note that talent management analysis has a wide range of definitions from practitioners and that the term “analytics” within this domain can either refer to an analytical technique or a set of measures. The use of the term “analytics” is also driven by the increased use of software packages.

2.2.3. Developing

The development of people as part of a talent management strategy can be either formal or informal. The formal approach has benefits such as the ability to attract potential candidates, shows a clear learning path and supports individual development (Tansley *et al.*, 2007). Negatives include a rigid approach, whereby a diverse workforce would need an extensive programme and issues can arise if certain individuals leave the programme at certain times (Tansley *et al.*, 2007).

Coaching focuses on improving performance and developing skills of an individual and is generally non-directive with both individual and organisational goals being discussed (CIPD, 2014f). Mentoring slightly differs as it generally refers to someone with a greater amount of experience and knowledge supporting the development of an inexperienced person and tends to be a longer process than coaching (CIPD, 2014f).

Many companies have formal learning programmes and manager development programmes. Google has a formalised learning programme called GoogleEDU that uses data analytics and other methods including employee reviews of managers to suggest courses for managers (Walker, 2012).

A Google search of the term “Succession Planning” in June 2015 returns more than 7 million hits. Succession planning may be defined as “a process for identifying and developing potential future leaders or senior managers, as well as individuals to fill other business critical positions, either in the short or long-term (CIPD, 2014a).

It is a difficult decision for any organisation to decide whether to promote internally or hire externally for certain roles. While external recruits can bring fresh ideas, hiring internally for senior roles brings internal firm-specific knowledge and it is particularly important for specialist roles within the IT industry (CIPD, 2014a).

When it comes to key positions such as CEOs, hiring externally can influence labour market demand and earnings of executives (Murphy and Zábajník, 2004). It has been argued that firm-specific knowledge is now readily available in computerised data as opposed to many years ago, so it is not necessary to promote someone with firm-specific knowledge (Murphy and Zábajník, 2004). Rost, Salmono and Osterloh (2008) argue that external hiring of CEOs can cause a drop in performance and integrity as there is no

investment in firm specific knowledge, while Datta and Guthrie (1994) argue that external CEOs are appointed as a direct result of lower profits and growth.

Secondments are another form of development whereby an employee may be assigned to another area of the organisation or even to a separate organisation for a designated period of time and allows for development of the employees skillset while allowing the organisation to make the most of their people, especially during difficult economic periods (CIPD, 2014g).

Secondments offer benefits such as personal development, increased morale and motivation and builds good reputation as an employer, while difficulties include managing expectations of the employee at the end of the secondment and adapting back to their previous position (CIPD, 2014g). Secondments may include international assignments. However, some international assignments may also be on a permanent basis. Expatriates may be used to develop competence and for knowledge transfer (Edstrom and Galbraith, 1977). There are many difficulties that can be encountered when dealing with international mobility such as the total reward package, cultural differences, personal circumstances and language barriers (CIPD, 2013b). Tung (1987) estimated that the rate of expatriate failure is in the region of 10-20% due to poor performance. Rates of failure can be reduced by appropriate training and preparation including language courses or trainings to prevent “culture shock” (Oberg, 1960).

2.2.4. Managing

Within the talent management loop, managing talent refers to performance management, reward management, retention and engagement (Tansley *et al.*, 2007).

Performance management includes everything that comes together to allows successful people management including tools such as the performance appraisal/360 degree feedback and learning and development (CIPD, 2014e).

The total reward package plays an important role in attracting, motivating and retaining employees. Performance-related pay is the use of some form of assessment that links to pay progression for an individual (CIPD, 2014h). Performance-related pay can encourage high performance, can embed a high performance culture and it can improve the notion of fairness across the organisation (CIPD, 2014h). The literature in the field suggests

productivity increases as a direct result of performance-related pay (Gielen, Kerkhofs and van Ours, 2010; Marsden and French, 1998). Estimates vary greatly on the percentage that productivity increases through performance-related pay, but has been estimated from 9% to 50% (Gielen, Kerkhofs and van Ours, 2010; Marsden and French, 1998). Bender (2004) questioned why companies use performance-related pay for their executive directors, when it would appear that money does not motivate employees. However, it appeared that performance-related pay at an executive level reflects on the director's success and is used as a tool to attract and retain executives, while also to match what other companies do (Bender, 2004).

Facebook has a unique approach for managing people. Becoming a manager is a lateral move and not a promotion. In order to maintain focus on their primary technical tasks, each new manager gets an internal mentor for four months and an external "strength coach" for three months with performance feedback every six months including feedback from up to seven people and employees are constantly provided with real-time metrics to measure their results (Sullivan, 2013b).

2.3. Talent Management in IT Companies

Talent Management within IT Companies is particularly competitive. There is a talent shortage in areas that are currently thriving such as data analytics, mobile and cloud computing (CIO, 2012). IT Companies are competing in a harsh environment against companies like Google and Facebook for top talent (CIO, 2012). Adding to the demand in the technology market are financial services companies and non-technology companies (Brightwater, 2015).

Technology and business requirements change rapidly and it important that companies hire the right people to gain a competitive advantage and to prepare for the future (CIO, 2012).

According to Tansley *et al.* (2007), the talent management loop consists of evaluating talent, attracting talent, developing talent and managing talent. This loop essentially encompasses the lifecycle of an employee talent management practices and can be very broad. This can lead to companies adopting new and innovative strategies to attract and retain top talent.

Facebook hires using contest-based recruitment methods such as coding contests and employee referrals known as “Ninja Hunts” whereby employees refer friends who they think would be great engineers for Facebook (Sullivan, 2013a).

One failed attempt at managing talent was whereby Facebook paid employees \$600 extra to live within a mile of the headquarters during its early days to encourage people to drop in for free food and collaboration (Sullivan, 2013a). However, this was quickly dropped as it raised surrounding rent dramatically (Sullivan, 2013a).

Facebook allows new hires to select their own teams and also avoids complex political internal moves by allowing people to choose their own next project team after working on a project for one year (Sullivan, 2013a).

Eric Schmidt (former CEO in Google) says that they use the “LAX test”, whereby you imagine being stuck with the person in LAX airport for six hours and consider whether you still like them or whether they are still interesting (Schmidt and Rosenberg, 2014).

Jonathan Rosenberg (former SVP of products in Google) states that he could teach someone about product management, but could not teach them passion and it is important to find out where people’s passion lies, as passion is correlated with persistence to power through failure (Schmidt and Rosenberg, 2014).

Rosenberg mentions that the mantra at Google is to focus on generalists not specialists, as specialists can be threatened by new solutions (Schmidt and Rosenberg, 2014).

Schmidt states that presentations to the board of directors are released to all employees to promote communication with a disclaimer that it is private information not to be leaked and they have yet to have a leak (Schmidt and Rosenberg, 2014).

2.4. The Importance of Talent Management

There is a constant demand for talent within the global workforce. However, there are challenges such as skill shortages, changing demographics, globalisation and changes in technology that are impacting how talent is attracted, engaged, developed and retained (Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2014). Over 70% of employers in Ireland have expressed concern over the skills gap and their ability to grow as a result of this (Accenture, 2013).

Many IT Companies in Ireland are required to look outside of the national workforce to find the skills they require. The services industry, which includes information technology, has the largest amount of work permits issued with 2169 issued between January and September 2014 (Department of Justice and Equality, 2014a). This is an increase of 582 permits from the same period in 2013 (Department of Justice and Equality, 2013). After the Health Services Executive (HSE) which received 668 permits, Google Ireland Limited received the second most permits with over 200 issued since January 2014 (Department of Justice and Equality, 2014b). In addition for the need to look internationally for skilled workers, Ireland has a high rate of emigration which increased in 2013 to over 89,000 people (CSO, 2014). A study by Glynn, Kelly and MacEínrí (2013) found that unlike emigrants from previous eras, 62% of today's emigrants hold tertiary qualifications including IT qualifications, which suggests that Ireland may be losing graduates and over 47% of those who have left Ireland left full time employment. In 2012, 33.9% of those aged 15-64 had a third level qualification (CSO, 2013a). These factors are contributing to the "brain drain effect" (Glynn, Kelly and MacEínrí, 2013).

While Ireland's population is continuing to grow in terms of births, the average age of the State has increased to 36.1 years and the percentage of those over 65 has increased over 14% in the period 2006-2011 (CSO, 2013b).

Due to these issues, IT companies are looking to develop and retain top talent (Brightwater, 2014). In such a competitive environment, succession planning can allow for the development and retention of key people, while ensuring there is a talent pool developing within an organisation (CIPD, 2014a).

Gutheridge and Komm (2008) noted a strong correlation between globally consistent talent management assessment practices, the management of cultural diversity and the mobility of global leaders. Companies that fell within the top-third in the three above areas had a 70% chance of also achieving top-third financial performance (Gutheridge and Komm, 2008).

2.5. Talent Management Responsibility

According to Ashton and Morton (2005), a crucial component of talent management is its position starting at the top of the organisation and filtering down throughout all levels of the organisation in order to make it a management initiative rather than a HR initiative. In

a PwC (2014) report, 93% of CEOs recognise the need to have strategies in place to attract and retain top talent. Some CEOs make talent management their immediate priority to build a talent pool (Chambers *et al.*, 1998) with some spending as much as 30% of their time developing talent, but with the support of HR for advice (McGee, 2006).

HR plays a critical role in coordinating talent pools and maintaining momentum within a talent management strategy (CIPD, 2010). However, for a talent management strategy to be successful, support must be found at all levels of the organisation. Line managers have a key part within the talent relationship management. When correctly done, performance management within a talent management strategy can create positive engagement and motivation by encouraging employees (Armstrong, 2012). Line managers are critical in identifying potential successors (CIPD, 2014a). However, if line manager support is inconsistent, this can negatively affect perception and cast doubt on the credibility of the strategy (CIPD, 2010).

This leads to question who is responsible for talent development within an organisation. Is it the responsibility of the CEO to develop senior leaders, the responsibility of line managers who know how their people perform or the responsibility of HR to have a system in place to pick out high performers within the organisation? Perhaps it is the responsible of the individual to develop themselves, once given the opportunity to develop by the organisation? It is not realistic for CEOs of large companies to have visibility and interaction with all talent throughout all levels of the organisation, nor is it realistic to ask for a CEO to devote substantial amounts of time to develop people (Ready and Conger, 2003). CEOs know something has to be addressed in terms of talent management, but 61% of CEOs have not taken the first step nor know what has to be done (PWC, 2014). While HR may attempt to develop systems to identify high-performers, they may be missing out on certain aspects that may make a great leader or take into consideration what requirements may be necessary for future business goals. Ownership and consistency of talent management may be particularly difficult for HR in a highly decentralised organisation (Ready and Conger, 2003). According to CIPD (2010), there is an increase in perceived value of a talent management strategy when owned by HR. However, it would appear that CEOs feel little trust in the ability of HR to handle such transformational changes (PwC, 2014). According to a report by CIPD (2010), line managers are crucial in creating a positive perception around the strategy.

While line managers have visibility on their people and top performers, the time needed to invest in them may be an issue (Guthridge *et al.*, 2008) or negative organisational politics may take place whereby a line manager may intentionally sabotage the performance of others, so as not to have someone promoted ahead of them or to even increase their own position (Salin, 2003). Talent Managers and HR Leaders seem to be in agreement that the individual needs to take ownership of their development and career, yet 11% of people surveyed within the CIPD report (2010) believe that their line manager takes primary responsibility for their career and development and 12% of people believe that responsibility of their development and careers lies elsewhere than themselves (CIPD, 2010). However, giving full responsibility to individuals is not without its own problems. If development is left to the individual once given the opportunity to develop, the person may have an unrealistic idea of development or their own abilities. Ready and Conger (2003) argue that each of these approaches are not without problems and that accountability must fall to each of these groups and their ability to work coherently.

2.6. Different Generations and Talent Management

Generation Y or Millennials, with a demographic of those born after 1980, have grown up with information and technology surrounding them (Guthridge, Komm and Lawson, 2008). It would appear that they have different priorities in terms of their careers and demand things like flexibility, higher rewards and a good work-life balance (Guthridge, Komm and Lawson, 2008). Generation Y are independent thinkers, who enjoy responsibility, demand immediate feedback and thrive on a regular sense of accomplishment (Martin, 2005). These individuals change jobs approximately every two to three years and organisations may face high rates of attrition unless their expectations are met (Guthridge, Komm and Lawson, 2008). With their sense of immediacy, knowledge of technology, longing for responsibility and entrepreneurial nature, Generation Y have the potential to be high performing individuals (Martin, 2005).

Martin (2005) makes a number of recommendations for managers when it comes to managing Generation X such as building informal relationships with them, establishing a coaching relationship, ensure flexibility with schedules, projects and provide consistent constructive feedback and praise.

The desire for both Generation X and Generation Y to develop and advance in their careers may make talent management initiatives even more crucial for these demographic groups (Festing and Schäfer, 2014).

Martin (2005) argues that organisations need to create value propositions that target specific demographics. ASDA in the United Kingdom recruits at social groups and bingo halls for those over 50 years of age highlighting benefits such as leave for grandparents and leave for careers of up to three months (Martin, 2005).

2.7. The Difficulties in Talent Management

Guthridge and Komm (2008) reported a number of barriers that MNCs encountered while managing talent including international mobility and consistency within global talent management processes. This survey noted that the barriers to international mobility include employees feel an international move may damage their career prospects (Guthridge and Komm, 2008). Talent Management may be particularly difficult in MNCs because an MNC “consists of a group of geographically dispersed and goal-disparate organizations” (Ghoshal and Bartlett, 1990). This creates implications for knowledge transfer across subsidiaries (Björkman, Barner-Rasmussen and Li Li, 2004).

Business and HR leaders cited that senior managers do not spend enough time on talent management as the main barrier to talent management (Guthridge *et al.*, 2008). Other major barrier include not encouraging constructive collaboration, line managers commitment to people development and senior leaders involvement in the talent management process (Guthridge *et al.*, 2008).

A case study on the Reuters Talent Management strategy found that other challenges include ensuring that managers have quality conversations with talent, aligning high performers with role expectations, using talent management technology and increasing integration of talent management initiatives (Aston and Morton, 2005). Another difficulty that may be encountered during a talent management strategy is alienating or demotivating those who are not “high fliers” but are high potential individuals and still essential to the organisation (CIPD, 2011).

In a survey of 534 respondents, 45% stated that other business priorities are a barrier to evaluating learning and development initiatives within their organisation and budgets

vary greatly depending on the size of the organisation (CIPD, 2015b). Of organisations with a learning and development budget, 27% had a budget of less than £100, while 15% have a budget of more than £700 (CIPD, 2015b).

2.8. Is Talent Management a fad?

It has been questioned whether talent management is a management fad (Coulson-Thomas, 2012; Blass, Knights and Orbea, 2008). However, it would appear interest in talent management is continuing to grow. In a recent CIPD report (2015c), it is stated that “what is clear is that organisations that fail to prioritise talent management risk losing out as demand for key skills escalates”. Lewis and Heckman (2006) note that talent management was a growing field between 2004 and 2005 when an internet search of the terms “talent management hr” generated 2.7 million hits compared to 2005 when it reached 8 million hits. A fad may be defined as ideas that become popular very quickly, stay popular for only a few years and experience a steep decline in interest and attention (Miller, Hartwich and Le Breton-Miller, 2004).

The term “Talent Management” appeared in the late 1990s in the McKinsey Quarterly report (Chambers *et al.*, 1998). Some view talent management as “nothing new” as it encompasses areas such as workforce planning, recruitment, human capital development, diversity, employee relations and employee retention which have been around for a long time (Adamsky, 2003). Iles, Chuai and Preece (2010) reviewed different thoughts around talent management; (a) talent management is not essentially different from human resource management, (b) talent management is integrated human resource management with a selective focus and (c) talent management involves organisationally focussed competence development in terms of managing talent flow.

Chuai, Preece and Iles (2008) used case studies to explore whether talent management practices are fundamentally different to traditional HRM practices and whether these practices are used to improve creditability and status of HR professionals in China. The authors conclude that talent management is different from traditional HRM practices using new knowledge and should not be regarded as “old wine in new bottles” (Chuai, Preece and Iles, 2008).

Iles, Preece and Chuai (2010) also examined whether talent management is a management or HRM fad or fashion. The method used to examine this was using print media

indicators and bibliometrics within the two databases Business Source Premier and Emerald (Iles, Preece and Chuai, 2010). Iles, Preece and Chuai (2010) conclude that if publications are used to demonstrate rising and falling popularity, similar to a fad, it is too early to tell as the numbers are continuing to increase.

Legge (1995) argues that HR professionals have long since aimed for recognition from all employees within an organisation including senior management and to establish credibility. The discipline of human resource practice has had many name changes over the years which may be reflective of the changing conceptions about the discipline (Iles, Preece and Chuai, 2010). HRD practice has been accused of being susceptible to fads rather than based on evidence and theory (Swanson, 2001). Some argue that these fads and being reactive have led to HRD having a poor reputation and that HRD will be viewed as secondary to other professions as a result (Short, Bing and Kehrhahn, 2003).

2.9. Conclusion

Talent management is rising in popularity and is becoming a necessity to combat increasing difficulties in the global labour market. In the IT sector in Ireland, employers are forced to look internationally to attract top talent. New approaches have been adopted in order to attract, engage, develop and retain talent. The literature suggests senior management in organisations highly value talent management; however, it would seem that line managers have an essential role in the process. If any talent management practices are in place, evidence suggests that line manager's support for the process is critical in order to make it successful. Most studies that examine talent management approach the subject from a senior management perspective. However, this fails to acknowledge the perspectives of line managers and lower levels of the organisation. Evidence suggests alignment from senior management down through the organisation is critical to a successful strategy. This study will investigate if this perception is the same at all levels of the organisation, whether there are barriers to talent management and who is responsible for talent management within an IT organisation.

2.10. Research Questions

As discussed in the CIPD (2010) report "The Talent Perspective – What does it feel like to be Talent Managed?" most research on talent management focuses on the employer's

perspective while few aim to look at the employee's perspective. However, this report is limited in that the survey only focuses on senior managers or leaders who are already part of a talent pool (CIPD, 2010). While this was an aim of the survey report (CIPD, 2010) to examine a group that are being actively talent-managed, it fails to examine those who are at lower levels within an organisation, those who are not within talent pools and organisations that do not have any talent management strategy in place. This theme whereby studies focus on senior managers and leaders appears to be recurring throughout the literature (CIPD, 2010; Mellahi and Collings, 2010; Blass, Knights and Orbea, 2008).

This prompts the following research questions:

How is talent management perceived by Senior Management, Middle Management and Entry Level/Specialists within an IT organisation?

In light of current employment market trends (Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2014; Accenture, 2013) it would seem that talent management should be a priority for an IT company. However, like any successful strategy, this needs to be embraced throughout all levels of the organisation (CIPD, 2010). It is important to understand whether talent management is perceived differently at different levels of the organisation as this could cause misalignment of any talent management strategy (PwC, 2014; CIPD, 2010). This study proposes to review the attitudes of people at all levels (Entry Level/Specialists, Middle Management and Senior Management) of the organisation in an attempt to understand the expectations of people within an IT organisation.

Sub-Objective: Examine whether there is a dilution in the appreciation of talent management from senior management down through the organisation (Ashton and Morton, 2005). The literature would suggest that talent management is a priority to CEOs and senior leaders of organisations (PwC, 2014). This study will investigate whether Middle Management, who are critical in the talent management process (CIPD, 2010); Senior Management who can drive any initiatives (PWC, 2014) and Entry Level/Specialists have the same attitudes towards Talent Management.

- Hypothesis 1a: People Managers have a higher perception of talent management than Non-People Managers in an IT Organisation

- Hypothesis 1b: Senior Management (Grades 53-58) have a higher perception of talent management than Middle Management (Grades 51-52) and Entry Level/Specialists (Grades 46-50) in an IT Organisation
- Hypothesis 1c: The perception of talent management varies between departments (Operations, IT, Marketing and G&A)
- Hypothesis 1d: Different generations/age groups (25-34 and 35-44) perceive talent management differently
- Hypothesis 1e: Managers with more people in their reporting line (1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 15-100) have a higher perception of talent management

Sub-Objective: Examine the barriers to talent management within an IT organisation. The literature suggests that there are a number of barriers to talent management including time and manager commitment (Guthridge *et al.*, 2008; Salin, 2003). The research will examine whether there are barriers and if there are, how they could be potentially alleviated in order to implement a successful talent management system.

- Hypothesis 2a: Entry Level/Specialists (Grades 46-50), Middle Management (Grades 51-52) and Senior Management (Grades 53-58) encounter different barriers in regards to talent management practices in an IT Organisation.
- Hypothesis 2b: People Managers encounter more barriers than Non-People Managers in regards to talent management practices in an IT Organisation.

Sub-Objective: Investigate who is responsible for the talent management strategy within an IT organisation. While the literature suggests that there is a perceived increase in value of a talent management strategy when owned by HR (CIPD, 2010), it also suggests that CEOs have little confidence in HR to handle the changes required (PwC, 2014) and line managers must positively embrace any strategy (CIPD, 2014a; CIPD, 2010). Additionally, it would appear that there are shortcomings when talent management is held by any one group (CEOs, line managers, HR or the individual) within an organisation (Ready and Conger, 2003).

- Hypothesis 3a: Entry Level/Specialists (Grades 46-50), Middle Management (Grades 51-52) and Senior Management (Grades 53-58) have different opinions on who is responsible for talent management within an IT organisation
- Hypothesis 3b: People Managers and Non-People Managers have different opinions on who is responsible for talent management within an IT organisation

3. Research Methodology

A quantitative approach will be used in this study. This was deemed to be the most appropriate method in order to; (a) examine a large sample size (370 employees), (b) allow participating individuals to complete their responses quickly rather than the time required for qualitative research and (c) due to the fact that the organisation is in an IT organisation, which means that all individuals are familiar with online survey tools.

The questionnaire used will address the research questions including the perception of talent management across the organisation, whether there is a dilution through the organisation by splitting the sample based on their grade, whether there are differences between people managers or non-people managers, between departments, age groups or the number of people within a manager's reporting line. The questionnaire also examines if there are barriers to talent management, either from a people manager/non-people manager perspective or between grades. Finally, there are questions examining who is responsible for talent management within the organisation in order to understand whether there are differences between grades or people manager/non-people manager.

The organisation to be used in this study has not yet implemented an official talent management strategy. However, the organisation has an advanced and dedicated Training and Development Department, a grade system in place and is highly committed to creating a strategy that utilises and develops internal talent, but has yet to formalise a strategy.

In addition, a search was performed for the term "talent management" to review whether this is considered a fad as per the definition of a fad by Miller, Hartwich and Le Breton-Miller (2004).

3.1. Questionnaire Design

Questionnaires will be used to conduct descriptive research in order to examine the attitude and opinions of respondents (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2003). Questionnaires allow for a large sample size and low likelihood of distortion of a respondent's answer (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2003).

There are no similar questionnaires within the literature. Therefore, the questionnaires will be designed for this study. Self-administered questionnaires will be used and completed online via Lime Survey. Given the nature of the organisation, computer literacy for respondents is not an issue and likelihood of reaching correct target individual is high as all people within the organisation use email and the internet to complete their daily tasks. Self-administered questionnaires rule out most of the risk associated with respondents answering in a way that is perceived to be socially desirable (Dillman, Smyth and Christian, 2014).

The questionnaire used during this study can be found in Appendix 1. Questions labelled P1-P32 are in relation to Perception of Talent Management, B1-B14 are in relation to Barriers to Talent Management and R1-R5 are in relation to Talent Management Responsibility.

The majority of the questions used within this study were adapted from the CIPD report (2010) “The Talent Perspective: What does it feel like to be Talent-Managed?” [Appendix 1: Questions P8, P9, P11, P12, P13, P15, P16, P19, P20, P22, P25, Group 4, R1, R2, R3]. However, this report used a scale that was not validated. The rest of the questions were designed based on the literature review [Appendix 1: Questions P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P10, P14, P17, P18, P21, P23, P24, R4, R5, B1-B14] and utilised a Likert Scale. A 5-point Likert (1932) Scale can be used to measure attitudes within the organisation. Questions within Group 4 (Appendix 1), which was adapted directly from the CIPD (2010) report, are not on a Likert Scale, but are ranked from 1 to 12.

3.2. Conducting the Sample

The sample size for the questionnaires will be 370 employees of an IT organisation. The employees come from four main departments; Operations, IT, Marketing and General and Administrative (G&A). The latter consists of the finance, human resources and facilities functions. There are over 35 nationalities within the organisation. The organisation has a grade system in use and this will be used to split the organisation into the following categories, Specialists/Entry Level, Middle Management and Senior Management as per Table 2 below. One questionnaire will be used for all levels, but respondents will be asked to fill in their grade in order to complete the analysis. It is worth noting that not all people at grades 51 and higher are people managers.

Table 2: The Organisation will be split into the below levels (Specialists/Entry Level, Middle Management, Senior Management) based on Grade.

Level of the Organisation	Grades
Specialists/Entry Level	46, 47, 48, 49, 50
Middle Management	51, 52
Senior Management	53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60

Initially, an email will be sent to those involved informing them of the questionnaire and prompting them to complete it. Crawford, Couper and Lamias (2001) found that the timing of reminders for web-based questionnaires is important. A reminder email after two days was shown to have a more positive effect on both the speed and response rate than a reminder after 5 days (Crawford, Couper and Lamias, 2001).

Survey Monkey conducted research on the best day/time to send out a survey in order to maximize responses (Survey Monkey, 2011). This study found that internal surveys had significantly higher response rates on a Monday, followed by a Friday with the lowest results taking place on a Thursday (Survey Monkey, 2011). However, the organisation in in this study tends to have less internal meetings on a Friday. Taking the findings from Crawford, Couper and Lamias, (2001), Survey Monkey (2011) and knowledge from the organisation in question, the questionnaire will be sent on Friday (17 July 2015) with a reminder sent on the following Tuesday (21 July 2015). The questionnaire will then close on the following Friday (24 July 2015) having been open for a total of seven days.

Prior to the full scale study being conducted, a pilot study was undertaken. Fink (2003) recommends that the minimum number of people for a pilot study within this context should be 10 people. A random selection of 18 people was selected for the pilot study (Specialists/Entry Level x6, Middle Management x6, Senior Management x6). There were some amendments made to the questionnaire following this in regards to understanding the questions and to ensure the software was working correctly.

3.3. Ethical Considerations

The Director of HR and Director of Training and Development have granted permission to use questionnaires within the organisation. In regards to data safety, no names were documented or comments collected. Only the author will have access to the survey results. All participants will be informed that the study is anonymous, the reason why the research is being completed and that the data may be used for further study. There are no further ethical implications to consider.

3.4. Analysing the Data

All data from the questionnaire will be analysed through the statistical software package SPSS and formulas used during this process can be found in Appendix 2. The first steps within the analysis will involve analysing the internal consistency of the three scales that were created for this study; Perception of Talent Management, Barriers to Talent Management and Talent Management Responsibility. Internal consistency is where the correlation between responses between each question within the questionnaire is examined and can be measured using Cronbach's alpha (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2003). Cronbach's alpha has been shown to be a reliable method of determining internal consistency within multi-item questionnaires (Gliem and Gliem, 2003). Following the results of the reliability tests, composite scales will be created once an acceptable Cronbach's alpha result (>0.7) has been achieved for each scale. This may involve removing certain questions that do not contribute to an acceptable Cronbach alpha result using "Reliability when Item Deleted" within SPSS. As the questionnaires were designed for this study, there is a possibility that this will be required to create a reliable composite scale which will be used for all further analysis.

To further inspect the validity of the scales, a lightweight exploratory factor analysis will be undertaken to investigate the underlying variables. Factor analysis refers to a variety of statistical techniques used to represent a set of variables in terms of a smaller number of hypothetical variables (Kim and Mueller, 1978). Factor analysis is used to construct scales within the social sciences and can be used to measure more than one concept equally or unequally. It can be used to simplify complex data sets as part of an exploratory analysis. The first step within this is to examine interrelationships amongst the variables and then use the correlation coefficient as a measure of association by

inspecting a correlation matrix to show positive relationships (Kim and Mueller, 1978). A factor analysis can then be used to examine whether the correlations can be explained by hypothetical variables (Kim and Mueller, 1978). Factor loadings are correlations between factors and variables where a single factor is involved (Kim and Mueller, 1978). The higher the loading factor, the more the item contributes to the factor (Carmines and Zeller, 1979). As a rule of thumb, eigenvalues greater than or equal to one can determine the number of factors (Kim and Mueller, 1978). In addition to this lightweight analysis of the factor structure, a parallel principle component analysis was undertaken to identify the recommended eigenvalue magnitude for the retention of the appropriate number of factors.

3.5. Assessing Normality or Deviation from Normality within Samples

Following this analysis, tests for descriptive statistics including histogram distributions and Shapiro-Wilk’s test of normality will be completed for each research question. Once normality or deviation from normality has been identified, a suitable statistical test will be used to test the hypothesis depending on the amount of groups to be examined.

3.6. Identification of Appropriate Tests of Difference

Table 3 below depicts how the appropriate tests were identified. The significance level of the test or p-value will be used to accept or reject the null hypothesis. For values under 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. For values greater than 0.05, we accept the null hypothesis.

Table 3: Identification of Appropriate Tests of Difference

Comparison	Parametric (Means)	Non Parametric (Medians)
Differences between means of two independent groups	Independent Samples t-Test (Assumes Normality)	Mann-Whitney U-Test
Differences between means of more than two independent groups	Single Factor ANOVA (Assumes Normality)	Kruskal-Wallis H-Test

3.7. Talent Management Opportunities Ranking Method

Group 4 (see Appendix 1) within the questionnaire is a ranking question, whereby respondents are asked to rank talent management opportunities from one to twelve, where those ranked first would be most beneficial and those ranked twelfth being less beneficial. The overall ranking score assigned to each initiative was calculated as a weighted sum of their assigned ranks. Calculation of the ranking will be carried out as per example in Table 4 below:

Table 3: Example of Ranking Calculation. If three Initiatives were Presented to 20 Respondents, the Calculation of Rankings would be as per below

Initiative	# Respondents Rank 1	# Respondents Rank 2	# Respondents Rank 3	Score contribution from Rank 1	Score contribution from Rank 2	Score contribution from Rank 3	Total Rank Score
Formal training	2	7	11	2 x 1	7 x 2	11 x 3	49
Pay and Reward	15	3	2	15 x 1	3 x 2	2 x 3	27
Secondments	3	10	7	3 x 1	10 x 2	7 x 3	44

3.8. Search Strategy

Following on from Lewis and Heckman (2006), who noted that the term “talent management hr” was growing in popularity between 2004 and 2005, a similar search was performed for the term “talent management” in Google in January, July and August 2015.

3.9. Limitations of Methodology

The questionnaire used in this study has not been fully validated, which means that the scales should ideally go through a full scale factor analysis with a large sample size. Factor analysis in itself can be misleading as a simplistic interpretation of factor structures and can artificially produce inferences, so it should be used in a more modest context and

is useful for aiding the development and assessment of empirical measurements (Carmines and Zeller, 1979).

The questionnaire used contained closed questions, which limits the understanding a respondent may have of the questions and there is a possibility of misunderstanding the questions. In addition, the IT Organisation is a multinational with over 35 nationalities, which gives rise to potential communication issues in the form of language barriers.

While focusing on response rate, the questionnaire will be sent on a Friday as this was rated as the second best day to send it out (Survey Monkey, 2011). Monday being the first, but due to this particular organisation and based on meeting requests, Friday will be selected. This could potential result in response bias as people could be on a “high” prior to the weekend (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2003).

4. Results

The results have been broken down into two main categories; the first category presents the results of the reliability of the three scales; Perception of Talent Management, Talent Management Responsibility, Barriers to Talent Management and the second category presents the results from exploration of scales in relation to various Groupings. With respect to both of these categories, a presentation of the characteristics of each of the variables under consideration is presented and the results of all statistical tests and an assessment of their precondition requirements are also presented.

Following these, results of the Group 4 Ranking Question and Search results will be presented.

4.1. Scale Reliability Results

This subsection presents the results from tests of reliability for each of the three scales under consideration in this study, which are: Perception of Talent Management, Barriers to Talent Management and Talent Management Responsibility.

4.2. Perception of Talent Management Scale Reliability Results

Tables 5 and 6 below depict the results of a Reliability Analysis for the Perception Scale. There were 140 valid responses across 32 items that contributed to the overall Perception of Talent Management Scale composite score. A Cronbach reliability value of **.804** is reported in **Table 6**.

Table 5: Perception of Talent Management Case Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	140	82.4
	Excluded ^a	30	17.6
	Total	170	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 6: Perception of Talent Management Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.804	32

4.3. Talent Management Responsibility Scale

Tables 7, 8 and 9 below depict the results of a Reliability analysis for the Talent Management Responsibility Scale. There were 137 valid responses across 5 items that contributed to the overall Employee Responsibility Scale composite score. A Cronbach reliability value of **.686** is reported in Table 2. Further analysis as a way to increase overall scale reliability is presented in Table 3. Of note is the exclusion of item 3 results in a greatly improved overall reliability score of **.806**.

Table 7: Responsibility Scale Case Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	137	80.6
	Excluded ^a	33	19.4
	Total	170	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 8: Responsibility Scale Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.686	5

Table 9: Responsibility Scale Reliability when Items Removed

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
R1	13.65	5.420	.557	.580
R2	13.72	5.676	.478	.619
R3	12.20	9.031	-.168	.806
R4	13.36	5.086	.650	.532
R5	13.31	5.129	.683	.519

A further inspection of the validity of the Responsibility scale was undertaken through a lightweight exploratory factor analysis. **Figures 4 and 5** present Scree Plots identifying factors associated with the Responsibility Scale. In particular, **Figure 4** represents the Scree Plot when all items were considered, with **Figure 5** when item three was excluded. The eigenvalue assumption of retaining factors with an eigenvalue greater than 1 indicates that on exclusion of item 3, **Figure 5**, the Responsibility Scale would suggest the presence of a single latent variable.

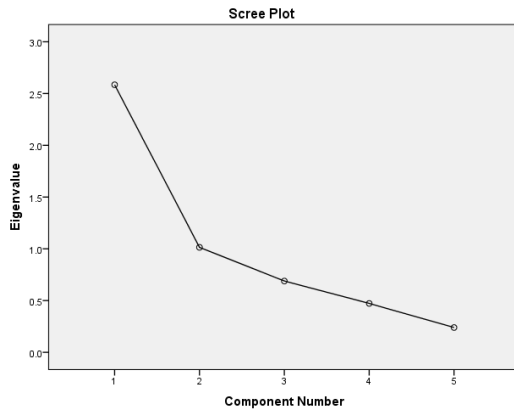


Figure 4: Scree Plot for Responsibility Scale inclusive of all items

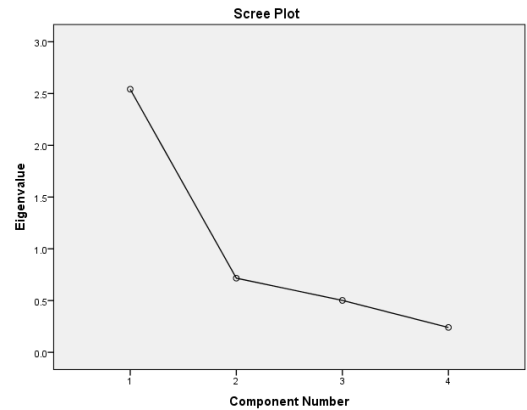


Figure 5: Scree Plot for Responsibility Scale exclusive of item 3

The results of a parallel principal component analysis are shown in **Figure 6**. These results indicate that only a single factor exists with respect to the four items associated with the responsibility subscale. In particular, the results indicate that only a single factor should be retained, as only a single eigenvalue; as depicted within the Scree Plot **Figure 5**, is greater than **1.1916**.

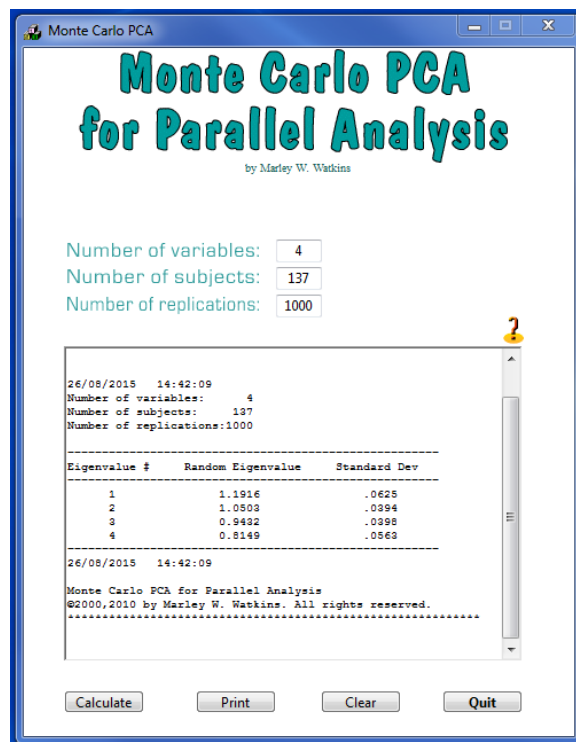


Figure 6: Parallel Analysis Results - Responsibility Sub-Scale Factor Quantity Identification

4.4. Barriers to Talent Management Scale

Tables 10, 11 and 12 below depict the results of a Reliability analysis for the Barriers to Talent Management Scale. There were 137 valid responses across 14 items that contributed to the overall Barriers to Talent Management Scale composite score. A Cronbach reliability value of **.598** is reported in Table 11. Further analysis as a way to increase overall scale reliability is presented in Table 12. Of note is the exclusion of item B7, which results in a slightly improved overall reliability score of **.649**. However, upon further review there are a number of negative correlations (Appendix 1: B4, B7, B8, B10, B14). In order to create the Barriers Composite Scale, these items will be removed.

Table 10: Barriers Scale Case Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	137	80.6
	Excluded ^a	33	19.4
	Total	170	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 11: Barriers Scale Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.598	14

Table 12: Barriers Scale Reliability when Items Removed

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
B1	41.63	24.059	.607	.496
B2	41.61	25.812	.505	.526
B3	42.00	26.676	.393	.548
B4	41.34	31.389	-.040	.640
B5	41.14	27.326	.481	.541
B6	41.48	30.899	.018	.622
B7	42.12	33.369	-.170	.649
B8	40.63	33.530	-.196	.635
B9	41.50	25.546	.569	.515
B10	41.46	33.324	-.166	.644
B11	42.08	26.089	.530	.525
B12	41.53	26.810	.468	.538
B13	41.17	25.405	.583	.512
B14	42.55	33.028	-.138	.632

Once the items were removed, an improved Cronbach reliability value of **.825** was achieved as shown in in Table 14. Tables 13 and 14 below depict the updated results of a Reliability analysis for the Barriers to Talent Management Scale.

Table 13: Barriers Scale Case Summary when Items Removed

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	137	80.6
	Excluded ^a	33	19.4
	Total	170	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 14: Barriers Scale Reliability when Items Removed

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.825	9

A further inspection of the validity of the Barriers scale was under taken through a lightweight exploratory factor analysis. **Figure 7** presents a Scree Plot identifying factors associated with the Barriers Scale and would suggest the presence of a single latent variable.

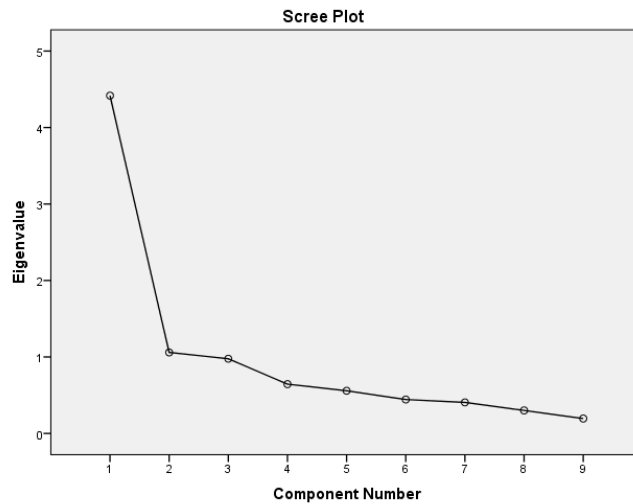


Figure 7: Scree Plot for Barriers Scale

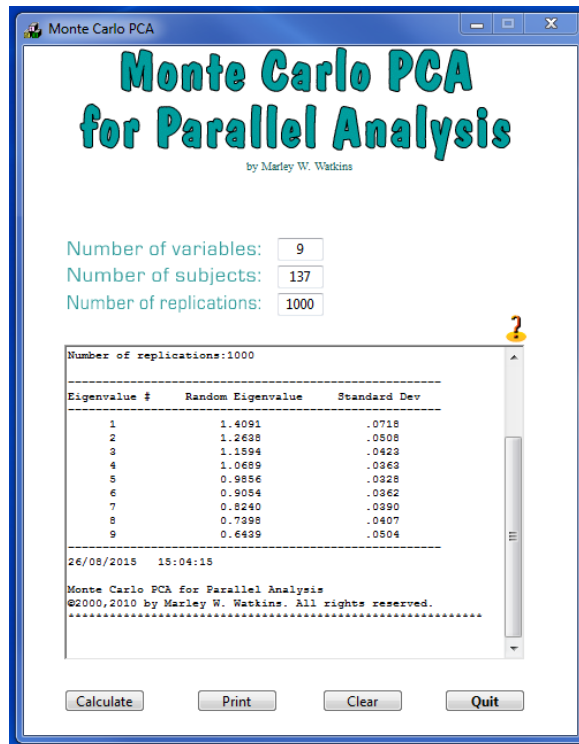


Figure 8: Parallel Analysis Results - Responsibility Sub-Scale Factor Quantity Identification

The results of a parallel principal component analysis are shown in **Figure 8**. These results indicate that only a single factor exists with respect to the nine items associated with the responsibility subscale. In particular, the results indicate that only a single factor should be retained, as only a single eigenvalue; as depicted within the Scree Plot **Figure 7**, is greater than **1.4091**.

4.5. Perception of Talent Management and People Managers/Non-People Managers

This study considered a total of 140 employees of an IT organisation, of which 33 were People Managers and 107 Non-People Managers. A case summary is presented in **Table 15**. Histograms of the distributions of levels of leave taken by both male and female employees are shown in **Figures 9 and 10** respectively. In both cases, the horizontal axis represents perception with the vertical axis depicting frequency.

Table 15: Perception Scale and People Managers/Non-People Managers

		Case Processing Summary					
		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
People Manager		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
PerceptionComposite	Yes	33	91.7%	3	8.3%	36	100.0%
	No	107	81.1%	25	18.9%	132	100.0%

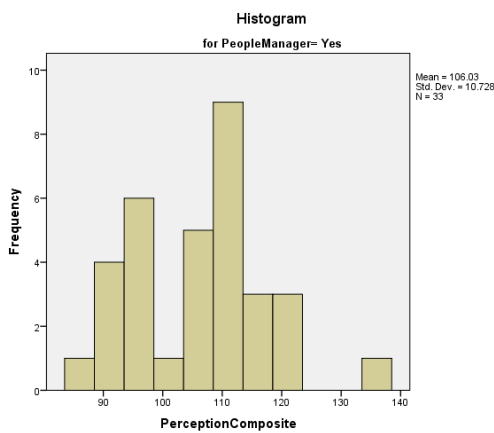


Figure 9: Perception Composite People Manager Distribution

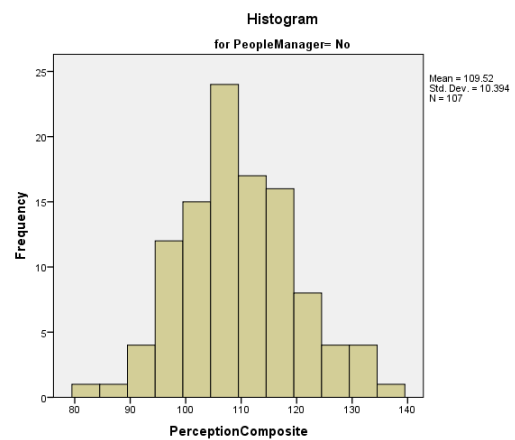


Figure 10: Perception Composite Non-People Manager Distribution

All associated descriptive statistics, for both the People Managers and Non-People Managers sample distributions, are shown in **Table 16**.

Table 16: Descriptive Distributions for People Managers and Non-People Managers

People Manager			Statistic	Std. Error			
PerceptionComposite	Yes	Mean	106.03	1.868			
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	102.23			
			Upper Bound	109.83			
		5% Trimmed Mean	105.79				
		Median	108.00				
		Variance	115.093				
		Std. Deviation	10.728				
		Minimum	86				
		Maximum	134				
		Range	48				
		Interquartile Range	18				
		Skewness	.204	.409			
		Kurtosis	-.066	.798			
		No	No	Mean	109.52	1.005	
				95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	107.53	
					Upper Bound	111.52	
				5% Trimmed Mean	109.41		
Median	109.00						
Variance	108.025						
Std. Deviation	10.394						
Minimum	82						
Maximum	139						
Range	57						
Interquartile Range	14						
Skewness	.203			.234			
Kurtosis	.312			.463			

a. There are no valid cases for PerceptionComposite when People Manager = .000. Statistics cannot be computed for this level.

The results of tests of normality are presented in **Table 17**. The results of the Shapiro-Wilk's test of normality indicate that there are no significant deviations from normality ($W_{YES} = .960$, $df = 33$, $p = .263$), ($W_{NO} = .990$, $df = 107$, $p = .578$).

Table 17: Perception and People Manager/Non-Manager People Tests of Normality

		Tests of Normality ^a					
		Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^b			Shapiro-Wilk		
People Manager		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
PerceptionComposite	Yes	.111	33	.200 [*]	.960	33	.263
	No	.072	107	.200 [*]	.990	107	.578

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. There are no valid cases for PerceptionComposite when People Manager = .000. Statistics cannot be computed for this level.

b. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Due to a lack of identified deviations in normality, an Independent Samples t-Test was relied upon to test if there are significant differences between the Perception of Talent Management by People Managers compared to Non-People Managers. The results of this test are presented in **Table 18**.

The results of Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances indicate that there is insufficient evidence to reject the assumption of equal population variances (**F = .201, p = .491**) and as such equal population variances are assumed.

The results of the Independent Samples t-Test indicate that there is insufficient evidence to suggest that the perception of Talent Management is different between People Managers (**M = 109.52, SD = 10.394, n = 107**) and Non-People Managers (**M = 109.52, SD = 10.394, n= 107**), (**t(138) = -1.675, p = .096**) as seen in **Tables 18 and 19**.

Table 18: Perception and People Manager/Non People Manager Group Statistics

		Group Statistics				
		People Manager	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PerceptionComposite	Yes		33	106.03	10.728	1.868
	No		107	109.52	10.394	1.005

Table 19: Perception and People Manager/Non-People Manager Independent Samples t-Test

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
PerceptionComposite	Equal variances assumed	.201	.655	-1.675	138	.096	-3.493	2.085	-7.616	.630
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.647	51.895	.106	-3.493	2.121	-7.749	.763

4.6. Perception of Talent Management and Grade

This study considered a total of 133 employees of an IT organisation, of which 59 are between Grades 46 to 50, 43 are between Grades 51 and 52 and 31 are between Grades 53-58. A case summary is presented in **Table 20**. Histograms of the distributions of levels of each of the Grade groupings are shown in **Figures 11, 12 and 13** respectively. In all cases the horizontal axis represents perception with the vertical axis depicting the frequency.

Table 20: Perception and Grade Case Summary

		Case Processing Summary					
		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
	Grade	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
PerceptionComposite	46-50	59	88.1%	8	11.9%	67	100.0%
	51-52	43	81.1%	10	18.9%	53	100.0%
	53-58	31	93.9%	2	6.1%	33	100.0%

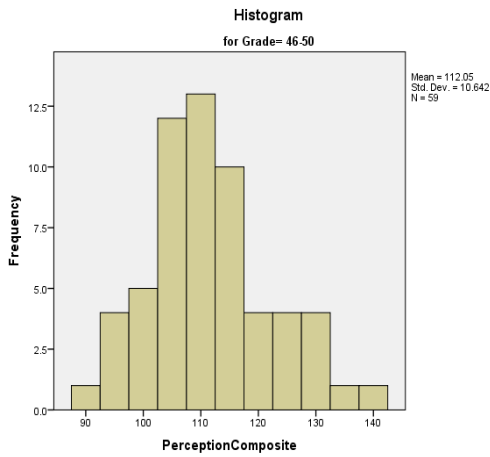


Figure 11: Perception Composite Grade 46-50 Distribution

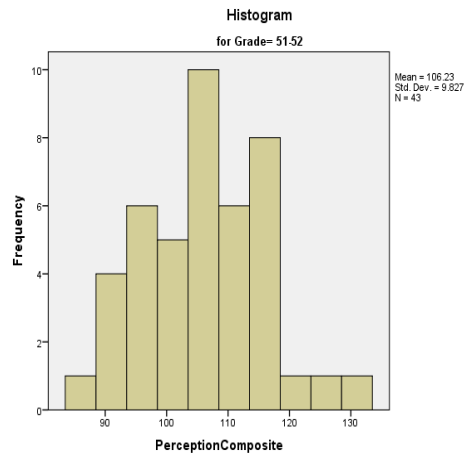


Figure 12: Perception Composite Grade 51-52 Distribution

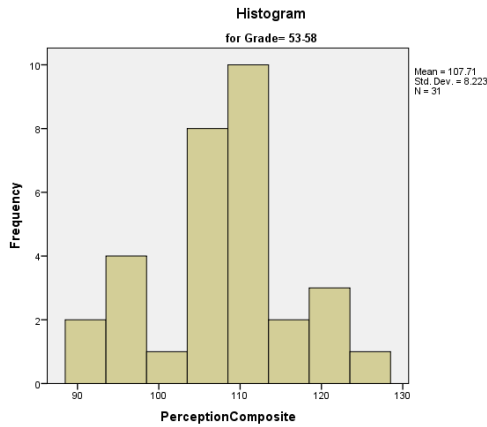


Figure 13: Perception Composite Grade 53-58 Distribution

All associated descriptive statistics for Grades 46-50, Grades 51-52 and Grades 53-58 sample distributions are shown in **Table 21**.

Table 21: Descriptive Statistics for Perception and Grade Groupings

Descriptives					
Grade				Statistic	Std. Error
PerceptionComposite	46-50	Mean		112.05	1.385
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	109.28	
			Upper Bound	114.82	
		5% Trimmed Mean		111.78	
		Median		111.00	
		Variance		113.256	
		Std. Deviation		10.642	
		Minimum		90	
		Maximum		139	
		Range		49	
		Interquartile Range		12	
		Skewness		.429	.311
		Kurtosis		-.155	.613
		51-52	51-52	Mean	
95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound			103.21	
	Upper Bound			109.26	
5% Trimmed Mean				106.03	
Median				106.00	
Variance				96.564	
Std. Deviation				9.827	
Minimum				86	
Maximum				132	
Range				46	
Interquartile Range				16	
Skewness				.169	.361
Kurtosis				-.053	.709
53-58	53-58			Mean	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	104.69	
			Upper Bound	110.73	
		5% Trimmed Mean		107.72	
		Median		109.00	
		Variance		67.613	
		Std. Deviation		8.223	
		Minimum		91	
		Maximum		125	
		Range		34	
		Interquartile Range		9	
		Skewness		-.143	.421
		Kurtosis		-.129	.821

The results of tests of normality are presented in **Table 22**. The results of the Shapiro-Wilk's test of normality indicate that there are no significant deviations from normality ($W_{46-50} = .978$, $df = 59$, $p = .365$), ($W_{51-52} = .986$, $df = 43$, $p = .884$), ($W_{53-58} = .975$, $df = 31$, $p = .666$).

Table 22: Perception and Grade Groupings Tests of Normality

		Tests of Normality					
		Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
Grade	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.	
PerceptionComposite	46-50	.095	59	.200 [*]	.978	59	.365
	51-52	.069	43	.200 [*]	.986	43	.884
	53-58	.113	31	.200 [*]	.975	31	.666

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Using a Test for Homogeneity of Variance, results in **Table 23** indicate homogeneity of variances is assured (**F = 1.242, DF1= 2, DF2= 130, p = .292**).

Table 23: Perception Test of Homogeneity of Variance

Test of Homogeneity of Variances			
PerceptionComposite			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.242	2	130	.292

The ANOVA calculation is presented below in **Table 24**. The results infer that there is a significant differences among Grades 46-50 (**M = 112.05, SD = 10.42**), Grades 51-52 (**M = 106.23, SD = 9.82**) and Grades 53-58 (**M = 107.71, SD = 8.22**) which suggests that Grade impacts Perception of Talent Management (**F = (2, 130) = 4.76, p = .010**).

Table 24: Result of Perception and Grades ANOVA

ANOVA					
PerceptionComposite					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	926.775	2	463.388	4.761	.010
Within Groups	12652.909	130	97.330		
Total	13579.684	132			

4.7. Perception of Talent Management and Department

This study considered a total of 140 employees of an IT organisation, of which 57 are within the Operations Department, 43 are within the IT Department, 30 are within the Marketing Department and 10 with the General and Administration Department. A case summary is presented in **Table 25**. Histograms of the distributions of each Department

are shown in **Figures 14, 15, 16 and 17** respectively. In all cases the horizontal axis represents perception with the vertical axis depicting the frequency

Table 25: Perception and Department Case Summary

		Case Processing Summary					
		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
Department	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	
PerceptionComposite	Operations	57	82.6%	12	17.4%	69	100.0%
	IT	43	84.3%	8	15.7%	51	100.0%
	Marketing	30	81.1%	7	18.9%	37	100.0%
	G&A	10	90.9%	1	9.1%	11	100.0%

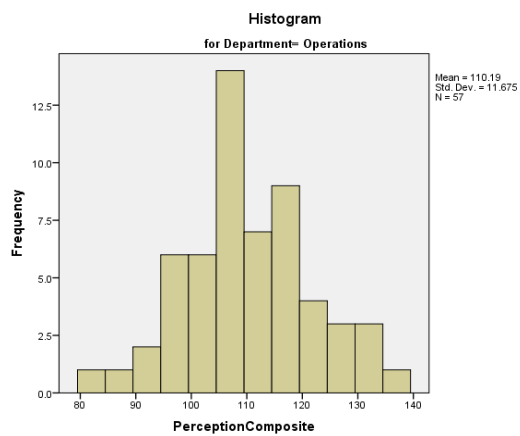


Figure 14: Perception and Operations Distributions

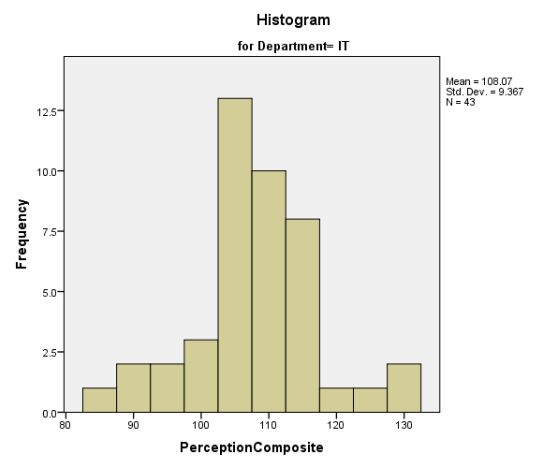


Figure 15: Perception and IT Distributions

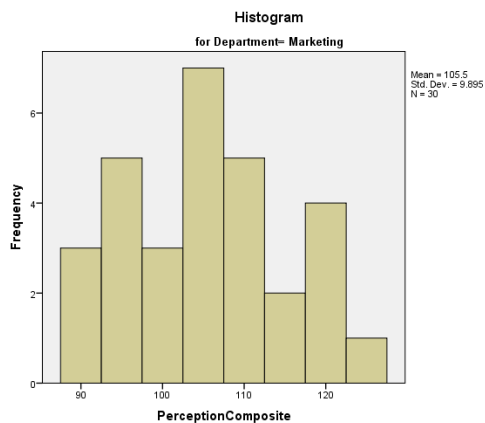


Figure 16: Perception and Marketing Distributions

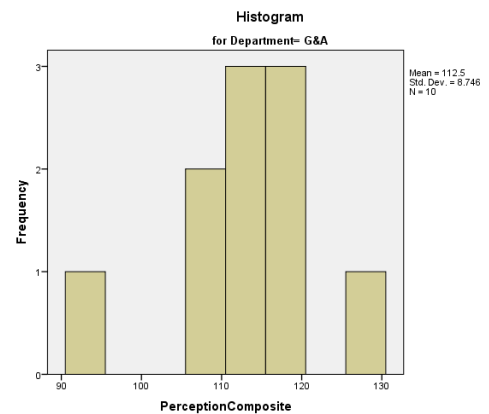


Figure 17: Perception and G&A Distributions

All associated descriptive statistics for each of the Departments; Operations, IT, Marketing and General and Admin sample distributions are shown in **Table 26**.

Table 26: Descriptive Statistics for Perception and Department

Descriptives							
Department		Statistic	Std. Error				
PerceptionComposite	Operations	Mean	110.19	1.546			
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound 107.10	Upper Bound 113.29			
		5% Trimmed Mean	110.10				
		Median	108.00				
		Variance	136.301				
		Std. Deviation	11.675				
		Minimum	82				
		Maximum	139				
		Range	57				
		Interquartile Range	14				
		Skewness	.179	.316			
		Kurtosis	.132	.623			
		IT		Mean	108.07	1.428	
				95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound 105.19	Upper Bound 110.95	
				5% Trimmed Mean	107.87		
				Median	109.00		
Variance	87.733						
Std. Deviation	9.367						
Minimum	85						
Maximum	132						
Range	47						
Interquartile Range	10						
Skewness	.187			.361			
Kurtosis	1.094			.709			
Marketing				Mean	105.50	1.807	
				95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound 101.81	Upper Bound 109.19	
				5% Trimmed Mean	105.37		
				Median	105.00		
		Variance	97.914				
		Std. Deviation	9.895				
		Minimum	90				
		Maximum	124				
		Range	34				
		Interquartile Range	16				
		Skewness	.176	.427			
		Kurtosis	-1.017	.833			
		G&A		Mean	112.50	2.766	
				95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound 106.24	Upper Bound 118.76	
				5% Trimmed Mean	112.78		
				Median	112.50		
Variance	76.500						
Std. Deviation	8.746						
Minimum	93						
Maximum	127						
Range	34						
Interquartile Range	8						
Skewness	-.887			.687			
Kurtosis	2.783			1.334			

The results of tests of normality are presented in **Table 27**. The results of the Shapiro-Wilk's test of normality indicate that there are no significant deviations from normality ($W_{OPERATIONS} = .989$, $df = 57$, $p = .875$), ($W_{IT} = .970$, $df = 43$, $p = .306$), ($W_{MARKETING} = .958$, $df = 30$, $p = .276$), ($W_{G\&A} = .904$, $df = 10$, $p = .243$).

Table 27: Perception and Department Tests of Normality

Tests of Normality						
Department	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
PerceptionComposite						
Operations	.083	57	.200*	.989	57	.875
IT	.108	43	.200*	.970	43	.306
Marketing	.111	30	.200*	.958	30	.276
G&A	.203	10	.200*	.904	10	.243

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 28 presents the Test for Homogeneity of Variance indicate homogeneity of variances is assured ($F(3, 136) = .153, p = .210$).

Table 28: Perception Tests of Homogeneity of Variances

Test of Homogeneity of Variances			
PerceptionComposite			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.530	3	136	.210

The ANOVA calculation is presented below in **Table 29**, results suggests that people within certain Departments do not have major differences between their Perception of Talent Management ($F(3-136) = -1.81, p = .147$).

Table 29: Result of Perception and Departments ANOVA

ANOVA					
PerceptionComposite					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	595.732	3	198.577	1.819	.147
Within Groups	14845.668	136	109.159		
Total	15441.400	139			

4.8. Perception of Talent Management and Age

This study considered a total of 140 employees of an IT organisation, of which 63 are between 25 to 34 years of age, 67 are between 35 and 44 years of age and 10 are between 45 and 55 years of age. There were no people within the sample above or below the aforementioned age groups. A case summary is presented in **Table 30**. Histograms of the distributions of levels of each of the age groupings are shown in **Figures 18, 19 and 20** respectively. In all cases the horizontal axis represents perception with the vertical axis depicting the frequency.

Table 30: Perception and Age Case Summary

Case Processing Summary							
		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
Age		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
PerceptionComposite	25-34	63	81.8%	14	18.2%	77	100.0%
	35-44	67	83.8%	13	16.3%	80	100.0%
	45-55	10	90.9%	1	9.1%	11	100.0%

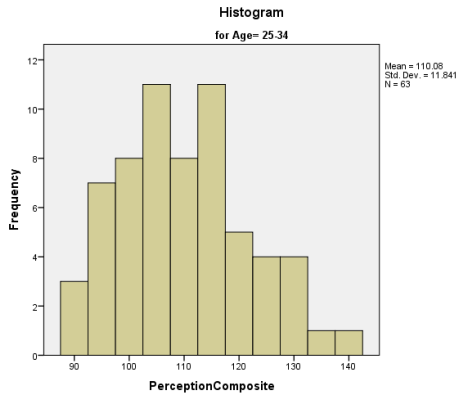


Figure 18: Perception and Age 25-34 Distributions

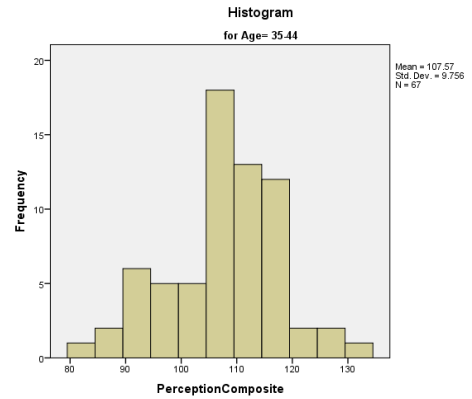


Figure 19: Perception and Age 35-44 Distributions

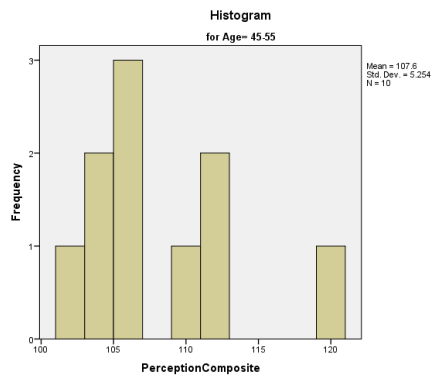


Figure 20: Perception and Age 45-55 Distributions

All associated descriptive statistics for each of the Age Groups; 25-34, 35-44 and 45-55 sample distributions are shown in **Table 31**.

Table 31: Descriptive Statistics for Perception and Age

		Descriptives		Statistic	Std. Error		
PerceptionComposite	25-34	Mean		110.08	1.482		
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	107.10			
			Upper Bound	113.06			
		5% Trimmed Mean		109.76			
		Median		110.00			
		Variance		140.203			
		Std. Deviation		11.841			
		Minimum		90			
		Maximum		139			
		Range		49			
		Interquartile Range		17			
		Skewness		.380	.302		
		Kurtosis		-.534	.595		
		35-44	35-44	Mean		107.57	1.192
				95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	105.19	
Upper Bound	109.95						
5% Trimmed Mean				107.76			
Median				108.00			
Variance				95.189			
Std. Deviation				9.756			
Minimum				82			
Maximum				132			
Range				50			
Interquartile Range				11			
Skewness				-.395	.293		
Kurtosis				.409	.578		
45-55	45-55			Mean		107.60	1.661
				95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	103.84	
		Upper Bound	111.36				
		5% Trimmed Mean		107.28			
		Median		106.00			
		Variance		27.600			
		Std. Deviation		5.254			
		Minimum		102			
		Maximum		119			
		Range		17			
		Interquartile Range		8			
		Skewness		1.162	.687		
		Kurtosis		1.202	1.334		

The results of tests of normality are presented in **Table 32**. The results of the Shapiro-Wilk's test of normality indicate that there are no significant deviations from normality ($W_{25-34} = .974$, $df = 63$, $p = .192$), ($W_{35-44} = .975$, $df = 67$, $p = .186$), ($W_{45-55} = .896$, $df = 10$, $p = .199$).

Table 32: Perception and Age Tests of Normality

		Tests of Normality					
Age	Statistic	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
PerceptionComposite	25-34	.095	63	.200*	.974	63	.192
	35-44	.119	67	.021	.975	67	.186
	45-55	.220	10	.188	.896	10	.199

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The results of the Levene's test for Homogeneity of Variances in **Table 33** indicate homogeneity of variances is not assured ($F(2-137) = 4.656, p = .011$). As a result of the violation of this assumption, a Kruskal-Wallis Test was utilised.

Table 33: Perception and Age Test of Homogeneity of Variances

PerceptionComposite			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
4.656	2	137	.011

Tables **34** and **35** below depict the result of the Kruskal-Wallis Test, which infer that there was no statistically significant difference between the different Age groups with a mean rank score of **68.21** for Ages 25-34, **62.95** for Ages 35-44. ($\chi^2(2) = .635, p = .425$).

Table 34: Perception and Age Group Mean Ranks

	Age	N	Mean Rank
PerceptionComposite	25-34	63	68.21
	35-44	67	62.95
	Total	130	

Table 35: Perception and Age Kruskal-Wallis Test

Test Statistics ^{a,b}	
	PerceptionComposite
Chi-Square	.635
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.425

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Age

4.9. Perception of Talent Management and Number of Direct Reports

This study considered a total of 33 managers of an IT organisation, of which 17 have 1-direct reports, 5 have 6-10 direct reports, 5 have 11-15 direct reports and 6 have over 15 direct reports. A case summary is presented in **Table 36**. Histograms of the distributions of levels of each of the report groupings are shown in **Figures 20, 21, 22 and 23**

respectively. In all cases the horizontal axis represents perception with the vertical axis depicting the frequency.

Table 36: Perception and Number of Reports

Case Processing Summary

Reports	PerceptionComposite	Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
1-5		17	100.0%	0	0.0%	17	100.0%
6-10		5	83.3%	1	16.7%	6	100.0%
11-15		5	83.3%	1	16.7%	6	100.0%
15-100		6	85.7%	1	14.3%	7	100.0%

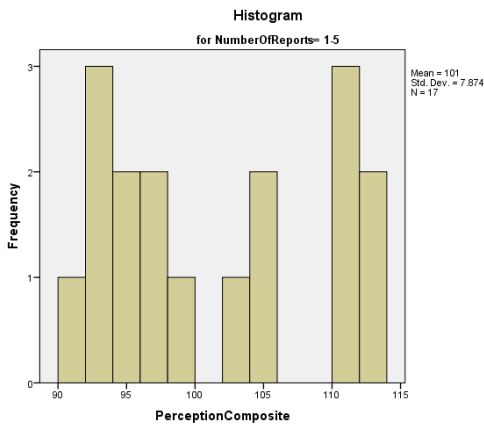


Figure 21: Perception and Number of Reports 1-5 Distribution

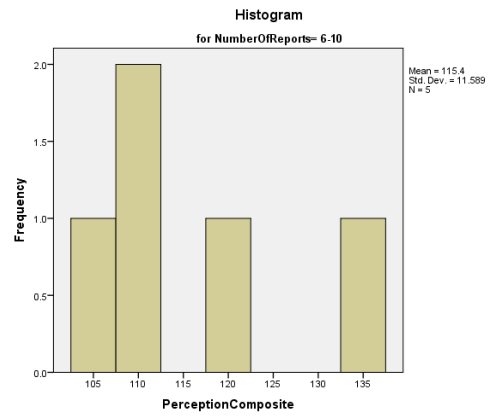


Figure 22: Perception and Number of Reports 6-10 Distribution

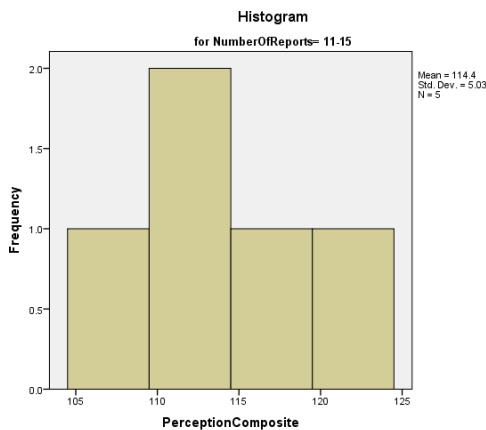


Figure 23: Perception and Number of Reports 11-15 Distribution

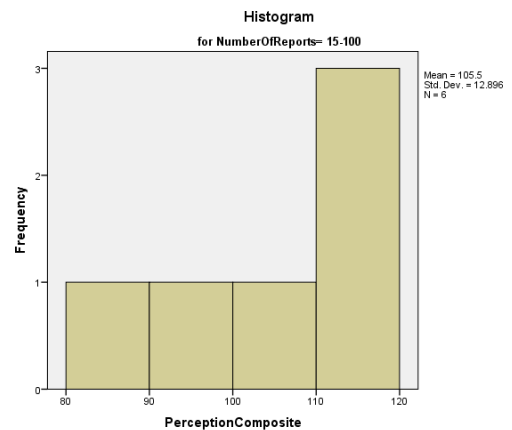


Figure 24: Perception and Number of Reports 15-100 Distribution

All associated descriptive statistics for each of the reporting Groups; 11-5, 6-10, 11-14, 15-100 sample distributions are shown in **Table 37**.

Table 37: Descriptive Statistics for Perception and Number in Reporting Line

		Descriptives		Statistic	Std. Error	
PerceptionComposite	Reports					
1-5	Mean			101.00	1.910	
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound		96.95		
		Upper Bound		105.05		
	5% Trimmed Mean			100.89		
	Median			98.00		
	Variance			62.000		
	Std. Deviation			7.874		
	Minimum			91		
	Maximum			113		
	Range			22		
	Interquartile Range			17		
	Skewness			.259	.550	
	Kurtosis			-1.626	1.063	
	6-10	Mean			115.40	5.183
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound		101.01	
			Upper Bound		129.79	
		5% Trimmed Mean			114.94	
Median				110.00		
Variance				134.300		
Std. Deviation				11.589		
Minimum				105		
Maximum				134		
Range				29		
Interquartile Range				20		
Skewness				1.322	.913	
Kurtosis				1.292	2.000	
11-15		Mean			114.40	2.249
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound		108.15	
			Upper Bound		120.65	
		5% Trimmed Mean			114.50	
	Median			114.00		
	Variance			25.300		
	Std. Deviation			5.030		
	Minimum			107		
	Maximum			120		
	Range			13		
	Interquartile Range			9		
	Skewness			-.608	.913	
	Kurtosis			.112	2.000	
	15-100	Mean			105.50	5.265
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound		91.97	
			Upper Bound		119.03	
		5% Trimmed Mean			105.83	
Median				109.00		
Variance				166.300		
Std. Deviation				12.896		
Minimum				86		
Maximum				119		
Range				33		
Interquartile Range				25		
Skewness				-.729	.845	
Kurtosis				-.988	1.741	

The results of tests of normality are presented in **Table 38**. The results of the Shapiro-Wilk's test of normality indicate that there was a significant deviation from normality with regard to managers with 1-5 reports ($W_{1-5} = .885$, $df = 17$, $p = .038$), ($W_{6-10} = .876$, $df = 5$, $p = .290$), ($W_{11-15} = .958$, $df = 5$, $p = .795$), ($W_{15-100} = .914$, $df = 6$, $p = .464$).

Table 38: Perception and Number of Reports Tests of Normality

		Tests of Normality					
		Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
PerceptionComposite	Reports	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
	1-5	.178	17	.157	.885	17	.038
	6-10	.279	5	.200 [*]	.876	5	.290
	11-15	.190	5	.200 [*]	.958	5	.795
	15-100	.244	6	.200 [*]	.914	6	.464

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Tables 39 and 40 below depict the result of the Kruskal-Wallis Test, which infer that there was a statistically significant difference between the number of direct reports that a manager has and perception to talent management with a mean rank score of **12.38** for 1-5 reports, **23.30** for 6-10 reports, **25.90** for 11-15 reports and **17.42** for 15-100 reports. ($\chi^2(2) = 10.301, p = 0.16$).

Table 39: Perception and Number of Reports Mean Rank

Ranks			
PerceptionComposite	Reports	N	Mean Rank
	1-5	17	12.38
	6-10	5	23.30
	11-15	5	25.90
	15-100	6	17.42
	Total	33	

Table 40: Perception and Number of Reports Kruskal-Wallis Test Statistics

Test Statistics ^{a,b}	
	PerceptionComposite
Chi-Square	10.301
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.016

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Reports

4.10. Barriers to Talent Management and Grade

This study considered a total of 131 employees of an IT organisation, of which 59 fall within Grades 46-50, 43 within Grades 51-52 and 29 within Grades 53-58 groupings. A case summary is presented in **Table 41**. Histograms of the distributions of each Department are shown in **Figures 25, 26 and 27** respectively. In all cases the horizontal axis represents barriers with the vertical axis depicting the frequency

Table 41: Barrier and Grades Case Summary

		Case Processing Summary					
		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
Grade	BarriersComposite	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
46-50	BarriersComposite	59	88.1%	8	11.9%	67	100.0%
51-52	BarriersComposite	43	81.1%	10	18.9%	53	100.0%
53-58	BarriersComposite	29	87.9%	4	12.1%	33	100.0%

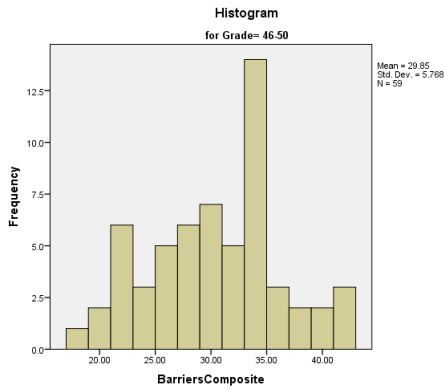


Figure 25: Barriers and Grade 46-50 Distributions

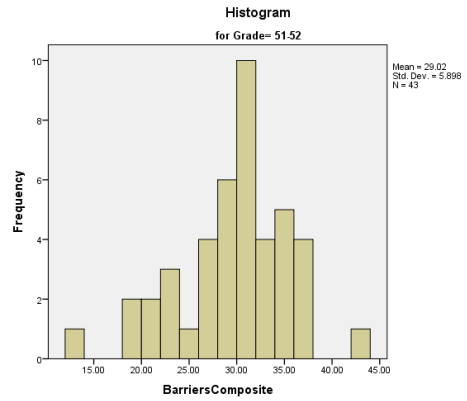


Figure 26: Barriers and Grade 51-52 Distributions

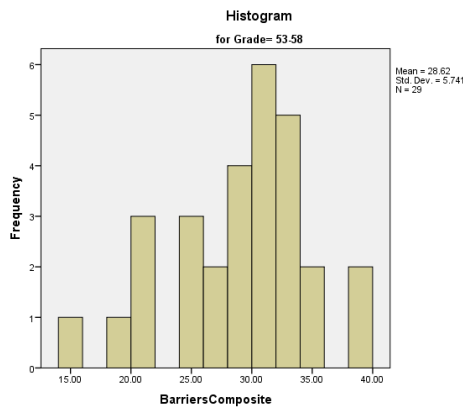


Figure 27: Barriers and Grades 53-58 Distribution

All associated descriptive statistics for each of the reporting Groups; Grades 46-50, Grades 51-52 and Grades 53-58 sample distributions are shown in **Table 42**.

Table 42: Descriptive Statistics for Barriers and Grades Sample Distributions

Descriptives					
	Grade				
BarriersComposite	46-50	Mean	29.8475	.75093	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	28.3443	
			Upper Bound	31.3506	
		5% Trimmed Mean		29.8126	
		Median		30.0000	
		Variance		33.269	
		Std. Deviation		5.76797	
		Minimum		18.00	
		Maximum		42.00	
		Range		24.00	
		Interquartile Range		8.00	
		Skewness		.000	.311
		Kurtosis		-.504	.613
			51-52	Mean	29.0233
95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound			27.2082	
	Upper Bound			30.8384	
5% Trimmed Mean				29.1705	
Median				30.0000	
Variance				34.785	
Std. Deviation				5.89789	
Minimum				13.00	
Maximum				43.00	
Range				30.00	
Interquartile Range				6.00	
Skewness				-.509	.361
Kurtosis				.628	.709
	53-58			Mean	28.6207
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	26.4370	
			Upper Bound	30.8044	
		5% Trimmed Mean		28.7318	
		Median		30.0000	
		Variance		32.958	
		Std. Deviation		5.74092	
		Minimum		15.00	
		Maximum		39.00	
		Range		24.00	
		Interquartile Range		8.00	
		Skewness		-.467	.434
		Kurtosis		.104	.845

The results of tests of normality are presented in **Table 43**. The results of the Shapiro-Wilk's test of normality indicate that there are no significant deviations from normality ($W_{46-50} = .974$, $df = 59$, $p = .231$), ($W_{51-52} = .965$, $df = 43$, $p = .212$), ($W_{53-58} = .958$, $df = 29$, $p = .291$).

Table 43: Barriers and Grades Tests of Normality

		Tests of Normality					
		Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Grade	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
BarriersComposite	46-50	.114	59	.053	.974	59	.231
	51-52	.129	43	.071	.965	43	.212
	53-58	.113	29	.200*	.958	29	.291

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

In order to use an ANOVA, Levene’s Test for Homogeneity of Variances was undertaken to establish whether homogeneity is assumed. The results in **Table 44** indicate homogeneity of variances is assured ($F(2,128) = .089, p = .915$).

The ANOVA calculation is presented below in **Table 45**, which suggests that people within certain Departments do not have major differences between their Perception of Talent Management ($F(2, 128) = .510, p = .602$).

Table 44: Barriers and Grades Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Test of Homogeneity of Variances			
BarriersComposite			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.089	2	128	.915

Table 45: Barriers and Grade ANOVA

ANOVA					
BarriersComposite					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	34.355	2	17.177	.510	.602
Within Groups	4313.431	128	33.699		
Total	4347.786	130			

4.11. Barriers to Talent Management and People Manager/Non-People Manager

This study considered a total of 137 employees of an IT organisation, of which 32 are People Manager and 105 Non-People Manager. A case summary is presented in **Table 46**. Histograms of the distributions of levels of each of the report groupings are shown in **Figures 28 and 29** respectively. In all cases the horizontal axis represents barriers with the vertical axis depicting the frequency.

Table 46: Barriers and People Manager/Non-People Manager Case Summary

Case Processing Summary

		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
BarriersComposite	Yes	32	88.9%	4	11.1%	36	100.0%
	No	105	79.5%	27	20.5%	132	100.0%

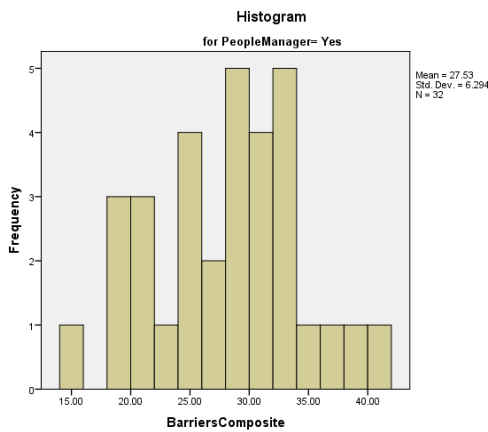


Figure 28: Barriers and People Manager/Non-People Manager Distribution

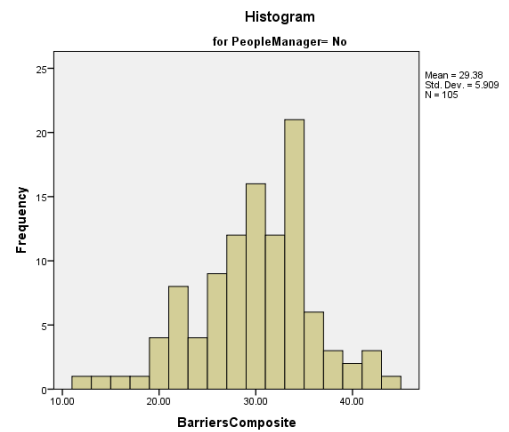


Figure 29: Barriers and People Manager/Non-People Manager Distribution

All associated descriptive statistics for each of the reporting Groups; People Managers and Non-People Managers sample distributions are shown in **Table 47**.

Table 47: Descriptive Statistics for Barriers and People Managers/Non-People Manager

Descriptives ^a				Statistic	Std. Error	
BarriersComposite	People Manager	Yes	Mean	27.5313	1.11260	
			95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	25.2621	
				Upper Bound	29.8004	
			5% Trimmed Mean	27.4931		
			Median	28.5000		
			Variance	39.612		
			Std. Deviation	6.29380		
			Minimum	15.00		
			Maximum	40.00		
			Range	25.00		
			Interquartile Range	9.50		
			Skewness	-.087	.414	
			Kurtosis	-.549	.809	
		No	Mean	29.3810	.57662	
			95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	28.2375	
				Upper Bound	30.5244	
			5% Trimmed Mean	29.4868		
			Median	30.0000		
			Variance	34.911		
			Std. Deviation	5.90857		
			Minimum	12.00		
			Maximum	43.00		
			Range	31.00		
			Interquartile Range	7.00		
			Skewness	-.414	.236	
			Kurtosis	.444	.467	

a. There are no valid cases for BarriersComposite when People Manager = .000. Statistics cannot be computed for this level.

The results of tests of normality are presented in **Table 48**. The results of the Shapiro-Wilk’s test of normality indicate that there are no significant deviations from normality ($W_{YES} = .977$, $df = 32$, $p = .704$), ($W_{NO} = .978$, $df = 105$, $p = .085$)

Table 48: Barriers and People Manager/Non People Manager Tests of Normality

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^b			Shapiro-Wilk		
People Manager		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
BarriersComposite	Yes	.103	32	.200 ^a	.977	32	.704
	No	.093	105	.025	.978	105	.085

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. There are no valid cases for BarriersComposite when People Manager = .000. Statistics cannot be computed for this level.

b. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Due to a lack of identified deviations in normality, an Independent Samples t-Test was relied upon to test if there are significant differences between Barriers to Talent Management by People Managers compared to non-People Managers. The results are presented in **Table 49**. The results of Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances indicate

that there is insufficient evidence to reject the assumption of equal population variances ($F = .476, p = .491$) and as such equal population variances are assumed.

Table 49 and 50 results of the Independent Samples t-Test indicate that there is insufficient evidence to suggest that Barriers to Talent Management are different between People Managers ($M = 27.53, SD = 6.29, n = 32$) and Non-People Managers ($M = 29.38, SD = 5.91, n = 105$), ($t (-1.527), df = 135, p = .129$).

Table 49: Barriers and People Managers Group Statistics

Group Statistics					
	People Manager	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
BarriersComposite	Yes	32	27.5313	6.29380	1.11260
	No	105	29.3810	5.90857	.57662

Table 50: Barriers and People Manager Independent Samples t-Test

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
BarriersComposite	Equal variances assumed	.476	.491	-1.527	135	.129	-1.84970	1.21139	-4.24547	.54606
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.476	48.839	.146	-1.84970	1.25314	-4.36819	.66879

4.12. Responsibility of Talent Management and Grade

This study considered a total of 131 employees of an IT organisation, of which 59 fall within Grades 46-50, 43 within Grades 51-52 and 29 within Grades 53-58 groupings. A case summary is presented in **Table 51**. Histograms of the distributions of each Department are shown in **Figures 30, 31 and 32** respectively. In all cases the horizontal axis represents responsibility with the vertical axis depicting the frequency

Table 51: Responsibility and Grades Case Summary

		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
ResponsibilityComposite Score	Grade 46-50	59	88.1%	8	11.9%	67	100.0%
	51-52	43	81.1%	10	18.9%	53	100.0%
	53-58	29	87.9%	4	12.1%	33	100.0%

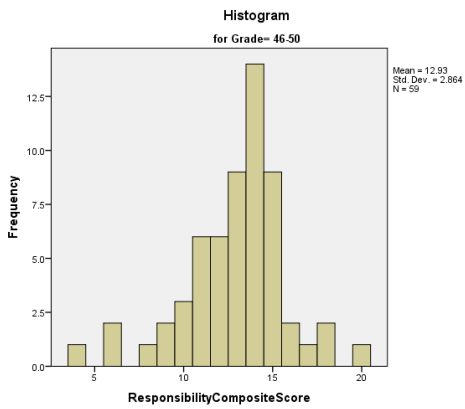


Figure 30: Responsibility and Grade 46-50 Distribution

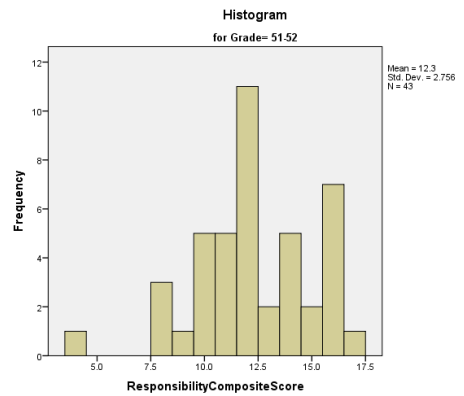


Figure 31: Responsibility and Grade 51-52 Distribution

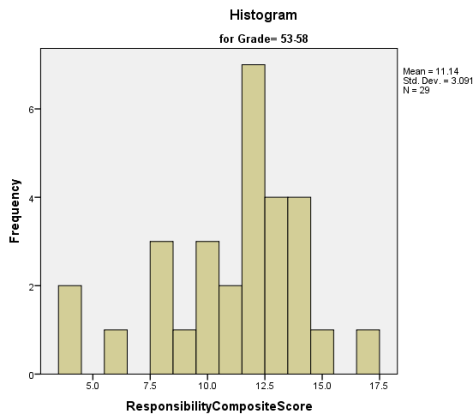


Figure 32: Responsibility and Grade 53-58 Distribution

All associated descriptive statistics for each of the reporting Groups; Grades 46-50, Grades 51-52, Grades 53-58 sample distributions are shown in **Table 52**.

Table 52: Descriptive Statistics for Responsibility and Grades

		Grade		Statistic	Std. Error	
ResponsibilityComposite Score	46-50	Mean		12.93	.373	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	12.19		
			Upper Bound	13.68		
		5% Trimmed Mean		13.04		
		Median		13.00		
		Variance		8.202		
		Std. Deviation		2.864		
		Minimum		4		
		Maximum		20		
		Range		16		
		Interquartile Range		4		
		Skewness		-.691	.311	
		Kurtosis		1.617	.613	
		51-52	Mean		12.30	.420
			95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	11.45	
	Upper Bound			13.15		
	5% Trimmed Mean		12.41			
	Median		12.00			
	Variance		7.597			
	Std. Deviation		2.756			
	Minimum		4			
	Maximum		17			
	Range		13			
	Interquartile Range		3			
	Skewness		-.474	.361		
	Kurtosis		.579	.709		
	53-58		Mean		11.14	.574
			95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	9.96	
		Upper Bound		12.31		
		5% Trimmed Mean		11.24		
		Median		12.00		
Variance		9.552				
Std. Deviation		3.091				
Minimum		4				
Maximum		17				
Range		13				
Interquartile Range		4				
Skewness		-.762	.434			
Kurtosis		.496	.845			

The results of tests of normality are presented in **Table 53**. The results from Shapiro-Wilk’s test of normality indicate that there is a deviations from normality ($W_{46-50} = .007$, $df = 59$, $p = .007$), ($W_{51-52} = .946$, $df = 43$, $p = .044$), ($W_{53-58} = .934$, $df = 29$, $p = .070$). As a result of this deviation, a Kruskal-Wallis Test was utilised.

Table 53: Responsibility and Grade Tests of Normality

		Tests of Normality					
		Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Grade	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
ResponsibilityComposite Score	46-50	.154	59	.001	.942	59	.007
	51-52	.148	43	.018	.946	43	.044
	53-58	.196	29	.006	.934	29	.070

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Tables 54 and 55 below depict the result of the Kruskal-Wallis Test, which infer that there was a statistically significant difference between the different Grade groups with a mean rank score of 74.49 for Grades 46-50, 64.17 for Grades 51-52 and 51.43 for Grades 53-58. ($\chi^2 (2) = 7.442, p=0.24$)

Table 54: Responsibility and Grade Mean Rank

Ranks			
	Grade	N	Mean Rank
ResponsibilityComposite Score	46-50	59	74.49
	51-52	43	64.17
	53-58	29	51.43
	Total	131	

Table 55: Responsibility and Grade Kruskal-Wallis Test

Statistics	
Test Statistics ^{a,b}	
	ResponsibilityCompositeScore
Chi-Square	7.442
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.024

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Grade

4.13. Responsibility of Talent Management and People Managers/Non-People Managers

This study considered a total of 137 employees of an IT organisation, of which 32 are People Managers and 105 are Non-People Manager. A case summary is presented in **Table 56**. Histograms of the distributions of each Department are shown in **Figures 33** and **34** respectively. In all cases the horizontal axis represents responsibility with the vertical axis depicting the frequency

Table 56: Responsibility and People Manager/Non-People Manager Case Summary

		Case Processing Summary					
		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
People Manager		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
ResponsibilityComposite Score	Yes	32	88.9%	4	11.1%	36	100.0%
	No	105	79.5%	27	20.5%	132	100.0%

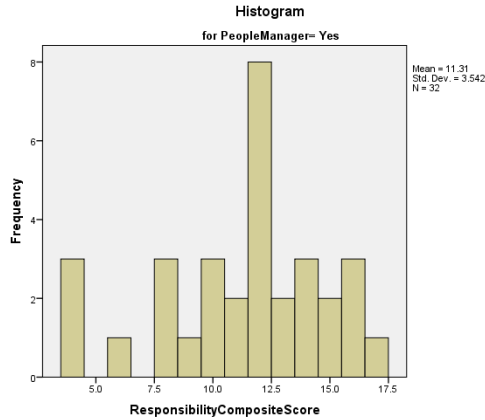


Figure 33: Responsibility and People Manager Distribution

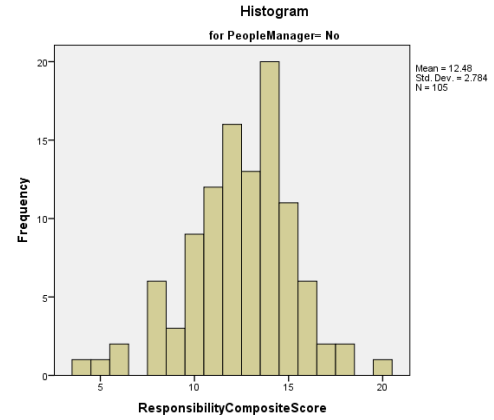


Figure 34: Responsibility and Non-People Manager Distribution

All associated descriptive statistics for each of the People Manager and Non-People Manager sample distributions are shown in **Table 57**.

Table 57: Responsibility and People Manager/Non People Manager Descriptive

Descriptives ^a					
ResponsibilityComposite Score	People Manager		Statistic	Std. Error	
	Yes	No			
ResponsibilityComposite Score	Mean		11.31	.626	
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound		10.04	
		Upper Bound		12.59	
	5% Trimmed Mean		11.42		
	Median		12.00		
	Variance		12.544		
	Std. Deviation		3.542		
	Minimum		4		
	Maximum		17		
	Range		13		
	Interquartile Range		5		
	Skewness		-.610	.414	
	Kurtosis		-.126	.809	
	Mean		12.48	.272	
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound		11.94	
Upper Bound			13.02		
5% Trimmed Mean		12.54			
Median		13.00			
Variance		7.752			
Std. Deviation		2.784			
Minimum		4			
Maximum		20			
Range		16			
Interquartile Range		3			
Skewness		-.432	.236		
Kurtosis		.714	.467		

a. There are no valid cases for ResponsibilityCompositeScore when People Manager = .000. Statistics cannot be computed for this level.

The results of tests of normality are presented in **Table 58**. The results of the Shapiro-Wilk's test of indicate that there is a deviations from normality ($W_{YES} = .064$, $df = 32$, $p = .064$), ($W_{NO} = .972$, $df = 105$, $p = .025$). As a result of this deviation, a Mann-Whitney U-test was utilised.

Table 58: Responsibility and People Manager/Non-People Manager Tests of Normality

Tests of Normality^a

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^b			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
ResponsibilityComposite Score	Yes	.171	32	.019	.938	32	.064
	No	.108	105	.004	.972	105	.025

a. There are no valid cases for ResponsibilityCompositeScore when People Manager = .000. Statistics cannot be computed for this level.

b. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Tables **59** and **60** below depict the result of the Mann-Whitney U-test, which infer that there was no statistically significant difference between the People Managers and Non-People Managers with a mean rank score of **59.70** for People Managers and **71.83** for Non People Managers (**U = 1382.50, p = .127**).

Table 60: Responsibility and People Manager

Table 59: Responsibility and People Manager Mean Rank

Ranks

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
ResponsibilityComposite Score	Yes	32	59.70	1910.50
	No	105	71.83	7542.50
	Total	137		

Test Statistics^a

	ResponsibilityCompositeScore
Mann-Whitney U	1382.500
Wilcoxon W	1910.500
Z	-1.525
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.127

a. Grouping Variable: People Manager

4.14. Talent Management Opportunities Ranking Result

Table 61 below depicts results from Group 4 ranking question in which 137 respondents ranked which talent management opportunity would be most beneficial to least beneficial. Full calculation can be found in Appendix 3.

Table 61: Results of Group 4 Ranking Question in regards to most beneficial Talent Management Opportunities

Rank	Talent Management Opportunities	Total
1	Formal Training	645
2	Reward/Pay	672
3	Career Planning/Advice	730
4	Special Projects	755
5	Mentoring	772
6	Coaching	787
7	Feedback Sessions	797
8	Senior Management Support	819
9	Internal Secondments	1064
10	Job Rotation	1088
11	External / International Secondments	1133
12	Other	1502

4.15. Search Results

Table 62 below depicts the results of a Google search for the term “Talent Management” completed in January, July and August 2015.

Table 62: Google Search Results for the Term "Talent Management"

Month and Year Search Completed	January 2015	July 2015	August 2015
Amount (Millions)	32.1	41.2	44

5. Discussion

The response rate of the questionnaire was 37% (137/370 individuals), which falls closely to the approximate average response rate from organisations as predicted by Baruch and Holtom (2008) of 35.7%. There was a non-response rate of 63% (233/370 individuals). Cook, Heath and Thompson (2000) argue that the response representativeness is more important than response rate when completing survey research, but they also note that response rate is significant if it bears on representativeness. Rogelberg *et al.*, (2000) found that employees who refuse to respond to an employee survey request have higher intentions of quitting, less organisational commitment and have concerns around how the organisation would handle the data including a lack of action on feedback. Another study with a 33% response rate examined a number of non-respondents and the reasons why they did not respond included that they were too busy and the survey was not considered relevant amongst other reasons (Fenton-O’Creevy, 1998).

The main research objective of this study was to examine the perception of talent management within an IT Organisation. The drivers for this research were the gap in the literature based on studies analysing talent management from an employer’s perspective or the perspective of those already being actively talent-managed (CIPD, 2010), the difficulties within the employment market including skill-shortages, advancing technologies and changing demographics (Brightwater, 2014; Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2014; Accenture, 2013) and to attempt to create usable scales to examine talent management in order to contribute to the gap within the literature.

In the current employment market with the “war for talent” prevailing (Chambers *et al.*, 1998), IT recruitment is difficult on a global basis with technology companies actively competing for people due to a talent shortage in many areas (CIO, 2012). Due to these difficulties, it would appear that talent management should be utilised in order for organisations to take full advantage of their current talent and attract future talent. However, most studies within the literature view the topic from an employer’s perspective or from the perspective of those already actively talent-managed (CIPD, 2010; Mellahi and Collings, 2010; Blass, Knights and Orbea, 2008). This current study aims to fit into that gap within the literature.

5.1. Perception of Talent Management

From the literature, talent management would appear to be high priority for senior leaders (PwC, 2014) but this would need to filter down to all levels of the organisation (Ashton and Morton, 2005) in order to have an overall successful strategy. This study examined whether there is a difference in the perception of talent management from Senior Management, Middle Management or Entry Level/Specialists in an IT Organisation by breaking the organisation down by the Grade structure in place. The results from this study suggest that there are significant differences between different levels of the organisation (Senior Management, Middle Management and Entry Level/Specialists) in regards to their perception of talent management. While the literature implies that talent management is a priority to Senior Leaders (PwC, 2014; Ashton and Morton, 2005), this study takes a unique view taking into consideration all levels of the organisation and has not been statistically proven in any way prior to this study. The mean values within the Groupings indicate that those in the lower grades (46-50), have a higher perception of talent management than both of the higher grade groups which include Middle and Senior Management (51-52, 53-58). This is in direct conflict with the literature, which implies that CEOs and senior leaders highly value talent management (PwC, 2014; McGee, 2006; Chambers *et al.*, 1998). Results indicate that Senior Management (Grades 53-58) have a higher perception of talent management than Middle Management (Grades 51-52), which could suggest a misalignment and should be addressed if applying any strategy.

Organisations may decide to invest in training and promoting talent management to ensure all levels of the organisation are aligned. If Senior Management are highly committed, but Middle Management are not fully committed to talent management initiatives, a strategy may be misaligned and potentially fail. Senior leaders need to be the drivers for any initiatives with the support of line managers (CIPD, 2010a; Ashton and Morton, 2005). Organisations may potentially look to make talent management a key responsibility within any people-manager roles and give managers the resources to develop their people whether that is extra people to free up their time or dedicated people managers.

The people outside of Middle or Senior Management in the organisation may be more eager to be talent-managed than the managers and leaders may be aware of. There are certain characteristics associated with different generations, such as Generation Y who

enjoy responsibility, immediate feedback and are very willing to change jobs unless their expectations are met (Guthridge, Komm and Lawson, 2008; Martin, 2005). There is a possibility that these expectations are becoming more of a reality that organisations are expected to meet.

With this in mind, as well as changing demographics due to an increasing average age of the Irish population (CSO, 2014, CSO, 2013b) and rising emigration (Glynn, Kelly and MacEínrí, 2013), IT organisations are looking at ways to develop and retain top talent (Brightwater, 2014). Due to these different expectations, it might be expected that different age groups within an IT Organisation have different perceptions of talent management. However, results indicate that there are no differences between the age groups, so it would seem that age groups perceive talent management similarly. This result would effectively rule out the previous notion of generations driving up the perception of talent management in the lower grades.

If senior leaders prioritise talent management (PwC, 2014) and there is a difference between grades and perception, it may be assumed that there is a relationship between perception of talent management and People Managers/Non People Managers. This study found that there is insufficient evidence to suggest that the perception of talent management varies between People Managers and Non-People Managers with both groups appearing to perceive talent management similarly.

There may be other departments within an IT Organisation and it is important to understand whether they perceive talent management differently. However, there were no differences found between Departments. This is significant as it would suggest that all people within an IT Organisation, whether directly involved in the IT Department or otherwise, perceive talent management similarly, which may impact how talent management strategies are applied.

While the results of this study suggest that there were no differences between departments, it did show that managers with a direct number of reports of 11-15 have a higher perception of talent management than managers with less or more in their reporting line. Managers with 6-10 in their reporting line ranked second, managers with 15-10 ranked third and managers with 1-5 within their reporting line ranked last. While time has been cited a barrier within the literature (Guthridge *et al.*, 2008), this does not explain why managers with a higher number of reports (11-15) have a higher perception

of talent management than managers, as the higher the number of people they manage could imply they have less time to develop each individual. Managers with the least amount of reports (1-5) have a lower perception of talent management than the other groupings. Perhaps managers with a higher number of reports have been managing people longer or have gained more experience; therefore are more accustomed to talent management practices or that they have come to appreciate the value in developing their own reporting line.

5.2. Barriers

The literature suggests that time (Guthridge *et al.*, 2008; Ready and Conger, 2003); mobility (Guthridge and Komm, 2008), consistency (Guthridge and Komm, 2008; Björkman, Barner-Rasmussen and Li Li, 2004; Ghoshal and Bartlett, 1990), commitment (Salin, 2003) and managing talent in MNCs are barriers that are encountered when attempting to manage talent on an international basis.

If there are barriers to talent management within an organisation, senior leaders and HR should examine ways to alleviate them in order to support an effective talent management strategy. The Barriers to Talent Management scale that was used within this study focused on those issues from the literature review; time, mobility, consistency and commitment. These barriers would appear to have an impact on all levels of the organisation; such as a person who is not willing to relocate to a new role despite them being a good match or a manager who simply does not have enough time to develop their people.

This study reviewed whether barriers were perceived for each of the Grade groupings within the organisation (Senior Management, Grades 53-58; Middle Management, 51-52; or Entry Level/Specialists, 46-50) and for People Managers/Non People Managers. Managers may be encountering barriers in the form of time or someone feels like their manager is not fully committed to their development. However, results indicate that there are no differences between the various Grade Groupings or between People Managers/Non People Managers. This would imply that there are no major barriers encountered at any particular level of the organisation or perceived barriers between People Managers/Non-People Managers. This seems to be in conflict with the literature

(Guthridge *et al.*, 2008; Guthridge and Komm, 2008; Björkman, Barner-Rasmussen and Li Li, 2004; Ready and Conger, 2003; Salin, 2003; Ghoshal and Bartlett, 1990).

5.3. Responsibility

Talent management initiatives need to start at the top of the organisation and filter down to all levels (Ashton and Morton, 2005), yet the literature suggests that many CEOs have not taken the first step in terms of a strategy, but are aware that strategies need to be in place (PwC, 2014). HR would appear to play a critical role in talent management (CIPD, 2010); however, line managers are critical to the process in terms of identifying potential successors (CIPD, 2014a) and for overall consistency of any strategy (CIPD, 2010). It would appear that Talent Managers and HR feel that the individual must take control and ownership of their own development (CIPD, 2010), but it would appear that over 10% of people in the private sector feel that responsibility lies elsewhere or with their line manager (CIPD, 2010).

Results from this study indicate differences between Grade Groupings of the organisation (Senior Management, Grades 53-58; Middle Management, 51-52; and Entry Level/Specialists, 46-50). This could be reflective of the literature and results of the CIPD report (2010), whereby some individuals feel that their line manager or someone else is actually responsible for their development, while Senior Management feel that individuals are responsible for their own development. However, there was no difference between People Managers and Non-People Managers found within this study, which suggests that both People Managers and Non-People Managers have similar outlooks in regards to who is responsible for talent management. These finds are significant in order to address any misalignment as to who is responsible for development of individuals. If left solely to the business, HR or line managers, the individual may not get the type of development they want or require. Similarly, if left to the individual, the development may be too slow or too fast.

5.4. Talent Management Opportunities Ranking Result

The results of the Group 4 Ranking question gives some insight in to what people in an IT Organisation want in terms of talent management opportunities. Formal Training, Reward/Pay and Career Planning/Advice rank first, second and third respectively.

Interestingly, Coaching and Mentoring (fifth and sixth) ranked behind Special Projects (fourth). These results could be utilised when planning a talent management strategy with a higher focus put on formal training rather than coaching and mentoring or organisations may adopt special projects over internal/external secondments for development.

5.5. Search Results

Based on the findings of Lewis and Heckman (2006), this study examined whether the term “talent management” is a growing field or could be considered a fad. Miller, Hartwich and Le Breton-Miller (2004) define fads as ideas that become popular very quickly, stay popular for only a few years and experience a steep decline in interest and attention.

Similarly, a Google search completed in January 2015 for the term “talent management” had over 32.1 million hits and the exact same terms yielded over 41.2 million hits in July 2015 and over 44 million in August 2015.

By this definition, talent management would either appear to be either still increasing in popularity and not a fad given the fact it has steadily increased in popularity since the late 1990s.

5.6. Limitations

One of the main limitations of this research is that there was no validated talent management scale identified within the literature that could have been utilised within this current study. As a result of this, a questionnaire was created in an attempt to build three scales that could yield new evidence in the talent management arena. Ideally, the three scales would be put through a full validation and factor analysis process. However, timeframes and samples size would permit execution of this for this current study.

One of the proposed reasons that there are no scales in talent management is that it is an incredibly broad area cover many facets of HR practice. It requires an in-depth knowledge of the full cycle of an employee, the employment market (both national and international) and the definition for “talent” and “talent management” varies greatly between organisations that it would need to be tailored to each organisation rather than a “one size fits all” approach.

The questionnaire used within this study had over 70 questions and had an 18% incomplete response rate, which is a high amount of information that was not able to be utilised within this study. Within the survey tool itself, there is a graphical progress indicator built in. Dillman, Smyth and Christian (2014) do not recommend using any graphical progress indicator in studies. Heerwegh and Loosveldt (2006) have suggested that they do not reduce people who do not complete the survey midway through, but instead they discourage people in longer surveys. Disclosing the amount of time required to complete the survey can affect response rate with a higher time to complete the survey being associated with a higher non-response rate (Crawford, Couper and Lamias, 2001). With over 70 questions, this could have been an issue with this questionnaire.

6. Conclusion

The present study was carried out in order to contribute to closing the gap in the literature in regards to talent management. While talent management would appear to be of high importance to senior leaders and appear to continue to be a growing area of interest, there were no validated scales to measure this area or studies that looked at the area in depth in the IT industry or from an employee's perspective.

The overall research objective of this study was to understand how talent management is perceived within various levels of an IT Organisation and understand whether there is a dilution of the appreciation for this from Senior Management down through the organisation between different Grade Groupings (Senior Management, Grades 53-58; Middle Management, Grades 51-52 and Entry Level/Specialists, Grades 46-50); People Managers/Non-People Managers, Departments, Age Groups/Generations and Number of People in Reporting Line. Within this, there were a number of sub-objectives such as reviewing whether barriers to talent management are encountered by Senior Management, Middle Management or Entry Level/Specialists and between People Managers/Non-People Managers and whether people feel differently about who is ultimately responsible for talent management with an organisation.

The results found within this study conflicted with current literature in that senior leaders appear to highly value talent management, yet this study appears to show that the perception of talent management is higher in the lower grades (46-50) of the organisation. Following this, Middle Management appears to have a lower perception that Senior Management, which could suggest a misalignment. For any strategy to be effective, it needs to have senior management support and filter down through the organisation. If this support does not filter to middle management, it will not be consistent with the lower grades of the organisation, which would appear to highly value talent management.

While there were differences identified between the Grade groupings, there were no differences identified between People Managers/Non People Managers, Departments or Age Groupings. The Age Groupings may be seen to conflict the literature, as it would appear different generations' value certain things and have clear expectations, but this was not apparent during this study.

Interestingly, the number of people in a manager's reporting line showed statistical differences and managers with 11-15 people in their reporting line having a higher perception of talent management and those with a reporting line of 1-5 having the lowest. As previously mentioned, this could be due to the fact that people with a higher number in their reporting line have more experience dealing with talent management.

Two of the sub-objectives of this study were to examine whether barriers were encountered at any level of the organisation and whether there were any differences between various levels of the organisation in regards to who is responsible for talent management.

There were no significant differences between Grade Groupings or between People Managers/Non People Managers in regards to barriers. In reality, any barriers that are encountered should be addressed, as they would only hamper any strategy.

This study found that there were significant differences between Grade Groupings of the organisation in regards to responsibility, which could suggest that lower levels of the organisation feel someone other than themselves, for example HR, senior management or their line manager, are responsible for talent management. There were no significant differences found between People Managers and Non-People Managers.

As no talent management scales were available in the literature, three were created for this study. As these scales only went through a lightweight validation, rather than a full scale validation, it is worth noting that the questionnaire used may be significantly changed if it were put through a full validation.

6.1. Implications

Talent management is an extremely broad area. It is difficult to reduce it down to a simple scale, as it encompasses so many areas of HR. However, defining a scale would potentially enable organisations to create and adapt any talent management strategies to their own culture and environment. It could allow any misalignments to be identified and rectified in order to create an effective strategy.

Talent management can be a costly initiative depending on the strategy utilised. If a fully inclusive talent management strategy is used within an organisation, it may be argued that people who are not fully engaged or do not want to be developed would be included and

therefore, financially it would be a loss. In addition to these costs, there would be the cost of the actual development, whether this is internal or external training or the actual time dedicated from another person. The main issue with this would be the cost to develop everyone as opposed to developing a limited number of high performers. However, if a predominantly exclusive model is used, it may alienate people and even miss potential high performers. Promoting and retaining people internally would obviously reduce costs for an organisation and would create a positive work environment. Whether an organisation uses an exclusive or inclusive model is something that must be considered when developing a talent management strategy. Although an organisation may wish to use an inclusive model, it may not have the financial capability to do so. It is also difficult to predict return on investment for any talent management strategy, yet it is important to recognise that a well conducted strategy can indeed improve attraction and retention of people.

Talent management initiatives are something that must develop over time. For example, people within a talent management programme may be developed over years within a talent pipeline and be on a succession plan for a senior role. For this reason, it is important to know the direction of the company and future business goals to make adequate plans for talent management.

The talent management loop encompasses attracting, evaluating, developing and managing people. If an organisation is to invest in talent management, it needs to do so at each of these levels. One way of attracting talent is promoting the employer brand, which can be a costly exercise to develop. Evaluating talent requires the use of metrics, which can be costly in the form of talent management systems. As mentioned previously, developing people can be costly and can be exhausting on resources. Results from this study show that formal training and reward/pay are the most beneficial opportunities, both of which are costly. Overall, talent management strategies can be particularly expensive, but the alternative might be more costly in potentially being non-competitive and reducing the ability of the organisation to accomplish business goals.

The future of talent management appears to be safe, as the term itself is showing continual growth year on year. If IT organisations, both nationally and internationally continue to encounter skill shortages and other challenges such as changing demographics, globalisation and technological changes, they will need to become

adaptive in order to remain competitive. New initiatives will need to be undertaken to attract and retain top talent, whilst understanding what exactly it is that drives IT professionals. If a high potential individual within the organisation can potentially move into a business critical role in the future, why not develop and retain these individuals. For these reasons, it could be argued that talent management is critical in the current IT employment market. However, organisations need to remain alert with an aim to continually adapt and improve strategies.

6.2. Recommendations for Further Research

As there are no validated talent management scales within the literature, a full scale validation of the scales could be a potential next step following this study. In validating the scales, organisations could utilise them to review their current situation and look to improve any areas where there are differences.

Conducting a large scale study of talent management practices in both a quantitative and qualitative sense could yield extremely valuable information in regards to progressing talent management practices and could potentially provide insights on how to address some of the recruitment issues that organisations are encountering within the employment markets. Additionally, it could improve how people are engaged within their roles and support retention. Some of the results in this study gave conflicting results, so a wider-scale study would be useful in order to gain more conclusive findings.

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Appendix 1

Perception of Talent Management in an IT Organisation

As part of my Masters in HR with National College of Ireland, I am completing a study on how talent management is perceived in an IT Organisation. As part of this, I would kindly ask that you take some time to complete this survey. Your contribution will be invaluable to my research and I appreciate you taking the time to complete this.

The responses received will be anonymous and confidential. Your name will not be collected at any point. You can withdraw from this survey at any time. The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me: shollingsworth@ft-services.com

There are 15 questions in this survey

Group 1

1 [G1Q1]What is your gender? *

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Female
- Male

2 [G1Q2]What is your age? *

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-55
- 55-64
- Age 65 or older

3 [G1Q3]What is your education level? *

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Completed Secondary/High School
- College Diploma/Cert

- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- PHD
- Some college, did not complete
- Other

4 [G1Q4]What is your marital status? *

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Single
- Married
- Separated
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Cohabiting
- Other

5 [G1Q5]What is your business unit? *

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Operations
- IT
- Marketing
- G&A

6 [G1Q6]Which department do you work in? *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

° Answer was 'IT' at question '5 [G1Q5]' (What is your business unit?)

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- QA
- Web Development
- IT Operations

- Mobile Development
- Engineering Services
- Infrastructure
- Release and Admin
- Game System
- Database
- Web Gaming
- IT Support
- Services Development

7 [G1Q7]Are you a people manager? *

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Yes
- No

8 [G1Q8]What is your current grade? *

Please write your answer here:

9 [G1Q9]How many people are in your reporting line? *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

° Answer was 'Yes' at question '7 [G1Q7]' (Are you a people manager?)

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- +15

Group 2

11 [G2Q1]Group 2 *

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree or Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

- P1** The organisation develops high potential people.
- P2** The organisation is growing future managers/leaders
- P3** I am aware of the term “talent management”.
- P4** The organisation is retaining key employees.
- P5** The annual performance review rewards good performance.
- P6** The organisation is meeting future skill requirements of the organisation.
- P7** The organisation is attracting and recruiting key people.
- P8** Decisions have been made about my development without my knowledge.
- P9** I am proud to work for my organisation.
- P10** Talent management is important.
- P11** My efforts at work are valued.
- P12** I have had the opportunity to take an active role in my personal development in this organisation.
- P13** I am happy at work.
- P14** I am proud of the brand.
- P15** Career opportunities are available for me within this organisation.
- P16** I have a future with the organisation.
- P17** The term “Talent” has many definitions.
- P18** The brand attracts the best people.

Group 3

12 [G3Q1]Group 3 *

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree or Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

- P19** Being part of a talent programme would offer new challenges.
- P20** Development as part of a talent programme would help me in the future.
- P21** I would not want anyone to know if I was not on a talent programme.
- P22** I do not want to be part of a talent programme.
- P23** Being part of a talent programme would get me noticed.
- P24** Only top performers should be included in a talent programme.
- P25** Being part of a talent programme would help me progress faster.
- P26** The people who are not on a talent programme are at a disadvantage.
- P27** Everyone should be included in a talent programme.
- P28** If I was not on a talent programme, I would be motivated to try to get on one.
- P29** If I was on a talent programme, I would want everyone to know.
- P30** The people on a talent programme should be made known to everyone.
- P31** I would like to be part of a talent programme.
- P32** If I was not on a talent programme, I would be demotivated.

Group 4

14 [G4Q1] Which of these opportunities would be most beneficial to you? *

Please number each box in order of preference from 1 to 12

- Formal Training
- Internal Secondments
- Coaching
- Mentoring
- Feedback Sessions
- Career Planning/Advice
- Job Rotation
- Reward/Pay
- Senior Management Support
- Special Projects
- External / International Secondments
- Other

Group 5

15 [G5Q1] *

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree or Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

B1 My manager spends time developing me.

R1 HR/Training and Development are responsible for my development.

B2 There are sufficient opportunities for my development within the Dublin office.

B3 My manager has time to develop me.

B4 I would consider relocating to another office within the Group if a new opportunity arose.

B5 The organisation supports my development.

R2 Senior management are responsible for my development.

B6 If I was based in the head office of the organisation, I would have greater opportunities for my career.

B7 My manager prioritises the development of certain members of my team.

B8 I want further development within my role.

B9 My manager prioritises the development of my whole team.

- B10** The organisation prioritises the development of certain people.
- B11** Senior management invest time in my development.
- B12** The organisation is fair in its development of people.
- B13** My manager supports my development.
- B14** If I took a role in another office, it would damage my career prospects.
- R3** I am responsible for my development.
- R4** The organisation is responsible for my development.
- R5** My manager is responsible for my development.

Appendix 2

Cronbach's alpha Formula

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N-1) \cdot \bar{c}}$$

Shapiro-Wilk Test Formula

$$W = \frac{\left(\sum_{i=1}^n a_i x_{(i)}\right)^2}{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2}$$

Kruskal Wallis Formula

$$H = \frac{12}{N(N-1)} \sum_{j=1}^K \frac{R_j^2}{n_j} - 3(N-1)$$

ANOVA Formula

$$MSS_W = \frac{\sum_{g \in G} (X - \bar{X}_g)^2}{n - k}$$

$$MSS_B = \frac{\sum_{g \in G} n_g (\bar{X}_g - \bar{X}_G)^2}{k - 1}$$

$$F = \frac{MSS_B}{MSS_W}$$

$$df_B = k - 1$$

$$df_W = n - k$$

Independent Samples T-test

<p>Test Statistic for a Test of the Difference between Two Population Means</p> <p>(σ unknown; assumed equal)</p>	$t = \frac{(\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2) - (\mu_1 - \mu_2)}{\sqrt{\frac{s_p^2}{n_1} + \frac{s_p^2}{n_2}}}$ $s_p^2 = \frac{(n_1 - 1)s_1^2 + (n_2 - 1)s_2^2}{n_1 + n_2 - 2}$ $df = n_1 + n_2 - 2$
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<p>Test Statistic for a Test of the Difference between Two Population Means</p> <p>(σ unknown; assumed unequal)</p>	$t = \frac{(\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2) - (\mu_1 - \mu_2)}{\sqrt{\frac{s_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{s_2^2}{n_2}}}$ $df = \frac{\left(\frac{s_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{s_2^2}{n_2}\right)^2}{\frac{\left(s_1^2/n_1\right)^2}{n_1} + \frac{\left(s_2^2/n_2\right)^2}{n_2}}$
---	--

Mann-Whitney U Test Formula

$$U_a = n_a n_b + \frac{n_a(n_a + 1)}{2} - \sum R_a$$

and

$$U_b = n_a n_b + \frac{n_b(n_b + 1)}{2} - \sum R_b$$

Table 4: Presents numbers of respondents that ranked each opportunity from 1 to 12. For example, 12 individuals ranked Formal Training as the opportunity they feel would be most beneficial.

Talent Management Opportunity	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6	Rank 7	Rank 8	Rank 9	Rank 10	Rank 11	Rank 12
Formal Training	31	18	19	13	8	6	11	7	6	7	8	4
Reward/Pay	24	14	14	20	13	13	9	10	7	7	5	2
Career Planning/Advice	16	12	18	16	16	7	14	18	9	7	3	2
Mentoring	13	15	18	11	16	9	12	14	11	9	8	2
Senior Management Support	12	8	15	9	18	15	21	12	8	8	9	3
Special Projects	11	16	12	12	24	14	9	18	7	12	2	1
Internal Secondments	8	6	9	1	7	12	10	12	19	30	19	5
Coaching	8	17	13	17	8	25	10	9	13	10	7	1
Feedback Sessions	6	17	12	19	16	12	12	14	13	8	8	1
External / International Secondments	4	6	3	8	4	14	12	7	15	24	35	6
Job Rotation	3	7	4	10	5	11	13	14	26	13	23	9
Other	2	2	1	2	3	0	5	3	4	3	11	102

Table 5 Presents calculation on how Ranking Order was calculated

Talent Management Opportunity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Formal Training	31	36	57	52	40	36	77	56	54	70	88	48	645
Reward/Pay	24	28	42	80	65	78	63	80	63	70	55	24	672
Career Planning/Advice	16	24	54	64	80	42	98	144	81	70	33	24	730
Mentoring	13	30	54	44	80	54	84	112	99	90	88	24	772
Senior Management Support	12	16	45	36	90	90	147	96	72	80	99	36	819
Special Projects	11	32	36	48	120	84	63	144	63	120	22	12	755
Internal Secondments	8	12	27	4	35	72	70	96	171	300	209	60	1064
Coaching	8	34	39	68	40	150	70	72	117	100	77	12	787
Feedback Sessions	6	34	36	76	80	72	84	112	117	80	88	12	797
External / International Secondments	4	12	9	32	20	84	84	56	135	240	385	72	1133
Job Rotation	3	14	12	40	25	66	91	112	234	130	253	108	1088
Other	2	4	3	8	15	0	35	24	36	30	121	1224	1502

Submission of Thesis to Norma Smurfit Library, National College of Ireland

Student name: Sarah Hollingsworth.

Student number: 13112791

School: School of Business, NCI.

Course: PT MA HRM

Degree to be awarded:

Award of MR in Human Resource Management

Title of Thesis: Investigate Attitudes towards Talent Management in an IT Organisation

One hard bound copy of your thesis will be lodged in the Norma Smurfit Library and will be available for consultation. The electronic copy will be accessible in TRAP (<http://trap.ncirl.ie/>), the National College of Ireland's Institutional Repository. In accordance with normal academic library practice all theses lodged in the National College of Ireland Institutional Repository (TRAP) are made available on open access.

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Personal Learning Reflective Piece

Sarah Hollingsworth

The work on this dissertation allowed me to investigate an area that appears to be growing in popularity, but yet has gaps within the literature. I feel my work will contribute to closing the gap and takes positive steps forwards in creating scales in talent management. My work allowed me to review theory versus practice and understand the difficulties organisations encounter including resource and practical implications. This research allowed me to understand the financial implications of applying a talent management strategy and the difficulties in identifying any return on investment.

Having never undertaken a quantitative analysis prior to this study, it was initially a worrying and daunting challenge to understand statistics and utilise a new software package. However, I now feel confident in using the statistical programme SPSS and will look at how I can apply a more analytical approach in my day-to-day work in HR. Data analytics and its application in HR is now a big interest to me and I think my next learning step will be towards data analytics. Additionally, I am much more confident reviewing the methodology and results sections within academic journals and not avoiding or quickly glancing over them as I previously would have done.

Some of the results of this study conflicted with papers within the literature. These were very fascinating findings and it was highly rewarding to be the person to uncover them. These moments were highlights within my study.

An area I had to improve on was condensing my work into a concise paper, whereby I looked to put information through a deduction process. This is a skill that is necessary in practice; to get my point across in a direct, concise and complete fashion. This skill will carry over into my day-to-day work and I will be applying it going forward.

This paper allowed me to investigate an area I am very much interested in and I will hopefully aim to specialise in in the future. In addition, it will allow me to present usable information back to my organisation, whereby senior management may apply useful changes.