Development of a Talent-based Hybrid HR Architecture for Managing a Non-standard Global Workforce

by

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Master of Science-Management (MS-Management)

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Tasmania

May 2022

Declaration of Originality

I certify that this thesis's intellectual content is the product of my own work and that all assistance received in preparing this thesis and sources have been acknowledged, nor has this thesis been submitted for any degree or other purposes.

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June 14, 2021

Statement of Authority of Access

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Statement of Ethical Conduct

The research associated with this thesis abides by the Australian National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research and is approved by the Social Sciences and Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Tasmania with Ethics Reference number H0018562.

Mariam Tanweer

June 14, 2021

Acknowledgements

All praises to God Almighty, whose authority I recognise and acknowledge the blessings I received from Him in every endeavour of my life. Without His nurturing, I would not be able to complete my thesis successfully.

I want to express my most profound appreciation to my primary supervisor, Associate Professor Stephen Cahoon, who provided constructive advice throughout my research journey and belief in my work and abilities. I am grateful that he facilitated making me a part of AMC and UTAS by showing confidence and interest in my research ideas. I would also like to extend my deep gratitude to Associate Professor Shu-Ling Peggy Chen, my secondary supervisor, for her invaluable contributions to ccarryingout this research and the suggestions that gave me an unmatchable research experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to my Graduate Research Coordinator Dr Hossein Enshaei for being patient and supportive throughout my degree program. Special thanks to Dr Reza Emad, Dr Hong-Oanh (Owen) Nguyen, Dr Jiangang Fei, Dr Armand Djoumessi Mouafo, Dr Eduardo Batalha, Inoka Upul Seneviratne, Manoja Herath and KM Pratiksha Srivastava for their kind suggestions and support. Thanks to Dr Shamaila Gul, Dr Wajeeha Mudassar, Dr Gulen Hashmi, Dr Khuram Shahzad and Dr Sheeraz Qaisarani.

I owe a tremendous amount of gratitude to my daughter Minah Hajira for her unmatched emotional and mental support. Her constant encouragement motivated me to achieve this academic objective. I am grateful for my parents' and siblings' support throughout my life and in my academic path.

I dedicate this doctoral thesis to my daughter Minah Hajira.

Table of contents

List of tables

List of figures

List of acronyms

AI	Artificial Intelligence
APM	Alternative Perspective Manager
GTM	Global Talent Management
HR	Human Resources
HRM	Human Resource Management
ICT	Information Communication Technologies
Industry 4.0	Fourth Industrial Revolution
IRP	Interview Refinement Protocol
IT	Information Technologies
IT & TC	Information Technologies and Telecommunication
MNEs	Multinational Enterprises
NSE	Non-standard Employees
NWA	Non-standard Work Arrangements
RQ	Research Question
SHRM	Strategic Human Resource Management
SRQ	Secondary Research Question
SS HREC	Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee
T&L	Transports and Logistics
TM	Talent Management
4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
3PL	Third Party Logistics

Abstract

The fourth industrial revolution that utilises self-learning machines, robotics and automated decision making still relies on the human for cognitive work and shifting the burden of the menial job to digital devices. Organisations' requirements for adaptable and agile human talent in the fourth industrial revolution has already and will continue to necessitate a new way of working. This impact is already evident throughout the value chains of global organisations and will require new considerations for human resource management practice.

The existing approaches to managing human resources (HR) continue to be challenged in delivering sustainable competitive advantage. One of the most prominent challenges faced by organisations operating at a global level is responding to an emerging trend of non-traditional and non-standard employment, for example, part-time, on-call, contract or agency mediated work. This trend gives organisations a unique opportunity to recruit employees worldwide using various platforms provided by information communication technologies directly aligned with the organisation's strategic intent. However, it appears that organisations may not be prepared and/or lack the strategic decision framework to manage a new type of employee.

Although organisations are already using multiple HR systems to strategically align HR processes and practices, organisations need a different approach to recruit the best non-standard talent worldwide and manage them. Talent management is suggested in this thesis as being a new lens to develop a strategic decision framework to manage non-standard employees undertaken within three stages:

i. identifying existing HR systems in use by multinational enterprises (MNEs);
ii. exploring how talent management as a new approach can be used to rethink the existing HR systems for standard and non-standard employees; and
iii. combining the proposed talent-based HR systems into an HR architecture as a decisional framework for managers to choose optimally among the various talent-based HR systems.

This PhD research employed qualitative research methods consisting of 21 in-depth telephone interviews with key senior HR decision-makers from the maritime transport and logistics industry. The informants of this study were the strategic HR managers

involved in future-oriented HR strategy development. The average length of the in-depth interviews was 50 minutes. A parallel analysis of data during data collection and the observation of saturation determined the cease point of data collection and suggested that 21 in-depth interviews were sufficient to explore the phenomenon. A saturation of information at four levels was observed to ensure the quality of research and to cover the aspects of talent-based HR systems identified by the managers.

The informants provided information about the organisations' existing human resource management systems. The critical discussion was the views of informants on the development of contemporary HR systems and their potential components when considering the increase in the non-standard workforce. Interviews also included a detailed discussion on the understanding of what constitutes talent for the managers and how they consider the right talent can be employed to align with the strategic intent of the organisation. According to the findings of this study, organisations utilise a variety of HR systems that can be used for talent-based HR systems. Furthermore, HR managers have varying perspectives on talent and talent management, which can result in a variety of talent-based HR systems. The outcome of the discussion was the development of the value-driven framework and talent-based HR systems, which is the foundation of a talent-based HR architecture.

The data analysed through the grounded theorisation process enabled the combination of the themes and revealed the industry experts' underlying decision models and talent perspectives. The thematic analysis underpinning the grounded theorisation process assisted in determining the patterns in data, and the interpretation of those themes resulted in the talent-based HR systems being grounded in the views of strategic HR decision-makers.

This study contributes to the body of scholarship of strategic human resource management (SHRM) by offering a value-driven framework, a set of talent-based HR systems and an HR architectural framework. First, a value-driven framework is developed that indicates how value can be created, captured, leveraged and protected in each component of the HR system, such as designing jobs or the recruitment process. Second, this study offers talent-based HR systems aimed at developing a systematic and continuous process of managing highly talented employees and creating a talent mindset in the organisations. The value-driven framework is embedded in the proposed talent-based HR systems. Talent-based HR systems offer a systematic process of finding and utilising HR value for the strategic intent of the organisations by linking the value components such as value creation, capture, leverage and protection with the components of HR systems.

Thirdly, this study develops a talent-based HR architectural framework that combines multiple talent-based HR systems and a value-driven framework in an HR architecture for organisations using multiple employment arrangements. Multiple employment arrangements include a combination of standard employees and non-standard employees such as part-time, on-call, causal, agency mediated, and platform mediated employees. Moreover, this proposed framework can be adopted by HR managers or to configure various types of standard and non-standard employees optimally. Furthermore, this proposed framework allows the managers to use a different lens to manage multiple types of employees, for example, different talent-based HR systems for multiple projects within the same organisation, without impacting the core HR system, such as commitment-based or productivity-based HR systems of the organisation.

Future research areas could include expanding the value-driven framework, which currently assumes that people are the most valuable resource, to include other valuable resources, such as technology. The talent-based HR systems, founded on the value-driven framework and the resultant HR architectural decisional framework, could also be empirically tested for validation. Also, the talent-based HR decisional framework could be tested on a large sample to improve the statistical generalisability. Similar could be done on a large sample from various industries to ensure transferability of the decisional framework. Furthermore, the decisional framework can be customised for different organisations and industries. Moreover, as this study assumes people are a valuable source of competitive advantage, future studies can consider various sources of competitive advantage and combine them in a decisional framework in which the HR architecture decisional framework can be a part of the overall organisational competitive advantage architecture.

This study contributes to the practice of SHRM and assists organisations in continuing business by offering an optimal combination of employment arrangements, termed the 'best-fit approach' in SHRM. It also provides a managerial decisional framework for sustainable competitive advantage where HR is considered an organisation's most valuable resource. This study can also reduce the post-COVID-19 economic impact and help organisations to cope with the challenges of the fourth industrial revolution.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview

This chapter introduces this PhD research topic and justifies its selection and scope. The chapter commences with the study's background and is accompanied by a discussion on the rationale for conducting this research. This chapter outlines human resource management's future through the lens of talent management. It draws attention to the new forms of employment arrangements that are important to formulate the optimal and differentiated HR systems. The discussion ends with the identification of research questions. The significance of the research is discussed after the research questions in which the importance and the contribution of this research study are revealed. This chapter concludes with the structure of the thesis that provides an overview of subsequent chapters.

1.2. Background of the study

Over the last ten years, management and organisation-focused research suggest that HR significantly impact gaining competitive advantage and efficiency (Pasban & Nojedeh 2016; Lepak *et al.* 2017). The management of HR is considered a significant concern of today's organisations because of the capability of HR to create knowledge through their abilities and skills (Buta 2015; Rotich 2015; Sparrow *et al.* 2015a; Cui *et al.* 2018). Su *et al.* (2018) suggest that better management of human resources with a strategic focus has sparked the increasing interest of practitioners and researchers over the past 20 years. For example, HR managers are now more focused on linking the HR goals, policies and practices aligned with the organisational strategy to address the rapidly changing external technological environment (Ahmed & Ogalo 2019). Moreover, human resource management (HRM) research indicates a trend of considering management of various kinds of employees aligned with the organisation's strategic focus in the era of the fourth industrial revolution, often called Industry 4.0 (Malik *et al.* 2020). Thus, human resource management (HRM), the organisation's strategy, the strategic focus of HRM and competitiveness are important areas of interest in research and practice.

According to a number of academics, one of the most significant rising trends is the management of human resources through an integrated set of practices linked with the organisation's strategy, which is referred to as HR architecture (Kaufman 2010;

Michaelis *et al.* 2015; Hansen *et al.* 2019; Luo *et al.* 2020). The researchers' interest in architectural perspective using the different approaches such as multiple HR systems, optimal configurations and differentiated architecture appears to be increasing because of the growing strategic approach to HRM (Michaelis *et al.* 2015; Wright *et al.* 2018; Hansen *et al.* 2019).

Lepak and Snell (1999), Lepak and Snell (2007), and Lepak *et al.* (2017) assert that organisations may have different HR systems operating for different types of employees and the value they can create for organisations. The HR system is a combination of HR practices that are to be internally consistent and bundled to achieve overarching strategic targets (Boon *et al.* 2019). Organisations can configure multiple HR systems according to the strategic needs that can be unique for each organisation. For example, organisations can choose among high performance, high commitment, high productivity or high collaboration based HR systems or combinations (Lepak *et al.* 2017; Boon *et al.* 2019). However, since the early writings of Lepak and Snell (1999), the architectural perspective has not been investigated thoroughly, especially for optimal and differentiated architectures (Wright *et al.* 2018; Hansen *et al.* 2019; Luo *et al.* 2020). This may be attributed to the complexity of the HR architectural perspective along with the other trends that are reshaping HRM, such as changing employment arrangements, globalisation and dynamics of the workforce such as remote workers, working with multiple organisations at the same time, and freelancing (Kaufman 2010; Tatoglu *et al.* 2016; Church & Burke 2017; Lepak *et al.* 2017).

Another trend in the research and practice of HRM, as discussed by Church and Burke (2017), focuses on talent instead of employees. This trend is gaining in popularity among researchers because it focuses on the cultivation of talent culture and eliciting a talent mindset in an organisation that can assist in organisational development (Luna–Arocas & Morley 2015; Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2015; Cascio & Boudreau 2016; Tatoglu *et al.* 2016; McDonnell *et al.* 2017; Daubner-Siva *et al.* 2018; Collings *et al.* 2019) and thus can be considered a new lens through which to view human resource management — in other words, a new conceptualisation (Van Mierlo *et al.* 2018; Farndale *et al.* 2019). This trend suggests that investment in the development and management of talent is a valuable emerging research area. The need to manage talent as an essential investment in HR to gain a competitive advantage has been widely explored (see, for example, Sparrow *et al.* (2015b), Cascio and Boudreau (2016), Cascio and Boudreau (2017), Collings and Isichei (2018) and Collings *et al.* (2019)) because of the value it can create for organisations. However, the talent management lens to manage HR is still growing and seeking conceptual clarity (Daubner-Siva *et al.* 2018; Collings *et al.* 2019; Latukha 2021). The literature on talent management provides little evidence of managing talent at the organisational level (Collings *et al.* 2019). Moreover, the literature also presents issues in developing a shared understanding to define talent and talent management (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2013; Wright *et al.* 2018; Collings *et al.* 2019; Griffith 2019).

A recent trend in HRM is investigating talent management at a broader level and treating it as a multilevel concept (Thunnissen et al., 2013, King & Vaiman 2019). In this regard, Lepak and Snell (1999) and Collings et al. (2019) indicated a need to develop a differentiated HR architecture to manage talent and align it with the organisation's strategic needs. A differentiated HR architecture is concerned with utilising distinct strategic capabilities within the same organisation (Becker , Huselid & Huselid 2006; Lepak et al. 2006; Lepak & Snell 2007; Lepak et al. 2017, Huselid & Becker, 2011). The talent-based HR architecture is comprised of systematic identification of pivotal roles and exploitation of the talent that fits with the strategically important positions and roles in organisations (Boudreau & Ramstad 2005; Collings & Mellahi 2009). This suggests that an integrated set of systems, policies, practices, and processes for managing the talent (Church 2013) and etching a talent mindset in organisational culture (Cascio & Boudreau 2016) create talent-based HR architecture. Luna–Arocas and Morley (2015) discuss that talent mindset refers to a strong belief that in order to achieve business excellence, organisations require talent, which must be supported by the company's values and objectives. This is discussed further in detail in section 2.4.

The differentiated talent-based HR architecture considers the dynamism in the internal and external environment and the resultant need to realign talent-organisation fit (Collings *et al.* 2019). For example, suppose some important roles were to emerge in the maritime industry in response to digitisation. In that case, this could prompt a need for reassessment of the talent pool, methods to exploit them, and decisions to invest in them, hence altering the elements of talent-based HR architecture.

The differentiated architectural perspective recognises the disadvantage of identifying a single set of best practices and advocates developing a set of practices that best fit with organisational strategic intent (Collings *et al.* 2019). The architectural perspective in talent management can be taken as an extended version of the HR architecture as first introduced by Lepak and Snell (1999), in which they proposed the alignment of organisational systems, policies, practices and processes to the overall strategy of the organisation. Hence, the talent-based HR architecture is the extension of the HR architecture proposed by Lepak and Snell (1999).

HR architecture is highly influenced by the changing internal and external environmental conditions that alter the underlying HR systems and practices and impact the HR architecture. For example, employment and work arrangements may have direct implications for how companies structure their HR systems (Lepak & Snell 2007; Church & Burke 2017; Lepak *et al.* 2017). Boudreau *et al.* (2015) discuss there are many internal and external factors such as cost, specialised work, scarcity of talented individuals, contingent work arrangments, global access to market and quality conscious customers of which organisations are searching for different employment modes to allocate work and make new internalised or externalised employment arrangments (Lepak & Snell 1999, 2007; Cascio & Boudreau 2016; Cascio & Boudreau 2017; Collings & Isichei 2018). As of 2020, the social distancing due to COVID-19 is another phenomenon impacting the current HR systems and employment arrangements (Koirala & Acharya 2020). Church and Burke (2017) discuss that non-standard employment arrangements, coupled with globalisation, reshape how organisations manage their employees. Organisations choose different practices when triggered by unusual events such as technological breakthroughs or a phenomenon like globalisation or changed employment systems (Boudreau *et al.* 2015; Cascio & Boudreau 2016; Tung 2016) which ultimately impact the HR architecture (Lepak *et al.* 2007; Ridder & McCandless 2010; Lepak *et al.* 2017). The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic is another unusual event after which long-term economic uncertainty and downturn are expected (Atkeson 2020; Coibion *et al.* 2020), and organisations will have to reconsider their policies to ensure business continuity. Koirala and Acharya (2020) predict significant workforce transformation after 2020 due to COVID-19. A sharp rise in flexible digital work is expected in upcoming years due to factors such as slower globalisation and changes in work conditions or a faster social distancing-based workforce transformation (Koirala & Acharya 2020).

The HR architecture is shaped by organisations' systems, policies, practices, and processes. However, many laws, organisation systems and HRM processes are designed on the basic assumption of managing traditional full-time employees to get work done (Boudreau *et al.* 2015), which can portray a completely different picture of HR architecture when applied to non-standard employment arrangments. This issue becomes complicated for organisations working globally and operating at a multinational level because of the involvement of other factors such as culture and the laws of the home and the host country, environment and the context (Collings & Isichei 2018). International human resource management (IHRM) faces challenges in defining the strategic decision-making frameworks for non-standard employees (Boudreau *et al.* 2015; Murgia *et al.* 2020). Moreover, Cascio and Boudreau (2016) claim that fundamental dimensions of non-standard employment arrangements to help leaders make better decisions about work in general and talent specifically appear to be less investigated. The gap in the basic dimensions of HR systems in new employment settings requires investigation in areas such as acquisition, retention, engagement, learning, development, compensation and rewards of non-standard employees (Cascio & Boudreau 2016). The importance of investigating dimensions of HR systems in new employment settings is highlighted by the projections of tremendous growth in non-standard work arrangements in upcoming years and the estimation that the non-standard workforce will undertake more than 40% of work within the next few years (Sharpe 2015; Sveen 2015; Cascio & Boudreau 2017). A report in OECD (2020) indicates that in 2020, 40% of total employees, on average, were recorded as non-standard in OECD European countries; this percentage is as high as 50% in Italy, Netherlands, Spain and Greece. The growth in the non-standard workforce seems to rise in the upcoming years faster after COVID-19 (Koirala & Acharya 2020).

While using the lens of talent management practices to create talent-based HR architecture, the importance of considering non-standard work arrangements is highlighted by the growth of the non-standard workforce in recent years and the projected share of the non-standard work arrangements in the employment modes in upcoming years. The significance of this requirement is aggravated by the changing work conditions worldwide (Barley *et al.* 2017; Koirala & Acharya 2020), a need to consider talent as an important contributor to cultivating a talent culture in organisations and in gaining competitive advantage (Cascio & Boudreau 2016), an anticipated increase in non-traditional/ non-standard work arrangement in upcoming years (Boudreau *et al.* 2015; Koirala & Acharya 2020) and a lack of focus of HR research on non-standard employment settings and its impact on organisational performance (Cascio & Boudreau 2016; Cascio & Boudreau 2017; Murgia *et al.* 2020).

Another significant trend in human resource management is the shift in employment arrangements towards a more flexible workforce aligned with their requirements. Cascio and Boudreau (2016) discuss that employment is portrayed as being confined to organisations' boundaries for much of the past century while employees consider organisational working and associated support tasks as having typical traditional and standard work arrangements usually completed inside the organisations. A new trend is observed in organisations' employment systems is gaining popularity among researchers and practitioners in which work gets done through an externalised workforce that is non-traditional and non-standard in nature (Boudreau *et al.* 2015; Cascio & Boudreau 2016; Collings & Isichei 2018; Bolino *et al.* 2020). Boudreau *et al.* (2015) assert that the externalised workforce in new employment arrangments, termed non-standard employment arrangements, is a flexible workforce freely flowing into different talent platforms. Talent platforms such as for gig workers, freelancers or those used to land the job such as LinkedIn allow new work arrangements to thrive and enable workers to optimise work delivery. Moreover, in these non-standard employment arrangments, workers offer their services, bargain and choose when to work and what to work on and prefer to serve multiple employers instead of working with one employer resulting in a sharp decline in traditional full-time employment in recent years (Kirven 2018; Bissola & Imperatori 2020).

Freelancers, free agents, talent platforms, talent alliances, and talent trading are gradually replacing typical full-time standard employment settings (Spreitzer *et al.* 2017; Bissola & Imperatori 2020). Boudreau *et al.* (2015) discuss that talent platforms are replacing traditional employers with collaborative smart technology, which helps organisations connect with talent virtually through the internet and provide registered members with an opportunity to choose their jobs (Bissola & Imperatori 2020). The registered members are freelancers and free agents listing themselves on various talent platforms worldwide, exhibiting their characteristics and expressing their interest in particular jobs. Talent platforms, such as LinkedIn or Upwork, then match freelancers and free agents' traits with the organisations' requirements and suggest jobs to the registered members (Boudreau *et al.* 2015). In this process, role specifications provided by organisations and the availability of talent to perform that specific role are critical aspects as they help organisations match and formulate the competencies and practices essential for the organisational outcomes (Boudreau *et al.* 2015; Barley *et al.* 2017). Boudreau *et al.* (2015) discuss that talent alliances and trading are also new trends offering organisations an opportunity to collaborate with competing or allied firms by exchanging or grouping employees to get work done. These arrangements can happen by exchanging employees for a particular project where, for example, the experts are required in research and development in competing firms or by groupingemployees into firm ventures (Boudreau *et al.* 2015; Spreitzer *et al.* 2017).

The various concurrent trends in HRM, such as the HR architectural perspective, and configurations of multiple HR systems, termed hybrid HR architecture to create value for organisations, are projecting significant changes in the HRM theory and practice. Moreover, contemporary trends of analysing HRM through the lens of talent management to meet talent needs and changes in employment arrangements, termed talent-based HR architecture in this study, are new additions to HRM theory and practice.

This current research proposes that developing the optimal HR configurations and differentiated HR architecture using the lens of talent management can help develop talent-based HR systems and better understand the dynamics of non-standard work arrangments and their link with the HR strategy.

1.3. Research aim

A contingent employment system, also known as non-standard employment systems, in organisations coupled with the globalisation phenomenon is emerging and expected to replace almost half of the current global employment arrangments in upcoming years (Cascio & Boudreau 2017; Spreitzer *et al.* 2017; Koirala & Acharya 2020; OECD 2020). It appears that a framework for strategic decision making under contingent employment arrangements and the non-standard/non-traditional employees is still unavailable. The non-standard work arrangements are more related to the talent that matches the organisations' strategic intent explicitly, as discussed in section 2.8. Thus, there is a pressing need to investigate and develop a framework for strategic decision making focusing on non-standard employment and work arrangements and talent practices that can create a talent mindset in organisational culture.

Contingent employment is emerging and is anticipated to rise in the future, mainly because of globalisation. This research thus aims to investigate how multinational enterprises (MNEs) can use or intend to use non-standard employment arrangments to configure multiple talent-based HR systems and, therefore, design a differentiated and optimal hybrid HR architecture. This research primarily investigates how MNEs can develop policies, practices and processes and align them to the need of talent, which they identify according to their strategic intents for non-standard employment systems. The complexity of the talent management phenomenon in the non-standard employment arrangements at the global level is the reason to select MNEs as a prime focus for this research.

1.4. Research objectives

The talent-based HR systems composed of talent-based philosophies, policies, practices and processes can be explored to develop hybrid talent-based HR architecture by first identifying the current HR systems used by organisations. Identifying current HR systems can help find the valuable HR components for organisations and how the valuable components of HR systems can be aligned with the uniquely identified standard and non-standard employees . Additionally, the next stage will be to examine how MNEs that already utilise or intend to use non-standard work arrangements may alter their talent-based HR systems and to optimally configure them.. Hence the objectives of this research are to:

1. Identify the HR systems currently used by MNEs.
2. Explore the components of talent-based HR systems required to create the organisation-talent fit.
3. Explore multiple configurations of talent-based HR systems and components of hybrid HR architecture.
4. Propose a talent-based, hybrid HR architectural decision framework.

1.5. Research questions

The trends discussed in this chapter suggest that the traditional HR architecture provides insufficient support for strategic decision making for organisations operating at the global level. The challenge in strategic decision-making is intensifying due to the changing employment landscape and organisations' focus on promoting a talent mindset. This research contributes to the body of knowledge of non-standard employment and talent management by investigating the meaning of talent in the organisational context and by proposing a framework consisting of the programs, processes, and practices that can be designed to align the needs of talent with the strategic intent of organisations. This framework is then extended into non-standard employment modes and at the macro-level of talent management. This framework is used to unveil talent-based HR architecture components in MNEs to propose a hybrid HR architecture for the non-standard workforce globally.

The primary aim is to propose a hybrid HR architecture using multiple configurations of talent-based HR systems. Moreover, the focus is only on the non-standard and non-traditional employment arrangements to develop hybrid HR architecture because of the projected increase in the non-standard employment arrangements in upcoming years. As globalisation facilitates non-standard work arrangements, this study considers MNEs to benefit from hybrid HR architecture for non-standard employment arrangements. Hence, the primary question (PRQ) is:

PRQ. *What hybrid HR architecture can be developed for MNEs using non-standard employment arrangements?*

To answer the primary question, the existing HR systems that MNEs are using need to be identified. This step is necessary to investigate how organisations cope with the issues associated with globalisation and a new mode of employment. The secondary research question one (SRQ1) to investigate the current HR systems is:

SRQ1. *What HR systems or combinations of HR systems are MNEs using to manage employees?*

The second step to answering the primary research question is to explore what talent-based HR systems can be developed in MNEs. This includes the classification of talent in organisational settings and the alignment of talent philosophies, policies, practices and processes to the need of talent. Hence, the secondary research question two (SRQ2) is:

SRQ2. *What talent-based HR systems can be developed to manage global talent in MNEs?*

After identifying existing HR systems that will broadly define the organisation's HR policy, and the exploration of policy aligned talent-based HR systems, the multiple configurations of optimal talent-based HR systems can be investigated. Multiple configurations are explored using distinct employment modes, and thus, the secondary research question 3 (SRQ3) is:

SRQ3. *How can MNEs using non-standard employment arrangements configure multiple talent-based HR systems to hybrid HR architecture?*

To address these questions, a qualitative survey approach was adopted, which included twenty-one in-depth interviews. Human resource practitioners from various organisations in the chosen industry assisted in determining the responses to the research questions. As the perspective of HR industry professionals was critical for exploring the components of hybrid HR architecture, the experts were interviewed using a comprehensive process detailed in Chapter 4.

1.6. Significance and contributions of the research

HR theory has had a limited contribution to the knowledge of management of non-standard employees, particularly when examined through the lens of talent management (Cascio & Boudreau 2017). To date, there has been limited theoretical development in the formulation of a comprehensive architecture for strategic decision making in MNEs using non-standard work arrangements and creating an organisation-talent fit. Further, a lack of comprehensive architecture presents a problem for practitioners using non-standard employment arrangements as they lack information about the quality of their decisions, such as identification of talent that offers the most significant potential for return, investment in talent and building sustainable performance of employees (Boudreau & Ramstad 2007; Huselid & Becker 2011; Cascio & Boudreau 2016; Collings *et al.* 2019).

This research adds to the broad body of HR knowledge by rigorously investigating non-standard employment settings, patterns, and dimensions used by MNEs.

Furthermore, it contributes to HR theory by considering talent management as an alternative lens through which to view HR management and by including practitioners in the development of talent-based HR systems. It contributes to the development of new talent-based HR systems at the global level to assist organisations using or intending to use non-standard employment modes to adapt efficiently to the changing organisational needs and requirements of the talent. Moreover, it uses talent-based HR systems to propose a hybrid HR architecture. The proposed hybrid HR architecture provides a range of systems, talent practices and competencies that may be used in strategic decision making and to promote talent culture in organisations. By matching the organisation's strategic needs with a set of different components of talent architecture, practitioners can choose the best combinations that fit organisational needs in changing internal and external conditions.

1.7. Structure of the thesis

This thesis proceeds in seven chapters. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter Two undertakes a review of HRM, talent management and non-standard employment literature. It includes a discussion on various HR systems used by organisations and supports meeting the first aim of this research. Moreover, Chapter Two sets the foundations of the talent based HR systems by focusing on the underlying philosophical aspects of talent and how it is managed. Chapter Three outlines the value-driven framework that can work as an underlying mechanism in talent-based HR systems and hybrid HR architecture and is essential for value creation in organisations. Chapter Three concludes with a proposed hybrid HR architectural framework aligned with the second aim of this research and contributes to addressing the first and second secondary questions. Chapter Four outlines the methodology adopted to carry out this research. Chapter Five analyses collected data for the exploration and explanation of different components of the talent architecture. In this chapter, common emerging themes for the alignment of systems, practices and competencies are discussed to develop talent based HR systems and hybrid HR architecture. This chapter also clarifies the process of analysing the data grounded in the views of the industry experts. Chapter Six includes a discussion on key findings and the development of talent-based hybrid HR architecture. This chapter interprets the data collected through interviews and stages of proposed hybrid talent-based HR architecture development. Chapter Seven presents the conclusion and recommendations, including the implications of this research for organisations using non-standard employment arrangements.

CHAPTER TWO

SHRM TODAY: EXPLORING THE TRENDS

2.1. Introduction

The concept of managing employees for better organisational outcomes can be traced from the industrial revolution at the end of the eighteenth or the start of the nineteenth century (Stearns 2021). Various researchers and practitioners have used different lenses to observe the underlying systems for the better management of employees, for example, high-performance work systems, commitment-based human resource (HR) systems, collaboration-based HR systems and productivity-based HR systems, to name a few (Michaelis *et al.* 2015; Su *et al.* 2018; Boon *et al.* 2019).

Ideas about how to manage employees have progressed during the four industrial revolutions (Stearns 2021). For example, the concept of personnel management gradually evolved into HRM and then into SHRM in the last three industrial revolutions (Wright & Nishii 2013; Wright *et al.* 2018). Recently, during the fourth industrial revolution, talent management (TM) evolved as an adjunct field and a new lens to observe SHRM and gained the attention of researchers and practitioners as a ‘cradle to the grave’ process of managing talented employees of the organisation (Sparrow *et al.* 2015a). TM is a systematic identification, attraction, recruitment, development, deployment, and retention of talent aligned with the organisations' strategic intent (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2020). Now, the trend of aligning TM with the overall strategy of an organisation is increasing (Sparrow *et al.* 2015b; Daubner-Siva *et al.* 2018; Shet 2020).

Another trend has been observed in employment arrangements different from the standard and conventional employment mode and is termed as non-standard employment and work arrangement (Laß & Wooden 2020). Non-standard work arrangements are gaining prominence in contemporary business at the domestic and the global level (Collings & Isichei 2018). The technological advancements, changes in demographics, and employees' needs for flexible work arrangements have contributed to the drastic increase in non-standard work arrangements (Wheatley 2017). Cascio and Boudreau (2016) discuss that TM under non-standard work arrangements appears to be an important research and practice area. Moreover, scholars such as Cascio and Boudreau (2016) and Collings and Isichei (2018) assert that TM in non-standard employment settings should be investigated at domestic and global levels.

This chapter explains the evolution and underlying philosophical changes that contributed to HRM development from personnel management and its advancement to SHRM.

Further, TM as a new area of research and practice is discussed to advance the research in SHRM and understand the link between strategy and TM. This chapter also clarifies the difference between non-standard work arrangements and non-standard employment modes. The clarification of the difference between non-standard work arrangements and non-standard employment modes provides insights into how the employment relationships have been altered in the non-standard work arrangements with possible impacts on the organisational and behavioural outcomes. It also clarifies how organisations can manage to align organisational goals and resources (talent) under contemporary work arrangements. This chapter also lays the foundations for the subsequent chapter by discussing the need for a shift in understanding SHRM using the lens of TM in non-standard work arrangements.

Figure 2.1 clarifies the content and structure of this chapter. This chapter starts with a discussion on the evolution of SHRM from personnel management. The discussion in section 2.2 and 2.3 on the evolution of SHRM highlights the underlying reasons that resulted in the shift of HR managers' focus from personnel management to HRM and then SHRM. This discussion leads to section 2.4 about TM's evolution as a new perspective of HRM and SHRM and its challenges. The section on TM's evolution discusses the concept of talent, underlying philosophies to understand talent and how it can be classified. Sections 2.5 and 2.6 are about the work trends in which non-standard work arrangement have been discussed. Section 2.7 and 2.8 clarify the difference between non-standard work and employment trends, and section 2.9 links the TM agenda and non-standard employment and work arrangements.

2.2. From personnel management to HRM

In recent times, business organisations claim to be highly affected by globalisation. The changes in social, economic, political, and technological settings challenge organisations to consider global expansion and operate internationally. HR management is regarded as an integral element in achieving and maintaining a competitive advantage in the global arena (Syed & Kramar 2017).

HRM, as a vital element of management, has adopted different forms since the first industrial revolution (Cascio & Boudreau 2016) with changes in underlying systems such as the crafting system, market system, technical system, career system and commitment system. Each HR system had underlying reasons that initiated a movement to modify them (Kaufman 2012).

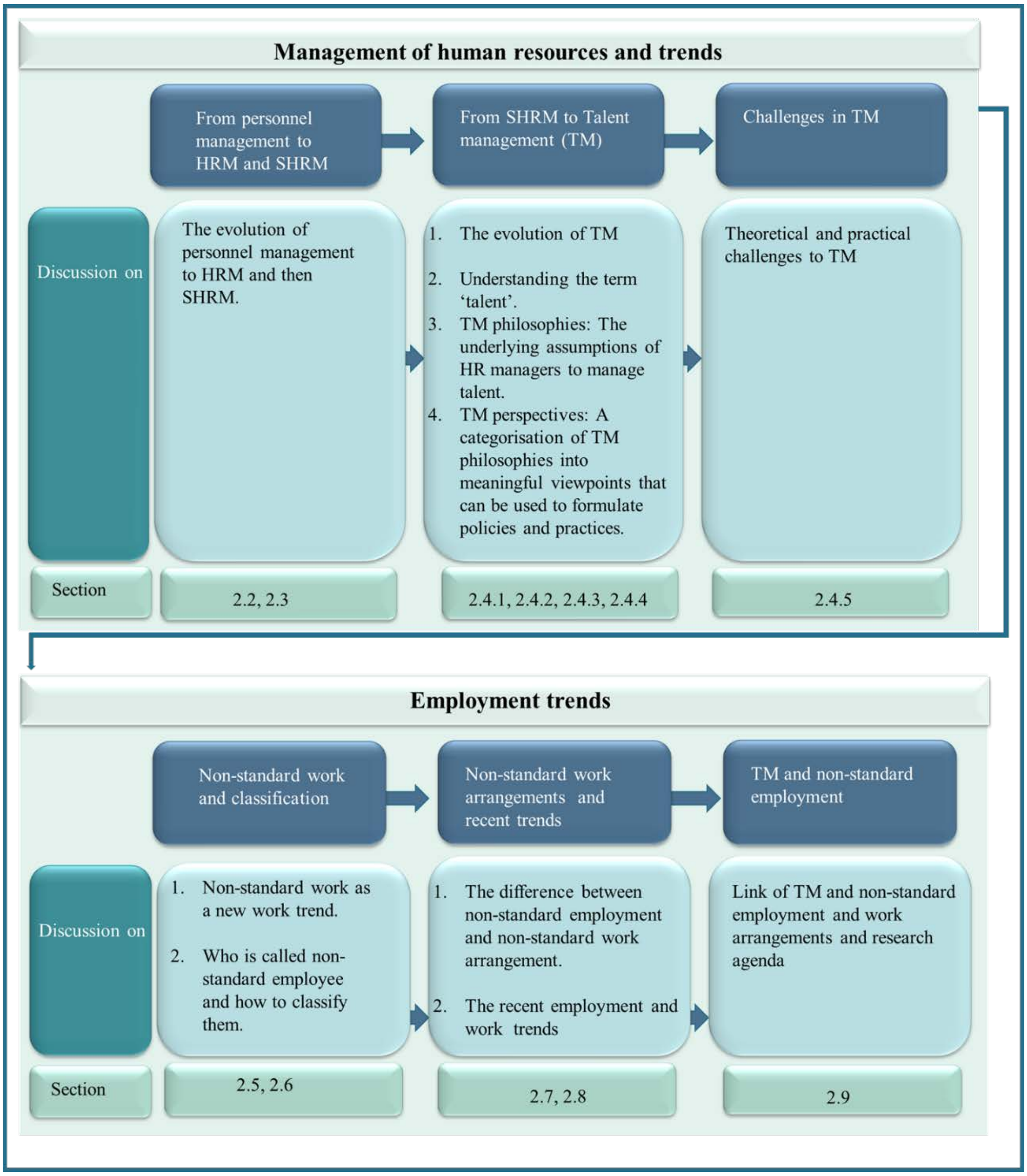


Figure 2.1- *The structure and content of chapter 2*

Personnel management is an administrative approach to managing people in organisations focused on record keeping, implementing policies while carrying out the functions such as recruitment and wage implementation and enforcement of the managers' standards (Ahammad 2017).

The literature in the early 1970s started replacing personnel management with a new label, human resource management, which constituted modified functions, objectives and boundaries of functions performed in managing personnel (Miller & Burack 1981; Tran 2015). The need for a different perspective in managing people in the organisation gained strength mainly because personnel management as a field failed to develop a sound theoretical base and resulted in a prescriptive textbook intervention which was experienced as being out of context by managers (Ahammad 2017). Hence, HRM started appearing as a replacement term of personnel management in the 1980s with a departure from administrative type roles and functions to integrated roles at the strategic level (Tran 2015; Ahammad 2017).

Analysis of personnel management's evolution to HRM suggests that the approaches to manage HR can broadly be classified into two competing categories: the control-based system and the commitment-based system (Su *et al.* 2018). The control-based system focuses on company rules, regulations and standard operating procedures to increase employee efficiency and productivity (Lepak *et al.* 2006; Su *et al.* 2018), while the commitment-based system focuses on autonomy and responsibility of employees and mutuality of interest between employees and employer (Su *et al.* 2018).

Organisations gradually started moving from the control-based system to the commitment-based system when considering HR as the most valuable resource (Rotich 2015; Su *et al.* 2018; Wright *et al.* 2018). This philosophical shift impacted the design of policies and practices to carry out HRM functions (Blom *et al.* 2019). In addition to this impact on policies and practices, the integration of HRM with the overall management of the business has developed into a significant area of research and practice, focusing on business strategy and human resource design issues such as teams, employee involvement, and culture. (Cascio & Boudreau 2016). The linkage of HRM with business management led to the vertical alignment of HR decisions to the organisational strategy and horizontal coordination of various HR activities (Wright *et al.* 2018). The planned HR deployment and intended activities to enable the organisation to achieve its goals were then termed strategic HRM (Wright & McMahan 1992; Su *et al.* 2018; Wright *et al.* 2018).

2.3. Strategic human resource management (SHRM)

The field of SHRM is newer than HRM, with most of the writings related to SHRM being after 1980 (Kaufman 2015; Wright & Ulrich 2017; Wright *et al.* 2018). Over the last 40 years, the research in SHRM continued expanding in different dimensions, but the main themes remained the same. Kaufman (2015) discusses that the alignment of HRM structure and practices with organisational objectives and strategies is the main idea of SHRM. Thus, SHRM is considered an approach that seeks to link HRM and sustainability (Kramar 2014; Karman 2020).

The literature indicates semantic difficulties in clarifying the main differences between HRM and SHRM (for example, see Kramar (2014), Jackson *et al.* (2014), Wright *et al.* (2018) and Boon *et al.* (2019)). It is significant to explain the difference between HRM and SHRM because of the underlying reasons for the evolution of SHRM. Kramar (2014) suggests that HRM is concerned with managing the people who work for the organisation, whilst SHRM is a more strategic approach to designing activities to increase the organisation's performance. SHRM is defined as the pattern of planned HR deployment and activities intended to achieve organisational goals (Wright *et al.* 2018). Thus, SHRM assumes that HRM activities should be integrated into the organisation's strategy and objective (Kramar 2014). Moreover, SHRM focuses on how organisations can bundle different practices to develop an HR system to achieve organisational goals (Boon *et al.* 2019).

HR systems have multiple levels, such as philosophies, policies, and practices (Lepak & Snell 2002; Boon *et al.* 2019). HR systems are discussed in the literature debating the bundling of policies and practices, sometimes with a clear strategic focus such as commitment (Arthur 1994), high performance (Huselid 1995) or involvement (Guthrie 2001) and sometimes without specifying a dominant strategic focus (Jackson *et al.* 2014). This implies that HR systems under SHRM are conceptualised in different ways in the literature, and various systems have been labelled differently according to the focus, such as strategic focus (for example, commitment-based) or without a dominant strategic focus (for example, improving teamwork) (Boon *et al.* 2019). Moreover, no matter what different titles have been given to HR systems, they primarily deal with the bundling of philosophies, policies and practices to make organisations work better.

SHRM proponents hold three different viewpoints; the universalistic opinions that support the best practice approach and the contingency and configurational opinion, favouring the best-fit approach (Michaelis *et al.* 2015; Wright *et al.* 2018). The universalistic approach assumes that specific HR practices and their bundling result in higher organisational performance. These specific HR practices can be observed or implemented by all kinds of organisations (Michaelis *et al.* 2015; Malik 2018). The most common and frequently discussed universalistic HR approaches in the literature are high-performance work systems, high involvement work systems, high commitment work systems and high-performance HR practices (Gittell *et al.* 2010; Michaelis *et al.* 2015; Boon *et al.* 2019). Contrary to that, the contingency approach to SHRM assumes that the organisational performance is contingent and that different contextual internal and external factors, such as cost minimisation practices or industry type, moderate the relationship between HR practices and performance (Kaufman 2010; Boon *et al.* 2019). It indicates that the contingency approach to SHRM holds that organisations create fit with the strategy and internal and external factors to develop organisational outcomes (Michaelis *et al.* 2015; Malik *et al.* 2020).

The configurational perspective of SHRM is relatively more complex than the other two perspectives because of the multiple layers of relationships among the variables. The configurational perspective considers the interaction of individual HR practices linked with the organisation's overall strategy (Kaufman 2010; Malik 2018). The main point is that some HR practices create synergies with other HR practices. These synergies are then mixed and matched by organisational strategists to develop distinct combinations of HRM systems called HR architecture (Kaufman 2010; Michaelis *et al.* 2015; Blom *et al.* 2019). The term HR architecture is used to manage employees in a way that systems, practices and processes are aligned with organisation level strategy, which may also include the configuration of employment modes and employment relationships and that can create value for the organisation (Lepak & Snell 1999, 2002, 2007; Tatoglu *et al.* 2016; Lepak *et al.* 2017; Wright *et al.* 2018; Luo *et al.* 2020). Thus, the configurational perspective is more about creating vertical and horizontal synergy and fit among the different HR practices and strategies and creating unique and differentiated HR systems in an organisation.

A seminal work in the multi-dimensional architectural perspective rooted in the configurational view of SHRM is presented by Lepak and Snell (1999), who developed a framework to understand the underlying reasons for selecting different employment modes and the development of HR systems to manage these diverse group of individuals by organisations (Luo *et al.* 2020). According to this framework, organisations structure their HR systems depending upon the variability of stheir employment modes. Moreover, Lepak and Snell (2007) provide insights into the impact of industry characteristics, such as a scope or economic activity, on organisational decision making to structure HR architecture. Prominent studies such as those conducted by Lepak and Snell (1999), Lepak and Snell (2002), Becker and Huselid (2006), Ulrich (2006), Lepak *et al.* (2007), Lepak and Snell (2007), Wright and Ulrich (2017) and Su *et al.* (2018) suggest that HRM should specialise in managing value and development of HR architecture. The architectural perspective emphasises the development of internal and external employment portfolios and helps organisations identify a few employees more valuable than others and performance implications of how organisations develop their HR architecture (Lepak *et al.* 2017). The architectural perspective of SHRM considers the interrelated issues, for example, employment mode selection or behavioural and attitudinal aspects and their impact on organisation performance. Moreover, this approach provides a foundation to structure an architecture of HR that can align systems, policies, practices and processes to the strategic needs of the organisation that can be influenced by internal or external environmental conditions (Lepak & Snell 1999, 2007; Tatoglu *et al.* 2016; Lepak *et al.* 2017).

A study conducted by Su *et al.* (2018) reveals that SHRM appeared as a commitment-based HR system and assumed that a control-based HR system might negatively impact organisational performance. The overemphasis on the employee as the organisation's most crucial asset created an inconsistency between organisational theory (OT) and HRM literature. Su *et al.* (2018) discuss that OT scholars strongly acknowledge the value of rules and procedures to gain competitive advantage through managing knowledge, effective decision-making process and maintaining dynamic capabilities, whereas the SHRM literature asserts that control and compliance systems can negatively affect organisational outcomes. The architectural perspective in SHRM provides a theoretical base to advance the field by aligning the system, policies, practices and processes, which is a step towards recognising that commitment and compliance systems focus on different areas and are not essentially mutually exclusive.

Another critical issue in SHRM research is its attempt to develop a ‘one size fits all’ approach to seek management practices of all organisations (Wright *et al.* 2018) and mainly ignore differentiated HR systems to fit the need of different organisations. Storey *et al.* (2019) mention that the first attempt to use a differentiated HR system is in the research of Lepak and Snell (1999), in which they presented an architectural model to align the value that an employee can provide, employment portfolios and HR system approach. The need for a differentiated HR system is accelerated due to the expansion of organisations' global operations (Wright *et al.* 2018). Due to global operations, organisations now realise that a ‘one size fits all’ approach may not be appropriate; instead, organisations must now create a synergetic fit of the HR activities with the organisation's strategy to maximise performance (Kaufman 2015; Wright *et al.* 2018).

The best-fit approach of SHRM initiates the idea that a combination of different configurations such as commitment-based or compliance-based, can help create a synergetic fit better than a single configuration (De Boeck *et al.* 2018; Su *et al.* 2018). The review of literature of different studies, such as Meyers *et al.* (2020), Murgia *et al.* (2020), Hoffman *et al.* (2020) and Allen *et al.* (2015), reveals that at least four reasons can be assigned to the increasing significance of the multiple configurational views which assists in the development of differentiated HR architecture. These include the war for talent agenda, the changes in the characteristics of the workforce, the changes in the nature of work and globalisation and its associated issues.

The ‘war for talent’ agenda establishes that the focus on competition has moved from customers to the workforce, and organisations are now facing the issue of attracting and retaining critical talent (McDonnell *et al.* 2017; Wright *et al.* 2018; Meyers *et al.* 2020). Moreover, the workforce is now more specialised and diverse in terms of gender, culture and demographics (Wheatley 2017). The nature of work has mostly been altered with the advent of flexible working and non-standard employment arrangements where the focus is to lead the work, not the employees (Boudreau *et al.* 2015; Wheatley 2017; Laß & Wooden 2020). The global operations of organisations are augmenting the issues of managing the specialised talent worldwide and getting the work done in the most appropriate way (Cascio & Boudreau 2016; Collings *et al.* 2019).

It appears that the four issues discussed above are interrelated. For example, the global operations of MNEs are making it easy for the ‘gig economy’ (in which the people with knowledge can use their expertise on a contract basis with global organisations) to thrive, providing a strong reason for the increase of non-standard work arrangements and endangering the standard work arrangements (Harris & Krueger 2015; Wright *et al.* 2018; Malik *et al.* 2020). SHRM is not prepared for these global external changes (Cascio & Boudreau 2016; Jooss *et al.* 2020) because the research is not directed toward the critical questions of how much talent matters, how the contribution of talent can be evaluated and how talent can be used in the gig economy in a globalised era? (Cascio & Boudreau 2016; Nyberg *et al.* 2018; Wright *et al.* 2018). These changes suggest that the research and practice in SHRM are in a transition period that needs a shift in the lens to observe the phenomenon.

The architectural perspective of SHRM seems to provide a better explanation and solution to the issues such as changes in the characteristics of the workforce, changes in the nature of work and managing talent at a global level. However, research such as Lepak *et al.* (2017), Malik (2018), Hansen *et al.* (2019), and Luo *et al.* (2020) indicates that the architectural perspective of SHRM itself requires modifications in terms of the addition of multiple configurations and development of a differentiated architecture that can best fit with the unique strategy of the organisation. The following section discusses talent management as a new lens to understand the changes in SHRM and non-standard work arrangements as one of the major reasons highlighting the need to shift the lens to better understand SHRM.

2.4. Talent management

During the last two decades talent management (TM) has become a topic of extensive discussion in research and practice (Wiblen & McDonnell 2018; McDonnell *et al.* 2017; Griffith 2019; Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2020). McDonnell *et al.* (2017) discuss that TM's significance can be estimated by the growing number of studies that assume TM as a competitive advantage source, especially in the changing global environment. TM is a discipline with a lack of consensus on the definition of what constitutes TM, at what level it should be analysed and the theoretical models that can be applied to TM (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2017; Daubner-Siva *et al.* 2018; Griffith 2019).

2.4.1. Evolution of talent management

A recent trend in HRM research is to study the practices through the lens of talent management (Cascio & Boudreau 2016). This trend is observed at domestic and global levels and is termed as talent management or global talent management (GTM). The McKinsey Group ‘war for talent’ report in 1998 (Chambers *et al.* 1998) has been marked as the beginning of TM (Berger & Berger 2011; Sparrow *et al.* 2015b; Serrat 2017; Griffith 2019). Swailes (2016) has provided an in-depth analysis of the sociogenesis of

TM in this regard. Moreover, McDonnell *et al.* (2017) indicate that there are many micro and macro factors that have led to the emergence of TM as an area of interest for practitioners and the academic community, such as changes in the workforce demographics, environmental changes, technological advancement and practitioners considering talent as a source of value creation (Serrat 2017; Latukha 2021).

Several scholars of TM, such as Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* (2013), Cappelli and Keller (2014), Sparrow *et al.* (2014), Thunnissen and Van Arensbergen (2015), Cascio and Boudreau (2016), Swailes (2016) , McDonnell *et al.* (2017), Serrat (2017), Collings and Isichei (2018), Collings *et al.* (2019) and Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* (2020), and Latukha (2021) have observed progression in the field of TM; however, there is a lack of consensus as what constitutes talent management (Collings *et al.* 2019; Thunnissen & Gallardo-Gallardo 2019). Cascio and Boudreau (2016), McDonnell *et al.* (2017) and Jindal and Shaikh (2020) explain that during the evolution of TM, three ways to interpret TM were common.

1. TM as an old concept with a new title (for example, see Iles *et al.* (2010) and Preece *et al.* (2011) and McDonnell *et al.* (2017) for discussion);
2. TM as an extension of succession planning of a group of employees (for example, see Jindal and Shaikh (2020)) and
3. TM as the management of core and strategic jobs to gain competitive advantage (for example see Cascio and Boudreau (2016) and Thunnissen and Gallardo-Gallardo (2019)).

Another understanding of TM claims that TM is a technique to manage talented employees through identifying essential and pivotal roles and positions (Lewis & Heckman 2006; Tarique & Schuler 2010; Al Ariss *et al.* 2014; Cascio & Boudreau 2016; McDonnell *et al.* 2017; Meyers *et al.* 2020). The identification of critical roles and positions can be conducted on a domestic and global level; when the TM is conducted on a global scale, it is referred to as global talent management (GTM) (Collings *et al.* 2019).

Multiple interpretations of TM in the literature establishes that TM is still seeking theoretical clarity. For this research, the definition provided by Serrat (2017, p 387) is used, which claims that "talent management refers to the additional processes and opportunities that an organisation makes available strategically to a pool of people who are deemed to have talent…. talent may just as well be defined as a dormant or untapped quality to be accessed in the future, either in an individual or in the collective”. This definition has three key points that clarify TM boundaries and scope. For example, the keyword ‘additional’ emphasises TM's uniqueness and separates it from HRM and succession planning. The word ‘pool’ claims to be inclusive of all employees and negates previous understandings of TM as management of a selected group of employees. The third keyword is ‘strategic’, which emphasises that organisations may need to develop and manage talent to maintain and gain a competitive advantage (Serrat 2017).

A significant theme in TM research is the inclusive and exclusive approach of managing talent, where it is debated whether all employees should be considered in TM activities or a few selected employees (Lewis & Heckman 2006; Dries 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2013; Daubner-Siva *et al.* 2018). To include or exclude the employee from the talent pool, organisations need to identify the talent and build TM activities around the talent needs (Dries 2013; Cascio & Boudreau 2016). The other theme in TM deals with the impact of getting selected in the talent pool on employees' performance (Daubner-Siva *et al.* 2018). Both themes in TM can be broadly classified into two main categories: (1) the management of talented individuals, including sourcing, development, and retention of high performers, and (2) the talent itself that focuses on what constitutes talent and behaviours of talented individuals.

This study deals with TM as a lens to understand SHRM. It investigates the concept of talent within organisational boundaries and the management of talent aligned with the organisation's strategic needs. This is important in current environmental and technological changes to instil a talent mindset in the organisation and create value through irreplaceable talent (Mayo 2018).

Wiblen and McDonnell (2018) and Meyers *et al.* (2020) suggest a few empirical studies are focusing on the concept of talent in organisational boundaries. However, it is essential to understand TM's dynamic and contextual nature and how talent is understood within the organisational context to link TM with the organisation's strategic needs (Wiblen & McDonnell 2018). Thus, in the following section, different approaches to understanding talent are discussed.

2.4.2. Understanding talent

Since its inception, TM has suffered from conceptual confusion, especially in its definition, scope and overall goals. An increasing amount of literature in TM (such as Lewis and Heckman (2006), Garrow and Hirsh (2008), Cappelli (2008), Collings and Mellahi (2009), Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* (2013), Wiblen and McDonnell (2018) and Meyers *et al.* (2020)) attach the ambiguity in the field of TM to the inadequate operationalisation of the underlying concept of talent and over-emphasis of researchers and practitioners on practices such as how to manage talent rather than who is talented and why. Considering the concept of talent in an organisational context, especially in SHRM and TM, confusion persists while investigating what talent is, whether it is referred to people (subject) or characteristics associated with people (object) and is it a natural ability or mastered through practice. (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2013; Sood 2018). The literature in the field of management in general and TM specifically provides too few theoretical insights into the concept of talent. In an attempt to conceptualise talent, four dominant approaches are found in the literature, which is shown in Figure 2.2 and discussed.

2.4.2.1 Talent as an object

Many studies have used an object approach to understand talent and identified talent as characteristics demonstrated by individuals in the literature. For example, ability to perform specific tasks (Tansley *et al.* 2006; Silzer & Dowell 2010), capacity and capability to accomplish assignments (Stahl *et al.* 2012), commitment to organisations (Ulrich 2008), relevant experience and knowledge (Tansley *et al.* 2006; Cheese 2007) and potential to carry out the job (Tansley *et al.* 2006) are all recognised as talent. Under the object approach to understanding talent, Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* (2013) have categorised talent further as natural ability, mastery, commitment, and fit.

2.4.2.1.1 Talent as an innate or acquired ability

Meyers *et al.* (2013) have placed the concept of talent on the innate and acquired continuum to explain it under the object approach to understand talent. On the one side of the continuum, talent is considered the innate ability of individuals (Meyers *et al.* 2013) and thus is believed to be challenging to manage.

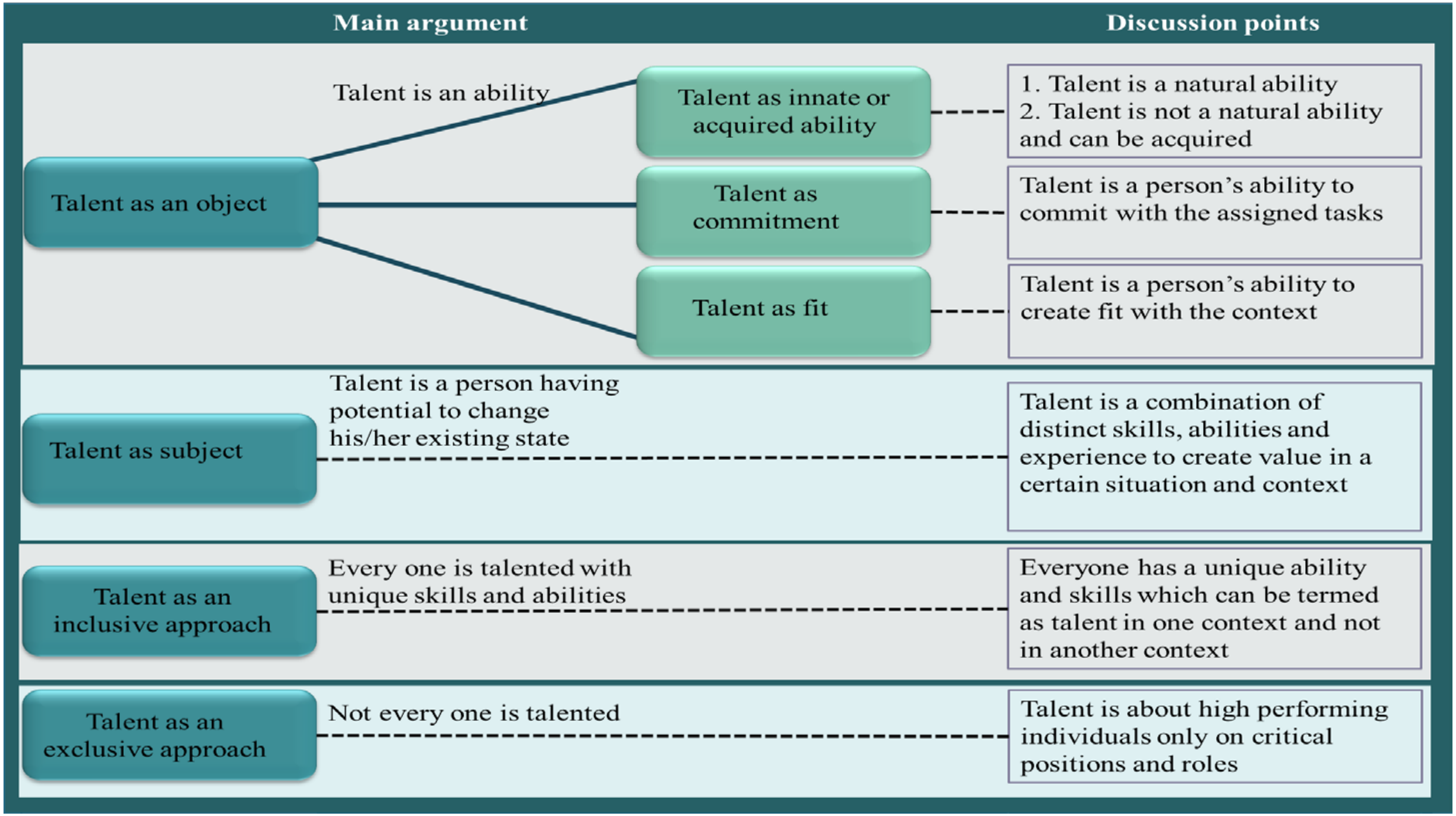


Figure 2.2 *- Understanding talent*

Source*: Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2013) and Meyers et al. (2020)*

The other side of an innate-acquired continuum of talent is the mastery of talent, which assumes that talent can be acquired through experience, deliberate practices, and the learning process (Ericsson *et al.* 2007; Dries 2013). This view is highly supported by the resource-based view of the firms in which individuals in organisations are considered resources, especially when perceived as capital in general and human capital as well as social capital specifically (Collins 2020).

2.4.2.1.2 Talent as a commitment

Another approach to understanding talent as the object is the individual's commitment to carrying out tasks and organisational-related activities. For example, the commitment to complete personal projects, motivation, and energy demonstrated in accomplishing organisational-related tasks and aligning organisational and individual goals (Ulrich 2008; Weiss & MacKay 2009; Pruis 2011) is considered a talent. Talent as a commitment also includes the commitment to personal development and working to help others succeed (Ulrich & Smallwood 2012). This indicates that a person committed to accomplishing organisational and personal tasks can be considered talented.

2.4.2.1.3 Talent as fit to context

While considering talent as a fit to the context, Dries (2013) discusses that talent is relative to the context and exhibited when used in the right place and at the right position. This means that an individual's characteristics can be termed talent in one context and cannot be considered as talent in another situation (Pfeffer 2001; Coulson-Thomas 2012). This view is supported by educational psychology, in which talent is operationalised as a domain-specific ability of an individual to perform tasks (Nolen 2020).

The object approach to understanding talent focuses on the characteristics of individuals. The debates on the nature of individual characteristics as innate or acquired and considering it as fit to the situation draw the conclusions that talent is the characteristic of individuals, their abilities to exhibit knowledge, competencies, relationship building capacity and networking ability (Dries 2013; Meyers *et al.* 2013; Meyers *et al.* 2020).

Understanding talent through the object approach has managerial implications. For instance, if managers understand talent as an innate ability, it is nearly impossible to impart talent and manage it. Davies and Davies (2010) suggest that if managers understand talent as an innate ability, organisations should focus on enabling conditions for talent instead of managing it. If managers understand talent as it can be acquired, organisations need to introduce a strong mechanism to measure talent's successful development (Ericsson *et al.* 2007). If managers consider talent as a person committing to the personal goals, then the organisation should focus on how organisational and individual goals can be aligned to function as a barrier to leaving the organisation (Ulrich 2008; Ulrich & Smallwood 2012; Kravariti & Johnston 2020). Finally, managers considering talent as the fit may consider providing opportunities to perform (Boon *et al.* 2005), for example, assigning particular roles to match individuals' skills and abilities (Collings & Mellahi 2009; Kravariti & Johnston 2020).

2.4.2.2 Talent as subject

The subject approach to understanding talent views it as the individual possessing multiple relevant characteristics instead of symbolising distinct skills and abilities (Thunnissen & Van Arensbergen 2015). Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* (2013) debate that an individual, having the potential to create value for the organisation, can be regarded as a talent. The term ‘potential’ is critical to comprehend the subject approach to understanding talent. According to Silzer and Church (2010), the potential is a promise or a possibility of an individual becoming something more than the current. Meyers *et al.* (2020) argue that the term potential indicates a commitment that has not been materialised; hence, organisations have several criteria to measure potential, determining individuals' ability to create value for the organisation, such as learning agility.

This implies that talent is about how an individual grows and modifies the current state to another better state individually and contributes to the organisation's growth. The subject approach to understanding talent is not widely discussed in the literature because it is difficult to separate the characteristics (object) from the individuals as a whole (subject) (Dries 2013). However, in this chapter, the subject approach to understanding talent is used to formulate TM philosophies because of the perceived importance of the relevant potential of individuals in managing critical roles in organisations (Sparrow *et al.* 2015b; Cascio & Boudreau 2016).

2.4.2.3 Talent as all people: An inclusive approach

An inclusive approach to understanding talent assumes that every individual in the organisation has some potential that can be used to create value for the organisation

(O'Reilly III & Pfeffer 2000; Buckingham & Vosburgh 2001; Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2013; Meyers & van Woerkom 2014; Nijs *et al.* 2014). The inclusive approach is an emerging research area and emphasises that organisations should recognise the full range of talent and deploy it according to the job fit (De Boeck *et al.* 2018; Meyers *et al.* 2020).

In this research, the inclusive approach to understanding talent is considered to formulate philosophies of TM because of the assumption that organisations can flourish by focusing on the talent of every employee that can be in the form of qualities, abilities, capabilities or personality as a whole (Meyers & van Woerkom 2014; Meyers *et al.* 2020). For example, suppose managers understand talent through an inclusive approach. In this case, it can help recognise individuals' abilities and transform individual skills and abilities into a combination that can be valuable for organisational working (Buckingham & Vosburgh 2001; De Boeck *et al.* 2018).

2.4.2.4 Talent as selected people: An exclusive approach

Under an exclusive approach to understanding talent, managers consider talent as characteristics of an elite segment of the organisational population. This means only those who can create value by demonstrating the highest level of potential to do the job are considered talented (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2013; Krishnan & Scullion 2017; Wiblen & McDonnell 2020). Stahl *et al.* (2012) argue that talent is about high performing individuals who can be selected in a group of high-ranked individuals due to their exceptional skills and abilities (Meyers & van Woerkom 2014). Sometimes, high performers are identified as people with exceptional abilities in various activities and situations (Williams 2000). Collings (2014) claims that talent is about individuals possessing the high potential to perform. This implies that talent as an exclusive approach assumes that individuals having potential and high performers can both be regarded as talent.

Although the exclusive approach to understanding talent is widely discussed in the literature of TM, it is also criticised due to performance management and measurement aspects attached with high performance and using past performance as a predictor of future performance (Bhatia & Baruah 2020). However, due to the common understanding of TM, which is related to the exclusive approach to understanding talent, organisations tend to allocate resources to high performing and high potential employees (Boudreau & Ramstad 2005; De Boeck *et al.* 2018).

The growing research in TM emphasises its practices, but too few insights are provided to the concept of talent as its prime component. This implies that managers who are unaware of TM's underlying building blocks may neglect the true aim of providing additional opportunities to the talent in the organisation. The purpose of this research is to explore various areas of TM literature to create underlying philosophies that can assist managers in making talent management decisions.

2.4.3. Talent management philosophies

Talent philosophies are the underlying assumptions of HR managers to define talent, who is considered talented, and how talent is managed (Meyers & van Woerkom 2014; Pantouvakis & Karakasnaki 2019). Meyers *et al.* (2020) define talent philosophy as the fundamental assumption and belief about talent's nature and instrumentality and found that managers had a different understanding of talent develop different HR policies and practices to manage talent.

A review of TM's literature presents a few patterns to understand its philosophies. Two competing views in the literature to understand talent in an organisational context are considered in this research to include all existing philosophies underpinning TM. While acknowledging other theoretical opinions in TM's field, the literature suggests that the object-subject approach and inclusive-exclusive views are predominant. In contrast, other theoretical ideas are part of these views. Moreover, examining the two main views in the literature regarding TM, the underlying concept of ‘talent’ and clustering them into four distinct philosophies helps understand the nature of talent in the organisational context. Hence, these two theoretical tensions have been combined in this research into a grid represented in Figure 2.3 in the form of four distinct TM philosophies and are discussed in the following sub-sections.

2.4.3.1 Object-exclusive philosophy

The object-exclusive philosophy, which combines the most common understanding of TM as management of elite employees with the object approach, implies that a few individuals exhibit specific characteristics essential for organisational working and create value. These characteristics in the form of ability, capability, capacity, potential, the pattern of thoughts, feelings and behaviour and can be innate or acquired (Ulrich 2008; Silzer & Church 2010; Stahl *et al.* 2012; Meyers *et al.* 2013; Sood 2018). Considering talent as an acquired ability, managers can accurately identify characteristics aligned with organisational needs and their development to benefit organisations (Church & Waclawski 2010; Silzer & Church 2010). However, if talent is understood as an innate ability, managers should focus on managing talent characteristics (Dries 2013; Nijs *et al.* 2014).

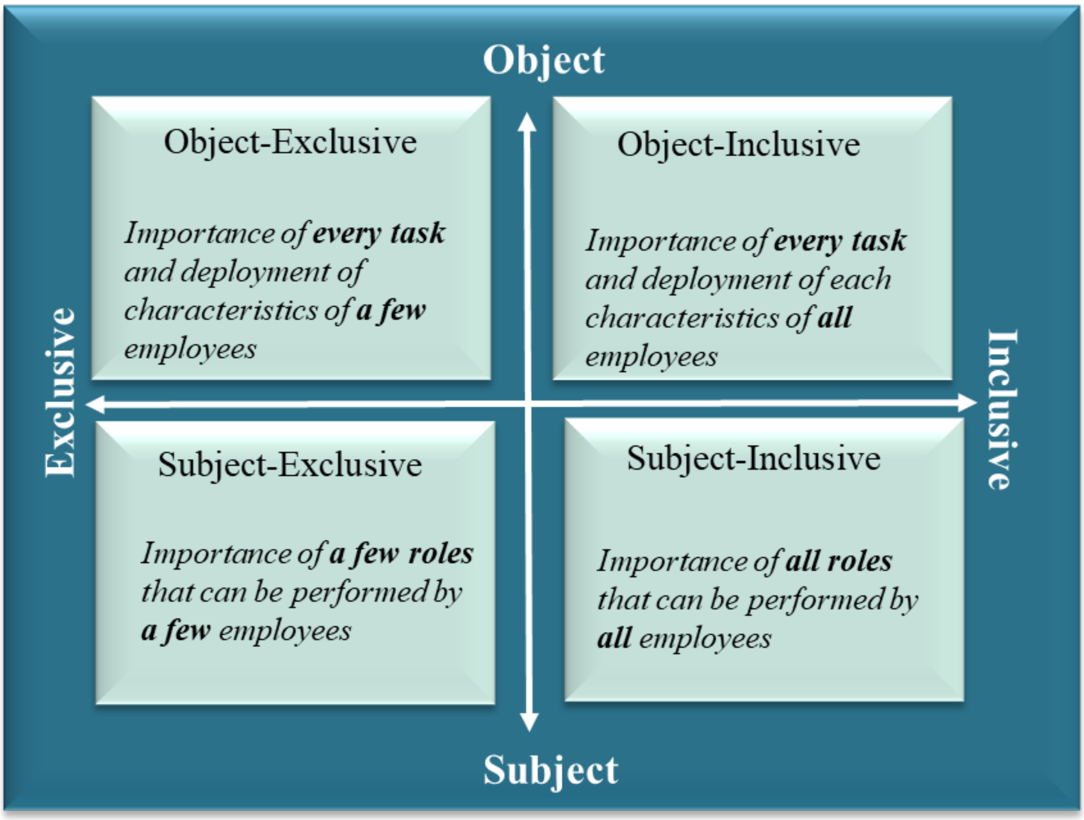


Figure 2.3 *- Philosophies of TM*

Source: *Adapted from Dries (2013), Meyers et al. (2013), Thunnissen and Van Arensbergen (2015) and Meyers et al. (2020)*

The innate-acquired distinction is under-investigated just as the object approach to understanding talent. De Boeck *et al.* (2018) claim that only eight non-empirical articles published from 2001 to 2017 discuss the innate or acquired dimension of talent and some other theoretical discussions on TM. The lack of understanding of the innate-acquired-dimensions of talent can be ascribed to focusing more on the TM practices and less on knowing talent philosophies. If managers understand talent philosophies, then he/she might focus on the innate or acquired ability of the employees (De Boeck *et al.* 2018; Meyers *et al.* 2020).

The importance of identification of innate or acquired abilities in an organisational context can be estimated from its significance in guiding managers to either develop or facilitate talent to manage abilities. Apart from the discussion on innate or acquired, if the talent is perceived as characteristic, skills, and abilities of a few individuals, then identifying and managing these characteristics is essential, and it is vital to use employee characteristics to create value for the organisation (Sparrow & Makram 2015; Karman 2020).

When incorporated by the organisation, the object approach to understanding talent is likely to result in competence management and knowledge management (Dries 2013). This implies that the object-exclusive philosophy helps organisations design their policies and practices around managing competence and knowledge of a differentiated workforce while focusing on training and development or selection, assessment and identification of specific individuals.

2.4.3.2 Subject-exclusive philosophy

The subject-exclusive philosophy behind TM segments the workforce and understands talent as an elite subset of the organisational population (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2013; Järvi & Khoreva 2020). This implies that certain employees are considered talented, such as high performers or high potential individuals who can work for an organisation in specific positions. The literature supporting the subject perspective on talent concentrates on high-potential individuals, employee classification as A (top performers), B (average performers), or C (low performers) players, and talent pools. (Boudreau & Ramstad 2005; Dries & Pepermans 2008; Becker *et al.* 2009; Silzer & Church 2010; Krishnan & Scullion 2017; Daubner-Siva *et al.* 2018; Meyers *et al.* 2020). The idea of workforce differentiation implies preferential treatment with talented employees (Meyers & van Woerkom 2014; Meyers *et al.* 2020) which alligns with the subject-exclusive appraoch to understand talent.

There are two streams of literature in HRM that discuss the nature of potential and performance in employees. Scholars, such as Silzer and Church (2009) and Yost and Chang (2009), discuss potential to create value for the organisation in employees can be developed, and performance can be improved while others, for example, Subotnik *et al.* (2011) and Dries and Pepermans (2008) discuss that the potential is innate, and performance can only be managed (Church & Waclawski 2010; Silzer & Church 2010; Dries 2013; Meyers & van Woerkom 2014).

Another tension regarding employees' potential and performance in an organisation is whether they are transferable or context-dependent (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2013). Dries (2013) discusses that if the talent is context-dependent and talented individuals can perform in a specific situation or domain, the context, situations, pivotal roles, and domain should be identified before recruitment. Moreover, Meyers and van Woerkom (2014) and Lepak and Snell (1999) propose that organisations should use practices fostering commitment and creating stable and long-term employment relations when naturally unique and valuable individuals have to be managed. This implies that TM's subject-exclusive philosophy suggests that certain employees have the potential to perform pivotal roles in organisations to create value. These high potential performers either perform well in every situation, or their knowledge and skills are context dependent. This philosophy also suggests that not every employee in an organisation has a high potential to perform pivotal roles; hence it is important to identify not only the strengths of individuals but also the key positions in organisations. Managers adopting the subject-exclusive philosophy of TM may train employees for certain identified key roles and organisational career management and tend to understand succession planning.

2.4.3.3 Object-inclusive philosophy

The inclusive approach to understanding talent assumes everyone possesses the skills and capabilities to make them talented (Buckingham & Vosburgh 2001; Daubner-Siva *et al.* 2018; Bhatia & Baruah 2020; Meyers *et al.* 2020). The object-inclusive philosophy is supported by the positive psychology literature, which considers positive traits and characteristics in every individual (Peterson & Park 2006; Meyers *et al.* 2020). The object-inclusive philosophy implies that every characteristic, ability and capability in every employee can be regarded as a talent. These traits can be innate or acquired; for example, attitude and behaviour that comes naturally to individuals or new knowledge and skills can be acquired by motivating and energising them (Meyers *et al.* 2013; Meyers *et al.* 2020).

The underlying assumption of the object-inclusive perspective is that talent is a trait present in every individual in different forms (Peterson & Park 2006; Dries 2013; Daubner-Siva *et al.* 2018). Advocates of an inclusive approach to TM advise talent managers to deliberately design a system that acknowledges individuals' unique qualities (Meyers & van Woerkom 2014; Wiblen & McDonnell 2020). The positive psychology literature highlights the importance of identifying innate talent characteristics in every individual and matching those characteristics with positions or tasks to be performed in organisations when considering the object perspective and inclusive approach to understanding talent (Meyers & van Woerkom 2014). In contrast to innate characteristics, the perspective that supports the argument that traits can be acquired seeks to develop and refine the characteristics of all the workforce and hence provide an equal opportunity to grow regardless of the type of skills and abilities an employee possesses (Ashton & Morton 2005; Biswas-Diener *et al.* 2011; Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2013; Pantouvakis & Karakasnaki 2019).

While managing talent under the object-inclusive approach to understand talent, researchers such as Cappelli (2008), Yost and Chang (2009), Biswas-Diener *et al.* (2011) and Dries (2013) suggest employee strength identification, development and utilisation and potential development through training for all workforce to better manage competence and knowledge. Therefore, the managers adopting an object-inclusive philosophy of TM may identify all employees' strengths, develop or manage them depending on the innate or acquired and utilise value creation.

2.4.3.4 Subject-inclusive philosophy

The subject-inclusive philosophy to understanding talent assumes everyone in an organisation can create value (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2013; Daubner-Siva *et al.* 2018). This understanding is justified by the view that in knowledge-based economies, companies cannot achieve desired outcomes without their people (Tulgan 2001; Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2013; Meyers & van Woerkom 2014). The subject-inclusive philosophy of TM implies that all individuals in the organisation are talented, and hence capturing the value of the entire workforce is essential instead of focusing on just an elite group of employees.

The inclusive approach emerged from a critique of the exclusive approach to understanding TM (De Boeck *et al.* 2018). This approach is still under-researched, and too few scholars suggested the programs and policies through an inclusive approach to manage talent (for example, see Buckingham and Vosburgh (2001), Buckingham (2005), Linley and Harrington (2006), Yost and Chang (2009), Dries (2013) and Meyers *et al.* (2020)). The subject-inclusive philosophy of TM focuses on the identification of roles that best fit the employees according to their talent. The subject-inclusive philosophy assumes that every role is significant, and it is the responsibility of managers to identify the right talent to perform the roles assuming that every employee in the organisation is made for some role to perform.

By examining the four distinct TM philosophies, this research infers that the philosophies with the object approach focus more on the tasks in organisations. In contrast, the subject approach focuses on specific roles. It implies that the object-inclusive philosophy, for example, emphasises the importance of every task in the organisation and the deployment of individual characteristics to match the different tasks. Hence, under this philosophical assumption, managers can use diverse talent in different projects or parts of projects. The object-exclusive philosophy considers that every task is important in an organisation but assumes that not everyone can perform them and match tasks with employees. The subject-exclusive philosophy focuses on roles and believes that certain individuals can perform a few important and pivotal roles in organisations. In comparison, the subject-inclusive philosophy assumes that all organisations' roles are important, and everyone can perform their role in value creation.

TM philosophies have been discussed to gain insights into how talent can be treated in organisations with varying understanding of talent. Different philosophies to understand TM assert that the same practices in the organisations can affect differently depending upon how they are designed and implemented by managers with a different understanding of talent. The importance of understanding TM philosophies is consistent with the literature in SHRM, which asserts that research in SHRM should concentrate on higher constructs such as HR philosophies that shape the practices instead of focusing on the practice itself (Boxall 2012; Meyers & van Woerkom 2014; Pantouvakis & Karakasnaki 2019; Meyers *et al.* 2020). Similarly, this research examines talent management as a broader construct, such as talent philosophies as suggested by Meyers *et al.* (2020), rather than as a set of human resource or talent management practises. Understanding TM philosophies and their role in shaping TM practices are necessary for this research to be incorporated into the value creation process.

2.4.4. The categorisation of talent management philosophies

The TM philosophies provide insight into how managers can understand talent and how it can help create value in an organisation. However, Sparrow and Makram (2015) suggest that TM concepts can be more effectively utilised if they are classified into viewpoints according to on their primary focus. Collings and Mellahi (2009) examined the several generic viewpoints in TM for the first time, defining them as people-focused, practice-focused, position-focused, and strategic pool-focused. Various scholars, for example, Sparrow and Makram (2015), McDonnell *et al.* (2017) and Järvi and Khoreva (2020) have followed these generic perspectives to understand TM. However, Sparrow (2019) discusses the use of theoretical viewpoints in the last decade, such as the star performer viewpoint, and suggests that TM's theoretical tensions persist due to various views without underlying philosophical justification. For example, without considering the innate or acquired characteristics of talent, the star performer viewpoint emphasises top-performing individuals' management and results in the unequal allocation of resources and compromising of a team effort (Sparrow 2019).

In this research, the identified TM philosophies are categorised under the different perspectives to understand TM because the literature indicates that the categorisation of talent philosophies into different perspectives can help understand better talent management (McDonnell *et al.* 2017; Sparrow 2019). This generic categorisation will help understand each philosophy of TM's focus and propose the multiple configurations and a hybrid HR architecture. Figure 2.4 presents the different TM perspectives and their shared underlying philosophies. This figure depicts how a talent perspective can share different talent philosophies. For example, the people focused perspective shares the object exclusive and subject exclusive philosophy. Figure 2.4 also indicates that the philosophy is highly influenced by the understanding of talent (presented in Figures 2.2 and 2.3), and it provides a foundation to the talent perspectives.

2.4.4.1 The people-focused perspective

The people-focused perspective of TM emphasises the identification of an elite group of employees whose skills are considered rare, hard to find and difficult to replace (Sparrow & Makram 2015). From the identification and management of an elite subset of employees, it is inferred that the exclusive approach to understanding talent is active behind the people-focused perspective. Moreover, the people-focused perspective considers employees and the skills of employees as necessary. It implies that object and subject approaches are also considered in the people-focused perspective. Hence, the subject-exclusive and object-exclusive philosophies of TM formulate the people-focused perspective of TM.

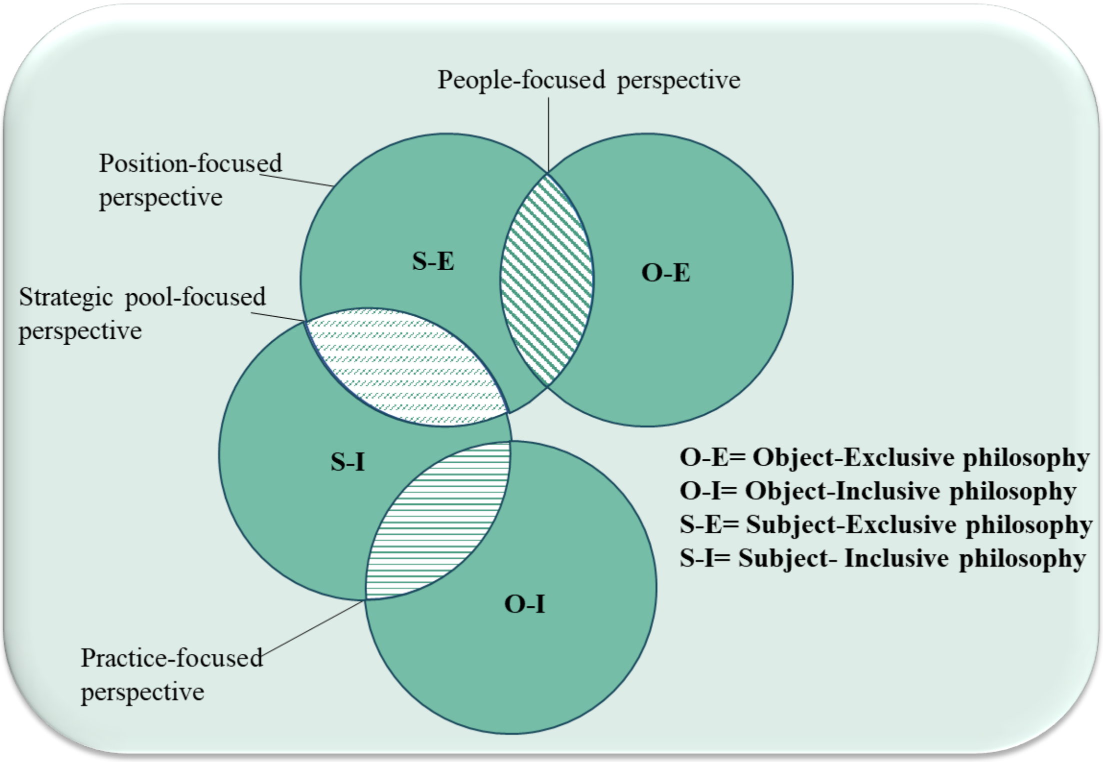


Figure 2.4 *- TM philosophies and perspectives*

2.4.4.2 The practice-focused perspective

The practice-focused perspective of TM acknowledges the development of an advanced and sophisticated set of practices and recognises the need for integrated processes and practices that must be aligned with broader organisational objectives (Meyers & van Woerkom 2014; Sparrow & Makram 2015; Sparrow 2019). Sparrow *et al.* (2014) claim that the practice-focused perspective revolves around identifying, recruiting, attracting, engaging, retaining and identifying internal talent, managing talent flows, developing employees and delivering the performance. This suggests that all employees must be considered during the development of talent management related practices and processes (Wiblen & McDonnell 2020). This perspective of TM does not consider elite employees; instead, it considers a range of employees during the development of the practices, hence using an inclusive approach to TM. Moreover, in different practices, the skills and capabilities and employees as individuals are considered essential. For instance, during the recruitment process, the skills and capabilities are considered, while in the management of talent flows (in succession planning or career management), the employee as a person is considered important. This implies that the practice-focused perspective of TM gets inspiration from the objective-inclusive and subject-inclusive philosophies of TM.

2.4.4.3 The position-focused perspective

The position-focused perspective of TM stresses the importance of the identification of pivotal roles and positions that can impact the organisations and contribute to gaining competitive advantage (Sparrow & Makram 2015). This perspective considers the importance of positions and roles, their complexity, and their significance in organisational working (Sparrow *et al.* 2014). This perspective's philosophical foundation is subject-exclusive as it considers positions that can be strategically important for an organisation and performed by capable employees.

2.4.4.4 The strategic pool-focused perspective

TM's strategic pool-focused perspective considers the identification and investment in pivotal talent pools that contribute to the organisation's overall objectives (Boudreau & Ramstad 2005; Sparrow & Makram 2015; McDonnell *et al.* Boudreau and Ramstad (2005). Boudreau and Ramstad (2005) explain pivotal talent pools as being groups and clusters of employees or positions in which organisations invest to improve organisational capabilities and competitiveness (Wiblen & McDonnell 2020). The strategic pool-focused approach considers employees and positions as a focal point; hence, subject-inclusive and subject-exclusive philosophies tend to provide foundations for this perspective.

The review of literature such as Sparrow and Makram (2015), McDonnell *et al.* (2017) and Wiblen and McDonnell (2020) indicates that TM philosophies can be categorised in at least four TM perspectives. However, these perspectives cannot be competing, mutually exclusive or alternative to each other as they share different underlying philosophies. The TM perspectives reflect the various dimensions to take strategic decisions to manage talent, create value for the organisation and contribute to hybrid HR architecture.

2.4.5. Challenges in talent management

Even though TM lacks conceptual clarity, it has become not only an area of substantial academic debate but also a central managerial discourse and practice issue because of the link of talent with the financial outcomes and operational and strategic success (Ambrosius 2018; Meyers *et al.* 2020; Wiblen & McDonnell 2020). Organisations nowadays struggle to develop and implement successful TM programs and practices to effectively gain a competitive advantage (Pirzada *et al.* 2021). Additionally, because there are numerous competing interpretations of TM, it faces many obstacles as a research and practise field. Following are the challenges TM as a field faces.

Firstly, Meyers *et al.* (2020), Pantouvakis and Karakasnaki (2019) and Meyers and van Woerkom (2014) claim that the underlying TM philosophies play a crucial role in the development of TM programs and practices. Although there are multiple perspectives to understanding TM, no single perspective on TM is considered better than the other (Meyers *et al.* 2020). For example, various scholars such as Garrow and Hirsh (2008), Stahl *et al.* (2012), Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* (2013), Thunnissen and Van Arensbergen (2015), and Collings *et al.* (2019) suggest that TM should be considered as a best-fit approach which implies that TM practices should be aligned with organisational objectives, the culture of the organisation, other HR practices and policies, organisational capacity and with overall organisational strategy to be competitive (Meyers *et al.* 2020). The integration of systems, policies, practices and processes, termed as 'architecture' (Sparrow *et al.* 2015b; Tatoglu *et al.* 2016; Luo *et al.* 2020), strongly connects TM with sustainable competitive advantage (Tatoglu *et al.* 2016; Collings *et al.* 2019).The research necessary to connect HR systems to the TM and to develop differentiated HR architectures must be conducted more rigorously (Khoreva & Vaiman 2021). COVID-19, in particular, emphasises the use of architectural perspectives in conjunction with new forms of working such as work from home or hybrid working (Collings *et al.* 2021; Vaiman *et al.* 2021). Secondly, although all philosophies and perspectives to understand talent and its effect on TM practices are equally viable (Dries 2013), every perspective has some practice level issues (Meyers & van Woerkom 2014; Botella-Carrubi & Tudela-Torras 2020). For example, while considering the exclusive approach to TM, identifying the right people for the right position is crucial to placing individuals in important strategic positions (McDonnell 2011; De Boeck *et al.* 2018). Workforce differentiation as talented or untalented based on previous performance assessments is highly criticised due to its high reliance on earlier experiences in hand that are domain-specific and hence do not depict talent (Yost & Chang 2009; Silzer & Church 2010; Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2013; Malik & Singh 2014; Sumelius *et al.* 2020). The exclusion of talented employees based on intelligence assessment tests does not fully capture all talent dimensions as they are context-specific (Meyers & van Woerkom 2014; Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2020). The exclusive approach leads to the unequal allocation of resources by dividing employees into A, B and C players and associating roles and positions with them (Dries 2013; Meyers *et al.* 2020). Moreover, the effect of being considered ‘untalented’ and ‘invaluable’ on employee performance is also a big challenge for organisations (De Boeck *et al.* 2018; Sumelius *et al.* 2020) because it can lead to demotivation, decreased job satisfaction and commitment. This indicates that the organizations pursuing exclusive talent strategies might face obstacles based on assumptions that are valid in their particular context and might get affected by implementing such practises (Swailes 2020); however, the literature is largely missing to deal with this issue.

In contrast, the inclusive approach provides a motivating environment for all individuals and could be an overall employee well-being contributor (Dries 2013; De Boeck *et al.* 2018). The inclusive approach also helps impart a growth mindset in all individuals in the organisation and provides opportunities to all employees. The issue with the inclusive approach is identifying areas in every individual where training and development are needed (Meyers & van Woerkom 2014). This includes the object approach in which individuals' characteristics, skills, and abilities need to be identified in alignment with roles and positions and the subject approach in which the knowledge and experiences are to be provided to employees (Järvi & Khoreva 2020). This also poses cost-related challenges that may be attached to delivering training, experiences and knowledge to every individual in the organisation in alignment with the organisational needs.

Thirdly, apart from TM's philosophies, organisations face talent migration issues, wastage of investment in talent development, and management in general. It may be caused by the lack of interest from employees for training and development, the trap of understanding talent as only natural ability, and hence getting stuck into not being able to develop talent at all (Tatoglu *et al.* 2016; Anlesinya & Amponsah-Tawiah 2020; Järvi & Khoreva 2020).

Lastly, there are multiple issues related to TM at the practice level that vary with the type of philosophy an organisation uses to define its talent (Meyers *et al.* 2020). There can be various understandings of the term talent and underlying philosophies to develop practices in an organisation. The debate on TM practices and their alignment with other organisational components such as overall HR policy, objectives and strategy of HR, and overall organisational needs are growing and are gradually becoming intense and complex. Cascio and Boudreau (2016) discuss that the current HR and TM processes and practices are designed for full-time employment. An emerging work and employment arrangement is termed as non-standard work that lacks HR and TM processes and practices systems design. The following section discusses the non-standard work and employment arrangements and their link with TM.

2.5. Non-standard work arrangements

Unconventional/non-traditional employment arrangements have continued to grow in number and variety for the last two decades (Spreitzer *et al.* 2017; Laß & Wooden 2020; Murgia *et al.* 2020). Multiple labels for unconventional employment have been used, such as non-standard employment relations (Kalleberg 2000), contingent work arrangements (Allan 2002), externalised work arrangements (Ashford *et al.* 2007), beyond employment (Boudreau *et al.* 2015), alternative work arrangements (Spreitzer *et al.* 2017), flexible work arrangements (Wheatley 2017), and non-standard employment (Laß & Wooden 2020) to discuss non-traditional work. However, to include all streams of literature reviewed regarding unconventional work arrangements, this current study uses the term non-standard work arrangements (NWA) as this term covers all employment types not following a standard employment layout (Ashford *et al.* 2007; Cappelli & Keller 2013; Kreshpaj *et al.* 2020). Standard work arrangements include fixed scheduling at the employer's place under the employer's control with mutual expectations of continuous employment (Kalleberg *et al.* 2000; Broschak & Davis-Blake 2006; Ashford *et al.* 2007; ILO 2016; Collings & Isichei 2018). Any arrangement deviating from any of the components of standard work is NWA (Ashford *et al.* 2007; ILO 2016; Jooss *et al.* 2020; Laß & Wooden 2020).

Since the rise of NWA, different employment arrangements have been discussed in the literature and practised in organisations (Ashford *et al.* 2007; Cappelli & Keller 2013; Spreitzer *et al.* 2017). The actual magnitude of the phenomenon in practice can be estimated by its growth from 1995, in which NWAs comprised 9.8% of the total workforce in America, to 2005, in which it was estimated as 10.7% (Ashford *et al.* 2007), followed by an increase with estimates of 15.8% of American workforce categorised as being non-standard (Katz & Krueger 2016; Spreitzer *et al.* 2017). This percentage is even higher in Europe, Canada, Japan and Australia (Cappelli & Keller 2013; Cassidy & Parsons 2017). For example, the average share of non-standard employees in total employment is 40% in Europe (OECD 2020), and non-standard employees constitute more than 55% of the entire workforce in Australia (Laß & Wooden 2020).

Sveen (2015) and Cascio and Boudreau (2017) project the share of NWA as 40% in total employment till 2020; this percentage share was exceeded in 2018 in Europe with the share of 43.5% of NWA in the total employment (ILO 2020). The OECD (2020) mentions that NWA accounts for around 40% on average across Europe and exceeds 50% in Italy, Spain, and Greece. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has rapidly altered the ways organisations work. Although the upcoming financial and managerial burden on the organisations due to COVID-19 is hard to estimate, social distancing has forced organisations to consider NWAs as an essential part of HR systems and hence a drastic increase in NWAs is expected in the upcoming years (Koirala & Acharya 2020; Umut 2020).

The focus on NWAs remained limited in the past in the research. Mainly three reasons for an insufficient focus on NWAs have been identified by Ashford *et al.* (2007) as:

1) Standard work arrangements were the most available jobs in the workforce post World War II; hence researchers worked on standard work arrangements.
2) Non-standard jobs were available to more marginalised society members, such as women, immigrants, youth, and minorities. Hence, the political and social conditions were attached to them. The researchers then focused on a less politicised population of standard workers.
3) Researchers focused on the most accessible population of workers.

For the last two decades, NWAs have been gaining greater interest among workers and organisations. NWAs now do not solely include a few small groups of workers; instead, a significant representation can be observed among different demographic groups such as women, different age groups, different educational level and employees having more than one job (ILO 2016; Cassidy & Parsons 2017; Appelbaum *et al.* 2019) which represents the diversity in the non-standard workforce. The emerging trends in employment arrangements and the inclusion of major population groups in NWA pave the way for research in areas other than the standard work.

2.6. Classification of the non-standard work

The rise of NWA can be traced in research and practice with the expansion of flexible working arrangements with an agenda of cost control, coping with a shortage of resources, work-life balance and gender equality (Wheatley 2017). There are multiple types of non-standard employees (NSEs) that are hired under the NWAs, such as direct hire employees, contractor, and internal talent market. Direct hire employment under the category of NWAs is the type of employment in which direct relations between employee and employer exist (Spreitzer *et al.* 2017). It includes part-time workers, on-call workers and seasonal employees. Table 2.1 explains the direct-hire employees based on the classification of direct-hire employees provided by Cappelli and Keller (2013) and Spreitzer *et al.* (2017).

Type of direct-hire employees	Characteristics	Administrative responsibilities
Part-time workers	Workers directly hired by the organisation to work for less than 35 hours/week with fewer benefits as compared to full-time workers.	Screening, hiring, socialising, training, evaluation directly by the organisation
On-call workers	Workers hired by the organisation and typically have irregular duty patterns. On-call workers provide service when they are required by the organisation.	
Temporary workers	Short-term employees serving as a supplement to the organisational workforce.	

Table 2.1 *- Classification of direct hire employees*

Source: *Based on Cappelli and Keller (2013) and Spreitzer et al. (2017)*

Internal talent markets are a new concept discussed by Boudreau *et al.* (2015) to lead the organisation's work. This working arrangement is related to the short term and long-term assignments in the organisational level projects. Table 2.2 elaborates on the internal talent market working arrangements.

Contractors are the workers hired by organisations for relatively short-term assignments or projects (Spreitzer *et al.* 2017). Contractors can be agency mediated or direct workers, highly skilled or low skilled, and instead of salary, they are paid by the hour or by the project by the mutual agreement (Cappelli & Keller 2013). Table 2.3 explains the types of contractors based on the classifications discussed by Barley *et al.* (2017), Spreitzer *et al.* (2017) and Cappelli and Keller (2013).

Type of internal markets	Types of activities	Characteristics	Administrative responsibility
Open talent marketplace (used by IBM)	As assigned by the employer	The projects are divided into subparts and individuals are invited for the event. Participants work for a small part of a large project and detach themselves from the work.	All administrative and management responsibilities remain with the organisation.
Talent platforms	As assigned by the employer	The internal talent platform is used to match the skilled individuals with the internal short-term assignments of the organisation.	
Talent trading	Consultation	The organisations use internal talent to facilitate clients and through this, employees gain more knowledge and experience.	
	Alliances	The organisations work with their allied organisations on certain projects and share as well as exchange employees for these projects.	

Table 2.2 *- Classification of internal talent markets*

Source: *Based on Boudreau et al. (2015)*

NWA's main characteristic is the inherent functional, geographical, numerical, financial or contractual flexibility (Lewis 2003; Spreitzer *et al.* 2017). For example, some work arrangements require highly skilled employees (functional flexibility) for short term projects (contractual flexibility) or highly skilled employees with physical remoteness (talent platforms, gig-workers) (Malik *et al.* 2020).

Mode	Skill level	Types of contractors	Characteristics	Administrative responsibilities
Agency mediated	High	Leased employees	Workers are employed by a staffing agency or leasing firm for a long period on skilled tasks. Workers return to the agency for re-assignment of work.	Payrolls, taxes, regulatory requirements and main administrative responsibilities remain with the agency.
	Low	Agency Temporary Workers	Workers are employed by a staffing agency or leasing firm for a short period. Workers return to the agency for re-assignment of work.	The client provides regulations regarding work during the contract and worker needs to comply with them.
Platform mediated	High	Gig workers	The workers typically land their jobs through the technology-mediated network. Such as up-work subscribers who offer their services but never meet employers. Employees can move from one platform to another platform freely.	The employer takes all administrative responsibilities.
	Low		Workers typically land their jobs through the technology-mediated network. Such as Uber or Mechanical Turk (mturk) subscribers who offer their services. They meet with clients by technology-mediated platform but may never meet employers. Employees can move from one platform to another platform freely.	
Independent	High	Free Agents	The workers obtain customers directly to perform skilled tasks such as programmers, writers, engineers.	On recruiting organisation
	Low	Day labourer	The workers are hired for one job for one to three days. They can be hired for the same task and on the same job repeatedly. Usually, this arrangement does not include a formal contract. Workers offer their services.	
Vendor on-premises	As assigned by the employer	Vendor mediated workers	The vendor is responsible to provide services. It depends upon the vendor how it executes the task. The task can be performed by independent contractors arranged by vendor or employees of a vendor.	All administrative and management responsibilities remain with the vendor

Table 2.3 *- Classification of contractors*

Source: *Based on Cappelli and Keller (2013), Barley et al. (2017) and Spreitzer et al. (2017)*

One of the major reasons for the increase of flexible work under NWA is that technology has improved geographical flexibility by providing opportunities to work from anywhere with reduced physical proximity (Spreitzer *et al.* 2017). An important example of NWA with geographical and contractual flexibility is gig work, defined as the short-term allocation of the task through a mobile application in the online marketplace (Harris & Krueger 2015; Farrell & Greig 2016; Spreitzer *et al.* 2017; Malik *et al.* 2020) such as Amazon Mechanical Turk, Upwork or Fiver.

The changing nature of the work and the departure of organisations from the standard work arrangements to the non-standard and non-traditional arrangements are under debate in academic research (Boudreau *et al.* 2015; Cascio & Boudreau 2016; Spreitzer *et al.* 2017; Collings & Isichei 2018; Kreshpaj *et al.* 2020; Laß & Wooden 2020). There are multiple reasons attached to the shift of work arrangements, for example, cost reduction, coping with the shortage of resources, especially human resources, gender equality (Cooper & Robertson 2003; Wheatley 2017), globalisation (Collings & Isichei 2018), and technological advancements and preferences of employees (Spreitzer *et al.* 2017; Murgia *et al.* 2020). Moreover, Boudreau *et al.* (2015) discuss the need for organisations to get the work done in the twenty-first century and lead the work, not the employees. They argue that NWA is beyond employment and that organisations cannot lead non-standard workforce who are independent and offer their services according to their convenience. Thus, organisations must consider how they can lead the work. The understanding of leading the work introduced by Boudreau *et al.* (2015) seems to have application during and post-COVID-19 strategies of organisations; however, their impact may not be estimated at this time because of slow economic activity as reported by the UN (2020). Regardless of the reasons attached to the changing landscape of work arrangements, the changes are real (Barley *et al.* 2017) and can impact organisational outcomes (Spreitzer *et al.* 2017).

2.7. Non-standard employment arrangements

The International labour organisation (ILO), in their report, define the non-standard employment relationships as any employment relationship falling out of the central realm of the standard relationship, which is understood as a relation between employer and employee with full-time work, indefinite duration of employment and a relationship occurring at a set place of work outside the home (ILO 2016). Employment laws distinguish employment relations and work arrangements (Cappelli & Keller 2013); for example, ILO defines an employment relationship as the legal link between employers and employees. It exists when a person performs work or services in return for remuneration (ILO 2018); while work arrangement is related to the employer's administrative responsibility and control (Ashford *et al.* 2007; Collings & Isichei 2018). The legal definition of the employment relationships is consistent with the conclusion drawn in the ILO meeting of experts on non-standard forms in February 2015. The employment relationship is considered an essential element in distinguishing standard and non-standard work. The definition of an employment relationship emphasises the reciprocity in working relations between employee and employer. This suggests that NWA and non-standard employment relationships differ on the intensity of the link developed between employee and employer. This also implies that the management of the work can be influenced by managers' decision to get the work done or to consider the employee as a valuable resource and use them for value creation in the organisation. This shows that reciprocity in the relationship between employee and employer is essential in employment arrangements, unlike the work arrangements where the job is the most critical element (Boudreau *et al.* 2015), no matter who takes the responsibility and controls the employment relationships.

Tables 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 illustrate the wide variety of work arrangements used to engage employees in economic activity. However, few work arrangements have shared administrative responsibilities, which reduces the attachment and direct relationship between employee and employer. Legal explanation and research in standard and non-standard employment assert that work arrangement is an umbrella term that includes different work and employment arrangements distinguished based on employment relationships.

2.8. Non-standard work and employment trends

The NWA has transformed the domain of work arrangements all over the globe. Although NWA does not seem to completely replace the standard work arrangements, it has flourished in multiple industries and occupations in the last two decades. The reasons assigned to this proliferation are multifaceted and vary substantially across countries, industries and organisations (Barley *et al.* 2017). According to an ILO report, the reasons for increasing NWA are globalisation, change of economic structure from agriculture to manufacturing to services, technological changes and demographical changes in the labour force (ILO 2016).

The literature review discussed in this section leads to the argument that technology, changes in the nature of the workforce, and globalisation have played a role in adopting NWA and, hence, altering employment relationships. However, along with these leading factors, organisations and employment systems have gone through an extensive route to embracing changes. Following the increased regulations and detailed laws in the 1960s and 1970s to protect the public interest, an overall reduction in corporate profitability was observed (Bidwell *et al.* 2013). Organisations then attempted to reshape the employment landscape to ensure flexibility and increase financial wealth (Kalleberg 2009; Bidwell *et al.* 2013). This shifted human resource management's role in organisations from creating the balance between the organisation and workers' interests to the strategic corporate partner in creating the value (Jacoby 2001). Organisations started using different employment portfolios to create value for the organisation by hiring and retaining talented employees and improving the employment relationships that can create value (Briscoe & Safford 2008; Daubner-Siva *et al.* 2018; Botella-Carrubi & Tudela-Torras 2020). Moreover, technology-supported easy access to the global market and flexible work arrangements and employment relations improvement (Spreitzer *et al.* 2017; Austin-Egole *et al.* 2020).

NWAs consist of multiple non-standard employment arrangements (NEA). NEA can be categorised based on the intensity of every NWA's employment relationship. Along with the changes in the factors influencing work arrangements, organisations have started adopting different NEA to get work done through arm’s length relationships with employees (Austin-Egole 2020). These relationships have changed the employment arrangements, including the employment practices and reward system. For example, the employment tenure has been substantially changed from long-term to short-term employment arrangements (Bolino *et al.* 2020).

Similarly, pay for performance practices (paying employees at marginal productivity while attaching incentives based on effort) have been replaced with contingent pay systems (where the pay is dependent on some measures of performance) (Kristal *et al.* 2020; Park & Conroy 2020). However, there is considerable evidence that contingent pay systems decrease the intrinsic motivation for extra-role creativity (Balkin *et al.* 2015) hence altering the employment relationships. Another change in employment relationships is evident from the benefits practices. Organisations adopting NWA do not provide benefits for employees, such as health cover, pension and retiree health benefits (Bidwell *et al.* 2013; Kristal *et al.* 2020). Even the employees who retain access to the employer's benefits experience the changed format of benefits. For example, Bidwell *et al.* (2013) and Benassi and Kornelakis (2021) discuss that the type of benefits has been modified from defined benefits (health insurance and retirement income arranged by the employer) to the contributed benefits (buying benefits from a set amount of pre-tax income).

A few scholars, such as De Cuyper *et al.* (2009a, 2009b), Håkansson and Isidorsson (2015), and Spreitzer *et al.* (2017), suggest that NWAs have created low motivation, lower organisational commitment, lower job satisfaction, increased job insecurity and decrease in extra-role behaviour. This indicates that different NWAs have varying impacts on the employee-employer relationship and, hence affect NEA. However, these studies have considered the single employment classification and have ignored the fact that organisations can use multiple employment portfolios (a combination of standard and NWA or different types of NWA) at the same time as was first proposed by Lepak and Snell (2007). The idea of multiple employment portfolios did not get much attention until after a decade, when Spreitzer *et al.* (2017) emphasised that considering multiple employment portfolios to find the impact of NWAs can be beneficial for organisations as it can provide insight by comparing non-standard and standard employees.

The choice of organisations using different employment portfolios highly depends on the specific organisational requirement, such as cost-saving, value creation in and through particular activities/role/positions, working on project-based assignments, use of talent in the most efficient ways, increasing flexibility, dealing with talent scarcity and globalisation (Kalleberg 2012; Boudreau *et al.* 2015; ILO 2016; Spreitzer *et al.* 2017; Collings & Isichei 2018); thus the different employment portfolios in a single organisation can be used to develop multiple employment systems and configurations. The outbreak of the pandemic COVID-19 and its social and economic impacts on the organisations indicate an urgent need to revisit HR systems (Caligiuri *et al.* 2020) and adjust them according to the new way of working, for example, working with social distance, reducing the cost by hiring non-permanent staff, increasing the value by hiring the best talent from all over the globe and shifting the work to home-based or remote offices. However, since many laws, organisation systems and HRM processes are designed on the basic assumption of managing full-time employees to get work done (Cascio & Boudreau 2016), and a proper HRM framework does not exist to take strategic decisions in NWA (Boudreau *et al.* 2015; Luo *et al.* 2020), it needs to be investigated that how the organisations can take maximum advantage of the multiple configurations using an optimised combination of NWA.

It is assumed in this current study that the lens of TM can offer a better view to understanding the phenomenon of NWA, resultant employment portfolios, combinations of employment systems, development of multiple configurations and hence progress towards the differentiated hybrid HR architecture.

2.9. TM in non-standard employment arrangements

The traditional employment arrangements, which were typically considered having full-time employment relations with mutual expectations of continuity in relationships, were influenced by the physical and conceptual organisational boundaries (Cascio & Boudreau 2017; Collings & Isichei 2018). Santos and Eisenhardt (2005) claim that the boundaries are the demarcation of the social structure in which an organisation operates, the activities with an underlying logic to get the things done, inclusion criteria, possession of resources and shaping of the organisational growth trajectories and sphere of organisational influence including control and power over industry and external forces. The distinct organisational boundaries are efficiency, power, competence and identity (Santos & Eisenhardt 2005), each of which addresses specific organisational issues such as cost (efficiency), autonomy (power), growth (competence) and coherence (identity) (Cascio & Boudreau 2017). Nason *et al.* (2019) claim that organisational boundaries delineate the organisation from the environment, make them unique and buffer against external environmental shocks. This implies that organisations address different internal administrative issues such as cost by drawing boundaries to create a cushion to avoid external shocks. A recent example in this regard is organisational decisions to make flexible employment to cope with the rapidly changing external environmental conditions or respond to the emergency discussed in the previous section of this chapter.

As the environment is becoming more volatile, organisations focus on multiple portfolios of employment relationships to modify organisations' conceptual and physical boundaries (Cascio & Boudreau 2017; Austin-Egole *et al.* 2020). Recently, scholars such as Hoffman *et al.* (2020), Jooss *et al.* (2020), Barley *et al.* (2017), Cascio and Boudreau (2017), Spreitzer *et al.* (2017) claim that the novel ways to use resources outside the typical physical boundaries of organisations are supporting NWA. Moreover, seizing the opportunities available in the market, dealing with scarcity of (human) resources, and addressing the cost, autonomy, growth and coherence issues in organisations through novel ways give rise to the TM agenda (Cascio & Boudreau 2017). The current COVID-19 crisis, which appeared unexpectedly, has opened a new perspective on managing HR through TM. For example, TM based HR systems and strategies can be developed to deal with the post-COVID-19 economic crisis (Latukha 2021).

The effect of NWAs on the HR discipline generally and on TM specifically is very complex. The reason for complexity can be attributed to TM's infancy and the sharp growth in NWAs without enough understanding of the phenomenon. Hence it is easy to comprehend the NWAs in TM to frame it in some familiar metaphor. Therefore, the term talent lifecycle coined by Boudreau *et al.* (2015) is used in this research study to explain the TM processes in NWA and is presented in Figure 2.5.

In Figure 2.5, the outer circle represents the elements of the employment life stages, and the inner part illustrates the organisational outcomes. For example, the planning stage in the outer circle of the talent lifecycle indicates the organisational workforce planning and relevant strategies, while the engagement in the inner part suggests the outcome of the activities and strategy of the organisation. In this study, the focus is only on the outer circle as talent outcome in NWA cannot merely be copied from traditional work arrangements (Boudreau *et al.* 2015), and to develop measurement tools for TM in NWA would require another study. Table 2.4 elaborates the outer circle of the talent lifecycle. As this talent lifecycle is the foundation of the talent-based HR systems and requires a detailed discussion, chapter 3 discusses it in detail.

Figure 2.5 *- Talent lifecycle*

Source: *Adopted from Boudreau et al. (2015), p 182*

Stages of the talent lifecycle	Major elements of each stage
Planning	Estimating the current and future supply of workers and work Development of strategies to match the demand and supply of talent
Attracting and sourcing	Identification of sources and activities to attract the talent
Selection	The matching of talent with the work
Deploying	Moving talent across different projects, assignments and locations
Developing	Building capacity through experiences, training, experiential learning and challenges
Rewarding	Benefits in exchange for the services provided by talent. It can be monetary, nonmonetary as well as implicit and explicit
Separating	End of employment or work relationship

Table 2.4 *- Talent lifecycle stages*

Source*: Adapted from Cascio and Boudreau (2017)*

2.10. Summary

A review of the literature presented in this chapter offers an insight into different aspects of HRM. In a philosophical shift in the understanding of HRM, consideration of the employee as an essential resource and a source of value creation has altered the lens to manage human resources from the mere input for organisational working to a significant resource to gain competitive advantage (Van den Broek *et al.* 2018; Järvi & Khoreva 2020; Shet 2020). Considering employee as a vital resource to deal with the scarcity of unique human resources, HRM captures TM's agenda (Dries 2013; Cascio & Boudreau 2016; Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* 2017; McDonnell *et al.* 2017). Additionally, TM is now a viable option for managing human resources amid a pandemic (COVID-19) and the subsequent global recession (Latukha 2021). However, TM as an area of research is still at its early stages of growth, and as it is a multilevel construct so to capture it entirely, TM needs to be investigated on multiple levels, such as examining underlying values and belief to understand talent, policies, practices and processes (Meyers *et al.* 2020; Wiblen & McDonnell 2020).

SHRM has evolved as a strategic approach to formulate the systems and policies using the HRM practices to improve organisational performance (Kramar 2014; Karman 2020). TM can be used as a new lens to observe the SHRM phenomenon and create multiple configurations and hybrid and differentiated HR architecture in organisations. A new direction to take full advantage of TM is to comprehend it as an integrated management approach of HR that is well-aligned with organisational level strategy (Sparrow *et al.* 2015b; Pirzada *et al.* 2021).

It appears that the configurational view in SHRM is a sound approach to help organisations fully respond to the driving forces such as globalisation, changes in the workforce demographics and changes in the nature of work that are creating a need to philosophically and rationally shift SHRM research and practice. The literature review depicts that TM can provide philosophical foundations for the shift in the research and practice in SHRM by emphasising more on the brain of employees than considering them as mere assets. Due to the dynamic environment and the changing business conditions, the ‘one size fits all’ approach is not feasible. Hence a strategic TM approach can be used to develop a framework that works as a basic HR architecture for organisations to create value and gain sustained competitive advantage that can be used as a best-fit approach rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. Moreover, it is suggested in this research study that NWAs can provide rational justifications for the shift in the practice of SHRM, especially at the global level, by developing multiple configurational talent-based HR systems. The alignment of basic HR architecture to create value through TM's lens with the multiple configurational systems using NWA may emerge as a hybrid differentiated HR architecture. The value creation through TM's lens and a conceptual framework of hybrid HR architecture is discussed in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER THREE

TALENT-BASED HYBRID HR ARCHITECTURE

3.1. Introduction

The configurational view of SHRM presented in Chapter 2 presupposes that certain HR practises work in concert with others to ensure the optimal fit with the organization's strategic needs. (Michaelis *et al.* 2015; Boon *et al.* 2019; Cooke *et al.* 2021). However, it remains under-investigated how HR systems and their underlying features such as philosophies, policies, practices and processes work (Monks *et al.* 2013; Luo *et al.* 2020; Van Beurden *et al.* 2021). In the literature, HR philosophies are considered as guiding rules and principles that determine how to treat and manage human resources to create value for the organisation (Monks *et al.* 2013; Rees & Leatherbarrow 2021). The policies, practices and processes are distinct but related elements of HR systems that operate at different organisational levels. For example, policies reflect what the organisation is trying to achieve; practices are activities to ensure the implementation of policies, and processes are an explanation of how the activities are to be executed (Monks *et al.* 2013; Sparrow & Makram 2015; Boon *et al.* 2019; Luo *et al.* 2020). The three distinct but related elements of HR systems following the guiding principles underpinning them are the HR philosophies (Meyers *et al.* 2020). This implies that HR systems are complex combinations of four elements that depend upon the strategists' guidance to create value through employees.

The seminal work in the HR systems includes Lepak and Snell (1999), Lepak and Snell (2002), Lepak *et al.* (2006), Lepak and Snell (2007) and Lepak *et al.* (2017), who have developed a framework for HR systems that discuss the view that different HR systems can be designed for different groups of employees based on the value they create for the organisation. Moreover, they asserted that the framework, which they called the HR architecture, can be used to identify the practices and processes underlying the framework (Kang *et al.* 2007; Lepak *et al.* 2017). Monks *et al.* (2013) and Wood and Kispál-Vitai (2021) discuss that, similar to developing the different HR systems, organisations can choose how to configure those HR systems in HR architecture based on the group of employees and their importance to generate value or based on the employment modes. Table 3.1 elaborates on the type of HR configurations and the philosophies, policies, practices, and processes discussed by Lepak and Snell (2002).

HR architecture components		Commitment-based HR configuration (knowledge-based employment)	Productivity-based HR configuration (job-based employment)	Compliance-based HR configuration (contractual work arrangements)	Collaboration-based HR configuration (alliances/ partnerships)
Strategies		Enhance employee capabilities	Maximisation of employee productivity	Reduction of employment costs	Use of specialised skills with minimum cost
Policies, practices and processes	Job design	Includes task variety, job rotation, decision making; job security; opportunity for employees to make changes in the way they do their jobs	Jobs are standardised	Simple skills; well defined jobs	Jobs designed around individual skills; job rotation
	Recruitment and selection	Promotion from within; focus on selecting best candidates and their ability to contribute to strategic objectives; priority on the potential to learn	Involves screening many candidates; comprehensive; uses many different sources		Assesses industry knowledge and experience; emphasis on teamworking
	Training	Comprehensive; continuous; investment of time and money; aim to develop firm-specific skills/knowledge	Emphasis on improving current job performance; emphasise on-the-job experience; seek to increase short term productivity	Focus on compliance with rules	Focus on team building
	Performance appraisal	Focus on contribution to strategic objectives; includes developmental feedback; emphasises employee learning	Based on the objective, quantifiable results; assess quality and quantity of output; measures productivity and efficiency	Assess compliance with pre-set behaviours, procedures and standards	Based on team performance; focus on ability to work with others
	Reward	Extensive benefits package; includes stock ownership; incentives for new ideas	Straight salary; market rate; ensure equity with peers; individual, incentive/bonus component; value seniority	Hourly pay; focus on short-term performance	Group-based incentive

***Table 3.1**- HR configurations*

***Source:** Adapted from Lepak and Snell (2002), Monks et al. (2013), Lepak et al. (2017) and Luo et al. (2020)*

The discussion on HR configurations and the components of HR architecture are further discussed and extended by Monks *et al.* (2013), Lepak *et al.* (2017) and Luo *et al.* (2020). Table 3.1 indicates that the HR architecture comprises two parts: (i) philosophies, policies, practices and processes, and (ii) HR configurations. The philosophy of HR managers to manage HR influence the practices, policies and processes and their configurations. For example, as indicated in Table 3.1, if HR managers of an organisation possess the strategy of improving employees' capabilities, then they include task variety to enhance employee's skills, rotate their jobs to offer them more exposure, allow them to participate in decision making and/or provide job security in their job designs. The practices of managers with a philosophy to improve employee's capabilities, such as training, are usually very comprehensive and tend to invest time and money in those practices (Monks *et al.* 2013; Lepak *et al.* 2017). Hence, such managers can develop commitment based optimal HR configurations, such as taking few or all elements of policies, practices and processes under the philosophy of improving capabilities, as mentioned in Table 3.1, and then combine them according to the organisational strategic intent. The architectural view suggests organisations can use multiple HR systems at the same time based on the employment and employee types and how they create value for the organisation (Lepak *et al.* 2017; Luo *et al.* 2020). For example, Figure 3.1 indicates that the HRM philosophy of managers influences HR systems. A single organisation may have multiple HR systems for different employees and their capacity to create value for the organisation. The configurations suggest that organisations can combine various HR systems to create maximum value.

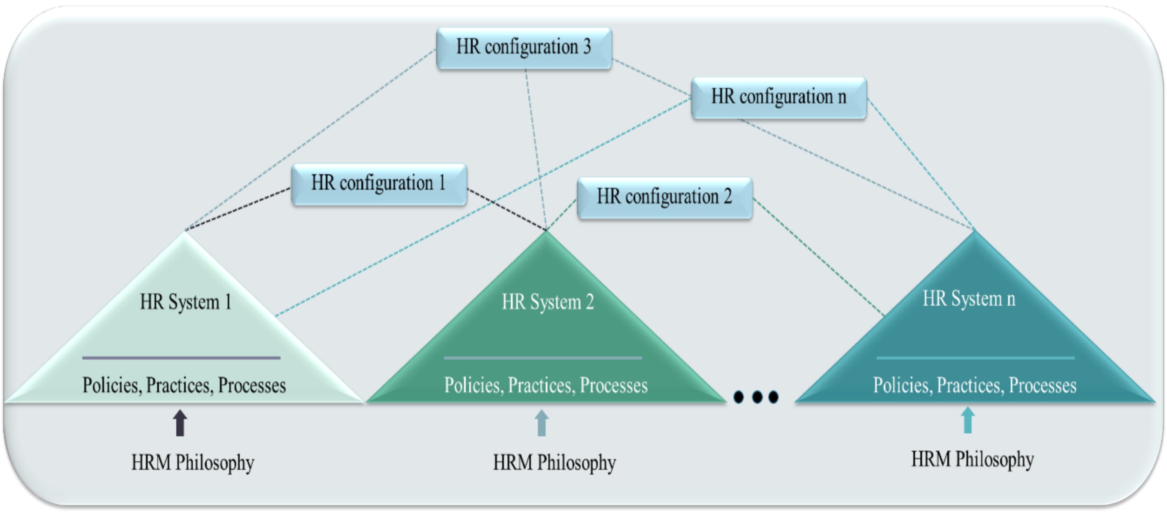


***Figure 3.1** - HR systems and multiple configurations*

***Source:** Adapted from Lepak and Snell (2007) and Lepak et al. (2017)*

Major and minor investigation themes have been identified using Table 3.1 to explore the components of hybrid HR architecture from this study's participants and are discussed in chapter 4. Chapter 3, however, discusses the proposed hybrid HR architecture and talent management as an important lens to view the multiple HR configurations in organisations. This chapter sets the foundations for the proposed hybrid talent-based HR architecture as a new decisional framework for managers. Figure 3.2 depicts how this chapter will proceed.

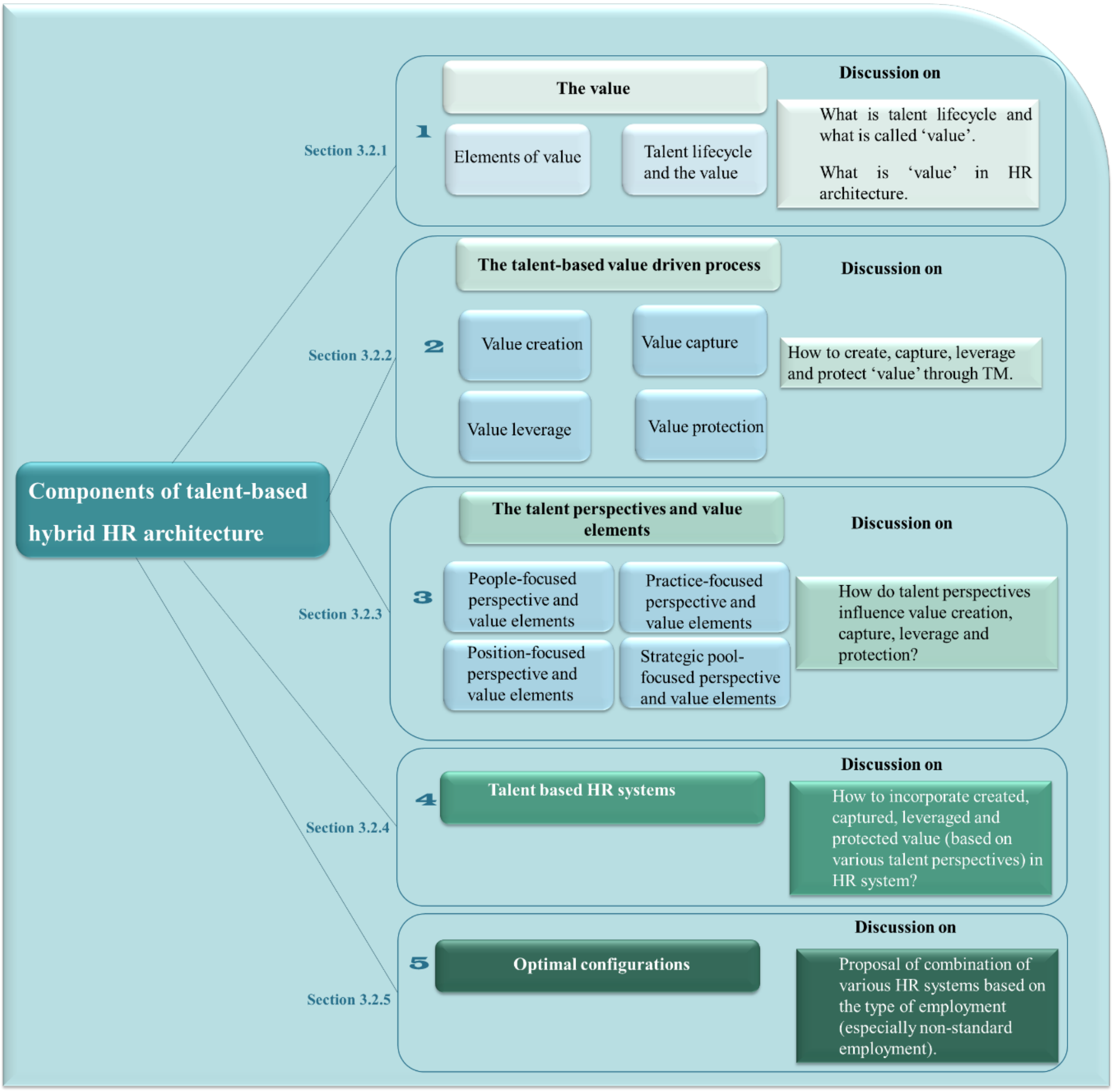


Figure 3.2 *- The structure of chapter three*

3.2. Components of the talent-based hybrid HR architecture

The literature review in chapter two suggests that the configurational view of SHRM can be used in a better way to address issues such as globalisation, changes in the workforce and the nature of work. It is also suggested that the lens to investigate SHRM needs to be modified due to different external and internal organisational factors. The section below maps the architectural perspective, including multiple configurations and the HR system, its underlying philosophies, policies, practices, and processes through the new lens of TM. While using the TM lens, this research uses the term ‘talent-based HR systems’ to replace HR systems because all components of HR systems consider the management of talent as the focal point in this research. The hybrid human resource architecture that this research expects to construct as a result of the literature review described in chapter two is depicted in Figure 3.3.Starting from the bottom of Figure 3.3, the literature review presented in chapter two suggests the talent philosophies influence the HR systems, including the policies, practices and processes (Meyers *et al.* 2020). Moreover, organisations create HR configurations based on the HR systems and their optimal combinations (Lepak *et al.* 2017). Talent-based HR systems and their optimal combinations highly depend upon the HR manager’s understanding of which talent can create value for the organisation and how the variety of different HR systems can be a source of competitive advantage (Karman 2020; Rees & Leatherbarrow 2021). The combination of HR systems is highly influenced by various factors such as external and internal environmental factors and employment modes (Lepak *et al.* 2017).

The architectural approach examines single employment modes and the evolution of diverse HR system configurations to support single employment modes. The hybrid HR architecture proposed in this study indicates that organisations use multiple employment modes, as discussed in chapter two, and that there can be various talent-based HR configurations based on different employment arrangements. Managers can configure the optimal combination of different talent-based HR systems, such as varying percentages of multiple talent systems based on the employment modes or different external and internal factors.

A hybrid HR architecture combines all the optimal configurations of different talent systems developed for different groups of standard and non-standard employees and addresses various factors to create value observed through the lens of TM. The following section discusses value as an essential element of the proposed hybrid HR architecture. A better understanding of the value-driven framework with the TM lens will explain the other parts of the proposed hybrid HR architecture presented in Figure 3.3.

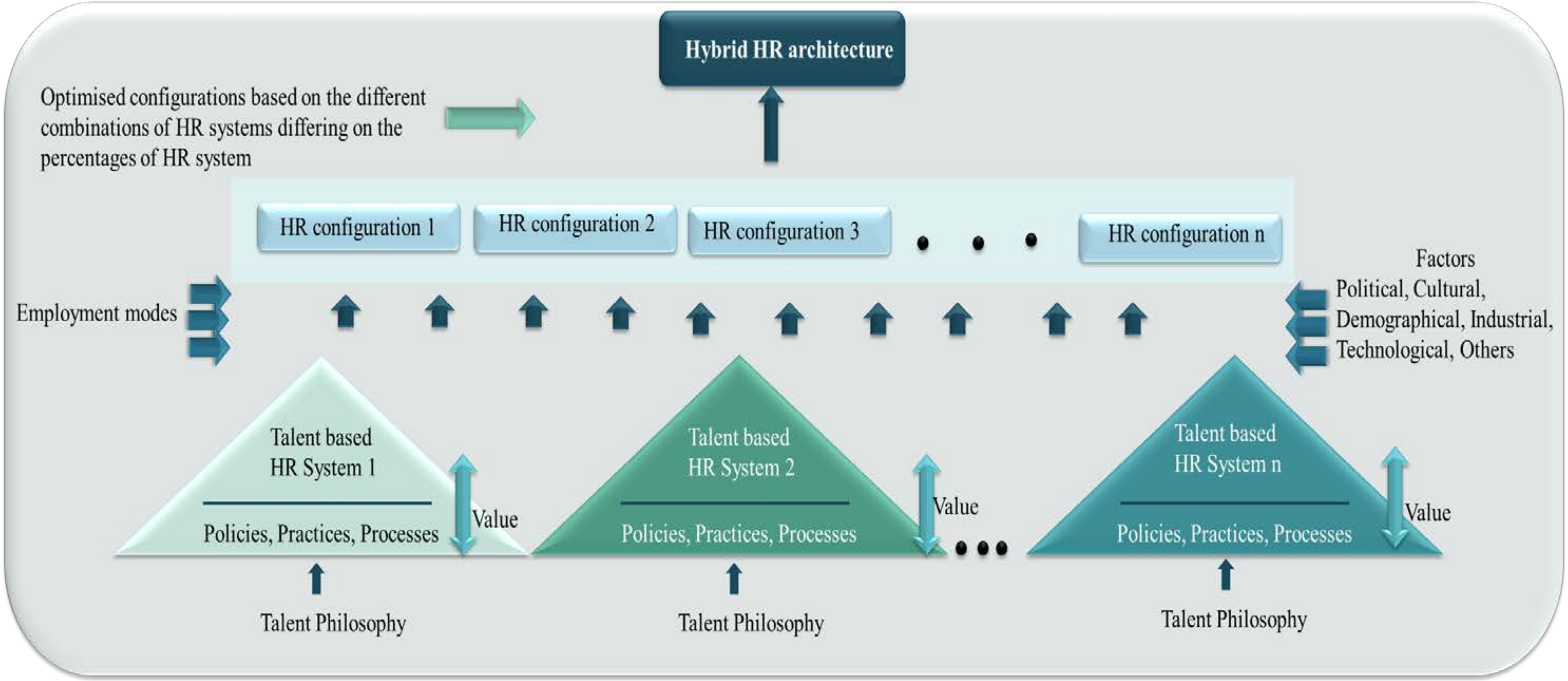


Figure 3.3 *- Proposed hybrid HR architecture*

Source: *Based on Sparrow and Makram (2015), Cascio and Boudreau (2017), Lepak et al. (2017) and Wright et al. (2018)*

3.2.1. Value in a hybrid HR architecture

Based on chapter 2, it is suggested that the talent lifecycle contains the value in it and exploring each stage of it is important for value addition in the organisation. This exploration process is termed a value-driven process in this study. In this section, the value-driven process components as the most critical component of the hybrid HR architectural framework are first discussed, followed by a description of each component in each talent lifecycle stage to gain insights into how the value-driven process can work for the value addition in organisations.

The value-driven process explains which part of the hybrid HR architecture holds value for the organisation (Sparrow *et al.* 2015b; Sparrow & Makram 2015; Karman 2020; Rees & Leatherbarrow 2021) that may include the value in the resources, processes, practices and system as a whole. Much research discusses the value of organisational resources that need to be inimitable to produce desired outcomes (Barney 1991; Barney & Clark 2007; Dries 2013; Sparrow & Makram 2015; Rees & Leatherbarrow 2021). However, Bowman and Ambrosini (2000) first discuss the need for a value theory in strategic management that may clarify the concept of ‘ value’ in the strategic management process. This view is further strengthened by Sparrow and Makram (2015), who assert that organisations first must know what constitutes value and what makes assets and resources valuable. This research follows the segregation of value into different elements by Sparrow and Makram (2015).

Further, the TM life cycle proposed by Boudreau *et al.* (2015) and discussed in chapter 2 has been used to understand the different stages of the talent lifecycle. Moreover, TM perspectives discussed in chapter 2 have been considered to match every TM life cycle stage and explain the corresponding value components. This matching makes created, captured, leveraged and protected value a vital part of the organisational processes and generates a holistic system and overall hybrid HR architectural framework.

3.2.1.1 Elements of value

The answer to questions such as what value is, who creates it and who captures it requires answers to understand the value-driven process as a whole (Sparrow & Makram 2015; Järvi & Khoreva 2020). The value creation in TM is the organisations' ability to build the talent aligned with strategic intent (Sparrow *et al.* 2015b; Harsch & Festing 2020). Lepak *et al.* (2007) provided useful insights into value creation and its process by considering what is valuable, who values what and where the value resides (Sparrow & Makram 2015; Sjödin *et al.* 2020). In other words, to understand value creation, the source, the target, and the level of analysis (individual or organisational) should be clear (Lepak *et al.* 2007; Sjödin *et al.* 2020). At the individual level of analysis, for example, the crucial part in value creation is the innovative and creative acts exhibited through the individual characteristics such as skills and abilities or a developed set of knowledge and experiences and their interactions with the environment (Lepak *et al.* 2007; Sparrow & Makram 2015; Collins 2020). This suggests that the value resides in the characteristics, abilities, skills, knowledge, and interaction of individuals with the environment at the individual level. This also implies that employees can be considered valuable either due to the individual characteristics or the combination of different characteristics that fit with the organisation's strategic intent. At the organisational level, issues such as innovation, knowledge creation, invention, and management gain prominence to create value (Post *et al.* 2002; Lepak *et al.* 2007; Sparrow & Makram 2015; Jooss *et al.* 2019; Collins 2020). This suggests that at the organisational level, value resides in the processes of an organisation which makes them valuable. In alignment with the definition of value creation, the individual and organisational level of analysis in value creation is essential to developing the capabilities in the talent required by the organisation.

The focus on value creation by itself is not sufficient; instead, the bundling of created value with the organisations' strategic intent is also essential (Sparrow *et al.* 2015b; Sparrow & Makram 2015; Collins 2020). The bundling of the created value with the organisations' strategic requirements is called value capture (Chesbrough *et al.* 2018). The value capture in TM is the alignment of the created value with the organisational capabilities integral to the business model (Sparrow *et al.* 2015b; Ganaie & Haque 2017; Collings *et al.* 2019; Harsch & Festing 2020). At the individual level of analysis, value capture is possible by bundling unique, specialised knowledge, skills, and abilities obtained from the performance of new tasks (Lepak *et al.* 2007; Sparrow & Makram 2015; Harsch & Festing 2020). At the organisational level, researchers such as Porter (1985), Barney (1991), Erickson *et al.* (2003), Holcomb *et al.* (2009), Collins (2020), Michaud and Tello-Rozas (2020) look internally within organisations to understand the value capture such as value chains and value chain analysis in which organisations configure primary and support activities to gain, maximise and sustain competitive advantage or through the resource-based view (RBV) which focuses on unique resources to align the organisational capabilities and make them inimitable.

After the value creation and the value capture, the next essential step is the value amplification or leverage, which refers to the application of a firm's created and captured value through mobilising, transferring of knowledge and learning to ensure engagement of value with broader organisational strategies (Sparrow *et al.* 2015b; Sparrow & Makram 2015). The last component of the value in TM is the value protection which deals with the retention and preservation of talent in a way that the organisation does not lose the talent and the created, captured and amplified value through specific processes (Sparrow & Makram 2015; Collings *et al.* 2019; Harsch & Festing 2020).

3.2.1.2 Talent life cycle

The talent lifecycle refers to the employment life stages and underlying HR processes (Cascio & Boudreau 2017), starting with the planning to hire talent and then attract, select, deploy, develop, and reward the talent (Boudreau *et al.* 2015). The talent lifecycle stages can be matched to the value elements to understand how the value can be created, captured, amplified and retained in different stages of the talent lifecycle. Table 3.2 illustrates the matching of different value components with the talent lifecycle based on Sparrow and Makram (2015) and Boudreau *et al.* (2015).

3.2.2. The talent-based value-driven process

The value-driven process is an important component of the proposed hybrid HR architectural framework. In this study, the value-driven process elaborates how the value can be created, captured, leveraged and protected in each stage of the talent lifecycle because it uses talent management as a new lens to view HR architecture. This section uses Table 3.2 and highlights each component of the value with the corresponding talent lifecycle stages to make it a part of the talent-based value-driven process.

		Talent lifecycle stages					
		Planning	Attracting and sourcing	Selecting	Deploying	Developing	Rewarding
Value components	Create	Planning to hire heterogeneous and immobile talent.	-	-	Development of a system that allows information flow and knowledge sharing.	Intentional efforts in innovation and invention activities.	-
	Capture	Planning to hire the talent that possesses specialised expertise and the knowledge aligned with the needs of the organisation.	Identification of the sources from where the aligned talent can be hired.	Processes that ensure the talent selection agenda at the planning stage.	Activities that ensure easy flow of information and the knowledge transfer.	Activities for the capacity building.	-
	Leverage	-	-	-	Create efficiencies in the knowledge transfer by designing the systems and the activities.	Bundle complementary resources. Activities that ensure renew, augment and adapt current capabilities.	-
	Protection	-	-	-	-	-	Human resource interventions.

Table 3.2 - *Talent lifecycle and value components*
Source: *Based on Boudreau et al. (2015) and Sparrow and Makram (2015)*

3.2.2.1 Value creation and the talent lifecycle

Sparrow and Makram (2015) claim that organisations need to plan to hire diverse talent, which may be hard to replace. This suggests that the organisational goals should be clear to the managers at the planning stage to plan the hiring of heterogeneous and immobile talent. Lepak *et al.* (2007) suggest that it is not enough to plan to hire talent. The system and processes in the organisation should also assist the free flow of talent within the organisation (Lepak *et al.* 2017). They further claim that innovation activities can help to create value in an organisation. This suggests that at the deploying stage of the talent life cycle, value creation can be seen in the processes that allow information flow and knowledge sharing to permit the development of new knowledge at the organisational level. The claim of Lepak *et al.* (2007) also suggests that at the development stage of the talent lifecycle, the organisation creates value through innovation and invention activities which are considered intentional efforts to develop a novel idea by involving different resources (Anser *et al.* 2020). At this development stage of the talent lifecycle, individuals create value by developing novel tasks, services, jobs and processes through their abilities, such as knowledge and intelligence (Lepak *et al.* 2007; Sjödin *et al.* 2020).

3.2.2.2 Value capture and the talent lifecycle

In the value capture, the operational mechanisms are considered to isolate the created value, making it difficult for competitors to imitate (Lepak *et al.* 2007; Minerbo *et al.* 2021). Sparrow and Makram (2015) suggest that value capture aligns the overall organisational strategy with the process of providing value. Organisations should plan the hiring of employees so that it matches with overall organisational goals (Timperley 2020). Cascio and Boudreau (2017) assert that organisations should be aware of the sources for hiring suitable employees. This suggests that the planning can capture the value in hiring talent that possesses specialised expertise or knowledge aligned with the organisational strategic intent at the planning stage of the talent lifecycle. Moreover, at the attracting and the sourcing stage of the talent lifecycle, organisations should identify the source from which workers can be drawn and the activities and processes to engage the workers and align with organisational needs.

At the deploying and the development stages of the talent lifecycle, the value is captured through the internal organisational processes such as focus on value chains and value chain analysis to configure primary and support activities to maximise and sustain competitive advantage (Porter 1985; Lepak *et al.* 2007; Dagnino *et al.* 2021). At the deploying and the development stages, organisation's focus can be to develop the resources that ultimately become non-substitutable, inimitable and aligned with organisational needs. The deployment and the development stages here get support from the RBV, which considers employees hard to replace and inimitable valuable resource (Barney 1991; Barney & Clark 2007; Collins 2020). This view strengthens the need for organisational focus on structuring the resource portfolio and bundling the resources to build capabilities (Lepak *et al.* 2007; Collins 2020).

3.2.2.3 Value leverage and the talent lifecycle

Value leverage is the amplification of the created and the captured value through mobilisation and coordination of the processes and the systems at the organisational level to intensify the individual's value and continuous improvement in their alignment with the strategy (Sirmon *et al.* 2007; Trivedi & Srivastava 2020). The theory of dynamic capabilities (for example, see Teece (2009)) supports the value leverage in the talent lifecycle. The dynamic capabilities view argues that the real value is created when the knowledge is internalised and is supported by all the systems, structures and processes (Linden & Teece 2014; Sparrow & Makram 2015; Harsch & Festing 2020). This implies that at the deploying and the development stages of the talent lifecycle, effective leveraging is considered to create dynamic capabilities in which organisations can renew, augment and adapt their current capabilities, bundle complementary resources and create efficiencies in the knowledge transfer by designing the systems and the processes. This effective leveraging is possible when organisations identify the value components (in the talent life cycle) and the drivers (such as customers, employees, technology, and processes) associated with the organisational strategy and then develop performance-based activities that leverage the identified drivers (Andreou *et al.* 2007; Chesbrough *et al.* 2018).

3.2.2.4 Value protection and the talent lifecycle

Finally, the fourth value-adding process is value protection by emphasising the retention and the preservation of the talent. Organisations can preserve value by preventing it from being captured by others (Zimmerman *et al.* 2020). The prior investment in the talent and the resultant created, captured, and leveraged value can be protected by the design and the maintenance of effective governance of the talent (Sparrow & Makram 2015; Sjödin *et al.* 2020; Rees & Leatherbarrow 2021). At the rewarding stage of the talent lifecycle, HR interventions such as salary growth and promotions and the benefits of retaining talent are important for value protection because they help talent retention (O'Boyle & Aguinis 2012; Rodríguez-Sánchez *et al.* 2020). Moreover, Boudreau *et al.* (2015) assert that the protection of the value in the talent lifecycle by rewarding depends upon the longevity of the employment relationship, which suggests that the development of a framework to retain and protect the value for the rewarding phase of the talent lifecycle is vital for the organisations when employing non-standard workforces.

The discussion on different phases of the talent lifecycle and the value addition process suggests that value resides in the entire talent lifecycle. At least one component of the value can be identified in each phase of the talent lifecycle that can assist in the proper execution of the talent-based value-driven process.

3.2.3. TM perspectives and the value elements in the TM lifecycle

In chapter two, different TM perspectives have been discussed. It is argued that each TM perspective is supported by the TM philosophy and therefore provides a justification for the policies, practices and processes designed to achieve organisational goals. In this section, each TM perspective's role in the value addition process is established. A talent-based value-driven framework is suggested to make it a part of the proposed hybrid HR architectural framework. This framework will also assist in the data collection process by identifying the areas of investigation. Figure 3.4 illustrates the value-driven framework, and which is discussed further in this chapter.

3.2.3.1 People-focused perspective and the value elements in the TM lifecycle

The people-focused perspective of TM emphasises the management of individuals whose skills are assumed to be rare, hard to find, difficult to replace and add value to organisations (Sparrow & Makram 2015; Sandeepanie *et al.* 2020). In Figure 3.4, the components of value addition are evident in all phases of the talent lifecycle. For example, value can be created and captured with heterogeneous, immobile, and unique resources that can align with the organisational needs at the planning phase. For this, organisations identify the needed skill set needed (Sparrow *et al.* 2015b; Cascio & Boudreau 2016; Anser *et al.* 2020).

Figure 3.4 *- The value driven framework*

Source: *Based on Sparrow and Makram (2015), and Boudreau et al. (2015)*

Value can be created and captured at the attraction and selection stage when the planned resources (from the planning stage) are successfully attracted and selected. This includes careful selection process objectives that are to be grounded in the strategic priorities (Sparrow *et al.* 2015b; Gilch & Sieweke 2021). At the TM lifecycle's deployment and development stages, the rigorous process involves using the value that talent brings with it and developing the processes that help transfer the knowledge and create new value. It also combines individual skills with tacit organisational knowledge that leads to valuable outcomes (Sparrow & Makram 2015; Boukis & Kabadayi 2020).

3.2.3.2 Practice-focused perspective and the value elements in the TM lifecycle

The practice-focused perspective differs from the people-focused perspective in understanding talent; for example, the people-focused perspective emphasises identifying valuable performers for the organisation. The practice perspective acknowledges the need for advanced and sophisticated HR practices in organisations (Sparrow & Makram 2015; Sparrow 2019). Dries (2013) and Timperley (2020) suggest that organisations identify the employees and determine the attraction and acquisition process to achieve organisational goals.

This indicates that in the planning, attracting and selecting stages of the talent lifecycle, the practice-focused perspective creates value by estimating the current and the future supply of the workers and subsequent attraction and selection by emphasising the acquisition process of employees/resources that can contribute to the organisational core competence and enhance competitive advantage.

Moreover, under these stages of the talent lifecycle, value capture is possible through an emphasis on practices of resource bundling in an effective manner (Sparrow & Makram 2015). Shet (2020), Sparrow and Makram (2015) and Sparrow *et al.* (2011) claim that organisations should identify the core resources and use them in combination with other essential resources. This infers that in the deployment and the development stages of the talent lifecycle, essential practices are to identify talent as a valuable resource, bundle them with other resources, improve the efficiency and effectiveness of strategy execution through motivation, learning and support the transfer of knowledge within the organisation for better alignment of overall strategy and gaining competitive advantage.

Overall, the practice-focused perspective adds value by focusing on practices such as recruitment, selection, training, and career development relationship building. It also includes interpersonal practices, such as enabling persons to do the best, optimise and amplify performance, building the talent around the capabilities central to the business model, enhancing contributions of the individuals for the successful execution of the strategy and increasing efficiency and effectiveness (Sparrow *et al.* 2011; Chitra & Shanthi 2019; Meyers *et al.* 2020).

3.2.3.3 Position-focused perspective and the value elements in the TM lifecycle

The position-focused perspective considers managing the pivotal roles and the positions rather than the people (Sparrow & Makram 2015; Järvi & Khoreva 2020). The value addition in this TM approach remains in the systematic identification of critical positions and the roles contributing to the sustainable competitive advantage (Cascio & Boudreau 2016). The position-focused perspective is related to the key roles and elite positions that create direct value for the strategic gains of the organisation; hence the value creation, capture, leverage and protection are related to the careful selection of individuals who can fill those pivotal positions (Boudreau & Ramstad 2007; Caligiuri *et al.* 2020). This includes the grooming of high potential leaders by aligning them with the corporate strategy (Sparrow *et al.* 2015b).

3.2.3.4 Strategic pool focused- perspective and the value elements in the TM lifecycle

The strategic pool perspective of TM introduced by Boudreau and Ramstad (2007) emphasises pivotal talent pools, for example, the clusters and the groups of talent (either people or positions) and investment in them to improve organisational capabilities, strategic success and competitiveness (Caligiuri *et al.* 2020). Cascio and Boudreau (2012) claim that organisations should plan the practices by keeping in view their strategic intent (Collings *et al.* 2019). This implies that the value addition in the strategic pool perspective is possible through the strategic workforce in the planning, attracting, and selecting phases of the talent lifecycle. This can include emphasising precision in the demand and supply estimates of future skills and position and eliminating bad outcomes.

3.2.4. Talent-based HR systems

HR systems deal with the linking mechanisms of the philosophies, policies, practices and processes at the individual and the organisational level and can be linked with the employee performance (Jiang *et al.* 2012; Monks *et al.* 2013; Lepak *et al.* 2017; Díaz-Fernández *et al.* 2020). Due to the drastic change in the nature of the workforce and demographics, coupled with the globalisation phenomenon, organisations' focus seems quickly moving towards the talent management agenda (Latukha 2021). Talent-based HR systems proposed in this research study are those systems that view HR systems through the lens of TM. A talent-based HR system includes the systematic identification of talent philosophies, talent-based policies, practices, processes, and a link among these components to create value for the organisation discussed in the talent-based value-driven framework section of this chapter. Talent-based HR systems in this study are those systems that use the value-driven framework presented in Figure 3.4 to develop policies, practices and processes. For example, if a manager has a people-focused perspective, then the talent-based HR systems will include job design, recruitment and selection, development and deployment, and rewarding policies and practices.

The proposed talent-based HR systems based on the value-driven framework can be seen in the lower layer of the talent-based hybrid HR architecture presented in Figure 3.3. The pyramids of HR systems based on the value-driven framework are proposed as a foundation of the talent-based hybrid HR architecture.

3.2.5. Optimal configurations of talent-based HR systems in NSEs

Lepak and Snell (1999) first present the idea of multiple configurations of HR systems (Boon *et al.* 2019). They assert that organisations configure their HR systems according to the value that employee can create. This was further extended by Lepak and Snell (2007), who discuss employment subsystems and multiple employment modes in the organisation and the configuration of different HR systems for each employment mode. Wright *et al.* (2018) discuss that HR systems need to be optimised to make them unique and inimitable. The increasing interest of the practitioners employing the best talent across the globe to cope with rapid technological and demographical changes indicates that changing the lens of HR systems from HR to talent may provide better solutions to contemporary organisational needs.

Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has also triggered the need for new employment modes and a change in the lens of how to manage HR (Latukha 2021). The optimal and differentiated HR systems can be understood through a TM's lens by combining the different talent-based HR systems for various employment modes (Lepak & Snell 2007; Lepak *et al.* 2017). In this thesis, the non-standard employment mode is focused on proposing the talent-based HR systems and multiple, optimal and differentiated configurations that can then be presented as a hybrid HR architecture.

3.3. Summary

The SHRM literature review demonstrates that the architectural perspective associated with the configurational view of SHRM is complicated due to the fact that it addresses issues at the individual, group, and organisational levels concurrently. (Lepak *et al.* 2017; Su *et al.* 2018; Wright *et al.* 2018; Luo *et al.* 2020). External factors such as changes in the preference of the workforce to be more functionally, geographically, numerically, financially or contractually flexible (Lewis 2003; Spreitzer *et al.* 2017), globalisation and internal factors such as the changes in the employment relations and the resultant employment arrangements are adding a layer to the complexity of the SHRM architectural perspective (Cascio & Boudreau 2016; Spreitzer *et al.* 2017; Collings & Isichei 2018; Caligiuri *et al.* 2020; Wood & Kispál-Vitai 2021). It is proposed in this thesis that the architectural perspective can be better understood if the underlying elements of the HR systems that assist in bringing value to organisations are captured through the lens of TM. Moreover, when the elements of HR systems such as philosophies, policies, practices, and processes and the system of producing value in each element are observed from the TM view, organisations can develop their optimal, and customised talent-based HR system configured based on the external factors. It is also proposed that organisations can configure multiple talent systems varying across the groups, departments or even business units which is a hybrid approach to manage talent.

All discussion in chapter three is related to the TM agenda and incorporation of TM in the HR architecture for standard employees; however, it is proposed that talent-based HR architecture can be developed for the non-standard employment modes. The next chapter discusses the methodology for developing talent-based HR architecture for the non-standard workforce termed as a hybrid talent-based HR architecture because it utilises a configurational view of SHRM in which optimal arrangements of talent-based HR systems for standard and non-standard employees can be developed.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

This study explores the components of a hybrid HR architecture that can be sub-divided into multiple talent-based HR systems. One primary research question (PRQ) and three secondary research questions (SRQ) are used to explore the components of talent-based hybrid HR architecture. The research questions are as follows:

PRQ. What hybrid HR architecture can be developed for MNEs using non-standard employment arrangements?

SRQ1. What HR systems or combination of HR systems are MNEs using to manage employees?

SRQ2. What talent-based HR systems can be developed to manage global talent in MNEs?

SRQ3. How can MNEs using non-standard employment arrangments configure multiple talent-based HR systems to combine in hybrid HR architecture?

To investigate and explore the hybrid HR architecture, an essential element in the research process is identifying research methodology. Walliman (2017) asserts that the research results' quality depends on the appropriateness of the method selected and the rigour in carrying out the activities during the whole research process. This chapter explains the research methodology's selection and justifies the research design's preference to achieve the objectives and answer the research questions. More precisely, this chapter outlines the philosophical paradigms adopted in this research and the resulting research strategy to inquire hybrid HR architecture and the research method used to explore components of talent-based HR architecture in discussion with industry experts. Each section of this chapter discusses the different philosophical and methodological aspects of the selected research design.

4.2. Philosophical considerations

Philosophical assumptions are termed as world views (Creswell & Creswell 2017), paradigms or broadly conceived research methodologies (Neuman 2013) that guide research strategies and research designs. Creswell and Creswell (2017) suggest making the research's philosophical assumptions explicit as they are the set of beliefs that guide a researcher's action during the whole research process.

The literature on research paradigms such as Baronov (2015), Blaikie (2007), Blaikie and Priest (2017), Creswell and Creswell (2017) and Blaikie and Priest (2019) indicate a wide array of world views, theoretical perspectives and paradigms. However, Blaikie and Priest (2017) assert that not all paradigms discussed in the literature can be considered research paradigms as they all cannot be articulated into research practice. Blaikie and Priest (2019) discuss that interpretivism is a research paradigm that can be articulated into research practice along with neo-positivism and critical realism. The neo-positivism paradigm assumes the nature of reality as singular, while critical realism assumes reality as being structured and patterned (Hoddy 2019). The interpretive paradigm assumes there are multiple constructions of reality being reproduced by different actors through various activities and interpretations (Blaikie 2007; Creswell 2013; Blaikie & Priest 2019).

This underlying philosophical assumption of this research is rooted in the interpretive paradigm of research. It assumes that the reality cannot be patterned and structured as in critical realism and the nature of reality is not singular as in the neo positivist paradigm because the reality varies based on the interpretations of the informants and the researcher. The HR managers' understanding of talent-based HR systems and management holds a central position in developing a hybrid HR architecture in this research. Hence, the understanding of managers could be explored by documenting the different interpretations and meanings they give to the phenomenon under discussion. Table 4.1 depicts the research philosophies available with the ontological, epistemological and methodological considerations and the choice made for this research, explained in the following section.

4.2.1. Ontological and epistemological considerations

Creswell (2013) and Creswell and Creswell (2017) discuss philosophical assumptions using multiple sub-assumptions to guide research proceedings and set a research foundation. Coates (2021) suggests that reporting the research foundations is essential because it supports the researcher in developing a framework to proceed with the research. These ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions based on the philosophical paradigm of this research are mentioned in Table 4.1.

Philosophical considerations			Neo-Positivist	Interpretivist	Critical realist
Ontological			**Cautious realist** Reality is out there. Single reality	**Idealist** Reality is reality because we think so. Multiple realities	**Depth realist** Reality is in different layers
Epistemological			**Falsificationism** Reality can be approximated through research and statistics	**Constructionism** Reality can be co-constructed by the researcher and the researched	**Neo-realism** Reality can be found by establishing patterns and regularities and then finding casual relationships
Methodological	Logic of inquiry	Inductive	To establish regularities	To produce thematic description	
		Deductive	To produce possible explanations		
		Abductive		To produce layered descriptions and finding underlying patterns of thematic description	To find underlying structures by finding casual relationships
		Retroductive			To find evidence of underlying structures and casual relationships
	Methodology	Sources of data	Semi natural, artificial; social artefacts	Natural and semi natural social settings	Natural and semi natural, artificial social settings; artefacts
		Type of data selection	Through population, probability and non-probability sampling	Through population and non-probability sampling	Through population, probability and non-probability sampling
		Methods of data collection	Mainly quantitative. Data collected rather than generated	Qualitative Generated	Qualitative and quantitative Collected and generated

Table 4.1 *- Research philosophies and philosophical considerations*

Source: *Adapted from Blaikie (2007) and Blaikie and Priest (2019)*

The ontological belief of this study relates to constructing reality and knowledge through experiences and interaction with others. This ontological belief suggests that each informant could have a different worldview, and through the research, the reality existing in multiple forms can be reported. For example, various HR managers could understand the term talent and have different talent management perspectives discussed in Chapter 2. Thus, this ontological belief emphasises the importance of the informants and their views in exploring different dimensions of the phenomenon.

The understanding of managers regarding talent and how it can create value for an organisation highly depends upon managers' experiences, their lens to view the world and causal maps created in their minds to materialise the value for the organisation. For example, the HR managers having a distinct understanding of talent management based on the talent perspectives could help develop different parts of the hybrid HR architecture. Thus, epistemologically this research considers that reality is co-constructed by the researcher and the researched.

4.2.2. Methodological assumptions

Blaikie and Priest (2019) and Creswell (2013) discuss methodological assumptions that include two aspects; the logic of inquiry and methods used to investigate the matter. The logic of inquiry guides the process of data collection and analysis. Moreover, the methods used to investigate the issue depends upon the logic of inquiry because methods need to consider the potential and limitation of a technique to answer the research question (Blaikie & Priest 2019; Chan & Clarke 2020). The following subsections explain two aspects of methodological assumptions.

4.2.2.1 The logic of inquiry

The logic of inquiry, often referred to as research strategy, determines how to answer research questions by elaborating a starting point, a series of steps, and an endpoint (Blaikie 2009; Blaikie & Priest 2019). The commonly used research logics are inductive, deductive, retroductive and abductive strategies (Blaikie 2007; Blaikie & Priest 2017, 2019). The deductive and retroductive strategies are not suitable for the interpretive paradigm of research, as depicted in Table 4.1 and hence are not considered. The inductive and abductive strategies are suitable for this research; however, the abductive strategy is used because of its fundamental characteristic of exploration through the common everyday knowledge that social actors use in the production, reproduction and interpretation of the phenomenon under investigation (Blaikie 2009; Blaikie & Priest 2017, 2019).

Moreover, this research seeks to understand the underlying mechanism that results in the observable decisional patterns of HR managers, which is the characteristics of abductive logic of inquiry, as mentioned in Table 4.1. For example, the abductive strategy assumes that observations of the phenomenon are possible through the prior theoretical frame in the observer's mind, unlike the inductive logic (Miles *et al.* 2013). The role of the researcher cannot be ignored in this research as the researcher has to frame the collection of data according to some preconceived theoretical ideas; hence pure inductive logic is not suitable for this research.

4.2.2.2 Research method

Decisions about the research method are considered essential to provide the answers to the research questions and make the research valuable both for theory and practice (Snyder 2019). Blaikie and Priest (2019) suggest it is crucial to decide the type, sources and method to collect data to produce knowledge through research. Moreover, to decide the suitable research method, it is important to identify the steps to complete the research. This helps ensure rigour and proves the validity of the research (Blaikie 2010; Blaikie & Priest 2019; Coates 2021). This current research expects to be completed in the following steps to answer the research questions and to explore the different components of the hybrid HR architecture:

1. Exploration of the components of HR systems and the possibilities of multiple HR systems in organisations.
2. Exploration of talent components in HR systems.
3. Proposing a framework to develop combinations of different talent-based HR systems for varying types of non-standard employment arrangements.

The interpretations of HR managers are required to understand what constitutes talent for the organisation to develop talent-based HR systems. The interpretations and their analysis can better be revealed through qualitative methods (Creswell & Creswell 2017; Blaikie & Priest 2019). Moreover, Creswell (2013) suggests conducting qualitative research when the problem or issue needs to be explored. One of the significant reasons to choose the qualitative frame for this research is the nature of the study, which is exploratory. This research aims to explore the HR systems; the underlying structures that help develop those systems are also considered essential in investigating the phenomenon because, without those underlying structures, the HR systems cannot be developed. Hence the detailed study of complex relations among the HR systems, underlying mechanisms, the role of key HR personnel and the organisational context justifies the need to use the qualitative research frame. Table 4.2 indicates the choices of research designs available based on the philosophical assumptions and methodological approach selected in the previous section and Table 4.1.

Research designs/framework/ approaches	Instrumental case study	Grounded theory	Qualitative survey (Designed for this PhD research)
Focus	Exploration of the phenomenon using the organisation as an instrument (context). Theoretical and analytical generalisation of patterns.	Developing a theory grounded in data through exploration or explanation of phenomenon. Theoretical and analytical generalisation of patterns.	Exploration of phenomenon. Theoretical and analytical generalisation of the underlying structures creating the patterns.
Type of problem suited for design	Providing in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in certain context.	Grounding a theory in the views of participants.	Providing in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in broader context.
Unit of analysis	Phenomenon	Process, action, interaction of individuals.	Phenomenon/HR philosophies, policies, processes, practices

Table 4.2 *- Appropriate research frameworks and designs*

Source: *Adapted from Creswell (2013), Creswell and Creswell (2017), and Yin (2018)*

The qualitative survey design is appropriate for exploring contemporary phenomena that require in-depth explanation (Yin 2018). Moreover, in following the abductive research strategy, the questions seeking the answer to the phenomenon under investigation could be best responded to by the meanings provided by the HR managers and could be explored through the interviews. The hybrid HR architecture with a talent aspect in a non-standard employment setting needs exploration and explanation of the underlying structures that shape the talent-based HR systems. For example, HR managers' understanding of talent perspectives and talent management helps develop talent-based HR systems. Hence, to find out the answer to what talent-based HR systems in varying combinations can be used by exploring the underlying reasons for developing hybrid HR architecture, the qualitative survey design seems appropriate. The instrumental case study design appears equally attractive in exploring and explaining the components of hybrid HR architecture; however, the preference is given to a qualitative survey design because of its ability to theoretically and analytically generalise the finding of underlying mechanisms that result in patterns (Kvale 2007; Brinkmann & Kvale 2018). Moreover, an instrumental case study is appropriate if research needs to be context-specific (Yin 2018). This study requires exploration of the components of talent-based hybrid HR architecture, which should not be context-specific.

The classic grounded theory research methodology also appears as an appropriate research design that can be employed in this study because it can help explore the components of talent-based hybrid HR architecture (Glaser & Strauss 2017). However, the grounded theory research design allows to study of action, a process or interaction of many individuals in a situation (Creswell 2013), while the focus of this current study is to find the underlying structures and reasons that result in an action or process to occur.

This research adopts the grounded theorisation process for data analysis, which is a pluralistic approach to the classic grounded theory under qualitative research (Charmaz 2016; Holton 2018). The grounded theorisation process can be distinguished from classical grounded theory methodology based on three pillars of grounded theory design: 1) emergence, 2) constant comparison, and 3) theoretical sampling (Glaser & Strauss 2017; Holton 2018) and is depicted in Table 4.3 and discussed.

		Grounded theory research design	Grounded theorisation process adopted for this research
Pillars of research design	Emergence	Observation of *unbounded* theme emergence	Observation of *bounded* theme emergence
	Constant comparison	To observe *unbounded theme emergence* and theme saturation	To observe *bounded theme emergence* and theme saturation
	Sampling	Theoretical sampling	Total population sampling

Table 4.3 *- Difference between grounded theory and grounded theorisation process*

Source: *Adapted from Charmaz (2016), Glaser and Strauss (2017) and Holton (2018)*

The component 'emergence' necessitates that the researcher remains open to the empirical discoveries of data without having a prior framework or theories in mind (Holton 2018). This current study aims at the advancement of the existing theory of HRM. It uses the extant theories and gaps identified in the literature review to frame data collection boundaries. Though it employs thematic analysis, which is also used in classic grounded theory methodology as an analysis technique and observes the emergence of themes within the specified boundaries set by the researcher, the procedure (discussed in chapter 5) does not allow the emergence of a new theme outside the boundaries of the research which is a typical characteristic of classic grounded theory design. For the bounded emergence of themes, this research uses semi-structured interviews, and the theme emergence is observed within the specified areas of discussion.

Constant comparison is also a significant component of data collection and is used to observe theme saturation and bounded emergence of themes (discussed in chapter 5). In classical grounded theory design, the constant comparison is used to observe theme saturation and unbounded theme emergence (Glaser & Strauss 2017). The third pillar of classic grounded theory design is theoretical sampling, in which the sample is drawn based on the ongoing data analysis during the constant comparison. The researcher identifies the need to collect more data and the appropriate informants during the emergence of the theory, constant comparison and the data collection process (Glaser & Strauss 2017; Holton 2018). This current study, however, uses total population sampling after identifying the selection criteria of the informants and hence, uses a theorisation process grounded in the industry experts' views and seeks to fill the gap in extant theories that can be a step in developing a future theory, as discussed in the next section. The preference to total population sampling is given over theoretical sampling because theoretical sampling is attached to unbounded theme emergence. This research does not use unbounded theme emergence. The sampling technique selection logic is further discussed in section 4.3.3.

4.3. Research design

The roadmap determines the research design, which clarifies the essential steps followed. Figure 4.1 depicts the four stages of this research. Stage 1 and 2, which is conducting a literature review, finding the literature gaps and formulating the research questions, are discussed in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. This chapter deals explicitly with stage 3, in which the approach to execute stage 3 is discussed.

4.3.1. Units of analysis and observation

The unit of analysis can be distinguished from the unit of observation. The unit of analysis is what is being analysed, while the unit of observation is the item that is observed to study the unit of analysis (Lavrakas 2008). Yin (2018) argues that the unit of observation is the unit of data collection and source of evidence. The unit of analysis can be a case, event, phenomenon, process or organisations in qualitative studies (Creswell 2013). This study's unit of analysis is the the optimal configurations of talent-based HR systems and the level of analysis is the HR philosophies, policies, processes and practices.

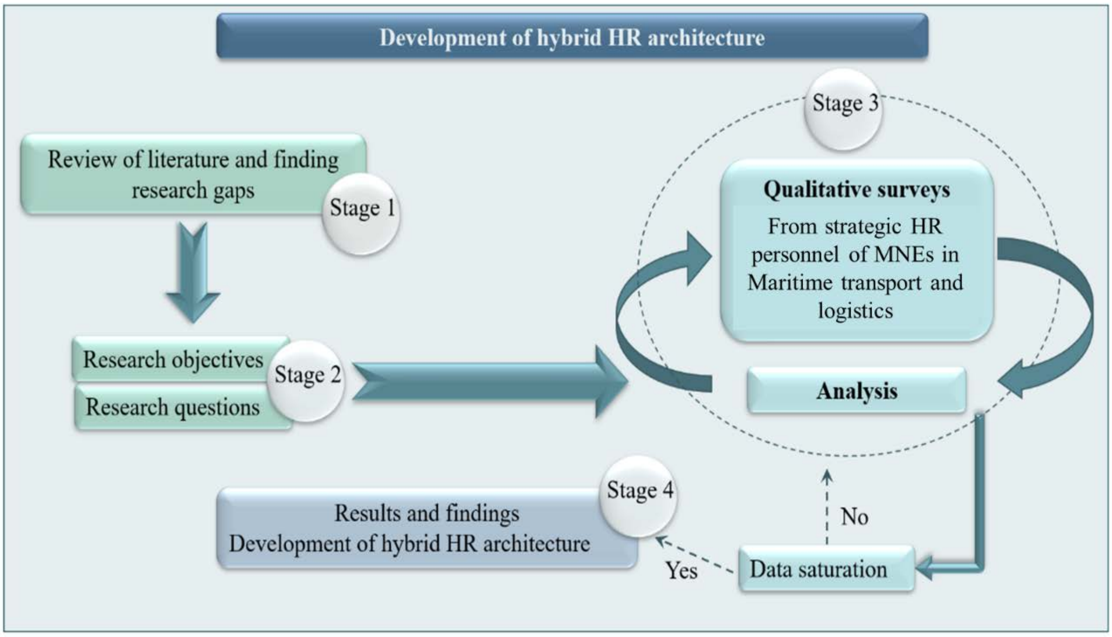


Figure 4.1 *- Pictorial representation of the research design to develop talent-based hybrid HR architecture*

The unit of observation is multinational enterprises (MNEs) in this study. The literature review in Chapters 2 and 3 indicates that the organisations operating at the global level or having global access to HR need to re-consider the HR systems for alternative employment arrangements and consider talent management at all abstraction levels. Thus, the MNEs utilising NWA to improve agility and flexibility could contribute to developing talent-based HR systems, their multiple configurations and hybrid HR architecture.

4.3.2. Population of interest

Blaikie and Priest (2019) discuss four data sources: natural settings, semi-natural settings, artificial settings, or social artifacts. Data sources from natural settings are useful to study the everyday life of individuals, semi-natural settings are helpful to study the activities and processes that occur in a natural setting, artificial settings are useful for the experimental type of studies, and social artefacts are valuable to examine the records and history (see Table 4.4).

Sources of data	Examples	Suitability for this research
Natural setting	Researcher enters the social activity of the individuals, groups or organisations and studies the everyday life of individuals.	**No** This source of data only allows the observation and study of data from the lens of the researcher and does not allow the involvement of participants. This study requires the participation of the social actors (HR managers in this study).
Semi-natural setting	Individuals are asked to report their relationships with other individuals, group or organisations and activities they perform. It also includes the study of activities, processes, motives, attitude, institutionalised practices.	**Yes** This source of data allows the involvement of participants and assist observation of phenomenon from multiple lenses. This is suitable for this study because it allows HR managers to participate in the development of the HR architecture.
Artificial setting	Placing people in experimental and simulated conditions, for example pre and post-test studies.	**No** This research does not aim at the identification of cause and effect of a phenomenon.
Social artefacts	To study the traces of activities people leave behind, such as official records or biographies or autobiographies.	**No** This study does not require historical data or record.

Table 4.4 *- Sources of data and their suitability for this research*

Source: *Adapted from Blaikie (2009) and Blaikie and Priest (2019)*

For example, as mentioned in Table 4.4, sources of data can be from natural settings in which the researcher studies the everyday life of the participants by entering the social activities of the informants. Data from natural settings allow the researcher to observe the phenomenon but does not let participants discuss their viewpoint on it (Blaikie & Priest 2019). Thus, a study that requires explanation and interpretations from the researcher and the participants uses semi-natural settings as data sources. Sources of data are essential to identify the characteristics of the population. The population in the research holds various meanings, such as objects, people, organisations, events or the total quantity of things to be investigated (Walliman 2017). The population is the aggregate of all cases that conform to the researcher's identified criteria (Blaikie 2009). This research, using the semi-natural settings, employs MNEs as the population of interest. The MNEs are considered important in exploring the hybrid HR architecture components in this research mainly because of the increasing trend of NWAs in MNEs.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the decision framework for employees working under NWA appears to be less investigated; thus, this research aims to explore the phenomenon in global settings. The world is now at the crossroad between the initial phase of the fourth industrial revolution (industry 4.0) and an extension of industry 4.0, which is called industry 4.0+ or industry 5.0, in which the global talent with collaborative robotics is emerging as a new trend in MNEs to become flexible (Demir *et al.* 2019; Nahavandi 2019; Rauch 2020). Thus, the talent-based HR systems with improved agility are timely to propose in organisations operating at the global level and using new employment modes of industry 4.0 such as NWAs.

Chapters 2 and 3 discuss the various factors that impact HRM and TM, including globalisation, new employment trends such as flexible working and organisational needs to be agile. Moreover, it is discussed that the global organisations are now following the trend of alternative employment arrangements to gain competitive advantage, and this trend is prevalent in industries most affected by globalisation. Based on the review of literature presented in Chapters 2 and 3, the following criteria are formulated to select the sector as a group under the population of interest:

1. Sector operating in a volatile environment, growing rapidly and need the flexibility to grow further.
2. Heavily rely on HR to become agile.
3. Flexible enough to use NWA as alternative employment arrangements.

Walliman (2017) asserts that certain groups may be of interest to the researcher in the total population of interest. For this research, global maritime transport and logistics service provider in the logistics industry is the population to explore the elements of hybrid HR architecture. The process of choosing the logistics industry among different industries follows a criterion to achieve the desired results. Figure 4.2 depicts the industry selection process and is explained in the following subsections.

4.3.2.1 Industry selection logic

Globalisation and technological advancements have affected every sector of the economy, making the environment volatile and turbulent. Among the three sectors of the economy that is, the primary sector (extraction of raw material-mining, agriculture, farming), the secondary sector (manufacturing, textile, infrastructure) and the tertiary sector (service), the service sector is the major contributor to the GDP worldwide and due to its large magnitude being affected by the globalisation and technological advancements more than any other sector.

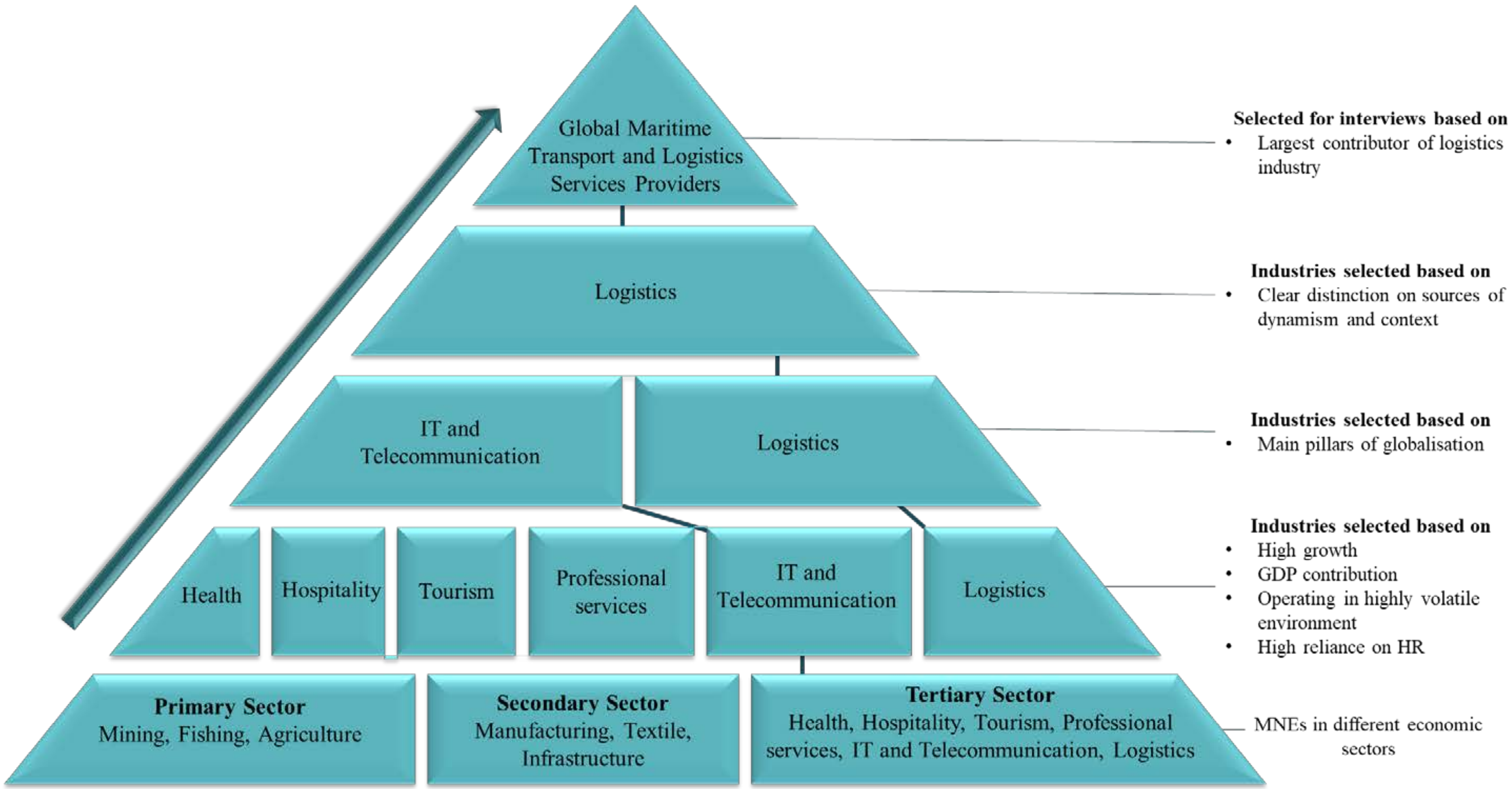


Figure 4.2 *-Industry selection logic*

For example, according to a report by the World Bank, the service sector has contributed more than any other sector to GDP during 2018 in East Asia Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America, Middle East, North America, South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa with 59%, 64.3%, 60.3%, 54%, 77.4, 49.9% and 52.5% respectively (World Development Indicators 2019). The report also shows tremendous growth in the service sector while decreasing or stabilising other sectors in different regions from 2010 to 2018.

The information technology and telecommunication (IT & TC) and logistics industry of the service sector are significant because of their various economic roles. IT & TC and the logistics industry contribute to the tremendous growth of the service sector; however, both industries are the primary facilitators of the growth in any other sector and industry (Grammenos 2013). IT & TC and the logistics industry are two cornerstones of globalisation as along with trade liberalisation and international standardisation, and these two industries facilitate the global access to goods and services (Grammenos 2013). This indicates that without the facilitator industries, the growth of the service sector and other economic sectors can generally become challenging. Moreover, facilitator industries are the source of globalisation and technological advancements, especially NWA, where the employees worldwide can connect and work according to their convenience.

The additional characteristics of IT & TC and logistics industries led to selecting them as the most significant industries to explore the phenomenon of hybrid talent-based HR systems in NWA. Moreover, among the two selected industries, the logistics industry is preferred for this research. Although both industries are globalised and work under turbulent conditions causing a high level of uncertainty and unpredictable macro and microenvironments for the firms working under these industries, the rapid and continuous changes caused by various factors such as technology become the inherent characteristics of the IT & TC industry thus making it difficult to clearly distinguish the context, sources of dynamism and its effect on human assets (Sanyal & Sett 2011; Stone 2015).

The logistics industry is a significant contributor to any economy's GDP worldwide (Park 2020). As this study focuses on MNEs, the logistics industry's selection ensures that the selected companies to collect data are inherently global because of their operation and not due to external or internal pressures. Under the logistics industry, the maritime transport and logistics service providers are considered the most globalised service providers worldwide and are also the facilitators of globalisation (Psaraftis 2020). Seaborne trade is one of the most significant shareholders in the logistics industry. Wan *et al.* (2016) explain the importance of maritime transport and logistics by highlighting that 90% of world trade is done through the sea and the rest of the 10% through other mediums such as air, rail or road transport. However, Fang *et al.* (2013) claim that maritime transport and logistics will be reshaped by 2030 due to global economic changes. This implies that the logistics industry generally and maritime and logistics specifically is expected to impact the economic conditions significantly, and it will itself be influenced by the changes such as technological advancements, demographical changes, legal framework, and employment conditions.

Industry 4.0 and its impact on work and employment arrangements require organisations to be more agile, flexible and responsive. To cope with the contemporary requirements of industry 4.0, organisations need to re-consider the HR systems and need a decision framework to manage HR, especially in new employment arrangements. The participating industry must be operating at the global level to initially exploring the component of HR systems and decision framework. Moreover, the industry's inherent characteristics must be separable from the sources of dynamism to address the micro and macro-environmental factors. The maritime transport and logistics service providers under the logistics industry seem appropriate for this research because they are globalised and are the major facilitator of industry 4.0 trends.

4.3.3. Selecting the organisations and informants

Sample selection plays an important role in achieving the research aims and objectives (Vasileiou *et al.* 2018). Blaikie and Priest (2019) discuss the importance of the sample type to be selected and the sampling procedure to be followed to determine the conclusion needed to be drawn from the research. Qualitative studies are concerned with the processes, interpretations, meanings and understanding of the phenomenon and the underlying reasons that cause different understandings (Cassell *et al.* 2017; Creswell & Creswell 2017; Silverman 2020). The qualitative studies use the non-probability sampling technique to explore the individuals' interpretations and how they make sense of specific processes (Creswell & Creswell 2017; Hennink *et al.* 2020). Unlike the probability sampling, that is used to represent a wider population and aims at the generalisation of the conclusions and findings, the non-probability sampling helps to investigate the specific set of the population that can provide insights into the issues (Creswell 2013;

Creswell & Creswell 2017; Mweshi & Sakyi 2020). This research employs a qualitative frame to investigate the components of hybrid HR architecture, thus uses a non-probability sampling technique. Moreover, the epistemological underpinnings emphasise the importance of interpretations of the individuals to investigate the phenomenon and does not aim to generalise the findings statistically. Hence, non-probability sampling seems the most relevant technique to select the sample.

4.3.3.1 Selection of sampling technique

Various scholars such as Blaikie (2009), Creswell (2013), Etikan *et al.* (2016) and Wronski (2020) suggest different types of non-probability sampling techniques for qualitative research, which includes convenience, quota, snowball, judgmental and theoretical sampling. Convenience, quota and snowball sampling are used in quantitative and qualitative studies and mainly used for studies that aim at statistical generalisations (Blaikie 2009; Parker *et al.* 2020; Andrade 2021). In addition to generalisability, quota sampling, after categorising the selection criteria and choosing the sample against each criterion, helps compare the information or the informants in each criterion. The aim of this research is not to compare the information but instead to get a collective understanding. Snowball sampling helps draw the sample through referrals and natural social networking (Blaikie 2009; Parker *et al.* 2020). Thus, a study that uses semi-natural settings for data collection cannot use snowball sampling.

The theoretical and judgmental (often referred to as purposive) sampling follows the same logic and procedure. For example, sampling based on the inclusion criteria identified by the researcher, no pre-defined sample size, a focus on data saturation, constant comparison and parallel analysis for data saturation and aim at theoretical generalisations are the characteristics of theoretical and judgmental sampling (Glaser & Strauss 2017; Blaikie & Priest 2019). However, theoretical and judgmental sampling differ in their fundamental purpose and distinguished in their data collection process. Theoretical sampling, for example, is used for theory development and remains open in terms of new themes developed during the data collection process and their inclusion in main themes for further collection of data in the same research (Glaser & Strauss 2017; Holton 2018). On the contrary, purposive sampling relying on the pre-defined themes during the data collection process, observes and acknowledges new emerging themes but does not add them in the main exploration areas in the same research (Blaikie 2009; Blaikie & Priest

2019). Table 4.5 explains the type of purposive sampling techniques and the justification of each sampling technique's suitability or unsuitability for this research.

Purposive sampling has been used in this research by deliberately selecting the characteristics of the participants. Using the abductive logic, this research utilises the pre-identified areas of investigation for the exploration of talent-based HR systems and their optimal configurations and targets to find the underlying reasons that create the patterns. Hence, purposive sampling seems appropriate for this research; unlike theoretical sampling, which assists in theory development and uses emerging themes as part of the research, purposive sampling helps explore the predefined areas.

Sampling technique	Major characteristics	This sampling is used when	Suitable	This study
Maximum variation	Taking samples as differently as possible	The researcher wants to investigate how various informants view the area of investigation	No	Does not aim to investigate the variation instead to investigate how differently key HR personnel collectively develop HR systems
Homogenous	Taking a sample with the same characteristics	The informants have similar traits	No	Considers key HR personnel working on various positions and performing different roles as informants
Typical case	Taking samples representing the characteristic of average or normal individuals in the population	The informants are expected to behave in a typical manner	No	Does not require a typical understanding of key HR personnel regarding HR systems rather aims to explore optimal configurations of HR systems
Extreme case	Taking the unusual or atypical sample	The informants have unusual characteristics	No	Can get affected in terms of theoretical generalisability and replicability if this sampling is used
Critical case	Taking small sample having high impact on the total population	The informants are critical cases	No	Considers informants from MNEs in transport and logistics industry and these informants are not critical cases or outliers
Expert	Taking samples from the experts in the area under investigation	The researcher has insufficient evidence of the worth of further study and has to determine whether or not to conduct further research	No	Indicates, through literature review, a gap and a need to investigate the area
Total population	Taking the entire population as a sample that meets the criteria	Leaving out the certain sample presents an incomplete picture	Yes	If leaves key HR decision makers such as senior HR managers or strategic HR manager, will present partial information

Table 4.5 *- Purposive sampling techniques*

Source*: Adapted from Blaikie (2009), Creswell (2013) and Etikan et al. (2016)*

4.3.3.2 Selecting the organisations

In this research, sampling involves the selection of organisations and informants. Creswell and Creswell (2017), Kumar (2019) and Myers (2013) discuss that for qualitative research, the researcher must have access to the relevant information sources that are critical for analysis. To interview the informants and the extent of information required needs explicit permission from the participating organisations (Kvale 2007; Brinkmann & Kvale 2018). Hence, global maritime transport and logistics providers in the logistics industry that granted approval and were willing to participate in this research were contacted for this research study.

A list of 199 companies was obtained through the web search through a systematic online search by firstly identifying the keywords to search, such as global maritime transport companies, global maritime logistics companies, third part logistics providers. Secondly, screening the search results of search engines, thirdly reading the information in the search results, fourthly recording search results on the excel sheets and fifthly comparing the various search results based on different keywords as suggested by Stansfield *et al.* (2016). Among these 199 companies, 179 were identified as global maritime and logistics companies, and 20 were identified as third-party logistics (3PL) providers. According to the World Shipping Council (2020), from the list of 179 companies, 26 companies represent 90% of the global maritime transport and logistics industry by their business volume. Those 26 companies were contacted. Moreover, 11 companies other than 26 selected companies were also contacted because they also had a global presence and operating in more than one country. Moreover, 20 largest global 3PL providers were also contacted because of their global presence. Table 4.6 contains the list of the companies chosen for data collection.

4.3.3.3 Selecting the type of informants

This research employs purposeful sampling, as discussed in subsection 4.3.3.1. Within the selected sample MNEs for the qualitative surveys, the informants' selection is completed through the total population sampling technique in which every informant meeting the criteria in the chosen organisation is included in the data collection process (discussed in Table 4.3 and section 4.3.3.1). Total population sampling is a non-random sampling technique under purposeful sampling in which the entire population that meets the criteria specified by the researcher is included in the research (Etikan *et al.* 2016).

The components of the hybrid HR architecture could be explored by dividing it into three major elements: talent-based HR systems, multiple configurations of HR systems, and micro and macro-environmental factors affecting HR systems. Boon *et al.* (2019) analyse 495 studies on HR system and find that 36% of studies involve key HR professionals, and

40% involve senior/middle managers (all managers) in studying HR systems. They also discuss that 41% of the informants of the studies involving managers as informants are HR managers. The issues of talent-based HR systems could be best explored with HR managers' help contributing to the development of policies aligned with the overall strategy of the organisation and tracking their progress. Using multiple employment systems is a strategic decision (Lepak & Snell 2007; Lepak *et al.* 2017). Hence, multiple configurations based on different employment systems could be best understood with the contribution of the strategic decision-makers.

Maritime Transport and Logistic Companies representing 90% of the global maritime transport and logistics industry	
1	A.P. Moller-Maersk
2	Australian National Line (ANL)
3	American President Lines (APL)
4	CMA CGM
5	COSCO
6	Crowley
7	Evergreen Maritime Corp
8	Hamburg Sud
9	HAPAG LLOYD
10	HYUNDAI Merchant Marine
11	Independent Container Line (ICL)
12	Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha Ltd (K-Line)
13	Korea Marine Transport (KMTC)
14	Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC)
15	Mitsui O.S.K. Lines Ltd (MOL)
16	NYK Lines
17	Ocean Network Express (ONE)
18	Orient Overseas Container Line (OOCL)
19	Safmarine
20	Sealand
21	TOTE Inc
22	Tropical Shipping
23	Wan Hai Lines Ltd
24	Wallenius Wilhelmsen
25	Yang Ming Marine Transport Corporation
26	Zim Integrated Shipping Services Ltd

Global Maritime Transport and Logistic Companies having a presence in more than one country and having global HR	
1	Antong Holdings
2	Arkas Lines
3	Grimaldi (NAPOLI)
4	Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL)
5	Matson Inc
6	Neptune Orient Line
7	Oldendorff
8	Pacific International Lines
9	Shandong International Transportation Corporation (SITC)
10	Sinotrans
11	Teekay Shipping

Global transport and logistic companies identified as 3PL provider	
1	Agility
2	Americold Logistics, LLC
3	Bolloré
4	C.H. Robinson Worldwide
5	Ceva Holdings LLC
6	Dachser
7	DB Schenker
8	DHL Supply Chain
9	DSV
10	Expeditors International
11	FedEx Logistics
12	Hitachi Transport
13	Kenco Group, Inc.
14	Kuehne+Nagel
15	Orient Overseas International
16	Panalpina
17	Toll Holdings
18	UPS Supply Chain Solutions
19	UTi Worldwide
20	XPO Logistics Inc.

Table 4.6 *- List of companies selected for the data collection*

Moreover, the choice of using employment subsystems can be highly influenced by the different micro and macro environmental factors (Lepak *et al.* 2017; Collings *et al.* 2019). The role of strategic decision-makers become critical in dealing with the external factors that influence HR issues of the organisation (Wright *et al.* 2018); hence the HR managers at the strategic level are considered the best informants for the part of this research project dealing with strategic decision making. The sampling process is discussed in section 4.4.

4.4. Data generation and procedures

As the purpose of selecting a qualitative survey design for this research is to gain insights into the phenomenon under investigation, particularly the underlying structure that influences the development of decision-making patterns, the data collection in this research involves interviews that are well suited for the exploratory studies (Myers 2013; Creswell & Creswell 2017). King *et al.* (2018) recommend interviews as the most suitable data collection method for research that entails interpretivist philosophy. The research entailing interpretivist philosophy emphasises the social construction of knowledge (Blaikie & Priest 2017, 2019) and requires an interactive data generation methodology such as interviews (Potrac *et al.* 2014). This study involves exploring managers' understanding of talent management based on their perspectives. Other methods such as observation are not suitable as the observation does not allow the in-depth exploration of the participants' views.

Interviews are used as a data collection method; however, King *et al.* (2018) indicate that interviews involve many ethical issues that need to be addressed in any research. To address the concerns related to the interviews as a data collection method and make the process reliable, interview as the primary source of data collection is designed in three major steps recommended by Kallio *et al.* (2016) and Rabionet (2011):

1) Deciding type of interviews
2) Establishing ethical guidelines
3) Crafting the interview protocol

4.4.1. Deciding the type of interviews

Semi-structured interviews are conducted to collect data. Tavory and Timmermans (2014) indicate that the researcher must aim to find the variations in the data through participant-led conversation through abductive reasoning. Semi-structured or unstructured interviews are well suited for a study entailing the interpretivist philosophy to unfold the knowledge creation patterns and underlying structures through informants' active participation (King *et al.* 2018). Semi-structured interviews are flexible to modify the sequence of the questions based on the participant's discussion (Roulston & Choi 2018).

The preference for semi-structured over unstructured interviews is given due to the semi-structured interviews' ability to pull the suitable elements together from other interview methods. For example, this study requires independent thoughts of each informant on the HR systems, configurations and alternative employment arrangements based on their perspective to understand talent management, which is possible through unstructured interviews. However, using a prior frame of investigation areas to understand the thoughts of an individual informant is the characteristic of semi-structured interviews (Adams 2015).

Telephone interviews are used in this research to collect data instead of face-to-face interviews. One of the most important reasons for preferring telephone interviews is the interviewee's physical inaccessibility in most cases. Most informants are positioned globally and cannot be interviewed face-to-face because of its cost. Therefore, telephone interviews as a cost-effective alternative to face-to-face interviews (Farooq 2015) are used. Telephone interviews provide a better level of autonomy to the interviewer to notate sub-questions and probes during listening, mainly because of the lack of eye contact. The telephone interviews are suitable for busy informants (Farooq & De Villiers 2017). It is easy for informants to schedule and reschedule the telephone interviews according to their convenience, which improves their involvement.

Telephone interviews are criticised in research in which face-to-face encounters are critical. For example, the opponents of telephone interviews believe that these interviews are weak in rapport building than face-to-face interviews (Farooq & De Villiers 2017). However, multiple studies such as Sturges and Hanrahan (2004), Glogowska *et al.* (2011), Trier-Bieniek (2012), Vogl (2013), Deakin and Wakefield (2014) and Zhang *et al.* (2017) indicate that they found no difference in rapport building when they conducted telephone interviews. Moreover, Vogl (2013), while discussing the advantages of telephone interviews, argues that telephone interviews give better control to the interviewee over the conversation compared to face-to-face interviews. Another criticism of telephone interviews is the lack of visual cues (Rowley 2012). However, telephone interviews reduce the interviewer bias that can be induced due to visual cues (Vogl 2013; Farooq 2015). The lack of visual cues and data improves effective listening (Heath *et al.* 2018), allowing the interviewers to use probes and prompts to extract in-depth data from semi-structured interviews (Farooq 2015).

4.4.2. Establishing ethical guidelines

The research study must ensure ethical standards to protect the informants' rights, such as informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity and the right to withdraw (Kvale 2007; Creswell & Creswell 2017; Yin 2018). This research adheres to the University of Tasmania's ethical guidelines that reflect the Australian national statement on ethical conduct in human research (Australian Government 2007 (Updated 2018)). Formal approval was taken from the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee (SS HERC), that fall under the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of Tasmania.

The various ethical issues considered in the overall data collection, including interviews such as informed consent, confidentiality, analysis, verification, reporting, and data storage attached with the ethics application, are discussed with the supervisory team and implemented during the research process. The informed consent form included an explanation of the project, areas of study for exploration and probing, declaration of possible benefits and risks associated with the study, right to withdraw, brief statements about the storage of data and ensuring confidentiality. The permission for the audio recording of the interview was taken at the start of the interview.

4.4.3. Crafting the interview protocol

After reviewing the literature, the interview guide is crafted, finding the significant areas to be investigated and narrowing them down to minor areas. The interview guide (see appendix A) has four sections based on themes and is discussed in the following sub-section. Section A includes the general questions regarding informants, such as job responsibilities of the informants, length of employment in the same position with the same organisation, experience in the same industry and experience working on different HR positions in other industries. Questions in section A help link managers' experiences with the contributions to the development of hybrid HR architecture.

Section B of the interview guide includes questions about managerial views on the latest HR trends and challenges and mechanisms to cope with them. It helps explore the managerial thoughts on understanding the current HR issues and linking them with contemporary solutions. Section C includes the main themes and probing questions and includes questions to explore the HR system components. Section C comprises various questions to explore the components of hybrid HR architecture, including multiple HR systems. Section D is related to the demographics, which help link managerial thoughts with their demographics, such as the educational background.

4.4.3.1 Developing interview guide questions

The systematic literature review of empirical studies conducted by Boon *et al.* (2019) measured that 34% of all studies from 1991 to 2017 used a mix of policies and practices such as job design, autonomy and decision making, recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal and rewarding to study the HR systems. In addition to the 173 studies to examine HR systems discussed by Boon *et al.* (2019), this research investigates the HR systems at the organisational level. Thus, the mix of policies and practices seems appropriate to explore the components of hybrid HR architecture.

The common policies and practices guided by the literature review presented in Chapters 2 and 3 are divided based on their characteristics (Lepak & Snell 1999, 2002; Oldham & Fried 2016), as illustrated in Table 4.7. These characteristics have been used as the major and minor areas of policies and practices to explore the components of talent-based HR systems in hybrid HR architecture during interviews. Table 4.7 indicates the number of common or specific questions for the non-standard employees that assist in determining the type of existing HR system of the participant organisations and the number of questions that help in exploring the components of talent-based hybrid HR architecture for the non-standard employees.

The questions in section C were developed based on the literature review results from Chapters 2 and 3. For example, to explore what job designs MNEs are using and what can be developed for the non-standard employees, a literature review on the practices and policies of HR systems such as Díaz-Fernández *et al.* (2020), Karman (2020) and Van Beurden *et al.* (2021) was used. The open-ended questions were asked to explore the various components of hybrid HR architecture grounded in the opinion of HR managers. For example, the opening question of section C was ‘Does your organisation prefer employees to perform a wide range of tasks?’ (see question C-1.1).

Major Areas of investigation	Minor areas of investigation	No. of questions	
		Common questions/ For existing HR systems/For standard employees	For new hybrid HR architecture/ For non-standard employees
Job Design	Job characteristics	10	5
	Motivational issues	13	6
Recruitment and Selection	Promotion from within	9	7
	Hiring from outside	4	
Development and Deployment	Identification of training and development needs	1	6
	HR development strategies	1	
	HR deployment strategies	1	
Performance Appraisal and Rewarding	Aims of performance appraisals	2	6
	Rewarding techniques	2	

Table 4.7 *- Areas of investigation in section C of interview protocol*

Based on the reply of the HR managers, probing questions were formulated asking the reasons to prefer or not prefer employees to perform a wide range of tasks, how do they select employees to perform various tasks (if applicable), and what is their opinion to offer various tasks to non-standard employees. This question helped to find the answer to the job characteristics mentioned under the minor area of investigation in Table 4.7. The questions for non-standard employees were developed with the understanding that many organisations do not prefer non-standard employees, that other organisations do prefer but do not employ such individuals, and that some organisations do employ such employees. Therefore, these questions were included at the beginning of the guide so that participants' expectations can be established prior to the commencement of the interview. A similar procedure was adopted to develop each question in the interview guide. Appendix A contains a full interview guide with questions and possible probes.

4.4.3.2 Pretesting

Hurst *et al.* (2015) and Willis (2016) suggest pre-testing to detect an error in the data collection tool and process. The feedback on the interview guide of this study is taken to improve the instrument's reliability and trustworthiness (Castillo-Montoya 2016). The interview guide is pre-tested to assess the clarity, simplicity and understandability of the interview questions. For pre-testing, the interview refinement protocol (IRP) framework proposed by Castillo-Montoya (2016) is used to get feedback for improvement from six pre-testing participants. The IRP framework involves rigorous steps to adhere to during the refinement process and helps the researcher ensure the questions' concurrence with the research objectives (Majid *et al.* 2017; Yeong *et al.* 2018). Table 4.8 explains the steps and actions of the IRP framework adopted for this study.

Steps	Actions
Ensuring interview questions align with research questions	Develop matrix to map interview questions onto research questions. See the relevance of the interview questions to the research questions, and the value each research question adds.
Constructing an inquiry-based conversation	Write the interview questions in the conversational style.
Receiving feedback on interview protocols	Get feedback from pre-test participant.
Piloting the interview protocol	Simulate the actual interview.

Table 4.8 *- Interview refinement protocol framework*

Source*: Adopted from Castillo-Montoya (2016)*

For step one of the IRP framework, first, the areas of investigation are identified after the literature review, and second, each question statement related to the area of investigation is mapped against the issues they are addressing. For example, Table 4.9 depicts an example of the interview guide's questions on the right-hand side and their link to the relevant issue stated on the left-hand side of the Table. This process is repeated for every area of investigation and their link to the research questions.

Six pre-testing participants were contacted to receive feedback from the interview protocol; five were academics in the maritime and logistics and HRM. Four of the pre-testing participants had experience pretesting the interview guide and data collection through the interviews. One had telephone interviewing experience, and one official in the maritime sector was contacted to evaluate the interview guide. The informants of this study were expected to be from different cultural backgrounds. Culture related ethical issues were anticipated during the data collection process in terms of the use of interview question statements; hence this issue was mitigated by recruiting the pre-test participants from diverse cultural backgrounds. On average, each participant took 45 minutes to read and evaluate the interview guide. The common feedback was regarding the interview's timing, which was expected to be a maximum of one hour long. The pre-test participants showed their concern about the interviews' length and thought that interview might take more than an hour. To address this concern, two steps were taken.

1) The initial information sheet was sent to the informants prior to the interview to reduce the time and questions on the pre-interview check list.
2) The interview guide questions were re-arranged. For example, questions about the background of the informants and demographics were asked at the end of the interview.

Issue no.	Components of job design	Questions in the interview guide	Link to the issue	Helpful in answering the research question
1	Task variety	Does your organisation prefer employees to perform a wide range of tasks?	1,4	SRQ1
2	Autonomy and decision making	Does your organisation consider it important to address motivational issues in job design? Such as autonomy, job rotation and job security?	1,2,3,5,6	SRQ1
3	Job security			
4	Job rotation			
5	Standardised jobs	Approximately what percentage of employees must follow standard operating procedures to perform their jobs in your organisation?	2,5,6	SRQ1
6	Simple skills and well defined and			

Table 4.9 *- Step 1 of interview refinement protocol framework*
Source: *Adapted from Castillo-Montoya (2016) and King et al. (2018)*

After pre-testing the interview guide, a pre-test interview was conducted with another pre-test participant. The pre-test participant for a pre-test interview was an academic who was not among the sample and an expert in HRM with previous industry experience. The pre-test interview, used to consider item revision, is a systematic process in which pre-test participants assess the interview questions on specific criteria (Willis 2016; Peterson *et al.* 2017; Willis 2018). The criteria were provided to the pre-test participant prior to the pre-test interview, and the pre-test interview was conducted on the telephone. The items were read, and the pre-test interviewee was asked to assess the item based on the criteria. Table 4.10 presents the areas that the pre-test interviewee assessed.

Checklist for pre-test interview participant	Response	Comments (if any)
Is the interviewer clear in asking questions?	Yes/No	
Are the item wording, terminology, and structure clear and easy to understand?	Yes/No	
Do the sections flow reasonably from one to the next?	Yes/No	
Does the answer require long term memory retrieval?	Yes/No	
Is the question too sensitive to yield an honest response?	Yes/No	
Are any questions unclear or ambiguous?	Yes/No	
Are the questions direct and concise?	Yes/No	
Are the questions free from unnecessary technical language?	Yes/No	
Is there any question that needs to be added?	Yes/No	
Is there any issue you would like to comment on?	Yes/No	

Table 4.10 *- Criteria checklist for the pre-test interview participants*

Source: *Parts of this table have been adapted from Peterson et al. (2017), Castillo-Montoya (2016) and Buers et al. (2014)*

The pre-test interview feedback indicated that a few questions could make some informants reluctant to answer, such as a policy of job security for standard and non-standard employees and why they think it should be the same or different for all kinds of employees. To mitigate this issue, a statement was added at the start of each section declaring that the informants can skip any question if they don't want to answer. After making the necessary changes in the instrument, a pilot interview which is termed a dress rehearsal by Willis (2016), was conducted with one participant who was not from the sample. The pilot interview participant was an academic with industry experience. It significantly helped in recording the time duration and proper pronunciation of the words in the questions.

4.4.4. Recruiting informants and administering telephone interviews

The time allocated for data collection was four months; however, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic made it challenging to contact HR managers and convince them to participate in a research study. This challenge arose because the data collection time was the same when the world was in lockdown due to the pandemic and when the HR managers were working on alternative arrangements to continue business operations. However, rigorous efforts were made to improve the response rate, as discussed in this section.

An interview database was prepared first, which had two parts: pre-interview and post-interview database. The pre-interview database includes the potential informants' names, job titles, email addresses and information regarding emails and invitations sent to them, along with the interview status. The post-interview database includes interview notes, and graphical and tabular material. All this data is saved on the server of the University of Tasmania to avoid losing data.

Two steps were taken to recruit informants for this research. In the first step, the HR departments in the head offices of the selected MNEs were contacted to get access to the informants. Dempsey *et al.* (2016) suggest considering contacting the organisations to facilitate access to the participants at first. Invitation letters were sent to the HR department in the head office of selected MNEs to nominate the informants. The criteria checklist was provided to the HR departments as well. However, none of the HR departments contacted back; hence, a list of HR personnel meeting the criteria in head offices and regional offices of selected MNEs was identified through an electronic database search, and email addresses were obtained. In the second step, the invitation letters were sent to the informants directly. Total of 331 potential informants were contacted initially, as mentioned in Table 4.11.

Eleven informants agreed to participate; one invitation email and three reminder emails were sent to the potential informants. Out of 331 potential informants, only 26 refused to participate through return email. Most of the refusals were related to their recent commitments due to COVID-19. Twenty-nine emails were returned with an automatic reply mentioning that the potential informants were either unavailable due to the limited access to the internet because of working from home in COVID-19 or on job retention leave introduced by their company for an unspecified time due to the pandemic. Even after one invitation and three reminder emails, the number of emails not responded to at all was 248.

Out of 331 potential informants, 41 email IDs were not reachable because of the change of email ID or permanently closed email IDs. Also, 17 managers advised contacting a few months later through professional network websites because of their commitments due to COVID-19. These 58 potential informants are contacted through LinkedIn from the professional LinkedIn account of the researcher. Contact of 49 managers is found on LinkedIn, and invitations to connect were sent. Twenty-seven managers accept the request to connect on LinkedIn. Out of 27 managers who become part of the researcher's professional network, ten managers accept the request to participate in the study.

A total of 21 in-depth interviews are conducted because of the data saturation (discussed in Chapter 5); 15 of them are conducted through a dedicated telephone line, and six of them are through skype. On average, each interview was 50 minutes long, with a minimum of 40 minutes and a maximum of one hour. Two out of 21 interviews were conducted on a video call, while 19 interviews were audio-based. The time was tracked during telephone interviews. The nine interviews were audio-recorded on a digital audio recorder and call recorder for skype. The interview guide, as suggested by Brinkmann and Kvale (2018), was used to manage the proper sequence of the interview.

Contacted	Agreed	Refused	Automated reply	Incorrect contact details	Asked to contact later	No reply
331	11	26	29	41	17	248

Potential informants with incorrect detail or those who asked to contact later	Found contacts on LinkedIn	Contacted through LinkedIn (accepted LinkedIn contact request)	Agreed	Refused	No reply
58	49	27	10	0	17

Table 4.11 *- Administration of telephone interviews*

4.5. Ensuring the quality of the research

The value of qualitative research can be ensured through reliability, validity, generalisability and credibility (Creswell 2013; Hayashi Jr *et al.* 2019). In qualitative research, validity and reliability are not ensured through data collection instrument only, but it runs in the whole research process (Kvale 2007; Creswell 2013; Hayashi Jr *et al.* 2019; Silverman 2020) because it includes various methodological and analytical decisions throughout the analysis and presentation of the results. In this section, the validity and reliability through the data collection tool are discussed. However, validity and reliability based on the methodological and analytical decisions in the whole research process are discussed in Chapter 5.

Validity relates to the legitimacy of the investigation (Kvale 2007; Brinkmann & Kvale 2018) and is the matter of avoiding systematic bias (Adams 2015; Hayashi Jr *et al.* 2019). In this research, the validity involved the theoretical conception of the areas of investigation. The theoretical conception resulted from the review of literature provided in Chapters 2 and 3. Moreover, peer validation is obtained by pre-testing the instrument, which was developed after reviewing literature and consultation and discussion with HR academics and practitioners. Reliability pertains to the consistency and trustworthiness of the research findings (Kvale 2007; Brinkmann & Kvale 2018). For this research, the results' consistency and trustworthiness are ensured by finding the consistent and most common research areas in the literature to explore the talent-based HR systems, interviewing after pretesting and confirming the answers and interpretations of the responses of the informants.

Another component to ensure the quality of the research is generalisability (Creswell 2013; Hayashi Jr *et al.* 2019). The generalisability of the study can be either statistical or theoretical/analytical (Yin 2018). Although statistical generalisability is not the aim of this research; however, this research aims to develop theoretical and analytical generalisations that involve reasoned judgments about how the study's findings can be used to guide the other studies (Kvale 2007; Maxwell 2020). The analytical and theoretical generalisations are discussed throughout Chapter 6. Moreover, the presentation and visualisation of findings will help to generalise the hybrid HR architecture analytically and theoretically. The credibility of the research refers to the freedom of research from error or bias (Walliman 2017). The following subsections discuss the bias and error control process for this research to ensure the credibility of the research.

4.5.1. Bias control

Research bias is an unwanted distortion in data that is inevitable and cannot be eliminated from the research because it is induced due to cognitive differences (Walliman 2017; Brinkmann & Kvale 2018); however, steps can be taken to mitigate it. There are two kinds of biases in research that stem from either the researcher or from the informants (see Brinkmann and Kvale (2018), Roulston and Choi (2018) and (King *et al.* 2018)). Table 4.12 states the type of biases considered in this research and the bias control processes adopted.

The biases discussed in Table 4.12 are recognised during the data collection process; however, the steps are taken during the whole research process to control the bias. For example, the investigation areas identified from the literature review are arranged into distinct yet interconnected sections in the interview guide. Brinkmann and Kvale (2018) and Roberts (2020) emphasise the importance of question order to reduce question order bias which can negatively impact the subsequent questions. The questions in the interview guide are worded neutrally and flow from more generic to specific in each section, and pre-testing the interview guide helped improve the sections' flow (Willis 2016). The order of questions improved the interviewer's control over the interview by quickly finding the probes, prompts and subsequent questions (see appendix A for the interview guide and order of questions). Roberts (2020) suggests including the questions in the interview that allow the complex answers, are open for both positive and negative views and are free from assumptions to mitigate leading question bias. The questions in this study mostly require the informants' opinion, their understanding of the phenomenon, and the link of their understanding with the organisation's HR policies and practices and thus are worded openly.

Type of biases		Potential impact	Steps taken to reduce bias
Researcher bias	Question order bias	Can influence the answer of subsequent questions	Arranged general questions first Divided the interview into distinct themes
	Leading questions bias	Can lead the informants on the probable results	Questions were worded neutrally
	Confirmation bias	Deliberate interpretation of data to support the pre-identified themes	• The emergence of themes was observed during the research process and was acknowledged • The interpretation of the interviews responses was confirmed during the interview with interviewee • Shared the initial hybrid HR architectural framework with the interviewee
Informant bias	Acquiescence bias	The informant chooses to agree with the interviewer thus makes the discussion skewed	The questions in interview were open ended and needed their opinion representing their logic
	Social desirability bias	The informant deliberately misleads the research to gain social acceptability	
	Habitational bias	The informant provides same answer to similar questions and hence distorts the data	Similar questions in different themes were worded differently

Table 4.12 *- Type of biases and bias control process*

Source: *Adapted from Brinkmann and Kvale (2018), King et al. (2018), Roulston and Choi (2018) and Roberts (2020)*

Confirmation bias is given special attention as it can impact the qualitative research's credibility, consistency, and trustworthiness. Kappes *et al.* (2020) suggest confirmation bias is a behavioural tendency of a human; however, it can be overcome by finding disconfirming evidence. Confirmation bias was controlled during all research process, starting from the conception of the themes to the analysis and final development of the hybrid HR architecture, as mentioned in Table 4.12. Moreover, the pre-testing interview helped find the probes that were likely to lead to the confirmation bias and were removed from the interview guide.

Research bias is usually systematically induced, while error can be randomly caused (Brinkmann & Kvale 2018). This research, like other research, was endangered by the non-response rate error, which is random and unpredictable in nature. Non-response error affected this research because of the outbreak of COVID-19 and the subsequent changes in the business operations in which the role of the strategic HR managers was critical to keep their business running. A self-explanatory email was generated for HR departments of selected MNEs and for the informants to increase the response rate. The email included explaining the project and the benefit to the participating organisation, a consent document and a description of exploration areas. The email was followed by a reminder email in case of no response in ten days. The choice of communication medium and flexible meeting schedule was also sent in a subsequent email after getting a positive response from the informant of HR (see Appendix A). Moreover, the participants identified with incorrect email IDs were contacted through LinkedIn.

4.6. Summary

The objective of this chapter was to explain and justify the methodology of this research. The research design employed in this study is aligned with the research's philosophical assumptions and is to find the answers to the research question and meet the research objectives. The paradigm of this research is identified as interpretive, in which it is assumed that the interpretations of the actors in any phenomenon constitute the knowledge (ontology), the knowledge is co-constructed by the interaction of various individuals and their interpretations (epistemology), and methodologically knowledge can be observed by finding the underlying mechanism of the interpretations provided by the actors thus employing abductive research strategy.

This chapter explained the research design adopted and the justification for choosing a qualitative frame based on philosophical assumptions and research logic. A qualitative survey-based research design is developed to conduct this research. The informants are from the population of global maritime transport and logistics providers in the logistics industry. The informants are selected through total population sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique. As a data collection tool, semi-structured interviews are used to collect data and telephone interviews are conducted. Considering the ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions, this research needs to consider the ethical standards throughout the research process, including the theoretical conceptions of the areas of investigation, development of interview guide, selection of informants, interview process, interpretation of the interviews, analysis, visualisation and presentation of data.

This chapter explained how the research bias has been mitigated and how the error control process worked in this research. This chapter also discussed that the research quality is not a linear process that can be ensured through a valid and reliable data collection tool. Instead, it is an iterative process that runs throughout the research process. This chapter also sets the foundations for the next chapter, which is about the analytical and methodological decisions taken during the analysis of the data generated through the interviews of the industry experts. Chapter five discusses the quality of the research process initiated from the data collection tool discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

METHODOLOGICAL AND ANALYTICAL DECISIONS FOR DATA ANALYSIS

5.1. Introduction

To accept the research as being trustworthy, the qualitative researcher must demonstrate that the research is conducted consistently and exhaustively by recording and discussing the process of methodological and analytical decisions taken throughout the research process (Nowell *et al.* 2017). This chapter discusses and explains the methodological and analytical choices that are used to interpret the data and development of the hybrid talent-based HR architecture for the non-standard workforce.

Table 5.1 depicts the various methodological and analytical decisions taken during the data analysis and interpretation and the sections in which they are discussed. Table 5.1 also suggests that the data analysis and interpretation are complex processes involving various decision points. This chapter is structured to reduce the complexity. The data interpretation and analysis are completed in two steps: the preliminary data analysis and the detailed data analysis. The preliminary data analysis ran parallel to the data collection and determined the data collection cease point, after which the detailed data analysis was conducted where the saturation was also observed.

This chapter begins with a discussion of when to cease collecting data and then moves on to the methodological choice for data analysis. A data collection cease point is a term that refers to the point at which data collecting has been stopped or must be stopped (Glaser & Strauss 1969). The grounded theorisation process as the detailed analysis technique is discussed as a step-by-step thematic analysis process used to improve the trustworthiness of the analysis and the research process. Under the step-by-step thematic analysis, numerous analytical choices are discussed. The saturation of codes, themes, meaning and data discussed in this chapter is an analytic technique to improve the credibility of the research. The chapter ends with a discussion on the quality of research and an explanation of how each process within the research was deliberately induced to improve the trustworthiness of the research.

5.2. Preliminary data analysis - Determining data collection cease point

Data collection aimed to interview all the strategic HR managers of selected MNEs meeting the criteria specified in chapter 4.

Section	Methodological decisions discussed	Main discussion in the section	Analytical decisions discussed
Section 5.2	Data collection cease point	How data collection cease point is determined?	**Preliminary data analysis** Initial analysis of the interviews for the story each interview was telling
Section 5.3	Selection of grounded theorisation process Selection of thematic analysis technique	Why grounded theorisation process is selected for data analysis? What type of thematic analysis approach is selected under grounded theorisation process to analyse data?	None
Section 5.4	Bottom-up and latent thematic analysis as an approach to analyse data	How grounded theorisation process is executed? How thematic analysis is executed?	**Detailed data analysis** Six phased thematic analysis Phase 1: Familiarising with data Phase 2: Development of initial codes Open, Axial and Selective codes Phase 3: Searching for the themes Minor themes, Major themes Phase 4: Reviewing the themes Phase 5: Defining and naming the themes Phase 6: Producing the report
Sections 5.5 and 5.6	Selection of an approach to improve the objectivity of the research	How the saturation is determined at various levels? How the research process is made reliable and valid?	Saturation at • Code level • Theme level • Meaning level • Data level Ensuring credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability

Table 5.1 *- Structure of chapter 5*

However, Hennink *et al.* (2017), Cobern and Adams (2020), and Hennink and Kaiser (2020) suggest that data starts converging after a few interviews, and there is no point to interview all the targeted sample. Preliminary data analysis had two parts: 1) demographics 2) initial analysis of interviews. Preliminary analysis of demographics suggested that the informants represent strategic HR decision-makers from global maritime transport and logistics and third-party logistics providers, as shown in Table 5.2. This table also shows that informants are from different global regions and had previous HR related qualifications and experience in MNEs.

Classification		No. of informants
Designations	General Manager (HR) or equivalent	6
	Director or equivalent	6
	Senior manager equivalent	9
Type of companies	Container and Bulk Shipping	11
	Third Party Logistics Providers	9
Region	Europe	9
	Middle East and Asia	5
	USA	3
	Africa	1
	Australia	3
HR Experience in MNEs	Over 15 years	3
	Between 10-15 years	3
	Between 6-9 years	9
	5 years or less	6
HR qualifications	Certificate	4
	Diploma	3
	Degree	14

Table 5.2 *- Demographical information of informants*

Table 5.3 shows the ranking of the duties performed by the informants. For example, 11 informants ranked participating in designing HR strategy and setting goals, and 13 ranked setting HR related policies and processes as very important duties in their job. Only three informants said that it is very important in their duty to oversee HR budget-related issues. Only one informant said that assisting in the execution of policies, and three said that evaluating operations and work productivity are important tasks in duties. None of the informants ranked overseeing the day-to-day HR operations as the most important duty is essential for their job. This demographics information suggested that all of the informants were performing strategic roles such as setting and participating in designing

HR strategies. It also suggested that they were overseeing budget issues, but it was not a very important part of their job.

Scale (5 being very important and 1 being not important duty)	Duties					
	Participating in designing HR strategy and setting goals	Setting HR related policies and processes	Overseeing HR budget-related issues	Assisting in the execution of policies	Evaluating operations and work productivity of employees	Overseeing day to day HR operations
	Number of responses					
5	11	13	3	1	3	0
4	10	6	4	5	4	0
3	0	2	11	5	9	1
2	0	0	3	10	5	12
1	0	0	0	0	0	8

***Table 5.3** – Job responsibilities of informants*

The preliminary data analysis is used to observe the convergence of data at the initial stage and determine the cease point of data collection. It included immediate transcribing, drawing an initial overall impression of each interview and the narrative from each interview (Johnny 2015; Vaismoradi *et al.* 2016). It also revealed the data convergence because it ran parallel to the data collection. It indicated constant convergence of data until the 15th interview, after which no divergence was observed. However, the data collection was not ceased until the 21 interviews to consider any possibility of divergent information and to conduct six interviews already scheduled. When the data did not diverge with additional interviews after the 21st interview, the data collection was ceased. The preliminary data analysis was used only to observe the convergence of data which was further extended into the observation of saturation at various levels (discussed in section 5.5). Table 5.1 highlights the levels at which the saturation was observed.

5.3. Detailed data analysis and analytic decisions

Thematic analysis can assist in approaching and analysing data collected using a variety of research strategies (Terry et al. 2017), including inductive, deductive, retroductive, and abductive. In the inductive thematic analysis, which is also termed as a bottom-up approach, the codes are generated from the data. They are ultimately used to develop themes that become foundations for data interpretation. In contrast, in the deductive approach to thematic analysis, a top to bottom approach is used by clustering the data into the pre-existing themes and codes (Maguire & Delahunt 2017; Terry *et al.* 2017). As explained in chapter 4, an abductive strategy is employed, the researcher's role cannot be ignored and that preconceived ideas are developed by identifying the gaps in existing theories. Hence a bottom-up approach for thematic analysis is used in this study in which the codes and themes are generated from the data, and the bounded emergence of themes is observed without clustering them into the pre-existing themes and codes as discussed in section 4.2.2.

Terry *et al.* (2017) suggest the focus of thematic analysis as being semantic or latent. The semantic thematic analysis attempts to capture the explicit meanings of the data and the resultant themes by dividing them into categories, while latent thematic analysis examines the themes on a much deeper level (Maguire & Delahunt 2017; Terry *et al.* 2017). This study seeks the underlying structures that result in different patterns; hence latent thematic analysis was required. For example, to find the talent-based HR systems in the organisation, the managers were required to identify the existing HR systems and the reasons to form those HR systems. This assisted in finding the components of talent-based HR systems based on the managerial perspectives (discussed in chapter 6) for standard and non-standard workforces.

The thematic analysis followed the six-step analytic process proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) and Terry *et al.* (2017). This process is provided in Table 5.4 and is perhaps the most significant in social sciences for thematic analysis and ensuring the trustworthiness of the process because it offers a clear and systematic process of conducting thematic analysis (Maguire & Delahunt 2017; Terry *et al.* 2017).

The issue of objectivity could be raised in each phase of thematic analysis. Many scholars such as Greiffenhagen and Sharrock (2008), Klempe (2012) and Levitt *et al.* (2020) suggest that the traditional view of objectivity in qualitative research is associated with the generalisability, absolute truth, detachment of the researcher from the data, impersonal and judgement-free research and reporting. However, Bird (2020) criticises the traditional view of objectivity in qualitative research and suggests that judgment-free qualitative research is not possible because qualitative research involves a subjective understanding of the phenomenon. Objectivity in qualitative research must be seen from a new perspective, making the interpretations explicit and welcoming the relevant scholars to identify any misinterpretations (Bird 2020).

Phases	Actions
Phase 1: Familiarising with the data	• Prolong engagement with data • Document theoretical and reflective thoughts • Document thoughts about potential codes and themes • Store raw data in well organised archives • Keep records of all data notes, transcripts and reflective journals
Phase 2: Generating initial codes	• Use of a coding framework • Audit trail of code generation
Phase 3: Searching for themes	• Researcher triangulation • Diagramming to make sense of theme connection • Keep detailed notes about development and hierarchies of concepts and themes
Phase 4: Reviewing themes	• Researcher triangulation • Themes and sub-themes vetted by co-investigators
Phase 5: Defining and naming themes	• Researcher triangulation • Themes and sub-themes vetted by co-investigators
Phase 6: Producing the report	• Thick description and interpretation • Describing the reasons of theoretical, analytical and methodological choices

Table 5.4 *- Six phase thematic analysis to improve trustworthiness*

Source: *Adopted from Braun and Clarke (2006) and Terry et al. (2017)*

In all six phases, this research provides a detailed description of the interpretation of the data and implicitly accepts reviews of relevant researchers on possible misinterpretation and misperception of any data. This study also acknowledges any views by experts in SHRM who can locate any questionable inferences based on the details discussed in the six phases of thematic analysis discussed in the following subsections.

5.3.1. Phase 1: Data familiarisation

Familiarisation with the data is the first and important phase of thematic analysis because it gives an entry point to analysis and engages the researcher with the data (Terry *et al.* 2017). It includes reading and re-reading the transcripts by immersing into the depth and the breadth of the data (Braun & Clarke 2006; Maguire & Delahunt 2017).

To familiarise with the data, the researcher first transcribed the telephone interview immediately after the interview as the detailed discussion was fresh in mind (Van Audenhove & Donders 2019). This provided an overall early impression of the key points which was also used in the preliminary data analysis. The early impression and key points were written and saved on the hard copy of the interview guide.

Next, the interview key points under the different parts were clustered to code the data properly. The informants discussed different points that needed to be segregated and then clustered for the analysis purpose. For example, in reply to discuss the importance of job rotation, an HR manager discussed:

> ***Country HR manager-Europe****: “We don’t follow any scientific process or a very sophisticated process for job rotations. We see people every day working, and we get to know their skills and abilities. For managers, we see that a person just sees a big picture and can have a vision for the job and the entire enterprise, for example.”*

The excerpt mentioned above is about the importance of job rotation and the benefits of job rotation, the process they follow to rotate the jobs, and the preferences of recruitment and selection (internal or external). In another example, an HR manager answering the question regarding the importance of job rotation discussed:

> ***National HR manager-Middle East:*** *“Yes, we give importance to job rotations. We go for the job openings internally first before we go to the outside market. This allows people to apply for these positions, and then*

> *we use the internally trained employees for new jobs. This way, we also provide them with an opportunity even to change their entire career."*

This excerpt refers to the importance of job rotation and the process adopted to rotate jobs and their benefits. The pattern of multiple points of information in answering the single question was evident in the entire data set of interview transcripts. For example, when extending the question of practice of job rotation for the non-standard workers, an HR manager mentioned:

> **National HR manager-Middle East:** *'We do not recommend rotating temporary staff since they are hired for a specific project or activity; they are trained and qualified to undertake just the activities to which they have been assigned.'*

This excerpt refers that the practices for non-standard workforce are different from the standard employees indicating the different point of information. The various points were clustered in each interview and then in the entire data set. This clustering was done by combining the same points. The third step was to tag the clustered data points for better understanding. Tagging includes the labelling of the data points and writing reflective notes that represent the whole idea (Terry *et al.* 2017). The transcriptions were read again, and reflective thoughts were noted by tagging the important points in the clustered data.

5.3.2. Phase 2: Development of initial codes

The previous phase consisted of adding casual observational notes and familiarisation of the data, but this phase consisted of the development of meaningful labels to the specific segments of the data (Terry *et al.* 2017). This phase comprises the arrangement of data in a systematic way called coding (Maguire & Delahunt 2017), and the resultant labels are called codes. Johnny (2015) defines a code as a meaningful phrase or a word assigned to the part of the data. Coding is not just labelling the data and segments; it links the data to the idea and then the idea to all the data set about that idea (Richards & Morse 2012). Linking the data to the idea and then looking for it in all the dataset and the patterns in the data was an important step in this study. Phase 1 of thematic analysis, which was familiarisation with data, played a crucial role in the execution of phase 2 of the coding process.

The coding process highly depends upon the study's theoretical and philosophical underpinnings and the results researchers want from the data (Charmaz 2016; Maguire

& Delahunt 2017; Terry *et al.* 2017). The coding process recommended by Corbin and Strauss (2015) is presented in Figure 5.1, as discussed in the following subsection.

5.3.2.1. Open coding

The code development process breaks down the data and re-arranges it in a new way (Corbin & Strauss 2015), often presenting the data into meaningful patterns (Braun & Clarke 2006). The code development process in this study was based on three levels: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. The code development process included the constant comparison of codes to define and re-define them at each level.

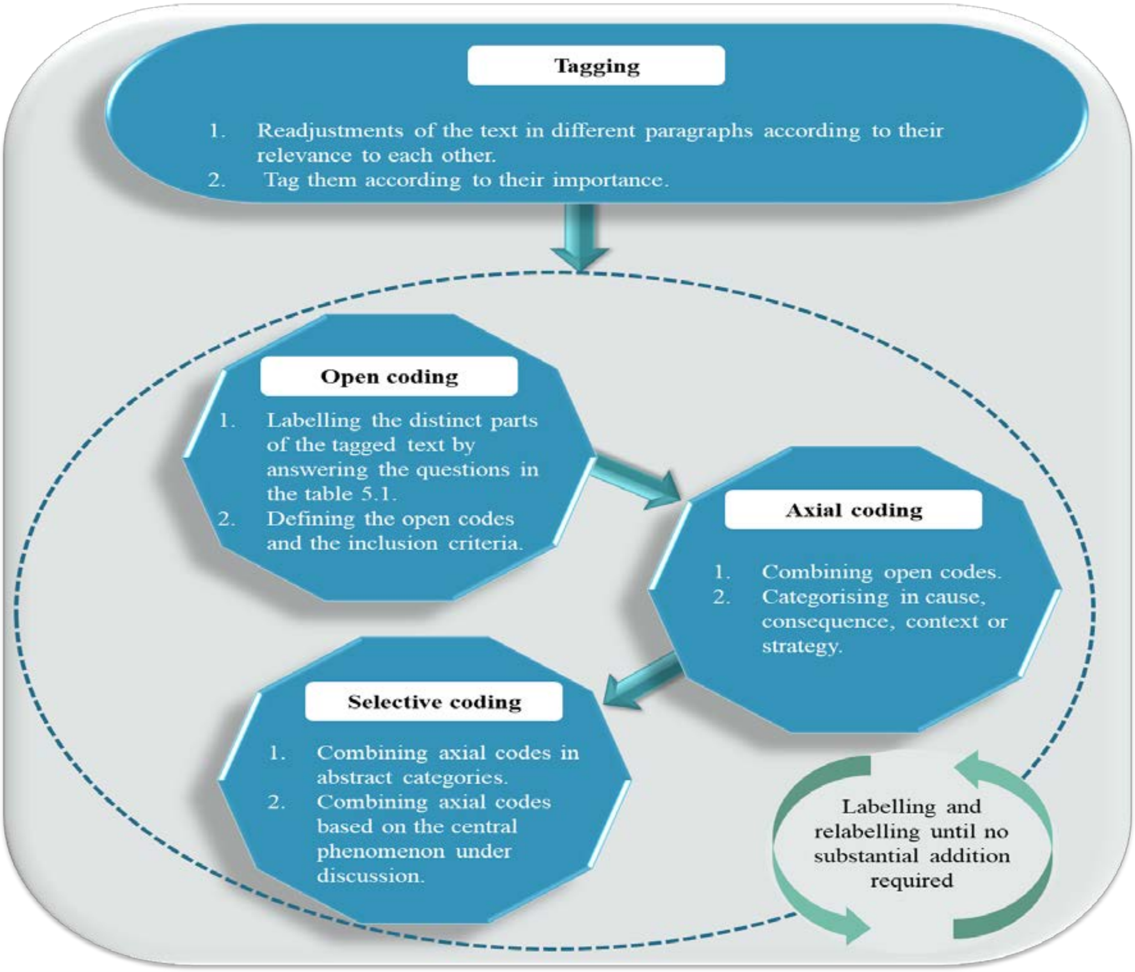


Figure 5.1 *- Tagging and coding process*

Source: *Adapted from Johnny (2015) and Corbin and Strauss (2015)*

The coding procedure started with open coding, as recommended by Corbin and Strauss (2015), in which the original text was segmented into distinct parts. The coding procedure was different from the previous step where during familiarisation of data, the data set was segmented into different paragraphs and tagged for their importance; however, in the process of open coding, the text was labelled. In Figure 5.2, the text extracted from the interview transcript is on the left-hand side, and the right-hand side depicts the tagging and open coding.

The open codes were identified based on their ability to answer the research question. For example, the open codes in Figure 5.2 helped determine HR managers' level of awareness about the existing HR trends, reasons for using existing HR systems, and how managers think the HR systems can be modified to cope with recent HR trends. These codes contributed to proposing the framework of talent-based HR systems (discussed in chapter 6).

Excerpt from an interview

"It's interesting that the trends that I see are (I went to HR conference last week and many HR managers were talking about) HR being [1]agile framework around project management, [2]the projects they run through the organisations any given time. For instance, [3]information and communication systems and seeing a lot of [4]training towards the very start of artificial intelligence. A lot more talking is about technology. [5]An increased use of artificial intelligence. So, it is lot more coming than I initially thought. Because we are working in logistics industry; it's a [6]bit different when we compared it to the financial sector."

Tags for the Phase 1 (whole text)

Important for trends
Important for the challenges

Open codes for Phase 2

[1]Flexible working
[2]Project based working
[3]ICT
[4]Training needs
[5]AI
[6]Industry differences

Figure 5.2 *- Example of tagging and open coding of the excerpts*

Johnny (2015) suggests it is uncommon that a researcher can code perfectly for the first time because the researcher refines the codes in subsequent interview analysis. The researcher has to re-consider and re-word the codes multiple times before finalising them and their labels. The same applied to this study. The researcher had to define and re-define the code especially when the number of interviews increased. When the number of interviews increased, it became difficult to code the sentence with the same title because of the wordings used by informants. For example, the following are excerpts from four informants' transcripts from different organisations when discussing the NSEs as the latest trends impacting multinational organisations.

> ***National Manager HR-Middle East:*** *"We are still reluctant to work on this trend as in our industry we still have to find what can be the suitable options for us in non-standard employment trends"*
>
> ***HR manager-Africa****: "It still is a conservative development, especially in the maritime and logistics industry. It's a conservative trend. We are still wondering how it is going to work for us?"*
>
> ***Head of HR strategy-Europe:*** *"yes, this is a new trend for many MNEs; we also will follow this fully in upcoming years but currently this trend seems flourishing in more progressive industries such as IT"*
>
> ***Senior HR manager-Europe****: "Because we are working in the logistics industry, it's a bit different when we compared it to the financial sector."*

In the excerpts above, HR manager-Middle East and Africa mentioned that the logistic industry is still struggling to adopt the latest trends because of its conservative nature. Hence, at first, this sentence was coded as 'conservative industry trends'. However, in the excerpts mentioned above, head of HR strategy-Europe and senior HR manager-Europe compared the latest trends with the financial sector without saying which sector is doing better or which is conservative or active. So, after the statement of the senior HR manager-Europe, the researcher had to re-word the code from 'conservative industry trend' to 'industry differences'. In this regard, the inclusion criteria were defined and re-defined for each code depending upon the breadth and depth of the code. To improve the consistency of the codes, the points mentioned in Table 5.5 were considered. Not all points were applicable in each code, but it enhanced the processes of defining each code and inclusion criteria for each statement under each code.

What?	What are the phenomenon and issue mentioned
Which?	Which actors are involved and what is their role.
How?	Which aspects of the phenomenon are discussed?
When? How long? Where?	Time and location.
How much? How strong?	Aspects of intensity.
Why?	Which reasons are given.
What for?	The logic behind the argument.
By which?	Means, tactics, and strategies for reaching the goal.

Table 5.5 *- Questions to be asked for open coding consistency*

Source: *Adopted from Corbin and Strauss (2015)*

In the examples above, the HR managers discussed the trends and challenges of HRM in MNEs. Different HR managers discussed many points, such as flexible working, project-based working, information communication technologies (ICT) as a new trend, training needs to cope with recent trends, artificial intelligence (AI) and trend differences due to industries' structure. However, these points needed to be linked to similar thoughts to capture the overall idea. In the example above, flexible working, project-based working, ICT as a new trend, and AI are interlinked because they all are discussed as HR-related trends for MNEs.

5.3.2.2. Axial coding

After finalising the open codes, the next step was to develop axial codes. Axial codes are refined codes that combine multiple open codes into similar categories. Corbin and Strauss (2015) suggest that in axial coding, the relationship of categories is elaborated. They suggest that the relationship can be a cause, consequence, context, or intervening conditions to a phenomenon or even a strategy to deal with it. Figure 5.3 presents an example of the text used for the open coding in an interview; on the right-hand side, the open codes and the resultant axial codes are mentioned.

Excerpt from an interview

"It's interesting that the trends that I see are (I went to HR conference last week and many HR managers were talking about) HR being [1]agile framework around project management, [2]the projects they run through the organisations any given time. For instance, [3]information and communication systems and seeing a lot of [4]training towards the very start of artificial intelligence. A lot more talking is about technology. [5]An increased use of artificial intelligence. So, it is lot more coming than I initially thought. Because we are working in logistics industry; it's a [6]bit different when we compared it to the financial sector."

Open codes

[1]Flexible working
[2]Project based working
[3]ICT
[4]Training needs
[5]AI
[6]Industry differences

Axial codes

[1,2,3,5]HR trends for MNEs
[4,6]HR challenges for MNEs

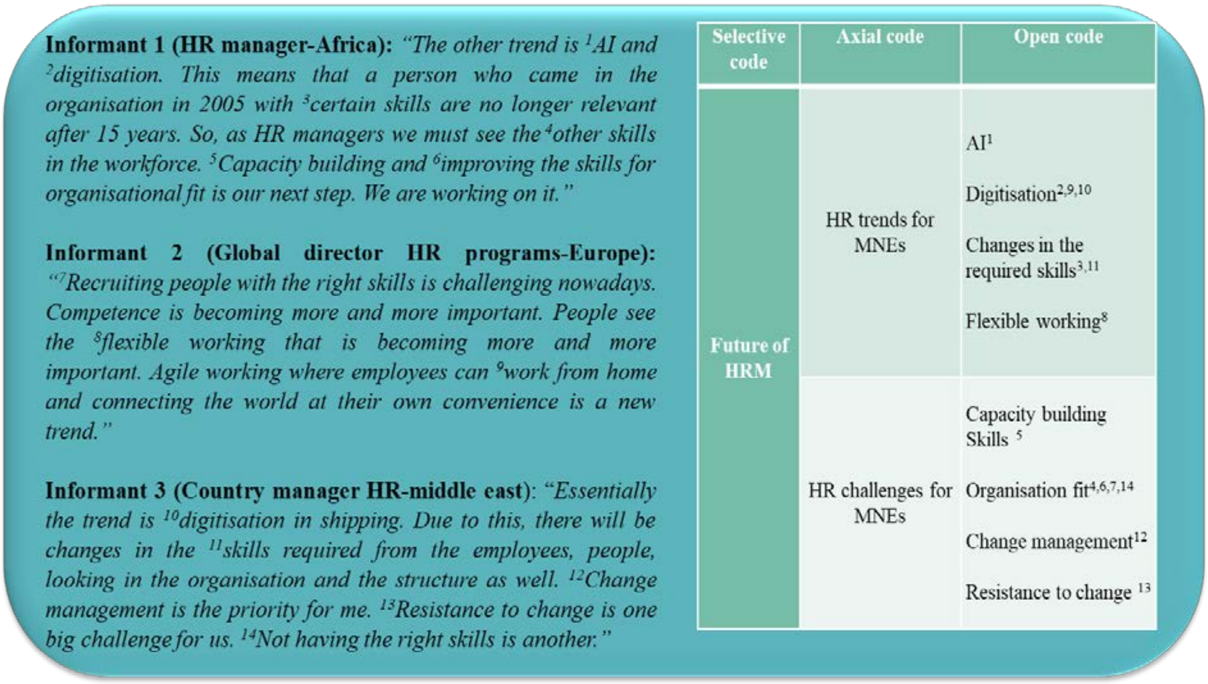
Figure 5.3 *- Example of open and axial coding of the excerpts*

The interlink of subcodes established through the definitions and inclusion criteria during the axial coding assisted in categorising open codes into a higher-level axial code. (Corbin & Strauss 2015) However, like labelling the open codes, the researcher had to review the label in the axial codes to find suitable labels.

5.3.2.3. Selective coding

Selective coding is the continuation of axial coding at a higher and abstract level. This coding focuses on comparing categories with other groups and emphasises the core categories instead of individuals (Johnny 2015). Corbin and Strauss (2015) discuss that Corbin and Strauss (1990), in their early writings about classic grounded theory methodology, discuss selective coding as a conception of the central phenomenon; the selective codes are not related to one interview or one informant but instead is one central category or a phenomenon. Figure 5.4 is the extract from three different interviews. On the right-hand side, open, axial and selective codes are mentioned.

Figure 5.4 shows that the informants discussed different trends and challenges that are mentioned under the open codes. Those open codes are categorised based on their relevance to each other and combined in axial codes. As recommended by Johnny (2015) and Corbin and Strauss (2015), the researcher combined the trends and challenges into an abstract category labelled as the 'future of HRM' because it captured the awareness of the managers of the trends as a multinational organisation,



Informant 1 (HR manager-Africa): *"The other trend is [1]AI and [2]digitisation. This means that a person who came in the organisation in 2005 with [3]certain skills are no longer relevant after 15 years. So, as HR managers we must see the [4]other skills in the workforce. [5]Capacity building and [6]improving the skills for organisational fit is our next step. We are working on it."*

Informant 2 (Global director HR programs-Europe): *"[7]Recruiting people with the right skills is challenging nowadays. Competence is becoming more and more important. People see the [8]flexible working that is becoming more and more important. Agile working where employees can [9]work from home and connecting the world at their own convenience is a new trend."*

Informant 3 (Country manager HR-middle east): *"Essentially the trend is [10]digitisation in shipping. Due to this, there will be changes in the [11]skills required from the employees, people, looking in the organisation and the structure as well. [12]Change management is the priority for me. [13]Resistance to change is one big challenge for us. [14]Not having the right skills is another."*

Selective code	Axial code	Open code
Future of HRM	HR trends for MNEs	AI[1] Digitisation[2,9,10] Changes in the required skills[3,11] Flexible working[8]
	HR challenges for MNEs	Capacity building Skills [5] Organisation fit[4,6,7,14] Change management[12] Resistance to change [13]

Figure 5.4 *- Example of open, axial, and selective coding*

industry-specific trends, the challenges which organisation may face or is facing, and the steps that will re-shape the HR management in future. Appendix B-Table B.1 provides an extract from the investigator's codebook for an interview to show the process which was repeated in other interviews.

5.3.3. Phase 3: Searching for the themes

A theme is a pattern that captures something significant about the data (Maguire & Delahunt 2017), specifically about the research questions and represents patterned responses in the data set (Braun & Clarke 2006). Themes are identified as a cluster of fragmented ideas that otherwise are meaningless if not viewed as a unified whole (Nowell *et al.* 2017). Two critical questions in this phase of thematic analysis that needed to be addressed for the correct thematic analysis in this research were 1) what counts as a theme and 2) what size of data should be clustered as a theme.

For the first question of what counts as a theme, Maguire and Delahunt (2017) discuss that a theme is characterised by its significance in finding the answer to the research question. The research questions act as a guide in finding themes because they determine what is and what is not relevant in terms of patterned clusters (Terry *et al.* 2017). For example, SRQ1 is about exploring the current HR systems used by MNEs. Any data informants provided related to organisational operations was clustered in meaningful patterns. However, it was not regarded as a theme if the clustered data were not associated with the areas of investigation through interviews mentioned in Table 4.7, such as job design, recruitment and selection, development and deployment, and performance appraisal and rewarding. If the clustered data were considered as a theme regardless of its relevance to the investigation areas mentioned in Table 4.7, it could initiate an unbounded theme emergence (Corbin & Strauss 2015; Glaser & Strauss 2017; Terry *et al.* 2017; Holton 2018) which is not the aim of grounded theorisation process adopted for this research.

The bounded emergence of the themes that significantly distinguished the grounded theorisation process and the classic grounded theory analysis was prevalently observable in this thematic analysis phase. The bounded emergence of themes was guided not only by the research questions but also by the gaps identified during the literature review, and they were labelled accordingly. Unlike the classic grounded theory analysis process in which the unbounded theme emergence guided by the research questions only is observed and is labelled without having any prior theoretical frame in mind, this research developed themes during an active process of pattern identification and labelling them having a prior frame in the mind of the researcher. This can be concluded that the identification and observation of the emergence of the theme were guided by the research questions and the existing theory. Hence, the theme consisted of the patterned responses that answered research questions, were already discussed in the literature and were supported by current theories.

The second important question that needed to be answered before developing the themes was the size of data that should be clustered to make it a theme. There is no rule on the proportion of data set that needs to display the evidence to be considered a theme; it depends on the data set's significance to answer the research question (Braun & Clarke 2006; Maguire & Delahunt 2017). This process of categorising data as a theme highly depends on the researcher's judgment and how the theme can answer the research question. In this current research, a few data items included many points to answer more than one research question during the major theme development, which is discussed further in this section. In contrast, some other data items included points that were partially answering the research questions but were still satisfying the definition of that theme. The following sub-section elaborates the process of developing minor themes and categorising them under one major theme based on the informant's logic.

5.3.3.1. Theme development

Theme development was a rigorous process. It involved re-examining the data, re-reading the transcripts and examining the codes developed in the previous phase to find the links between the codes. Terry *et al.* (2017) suggest that the theme development needs an examination of the codes to cluster or collapse them into meaningful patterns. Moreover, theme development was also a complex process mainly because of the richness of data and the logic provided by each informant about different actions and statements. For example, in reply to one question about job security, various informants had the same answer, but their reasons were completely different, as shown in the following excerpt. Following are the excerpts of the interviews of four informants discussing job security.

> ***Senior HR manager-Middle East**: “We guarantee that while they are working with us, we guarantee that they will be stretched, they will find opportunities on which they can perform and show their potential. Their learning is the promise of job security.”*
>
> ***HR manager-Africa:** “No, we don’t guarantee job security. If they perform well and their annual reviews show the increment in value, they keep on working with us.’*
>
> ***Senior HR manager-Europe:** “We have legal requirements which we have to follow. In Europe, for example, you cannot fire an employee based on their low performance. You must have a strong justification before laying off.”*

> ***Talent and organisational development manager-***Australia: "*We cannot guarantee job security, but because the law protects employees, we must have a compelling basis to terminate our relationship with them. We do not include it in their contracts, but they are aware of their rights and therefore feel secure in their jobs*."

All informants in these excerpts said they promise job security directly or indirectly and hence was mentioned under the code labelled 'job security' following the process discussed in the previous section, but their reasons were completely different. For example, the first two informants in the excerpts above were more focused on employees' learning and how they perform for the organisation. The third informant was focused on legal requirements regardless of the employees' performance or contribution. The fourth informant focused on the legal aspects and the awareness of employees regarding what can indirectly guarantee job security. These data items were coded under 'job security' but did not qualify as the same theme due to the inclusion criteria. The first informant appeared to be more inclined to improve the collaboration where the organisation provides opportunities while employees learn the skills and improve the organisational working; this inclination was evident from different parts of the interview of the same informant. For example, in answer to the question about the importance of teamwork, the same informant mentioned in the example above discussed the following:

> ***Senior HR manager-Middle East:*** "*Teamwork is paramount; we encourage people to speak up and share their experiences. This improves the organisation-wide learning.*"

While discussing the importance of job rotation, the same informant mentioned:

> ***Senior HR manager-Middle East:*** "*Yes, we give importance to job rotations. We go for the job openings internally first before we go to the outside market. This allows people to apply for these positions, and then we use the internally trained employees for new jobs. This way, we also provide them with an opportunity even to change their entire career. Also, their knowledge improves so as their willingness to work with us.*"

The entire interview of the same informant above was focused on improving the commitment and collaboration of employees. The senior manager-Europe in the example above, contrary to the senior manager- Middle East, was inclined towards the compliance of the legal frameworks. For example, when discussing the hiring of the employees, senior manager-Europe mentioned:

> **Senior manager-Europe:** *"It is the legal requirement that we need to advertise the job first providing equal opportunity to all prospective candidates; we can not internally fill the positions"*

The emphasis of senior manager-Europe was on compliance of the laws and this was evident from other parts of the interview. Therefore, the surrounding context of the discussion was critical to capture the themes accurately.

Theme development and clustering of the same logic under different codes or different logic under the same codes were examined multiple times before labelling themes. Each minor theme had an excerpt attached to reduce the process's complexity and re-examine the minor themes (see example in Appendix B - Table B.2). This reduced the chances of erroneous labelling and inclusion of minor themes into the major themes. In phase 3 of thematic analysis, the themes were not finalised; rather, the potential candidate themes were identified and were finalised in the next phase. The potential theme development included two levels: minor theme development and major theme development. Both levels of themes are discussed below.

5.3.3.1.1. Level 1: Minor theme development

The level 1 minor theme development initially included two-stage iterative processes, examining the codes developed in phase 2 and clustering them into different labels termed as themes grounded in the data. An example of a sample interview coding and theme development process is presented in Appendix B-Tables B.1 and B.2. Table B.1 indicates the open, axial and selective codes developed through the procedure discussed in 5.4.2. In the second stage, the statements of the informant related to different codes were extracted from the tagged data and clustered, labelled and numbered (Appendix B-Table B.2). For example, in the tagged data, statement one in Table 5.6 was open coded as digitisation and changes in skilled employees and talent, and statement two was open coded as resistance to change. Both statements were axially coded under trends and challenges, respectively and selective coded as the future of HR. However, to cluster them into themes for in-depth analysis and interpretation during this process, these statements were combined under the theme "Realise the importance of alternative employment arrangements to cope with the trends and challenges" because all the statements were about HR trends and challenges and indicating the need for alternative employment arrangements to cope with the upcoming HR trends and challenges.

Selective code	Axial code	Open code	Excerpts
Future of HR	Trends	1. Digitisation	***Statement 1:*** *"Essentially this is digitisation in shipping. There will be changes in the skills required from the employees, people, looking in the organisation and the structure as well. Change management is a priority for me."*
		2. Changes in skilled employees and talent	
	Challenges	1. Resistance to change	**Statement 2**: *"As permanent people are more reactive to change, so yes we may need more non-standard workers in future"*
Theme: Realise the importance of alternative employment arrangements to cope with the trends and challenges			

Table 5.6 *- Simple coding and theme relationship*

The two-stage iterative process was not as simple, as mentioned in Table 5.6. The researcher had to read the transcripts, tagged data and coded data multiple times to cluster it into themes in most of the cases. For example, the statements in Figure 5.5 were taken from the same interview. On the right-hand side of each statement, the respective open codes are shown. It can be inferred from the open codes that the statements are related to the job rotation as a motivational issue and long-term and short-term development. However, to cluster these statements, the researcher had to determine which statement must be combined with others and which should not. For example, statement 1 in Figure 5.5 is about the motivational issues that the organisation considered essential, and statement two emphasises the organisation's focus on motivational matters and their approach.

In contrast, statement three discussed that non-standard employees are treated differently from the standard employees when the organisation considered motivational issues or development approaches. All statements discuss job rotation as a motivational issue, but their focus is different. Hence the statements in Figure 5.5 were clustered under the theme of 'focus on motivation', 'importance of autonomy and job rotation' and 'job rotation not an option for NSE' respectively and numbered accordingly to trace the link with the code (see Appendix B-Table B.2). Figure 5.5 indicates the codes and theme link in one sample interview. This process was repeated for each interview and maintained codes, themes, and their link in each interview in separate files.

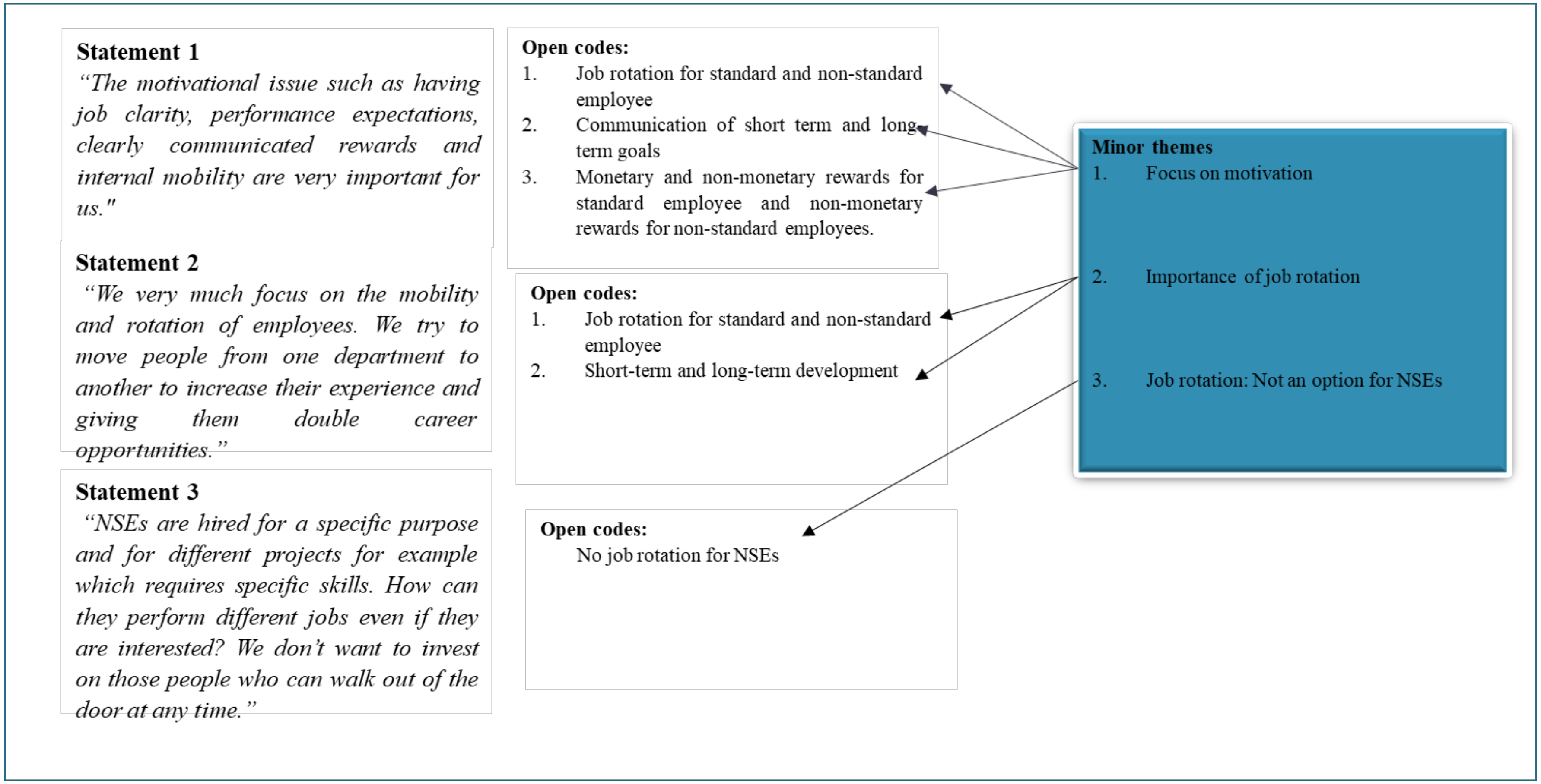


Figure 5.5 *- Clustering the same codes into different themes based on the reasoning*

5.3.3.1.2. Level 2: Major theme development

The level 2 theme development was about re-arranging the potential sub-themes into a major theme that is termed as the major overarching theme by Braun and Clarke (2006). Under this level of theme development, the potential sub-themes were combined based on the reasoning and to find the answers to the research questions. For example, SRQ1 is ‘What HR systems or combinations of HR systems are MNEs using to manage employees?’. To answer this question, all potential sub-themes about the organisation's current HR system under investigation were clustered as discussed in the previous sub-section. However, each major theme was not based on answering single research questions. They were clustered based on the potential minor theme characteristics and provided answers to multiple research questions properly.

For example, the major theme labelled ‘practices for NSEs’ helped answer SRQ1 about HR systems or combinations of HR systems organisations are using and provided major points to answer SRQ 2 and SRQ 3 by considering talent-based HR system development in general and non-standard workers specifically. Each potential major theme had a definition as an inclusion criterion to reduce the possibilities of erroneous entries (see Appendix B -Table B.3 as a linked step to Tables B.1 and B.2).

5.3.4. Phase 4: Reviewing the themes

Braun and Clarke (2006) indicate that once the potential and candidate themes have been identified, they need to be refined (Nowell *et al.* 2017; Terry *et al.* 2017). This requires the researcher to review them by re-reading the coded data extracts and consider whether each theme represents the cluster of the same data patterns (Braun & Clarke 2006; Maguire & Delahunt 2017; Nowell *et al.* 2017). To assess the theme representation of the same data patterns, Braun and Clarke (2006, 2012) and Terry *et al.* (2017) suggest that researchers consider the internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity of the themes to ensure the meaning coherence of data in each theme and to identify the boundaries of themes to distinguish them. The potential themes were reviewed by examining them at two levels to ensure internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity to make them a part of the final themes. The two-level examination of candidate themes is represented in Figure 5.6.

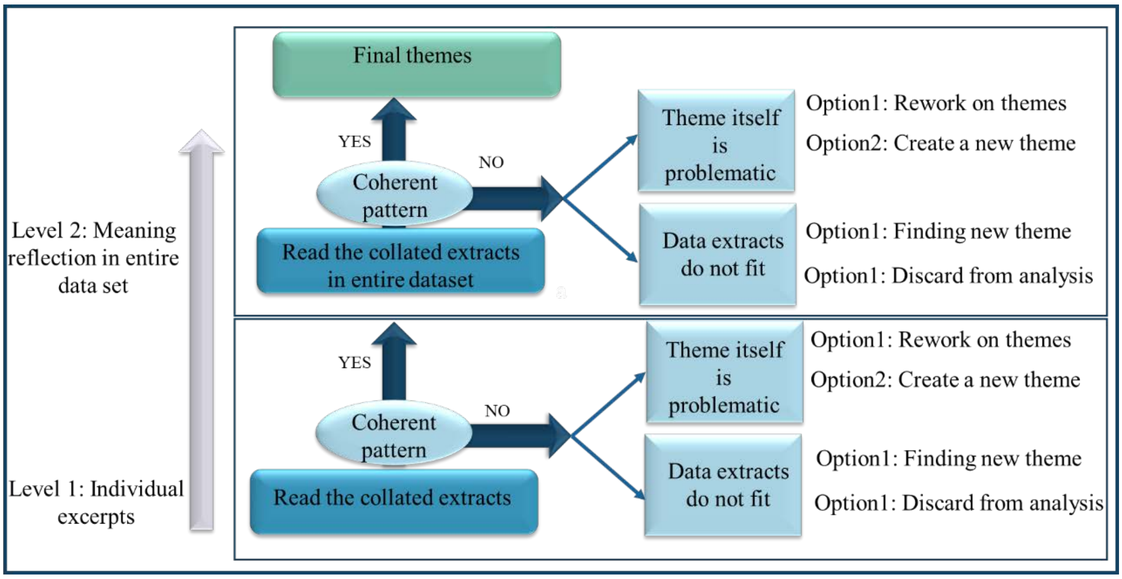


Figure 5.6 *- Ensuring internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity of themes*

Source: *Adapted from Braun and Clarke (2006) and Braun and Clarke (2012)*

Level 1, shown in Figure 5.6, started with re-reading the collated extracts from each interview (for example, Tables B.1, B.2 and B.3 in Appendix B indicate the process of reading extracts and development of codes, minor and major themes). The collated extracts were examined to assess whether the extracts present coherent patterns or not. Nowell *et al.* (2017) suggest that the coherence of the extracts can be assessed by defining the themes, examining that each extract matches the inclusion criteria based on the definition, and all the extracts in a theme are contributing towards the central idea of the theme. In most of the cases, the extracts were coherent, and the examination moved to level two. However, in a few cases, the extracts were not coherent. In those cases, two possibilities were assessed a) the theme itself is problematic, or b) data extracts do not fit with the theme.

a. Possibility 1 - The theme itself is problematic: In the case where the first possibility was assessed to find the problem with the theme, a few points were considered. The problem of the theme was assessed based on the inclusion criteria and definitions. The inclusion criteria were refined, and the theme was re-defined. Most of the times, it resolved the issue with the theme. However, in one case, a new theme was created because re-defining and broadening the inclusion criteria was making the theme more abstract. Nowell *et al.* (2017) indicate that the theme should be broad enough to capture the set of ideas but specific enough to be discrete.

b. Possibility 2 - Data extract does not fit with the theme: In the case where the second possibility of fitness of data extracts with the themes was assessed, actions recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2012) and Nowell *et al.* (2017) were followed. They recommend that if the data extract does not seem to completely fit with the themes, either find a new theme for extract or discard the extract from the analysis. In this study, few extracts were allocated to new themes, but none of the extracts was discarded from the analysis. The inclusion criteria of each theme were examined to assess the fitness of data extract in the theme and to allocate the extract to a new theme. The decision not to discard the extract from the analysis helped in the proper execution of level 2 of this phase of thematic analysis.

Level 2 of this phase of thematic analysis followed the same procedure as level 1, but it expanded on the entire dataset (Nowell *et al.* 2017). This process not only applied to individual interviews but was considered on multiple interviews at the same time. For the individual interviews, the coherent patterns of themes in the entire interview and the connectivity of the themes were assessed.

5.3.5. Phase 5: Defining and naming themes

Braun and Clarke (2006, 2012) suggest that during this phase, the researcher determines the aspects of data each theme captures and what is of interest in each theme and why (Nowell *et al.* 2017; Terry *et al.* 2017). In this phase, firstly, the themes were re-assessed for their breadth. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that the themes should not be broad to capture multiple aspects of data or complex to find out what is of interest in each theme. The breadth and complexity of the minor themes were assessed by again going back to the extracts and re-assessing their appropriate allocation to the major theme. King (2004) suggests that refining themes is an infinite process, and the researcher must not get over-enthusiastic with the endless re-coding process (Braun & Clarke 2006). Hence, the stop point for the refinement of themes and codes was determined to be where minor adjustments were required, and nothing substantial was getting added (Braun & Clarke 2006). The term ‘substantial’ here means a major appearance of the extract that does not fit any existing theme or emergence of the new theme.

In the next step, each developed major theme was analysed for the narrative it was telling. This included paraphrasing the content of the interview transcripts and the analysis, which indicated the initial pattern concerning the research question (Braun & Clarke 2006; Nowell *et al.* 2017). For example, Figure 5.7 shows the analysis of the theme 'maximisation of commitment and collaboration' for phase 5 of thematic analysis.

Analysis	Major theme
The organisation is using multiple configurations for standard employee such as a mix of productivity, commitment and collaboration configurations in different parts of the HR systems. Such as, in the planning of job design, productivity-based managerial perspective is dominant while during the hiring and placement, organisation seem to be focusing more on commitment and productivity mix. The organisation is using commitment-based perspective as a source to reduce cost by retaining employees and providing them opportunities for job rotation.	Maximisation of commitment and collaboration

Figure 5.7 *- Initial analysis of major themes*

Figure 5.8 depicts the major theme and the interview narrative by indicating that the HR systems and multiple HR configurations for each component of HR systems in an organisation. The analysis of each major theme was a description of the pattern which each theme was showing. Based on the pattern, the themes were to be re-named if required and a possibility of a modified definition of the theme was to be considered. However, in this study, the theme definition assigned during the previous phases was adopted as the analysis and definition matched. For example, Figure 5.9 presents the definition of the theme 'maximisation of commitment and collaboration' developed in the previous phase of thematic analysis, which matches with the analysis provided in Figure 5.8.

Major theme	Definition
Maximisation of commitment and collaboration	The processes especially planning including job design, recruitment and selection and development and deployment mainly focus on the commitment of employees and their collaboration to improve organisational working

Figure 5.8 *- Example of definition of a theme*

Braun and Clarke (2006) discuss that if the researcher can clearly describe each theme's scope and content, they may be ready to move to the next phase (Nowell *et al.* 2017). The researcher defined and analysed each theme to grasp each major theme's meanings. The minor themes were considered as a snapshot of each major theme to assess how tightly the major theme is built around similar ideas and patterns in the entire dataset.

5.3.6. Phase 6: Producing the report

The final phase of thematic analysis is interpreting the themes to find the answers to the research questions. Chapter 6 provides the discussion on phase 6 of thematic analysis. However, it is important to note that before moving to the final phase of thematic analysis, it should be ensured that all the essential aspects have been captured during all the phases of thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that the discussion and the writeup of thematic analysis should be coherent, logical and non-repetitive within and across the themes (Nowell *et al.* 2017). Two steps were taken to make the analysis interesting, meaningful, and comprehensive: 1) revision of phase 1 to 5 of thematic analysis and 2) the observation of data saturation. The following section discusses the observation of the data saturation process and its importance to phase 6 of thematic analysis which is presented in the discussion chapter of this thesis.

5.4. Saturation and constant comparison

The term saturation has been widely acknowledged in social science research as evidence of rigour (Constantinou *et al.* 2017; Hennink *et al.* 2017). However, little methodological guidance is available to determine the saturation (Hennink *et al.* 2017; Vasileiou *et al.* 2018). Saturation can be of various kinds, with the most commonly discussed in the literature being theoretical saturation which was first defined by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as when the researcher can find no additional content to add any category of theory and when the information starts repeating in every subsequent interview (Constantinou *et al.* 2017; Hennink *et al.* 2017). The other saturation types are code saturation, thematic saturation, meaning saturation and data saturation (Hennink *et al.* 2017). Code saturation occurs when no new issue is identified, and the codebook starts stabilising, thematic saturation occurs when no new theme is identified, meaning saturation occurs when the understanding of each part of interviews is completely developed under each theme (Hennink *et al.* 2017) while data saturation is considered a more generic term which covers the entire data set and its complete understanding with no new themes, codes or meanings (Guest *et al.* 2006).

In this current study, code, thematic, meaning and data saturation are used to ensure the comprehensive analysis. The process to observe saturation is discussed in this section is a method to improve the rigour and trustworthiness of the research. Theoretical saturation was not observed because the purpose of theoretical saturation is to find the cease point for theory development (Constantinou *et al.* 2017) which is not the aim of this PhD research.

5.4.1. Code saturation

The process of code development was documented to assess the saturation in the codes in each interview. This process was discussed under section 5.3.2. Along with the process documentation, each open, axial and selective code had a definition as an inclusion criterion. Moreover, all the tagged parts of the interview were read to confirm the inclusion of every aspect of the interview in the codes. Codes of each subsequent interview were managed in the same way and were recorded for comparison in the codebook. For example, Table 5.7 is the extract of five interviews from the code stabilisation workbook and presents an example of how the code stabilisation codebook is maintained.

As evident from Table 5.7, some open codes were repeated in multiple interviews such as artificial intelligence (AI) and digitisation, agile working, changes in employment and finding the right skills for the organisation, which were combined under the axial code of ‘trends’ while some open codes were identified in one interview only such as global employees under axial code of trends and lack of skills and talent to address trends under the axial code of challenges. The emergence of each subsequent code was documented and numbered.

For example, at the end of Table 5.7, two rows have been added to document the stabilisation of the codes. For this table, the first interview had five total open codes, while in interview two, a total of five open codes are identified, and they are all new. For interview three, a total of five open codes are identified, but only one is new, and the rest of the four are repeated. This way, the whole codebook was documented, and codebook stabilisation was observed. The codebook was considered stabilised when no new code documented in every subsequent interview. The table of code stabilisation was adopted from Constantinou *et al.* (2017) and is added in Appendix B indicated that the codebook started stabilising after the 11th interview (see Appendix B - Table B.4).

	Selective	Axial	Number of interviews				
			1	2	3	4	5
			Open				
Codes	Future of HR	Trends	AI and digitisation		AI and digitisation	AI and digitisation	
			Global employees				
			Conservative industrial trends in agile and flexible working	Agile working		Conservative industrial trends in agile and flexible working	
				Changes in employment types	Changes in employment types		Changes in employment types
				Finding the right skills for the organisation	Finding the right skills for the organisation		
		Challenges	Managing a global workforce			Managing a global workforce	Managing a global workforce
			A new trend of flexible working and conservative industry				
				Training of new kind of employees	Training of new kind of employees		
				Culture org fit			Culture org fit
					Managing change	Managing change	
							Lack of skills and talent to address trends
Total codes	1	2	5	5	5	4	4
New codes	-	-	-	5	1	0	1

Table 5.7 *- An example of management of codes in each interview*

5.4.2. Theme saturation

Constantinou *et al.* (2017) argue that when the categorisation of all data is finalised, and no new category is identified, then theme saturation is achieved. The process of classification of all data into the categories was discussed in section 5.4.3; however, to reach theme saturation, the data needed to be observed for the possibility of developing a new category. For this, the same process as the codebook stabilisation process was followed. Each theme emergence was documented with definitions and inclusion criteria. Moreover, each tagged data in the transcriptions were re-read, considering that the tagged statement may need a new theme. Each subsequent interview was managed the same way, and the emergence of new themes was documented, as shown in Table 5.8.

	Major	Number of interviews				
		1	2	3	4	5
		Minor				
Themes	Future focus	Realise the importance of alternative employment arrangements	Realise the importance of alternative employment arrangements	Realise the importance of alternative employment arrangements	Realise the importance of alternative employment arrangements	Realise the importance of alternative employment arrangements
		Clear to use NSEs to save cost				
			Not sure of NWA	Not sure of NWA		
		Major changes anticipated for development strategies	Major changes anticipated for development strategies	Major changes anticipated for development strategies		
					Realise future issues for NWA	Realise future issues for NWA
	Practices for NSEs	Job structure around specialised skills				
		No job rotation		No job rotation		
		Team work to use knowledge			Team work to use knowledge	
		Objective-based hiring				
		Flexible development and deployment approach				
			Partial rewarding	Partial rewarding	Partial rewarding	
			Autonomy and decision making		Autonomy and decision making	
			Communicating long term expectations	Communicating long term expectations		
				No annual performance appraisals		
				Inflexible development and deployment approach		
					No job security	No job security
						Role-based training is not an option for NSEs
Total themes	2	8	6	8	6	4
Repeated themes	-	-	2	6	4	3
New themes	-	-	4	2	2	1

Table 5.8 - *Example of five interviews-management of themes in each interview*

Table 5.8 is an extract from the complete theme saturation worktable and shows two major themes in five interviews. At the end of the table, the counter shows eight minor themes in the first interview for two major themes. In the second interview, six minor themes are identified, among which two themes are the same as the previous interview, and four are new. In the third interview, eight minor themes are identified, among which six are the same as specified in previous interviews, and two are new. A complete theme saturation worktable presented in Appendix B - Table B.5 shows no new minor theme emerged after the 15th interview.

5.4.3. Meaning saturation

Hennink *et al.* (2017) argue that saturation can be reached in a study at different points in each category. For example, Francis *et al.* (2010) discussed one study which reached overall saturation in seventeen interviews, with each category reaching saturation at a different point. They also discussed another fourteen interviews-based study where the saturation in few beliefs was achieved. A few were not saturated, indicating that a few themes and categories saturate earlier than others while some continue adding new meanings.

Hennink *et al.* (2017) conducted a study and concluded that the code and theme saturation alone is not enough; instead, the researcher must know at what point the meaning of a concept under discussion is fully understood. The analysis of data from multiple aspects was required in this study to ensure that full meanings are understood and to observe meaning saturation. For this, various interviews and individual codes and themes were considered to assess how the same theme and code were discussed differently in each interview. Table 5.9 shows one example of meaning saturation observation.

On the left-hand side, first, the major themes with a colour code and then the minor themes in each interview are mentioned. Each interview's colour codes show that each corresponding minor theme is present with a different justification and is clustered under the different major code. For example, minor theme five, ‘autonomy with some basic standards to follow’, was present in four interviews; however, they are colour coded differently because of the different meaning assigned by the managers to the concept.

Interview 1	2	3	4	5	Minor Themes	
					Job structure built around roles and their changing requirements	1
					Job structure around generic skills to promote task variety	2
					Job structure around the pre-defined job descriptions	3
					Importance of communicating long-term and short-term expectations	4
					Autonomy with some basic standards to follow	5
					Duration based autonomy	6
					Role based autonomy	7
					Job security linked with productivity	8
					Link of job security with performance	9
					Two-way job rotation	10
					Recruitment and selection focus on strategic goal achievement	11
					Recruitment and selection focus on cost reduction	12
					Recruitment and selection focus matching of roles and skills	13
					Collaborative working	14
					Multi focused development objectives	15
					Requirement driven deployment strategies	16
					Role based rewarding	17
					Sophisticated mechanisms for training and development	18
					Sophisticated rewarding mechanisms	19
					Focus on learning	20
					Focus on retention	21
					Focus on capabilities	22
					Focus on leadership development	23
					Communication of short-term expectations trough training	24
					Communication of long-term expectations through performance management procedures	25
					Recruitment and selection focus on skills and their impact	26
					Skills are identified through comprehensive screening and matching the skills with the strategy	27
					Focus on skill development	28
					Clarity of objectives	29
					Multi focus rewarding mechanism	30
					Job rotation to improve organisational working	31
					Multi focused development strategies	32
					Need based development	33
					Importance of autonomy and job rotation	34
					Role based rewarding	35
					Performance based rewarding	36
					Multi focused objectives of performance appraisals	37

Major theme legends
Maximisation of collaboration and commitment
Maximisation of collaboration and productivity
Maximisation of commitment and productivity
Improving capacity of employees
Improving the commitment of employees
Improving the capabilities
Improving the productivity

Table 5.9 *- Meaning saturation - An example of five interviews*

In the second interview, for example, the justification provided by a manager was as follows:

> ***HR strategy head-Europe:*** *"Well, everybody has autonomy. If you know what you are supposed to do through the objectives we communicate to you, you focus on what output is required. This improves shared results."*

The excerpt above indicates that the manager thought the basic standards should be provided to perform different tasks and some level of autonomy to improve productivity. Another manager provided a different justification for the autonomy with some standards as follows:

> ***HR strategy head-Europe:*** *"It depends upon the level they are working on. Autonomy is given to everyone depending upon the allocated tasks. For example, a strategic is more autonomous than the line manager. The balance of autonomy improves the efficiency and the overall productivity of employees and work"*

Monks *et al.* (2013) argue that organisations focus on following the standards under the productivity-based HR systems. In contrast, under the collaborative HR system, the organisation requires cooperation from employees by allowing them to work according to their skills. Hence this minor theme for interview 2 was colour coded as 'maximisation of collaboration and productivity'.

The informant of interview 3 mentions the following while discussing the 'autonomy with some basic standards to follow:

> ***Interviewer:*** Does your organisation grant autonomy to the employees for daily task execution?
>
> ***HR manager training and development-Europe:*** *"Of course, there are specific patterns they must follow, but they get it. As long as they are not compromising the security standards, all kind of employees gets it."*
>
> ***Interviewer:*** *Why?*
>
> ***HR manager training and development-Europe:*** *"If we do not give them freedom in work, then it shows a lack of trust from our side. We do trust them, and we want long term relations with them.*

The excerpt shows that although the manager wants employees to follow specific standards, he/she wants to give them some level of freedom to work to improve the commitment. Commitment-based HR systems focus on employees' dedication in different ways, such as providing them opportunities to innovate, become creative or work to enhance motivation (Ceylan 2013; Monks et al. 2013). Hence, in interview three, this statement came under the minor theme ‘autonomy with some basic standards to follow’, but it was clustered under the major theme ‘maximisation of collaboration and commitment’ because of the logic provided.

This process described above was repeated for each minor theme in all the interviews. All the transcripts, interview notes and memos were read and re-read to assess the meanings in each tagged discussion. The meaning saturation was achieved in the 7th interview with no subthemes clustered in new major themes due to the different meanings assigned to the phenomenon by the managers. This is evident from the theme saturation worktable attached in the Appendix - Table B.5 that no new major theme was developed after the 7th interview.

5.4.4. Data saturation

The data in this research is the informants' interview material and discussions about different aspects of HR systems. The data itself cannot be saturated because the wording can be different in each interview; however, the words can be categorised based on their commonalities (Constantinou *et al.* 2017). The categorisation of words based on commonalities was done in three stages in this study and discussed in previous sections: tagging data, coding the words and categorising code into themes. The saturation of categorisation in each stage was also observed through the processes discussed in this section; the observation of code, theme and meaning saturation. However, to close the process of saturation, a final step was taken in this research by looking into the entire data set, that is, the wordings of all the interviews, to ensure all the data is categorised based on commonalities and no new uncategorised data is left. This process included revisiting tags, codes and themes and the code, theme and meaning saturation points. Data saturation determined the cease point of data collection, which included all types of saturation tables presented in Appendix B. The comparative method of theme saturation proposed by Constantinou *et al.* (2017) was used to observe data saturation. It is evident from the code saturation worktable and theme saturation worktable that the codes were saturated in eleven interviews, themes were saturated in fifteen interviews and meanings were saturated in seven interviews.

5.5. Establishing the validity and reliability of the research process

In this study, the aim is to offer the findings of this research not only for the addition of academic knowledge but also for the practical use of MNEs. Therefore, this research needs to be recognised as legitimate by academic researchers, practitioners, and readers. Trustworthiness is the one way a researcher can persuade the reader that their study is worthy of attention (Nowell *et al.* 2017). Lincoln and Guba (1985) first distinguished the criteria of trustworthiness of qualitative and quantitative inquiry by mentioning that trustworthiness of qualitative research can be assessed through credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, which is parallel to the validity and reliability in quantitative research (Nowell *et al.* 2017). Validity and reliability of qualitative research run in the whole research process (Kvale 2007; Creswell 2013). Hence, the following subsections discuss how the validity and reliability of the entire research process are ensured.

Credibility refers to the accurate representation of the phenomenon discussed by the informant and understood by the researcher (Creswell & Miller 2000; Tobin & Begley 2004). Creswell and Miller (2000) developed a framework that can be used to establish the validity from the different lens based on various philosophical assumptions. Table 5.10 is adopted from the study of Creswell and Miller (2000) and is helpful in establishing the validity of qualitative research in this current study.

Paradigm assumption/Lens	Postpositivist	Constructivist	Critical
Lens of the researcher	Triangulation	Disconfirming evidence	Researcher reflexivity
Lens of study participants	Member checking	Prolonged engagement in the field	Collaboration
Lens of people external to study (reviewers, readers)	The audit trail	Thick and rich description	Peer debriefing

Table 5.10 - *Lenses to establish validity in qualitative research*

Source: *Adopted from Creswell and Miller (2000); Corbin and Strauss (2015)*

The lens in Table 5.10 refers to the viewpoint of the inquirer to establish validity. This study used a constructivist paradigm; hence three ways were considered essential to establish validity; disconfirming evidence for the researcher's lens, prolonged engagement for the study participant's lens and detailed and thick description for the readers' lens. In the search for disconfirming evidence, the codes and themes were developed first, and then the entire data set was re-read to find some codes or themes that disconfirm the existing codes or themes. This was the same process discussed in the previous section of this chapter in which observation of the emergence of new themes as well as achieving code, theme, meaning and data saturation is discussed. The process itself was challenging for the investigator of this study because of the researcher's tendency to find the confirming evidence instead of disconfirming. However, analysing the data on multiple levels, reviewing the code and themes various times, and observing meaning saturation assisted in the process because the investigator had to link the meanings to the themes and the disconfirming evidence became identifiable.

The prolonged engagement was not as valid for this study as it could be for field studies; however, the rapport was built prior to and at the start of the interview to make the participants open for the discussion. Moreover, during the interview, participants' views were summarised, repeated, and asked to correct any erroneous interpretation after each section and subsection of the interview guide. The thick and rich description was considered very important in each part of this research. For example, a very rich and detailed description of the process of designing this research and the execution of the data analysis process is provided in this thesis considering the reader's viewpoint. The credibility of the research and research process discussed in this section is related to the analysis and interpretation process.

The transferability of qualitative inquiry refers to the generalisability of the study (Nowell *et al.* 2017). Yin (2018) indicates that generalisability can be statistical or analytical. Statistical generalisability is not the aim of this research; however, analytical generalisability is considered throughout the research process. The generalisability referred to as transferability in this research is ensured by providing detailed descriptions of each process throughout the research and a thick description of the process of code and theme development. The interpretation of the analysed data, that is, codes and themes, is also discussed using graphical representations to ensure transferability.

To achieve dependability in the reader's view, the researcher can ensure that the research process is logical and traceable (Tobin & Begley 2004; Nowell *et al.* 2017). The research process of this study is explained with detailed descriptions. Moreover, the researcher used the six-phase thematic analysis process to ensure dependability. The evidence of methodological and analytical decisions as audit trails are also provided throughout the research process so that future research can easily follow the decision trail (Nowell *et al.* 2017).

Confirmability is concerned with establishing that the analysis, interpretation and findings are derived from the data (Nowell *et al.* 2017). This required researcher to demonstrate how the interpretations are made. This requirement is also discussed throughout the six phases of thematic analysis by providing theoretical and analytical decision explanations.

Qualitative research intends to generate knowledge grounded in the informants' views and requires transparent communication of the complex data analysis to generate valuable knowledge (Nowell *et al.* 2017). Adopting a systematic six phased approach to analyse data in this research required a thoughtful discussion to establish trustworthiness. Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are criteria for trustworthiness (Nowell *et al.* 2017) and are discussed as an interwoven process of establishing trustworthiness throughout the research process in this study.

5.6. Summary

The detailed and thick description and discussion of methodological and analytical choices made during the research process were considered important in this study to improve the trustworthiness of the research from the viewpoint of researchers, practitioners and readers. The trustworthiness needs to run throughout the research process in the qualitative research design because, in the qualitative research, the data collection, analysis and interpretations are not distinct steps; they are interconnected (Creswell 2013; Creswell & Creswell 2017; Nowell *et al.* 2017). The quality of research and trustworthiness is ensured through credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability throughout the research process. The six phased thematic analysis was also one form of ensuring the trustworthiness of the research process (Nowell *et al.* 2017), in which traceable decision trails were identified and implemented.

There were several analytical decisions taken throughout the thematic analysis such as tagging of data for appropriate sections of analysis, inclusion criteria specification for codes and themes at each level, the inclusion of text in the codes and themes, relationship specification between codes and themes, determining the saturation especially the meaning saturation and cease point of data collection. The evidence of all decisions and choices is maintained by the researcher and is discussed in this chapter. All analytical decisions assisted in interpreting data, finding the answers to the research questions, and developing talent-based HR architecture discussed in the discussion and conclusion chapters.

CHAPTER SIX

INTERPRETATION OF DATA, DISCUSSION, AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE HR ARCHITECTURAL FRAMEWORK

6.1. Introduction

This chapter represents the last phase of the thematic analysis discussed in the previous chapter. It presents a focus and refinement of the analysed data, interpretation of the findings, and discussion and development of the hybrid HR architecture. Its purpose is to discuss the interview analysis and answer the research questions. It is divided into four sections; each section addresses the research questions. Table 6.1 shows the structure of this chapter, sections and main points of discussion under each section.

Section	Main discussion points	Linked to research question
Section 6.2	1. Current HR systems organisations are using 2. Justification on using various HR systems simultaneously.	SRQ1
Section 6.3	1. Talent perspectives of HR managers currently using or wish to use. 2. How current/wished talent perspectives help managers propose talent based HR systems considering current HR systems their organisations are using.	SRQ2
Section 6.4	1. Extension of talent based HR systems proposed in section 6.3 for non-standard employees.	SRQ3
Section 6.5	1. Development of HR decisional framework (talent based hybrid HR architecture) to optimally configure talent based HR systems and sub-systems discussed in section 6.3 and 6.4	PRQ

Table 6. 1 *- Structure of chapter 6*

6.2. HR systems or combinations of HR systems

This section answers SRQ1, which is '*what HR systems or combinations of HR systems MNEs are using to manage employees?*'. Based on the preliminary analysis, 18 of 21 strategic HR managers disagreed that certain HR practices implemented by the other organisations can improve their organisation's performance and thus rejected the idea of a best practice approach. However, three managers discussed that a few HR practices are now important trends, such as using non-standard employees. They also discussed that following the industry trends improves their sense of belongingness to the industry. However, they discussed that considering some HR practices as industry trends does not mean benchmarking as best practices. This interpretation and analysis of interviews went against the views of research in SHRM that supports the universalistic approach to SHRM. The preliminary analysis of the interview sections about the prevailing HR systems in the organisations indicated that the global maritime transport and logistics providers in the logistics industry had no single dominant HR system; instead, the organisations were using combinations of HR systems according to their needs. It also revealed that all organisations had multiple foci when planning and executing the different parts of the HR systems, including the job design, recruitment and selection, development and deployment, and rewarding.

An in-depth analysis was conducted after preliminary analysis, as mentioned in Chapter 5, to determine the HR approach, the HR systems and different HR practices adopted by organisations. As part of phase 6 of thematic analysis, the in-depth analysis assisted in answering the SRQ1 in alignment with the initial thoughts and analysis presented in phase 6 of thematic analysis.

HR practices were analysed first to categorise the practices into the dominant configurations. At this stage, the number of codes generated against each criterion of HR configurations discussed in Table 3.1 was counted. Appendix B - Table B.6 shows the presence of components of HR systems such as job design, recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal and rewarding and their respective HR practices indicated by different informants. For example, HR manager-Africa discussed that her organisation offers task variety, job rotation, job security, and standardised jobs to the employee when designing the jobs. The coding process discussed in chapter 5 assisted in marking the presence of different HR practices under the job design component of HR systems. The same approach was adopted for every component of the HR system, such as job design, recruitment and selection, development and deployment, performance appraisal and rewarding and shown in Appendix B - Table B.6.

The analysis presented in Appendix B - Tables B.6, B.7, and B.8 showed that the organisations were not using a single configuration; instead, they were using multiple configurations. For example, informant one (HR manager-Africa) discussed that her organisation offers various tasks to the employees and rotates their jobs to improve their commitment, which is a part of commitment-based HR systems. However, the same informant said her organisation also believes that the tasks should be standardised to ensure quality and improve productivity, which is the characteristic of a productivity-based HR system. This analysis supported the multiple configurational views presented by Lepak and Snell (1999) and indicated that organisations configure their HR systems based on how the employees can create value for them. This pattern was present in all the interviews. Appendix B - Table B.7 shows the multiple HR configurations identified in the organisations of respective informants.

For identifying the HR systems, the informants were required to assess the degree of reliance on the different HR practices under the components of HR systems such as job design, recruitment and selection, development and deployment, performance appraisals and rewarding. For example, during the interview, all the informants discussed the extent to which they utilise task variety, job rotation, autonomy and standardised jobs or how vital job security and communicating the jobs are while designing the jobs.

The thematic analysis of the interviews indicated that the organisations were not using a single HR system focus. Instead, they were optimally configuring the HR systems and components according to their needs. For example, Appendix B - Table B.7 shows that the organisation of informant 1 (HR Manager-Africa) was more inclined to the commitment-based HR practices with some components of productivity-based HR practices for designing the jobs. Similarly, the organisation of informant 7 (Head-HR Strategy and Transformation-Europe) was more inclined to the productivity and compliance-based HR practices in designing the jobs. The trend of relying on multiple HR practices with different HR systems foci was evident in other components of HR systems, such as recruitment and selection, development and deployment, performance appraisals, and rewarding (see Tables Appendix B - Table B.8) and in all the sample organisations. This was aligned with the HR literature; for example, Lepak and Snell (2007), Lepak *et al.* (2017) and Boon *et al.* (2019) indicate that multiple HR configurations can be observed with the number of practices organisations employ within their HR system.

The thematic analysis of the interviews in this section answers SRQ1. It suggests that the logistic industry utilises multiple HR-focused systems and no dominant best practice HR system for the industry. This analysis also suggested that organisations in the sample industry were using the configurational view to manage human resources as discussed in the literature (for example (Lepak & Snell 1999, 2002, 2007; Lepak *et al.* 2017; Wright *et al.* 2018)) and confirmed initial analysis of the interviews presented in chapter 5. The answer to SRQ1 indicates that MNEs use various HR systems, such as a combination of HR systems or multiple configurations in various HR related activities, such as commitment focus in the job design and collaboration focus in the development and deployment. These existing HR systems and configurations that MNEs were using helped develop talent-based HR systems discussed in the next section.

6.3. Talent-based HR systems

The talent-based HR systems can be distinguished from the traditional HR systems based on the value they create, capture, leverage and protect during the different stages of the talent lifecycle (see Table 3.2). The following sub-section interprets the interviews of the informants and answers SRQ2, which is '*What talent-based HR systems can be developed to manage global talent?'*. It also proposes talent-based HR systems that can be a part of a hybrid HR architecture. This section discusses what various talent perspectives managers had and how talent perspectives could develop talent-based HR systems.

6.3.1. Talent perspectives

Analysis of interviews suggests that the HR managers had different justifications for choosing multiple HR systems and combinations representing their managerial perspectives. It also suggests that the different talent perspectives of the HR managers exist when choosing the HR systems and configurations. For example, the senior HR Manager-Europe discussed that his organisation focused on the collaboration and commitment of employees. He also thought that the employees working on the pivotal roles were the most important employees and could be considered valuable for his organisation. This suggested that he considered that the activities to improve collaboration and commitment must focus on the employees working in pivotal roles, which is the characteristic of the position-focused perspective to understand talent. The head of HR strategy-Europe discussed that it was the valuable HR practices that helped the organisation explore every employee's talent, and this exploration could improve the productivity and commitment of employees. This suggested that the practice-focused perspective inspired him to understand talent. This shows that the managerial reasoning of adopting HR systems and combinations was different and based on managers' talent perspectives.

The analysis, considering the demographical information, revealed that the experience of the managers and their job responsibilities influenced the perspectives of managing employees. For example, among the twenty-one interviews, five managers promoted or reselected at a different or a higher position in the same organisation had a dominant people-focused perspective of talent. Four managers engaged in assisting the execution of policies had a practice-focused perspective. Similarly, six managers having experiences from other MNEs in the same industry had a dominant practice-focused perspective on talent. Moreover, six managers involved in strategic decision-making or policy development had a dominant strategic pool-focused, and four had a dominant position-focused perspective.

The determination of talent perspectives played a crucial role in answering the SRQ2. The talent-based HR systems are highly influenced by the understanding of the managers, what constitutes talent for them and how to manage it. The interviews showed that the managerial positions and the background of managers, such as HR experience in MNEs or HR-related qualifications, impacted the influence of the talent perspectives. Examples include being able to compare the HR practices of previous companies and thereby building their own talent perspective on the talent. Furthermore, when comparing managers with HR-related qualifications to those with other qualifications such as finance, it was found that those with HR-related qualifications were more inclined towards people-focused perspectives to manage talent, whereas those with finance backgrounds were more interested in productivity and, as a result, a practice-focused perspective.

However, when they were asked if they would like to change the way of HR management (see, for example, Appendix A - Question C-1.1.3, C-1.1.3, C-1.1.4 C-1.2.3), 16 out of 21 indicated that they wanted to change the way of managing HR. For example, Appendix A - Questions C-2.3.1 and C-2.3.2 show that they were asked for some information related to the team formation practices in their organisation. Two managers with a position-focused perspective mentioned that they would like to add a few activities if they get a chance. Their responses determined that the people-focused perspective inspired those activities. It also determined their current talent perspectives and the talent perspectives they would like to adopt if they get a chance. This suggests that the managers identified the practices they were either following or wished to follow to create value for the organisation. In Table 6.2, two types of managers are identified 1) those who possessed a particular talent perspective and 2) who had a talent perspective influenced by factors such as job responsibilities and organisational requirements but wished to follow another perspective. The second type of informants is mentioned as alternative perspective managers (APM). Initially, informants were asked for the reasons for adopting certain practices and their suggestions for improving those practices and then what if they want to change some practices.

The next section mentions the original perspective each manager had and an alternative perspective. The opinion of managers to develop better HR systems is based on the underlying perspectives to understand and manage talent.

The person possessing talent perspective	Talent perspective				Total
	People-focused	Practice-focused	Position-focused	Strategic-pool focused	
Managers	5	6	6	4	21
Alternative Perspective Managers	7	2	3	4	16
Total	12	8	9	8	37 opinions

Table 6.2 *– Number of managers and potential managers having different talent perspectives*

6.3.2. Talent-based HR systems and talent perspectives

Based on the interviews, analysis (process explained in chapter 5) and their interpretations, talent-based HR systems with different managerial perspectives are proposed and discussed in the form of managerial frameworks below in Figures 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4. The answer to SRQ1 assisted in providing the foundations to find the existing HR systems organisations are currently using and then exploring the components of talent-based HR systems with the help of reasoning managers offered. The presentation of proposed talent-based HR systems is in the form of questions that managers can use to answer to utilise the various aspects of the talent-based HR systems and value creation, capture, leverage, and protection in the different stages of the talent lifecycle.

6.3.2.1 Talent-based HR system - A people-focused perspective

The people-focused perspective inspired five managers out of twenty-one, and seven were identified as APM, as shown in Table 6.3. The thematic analysis of interviews indicated that the managers who had a people-focused perspective emphasised identifying critical skills such as problem-solving to create value for the organisation. It also included proper planning and identifying critical and unique skills needed by the organisation. Moreover, pre-identifying the source of talent acquisition is necessary for value capturing.

The person possessing talent perspective	Position Titles
Managers	1. HR Manager Training and Development 2. HR Business Partner 3. Head of HR projects 4. Global Director, HR Programs 5. Talent & OD Manager
Alternative Perspective Managers	1. SVP & Head of HR Strategy & Transformation 2. General Manager HR 3. Senior Director HR 4. GM HR 5. Vice president-HR 6. HR continuous improvement manager 7. Country HR Manager

Table 6. 3 *- Position titles of managers and APMs having people-focused perspective*

This discussion with the managers having a people-focused perspective indicated that considering talent acquisition is a critical decision in the value creation process. Moreover, value creation is possible if managers focus on competitive HR practices. The interview interpretations suggest that projected external and internal environmental changes should be central to modifying the job requirement to utilise the skills of the elite individual who are considered irreplaceable. The recruitment and selection discussion by managers having this talent perspective suggested two significant concerns and their interconnection at the planning stage: proper skills utilisation and cost matter. Skill utilisation planning is important if the organisation's core HR system is productivity and commitment-based. Cost minimisation is important to plan to hire skilled employees by comprehensively assessing the needed skills.

The interpretation of interviews revealed that it is essential to have a comprehensive approach that can allow the proper identification, development, utilisation and deployment of the unique skills of the individuals in the development and the deployment domain of HR systems when utilising the people-focused approach to managing talent. For example, managers with this talent perspective mentioned that short-term and long-term skill development are separate issues, and the training recipients are different and are carefully selected. They said that crucial decisions about the type of training needs are identified based on the previous year's performance appraisals and the direct supervisors' recommendations. They also added that they try to bundle the skills of various employees by formal and informal training mechanism. This suggests that it is necessary to have sophisticated systems developed to make the skills more fluid, considering the skills and employees possessing those skills a central concern of HR management.

The interviews revealed that this talent perspective's performance appraisal and rewarding mechanisms distinguished the good and average performers. This demarcation was evident in the managers' views of employing dominantly the productivity-based HR systems in their organisations compared to the other HR systems. Organisations using a dominant productivity-based HR system, for example, consider that skilful employees should be hired and lavishly rewarded. In contrast, the less productive employees need to be given a safe exit from the organisation without legal obligations. The organisations employing other than productivity-based HR systems focus on skill development and bundle them with existing organisational resources to benefit. However, regardless of the type of HR system, skills development and contribution to the organisation's overall strategy should be given special consideration.

This analysis was aligned with the criticism in the literature, which shows that the managers with a people-focused perspective are over-concerned about the overall productivity of the skilled employees. They consider productivity as the appropriate skill to match the organisation's strategic intent and utilisation at its fullest. The analysis also indicated that the managers consider developing a system that can assist in developing and utilising the skills for the organisation's best interest. However, they focus on employees having critical skills and invest disproportionality on the high and the average performers, which attracts another criticism discussed as the level of balance critique in the literature. Figure 6.1 presents the proposed framework of a talent-based HR system with the people-focused perspective identified by the managers who were the informants. The questions in the proposed system shown in Figure 6.1 illustrate the various components of the HR systems mentioned by the managers having a people-focused perspective.

6.3.2.2 Talent-based HR system - A practice-focused perspective

The six managers and two APMs were inspired by this talent perspective, as shown in Table 6.4.

The person possessing talent perspective	Position Titles
Managers	1. SVP & Head of HR Strategy & Transformation 2. Global HR head 3. HR continuous improvement manager 4. Country HR Manager 5. HR head 6. Global Expert - Compensation & Benefits
Alternative Perspective Managers	1. Senior HR manager 2. HR advisor

Table 6.4 *- Position titles of managers and APMs having practice-focused perspective*

The analysis of the interviews of managers having a practice-focused perspective revealed that developing advanced HR policies, programs, and processes and determining their complex relationships by establishing their interdependence is the managers' prime responsibility to address the organisation's strategic intent. Also, developing proper systems that provide employees with a conducive environment to grow and work well with the organisation in alignment with the strategic intent is crucial for managers. The interpretation of interviews of the informants having this talent perspective suggested that it is valuable to comprehensively analyse the external and internal environmental factors and predict changes that may affect the organisation in future.

People focused perspective

Talent based policies domain	Talent based practices
Job design policies	• What are the critical and unique skills needed for the organisation? • Do we need to hire skilled employees from outside or skills are present in the organisation? • Can we modify the job designs based on the skills needed to perform certain tasks (such as modification in the job design due to the advancement in technology)? • How can we best utilise the individual talent (such as offering various tasks or rotating the jobs)?
Recruitment and selection policies	• Do we need to hire a skilled employee, or can we train them to align their skills with the organisational strategy? • How can we identify the needed skills in an individual?
Development and deployment policies	• What skills are needed to be developed? • Do we need to develop short term skills or long-term skills? • How can the short-term skills be developed? • How can the long-term skills be developed? • How be the tacit skills developed? (such as on the job training, experiential learning) • Where the developed skills can be deployed? (for example, multiple jobs, teams or project)
Performance appraisal policies	• Can we link the developed skills with the strategic intends of the organisation? • Can we easily identify the valuable performers? • How can we provide developmental feedback to the employees in terms of skills development?
Reward policies	• How can we link the skills development with the rewarding mechanism?

***Figure 6.1** – Talent-based HR system with people-focused perspective*

Also, focusing on at least three components during the planning process and designing the jobs is important. First, the external changes that may alter the future supply of HR. The second is the internal analysis of core competencies. Third, coping with unforeseen changes in the supply of HR. The value creation and capture at designing a job is possible by analysing the organisation's core competencies and identifying the type of employees who can contribute progressively to the strategic plans and the enabling practices.

The interviews suggested that during the recruitment and selection, the value can be created and captured with the benchmarked practices of competitors. Identifying the best recruitment and selection practices and considering the organisation's core competencies can assist the organisation with the development of best practices. Moreover, creating and amplifying value for the organisation is possible if the policymakers and external recruiters are aware of the organisation's core competencies.

Under the development and deployment domain, it is essential to identify the internal talent which is most valuable for the organisation and identify the need to develop them. The thematic analysis of the interviews of the managers with having practice-focused perspective suggests that the development and deployment process has three objectives: 1) to develop and deploy the most valuable talent in alignment to the organisational strategy, 2) to work on the engagement and retention of the valuable employees and 3) to manage the proper flow of knowledge created through the employees. For example, managers and APM with this talent perspective suggested that value creation is possible for the organisation if the managers identify the most effective practices such as providing opportunities for learning, team development, leadership development, and innovative training practices. They also suggested that value capturing is possible by linking employees' selection, performance appraisal systems, and rewarding mechanisms. They discussed that facilitating the flow of knowledge created through employees is also essential and can be ensured through the practices such as supporting employee's internal mobility, enabling knowledge sharing culture and proper career management practices. The views of the managers indicated that such enabling practices could improve the value capture, leverage, and protection in the organisation.

The literature on talent management, such as Al Ariss *et al.* (2014), Wiblen and McDonnell (2020), Shet (2020), and Gilch and Sieweke (2021), indicates that focusing on talent activities and processes can improve organisational working; all the managers and APMs suggested the same. This perspective on managing talent relies heavily on the assumption that all the practices must be bundled and aligned with the organisation's intended strategic outcomes. Under this talent perspective, the value can be created, captured, leveraged and protected only if the whole bundle of practices is under operation (Sparrow & Makram 2015). The analysis of the interviews suggested that managers who had this talent perspective gave importance to the core competencies of the organisation and bundling of the best practices with the core competencies.

Figure 6.2 depicts the proposed framework of talent-based HR systems identified by the managers having the practice-focused perspective to manage employees based on the analysis. It indicates the presence of each value component in various talent lifecycle stages. This means that the practices are interlinked and work well if they are bundled in the whole talent lifecycle. However, each practice holds its unique position as well, and the organisation can utilise these practices under each talent lifecycle stage configured with other managerial perspectives, as discussed in Section 6.5.

6.3.2.3 Talent-based HR system - A position-focused perspective

The difference between the people-focused perspective and position-focused perspective is that the former considers an individual's skills, and the latter considers the position in which an individual works. The people-focused perspective suggests that everyone in the organisation can be talented, considering them elite in one role or another. In contrast, the position-focused perspective assumes the position or role as an important aspect no matter who is working on that position.

Six managers had a position-focused perspective, and three managers showed their interest in this perspective as a potential perspective if they get a chance, as shown in Table 6.5.

The interview analysis suggested that managers that have this perspective and APMs favour the disproportionate allocation of resources for elite positions. They all indicated that the determination of elite positions or roles requires careful analysis, not all positions such as determining the uncertainty in the execution of the role. The interpretation of interviews revealed that the elite role and position are decided based on uncertainty in the role execution. It also shows that the guidance needed and the amount of contribution of the role or the position holder in the organisation's overall strategy determine the influence of the role and position holder in the organisation.

Practice focused perspective

Talent based policies domain	Talent based practices
Job design policies	• How can the future supply of valuable HR be affected by the external changes (such as demographical, cultural, legal, and technological)? • What are our core competencies that can be used as a competitive advantage? • How can we use valuable HR to contribute to the organisational core competencies? (such as providing them more decisional autonomy, assigning various tasks, development of standardised jobs, enabling knowledge sharing conditions etc). • Do we facilitate internal mobility of the valuable HR?
Recruitment and selection policies	• How can we conduct an effective analysis of the talent pools (in terms of hiring trained employees, shrinking the risk of reduced supply in future, flexibility etc)? • Can we allow decentralised recruitment practices? (if yes, is it conditional?). • Do we need benchmarking competitor's HR recruitment practices? (if yes, has the analysis been done?). • How aware the third-party recruiters are from the core competencies and the requirement of the organisation?
Development and deployment policies	• What system do we have/can develop to identify the high potential individuals for effective onboarding? • What instruments do we have/can develop to identify the training needs? • What training systems do we have? (for example, flexible development, contribution-based training systems, learning opportunities etc). • What career management systems do we have?
Performance appraisal policies	• Is our performance review process linked with the organisational outcomes? • Is our talent review process linked with the selection of employees? • What mechanisms can be used to manage under performance?
Reward policies	• How can we link the performance with the rewarding mechanism?

***Figure 6.2**- Talent-based HR system with practice-focused perspective*

The person possessing talent perspective	Position Titles
Managers	1. National HR Manager 2. General Manager Human Resources 3. HR manager-Indonesia 4. HR Manager-Africa 5. Vice president-HR
Alternative Perspective Managers	1. HR Manager Training and Development 2. Senior Director HR 3. Head of HR projects

Table 6.5 *- Position titles of managers and APMs having position-focused perspective*

The interviews of managers holding the position-focused perspective suggested that value creation is possible for the organisation if they can identify, recruit, develop and retain the needed talent aligned with the business model. Moreover, the first and the foremost step to aligning the business model's needs with the talent is to identify the roles and positions that require more strategic level skills and dealing them separately from those who require non-strategic skills and abilities.

The analysis also suggested that dividing employees into different categories depending upon their roles is important for this talent perspective holders. Value can be created and captured by developing optimal portfolios of the A, B and C roles during the recruitment and selection process. During the interview analysis and interpretation, it is also found that budget and criticality of the role itself determine the hiring of individuals in critical roles. Moreover, value can be leveraged by effective analysis of the pools of A, B and C players available to the organisation and then finding what part these pools can play in executing the critical tasks.

Under the position-focused perspective, the development and deployment domain focus on the disproportionate allocation of resources for the training and development of the employees. The analysis indicated that managers having this talent perspective focuses on the continuous development of the critical position holders and suggest that the value capture, leverage, and protection are possible if the pipeline of the highly trained key position holders is maintained. Furthermore, distinguishing the critical and non-critical roles is crucial. Identifying high and low performance on each critical and non-critical role is essential to creating value.

The position-focused perspective is highly criticised due to its over-focus on identifying pivotal positions and ignoring the system discussed previously as the locus of organisational effectiveness (Pfeffer 2001; Sparrow & Makram 2015). However, the analysis suggested that the managers that have the people-focused perspective and APM favour the systematic identification of roles and positions by clearly indicating the criticality of the roles. Managers also claimed that this perspective assists in improving the speed and the quality of the strategic execution. This claim is aligned with the discussion provided in literature such as Sparrow and Makram (2015) and Collings and Mellahi (2009), which suggest using a differentiated workforce to improve strategy development and execution. Figure 6.3 depicts the proposed framework of talent-based HR systems with a position-focused perspective and its components based on the views and discussion of the managers having this perspective.

6.3.2.4 Talent based HR system- Strategic pool-focused perspective

Four out of twenty-one managers were identified as having a strategic pool perspective, and four APM were identified as they wished to adopt the strategic pool-focused perspective to manage talent. Table 6.6 shows the number of managers having a strategic pool-focused perspective and APMs. The interview analysis and interpretation indicated that the managers realise the importance and criticality of some roles as they are essential strategic. However, they also appreciate the non-critical roles that are essential for the accomplishment of short-term goals. Moreover, it is found during the interview analysis that clustering the human resources based on the range of contributions they can offer and investing disproportionately in the different clusters improve the overall organisational capability of competitiveness and effectiveness. The development of unique clusters of essential employees provides an opportunity to develop an inimitable group of talent.

Additionally, clustering and identifying required talents throughout the recruitment and selection process contribute to the generation of value in the domain of policy development and deployment. For example, all the managers having this talent perspective suggested that they identify the training needs for each cluster, and it helps them allocate resources for the development and deployment. They also indicated that they prefer to maintain a talent pipeline of the cluster, which means that they identify elite clusters and consider continuous development of them.

Position focused perspective

Talent based policies domain	Talent based practices
Job design policies	• What (managerial/non-managerial) positions are pivotal for the organisation? • What (managerial/non-managerial) roles are critical for the organisation? • What are the critical and unique skills needed for the critical roles and positions? • Do we need to hire skilled employees from outside or skills are present in the organisation for critical roles and positions? • How can we categorise all roles in the organisation as [1]A, B or C roles? [1]A role= Critical to execute strategy with variety of skills needed B role= Critical to execute strategy with common skills C role=Non-core roles that perform functions and can be outsourced
Recruitment and selection policies	• How can we develop effective portfolios of A, B and C roles? • How can we conduct an effective analysis of talent pools for hiring on critical roles?
Development and deployment policies	• What training mechanism do we have to develop A and B players? • Are we developing the talent pipeline to ensure that the successors of the A players are also A players? (such as leadership development programs)
Performance appraisal policies	• What system do we have to objectively differentiate the high performer and a low performer hired on A, B and C roles? • What system do we have to link objectively the high and low performance on critical roles? (such as determining the characteristics of good leadership).
Reward policies	• Do we have disproportionate compensation and rewarding mechanism for critical roles? • Do we link the high performance on critical roles with the rewarding mechanism? • Do we link the development of employees performing critical roles with the rewarding and compensation? • Do we link the performance on non-critical roles with the rewarding?

***Figure 6.3** – Talent-based HR system with position-focused perspective*

The person possessing talent perspective	Position Titles
Managers	1. Director Labour relations 2. HR advisor 3. Senior Director HR 4. GM HR
Alternative Perspective Managers	1. Global Expert - Compensation & Benefits 2. HR Business Partner 3. Global HR head 4. National HR Manager

Table 6.6 *- Position titles of managers and APMs having strategic pool-focused perspective*

The analysis indicated that value creation is possible when the entire workforce aligns their work with the organisation's strategic intent if a manager has a strategic pool-focused perspective. However, the cruciality of identifying critical and non-critical positions and roles before clustering them with other vital roles to capture the value entirely cannot be ignored. The analysis suggested that along with the workforce planning and designing the job descriptions, segregating the types of roles, positions and skills needed for them make it easy to get the maximum returns out of the strategic pools generated later. Moreover, the value capture is possible with the proper distinction of the A, B and C roles aligned with the strategic dictates and intent of the organisational business model.

The interview analysis showed that the managers having a strategic pool-focused perspective consider value creation in the performance appraisal through the performance of the entire cluster. For this, they indicate that the internal practices of every cluster for knowledge sharing and steps to improve the overall performance of the cluster are important. The organisation provides the platform for the enabling conditions that can make a cluster outperform the other. However, they also mentioned that the proper identification of different players and their allocation to different clusters still holds a central position, along with the adequate communication of the organisation's expectations from the clusters. This perspective was dominant in organisations with project-based working, team-based performance appraisal systems, and collective rewarding mechanisms.

The managers with a strategic pool focused-perspective and APMs did not consider a few positions or roles as valuable. Instead, like the people-focused perspective, they believed everyone in the organisation was capable of valuable contributions. However, unlike the people-focused perspective, all the managers having a strategic pool-focused perspective emphasised value creation, capture and leverage in the strategic pool development. Moreover, the value creation in the strategic pool development is different from the valuable practices under the practice-focused perspective. The strategic pool development is about systematically identifying the roles and individuals and clustering them for value creation in the organisation, unlike the practice-focused perspective, which emphasises the importance of the practices and ignores the capabilities of the individuals or their pooled effect. Figure 6.4 depicts the range of questions for a talent-based HR system identified after the analysis of the interviews indicating a strategic pool-focused perspective as a dominant perspective to manage talent in the organisations.

The framework proposal process for developing optimal talent-based HR systems in organisations based on the managerial perspectives unveiled various aspects. For example, a critical observation was about the decision making related to HR and the development of HR systems. The thematic analysis results revealed that the managers do not typically rely on the strategic planning frameworks or conduct a comprehensive analysis to identify critical talent and their management. The analysis results also indicate senior managers mostly depend upon the combination of individual preferences, intuitive instincts, previous experiences, beliefs, and job requirements to identify talent. This converged with the discussion presented by Mäkelä *et al.* (2010), Boudreau and Jesuthasan (2011), Viaman *et al.* (2012) and Sparrow and Makram (2015) in which they argued that the individual preferences and job requirements play a crucial role in talent management.

Heavy reliance on the personal perspectives to manage talent presented another pattern; the senior managers, regardless of the type of the existing HR systems, were using their dominant talent perspectives to justify the HR practices. For example, a talent manager in an organisation identified having a commitment and productivity-based HR systems as dominant systems were inclined to the people-focused perspective to manage talent. The talent manager of this organisation mentioned that he believed in improving the productivity and commitment of employees by aligning the existing skills of all of their employees in the organisation and investing to improve the capacity of the individuals to contribute to the overall organisational outcome.

Strategic pool focused perspective

Talent-based policies domain	Talent based practices
Job design policies	• What (managerial/non-managerial) positions are pivotal for the organisation? • How can we fill critical managerial and non-managerial positions? • What (managerial/non-managerial) roles are critical for the organisation? • To whom can we assign the important roles in the organisation? • How can we categorise all roles in the organisation as [1]A, B or C roles? [1]A role= Critical to execute strategy with variety of skills needed B role= Critical to execute strategy with common skills C role=Non-core roles that perform functions and can be outsourced
Recruitment and selection policies	• How can we develop effective portfolios of A, B and C roles? • How can we conduct an effective analysis of talent pools for hiring on critical roles? • Do we need to hire a skilled employee, or can we train them to align their skills with the organisational strategy? • How can we identify the needed skills in an individual?
Development and deployment policies	• What skills are needed to be developed? • How can the short-term skills be developed? • How can the long-term skills be developed? • How be the tacit skills developed? (such as on the job training, experiential learning) • What training mechanism do we have to develop A and B and C roles players? • Are we developing the talent pipeline to ensure that the successors of the A players are also A players? (such as leadership development programs)
Performance appraisal policies	• What system do we have to objectively differentiate the high performer and a low performer hired on A, B and C roles? • What system do we have to link objectively the high and low performance on all roles? • Can we link the developed skills with the strategic intends of the organisation? • How can we provide developmental feedback to the employees in terms of skills development?
Reward policies	• How can we link the skills development with the rewarding mechanism? • Do we have disproportionate compensation and rewarding mechanism for some roles? • Do we link the high performance on critical roles with the rewarding mechanism? • Do we link the performance on non-critical roles with the rewarding?

Figure 6.4 *- Talent based HR system with strategic pool-focused perspective*

The analysis of another interview of the manager (National HR manager-Middle East), who identified the same commitment and productivity-based HR system as a dominant HR system in her organisation, mentioned a strategic pool perspective to manage talent. She elaborated that her preference was to develop a team of people having exceptional skills to execute project-based tasks. She further explained that the investment in critical and priority teams and their project and team-based rewarding by linking the project success with the organisational strategy were the critical tasks for the HR team working under her. She also mentioned that her HR team continuously works to match the different skills of employees to the various projects in the organisation so that they can be offered various tasks and can get a chance to change their career paths if they want to.

The discussion above indicates that the different organisations using similar HR systems may employ different talent-based HR practices grounded in various managerial perspectives. Moreover, different organisations having diverse HR systems may share the managerial perspective to develop their talent-based HR practices. Thus, organisations employing a commitment-based HR system, for example, have four choices of talent perspectives to choose from, as mentioned in Figure 6.5, which shows that the organisation can choose any HR system among at least four HR systems. As discussed in the previous section, the number of overall choices increases if the organisation employs multiple HR systems with one or more dominant HR systems. Each HR system may employ different talent management perspectives. This choice leads to the optimal configurations of talent-based HR systems.

In response to the SRQ2, the analysis of the prevailing HR systems in the sample organisations played a crucial role. The analysis indicates that the existing HR systems represent the overall policy domain of the organisation; however, to execute the policies and develop the practices and processes, the underlying philosophy of the managers plays a central role. The analysis also suggests that systematic identification of relevant practices is possible by using the lens of talent.

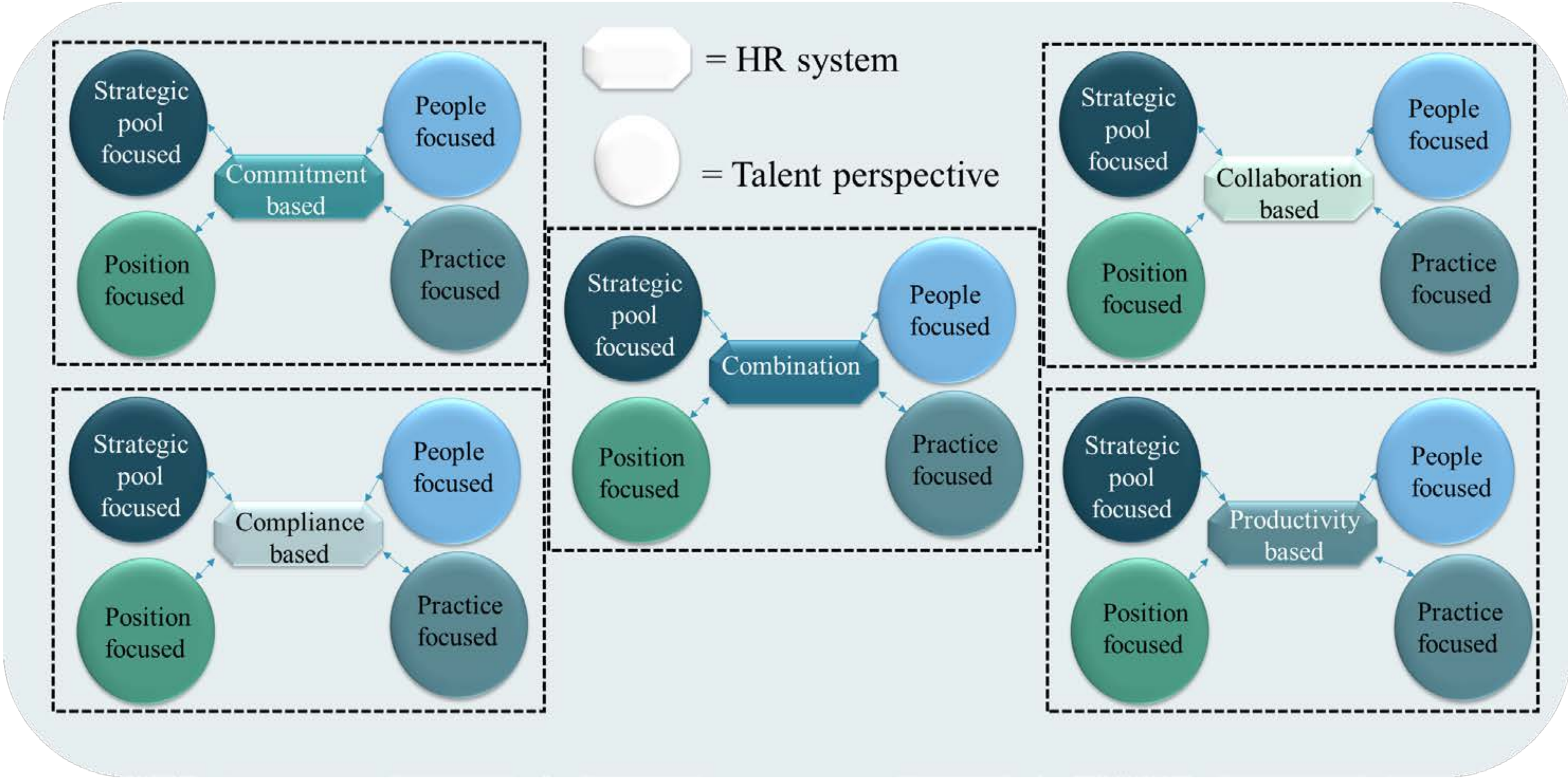


Figure 6.5 *- Possible combinations of talent perspective for each HR system*

6.4. Talent based HR configurations and NSE

This section addresses SRQ3 by extending the talent-based HR systems discussed in section 6.3 for NSEs. SRQ3 is *'How can MNEs using non-standard employment arrangments configure multiple talent-based HR systems to hybrid HR architecture?'* The proposed talent-based HR systems for NSE are grounded in the views of the managers of the sample organisations. Moreover, this section also discusses the optimal configurations of talent-based HR systems.

The analysis of the interviews suggests that six out of twenty-one managers indicated there is no need for a different talent-based HR system for the NSEs, and they should be treated the same as the standard workforce. However, fifteen managers stated a need for a distinct talent-based HR system for the NSEs. This included nine managers from logistics services providers and six from container and bulk shipping. The analysis indicated that the HR managers in logistics service providers are concerned with the innovation and new working arrangements that can save cost, make processes efficient and help to gain a competitive advantage. However, the managers from container and bulk shipping organisations think it's good to follow new trends from other industries. The analysis also suggests that the managers from Europe, the USA and Australia indicated the need for distinct talent-based HR systems. This is linked with their talent perspectives developed because of their previous experience working with MNEs.

All the informants were working at the strategic HR management positions, such as global HR head, and were concerned about the new, innovative, and distinctive ways to manage non-standard and standard workers. They also mentioned the need to identify the best combinations of different types of employees and optimal configurations of HR systems. The same view was dominant in the interviews of the managers having vast experience with HR management or working at some managerial positions in the multinational enterprises in the same or some other industry. Out of the fifteen managers who indicated the need for distinct HR systems for NSEs, twelve had HRM-related qualifications. All fifteen had six to fifteen years of experience working with MNEs in HR-related roles. This data indicated that most of the strategic managers having either vast experience in HR or HR-related qualification or both mentioned the need for separate HR systems for the NSEs. This also suggests that managers understand the need for alternative HR systems because the non-standard workforce has different employment relationships.

In the interviews, all the managers spoke about the ideal HR practices that can be developed for NSEs. The managers informed about the practices they already had adopted and the ideal practices that they wished to implement for the optimal use of all employees generally and for NSEs specifically. The managers discussed that identifying value creation, capture, leverage, and protection is possible through the questions mentioned in the various talent-based HR systems discussed in the previous section. However, the value resides in the answers to the questions and the process adopted to answer those questions. For example, Figure 6.6 elaborates the view of a manager (Talent and OD manager-Australia) holding a people-focused perspective to manage talent under the commitment and productivity-based HR systems and provides answers to the job design policy domain's questions in Figure 6.1. In the interview, this manager (Talent and OD manager-Australia) revealed that he assumed that the various value creation processes were possible for different kinds of employment modes.

The interpretation of the interview content during the thematic analysis uncovered the process of value creation through the different types of employees. Such as the interpretation of the interview shown in Figure 6.6 suggests that the manager (Talent and OD manager-Australia) assumed, in the case of the standard employees, value resides in the process of hiring externally or internally based on the need. However, in the case of the NSEs, the value resides in hiring the blue-collar workers only, and the white-collar workers could be employed only if they need to reduce the cost or the expert knowledge was not available in the organisation. This pattern was evident throughout the different policy domains, including job design, recruitment and selection, development and deployment, performance appraisals and rewarding in this interview. Twelve of the fifteen informants who indicated the need for a separate talent-based HR system said that they found it unlikely to follow the same talent perspective for both types of employment modes. However, they indicated that the talent-based practices, for example, identification of the critical skills needed for the organisation, remain the same for both kinds of employees; only the process may differ, an example of which is elaborated in Figure 6.6.

Questions for the practices under the job design domain	Value creation through the standard employees	Value creation through the non-standard employees
What are the critical and unique skills needed for the organisation?	Adaptability, understanding the competitive environment and understanding the upcoming challenges such as IT trends	Adaptability, understanding the competitive environment and understanding the upcoming challenges such as IT trends
Do we need to hire skilled employees from outside or skills are present in the organisation?	Both • The internal talent aligns with the organisational intends • The external talent brings new experience and is usually more innovative and focused	Both • The internal talent aligns with the organisational intends • The external talent brings new experience and is usually more innovative and focused • However, we prefer to hire blue non-standard workers. White collar non-standard workers are hired only if we exhaust all the options of standard workers or if the standard white collar workers are expensive to hire permanently. It also depends if we need to hire white collar employee for temporary projects.
Can we modify the job designs based on the skills needed to perform certain tasks (such as modification in the job design due to the advancement in technology)?	Our research department identifies the upcoming trends. We also benchmark activities of the competitors as well as the similar(based on certain characteristics such as size of the organisation, environment in which they are operating etc) organisations from other industries. We try to revise the job requirements especially of white collar workers based on the identified trends and to address challenges.	Our research department identifies the need of modified job design for every kind of employee. We don't need to change the design of the jobs for non-standard white collar employees as they are need based hiring which means they are always designed fresh based on the requirement.
How can we best utilise the individual talent (such as offering various tasks or rotating the jobs)?	We offer employees an opportunity to join other departments and utilise their best skills. This improves team working, assist people to benefit from the skills of people from various departments, reduces the cost of training, improves the commitment and overall efficiency of the employees	The non-standard employees are hired for specific job. We can best utilise their individual talent by communicating our expectations clearly and rewarding generously based on the role they perform.

Figure 6.6*- An example of value creation through different type of employees-Job design practices*

The value creation process through the different employment modes indicated the need for an extension in the talent-based HR systems presented in Figures 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4. Figure 6.7 illustrates an extension in the talent-based HR system proposed for managers with a people-focused perspective and can be imitated for other talent perspectives. On the right-hand side of the proposed talent-based HR system for the managers having a people-focused perspective in Figure 6.7, two columns are added; one for the value creation through the standard employees and the other is for the non-standard employees. The managers can answer the questions of the talent-based HR system in the relevant column for the systematic identification of the value-based practices under each policy domain, as mentioned in Figure 6.6.

Another pattern identified during the analysis was having different managerial perspectives for various employment modes. For example, five managers showed an inclination towards a people-focused perspective during the talent management of standard employees. However, they were inclined to other talent perspectives when considering the NSE. This pattern of having different managerial perspectives for various employment modes revealed a new aspect of talent perspectives that the managers do not solely rely on their understanding to manage talent; instead, they consider the mode of employment and alter their dominant talent perspective based on the external factors and organisational needs. Hence, analysis of the interviews revealed that a manager working for an organisation having an overall commitment-based HR system, for example, and managing a standard employee with a people-focused perspective doesn't need to hold the same perspective for the non-standard employees. Multiple options for talent in various employment modes added another layer of complexity, which is discussed in Section 6.5 under the discussion of hybrid HR architecture.

SRQ 3 has been addressed by extending the talent-based HR systems proposed in section 6.3 while addressing the SRQ2. The talent-based HR systems can be presented by dividing broadly into two major categories: value through standard employees and value through non-standard employees. The non-standard employees can be further divided into different categories such as contractors, casual, on-call or part-time employees. However, for simplicity, the talent-based HR system presented in Figure 6.7 is extended for two broad categories only: 1) standard employees and 2) non-standard employees.

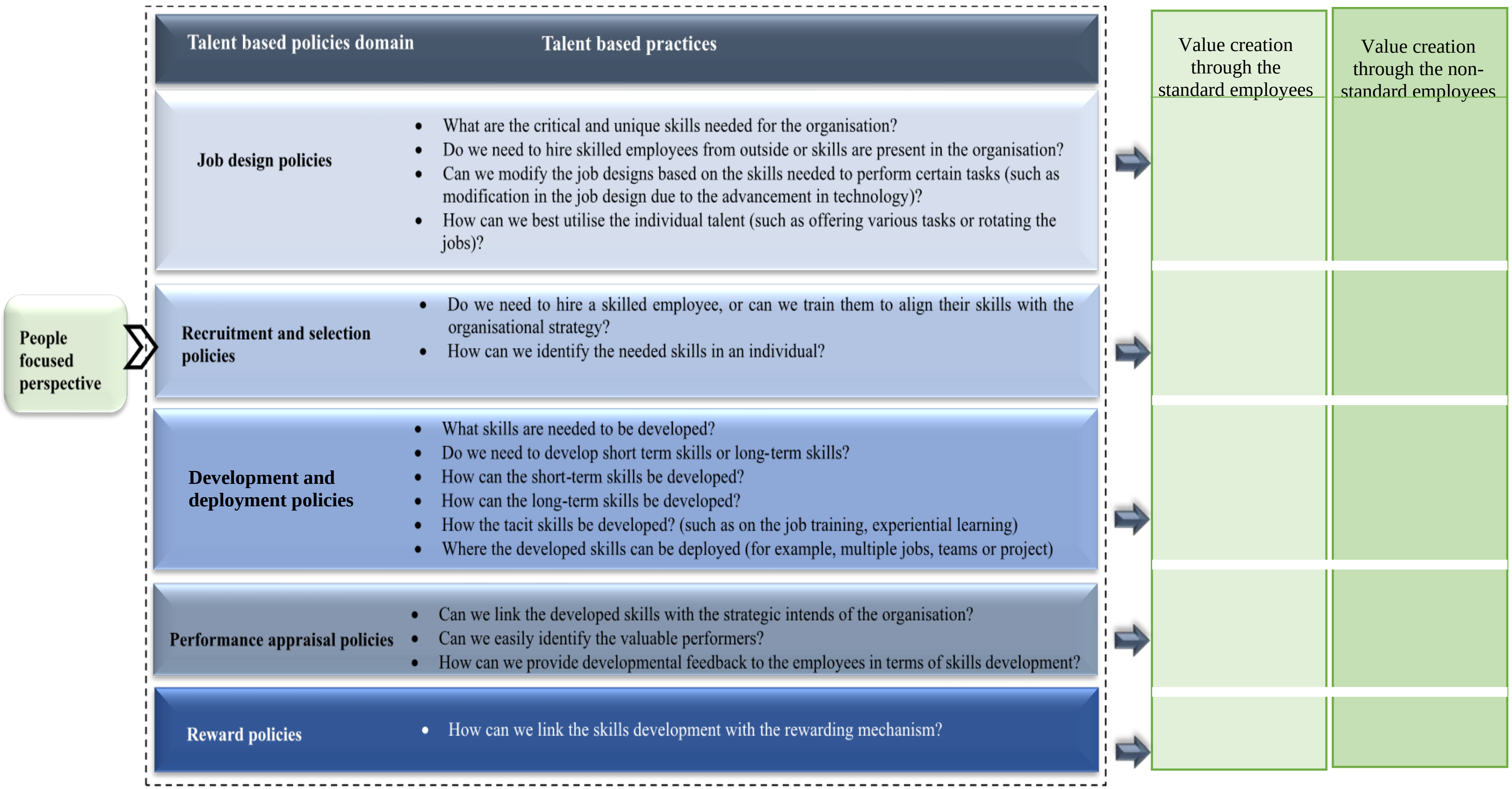


Figure 6.7- *Value creation through different type of employees*

The overall dominant HR system for the policy domain and talent perspectives for the practice domain highly influence the talent-based HR system for the standard and non-standard employees. However, the utilisation of multiple talent perspectives for different kinds of employees and employment modes is discretionary, and managers may have multiple talent perspectives of different types of employees.

6.5. Hybrid HR architecture

This section answers the PRQ, which is *'What hybrid HR architecture can be developed for MNEs using non-standard employment arrangements?'* and pulls the different components of the talent-based HR architecture discussed in sections 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4 and proposes a hybrid HR architectural framework that the managers and decision-makers can use as a decisional framework. At least three levels of complexities are to be addressed when deciding the talent-based HR systems and incorporating them into the hybrid HR architecture for an organisation, as discussed in the previous sections of this chapter. The first level of complexity is to determine which kind of HR system the organisation currently employs. Section 6.2 addresses this level of hybrid HR architecture and labels the HR systems. The literature indicates multiple conceptualisations of the HR systems; some scholars label HR systems with a dominant strategic HR focus, while some scholars bundle the HR practices without mentioning the HR strategic focus (Boon *et al.* 2019). Labelling the HR system with a strategic emphasis seemed appropriate as it provided a foundation for the talent-based HR systems. The analysis of the focus of HR systems in the sample organisations in this study, for example, assisted in proposing a framework of the talent-based HR practices grounded in the broader HR strategic focus of the organisation. For instance, an organisation having a commitment focus HR system may have multiple options to improve the commitment of talent, such as through a people-focused perspective which may consider the commitment of all employees or a strategic pool-focused perspective in which the commitment of only pivotal and important project teams may be considered important. The same organisation can adopt a position-focused perspective in which only the commitment of the pivotal position holders is considered important or practice-focused in which focus is to develop practices that may improve the commitment in all or selected employees.

The analysis presented in section 6.2 and Appendix B-Tables B.7 and B.8 indicated that the interviewees' organisations were not using a single strategic HR focus; instead, they were more inclined to use mixed HR systems. However, there was always a dominant HR focus with sub-focused HR systems, such as a few organisations that used commitment and productivity systems. However, commitment as a strategic focus was prevalent in practices, with productivity as a secondary focus. This analysis suggested that organisations may have as many as 15 HR strategic focuses to compose HR systems, as mentioned in Table 6.7.

The focus of strategic HR systems varies depending upon the organisational intent, cultural, legal, and demographical factors. For example, a senior HR manager (Middle East) mentioned that she preferred the compliance-based system because of the legal and cultural aspects. On the contrary, a senior HR manager (Europe) said that his organisation preferred the use of the commitment-based system because, legally, employees had multiple options to switch the organisation; hence, improving employees' commitment was considered essential for their organisation. The findings indicate that organisations may have different HR system foci than those discussed above. The addition in the HR system foci will increase the options available to the organisations and not affect the HR architecture's foundations.

Option	Focus
1	Commitment
2	Compliance
3	Collaboration
4	Productivity
5	Commitment and compliance
6	Commitment and collaboration
7	Commitment and productivity
8	Compliance and collaboration
9	Compliance and productivity
10	Collaboration and productivity
11	Commitment, compliance, and collaboration
12	Commitment, compliance, and productivity
13	Commitment, collaboration, and productivity
14	Compliance, collaboration, and productivity
15	Commitment, compliance, collaboration, and productivity

Table 6.7 *– Multiple strategic HR foci*

The second layer of complexity in the hybrid HR architecture is the dominant managerial talent perspective to manage talent. As mentioned in Figure 6.5, an organisation may have four choices to manage talent with each HR system, which increases numerously the ways organisations can manage their talent. Analysis of the interviews in sections 6.3 and 6.4 showed that organisations use various perspectives to manage talent along with having multiple HR systems as a strategic focus. For example, in Figure 6.8, parts 1 and 2 present simple and complex examples, respectively, of the HR system and talent perspectives analysed from the interviews. The presence of multiple HR systems foci and multiple talent perspectives lead the organisation to configure optimal and differentiated talent-based HR systems.

Figure 6.8 shows an example that if an organisation has commitment and productivity as strategic HR focus, then the managers may have people focused perspective to improve the commitment and productivity as a simple case as presented in part 1. Managers may also opt for a position-focused perspective to improve the commitment of elite employees and a people-focused to improve the productivity of all employees, as presented in part 2. This complexity increases if the organisation has multiple HR foci.

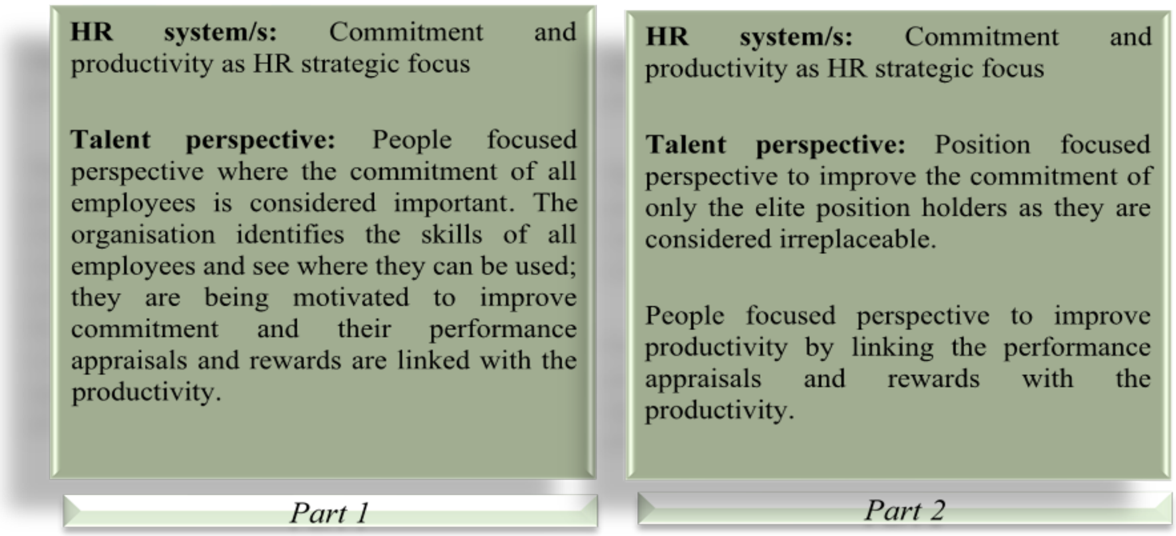


Figure 6.8- *A simple and a complex example of talent-based HR system*

The third layer of complexity in the hybrid HR architecture is the decision about the multiple employment arrangements. Figure 6.9 explains this complexity; part 3 is the extension of part 1 in Figure 6.8 and is analysed from the same interview as part 1. Part 4 is an extension of part 2 in Figure 6.8 and is analysed from the same interview as part 2.

The analysis in section 6.4 indicated that the organisations realise the need to change the typical employment arrangements and consider the mix of standard and non-standard employment arrangements for organisational effectiveness. However, this decision increases the complexity in terms of strategic HR focus and its linked talent perspectives. The analysis in section 6.4 indicated that some managers having a people-focused perspective for the standard employee, for example, possessed the position-focused perspective to manage talent identified through non-standard employment arrangements. This added complexity allows the organisations to have multiple talent-based HR systems for different employment arrangements. It is important to note that the managers mentioned that they have different management styles for the contractors and the part-time or on-call employees, which makes hybrid HR architecture even more complex.

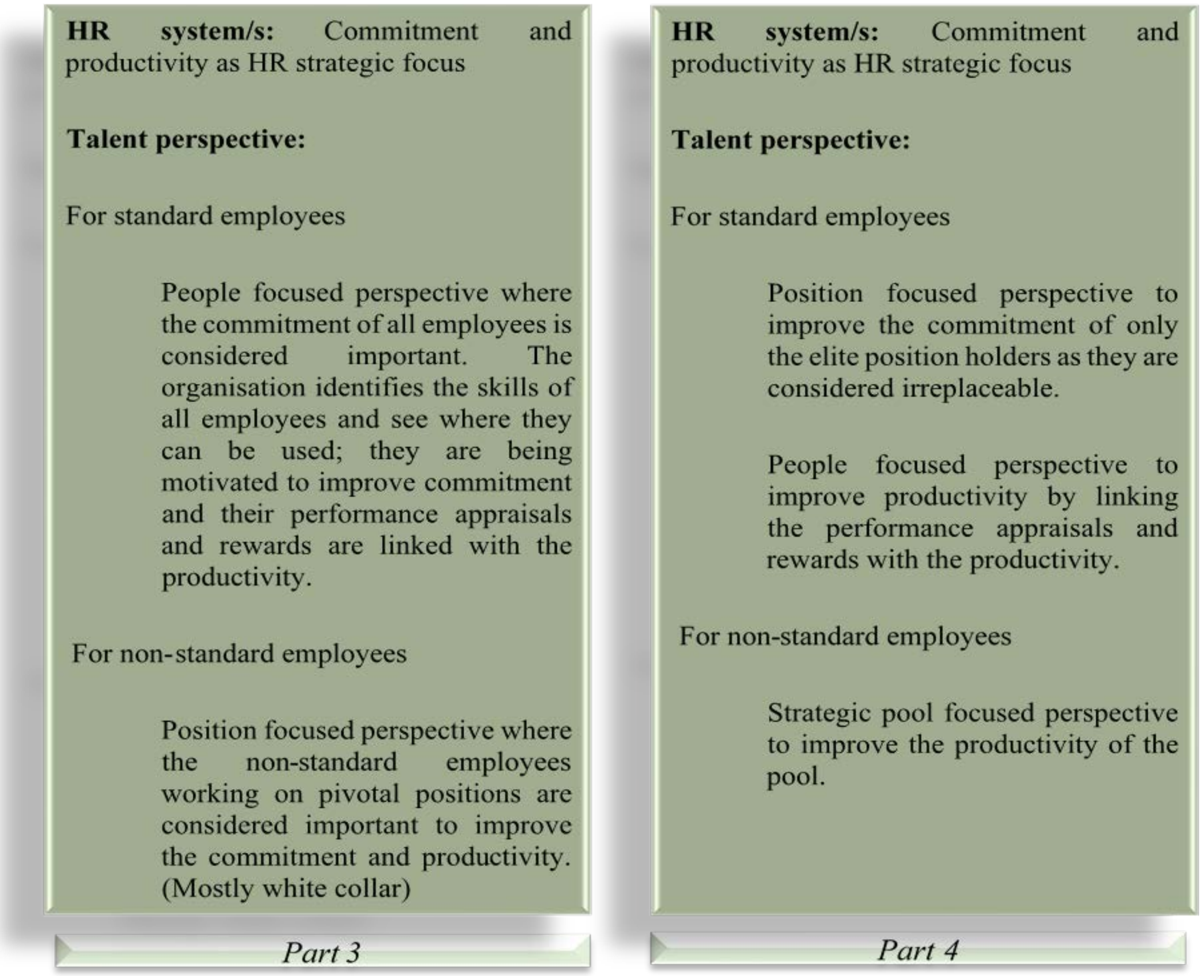


Figure 6.9- *A simple and a complex example of talent-based HR system with multiple employment modes*

Combining the three layers of complexity discussed above, Figure 6.10 and Table 6.8 illustrate the proposed hybrid talent-based HR architectural decisional framework. Figure 6.10 is the first part of the proposed hybrid talent-based HR architectural framework in which managers can select the strategic focus in step 1 and talent perspective in step 2 (empty boxes are used to select the relevant option). The managers can also mention the planned value creation for standard employees (SEs) and non-standard employees (NSEs) in step 3. In step 3, they can decide whether they want to use the same value creation process for NSEs as they plan for SE or will it be different.

After identifying the planned value creation through different employees, managers can choose the talent perspective they are more inclined to and then use the questions to develop the talent practices under each policy domain by utilising the tables presented in the second part of the framework. For example, a manager having a commitment-based HR system as a strategic focus and a people-focused perspective to manage talent can answer the questions mentioned in Table 6.8 under each domain to create value through SEs and NSEs. A manager may choose a people-focused perspective for job design and recruitment and selection, but position-focused on development and deployment and rewarding. This is also possible that the same manager has a strategic pool-focused perspective for the NSEs, and he/she may mention it in the first part of the framework in Figure 6.10 under step 3. The proposed framework will assist in the systematic identification of the components of the hybrid HR architecture and optimal configurations of talent-based HR systems that will be differentiated and unique for every organisation based on the organisation's specific needs. It appears that the talent-based HR architecture presented in Figure 6.10 and Table 6.8 is both for SE and NSEs. This is partly correct because the talent-based HR systems that are the foundation of this architecture are presented for all employees. However, the architecture presented here represents the optimal configurations and the differentiated HR design based on the type of the employees. It is discussed in the review of literature that NSEs are all those employees that are not standard. This argument increases the chance of the variety of employees that the organisation can hire as NSEs. For example, an organisation may have 70% SEs and 30% NSEs; for all SEs, they may have the same talent-based HR system, but for the different types of NSEs such as contractors, part-time, on-call or casual employees, they may need separate talent-based HR system each. Hence the architectural framework proposed in Figure 6.10 and Table 6.8 benefits more the non-standard employment arrangements even if NSEs are very few in percentage in the organisation; for example, overall, 30% NSEs with a breakdown of 5% casual, 15% part-time, 3% on-call employees and 2% contractors.

6.6. Summary

The illustrative and analytical interpretations of the data assisted in finding the answers to the PRQ and three SRQs of this research study. Following the analysis and interpretation procedure presented in chapter 5, the interpretation of the data discussed in chapter 6 indicated that the informants mentioned multiple HR systems within one organisation to manage HR effectively.

The discussion with the strategic HR managers revealed that the organisations had a major strategic HR focus, such as cost-saving or improving commitment; however, each HR practice had a different focus. This showed that the organisations were already using combinations of HR systems. However, the managers identified the need for separate HR systems for various types of employees. The talent perspectives of HR managers were identified from the interviews to find the reasons for adopting and devising different types of HR systems. Multiple talent perspectives were found during the thematic analysis of interviews, which revealed that managers devise the HR practices based on their talent perspectives while confining the talent-based HR practice in their organisation's broader and dominant HR system. The talent perspectives revealed that a few managers follow certain practices based on their understanding of talent. A few managers follow some HR practices because of their organisations' policies. Regardless of the reasons to follow a particular talent perspective, all managers who were the informants justified the HR practices they were following based on their understanding of talent.

Based on the opinion of the managers, talent-based HR systems are proposed for the systematic identification of the talent and its effective use. These systems are provided in the form of a framework that includes some questions that a manager answer to develop a talent-based HR system. The talent-based HR systems can be used for the HR decision-making of all kinds of employees, including SEs and NSEs. However, the proposed framework based on the talent-based HR systems seems more beneficial for non-standard employment arrangements and their optimal configuration to gain a competitive advantage.

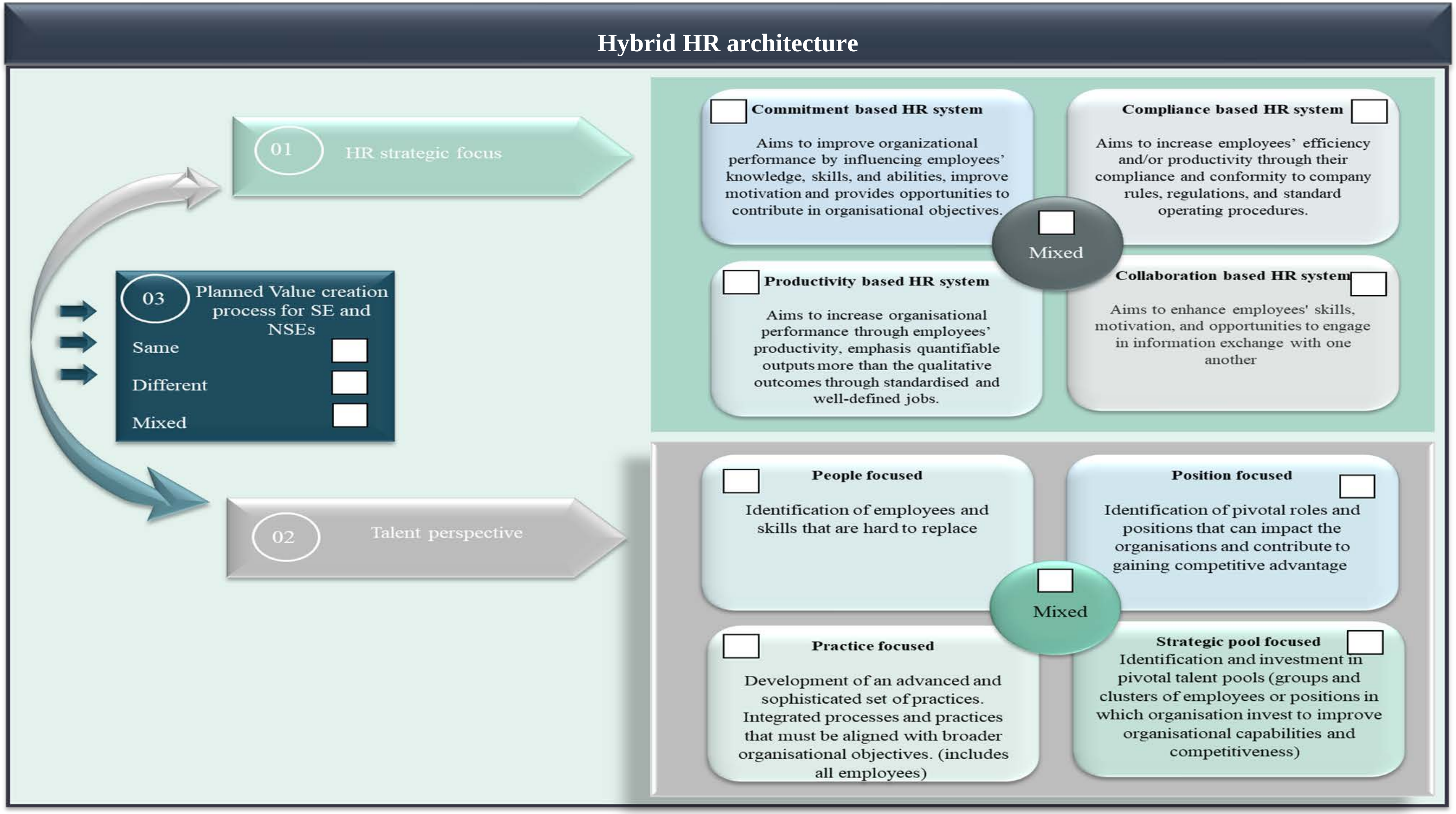


Figure 6.10 *- Hybrid architectural framework-part 1*

Talent Perspectives	Domain					Value creation in each domain	
	Job design	Recruitment and selection	Development and deployment	Performance appraisals	Rewarding	Through SEs	Through NSEs
	Questions to be asked						
People-focused	What are the critical and unique skills needed for the organisation? Do we need to hire skilled employees from outside, or skills are present in the organisation? Can we modify the job designs based on the skills needed to perform certain tasks? How can we best utilise the individual talent?	Do we need to hire skilled employee, or can we train them to align their skills with the organisational strategy? How can we identify the needed skills in an individual?	What skills are needed to be developed? Do we need to develop short term skills or long-term skills? How can short-term skills be developed? How can long-term skills be developed? How the tacit skills developed? Where the developed skills can be deployed	Can we link the developed skills with the strategic intends of the organisation? Can we easily identify the valuable performers? How can we provide developmental feedback to the employees in terms of skills development?	How can we link the skills development with the rewarding mechanism?	How can value be created in each domain for SEs?	How can value be created in each domain for NSEs?

Table 6.8 *- Hybrid architectural framework-part 2*

Talent Perspectives	Domain					Value creation in each domain	
	Job design	Recruitment and selection	Development and deployment	Performance appraisals	Rewarding	Through SEs	Through NSEs
	Questions to be asked						
Practice-focused	How can the future supply of valuable HR be affected by the external changes? What are our core competencies that can be used as a competitive advantage? How can we use valuable HR to contribute to the organisational core competencies? Do we facilitate internal mobility of the valuable HR? Are we flexible for multiple career management?	How can we conduct an effective analysis of the talent pools (in terms of hiring trained employees, shrinking the risk of reduced supply in future, flexibility etc.)? Can we allow decentralised recruitment practices? (if yes, is it conditional?) Do we need benchmarking competitor's HR recruitment practices? (if yes, has the analysis been done?) How aware the third part recruiters are from the core competencies and the requirement of the organisation?	What system do we have/can develop to identify the high potential individuals for effective onboarding? What instruments do we have/can develop to identify the training needs? What training systems do we have? (for example, flexible development, contribution-based training systems, learning opportunities etc) . What career management systems do we have?	Is our performance review process linked with the organisational outcomes? Is our talent review process linked with the selection of employees? What mechanisms can be used to manage underperformance?	How can we link the performance with the rewarding mechanism?	How can value be created in each domain for SEs?	How can value be created in each domain for NSEs?

***Table 6.8** - Hybrid architectural framework-part 2-* *continued*

***Table 6.8** - Hybrid architectural framework-part 2-continued*

Talent Perspectives	Domain					Value creation in each domain	
	Job design	Recruitment and selection	Development and deployment	Performance appraisals	Rewarding	Through SEs	Through NSEs
	Questions to be asked						
Position-focused	What (managerial/non-managerial) positions are pivotal for the organisation? What roles are critical for the organisation? What are the critical and unique skills needed for the critical roles and positions? Do we need to hire skilled employees from outside, or skills are present in the organisation for critical roles and positions? How can we categorise all roles in the organisation as [1]A, B or C roles? [1]A role= Critical to execute strategy with variety of skills needed B role= Critical to execute strategy with common skills C role=Non-core roles that perform functions and can be outsourced	How can we develop effective portfolios of A, B and C roles? How can we conduct an effective analysis of talent pools for hiring on critical roles?	What training mechanism do we have to develop A and B players? Are we developing the talent pipeline to ensure that the successors of the A players are also A players? (such as leadership development programs)	What system do we have to objectively differentiate the high performer and a low performer hired on A, B and C roles? What system do we have to link the high and low performance objectively on critical roles? (such as determining the characteristics of good leadership).	Do we have disproportionate compensation and rewarding mechanism for critical roles? Do we link the high performance on critical roles with the rewarding mechanism? Do we link the development of employees performing critical roles with the rewards and compensation? Do we link the performance on non-critical roles with the rewarding?	How can value be created in each domain for SEs?	How can value be created in each domain for NSEs?

Talent Perspectives	Domain					Value creation in each domain	
	Job design	Recruitment and selection	Development and deployment	Performance appraisals	Rewarding	Through SEs	Through NSEs
	Questions to be asked						
Strategic pool-focused	What (managerial/non-managerial) positions are pivotal for the organisation? How can we fill critical managerial and non-managerial positions? What (managerial/non-managerial) roles are critical for the organisation? To whom can we assign the important roles in the organisation? How can we categorise all roles in the organisation as [1]A, B or C roles? [1]A role= Critical to execute strategy with variety of skills needed B role= Critical to execute strategy with common skills C role=Non-core roles that perform functions and can be outsourced	How can we develop effective portfolios of A, B and C roles? How can we conduct an effective analysis of talent pools for hiring on critical roles? Do we need to hire skilled employee, or can we train them to align their skills with the organisational strategy? How can we identify the needed skills in an individual?	What skills are needed to be developed? How can the short-term skills be developed? How can long-term skills be developed? How be the tacit skills developed? (such as on the job training, experiential learning). What training mechanism do we have to develop A and B and C roles players? Are we developing the talent pipeline to ensure that the successors of the A players are also A players? (such as leadership development programs)	What system do we have to objectively differentiate the high performer and a low performer hired on A, B and C roles? What system do we have to link the high and low performance objectively on all roles? Can we link the developed skills with the strategic intends of the organisation? How can we provide developmental feedback to the employees in terms of skills development?	How can we link the skills development with the rewarding mechanism? Do we have disproportionate compensation and rewarding mechanism for some roles? Do we link the high performance on critical roles with the rewarding mechanism? Do we link the performance on non-critical roles with the rewarding?	How can value be created in each domain for SEs?	How can value be created in each domain for NSEs?

Table 6.8 - *Hybrid architectural framework-part 2-continued*

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

7.1. Introduction

The main objective of this study was to explore the multiple talent-based HR configurations and components of the hybrid HR architecture. The PRQ underpinning this research was: what hybrid HR architecture can be developed for MNEs using non-standard employment arrangements? Three SRQs were identified by examining the research objectives to address the PRQ logically and rationally, as discussed in chapter one. A literature review was conducted to address the PRQ and three SRQs. Chapters two and three presented the review of relevant HR theories, literature and future research directions. Chapter three focused on the solutions to the HR management problems for the non-standard workforce with the help of future directions provided by the researchers of the HRM field and practitioners discussed in chapter two. Chapter three was a solution-oriented review of literature in which the different components of the hybrid HR architecture were theoretically and conceptually proposed.

Chapter four presented a methodology to meet the objectives of this research and discussed the philosophical and methodological choices of this research based on the justification and how to reach the appropriate informants of the phenomenon under discussion. Chapter five presented the analysis and its process side by side. A six-phased thematic analysis was clarified through examples by discussing how the transcribed data was tagged, tags were clustered into three-level codes, the codes were clustered into themes, and the codes and themes were linked. Chapter six combined the results of thematic analysis and proposed a talent-based hybrid HR architectural framework.

This chapter has four parts; first, it discusses the major findings of this research. Second, this chapter reviews how this research contributes to coping with the various challenges in HRM faced by MNEs. Third, the limitations of this study are raised, which may have affected some parts of the research and fourth, it provides future research directions.

7.2. Findings of the study

This thesis suggests two critical aspects of HRM; the employee side and the organisational side. For the employees and the global talent, it suggests that technology has provided an opportunity for employees to choose their employer, work, mode and time at their convenience hence changing the characteristics of workforce and employment relationships. Technology has also allowed employees to work for multiple organisations simultaneously, thus shifting the balance of the human capital market to the employee side. This shift has risked the organisational intent of gaining a competitive advantage. From the organisational side, this thesis finds that the MNEs lack a decisional framework to manage a new type of workforce and employment relationships. It also suggests the need to alter the lens to view the HRM practices and, therefore, use the lens of talent management to develop the HR practices, activities, and processes and propose a framework to bundle them optimally.

The findings of this study can be categorised as 1) from literature and 2) through empirical study. The findings based on the literature review suggested that HR systems and sub-systems can be used to gain a competitive advantage and improve efficiency and agility. Moreover, various combinations of HR systems and sub-systems can be optimised by organisations; however, the lack of an HR system based configurational framework requires the attention of HR scholars. The literature review also suggested that talent management can be used as a new lens to view HR systems. Moreover, the literature on non-standard employment arrangements suggested a need for the development of new HR systems.

This study employed qualitative research methods to collect and analyse the data. The qualitative study was required to explore the various components of the talent-based HR systems. The views of strategic HR managers as informants were taken to explore the talent-based HR systems components. The reasons for choosing strategic HR managers as informants were twofold; 1) the strategic HR managers were the most relevant informants who could provide information about the HR systems and 2) as they were directly involved in the formulation of HR systems, their suggestions could be most valuable and practical in nature. The strategic HR managers selected as informants were directly involved in the policy development of different HR functions such as HR planning, recruitment and selection, development, deployment, and rewarding policies.

The informants of this study, the strategic HR managers, suggested that MNEs are not ready to cope with the HR challenges posed due to globalisation and technological advancements such as changes in employment relationships. They also indicated that the tremendous increase in non-standard work arrangements requires serious re-consideration of managing their human resources. They also discussed that they are still trying to manage all types of workforces through traditional HRM practices. However, they are looking for more agile ways to address the need for all human resources under various employment modes. The agile solutions were discussed with them, such as considering employees as unique talent and aligning the talent with the organisation's strategic intent.

Talent-based HR systems were proposed based on the different managerial perspectives and philosophies identified in this research through the literature review and interviewing the HR managers. The proposed talent-based HR systems collated the HR practices, processes and activities based on the managerial perspectives and philosophies to manage talent. These talent-based HR systems discussed how different talent perspectives and talent philosophies influence the management of employees.

The results of this study reveal numerous managerial perspectives to managing HR that are independent of the HR systems. For example, HR managers in one organisation may follow a position-focused perspective on improving commitment. In contrast, in another organisation, a manager may follow a practice-focused perspective on enhancing commitment. This important finding presents a new and different picture of HR systems discussed in the literature. The current HRM literature discusses the strategic or non-strategic focus of HR systems such as commitment-based or productivity-based but lacks the discussion on the relationship of managerial talent perspectives with the HR systems.

This study finds that HR managers in an organisation may follow a people-focused perspective on standard employees and a strategic pool-focused perspective for non-standard employees. This is an important finding because it segregates the talent perspectives based on the type of employment arrangement and thus is a contribution to the literature of HRM. This finding also indicates that organisations may have multiple talent-based HR systems operating simultaneously for different types of employees. Moreover, it provides foundations for the talent-based HR systems for standard and non-standard employees. The findings suggest that the HR managers at strategic positions differ in adopting HR systems and talent perspectives. The role of strategic HR managers in their organisation and their previous experience of working on HR roles with MNEs influenced the most the talent perspectives and the suggestions on HR systems.

A framework is proposed to assist in developing a talent-based HR system architecture for strategic HR managers. The proposed talent-based hybrid HR architectural framework is an attempt to structure the talent-based HR systems with multiple managerial perspectives under various strategically focused HR systems. This architectural framework is important because it pulls the various characteristics of strategically focused HR systems, managers' talent perspectives, and talent-based HR systems. The proposed framework is based on the opinion of the strategic HR managers and is supported by the literature such as Lepak and Snell (2007), Kang *et al.* (2007), Sparrow and Makram (2015), Morris *et al.* (2016), Cascio and Boudreau (2017), Lepak *et al.* (2017), Hansen *et al.* (2019), Collings *et al.* (2019), and Luo *et al.* (2020).

The proposed framework allows managers to choose different employment arrangements and develop differentiated talent-based HR systems for them. It is helpful when using multiple HR systems at the same time and utilising an optimal workforce. For example, an organisation's strategic HR managers may decide to divide their workforce into 60% standard and 40% non-standard workforce. Under the 40% non-standard workforce, they may have 20% contractors, 10% part-time, 5% casual and 5% on-call employees. With the proposed framework, the manager, in the example above, can develop five different talent-based HR systems and can combine them in a broader talent-based hybrid HR architecture that can be unique for their organisation. These five different talent-based HR systems can use the unique skills of different types of employees. For example, the strategic HR manager may decide to employ 20% of contractors for the completion of short-term projects. These contractors can provide specialised services aligned with the organisation's strategic intent and can be separated from the organisation at the end of the project.

7.3. Contributions of the study

This study emphasises that managerial perspectives to understand talent management are crucial and that talent-based HR systems can provide organisations with an opportunity to deal with the current HR-related challenges. Moreover, it adds value to contemporary theory and practice by proposing various talent-based HR systems and their optimal configurations. The optimal configurations of talent-based HR systems can be helpful for MNEs to restore the balance of the human capital market. Moreover, this configurational view could help organisations to deal with the challenges of Industry 4.0 by hiring a specialised workforce. Furthermore, the managerial decisional framework based on the optimal configurations can assist organisations to reduce the post-COVID-19 economic impact. This research contributes to both research and practice. There are various theoretical and conceptual contributions, such as using effective ways to improve response rates, declaration of the detailed process of parallel analysis, observation of saturation at various levels, and developing a theoretical framework that can be adapted inimitably by various organisations in the range of industries.

The data collection started during the initial outbreak of COVID-19 and when the world was locked down, which significantly impacted the response rate. There were different psychological mechanisms for the informants that were used to improve the response rate. For example, indicating their importance as informants, the value of their views in the research, and how can they contribute to the development of the future of HR, especially to cope with the post-COVID-19 impact, improved their willingness to contribute. It also included noting the time zone of the potential informants and sending them an email at the time that should be the first email in their mailbox on a working day, motivating them through reminder emails and indicating that strategic HR managers of other MNEs are also participating in this study. The improved response rate in the crisis is the theoretical contribution of this study in the motivation theory to improve the response rate in qualitative studies, as discussed by Wenemark *et al.* (2011).

This research used a grounded theorisation process to observe bounded theme emergence, explore the components of talent-based HR systems, and develop a framework grounded in the views of the managers who anticipated the future of HR. The detailed data collection and parallel analysis process are discussed, contributing to the qualitative research literature. Parallel analysis such as initial analysis of data to note the narrative of each interview, comparing initial analysis of each subsequent interview and observing any new ideas help to cease the data collection. Also, the parallel analysis provides a foundation for a detailed analysis and development of codes and themes. The detail of the process helps improve the replicability of research. Also, it adds to the literature related to saturation observation. Saturation is observed at four different levels to ensure accurate interpretations and draw maximum possible meanings from the data. A thorough process of saturation observation discussed in this study contributes to the literature of qualitative research generally and the literature related to the rigour in research and data saturation specifically. It contributes to the literature by discussing how the saturation at different levels can contribute to a thorough thematic analysis. The literature indicates that saturation at any level can be observed in qualitative research to cease data collection. However, in this study, saturation is observed at four levels and is used to cease data collection and ensure that no data, meaning, and reasoning are left excluded. This study suggests that observation of saturation at different levels improves the thoroughness of analysis. It reduces the subjectivity in qualitative analysis because assessing the codes, themes, meanings and the entire data set for any new aspect in data or identifying any diverging interpretations can be noticed at this stage of data analysis.

This research proposed an HR decisional framework that can be used by various organisations in different industries inimitably. Strategic HR managers discussed that they wish to develop a unique HR system to gain a competitive advantage and this optimal HR configurations based decisional framework could be useful for them. The proposed framework is differentiated from the other existing frameworks and thus adds to the body of knowledge of SHRM. For example, Lepak *et al.* (2017) suggest that organisations can configure various employment systems and sub-systems and develop HR architecture, but that architecture can be unstable as the value and uniqueness of the human capital can be changed. This current study developed the HR architecture considering the value in the various talent life-cycle stages. This reduces the chance of dynamism in the HR systems and provides a relatively stable HR architectural framework. Moreover, this study uses the managerial perspectives on talent to develop HR systems and provide a decisional framework based on those perspectives. This makes the decisional framework clear and stable, even if the talent perspectives vary for different employment arrangements.

This research suggests working on various managerial talent perspectives and developing their link with the HR systems. Moreover, it also provides theoretical foundations by proposing a theoretical framework to link the components of value with the managerial talent perspectives and develop the talent-based HR systems. Additionally, it provides an opportunity to further explore the HR architectural perspective of SHRM through the lens of talent management to cope with the challenges of integration of Industry 4.0 and relevant HRM issues.

Conceptually proposed talent-based hybrid HR architecture adds value to the literature on HRM. A framework with the help of strategic HR managers to utilise the various types of the workforce generally and non-standard workforce specifically is proposed, which adds value to the literature. The non-standard workforce has more opportunities to work with multiple organisations simultaneously, choosing their own work, mode and time at their convenience and are directly linked with the strategic intents of the organisations, such as highly skilled temporary employees working for a project in an organisation.

Proposed optimal configurations of talent-based HR systems also add to the body of scholarship in SHRM. The ideally bundled talent-based HR practices, activities and processes in multiple HR systems and their best configurations based on the needs of the organisation is termed hybrid HR architecture. This hybrid HR architecture also provides a decisional framework for the managers in MNEs utilising or intended to utilise a non-standard workforce.

In addition, the current study contributes to the existing literature on TM. To date, the literature in TM is slanted towards practices rather than policies; just three talent practises, including talent recruiting, talent development, and talent retention, have garnered substantial academic attention (Aljbour et al. 2021). This study examined talent management policies instead of practices and contributed to the TM literature. The policies presented in this thesis, which contribute to the TM literature, pertain to job design, attraction and selection, development and deployment, and rewarding. This study also examined policies that applied to the complete talent lifecycle; it included policies that applied to planning, attracting, recruiting, deploying, engaging, and rewarding.

This study contributes to the literature and practice on non-standard work. It extends the growing body of literature on non-standard employees by elaborating on the distinction between non-standard work arrangements and non-standard employment relationships. Furthermore, this research advances the NWA literature by discussing the impact of work arrangements on employment relations in non-standard work. This theoretical contribution could aid in formulating non-standard employment and work relations policies for organisations. Moreover, this research establishes a link between talent management and non-traditional employment. There is a strong emphasis on how each component of the talent lifecycle may be managed in detail in NWA, which is a theoretical contribution of this study.

For practitioners, this study provides a decisional framework for the development of talent-based HR practices, activities, and processes to create value from human capital. As discussed by the strategic HR managers, their organisations lack the decisional framework for managing non-standard employees; they anticipated the relevance of this decisional framework with their current HR-related needs. As foreseen by the strategic HR managers, this framework will assist them in assessing the appropriateness of human capital decisions, such as investment in important and pivotal talent, that can contribute to the strategic success and competitiveness of the organisation. Moreover, this study provides an opportunity for managers to select their managerial perspective on talent management, use it for various types of employment arrangements, develop unique HR systems for their organisations and configure those unique HR systems in the central HR system.

7.4. Limitations

This exploratory study's outcomes are influenced by some factors such as methodological and analytical decisions, time and resource constraints, and the outbreak of pandemic COVID-19 and thus are subject to limitations. First, although a relatively conservative industry was appropriate to collect data as discussed in Chapter Four, the methodological choice made to contact strategic HR managers from a specific industry limits this study's generalisability. Any industry operating in a dynamic environment such as the ICT industry could not separate the dynamism from its core processes and practices. To provide a foundation level, talent-based hybrid HR architecture would be a very complex task for such an industry. For example, this study only considered various components of value in the talent lifecycle stages. A dynamic industry highly affected by technological advancements would need to add another layer of value component in the technology lifecycle along with the talent lifecycle in the talent-based HR systems, which would not only be complex but also would not be useful for every industry.

The established components of the hybrid HR architecture can be transferred to other industries and can be adjusted based on the industry characteristics. However, the analytical generalisability may have been impacted by the methodological decision of selecting a conservative industry for data collection and may present a different result in other industries due to the differences in industry characteristic. For example, this research aimed to analytically and theoretically generalise the underlying structures such as talent-based perspective and philosophies that impact HR managers' decision patterns. As it investigated talent perspectives, talent-based HR systems, and HR architecture development in a conservative industry, the industry operating in a progressive environment such as IT and telecommunication may present different decision patterns based on the sources of dynamism discussed in Chapter four.

This study is not statistically generalisable. Chapter four discussed that statistical generalisability was not the aim of this research as this is exploratory research. Also, it aims to propose a differentiated hybrid HR architectural framework that can be unique for every organisation; thus, statistical generalisability was not possible. However, the proposed talent-based hybrid HR architectural framework can be used widely by considering the industry characteristics, thus offering conceptual generalisability. For example, managers can use the proposed framework to determine the role of HR and talent in value creation. Other industries can add various factors and HR to create value, such as the IT and telecommunication industries heavily rely on technology to create value, the hospitality industry relies on services, and the manufacturing industry relies on sophisticated processes to create value. The role of HR can be different in each industry; thus, this framework provides a theoretically generalised framework that various industries can optimise.

The analytical choices made throughout the data analysis and the development of the talent-based hybrid HR architectural framework may have impacted the transferability, application, and implementation of the proposed framework to other industries. The data, theme, code, and meaning saturation observation helped in the data collection cease point determination; however, this process may have impacted data transferability. For example, the data collected from a single industry resulted in a significant drop in the theme and meaning emergence after the fifteenth interview. The possible convergence of data could be attached to the homogenous sample; for example, the informants in the same industry provided their views that were highly influenced by the characteristics of the transport and logistics industry alone. A few more themes and meanings could be observed if more than one industry had been considered. However, to provide a foundation level framework, a single industry was used as a sample in this study.

The analytical choices made in this study resulting in the hybrid HR architectural framework are presented in the most suitable way considered by the researcher. Corbin and Strauss (2015) discuss that there are various ways to present data, and it is up to the analyst to present the way one finds it appropriate. However, the application and implementation of the framework may consider another way suitable to the user of the framework. Similarly, another investigator of the phenomenon in the same or another industry can adopt a different way of presenting the framework. Moreover, the inherent subjectivities in the interpretations of the results of this research are recognised and acknowledged by the researcher of this study. Hence, to mitigate the issue of subjectivity, the process of interpretations is declared and discussed in chapter five, results are presented as insights instead of facts, and interpretations are open for criticism, alternative understandings and further research.

Although various steps have been taken to improve the valid interpretation of the interviews and the data collected, a quantitative study was not possible to validate the framework due to time and resource constraints. Also, the aim of this research was to explore the components of talent-based hybrid HR architecture; hence a qualitative study was required instead of a quantitative. However, the results were shared with the participating managers, and they appreciated the outcomes. Still, this framework may need a longitudinal study to measure the proposed framework's impacts and effectiveness.

The outbreak of COVID-19 impacted the data collection process; contributions from more valuable informants would be expected in a normal situation. During the lockdown period of COVID-19, strategic HR managers were working on uninterrupted business operations and were less concerned about the research. Moreover, many potential valuable informants were not available for interviews during seven months of data collection due to home-based working or reduced accessibility due to the leave programs introduced by the organisations during the pandemic to minimise cost. One of the significant impacts of COVID-19 on this research was the significantly lower response rate than expected. It did not impact the results because the code, theme, meaning and data saturation were observed and data collection was not ceased until the saturation was reached; however, it impacted the duration of the overall project.

7.5. Future research directions

There are several future research recommendations of this study. Firstly, future researchers may find another way to interpret and present the talent-based HR architectural framework following the process discussed in this study. As mentioned in the previous section, the proposed framework acknowledges the inherent subjectivity from the qualitative study; hence there may be other ways to interpret and present it. This may include the re-definition of talent management, talent-based value-driven framework, talent-based HR systems and talent-based HR architectural framework. This may also include restructuring the talent-based HR architectural framework components by analysing and presenting the results by employing different methodological and analytical choices.

Secondly, the proposed talent-based hybrid HR architectural framework can be theoretically extended to other industries. The present study provides a theoretical foundation and explains a thorough process to conduct similar research in other industries, making it possible to extend the current framework in other industries. Thirdly, the present framework can be compared with other industry's theoretical frameworks to develop an industry-specific HR architecture. The extension of the proposed talent-based hybrid HR architectural framework to the other industries and the comparison can help explore the difference in the framework's various components based on the industry characteristics such as value creation through different resources.

Fourthly, the framework can be validated and empirically tested in the same industry with industry experts help. Moreover, this framework can be studied in longitudinal research in which the effectiveness of the framework can be tested. Similar can be done for the extended framework in the other industries. This was not included in this current research because of the different objectives and the qualitative nature of this study. Empirical testing can help to advance the architectural framework in the same and other industries.

Fifth, an important aspect that can be studied is the legal reforms for the non-standard workers and their impact on the proposed talent-based HR systems and talent-based hybrid HR architectural framework. This could not be covered in this current study because the aim was to explore the component of talent-based HR systems. The impact of external factors such as labour legislation could be studied if the talent-based HR system was already adopted by individual organisations and was optimally configured in the central HR system. Labour legislation can be studied for the MNEs operating in different parts of the world and the impact of legislation on the proposed framework. Similar can be studied for the impact of the culture on the different components of the hybrid HR architecture such as job design, recruitment and selection, training and development, and compensation and rewards.

The sixth, seventh and the last future research recommendation relate to the different areas under the business and management. Research can be conducted on various aspects and components of the proposed talent-based HR architectural framework to see how well each component aligns with the overall strategy and its aspects, such as financial strategy. For example, the value component of the hybrid HR architecture can be researched as an integrated component that simultaneously impacts the development of employees based on the finances available.

The value-driven framework can be extended in parallel issues such as customer lifecycle, product lifecycle or technology lifecycle depending upon the organisational preferences to create value from. For example, this study assumes HR as the most valuable resource of the organisation to gain a competitive advantage; hence the value-driven framework focuses on the talent lifecycle stages in this study. For example, an organisation considers technology as a source of competitive advantage along with human resources. In that case, the value-driven framework can be extended for the technology lifecycle along with the talent lifecycle. The researchers can focus the industries and their sources of value creation on extending the value-driven framework.

Lastly, a hybrid value architecture can be an exciting area of future research. For example, researchers may identify the multiple sources of competitive advantage in a single organisation, such as HR, technology and product.Based on these multiple sources of competitive advantages, a researcher may develop a talent-based hybrid architectural framework for strategic decision-making. The allocation of resources is possible by rankingan organisation allocates to the sources of competitive advantage and their optimal configurations. This also includes researching talent management as a primary or a support activity in the organisation based on its sources of competitive advantage.

7.6. Summary

This study offers insights into talent management, its various aspects and utilises it as a lens to alter the traditional way of looking at the SHRM. It also discusses that rapid changes in employment arrangements and technological advancements indicate the need for an altered view to manage talent. It contributes to the literature and the practices of employment modes generally and non-standard employment modes specifically and proposes a framework for the systematic identification and management of the different type of employees. It provides a decisional framework that allows the strategic HR managers to consider how value can be created in the systematic identification and management of talent by aligning them with the organisation's strategic intent and developing an inimitable and unique talent-based HR architecture for their organisation. Moreover, this research can reduce the post-COVID-19 economic impacts on organisations by proposing HR systems for various employment arrangements, which are already significantly increasing. The reduction of post-COVID-19 impact is possible through the proposed decisional framework by reducing the HR cost and hiring the talent aligned with the strategic intent of the organisations.

Like any research, there are limitations that may have impacted some parts of the investigation, process, and expected results. Extensive steps were taken to reduce the impact of any unfavourable circumstances; however, some unavoidable factors affected the research process. There are various future research directions and extensions of the current research proposed in this thesis that could not be carried out in this research because of different research focus. Overall, this important study adds to the body of knowledge and theory of SHRM and offers a practical solution to manage valuable and unique talent distinctively and offers future research thinking on the optimised talent-based HR systems and configurations to support various types of employment arrangements.

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APPENDIX A

Appendix A1: Interview Guide

Development of a talent-based hybrid HR architecture for managing a non-standard global workforce

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Confidential

Informant number ________

Medium of interview: Telephone/Skype/Other (specify________)

Date of interview _ _/_ _/20 _ _

Start time ________

End time ________

Length of interview

Note/comments (if any)

____

____

____

____

____

Pre-interview checklist

- **Introduction:** Good morning/afternoon Mr/Mrs._______, this is Mariam Tanweer from the Australian Maritime College at the University of Tasmania. I recently contacted you through email regarding a research study I am conducting to develop HR systems for the non-traditional workforce. Can you recall that email?
- **Purpose:** Thank you for accepting the invitation to participate in this study. The purpose of this study is to understand how organisations employing a workforce from all over the globe can use different HR systems for employees such as contractors, freelancers, part-time, on-call and casual employees.
- **Privacy and confidentiality:** The interview content will be used for research purposes only; your identity will not be revealed. If you agree, the data collected through the interview will be used for subsequent publications. Are you ok for this to occur?
  - **Yes**
  - **No**
- **Time:** The interview should take approximately 30 minutes. Are you ready to proceed with the interview?
- **Recording:** I am seeking your permission to record the interview to ensure capturing the detailed responses with accuracy. If you are comfortable, may I record the interview?
  - **Yes**
  - **No**

  Yes ➔ Move to section A

  No ➔ Recording importance

  - **Recording importance**: Recording will allow me to listen attentively and further explore the areas with you instead of noting the points. This will also assist in improving the quality of analysis and the development of accurate HR architecture. Are you able to reconsider and allow me to record the interview?
    - **Yes**
    - **No**

    Agree ➔ Move to section A

    Disagree ➔Ask for a probable follow-up call/email

  - **Follow-up call/email**: I understand your concerns regarding the recording of the interview. I will try my best to note all the important points and discussion during the interview. In case I miss some important points or need some explanation, I may need to contact you to clarify a part of the interview. Could you please specify the suitable medium for a follow-up such as an email or a phone call?

Suitable medium ______________________

- ☐ **Phone number** ______________________

  Time to contact

  Respondent's time ____ AM/PM

  Interviewer's time ____ AM/PM

  Days to contact ______________________

  OR

- ☐ **Email address** ______________________

Section A- Background

Let us start off with a bit about yourself, your background and your role in the organisation, and then we will discuss HR systems in your organisation.

A.1 **What are the typical responsibilities related to your role in the organisation?**

____

____

A.2 **How long have you been performing this role in your organisation?**

______________months/ years

A.3 **Now that I understand your role and responsibilities in the organisation, I would like to specify some job responsibilities and activities you may be undertaking. Could you please rate how important they are for your role on a scale of one to five, where one is not important, and five is very important? Feel free to respond by using the numbers ranging from 1 to 5 or indicate if roles and responsibilities are not applicable or you don't know.**

a. Participating in designing HR strategy and setting goals

1 2 3 4 5 Not applicable Don't know

b. Setting HR related policies and processes

1 2 3 4 5 Not applicable Don't know

c. Overseeing HR budget-related issues

1 2 3 4 5 Not applicable Don't know

d. Assisting in the execution of policies such as recruitment, selection, training, development, motivation and productivity enhancement

1 2 3 4 5 Not applicable Don't know

e. Evaluating operations and work productivity of employees

1 2 3 4 5 Not applicable Don't know

f. Overseeing day to day HR operations

1 2 3 4 5 Not applicable Don't know

Section B- The challenges

Thank you for providing me with information regarding your role and responsibilities in your organisation. We now move to the discussion related to the new HR trends, challenges and solutions to these challenges.

B.1 What HR trends do you currently see that are impacting multinational organisations?

B.2 What are the challenges these HR trends are presenting to multinational enterprises?

B.3 Having discussed the trends and challenges that are reshaping global work and employment, how does your organisation anticipate coping with these challenges?

Thank you. Now we move to the non-standard work arrangements, which may be another trend and a challenge for your organisation.

Non-standard work arrangement

For the purpose of this study, a non-standard work arrangement relates to peripheral or interim employees such as part-time, on-call, casual workers, contractors, freelancers non-standard employees.

B.4 **Does your organisation employ non-standard workers?**

Yes ➔ B.6

No➔ B.5

- **Yes**
- **No**

B.5 **Does your organisation intend to employ non-standard workers in the future?**

Yes ➔ B.7

No/possibly/not sure➔ B.8

- **Yes**
- **No**
- **Possibly**
- **Not sure**

B.6 **What is the percentage of non-standard workers in your organisation?**

- **Non-standard workers ___________**
  - Part time _____
  - On call _____
  - Causal _____
  - Contractors _____
  - Free lancers _____
  - Others _____

B.7 **Does your organisation find it important to use non-standard work arrangements?**

- **Yes**
- **No**
- **Not sure**

Yes ➔ B.7.1

No➔ B.8

B.7.1 How can they impact on current employment arrangements?

B.7.2 What can be/are the challenges related to non-standard work arrangements?

B.7.3 How does your organisation anticipate coping with these challenges?

B.8 **What can be/are the factor preventing your organisation from adopting non-standard work arrangements?**

Section C- Components of HR systems

We assume that the non-standard work arrangements can help organisations deal with the challenges by re-structuring the existing HR systems. For this, we need to first analyse what existing HR systems organisations are using and how we can add non-standard work arrangements to the main HR systems.

For this, let's start with some questions about job design in general in your organisation. I will begin with standard employees and current arrangements. I will specify when I am referring to the non-standard workers.

C-1 Job design

C-1.1 **Does your organisation prefer employees to perform a wide range of tasks?**

- **Yes**
- **No**
- **Sometimes**
- **Not sure**

Yes/sometimes ➔ C-1.1.1

No/not sure➔ C-1.2

C-1.1.1 Does the organisation select all employees or a limited number of employees to perform various tasks?

C-1.1.2 How does the organisation identify the skills needed to perform a variety of tasks?

C-1.1.3 Should this task variety be offered to non-standard employees?

- Yes
- No
- Possibly
- Not sure

Yes/Possibly ➔ C.1.1.4

C-1.1.4 Do you think that assigning a wide range of tasks to the non-standard employee can impact on the commitment of standard employee?

C-1.2 **Approximately what percentage of employees must follow standard operating procedures to perform their jobs in your organisation?**

- **All (100%)**
- **None (0%)**
- **Some (specify___%)**

All/some ➔ C-1.2.1

None ➔ C-1.3

C-1.2.1 What kind of employees can be selected for standardised jobs?

C-1.2.2 How does your organisation standardise the jobs?

C-1.2.3 Can/ are non-standard employees (be) offered jobs having standard operating procedures?

C-1.3. **How important is it for your organisation to communicate short-term performance expectations to employees?**

- **Not important**
- **Not sure**
- **Important (slightly/moderately/very)**

Important ➔ C-1.3.1

Not important/not sure➔ C-1.4

C-1.3.1 How is job clarity ensured in your organisation especially in complex tasks?

C-1.3.2 How can job clarity be ensured for non-standard workers?

C-1.4. **How important is it for your organisation to clarify employees what is expected from them in long-term?**

- **Not important**
- **Not sure**
- **Important (slightly/moderately/very)**

Important ➔C-1.4.1

Not important/not sure➔ C-1.5

C-1.4.1 How is it ensured that the roles are understood by all employee in your organisation?

C-1.4.2 How can role clarity be ensured for non-standard workers?

C-1.5 Does your organisation consider it important to address motivational issues in job design?

- **Yes**
- **No**
- **Not sure**

No➔ C-2

Yes/Not sure ➔ questions below

- Autonomy -- ➔ C-1.5.1
- Job security --
- Job rotation -- ➔ C-1.5.3

C-1.5.1 Does your organisation grant autonomy to the employees for daily task execution?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
  - *Control over performing the daily tasks, doing the job in their own way*

Yes➔ C-1.5.1.1

No➔ C-1.5.2

Not sure➔ prompt

C-1.5.1.1 What kind of employees can be granted task autonomy?

C-1.5.1.2 Are non-standard employees granted the same level of task autonomy?

C-1.5.2 Does your organisation grant autonomy to the employees for decision making?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
  - *Control over setting the direction of teams/projects*

Yes➔ C-1.5.2.1

No➔ C-1.5.3

Not sure➔ prompt

C-1.5.2.1 What kind of employees can be granted decision autonomy?

C-1.5.2.2 Are non-standard employees granted the same level of decision autonomy?

C-1.5.3 Does your organisation consider job security an important element in designing the jobs?

- Yes
- For some jobs
- No
- Not sure

Yes ➔ C-1.5.4

For some jobs ➔ C-1.5.4

Not sure ➔ C-1.5.5

C-1.5.4 How is job security ensured in your organisation?

C-1.5.5 What kind of employees receive the assurance of continuous employment in your organisation?

C-1.5.6 If employees are not receiving the assurance of continuous employment, how can/does it impact their motivation?

C-1.5.7 Is job security an important element for non-standard workers?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Yes➔ C-1.5.8

C-1.5.8 How can/does the organisation provide job security to non-standard workers?

C-1.5.9 If job security is not important for non-standard workers, how can/does it impact their motivation?

C-1.5.10 Does your organisation consider moving employees from one job to another to increase experience?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

Yes/Sometimes➔ C-1.5.11

C-1.5.11 What kind of employees are selected to move from one job to another?

C-1.5.12 How are the skills of employees identified to move them from one job to another?

C-1.5.13 Can jobs be rotated for non-standard workers?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Yes➔ Prompts

- *Why or why not?*
- *Can the organisation adopt the same procedure for the skill identification of non-standard workers as they adopt for standard workers to rotate jobs?*

C-1.5.14 Are there any other motivational issues that are considered important in job design in your organisation?

C-2 Recruitment and selection

We have discussed job design, and now we move to the next section which is about recruitment and selection as a part of HR systems. Exploration of the recruitment and selection process in your organisation will be extremely helpful in understanding how your organisation select effective employees.

So, let's start with the planning process of recruitment and selection. I will start with current recruitment and selection practices for standard employees in your organisation. I will specify when I am referring to the non-standard workers.

C-2.1 **How does your organisation plan the hiring of standard employees?**

C-2.1.1 Does your organisation prefer to hire from inside or outside of the organisation?

C-2.1.2 How are the needed skills and abilities identified for particular roles?

- *New roles and existing roles*

C-2.1.3 How are the skills and abilities identified in potential candidates?

C-2.1.4 How does your organisation assess the industry knowledge and experience of potential candidates?

C-2.2 **How does your organisation undertake the recruitment process*?***

C-2.3 **How important is teamwork in your organisation? Please rate on a scale of 5 with 1 being not important and 5 being very important.**

1 2 3 4 5 Not applicable Don't know

2-5➔ C-2.3.1

N/A, don't know, 1 ➔ C-2.4

C-2.3.1 How are teams formed in your organisation?

C-2.3.2 How are team members selected in your organisation?

C-2.3.3 How can/are non-standard workers (be) selected as team members in your organisation?

C-2.4 **Is it possible for standard employees to be promoted to the higher levels in your organisation?**

- **Yes**
- **No**

Yes➔ C-2.4.1

No➔ C-2.5

C-2.4.1 How frequent is the promotion from within in your organisation practised?
C-2.4.2 How does the organisation plan promotion from within*?*
C-2.4.3 What type of employees get promoted from within?
C-2.4.4 Can non-standard workers get the chance for promotion from within the organisation?

C-2.5. **Should there be a separate hiring procedure for non-standard workers?**

- **Yes**
- **No**
- **Unsure**

Yes➔ C-2.5.1

C-2.5.1 How does/can your organisation plan recruitment and selection of non-standard workers?

C-2.5.2 How is/can the industry knowledge and experience of non-standard workers (be) assessed?

C-2.5.3 What can be/is the hiring procedures and practices for non-standard workers?

C-2.5.4 How can/does the same recruitment and selection process affect the standard and nonstandard worker?

C-3 Development and deployment

Thank you for providing valuable insights into the recruitment and selection process in your organisation. We have completed almost 70% of the interview. Now, I would like to move to another important part of HR systems, the development and deployment practices. I will start with the current development and deployment practices for standard employees in your organisation. I will specify when I am referring to the non-standard workers.

C-3.1 **Could you explain the planning involved for the development of standard employees?**

C-3.2 **Within the next five years, how do you think that your HR development strategies may change?**

C-3.3 **What HR deployment approaches for standard employees do you use in your organisation?**

C-3.4 **Should there be separate development practices for non-standard workers?**

- **Yes**
- **No**
- **Unsure**

Unsure/Yes➔C-3.4.1

C-3.4.1 What HR development approaches can be/are adopted for the non-standard workers?

C-3.4.2 What HR deployment approaches can be/are used for the non-standard workers?

C-3.4.3 How (can) the non-standard workers develop firm, project or team specific knowledge?

C-3.4.4 How can non-standard workers be selected and reselected for the different projects, teams or in different regions?

OR

How does the organisation select and reselect the non-standard employees for the different projects, team or in different regions?

C-4 Rewarding and performance appraisals

Now, I would like to move to the last part of the HR system; rewarding and performance appraisals. I will start with the current rewarding and performance appraisal practices in standard employees. I will specify when I am referring to the non-standard workers.

C-4.1 **What are the objectives of performance appraisal in your organisation for the standard workers?**

- ☐ Pay raise
- ☐ Assessment of training needs
- ☐ Matching the skills with strategy
- ☐ Identification of critical roles
- ☐ Strategic positions

Any other objective (Please specify) ____

C-4.2 **What can be/are the objectives of performance appraisal in your organisation for the non-standard workers?**

- ☐ Pay raise
- ☐ Assessment of training needs
- ☐ Matching the skills with strategy
- ☐ Identification of critical roles
- ☐ Strategic positions

Any other objective (Please specify) ____

C-4.3 **Are standard employees aware of their annual performance expectations in your organisation?**

- ☐ **Yes**
- ☐ **No**
- ☐ **Unsure**

Yes➔ Prompts

Such as

- *Being creative*
- *Innovative*
- *Idea generations*
- *Teamwork*
- *Quantifiable results, target achievements*

C-4.4 **Should the non-standard workers be aware of the performance expectations in your organisation?**

- ☐ **Yes**
- ☐ **No**
- ☐ **Unsure**

C-4.5 **I will specify some rewarding mechanisms. Could you please specify which rewarding mechanisms are used in your organisation for standard employees?**

- ☐ Monetary (what kind of) _____________________________
- ☐ Non-monetary (what kind of) _________________________
- ☐ Group and team rewards
- ☐ Others (Please specify) _______________________________

C-4.6 **Do all employees get the same kinds of rewards?**

- ☐ **Yes**
- ☐ **No**
- ☐ **Unsure**

C-4.7 **Should rewarding mechanism be different for non-standard employees?**

- ☐ **Yes**
- ☐ **No**
- ☐ **Unsure**

Unsure/Yes➔ C-4.7.1

C-4.7.1 What should be the appropriate rewarding mechanism for non-standard workers?

C-4.7.2 Does/can the same rewarding mechanism impact on the productivity, quality of work and motivation of non-standard workers?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Yes➔ C-4.7.3

No ➔ Section D

C-4.7.3 You mentioned that rewarding mechanism should not be different for non-standard workers, but this may negatively impact the productivity of non-standard workers, what solution do you recommend?

Section D- Demographics

Now I have just a few last questions about you and your organisation.

D.1 **Do you have a HR-related qualification?**

- ☐ **Yes (Please specify)**
  - ☐ Certificate
  - ☐ Diploma
  - ☐ Degree
  - ☐ Postgraduate
- ☐ **No**

D.2 **Other than HR, do you have some other qualification?**

- ☐ **Yes** (Please specify) ____
- ☐ **No**

D.3 **Do you have HR-related experience other than in your current role?**

- ☐ **Yes** (please specify month/years) __________
- ☐ **No**

D.4 **Have you ever worked with other multinational organisations in any capacity related to the management of HR?**

- ☐ **Yes** (please specify month/years__________)
- ☐ **No**

Yes➔ D.5

No➔ Concluding statements

D.5 **Could you please specify the industry in which your previous employer was operating?**

- ☐ **Primary industry**
  - ☐ Mining
  - ☐ Fishing
  - ☐ Agricultural
- ☐ **Secondary industry**
  - ☐ Manufacturing
  - ☐ Textile

- ☐ Infrastructure
- ☐ **Tertiary industry**
  - ☐ Health
  - ☐ Hospitality and tourism
  - ☐ Professional services
  - ☐ IT and telecom
  - ☐ Transport and logistics

Other (specify_____________)

D.6 **Could you please specify the approximate number of employees of your previous employer including standard and nonstandard employees?**

☐	**Small business**	1-20
☐	**Medium business**	21-100
☐	**Medium business**	101-200
☐	**Large business**	201 and more

Concluding statements

1. Thank you, this was very helpful. This now completes the interview. I have got good points here. I really appreciate your time and contributions to this research.

2. Is there anything else that you feel is important that I may have missed and that you think should be included in the research?

   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____

3. Do you have any questions regarding this research?

4. We want to contact more participants who can significantly contribute to the development of a decisional framework for the managers to manage global HR. Could you please identify a few HR managers in your organisation who can contribute to this study?

   If they identify, then:

   Is it ok if I mention your name and copy you the email while inviting them?

5. Would you like to receive a copy of the results of this study when they are available?

   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

   Company/email address on which you wish to receive the copy of results?

   ____

Thank you once again.

Appendix A2: Participant information sheet

Development of a new global hybrid human resource architecture for the non-traditional workforce

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Research team

Associate Professor Stephen Cahoon, Director Sense-T/Division of DVCR and National Centre for Ports and Shipping/Department of Maritime and Logistics Management, Australian Maritime College

Associate Professor Shu-Ling (Peggy) Chen, National Centre for Ports and Shipping/Department of Maritime and Logistics Management, Australian Maritime College

Mariam Tanweer, PhD candidate, National Centre for Ports and Shipping/Department of Maritime and Logistics Management, Australian Maritime College

Contact email Mariam.tanweer@utas.edu.au

Invitation

You are invited to participate in a multinational research study for the "Development of a new global hybrid human resource architecture for the non-traditional workforce". The study is being conducted by Mariam Tanweer, a PhD candidate supervised by Associate Professor Stephen Cahoon and Associate Professor Peggy Chen from the Department of Maritime and Logistics Management, Australian Maritime College, University of Tasmania.

1. **What is the purpose of this study?**

The purpose of this study is to develop a hybrid human resource architecture by examining how new employment arrangements such as project-based, contract or an online platform mediated workforce (as an efficient, cost-effective and specialised workforce) can be managed along with the core workforce of an organisation. This research study aims to develop a decisional framework for human resource managers for the optimal selection of different type of employment arrangements.

2. **Why have I been invited to participate?**

You have been invited due to your specialised and expert knowledge in strategic HR issues, and because you are a senior manager involved in policy development of job design, recruitment and selection, development and deployment and rewarding.

3. **What will I be asked to do?**

Firstly, you will be asked about information such as your experiences in working with multinational enterprises performing HR-related roles and the specific roles you perform in your current job. Then specific questions about the job design, recruitment, selection, development, deployment and rewarding in your current organisation will be asked. This will also include your opinions about the management of the workforce under new employment arrangements (we term it as non-traditional, non-standard employment arrangement as oppose to traditional or standard employment).

We anticipate that the total interview will not exceed 30 minutes. You will be asked for the consent to be recorded before the interview. We may need to contact you after the interview if we need clarification of some parts of the interview. This is necessary to ensure the accuracy of data.

At the beginning of the interview you will be asked if it can be audio recorded to ensure accuracy of wording. When the interview is being transcribed, if clarification is required to ensure your comments are correctly recorded, we may need to contact you to avoid any misleading information. This will be done via email where a copy of the wording will be provided for your consideration.

4. **Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?**

We expect a number of benefits for the participants of this multinational study. This research will advance the knowledge in HRM and will assist in the development of a generic decision framework for HR managers which can be used by your organisation. The summary of the results of this study, which will be shared on request with the participants, will include an analysis of current HR practices gained from the interviews and explain how HR managers are planning or are currently working effectively with non-standard employees in relation to developing a talent-based HR architecture.

During the interview, you will be invited to receive a copy of the results of the study.

5. **Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?**

There is no anticipated risk for the HR managers participating in this study.

6. What if I change my mind during or after the study?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Whilst your participation in this study would make a significant contribution by advancing HR practices, we respect your right to withdraw at any time. There will be no consequences if you change your mind during the study and decide to discontinue. If you believe any part of the interview is targeting confidential or personal information that you may not want to share, please feel free to not answer those questions.You may also ask any time before the completion of the project to remove data you have provided from the research.

7. What will happen to the data when this study is over?

- The data will be stored on the server of the University of Tasmania. The server is password protected and is accessible to the researchers of this study. The data will be stored for five years from the completion of the study. Data will be destroyed by the research team at the end of five years.
- The audio files along with transcription will be stored in password-protected folders.
- The data will not be directly identifiable. This means that we will remove any reference to personal information that may allow anyone to guess your identity.
- Subject to your consent, the data will be used for subsequent publication with personal information references removed. All information will be treated confidentially, and your name or reference will not be used in publications arising from this study.

8. How will the results of the study be published?

The data will primarily be gathered for the doctoral thesis of the student investigator. Later, the findings may be presented and published in conferences and other academic journals or arenas. The copies of the subsequent publication can be supplied if requested. The interview data will not be directly quoted in the research project. Any data used in publications from the interviews will be used anonymously so that no individual manager or organisation can be identified.

9. What if I have questions about this study?

If you have any queries, concerns or issues with this study, please feel free to contact us:

Student investigator

Mariam Tanweer, PhD student, National Centre for Ports and Shipping/Department of Maritime and Logistics Management, Australian Maritime College

Contact email Mariam.tanweer@utas.edu.au

Chief investigator

Associate Professor Stephen Cahoon, Director Sense-T/Division of DVCR and National Centre for Ports and Shipping/Department of Maritime and Logistics Management, Australian Maritime College

Contact phone +61 3 62262306

Contact email Stephen.Cahoon@utas.edu.au

Chief investigator

Associate Professor Shu-Ling (Peggy) Chen, National Centre for Ports and Shipping/Department of Maritime and Logistics Management, Australian Maritime College

Contact phone +61 3 6324 9694

Contact email p.chen@utas.edu.au

This study has been approved by the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, you can contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on (03) 6226 2975 or email ss.ethics@utas.edu.au The Executive Officer is the person nominate to receive complaints from research participants. You will need to quote H0018562.

10. How can I agree to be involved?

If you agree to participate, please sign the consent form below and return the email.

Thank you for your time

Appendix A3: Participant consent form

Development of new global hybrid human resource architecture for the non-traditional workforce

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Research team

Associate Professor Stephen Cahoon, Director Sense-T/Division of DVCR and National Centre for Ports and Shipping/Department of Maritime and Logistics Management, Australian Maritime College

Associate Professor Shu-Ling (Peggy) Chen, National Centre for Ports and Shipping/Department of Maritime and Logistics Management, Australian Maritime College

Mariam Tanweer, PhD student, National Centre for Ports and Shipping/Department of Maritime and Logistics Management, Australian Maritime College

Contact email Mariam.tanweer@utas.edu.au

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet and in particular:

- I understand that my involvement in this research will require approximately 30 minutes of commitment. It will include information about the current HR systems in my organisation for the standard workforce and opinions about ‘talent-based HR systems for the non-standard workforce.
- I understand that the research may include an audio recording of my participation.
- Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
- I understand that all study data will be securely stored on the University of Tasmania’s premises for a duration of five years from the publication of the study results and will then be destroyed.
- I understand that the results of the study will be published so that I cannot be identified as a participant.
- I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time, without explanation or penalty.
- If I wish, I may request that any data I have supplied be withdrawn from the research until *May 1, 2020.*

- I agree to participate in the study.

Name	
Signature	
Date	

Statement by Researcher

☑I have explained the project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

☑The participant has received the Information Sheet where my details have been provided so participants have had the opportunity to contact me prior to consenting to participate in this project.

Appendix A4: Ethics approval

UNIVERSITY of TASMANIA

09 January 2020

Assoc Prof Stephen Cahoon
C/- University of Tasmania

Sent via email

Dear Assoc Prof Cahoon

REF NO: H0018562
TITLE: Development of A New Global Hybrid Human Resource Architecture for the Non-Traditional Workforce

We are pleased to advise that acting on a mandate from the Tasmania Social Sciences HREC, the Chair of the committee considered and approved the above project on 19 December 2019.

Please ensure that all investigators involved with this project have cited the approved versions of the documents listed within this letter and use only these versions in conducting this research project.

This approval constitutes ethical clearance by the Tasmania Social Sciences HREC. The decision and authority to commence the associated research may be dependent on factors beyond the remit of the ethics review process. For example, your research may need ethics clearance from other organisations or review by your research governance coordinator or Head of Department. It is your responsibility to find out if the approvals of other bodies or authorities are required. It is recommended that the proposed research should not commence until you have satisfied these requirements.

In accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, it is the responsibility of institutions and researchers to be aware of both general and specific legal requirements, wherever relevant. If researchers are uncertain they should seek legal advice to confirm that their proposed research is in compliant with the relevant laws. University of Tasmania researchers may seek legal advice from Legal Services at the University.

All committees operating under the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network are registered and required to comply with the *National Statement on the Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (NHMRC 2007 updated 2018).

Therefore, the Chief Investigator's responsibility is to ensure that:

(1) All investigators are aware of the terms of approval, and that the research is conducted in compliance with the HREC approved protocol or project description.

(2) Modifications to the protocol do not proceed until approval is obtained in writing from

Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network
Research Ethics and Integrity Unit
Office of Research Services
Private Bag 1
Hobart Tasmania
7001
Australia
T +61 3 6226 2975
E ss.ethics@utas.edu.au
ABN 30 764 374 782 /CRICOS 00586B
utas.edu.au

UNIVERSITY *of* TASMANIA

the HREC. This includes, but is not limited to, amendments that:

(i) are proposed or undertaken in order to eliminate immediate risks to participants;
(ii) may increase the risks to participants;
(iii) significantly affect the conduct of the research; or
(iv) involve changes to investigator involvement with the project.

Please note that all requests for changes to approved documents must include a version number and date when submitted for review by the HREC.

(3) Reports are provided to the HREC on the progress of the research and any safety reports or monitoring requirements as indicated in NHMRC guidance. Researchers should notify the HREC immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants.

(4) The HREC is informed as soon as possible of any new safety information, from other published or unpublished research, that may have an impact on the continued ethical acceptability of the research or that may indicate the need for modification of the project.

(5) All research participants must be provided with the current Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form, unless otherwise approved by the Committee.

(6) This study has approval for four years contingent upon annual review. A *Progress Report* is to be provided on the anniversary date of your approval. Your first report is due **18 December 2020,** and you will be sent a courtesy reminder closer to this due date. Ethical approval for this project will lapse if a Progress Report is not submitted in the time frame provided

(7) A *Final Report* and a copy of the published material, either in full or abstract, must be provided at the end of the project.

(8) The HREC is advised of any complaints received or ethical issues that arise during the course of the project.

(9) The HREC is advised promptly of the emergence of circumstances where a court, law enforcement agency or regulator seeks to compel the release of findings or results. Researchers must develop a strategy for addressing this and seek advice from the HREC.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me on (03) 6226 2975 or via email ss.ethics@utas.edu.au.

Yours sincerely

Tammy Harvest
Executive Officer

Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network
Research Ethics and Integrity Unit
Office of Research Services
Private Bag 1
Hobart Tasmania
7001
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T +61 3 6226 2975
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ABN 30 764 374 782 /CRICOS 00586B
utas.edu.au

Appendix A5: Email Invitations

Initial email

Subject line:

Invitation: Development of global HR systems for the non-standard workforce

Main Text:

Good morning/afternoon Name of informant!

I am Mariam Tanweer, a PhD candidate at the Australian Maritime College, University of Tasmania, Australia.

I am conducting a study titled 'Development of a new global hybrid human resource architecture for the non-traditional workforce' to develop human resource systems for multinational enterprises to manage global talent especially part-time, casual, on-call employees or freelancers and contractors. This important study will assist the development of a decision framework for managers to develop ideal HR systems for their organisations, especially for the non-standard workforce.

Due to your role and expertise, you are invited to participate in this multinational study to provide a valuable contribution to the development of global HR decisional framework. **In return for sharing your views on current and future impacts, a summary of the results of the study will be provided that will enable benchmarking with other similar organisations** and a sharing of views on how the increase of the non-standard workforce is and will be managed and also impacting on the development of new HR systems. The study takes the form of a **30-minute telephone** interview that can be scheduled for anytime convenient for you.

If you are interested in this topic that is changing approaches to the management of people, and able to participate, please find attached more details about this study and a consent form to meet the University's ethics requirements.

If you wish to participate, please respond to this email and suggest a time convenient to you for me to call you for the interview. Please do not hesitate to contact me for any further information.

Your views are extremely important in the development of global HR architecture, however, please do let me know if you wish not to receive further emails; I will withdraw this invitation.

Regards,

Mariam Tanweer

PhD candidate
Australian Maritime College
C# 52 Ground floor, Connell Building
Launceston, TAS 7248
University of Tasmania
E: Mariam.tanweer@utas.edu.au

Reminder email

Subject line: Re: Invitation: Development of global HR systems for the non-standard workforce

Main Text:

Good morning/afternoon Name of informant!

I am sending this email to confirm whether you have had a chance to consider my invitation to participate an interview on the development of global HR systems for the non-standard workforce. I understand that your role in your organisation is very demanding, but if you can spare 30 minutes at a time suitable to you, it would be highly appreciated. Your views will be extremely valuable for us to develop a decisional framework for HR managers and new HR systems for nonstandard workforce. **In return for sharing your views on current and future impacts, a summary of the results of the study will be provided that will enable benchmarking with other similar organisations.**

If you are interested in a research to develop contemporary HR systems and able to participate, please find the attached details of this study and a consent form.

The interview can be scheduled anytime convenient to you. If you wish to participate, please let me know via this email and suggest a suitable time for interview.

Your views are extremely important in the development of global HR architecture, however, please do let me know if you wish not to receive further emails; I will withdraw this invitation.

Regards,

Mariam Tanweer
PhD candidate
Australian Maritime College
C# 52 Ground floor, Connell Building
Launceston, TAS 7248
University of Tasmania
E: Mariam.tanweer@utas.edu.au

APPENDIX B

Appendix B1: Codes and themes

Codes		
Selective codes	**Axial codes**	**Open codes**
Future of HR	Trends	[1]Digitisation, [2]Changes in skilled employees and talent, [3]Requirements of organisations in terms of more specific skills
	Challenges	[4]Lack of skills and talent to address trends, [5]Resistance to change
Job design	Motivational issue	[6]Autonomy, [7]Rotation for SE and NSE
	Job structure	[8]Task variety, [9]Standardisation
	Communication of expectations	[10]Short term, [11]Long term work expectations
Recruitment and selection	Focus	[12]Promotion from within, [13]Matching skills with strategy, [14]Team working
	Method	[15]Comprehensive screening for external candidates, [16]Skill assessment for internal candidates,
Development and deployment	Development approaches	[17]Short term development, [18]Long term development
	Deployment approaches	[19]Areas, [20]Regions, [21]Group, [22]Teams
Rewarding and performance appraisals	Objectives of performance appraisals	[23]Assessment of training needs, [24]Matching skills with the strategy for SE, [25]Meeting KPIs for NSE
	Rewarding	[26]Monetary for SE, [27]Non-monetary for SE, [28]Non-monetary for NSE

Table B.1 *- Coding of an interview*

Axial code number	Axial codes	Inclusion criteria Discussion about:
1	Trends	Any new changes in HRM reported by the managers
2	Challenges	Any HRM-related difficulties that organisations report in relation to the trends
3	Clear broad focus	Clear steps of managing challenges
4	Unclear broad focus	Unclear steps of managing challenges
5	Motivational issues	Views of managers about any issue that motivates employees
6	Job structure	Job designs such as standardised or non-standardised
7	Communication of expectations	Importance of communication and type of communication within the organisation
8	(Recruitment and selection) Focus	Internal or external recruitment, reasoning and implications
9	(Recruitment and selection) Method	Different methods of recruitment and selection, such as using sophisticated mechanisms
10	Development approaches	Different approaches are used such as longterm or short term, team development, managerial level developments
11	Deployment approaches	How the employees are deployed
12	Objectives of performance appraisals	What are the objectives of performance appraisals
13	Rewarding	Type of rewarding

***Table B.2** - Inclusion criteria of Axial codes*

Themes	Excerptions
[1,2,3,5]Realise the importance of alternative employment arrangements to cope with the trends and challenges	"As permanent people are more reactive to change, so yes, we may need more non-standard workers in future." "Essentially, this is digitisation in shipping. There will be changes in the skills required from the employees, people, looking in the organisation and the structure as well. Change management is a priority for me."
[4]There is no surety how that NSE can be hired to remain on the focus	"We are not sure to what extent will we go for non-standard arrangements to address challenges in future; however, we are working on it; it may or may not work."
[5]Major changes anticipated for development strategies	Do you anticipate that the current arrangement will change in the next five years? "Totally, as the jobs, environment and organisations are changing. And skills, right skills are changing. So, we need to upscale ourselves."
[6,8,9]Job structure is tightly built around the pre-defined job descriptions for all kind of employees	"Each employee has specific JD, so they usually stick with their JD", "Well, everybody has autonomy. If you know what you are supposed to do. You are focusing on what output is required and how and in which time frame." "Basically, everyone has to follow certain standards."
[12]Recruitment and selection focus on cost reduction	"Normally, we go internally and externally, but we do prefer to go internally. If we don't find an appropriate person internally, then we go for external hiring. It reduces the cost of hiring and training external employees. It improves retention as well."
[13,15,16]Skills are identified through comprehensive screening and matching the skills with the strategy	"First, we identify the need; once the need is identified, then comes the screening and shortlisting of the candidate comes. For this, we have some tools that help us. We have an assessment process. We have about 3 or 4 logical, a numerical assessment that shortlist the candidates for us."
[10,11]Communicating long-term and short-term expectations is very important for all kind of employees	"This is very important because otherwise, we cannot manage performance."
[10,11]Communication of expectations	As you indicated that communication of expectations is very important; is the method of communication the same for NSE? "No, they have different KPIs and JDs. They come in jobs with very specific JDs and KPIs, so they are managed through the same mechanism but focusing on different parts of it. The duration does not matter, it's a matter of the job they are performing and what is the focus of their jobs."
[10,11,17,18]Clarity of objectives	"We have KPIs, and everyone is communicated those KPIs to clarify the jobs they are performing and what is expected from them. Through communication."
[6,7]Importance of autonomy and job rotation	"We very much focus on the mobility and rotation of employees. We try to move people from one department to another to increase their experience and giving them double career opportunities." and "Well, everybody has autonomy. If you know what you are supposed to do. You are focusing on what output is required and how and in which time frame."
[7]Job rotation not an option for NSE	"NSEs are hired for a specific purpose and for different projects for example, which requires specific skills. How can they perform different jobs even if they are interested? We don't want to invest in those people who can walk out of the door at any time."
[6]Autonomy and decision making	"Well, everybody has autonomy. including NSEs"
[6]Duration based autonomy	"It depends upon the level of the person and the maturity in the organisation, i.e. Have they completed probationary period or not?"
[6]Autonomy with some basic standards to follow	"Well, everybody has autonomy. If you know what you are supposed to do. You are focusing on what output is required and how and in which time frame. Basically, everyone has to follow certain standards."

Table B.3 - *Minor themes and excerpts*

Themes	Excerptions
[7,10,11,26,27,28]Focus on motivation	"The motivational issue such as having job clarity, performance expectations, clearly communicated rewards and internal mobility are very important for us."
[12]Focus on retention	"Normally we go internally and externally, but we do prefer to go internally. If we don't find an appropriate person internally then we go for external hiring. It reduces the cost of hiring and training external employees. It improves retention as well. So, if people want to move from one department to another, it will help us in the retention of employees if we allow rotation options."
[7]Focus on learning	"We try to move people from one department to another to increase their experience and also giving them double career opportunities."
[14]Collaborative working	"We value teamwork and encourage them to work like this. We encourage projects in which teamwork is important."
[17,18] Multi focused development objectives	"We are very careful about this. We need to be sure that development is aligned with the appraisals, the job required from them, skill development for mobility. So, we have two parts; one is process-driven and one is people-focused."
[23,24,25]Multi focused objectives of performance appraisals	"To make it sure that they are following KPIs. They know what is needed from them and they are aligned with it. As the world is changing and KPIs are valid for the short term so we may need to revise them as well. We should be agile. KPIs should develop people. This makes sure that they work for different projects having different KPIs also the assessment of the job by looking at are you doing the job we are paying you for. Are you following JDs? Are your skills matching with the strategic intends, is there anything common?"
[19,20,21,22]Requirement driven deployment strategies	What HR deployment approaches for standard employees do you use in your organisation? "Groups or teams Depending upon their skills and role requirement."
[17,18]Multi focused development strategies	"So, we have two parts; one is process-driven and one is people-focused. We provide training, on the job or special need training for capacity building for example required by the managers. On the other hand, sometimes employee identifies for special training need and we send them for training."
[13,15,17,18,19,20,21,22]Inflexible development and deployment approach for NSE	"They come with the skills that are required from them. They are already developed, and they are hired because they fit with the organisational needs. We need not worry about them" "We don't want to invest in people who can walk out of the door any time"
[26,27,28]Rewarding based on roles	"Amount and quantity differ based on the position and performance."
[26,27,28]Multi focused rewarding mechanisms	We have monetary rewards such as bonus or shares in stocks or non-monetary rewards such as support for public transport, sports activities, or even letters of appreciations"
[25]No annual performance appraisals for NSE	"No this is different. For them, we develop KPIs for the duration of the time they are hired for. They are not part of annual appraisals. We just see whether they are meeting the criteria or KPIs for the term of their contract and if yes we extend the contract."
[28]Partial benefits for NSE under the rewarding mechanism	"They can get the part of the benefits we provide to SE but not the monetary benefits."
[14]Team work to use knowledge	"If they have specific and required skills for the project which has defined specifications, yes NSEs can be the part of a team of standard employees projects. "

Table B.3 *- Minor themes and excerpts (Continued)*

Major themes	Minor themes	Definition
Maximisation of commitment and collaboration	[8,9]Job structure is tightly built around the pre-defined job descriptions for all kind of employees	The processes especially planning including job design, recruitment and selection and development & deployment mainly focus on the maximisation of commitment and collaboration
	[10,11]Communicating long-term and short-term expectations is very important for all kind of employees	
	[12]Recruitment and selection focus on cost reduction	
	[6]Duration based autonomy	
	[6]Autonomy with some basic standards to follow	
	[14]Collaborative working	
	[17,18] Multi focused development objectives	
	[19,20,21,22]Requirement driven deployment strategies	
Improving capacity and capabilities of employees	[10,11,17,18]Clarity of objectives	Execution of HR activities focuses on the improvement in the capacity and capabilities of SE employees.
	[6,7]Importance of autonomy and job rotation	
	[13,15,16]Skills are identified through comprehensive screening and matching the skills with the strategy	
	[23,24,25]Multi focused objectives of performance appraisals	
	[17,18]Multi focused development strategies	
Improving the commitment	[7,10,11,26,27,28]Focus on motivation	Activities focus in finding the right balance between improving the commitment of employees and productivity. The focus of organisation is to find a hybrid configuration that can improve the commitment as well as align with the organisational outcomes.
	[12]Focus on retention	
	[7]Focus on learning	
	[26,27,28]Rewarding based on roles	
	[26,27,28]Multi focused rewarding mechanisms	
Practices for NSE	[7]Job rotation not an option for NSE	Practices that are considered different for SEs and NSEs
	[10,11]Communication of expectations	
	[29]No annual performance appraisals for NSE	
	[30]Partial benefits for NSE under rewarding mechanism	
	[17,18,19,20,21,22]Inflexible development and deployment approach for NSE	
Common practices	[6]Autonomy and decision making	Practices common for SE and NSE
	[14]Team work to use knowledge	
Future focus	[1,2,3]Realise the importance of alternative employment arrangements to cope with the trends and challenges	The organisation realises the need for new, improved and modified systems.
	[4]There is no surety how that NSE can be hired to remain on the focus	
	[5]Major changes anticipated for development strategies	

***Table B.4** - Major and minor themes and inclusion criteria*

Appendix B2: Codebook stabilisation

	Code											
	Number of codes			Number of shared open codes with previous interviews	Number of new open codes per interview	Number of shared axial codes with previous interviews	Number of new axial codes per interview	Number of shared selective codes with previous interviews	Number of new selective codes	Total number of open codes	Total number of axial codes	Total number of selective codes
	Open	Axial	Selective									
Interview 1	22	13	6		22		13		6	22	13	6
Interview 2	18	12	6	13	5	12	0	6	0	27	13	6
Interview 3	23	11	6	17	6	11	0	6	0	33	13	6
Interview 4	22	12	6	19	3	12	0	6	0	36	13	6
Interview 5	24	12	6	21	3	12	0	6	0	39	13	6
Interview 6	23	11	6	20	3	11	0	6	0	42	13	6
Interview 7	23	12	6	22	1	12	0	6	0	43	13	6
Interview 8	23	12	6	22	1	12	0	6	0	44	13	6
Interview 9	26	12	6	25	1	12	0	6	0	45	13	6
Interview 10	22	13	6	22	1	13	1	6	0	45	13	6
Interview 11	23	12	6	22	1	12	0	6	0	46	13	6
Interview 12	22	13	6	22	0	13	0	6	0	46	13	6
Interview 13	23	11	6	23	0	11	0	6	0	46	13	6
Interview 14	22	12	6	22	0	12	0	6	0	46	13	6
Interview 15	23	12	6	22	0	12	0	6	0	46	13	6
Interview 16	24	12	6	24	0	12	0	6	0	46	13	6
Interview 17	23	11	6	23	0	11	0	6	0	46	13	6
Interview 18	23	11	6	23	0	11	0	6	0	46	13	6
Interview 19	23	11	6	23	0	11	0	6	0	46	13	6
Interview 20	24	13	6	24	0	13	0	6	0	46	13	6
Interview 21	23	11	6	23	0	11	0	6	0	46	13	6

Table B5 - *Codebook stabilisation*

Appendix B3: Theme and meaning saturation

	Themes							
	Nuber of themes		Number of shared minor themes with previous interviews	Number of new minor themes per interview	Number of shared major themes with previous interviews	Number of new major themes per interview	Total number of minor themes	Total number of major themes
	Minor	Major						
Interview 1	27	6		27		6	27	6
Interview 2	27	6	11	16	3	3	38	9
Interview 3	28	6	18	10	6	0	48	9
Interview 4	27	6	21	6	5	1	54	10
Interview 5	24	6	16	8	6	0	62	10
Interview 6	26	5	20	5	5	0	67	10
Interview 7	21	5	20	1	4	1	68	11
Interview 8	24	5	18	6	5	0	74	11
Interview 9	26	6	23	3	6	0	77	11
Interview 10	21	6	19	2	6	0	79	11
Interview 11	23	5	21	2	5	0	81	11
Interview 12	21	6	20	1	6	0	82	11
Interview 13	26	6	24	2	6	0	84	11
Interview 14	24	6	23	1	6	0	85	11
Interview 15	23	5	23	1	5	0	86	11
Interview 16	21	6	21	0	6	0	86	11
Interview 17	23	6	23	0	6	0	86	11
Interview 18	23	5	23	0	5	0	86	11
Interview 19	24	5	24	0	5	0	86	11
Interview 20	21	5	21	0	5	0	86	11
Interview 21	24	6	24	0	6	0	86	11

Table B.6 - *Theme and meaning saturation*

Appendix B4: Components of HR systems

No	Policies, practices and processes indicated by informants	Component of HR system
1	Task variety	Job Design
2	Autonomy and decision making	
3	Job security	
4	Job rotation	
5	Standardised jobs	
6	Simple skills and well defined jobs	
7	Job design around individual skills	
8	Promotion from within	Recruitment and selection
9	Focus on selecting best candidates and their ability to contribute to strategic objectives	
10	Priority on potential to learn	
11	Involves screening many candidates; comprehensive; uses many different sources	
12	Assesses industry knowledge and experience; emphasis on teamworking	
13	Comprehensive training	Training and development
14	Continuous investment of time and money	
15	Aim to develop firm-specific skills/knowledge	
16	Emphasis on improving current job performance	
17	Emphasise on-the-job experience	
18	Seek to increase short term productivity	
19	Focus on compliance with rules	
20	Focus on team building	
21	Includes developmental feedback	Performance appraisal
22	Emphasises employee learning	
23	Focus on contribution to strategic objectives	
24	Quantifiable results	
25	Assesses quality and quantity of output	
26	Assess compliance with pre-set behaviours, procedures and standards	
27	Based on team performance	
28	Focus on ability to work with others	

Table B.7 *- Components of HR systems indicated by informants*

Interview	Maximisation of collaboration	Maximisation of commitment	Maximisation of productivity	Improving compliance	Improving capacity of employees	Improving capabilities of employees
1	X	X			X	X
2	X		X			X
3	X	X			X	X
4		X	X		X	X
5	X	X			X	X
6	X	X			X	X
7			X	X		
8		X	X			
9		X	X			
10			X	X		
11			X	X		
12	X	X			X	X
13			X	X	X	
14	X	X		X	X	
15			X			X
16			X	X	X	
17	X	X			X	X
18	X	X			X	X
19			X	X	X	
20		X	X		X	X
21	X	X			X	X

Table B.8 - *Multiple HR configurations identified in the organisations of the informants*

HR components	Job design	Recruitment and selection	Development and deployment	Performance appraisals	Rewarding
Informant	**HR Focus**				
1	Commitment and productivity	Commitment, productivity, and collaboration	Commitment and collaboration	Commitment and collaboration	Commitment and productivity
2	Collaboration and productivity	Productivity	Collaboration	Productivity	Productivity
3	Commitment and productivity	Commitment, productivity, and collaboration	Commitment and collaboration	Commitment and collaboration	Commitment and productivity
4	Commitment and productivity	Commitment and productivity	Collaboration	Productivity	Productivity
5	Commitment and productivity	Commitment, productivity, and collaboration	Commitment and collaboration	Commitment and collaboration	Commitment and productivity
6	Commitment and productivity	Commitment, productivity, and collaboration	Commitment and collaboration	Commitment and collaboration	Commitment and productivity
7	Productivity and compliance	Commitment, productivity, and collaboration	Commitment, productivity, and compliance	Productivity and compliance	Productivity and compliance
8	Commitment and productivity	Commitment and productivity	Productivity	Productivity	Productivity
9	Commitment and productivity	Commitment and productivity	Productivity	Productivity	Productivity

Table B.9 *- Multiple HR configurations in each component of HR system*

HR components	Job design	Recruitment and selection	Development and deployment	Performance appraisals	Rewarding
Informant			HR Focus		
10	Productivity and compliance	Commitment, productivity, and collaboration	Commitment, productivity, and compliance	Productivity and compliance	Productivity and compliance
11	Productivity and compliance	Commitment, productivity, and collaboration	Commitment, productivity, and compliance	Productivity and compliance	Productivity and compliance
12	Productivity and compliance	Commitment, productivity, and collaboration	Commitment, productivity, and compliance	Productivity and compliance	Productivity and compliance
13	Productivity and compliance	Commitment, productivity, and collaboration	Productivity and compliance	Productivity and compliance	Productivity and compliance
14	Commitment and collaboration	Commitment and collaboration	Commitment and compliance	Compliance	Compliance
15	Productivity	Commitment and productivity	Collaboration and productivity	Collaboration and productivity	Productivity
16	Productivity	Commitment and productivity	Commitment and compliance	Compliance	Compliance
17	Productivity and compliance	Commitment, productivity, and collaboration	Commitment, productivity, and compliance	Productivity and compliance	Productivity and compliance
18	Productivity and compliance	Commitment, productivity, and collaboration	Commitment, productivity, and compliance	Productivity and compliance	Productivity and compliance
19	Productivity and compliance	Commitment, productivity, and collaboration	Productivity and compliance	Productivity and compliance	Productivity and compliance
20	Commitment and productivity	Commitment and productivity	Commitment and productivity	Productivity	Productivity
21	Productivity and compliance	Commitment, productivity, and collaboration	Commitment, productivity, and compliance	Productivity and compliance	Productivity and compliance

Table B.9 - *Multiple HR configurations in each component of HR system (Continued)*