

**MANAGING TALENTS FOR SUSTAINABLE ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT****ABDUL AMID AZIZ JALLOH****Lecturer: University of Makeni & University of Science and Technology Sierra Leone.**[azizhrmjay@gmail.com](mailto:azizhrmjay@gmail.com)**ABSTRACT**

Managing high quality employees in modern enterprises is quite a challenging task since some enterprises cannot afford to retain such talents as a result of their high reward expectations. For an enterprise to develop and sustain in a tough competitive environment, it requires competent workforce endowed with tacit and explicit intellectual capital in order to transform its operations. In this regard, this study seeks to examine the process of managing talents for sustainable enterprise development. The qualitative perspective of this research led to the extraction of information from secondary sources published on the subject matter. Analysis drawn from reviewed information disclosed the significance of attracting, selecting, training, compensating and retaining higher quality employees as elements that constitute the effective and efficient management of talents for sustainable enterprise development. The significance of this study could aid practising managers, human resources professionals and heads of private and public corporations.

**KEYWORDS:** Managing Talents, Sustainable Enterprise Development, Intellectual capital, High Quality Employees, Tacit and Explicit, Competitive Environment, Attracting, Training, Rewarding

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Resourcing strategies are concerned with assessing the need for talented people and then recruiting and retaining them. The concept of talent management as a process of ensuring that the organisation has the talented people it needs only emerged in the late 1990s. It has now been recognised as a major resourcing activity, although its elements are all familiar. Talent management has been called a fad or a fashion, but David Guest argues that 'talent management is an idea that has been around for a long time. It's been re-labelled, and that enables wise organisations to review what they are doing. It integrates some old ideas and gives them freshness (Warren, 2006: 29). It is possible to have different views about talent management: on the one hand, everyone has talent and it is not just about the favoured few; on the other, you need to focus on the best. Laura Ashley, director of talent at newspaper group Metro (reported by Warren, 2006), believes you must maximize the performance of your workforce as a whole if you are to maximise the performance of the organisation. In contrast (also reported by Warren), Wendy Hirsh, principal associate at the Institute for Employment Studies, says it is not helpful to confuse talent management with overall employee development. Both are important, but talent management is best kept clear and focused. Another view was expressed by Thorne and Pellant (2007): 'No organisation should focus all its attention on the development of only part of its human capital. What is important,

however, is recognising the needs of different individuals within its community. The general consensus seems to be that while talent management does concentrate on obtaining, identifying and developing people with high potential, this should not be at the expense of the development needs of people generally. Fighting the war for talent itself can cause problems. Companies that adopt a talent war mind-set often wind up venerating outsiders and downplaying the talent already in the company. They frequently set up competitive zero-sum dynamics that make internal learning and knowledge transfer difficult, activate the self-fulfilling prophesy in the wrong direction (those labelled as less able become less able), and create an attitude of arrogance instead of an attitude of wisdom. For all these reasons, fighting the war for talent may be hazardous to an organisation's health and detrimental to doing the things that will make it successful (Pfeffer, 2001).

Talent management is a matter of anticipating the need for human capital and then setting out a plan to meet it (Cappelli, 2008). The now, rather clichéd, assertion that people are the prime source of competitive advantage can be seen to emphasise the need to adopt a strategic approach to talent management to ensure that the organisation has the 'right people in the right place at the right time to fulfil its strategic goals. The existence of a strategy can support the development of plans which are concerned with attracting sufficient high-quality external applicants and making effective use of the internal labour market through the retention, deployment and engagement of the existing workforce. These plans are based on predictions of demand, i.e. the numbers of people and skills that the organisation will need in the future, and supply, i.e. the availability of those people and skills already in the organisation and in the external labour market. Reconciliation of these plans can help organisations to determine the optimum balance between external and internal recruitment. Some organisations prefer to fill as many vacancies as possible with existing employees in order to motivate and develop people and retain critical skills. This approach requires considerable investment in training and development and the support of a performance management system with an emphasis on identifying potential and on securing commitment from employees. However, the internal recruitment pool is likely to be relatively small so the potential downside of internal recruitment is that the organisation does not necessarily get the best person for the job (Beardwell and Claydon, 2010).

Enterprises today are facing heightened challenges in their efforts to perform effectively. These challenges are reflected in the failure of many long-standing enterprises and the shortened tenure of senior-level executives. There is increasing agreement that the unique competitive advantage enterprises have today lies in their people, their human resource management practices and their cultures. All other elements of production can be readily obtained, bought or copied. We are now in the era of human capital; to be successful; enterprises need to unleash the talents of their people. Fortunately we now have considerable understanding of what high-performing enterprises look like. However, a large gap still exists between what we know and what managers actually do. With contributions from a team of

leading academics and practitioners, building more effective enterprises provides an extensive survey of human resource management and the enterprises practices associated with the high performance of individuals (Burke and Cooper, 2008).

### **1.1 RESEARCH AIM**

Identifying, developing and retaining high quality personnel, is a recipe for sustained growth in enterprises operations. Though critical to manage, talents in enterprises should be effectively and efficiently managed if sustainable development is to be achieved. Success in competitive environment requires a talented and diligent workforce whose intellectual capital transforms such enterprise in order to attain a level desire in the competitive environment. The thrust for a critical examination of the significance of talents, led to an identification of the subject matter which seeks to examine the processes and procedures involve in managing talents for sustainable enterprise development.

#### **1.1.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

This section outlines the subsets of the research aim in a structured manner, to ensure careful collection of secondary information in order to assemble relevant facts which will give expressive actualities in the subject matter. The research objectives are outlined as follows:

- Describe business strategy, resourcing strategy (internal and external) and discuss attraction and retention policies and programmes
- Explain talent audit, role design, talent relationship management and performance management.
- Discuss the components of Training, learning and development and explicate issues in management succession planning and career management
- Describe sustainable enterprise, enterprise development and enterprise development tools.

### **1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Managing talents in a highly competitive environment is clustered with critical issues and the search for competent personnel poses several challenges towards sustainable enterprise development. Organisations should ensure that they retain the required staff and should be able to identify future successors internally and possibly externally. Internal talents can be easily identified since organisations are familiar with the exhibition of their skills and competencies. Considering the facts aforementioned, this study is relevant to all enterprises whether small scale, medium scale, large scale or multinational corporations. It is also significant to non-profit making institutions and government establishments, since these sectors can only function well and sustain as a result of managing their talents. This study is of paramount importance to human resource management practitioners as their role distinctly focus on managing enterprises workforce.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

Talent management is typically defined in two major ways. 'Exclusive' definitions of talent management refer to the differential management of employee groups with differential value, for example: "Activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions which differentially contribute to the organization's sustainable competitive advantage, the development of a talent pool of high potentials and high-performing incumbents to fill these roles, and the development of a differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling these positions with competent incumbents and to ensure their continued commitment to the organization" (Collings and Mellahi 2009, p. 304). On the other hand, definitions that are more 'inclusive', for instance that of Buckingham and Vosburgh (2001): "Talent management refers to the art of recognizing where each employee's areas of natural talent lie, and figuring out how to help each employee develop the job-specific skills and knowledge to turn those talents into real performance, elevating each person's performance to its highest possible levels, given the individual's natural talents" (p. 22). Although strong opinions are held on either end, to date it remains unclear which definition of talent management offers the most accurate representation of how the phenomenon plays out in the field. While an inclusive approach to talent management is believed to lead to a more pleasant working environment characterized by openness, trust, and overall employee wellbeing (Warren 2006), the exclusive approach is assumed to generate higher return on investment in terms of profit and productivity, brought about by increases in the achievement motivation of pivotal employees (Boudreau and Ramstad 2005).

## **2.1 Business Strategy, Resourcing Strategy (Internal and External), Attraction and Retention Policies and Programmes:**

### **2.1.1 Business Strategy**

Every firm competing in an industry has a competitive strategy, whether explicit or implicit. This strategy may have been developed explicitly through a planning process or it may have evolved implicitly through the activities of the various functional departments of the firm. Left to its own devices, each functional department will inevitably pursue approaches dictated by its professional orientation and the incentives of those in charge. However, the sum of these departmental approaches rarely equals the best strategy (Porter, 1998). Business strategy is concerned with the challenges of creating financial value in competitive markets. Some departments of state and some public agencies and corporations, as well as private charities, handle similar tasks. In fact, governments have recently tried to simulate market conditions in their business or near-business operations. The aim is to become more responsive to the varying needs of their customers or clients. In the 1960s, strategy was first thought of as a formal, largely financial, planning process. The unquestioned goal of strategy was growth (Mathur and Kenyon, 2001).

**2.1.2 Strategic Analysis:** The purpose of strategic analysis is to gather information. None of us would be wise to make an important decision about anything in life without adequate and relevant information, and neither would a business. There are two main stages in strategic analysis. Firstly, strategic analysis involves an examination of an organization's internal

environment (internal analysis). This takes the form of a thorough analysis of the internal processes and structures of a business in much the same way as a doctor might carry out a thorough medical examination on a person. The purpose of internal analysis is to establish what the organization is good at (its strengths) and what it is not so good at (its weaknesses). The second stage in strategic analysis is an examination of the organization's external environment (an external analysis). This takes the form of a thorough analysis of two 'layers' of external environment – the micro or 'near' environment, and the macro or 'far' environment. The micro environment comprises the industry in which the business competes. The organization is usually affected by the factors in this environment often and it may be able to have an influence upon it. We sometimes refer to the micro environment as the competitive environment because it is within this sphere that an organization competes, both for resource inputs and to sell its product outputs. The macro environment contains a range of influences that affect not only an organization in an industry, but also the whole industry itself. It follows that a single organization is usually unable to affect the factors in the macro environment – successful strategy usually involves learning to cope and adapt to changes (Campbell et al, 2002).

### **2.1.3 Resourcing Strategy**

The concept that the strategic capability of a firm depends on its resource capability in the shape of people (the resource-based view) provides the rationale for resourcing strategy. As explained by Grant (1991): The firm's most important resources and capabilities are those which are durable, difficult to identify and understand, imperfectly transferable, not easily replicated, and in which the firm possesses clear ownership and control. These are the firm's 'crown jewels' and need to be protected; and they play a pivotal role in the competitive strategy which the firm pursues. The essence of strategy formulation, then, is to design a strategy that makes the most effective use of these core resources and capabilities (Grant 1991). The aim of this strategy is to ensure that a firm achieves competitive advantage by attracting and retaining more capable people than its rivals and employing them more effectively. These people will have a wider and deeper range of skills and will behave in ways that will maximize their contribution. The organization attracts such people by being 'the employer of choice'. It retains them by providing better opportunities and rewards than others and by developing a positive psychological contract that increases commitment and creates mutual trust. Furthermore, the organization deploys its people in ways that maximize the added value they create (Armstrong, 2009).

**2.1.3a Internal Sources:** There are numerous advantages in recruiting internally. The candidates' performance is known well, as are their attendance records and their strengths and weaknesses. Hopefully, an effective career development plan will be in place which can identify employees who are ready to be promoted or who are available to take up project-style positions. From an employee's viewpoint, an internal promotion is normally a far more satisfying move than the risk involved in moving to another organisation when service rights

are lost and a mass of cultural and technical information has to be learnt in a very short time (Stredwick, 2005).

**2.1.3b External Sources:** In addition to looking internally for candidates, organisations often open up recruiting efforts to the external community. These efforts include advertisement (including internet postings), employment agencies, schools, colleges and universities, professional organisations, and unsolicited applicants (DeCenzo and Robbins, 2010).

#### **2.1.4 Attraction and Retention Policies and Programmes**

These policies and programmes describe the approach to ensuring that the organization both gets and keeps the talent it needs. Attraction policies lead to programmes for external resourcing (recruitment and selection of people from outside the organization). Retention policies are designed to ensure that people remain as committed members of the organization. The outcome of these policies is a talent flow that creates and maintains the talent pool (Armstrong, 2009).

**2.1.4a Attracting Talent:** Attracting talent is primarily aimed at the external labour market and involves the use of recruitment and selection techniques to identify the skills required and then attract and choose the most suitable people to meet an organisation's human resource requirements. Recruitment and selection are integrated activities, and where recruitment stops and selection begins is a moot point (Anderson, 1994). Nevertheless, it is useful to try to differentiate between the two areas: Whitehill (1991) describes the recruitment process as a positive one, 'building a roster of potentially qualified applicants', as opposed to the 'negative' process of selection. So a useful definition of recruitment is 'searching for and obtaining potential job candidates in sufficient numbers and quality so that the organisation can select the most appropriate people to fill its job needs' (Dowling and Schuler, 1990: 51). Selection is concerned more with 'predicting which candidates will make the most appropriate contribution to the organisation – now and in the future' (Hackett, 1991: 49), but also affects the ability to attract suitable candidates as applicants may be put off if the selection practices appears unfair or unprofessional.

**2.1.4b Selecting Talent:** The stages described above constitute recruitment, and are primarily concerned with generating a sufficient pool of quality applicants. The focus now shifts to selection and the next stages concentrate on assessing the suitability of candidates. It is extremely unlikely that all job applicants will meet the necessary criteria, and so the initial step in selection is categorising candidates as probable, possible or unsuitable. This should be done by comparing the information provided on the application form or CV with the predetermined selection criteria. The criteria may either be explicit (detailed on the person specification) or implicit (only in the mind of the person doing the shortlisting). However, this latter approach is potentially discriminatory, and would provide no defence if an organisation was challenged on the grounds of unlawful discrimination. Potentially suitable candidates will continue to the next stage of the selection process. CIPD guidelines state that

unsuccessful candidates should be informed as soon as possible. In practice, written notification of rejection is increasingly less common, and many application forms warn candidates that if they have not had a response by a set date they can assume they have been unsuccessful. (Beardwell and Caydon, 2010).

**2.1.4c Retaining Talent:** Attracting new talent and retaining them is an advantage to the organisation. However, that is only part of the equation and talent management is also concerned with the ability to keep high-quality employees and continue to maximise their contribution to the organisation. Labour turnover is inevitable but, where it is high, organisations face a loss of corporate knowledge and a potential threat to their ability to meet business objectives (CIPD, 2008a: 20). Manfred Kets de Vries (cited in Williams, 2000: 28) stated that 'today's high performers are like frogs in a wheelbarrow: they can jump out at any time'. It seems that increasing numbers of organisations recognise this and the retention of key staff is a major component of talent management. Any retention strategy needs to have information on why employees leave the organisation. Investigating labour turnover can include the use of quantitative and qualitative techniques.

**2.1.4d Engaging Talent:** Retention initiatives can help organisations to keep the skills, knowledge and experience required to fulfil long-term goals as well as reduce the costs and disruption associated with high labour turnover and frequent recruitment. However, in order to maximise employee contribution it is important that employees not only stay, but are actively engaged at work. Over the last few years increasing attention has been paid to the concept of employee engagement. The meaning of the term is still somewhat ambiguous, but definitions derived from academic and practitioner literature have a number of elements in common (Macey and Schneider, 2008: 4) in that employee engagement is seen as desirable; has an organisational purpose; and has both attitudinal and behavioural components. So for, example, the CIPD defines engagement as: a combination of commitment to the organisation and its values plus a willingness to help out colleagues (organisational citizenship). It goes beyond job satisfaction and is not simply motivation. Engagement is something the employee has to offer: it cannot be 'required' as part of the employment contract. (CIPD, 2009c). The term 'employee engagement' has now become fairly widespread, but there is still relatively little academic research and much of the work on the subject has been undertaken by survey houses and consultancies (Robinson et al., 2004). As a result, there is more description and prescription than critical analysis on the benefits of engagement to individuals and organisations. Engagement is closely linked to job satisfaction, so individuals are seen to benefit from having a job that they see as interesting and worthwhile, whilst organisations are seen to gain performance benefits from having employees who will give of their best and 'go the extra mile' (CIPD, 2009c).

**2.1.4e Compensating Talent:** There are three elements in an employee's compensation: basic (financial) compensation, pay incentives and indirect compensation/ benefits. The relative proportion of these elements (termed as pay mix) varies considerably from company

to company. The first element (base compensation) is the largest element of the total compensation. It is the fixed pay which an employee receives on a regular basis. It is in the form of a monthly/weekly salary or an hourly wage. The second element (pay incentives or contingent pay) is designed to reward employees for performance/skill/ competence, etc. The last element of total compensation is benefits (indirect compensation embracing a wide range of programmes including perks paid to senior executives). Usually, compensation is the most important cost in most companies. It may range from 60 to 80 per cent of total costs. Thus, the effectiveness with which compensation is allocated makes an important difference in gaining or losing a competitive edge. For example, a high-tech company which offers generous compensations to managerial and marketing personnel but underpays its research and development staff may lose its ability to innovate because competitors continuously pirate away its best talent (Dwivedi, 2007).

## **2.2 Talent Audit, Role Design, Talent Relationship Management and Performance Management:**

**2.2.1 Talent Audit:** A talent audit identifies those with potential and provides the basis for career planning and development – ensuring that talented people have the sequence of experience supplemented by coaching and learning programmes that will fit them to carry out more demanding roles in the future. Talent audits can also be used to indicate the possible danger of talented people leaving (risk analysis) and what action may need to be taken to retain them (Armstrong, 2006).

**2.2.2 Role Design:** Talent management is concerned with the roles people carry out. This involves role design – ensuring that roles provide the responsibility, challenge and autonomy required to create role engagement and motivation. It also means taking steps to ensure that people have the opportunity and are given the encouragement to learn and develop in their roles. Talent management policies focus on role flexibility – giving people the chance to develop their roles by making better and extended use of their talents (Armstrong, 2009).

**2.2.3 Talent Relationship Management:** Talent relationship management is the process of building effective relationships with people in their roles. It is concerned generally with creating a great place to work, but in particular it is about treating individual employees fairly, recognizing their value, giving them a voice and providing opportunities for growth. The aim is to achieve ‘talent engagement’, ensuring that people are committed to their work and the organization. As Sears (2003) points out, it is ‘better to build an existing relationship rather than try to create a new one when someone leaves’.

**2.2.4 Performance Management:** One of the most important, if not the most important, of the responsibilities undertaken by managers is to ensure that the members of their team



achieve high levels of performance. They have to know how to agree expectations and review results against those expectations, and how to decide what needs to be done to develop knowledge and skills, and where necessary performance. The organization may well have a performance management system which provides guidance on how this should be done, but ultimately it is up to managers. They are the people on the spot. Performance management systems only work if managers want them to work and are capable of making them work. They have to believe that their time is well spent in the process of managing performance. They need the skills required to set objectives, conduct formal performance reviews and provide feedback (Armstrong, 2010).

**2.2.5 Development of Performance Appraisal:** Informal systems of performance appraisal have been around as long as people have worked together; it is a universal human tendency to make evaluations of our colleagues at work. Formal performance appraisals have a shorter but still considerable history. Grint (1993) traces it back to a third-century Chinese practice. In the UK Randell (1989) identifies its first use via the 'silent monitor' in Robert Owen's textile mills. Here a multi-coloured block of wood was hung over the employee's workspace with the front colour indicating the foreman's assessment of the previous day's conduct, from white for good through to black for bad. Owen also recorded a yearly assessment of employees in a 'book of character'.

**2.2.6 Performance Appraisal as Managerial Control:** With the decline of careers in the flat, delayed organisation, HRM techniques such as performance appraisal have become more important managerial tools in motivating and controlling the workforce. Appraisal is now seen by some commentators as being much more important in maintaining employee loyalty and commitment than in directly managing performance (Bowles and Coates 1993). Its use provides managers with a major opportunity to reinforce corporate values and attitudes and thus it appeals as an important strategic instrument in the control process. Thus we find an increasing use of appraisal systems for non-managerial employees that are based on social, attitudinal and trait attributes (Townley 1989). Employees are increasingly being appraised not only on 'objective' measures such as attendance, timekeeping, productivity and quality but also on more subjective aspects such as dependability, flexibility, initiative, loyalty, etc.

## **2.3 Training, Learning and Development, Management succession planning and career management:**

### **2.3.1 Training, Learning and Development**

Companies are experiencing great change due to new technologies, rapid development of knowledge, globalization of business, and development of e-commerce. Also, companies have to take steps to attract, retain, and motivate their work forces. Training is not a luxury; it is a necessity if companies are to participate in the global and electronic marketplaces by offering high-quality products and services. Training prepares employees to use new technologies, function in new work systems such as virtual teams, and communicate and

cooperate with peers or customers who may be from different cultural backgrounds (Noe, 2010).

**2.3.1a Training:** Training refers to a planned effort by a company to facilitate employees' learning of job related competencies. These competencies include knowledge, skills, or behaviours that are critical for successful job performance. The goal of training is for employees to master the knowledge, skill, and behaviours emphasized in training programs and to apply them to their day-to-day activities. For a company to gain a competitive advantage, its training has to involve more than just basic skill development. That is, to use training to gain a competitive advantage, a company should view training broadly as a way to create intellectual capital. Intellectual capital includes basic skills (skills needed to perform one's job), advanced skills (such as how to use technology to share information with other employees), an understanding of the customer or manufacturing system, and self-motivated creativity (Noe, 2010).

**2.3.1b Learning:** Learning is the means by which a person acquires and develops new knowledge, skills, capabilities, behaviours and attitudes. As explained by Honey and Mumford (1996): 'Learning has happened when people can demonstrate that they know something that they did not know before (insights, realizations as well as facts) and when they can do something they could not do before (skills). Learning is a continuous process that not only enhances existing capabilities but also leads to the development of the skills, knowledge and attitudes that prepare people for enlarged or higher-level responsibilities in the future.

**2.3.1c Development:** Development is an unfolding process that enables people to progress from a present state of understanding and capability to a future state in which higher-level skills, knowledge and competencies are required. It takes the form of learning activities that prepare people to exercise wider or increased responsibilities. It does not concentrate on improving performance in the present job. Development has been defined by Harrison (2000) as: 'Learning experiences of any kind, whereby individuals and groups acquire enhanced knowledge, skills, values or behaviours. Its outcomes unfold through time, rather than immediately, and they tend to be long lasting.' In development programmes there is an emphasis on personal development planning and planned learning from experience. Use may be made of a 'corporate university'. Development can also focus on managers and take the form of action learning or outdoor learning (Harrison, 2000).

**2.3.2 The Learning Organisation:** The concept of the learning organization has caught the imagination of many people since it was first popularized by Senge (1990) who described it as follows: The learning organization is one 'where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together. Pedler et al (1991) state that a learning organization is one 'which

facilitates the learning of all its members and continually transforms itself'. Wick and Leon (1995) refer to a learning organization as one that 'continually improves by rapidly creating and refining the capabilities required for future success'. As Harrison (2000) comments, the notion of the learning organization remains persuasive because of its 'rationality, human attractiveness and presumed potential to aid organizational effectiveness and advancement'. However, Scarborough et al (1999) argue that 'the dominant perspective (of the learning organization concept) is that of organization systems and design. Little attention seems to be paid to what individuals want to learn or how they learn. The idea that individuals should be enabled to invest in their own development seems to have escaped learning organization theorists who are more inclined to focus on the imposition of learning by the organization, rather than creating a climate conducive to learning. This is a learning culture, a concept that has much more to offer than that of the learning organization.

**2.3.3 Comparison of Learning and Training:** Learning should be distinguished from training. 'Learning is the process by which a person constructs new knowledge, skills and capabilities, whereas training is one of several responses an organization can undertake to promote learning' (Reynolds et al, 2002).

**2.3.4 Informal Learning:** Informal learning is experiential learning. It takes place while people are learning on-the-job as they go along. Most learning does not take place in formal training programmes. People can learn 70 per cent of what they know about their job informally. A study by Eraut et al (1998) established that in organizations adopting a learner-centred perspective, formal education and training provided only a small part of what was learnt at work. Most of the learning described to the researchers was non-formal, neither clearly specified nor planned. It arose naturally from the challenges of work. Effective learning was, however, dependent on the employees' confidence, motivation and capability. Some formal training to develop skills (especially induction training) was usually provided, but learning from experience and other people at work predominated. Reynolds (2004) notes that: The simple act of observing more experienced colleagues can accelerate learning; conversing, swapping stories, cooperating on tasks and offering mutual support deepen and solidify the process... This kind of learning – often very informal in nature – is thought to be vastly more effective in building proficiency than more formalized training methods.

**2.3.5 Workplace Learning:** Informal learning occurs in the workplace but there are a number of specific ways in which learning can be enhanced. The most important of these are coaching and mentoring, but other methods are job rotation, job shadowing, bite-sized learning through e-learning, cross-functional or cross-site project work. The characteristics of workplace learning were explained by Stern and Sommerlad (1999) as follows:

- The workshop as a site for learning. In this case, learning and working are spatially separated with some form of structured learning activity occurring off or near the job. This may be in a company training centre or a 'training island' on the shop floor where the production process is reproduced for trainees.

- The workplace as a learning environment. In this approach, the workplace itself becomes an environment for learning. Various on-the-job training activities take place which are structured to different degrees. Learning is intentional and planned, aimed at training employees by supporting, structuring and monitoring their learning.
- Learning and working are inextricably mixed. In this case, learning is informal. It becomes an everyday part of the job and is built into routine tasks. Workers develop skills, knowledge and understanding through dealing with the challenges posed by the work. This can be described as continuous learning. As Zuboff (1988) put it: 'Learning is not something that requires time out from being engaged in productive activity; learning is the heart of productive activity.'

**2.3.6 Formal Learning:** Formal learning is planned and systematic. It makes use of structured training programmes consisting of instruction and practice that may be conducted on- or off-the-job. Experience may be planned to provide opportunities for continuous learning and development. Formal learning and developmental activities may be used such as action learning, coaching, mentoring and outdoor learning (Armstrong, 2009).

**2.3.7 E-Learning:** E-learning was defined by Pollard and Hillage (2001) as 'the delivery and administration of learning opportunities and support via computer, networked and web-based technology to help individual performance and development'. E-learning enhances learning by extending and supplementing face-to-face learning rather than replacing it. It enables learning to take place when it is most needed (just in time as distinct from just in case) and when it is most convenient. Learning can be provided in short segments or bites that focus on specific learning objectives. It is 'learner-centric' in that it can be customized to suit an individual's learning needs – learners can choose different learning objects within an overall package. The main potential drawbacks are the degree of access to computers, the need for a reasonable degree of literacy, the need for learners to be self-motivated, and the time and effort required to develop and update e-learning programmes (Pollard and Hillage, 2001).

**2.3.8 Blended Learning:** Blended learning is the use of a combination of learning methods to increase the overall effectiveness of the learning process by providing for different parts of the learning mix to complement and support one another. A blended learning programme might be planned for an individual using a mix of self-directed learning activities defined in a personal development plan, e-learning facilities, group action learning activities, coaching or mentoring, and instruction provided in an in-company course or externally. Generic training for groups of people might include e-learning, planned instruction programmes, planned experience and selected external courses. Within a training course a complementary mix of different training activities might

take place, for example a skills development course for managers or team leaders might include some instruction on basic principles but much more time would be spent on case studies, simulations, role playing and other exercises (Armstrong, 2009).

**2.3.9 Self-directed Learning:** Self-directed or self-managed learning involves encouraging individuals to take responsibility for their own learning needs, either to improve performance in their present job or to develop their potential and satisfy their career aspirations. It can also be described as self-reflective learning (Mezirow, 1985), which is the kind of learning that involves encouraging individuals to develop new patterns of understanding, thinking and behaving.

**2.3.10 Management Succession Planning:**

The basis for dealing successfully with staffing surprises is succession planning. When a sudden loss of a manager occurs, the void is a serious problem. At that point it is too late to begin to develop a replacement. “Bench strength” and the leadership “pipeline” are metaphors for ways to prevent the void by having replacements ready. However, succession planning involves more than simply replacement planning. Replacement planning usually develops a list of replacements for given positions. Succession planning must include a well-designed employee development system to reach its potential. Succession planning is the process of identifying a plan for the orderly replacement of key employees (Mathis and Jackson, 2010).

**2.3.11 Career Management: (Definitions and Importance of Career Development)**

A career can be defined as the pattern or sequence of work roles of an individual. Traditionally, the word applied only to those occupying managerial and professional roles, but increasingly it is seen as appropriate for everyone in relation to their work roles. Also, the word career has been used to imply upward movement and advancement in work roles. As we have noted, many organisations no longer offer a traditional career, or only offer it to a selected few. Enforced redundancies, flatter structures, short-term contracts, availability of part-time rather than full-time work, all break the idealised image of career. We now recognise other moves as legitimate expressions of career development, including development and extension within the job itself, lateral moves and the development of portfolio work. Career can also be conceptualised more broadly in terms of ‘the individual’s development in learning and work throughout life’ (Collin and Watts 1996), and thus includes voluntary work and other life experiences.

**2.3.12 Individual Career Management:** If we identify a career as the property of the individual, then clearly the responsibility for managing this rests on the individual, who should identify career goals, adopt strategies to support them and devise plans to achieve the goal. In reality, however, many people fail to plan. Pringle and Gold (1989), for example, found a lack of career planning in their sample of 50 ‘achieving’ men and women managers. Only around a quarter of people had plans for the future and many identified luck,

opportunity or being in the right place at the right time as the reason they had achieved promotions. Harlan and Weiss (1982) found both men and women drifting into positions created through coincidences.

**2.3.13 Organisational Support for Career Development:** Although career management is primarily the individual's responsibility, organisations can and should support this. This will be relevant whether careers are offered internally or whether employability is promoted, although the support may be different. Most organisations still see career management as optional rather than essential, its future orientation makes it slip down the business agenda, and there is always a tension between individual and organisational needs (Hirsh 2003). Successful career management is dependent on resolving these differences. CIPD (2003) argues that the factors contributing to effective career management are using career management activities valued by employees; training of line managers and HR staff in career management; line managers taking career management seriously; commitment of senior managers; a formal written career management strategy; integration with overall HR and business strategy. Based on the 2003 CIPD study Hirsh notes that the main barriers to career management are practical rather than philosophical and involve lack of time and resources, career management being seen as peripheral and lack of senior management commitment.

## **2.4 Sustainable Enterprise, Enterprise Development and Enterprise Development Tools:**

### **2.4.1 Sustainable Enterprise**

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) emerged in the UK in the 1990s as a developing agenda which was a reflection of growing public and governmental concerns about the effects of large corporations on society and the environment. The chief areas of CSR focus have been a company's marketing practices and communications, and also the impact of their operations on workers in their supply chain including their families and communities. The CSR agenda is being replaced by the practices of sustainability. Such practices by corporations carries resonance with their stakeholders as well as their investors who see value creation opportunities and cost reduction opportunities in the strategic use of sustainability concepts, practices and innovation. However, investments in sustainability projects and innovation are frequently longer-term investments and economic returns on social and environmental investments may take up to three years or more. Sustainable business or sustainable enterprise are terms that are now being used by firms who are integrating sustainable business practices into their corporate and brand strategies whilst seeking to address both shareholder and stakeholder interests within these strategies (The Financial Times website, 2015).

**2.4.2 Enterprise Development:** Innovation advances the economy to new levels, and enterprise development activity is the cradle of innovation. This applies whether the innovation results in the formation of a new organization or in the expansion of an existing organization. Enterprise development can refer to the creation of new enterprises or the

redevelopment or expansion of existing enterprises. The critical success factors of any enterprise development strategy are the viability of the business ideas or strategy behind the enterprise development activity. Enterprise development materializes as any action, movement or activity that creates new business value. The individuals or organizations that have an interest in the result of the enterprise activity are responsible for funding, guiding or supporting the enterprise development activity toward its objective. Economic society evolves as a result of enterprise development activity. Aggressive and continuous enterprise development creates jobs, funds the tax base for local and governments, and increases the aggregate standard of living (Chestnut, 2015).

**2.4.3 Enterprise Development Tools:** Enterprise development tools help build applications which are specific to an organization or business during its planning stages. Enterprise tools can also model how organizations work. These tools perform business functions that add to the cohesiveness and interrelatedness of an enterprise's operations, such as business idea development, planning and conducting business. Enterprise tools are often object-oriented and are designed to work across a number of business partners. Enterprise development tools offer solutions related to an entire enterprise, rather than a categorical or departmental problem. Enterprise development tools link programs and functionalities together, allowing business partners to work in an effective and efficient manner. There are thousands of enterprise development tool companies, but the trick is to find the right one for the right enterprise. Many claim to do the same thing, which means it can be difficult to determine which developer to use. Some are so large that their applications do not suit smaller businesses. Others have such complicated applications that even larger enterprises find them confusing and fail to be able to use them. Private IT professionals can custom-design these development tools or apply them to large or small businesses. There is no industry which cannot use enterprise development tools and hence it is not specific only to large enterprises (Enterprise Development website, 2010 - 2015).

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

Sustainable enterprise can be achieved if stakeholders concentrate on managing its talents effectively and efficiently. Multinational enterprises have been working diligently to ensure that they maintain a higher level in the competitive environment, and the thrust for such attainment stems from identifying and developing a workforce that will make such firms achieve their desires. Managing high quality employees is a challenging task and enterprises should ensure that extrinsic motivation is satisfactory in order to trigger the intrinsic and enhance outstanding performance. With reference to aforesaid, this study determines to examine the process of managing talents for sustainable enterprise development from a qualitative standpoint which led to the extraction of information from secondary sources published on the subject matter and other related research disciplines, in which critical examination of retrieved information will be done in order to establish satisfactory conclusion.

### 4.0 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Enterprise strategic objectives should be in consonance with its resourcing strategy to ensure successful achievement of its goal. Resourcing strategy helps to identify/attract suitable candidates an enterprise requires to develop and sustain in a competitive environment. Recruiting talents is a worthy venture but retaining them can be problematic, considering their desires for satisfactory rewards. Developing a sound retention policy and implementing it with equitable distribution of rewards will prevent turnover. Nevertheless, the inequitable administration of financial and non-financial rewards triggers employee turnover. Recruiting talents externally could create an influx of new ideas into the enterprise but care must be taken to prevent selecting the wrong candidates, and also if recruitment is to be done internally, selection process should be properly administered to prevent resentment, jealousy, and prejudice. In the case of internal recruitment, objective selection can be guaranteed since employees' past performance records can substantiate their competencies for posts to be filled which makes the process easy.

Managing performance is one of the most important processes in enterprise operations and requires clear roles and responsibilities, so that employees know their job duties and should be able to exhibit their expertise so as to achieve specific objectives. Sustainable development accentuates the significance of outstanding performance which quickens the activities of an enterprise and consequently leads to an achievement of its objectives. Appraising employees' performance helps to identify their strength and weaknesses so that recommendations for promotion or further training can be made by their supervisors. Performance appraisal has been proven to be a key component in measuring employees' performance level and helps to identify talents within enterprises.

Training and development plays a vital role in strengthening talents capacity for excellent performance. The processes starts with an analysis of the organisation's strategy, task to be performed and the person identified for the training programme. The person(s) identified should be willing to undergo the training and the training instructor must ensure that the appropriate method is selected and implemented effectively and efficiently. Enterprises can choose either to train their employees on-the-job (coaching and mentoring) or off-the-job (consulting training establishments). To ascertain the significance of the training programme implemented, an assessment of its impact should be conducted and trainees should ensure that concepts learnt is transferred to their various duties. The development of succession plan goes with staff capacity building for successful future replacement since unexpected circumstances (employee turnover) may arise and also retirement which is unavoidable may definitely take place once an employee approaches the stipulated age requirement.

Developing and sustaining enterprises in a tough competitive environment encompasses a whole lot of issues ranging from recruiting the required personnel, training and developing their intellectual capital, administering satisfactory financial and non-financial rewards, retaining high quality employees for outstanding performance to the delivery of effective and efficient services to customers. Sustainable enterprises always attempt to maintain a unique



system in a competitive environment so that rival firms cannot easily adopt their management techniques. Managing talents in the twenty-first century is the focus of most enterprises since their desire is to retain outstanding performers in order to maintain a higher level in the competition. In consideration of the above facts, enterprises are working relentlessly to ensure that they contain the talents required to develop and sustain in tough competitive environments.

### **5.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

Brilliant and hardworking employees are vital towards the success of many enterprises since their knowledge capacity can be unleashed and bring about transformation in the operations of an enterprise and consequently lead to sustainable enterprise development. The greatness of modern large scale enterprise hinge on high quality employees. The critical analysis of retrieved information from secondary sources published on the subject matter identified attracting, selecting, training, rewarding and retaining high quality employees as components that lead to sustainable enterprise development. Further analysis drawn from available information disclosed the significance of managing talents and key elements in the review process emphasised training and developing staff capacity for successful implementation of succession plans so that circumstantial issues such as turnover and retirements could be addressed when they show up. This research emanated from a theoretical viewpoint that permitted the retrieval in information from secondary sources published on the subject matter nonetheless, further study could be conducted in this subject using quantitative and qualitative approach to elucidate specific elements of managing talents.

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