Perceptions of middle managers on talent development and management in business organisations in Zimbabwe

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ABSTRACT
Talent development and management is a subject that has been widely researched. In some organizations, talent development and management is not a conscious process. Organizations approach the practice differently with some organizations having clear policies on talent development and succession planning while others approach it in a casual manner. This study carried out a survey to determine the perceptions of middle managers from various organizations in Zimbabwe on the existence of talent development and management, the existence of talent development and management policies, the extent to which talent management is an integrated process and to identify the approaches used by different organizations in handling talent. It came out that in Zimbabwe, the talent development and management area is a mixed bag with some organizations taking a conscious and well planned approach to it while others approach it in a passive manner. The underlying result, however, is that talent development is present in most Zimbabwean organizations although it is referred to differently. It is recommended that organizations should put relevant talent development and management policies in place and ensure that the organization’s approach and expectations are clear to every organization member, if talent is to be harnessed profitably.

Key Words: Talent development, middle management, perceptions, organizations, succession planning

1. INTRODUCTION
Defining the word ‘talent’ for talent identification, development and management purposes is challenging. Some researchers have argued that “companies do not even know how to define ‘talent’, let alone how to manage it” (The Economist, 2006:4). The word ‘talent’ has been taken to mean ‘a gift which enables someone to achieve a conspicuously exceptional or above- average performance in a particular field’ (Tansley, 2011). Gagne’ (2000), notes that the term talent designates the superior mastery of systematically developed abilities and knowledge in at least one field of human endeavor.

Most researchers agree that talented employees can easily work their way out of difficult situations and work faster than ungifted people and that talent has to be identified, nurtured, developed and managed in a strategic way, in order to benefit both the talent holder and the organization (Newhall, 2012; Pruis, 2011; Haskins and Shaffer, 2010). Therefore, talent is a very important attribute in business operations as it enables labour to be more productive and innovative. For talent to be developed and properly managed, the process of talent management and development requires appropriate decision making, leadership and guidance. In most cases, organizations that fail to pay attention to talent development end up losing talent and good operational and strategic results. Key talent necessary for organizational success is found in middle level managers (Sheehan, 2011).

This paper makes a contribution to the body of knowledge on talent development and management in Zimbabwean organizations as perceived by middle level management where key talent of an organization lies.

2. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES
The purpose of this study was to establish perceptions of middle managers on talent development and management in business organisations in Zimbabwe.
Specific objectives addressed in the study were:

1. To establish the existence of talent development in any form in Zimbabwean organizations;
2. To ascertain the existence of talent development and management policies in Zimbabwean organisations;
3. To establish the extent to which talent management is an integrated process and
4. To identify the various approaches to talent development in Zimbabwean organizations.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Talent development and management is an area that has been widely studied. Tansley (2011) proffers that there is no contemporary definition of talent that is universally accepted. The word talent infers to the most important attributes necessary for management development and excellence. It comprises of the gift of unique knowledge and skills that are necessary to achieve high levels of performance (Tansley, 2011). The same author notes that talent is not only innate but that it can also be developed. Creativity in itself is an element of talent. The extent to which an organization’s environment allows for or enables one to be creative, becomes very important for talent development. This means that talent must not only be visible; it must also be stimulated and nurtured. Business organizations should, therefore, be keen to explore how this talent can be identified, nurtured, developed and managed for better performance.

Talent management can be understood to mean a systematic way of attracting and identifying, developing and retaining those individuals in an organization who are regarded as having value to that organization, currently and in the future. This implies that it is important to attract individuals with potential to meet both current and future goals of the organization. Talent management is, therefore, both now and future oriented. To develop, manage and retain those talented individuals requires the organization to have in place a planned strategy for talent development. Particular strengths of individuals need to be identified and developed. A talent development strategy needs to look at the entire workforce of an organization. Apart from use in specialist jobs, talent development is critical for management succession planning (Sheehan, 2012; Pruis, 2011). It is, therefore, important to have a clear assessment of the presence and extent of talent development and management in any organization.

Managers, particularly middle managers, form key talents for organizational success (Sheehan, 2011). Talent development is a major element of management development that is necessary to produce effective ‘ready to manage’ cadres in organisations (Haskins and Shaffer, 2010). The development of talent in organisations relies on a number of variables such as organizational will, goals, required attributes and the development processes and/or methods put in place (Haskins and Shaffer, 2010).

A worldwide study by Corporate Executive Board (CEB) (2013) on talent management, revealed various levels of manager commitment to talent development, ranging from those who are committed and effective in managing talent to those who are neither committed nor effective. The findings of that study showed that 20% of senior executives lacked commitment to talent development. This lack of commitment to talent development directly impacted on their level of effectiveness in developing talent in their organizations.

Erickson (2012) identified top challenges that face managers when it comes to talent development and management including the following:

1. Attracting and retaining enough employees at all levels to meet the current and development needs of the organization;
2. Creating talent development design that appeals to employees across ages/generations;
3. Difficulty in determining whether individuals who are technical experts and skilled in their fields have the people and leadership capabilities, business breadth and global diversity required in future leadership;
4. Transferring key knowledge and relationships;
5. The exodus of mid-level managers in whom the organization might have invested a lot;
6. Developing talent management programmes that are attractive to young and upcoming managers;
7. The challenge of short tenure and frequent movement and;
8. The challenge of enlisting support from executives who believe in buying talent as opposed to building own talent.

Pruis (2011) offers a five point talent development and designing framework. It clearly spells out the various aspects which should be present in an organization that is developing talent. He contends that there should be the following:

1. Existence of clear policy and strategy;
2. Integrated process;
3. Organisational needs and goals that drive talent development;
4. Mentoring process and continuous development of talent and
5. Existence of a balance between organisational and individual needs or expectations.

For successful talent development and management to happen, there should be a crystal clear policy and strategy (Pruis, 2011; Newhall, 2012). Talent management has become a strategic priority in today’s complex business world. It is an important strategy on its own that business organizations should not underestimate (Newhall, 2012; Sheerhan, 2012).

Talent development and management process requires an integrated effort supported by all key stakeholders in an organisation (Newhall, 2012; Pruis, 2011; Haskins and Shaffer, 2010). This factor requires evident coherence in the planning, identification, recruitment, mentoring and the development and utilization of talent in an organization.

Organisational needs and goals must drive talent development and management. Organisations should aim to satisfy given needs or rather achieve set goals, such as cost savings and superior production techniques. This will give value for money invested in human resources, particularly in talent development (Sheerhan, 2012; Pruis, 2011). Succession planning is a critical strategic aspect in many organisations, as there is a need for leadership renewal all the time. Talent development and management is often associated with succession planning activities in many organisations (Sheeran, 2012).

Mentoring in talent development and management entails a one-to-one relationship between the talent holder and a more experienced professional or mentor or role model. Pruis (2011) contends that mentoring is critical for a successful talent development and management program. Newhall (2012) refers to the mentors as ‘talent ambassadors’ who have commitment for driving and measuring talent development and management. This will give required results in terms of skills, expertise and operational outcomes.

A serious talent development and management programme should clearly state the expectations of the organization to talent holders and other stakeholders. This is critical in that it allows the talent holders to synchronize their expectations with those of the organization (Pruis, 2011). This requires clear job assignments, clearly laid out career paths, clear competence expectations and management succession, among others (Haskins and Shaffer, 2012; Pruis, 2011; Sheerhan, 2011).

This review of literature on talent development and management shows that there is need to align strategic business plan with talent development plans that meet both individual and organisational goals.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
This study on perceptions of middle managers on talent development and management in Zimbabwean organizations was based on a survey which was administered to a random sample of 200 middle managers working in private and public sector organizations. Responses were solicited on the following questions;

1. Does talent exist in any form in Zimbabwean organisations?
2. Are there clear policies on talent development and management in Zimbabwean organisations?
3. Is talent management an integrated process in Zimbabwean organisations?
4. What approaches are used for talent development in Zimbabwean organisations?

One hundred and forty two (142) responses were received, giving a 71% response rate. Data was analysed using IBM SPSS version 22 software. The analysis was done through factor analysis, correlations, Chi-square, and frequencies. Reliability analysis was done using Cronbach's Alpha, with a value of 0.850 being obtained. According to Santos (1999) and Nunnally (1978), a Cronbach's Alpha value lower than 0.7 is a sign of a weak tool whose results are not reliable.

5. FINDINGS
The study used data collected from middle managers picked randomly from various organizations and varying fields.

5.1 Existence of talent development in Zimbabwean business organizations
The first objective of the study was to establish whether talent development and management exists in Zimbabwean organizations. The following variables were used in the questionnaire to assess the availability of talent development:
1. Availability of a clear talent policy
2. Organizational talent management effort
3. A clear mentoring process for talent development
4. Succession planning
5. Talent holders are mentored by role models
6. The talent pool is collectively harnessed for profitability
7. Talent holders are offered attractive jobs, positions and projects
8. Management always talk about talent
9. Talent holders collaborate actively with each other in the organization and
10. Talent holders are given jobs in areas in which they are talented

The frequencies obtained in relation to the above factors are shown in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>% Frequency (Agree)</th>
<th>% Frequency (Disagree)</th>
<th>% Frequency (Not sure)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Availability of a clear talent policy</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational talent management effort</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A clear mentoring process for talent development</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succession planning</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent holders are mentored by role models</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The talent pool is collectively harnessed for profitability</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent holders are offered attractive jobs, positions and projects</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management always talk about talent</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent holders collaborate actively with each other in the organisations</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent holders are given jobs in areas in which they are talented</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall, although talent development and management is evident in Zimbabwean business organizations. Perceptions differ from organisation to organisation, with some people not even sure of its existence. This may be as a result of situations where there are no clear policies on talent development and in some cases management do not talk about talent development and management. Talent development comes in varying forms with some organisations having succession plans, while others simply give talented people attractive jobs, positions and projects.

The analysis showed a strong correlation between some of the variables used in answering this objective.

1. In organisations where a clear talent policy is available, organisational talent management effort is most significant.
2. Where there is a clear talent development policy and significant talent management effort, management always talks about talent in the organisation.
3. In organisations where talent management efforts are put in place, there is a high probability that there will be a clear mentoring process for talent development.

Principal component analysis was done to establish the major determining factors for the presence of talent development and management in organisations. Table 2 shows the primary determinants or indicators which reveal that talent development is present in an organisation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Primary Indicators</th>
<th>Secondary Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A clear talent policy</td>
<td>.756</td>
<td>- .374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational talent management effort</td>
<td>.808</td>
<td>- .368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear mentoring process for talent development</td>
<td>.689</td>
<td>- .205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succession planning</td>
<td>.613</td>
<td>.129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent holders are offered attractive jobs, positions and projects</td>
<td>.538</td>
<td>.733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management always talks about talent in the organisation</td>
<td>.725</td>
<td>-.104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent holders are given jobs in the areas which they are talented</td>
<td>.729</td>
<td>.443</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whereas all the indicators in Table 2 show the existence of talent development in an organisation, the fact that talent holders are offered attractive jobs, positions and projects is not necessarily a primary indicator. Giving attractive jobs and positions to people who are thought to be talented may not be regarded as talent development but maybe just a way of motivating staff members. Also, according to Newhall (2012), mentoring is an important component of talent development. Therefore, an attractive job or position without the mentoring process may not necessarily be regarded as talent development or management.

5.2 Presence of crystal clear policies on talent development and management in Zimbabwean Organizations

Results show that there is an almost equal distribution of organizations where a clear talent policy is available (42%), and the ones where a clear policy is not available (43%), with 15% being not clear.

A mean of 2.01 on a 3 point scale also shows that the results are evenly distributed. A T-test was done to measure the reliability of the mean with respect to 1(Present) and 3 (Not present) to establish the stronger side, with results of 12.860 and 12.490, respectively. This showed that neither side is strong enough and that there is a balance between organisations with a clear talent policy and those without a clear talent policy.
5.3 The extent to which talent management is an integrated process in Zimbabwean Business Organisations
The study used the following variables to measure the extent to which talent management is an integrated process in an organization;
1. Accountability for talent management lies with the board;
2. Talent development addresses a strategic objective;
3. Career development for succession planning is sought and developed from within;
4. The organisation is clear about its expectations on talent holders;
5. The talent pool is collectively harnessed for profitability and
6. The talent holders in an organization actively collaborate with each other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>% Frequency (Agree)</th>
<th>% Frequency (Disagree)</th>
<th>% Frequency (Not sure)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accountability lies with the board</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent development addresses a strategic objective</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career development for succession is developed from within</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation is clear about its expectations on talent holders</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent pool is collectively harnessed for profitability</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent holders collaborate with each other</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The statistics in Table 3 show that middle managers perceive that accountability for talent development and management does not lie with the board. A significant number of respondents indicated that they were not sure whose responsibility it is to develop talent in their organisations (18%). The majority of respondents indicated that talent development in their organisations lead to addressing a strategic objective or challenge (79%). In 69% of the cases, career development for succession planning is sought and developed from within the organisation. Although in some organisations succession planning is available at an operational level (55%), a significant number of respondents (29%) disagreed with this, showing a variation of practices in organisations. A resounding number of respondents agreed that talent development is necessary for middle managers (93%) while 73% also agreed that talent holders should be mentored by role models. Half of the respondents (50%) indicated that their organizations make clear expectations on talent while a significant number were not sure (20%). This may be an indication of communication challenges in organisations where some managers may not be sure about how certain issues are handled within the organizations. In 60% of most organizations, talent is harnessed collectively for profitability. However, a significant fraction of respondents (21%) were not sure whether or not this happens within their own organizations. Results also show that talents collaborate actively with each other in organizations (64%). Basing on frequencies, results generally show that most boards of business organisations in Zimbabwe are not living up to their role as policy makers in this area. It may also indicate that some top management do not initiate policies on talent development to the boards and they use salaries to attract and keep talent.

Six factors emerged as major determinants or reliable indicators showing that talent development and management is an integrated process as shown in Table 4.
Table 4: Indicators showing that talent development is an integrated process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Primary indicators</th>
<th>Secondary indicators</th>
<th>Other indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accountability for talent management lies with the board</td>
<td>.330</td>
<td>.536</td>
<td>-.469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent development in the organisation leads to addressing a strategic objective and/or challenge</td>
<td>.554</td>
<td>.273</td>
<td>.434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career development for succession is sought and developed from within</td>
<td>.701</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>-.199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succession planning is available at operational level</td>
<td>.483</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>-.314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent development is necessary for middle managers</td>
<td>.194</td>
<td>.339</td>
<td>.725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent development is mentored by role models</td>
<td>.222</td>
<td>.659</td>
<td>-.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The organisation clearly makes its expectations on talents</td>
<td>.732</td>
<td>-.207</td>
<td>-.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The talent pool is collectively harnessed profitably</td>
<td>.782</td>
<td>-.261</td>
<td>.108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The talents collaborate actively with each other in the organization</td>
<td>.769</td>
<td>-.345</td>
<td>.024</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table 4, six factors were found to be key in showing whether or not talent development is an integrated process in an organization and these are;

1. Talent development in the organisation leads to addressing a strategic objective and/or challenge;
2. Career development for succession is sought and developed from within;
3. Succession planning is available at operational level;
4. The organisation clearly makes its expectations on talent;
5. The talent pool is collectively harnessed profitably and
6. The talents collaborate actively with each other in the organisation.

The Correlation analysis of the data showed that

1. Where organizations make clear expectations on talent, the talent pool is most likely harnessed profitably.
2. When talents collaborate actively in the organization, the talent pool is harnessed profitably.

5.3 How Zimbabwean organisations approach talent development

The following variables were used to indicate the approach used by different organizations

1. Talent is based on a broader pool of talent;
2. Most young talent comes from university;
3. Career development for succession is sought and developed from within;
4. Succession planning is available at top management;
5. Succession planning is available at middle management;
6. Succession planning is available at operational level;
7. Talent management is necessary for executives;
8. Talent management is necessary for middle managers;
9. Talent development is necessary for specialists and
10. Talent development is mentored by role models.
Table 5: Approaches to talent development and management in Zimbabwean business organisations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>% Frequency (Agree)</th>
<th>% Frequency (Disagree)</th>
<th>% Frequency (Not sure)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talent is based on a broader pool of talent</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most young talent comes from university</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career development for succession is sought and developed from within</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succession planning is available at top management</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succession planning is available at middle management;</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succession planning is available at operational level</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent management is necessary for executives</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent management is necessary for middle managers</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent development is necessary for specialists</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent development is mentored by role models</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results show that most organizations believe that talent should be based on a broader pool of talent (74%). About three quarters of respondents (73%) also believe that most young talent comes from university. Almost two thirds of respondents (64%) agree that career development for succession planning should be sought and developed from within. An overwhelming number of respondents (84%) also agreed that talent management is necessary for executive level, middle management (94%) and specialists (89.3%). Most respondents also believed that talent should be mentored by role models (75.4%).

From the foregoing analysis, it can be concluded that:

1. Where career development is sought and developed from within, succession planning is evident at both middle and top management levels and
2. Generally, organisations which feel that succession planning is necessary for top executives will also find it necessary for middle managers. Succession planning at middle management should be the basis for succession planning at top management level. The crop of talent that is admitted at middle levels should have potential for promotion to top management.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is evident from the study results that talent development and management exists in Zimbabwean business organisations. The nature of the existence of talent development and management in these organisations varies across the organizational spectrum. In some organisations, it is more meaningful and the factors that measure it are well defined and reliable, such as organizational talent management effort and clear talent policies. This is a good development in the area of talent development and management as it is the middle managers themselves that are giving this evidence. If things were really bad, the middle managers would have indicated it.

The presence of clear policies on talent development and management in Zimbabwe also varies across organisations, confirming the variation in the presence of talent development and management in the same organisations. What is shown by the 41.6% availability and 43.1% of non-availability of clear policies on talent development and management is that not all middle managers have been exposed to these policies. Top managers may not be exposing these policies in a clear manner to 43.1% of the respondents. There is a need therefore to encourage organisations to clearly spell out their talent development policies.

An integrated process for talent development and management is critical (Pruis, 2011). About a third (34%) of the middle managers surveyed is not familiar with what happens at corporate levels regarding the board’s position on talent development and management. At times the board’s feelings and actions fail to permeate
below top managers for a variety of reasons. Written comments from some of the respondents tend to suggest that middle managers were at times not aware of the real position of the board on talent development and management. This is a major concern in talent development and management.

The fact that 93% and 73% of the respondents agreed that talent development is necessary for middle managers and should be mentored by role models respectively, shows that they were an interested party. Nevertheless, this result stands valid in supporting the situation on integrated approach to talent development and management, as it is validated by the six factors that determine talent development as discussed above. The observation by the respondents that talent development in organisations leads to addressing a strategic objective and/or challenge (Factor value .554) shows that middle managers believe that the board and top managers are strongly involved in talent development. Succession planning in most organisations is an important theme (Gonzalez, 2013; Pruis, 2011) as it deals with managers, particularly at top level, having to be replaced from below when they depart for a variety of reasons such as retirement or incompetence. As a result, some senior managers would rather delay their departure by slowing down talent development in organisations, where they doubt their competence. Nevertheless, it is important for talent development and management that career development for succession planning is sought and developed from within and that clear policies are available and visibly communicated to all stakeholders.

The results of this study are a sound foundation for more studies on the subject, such as on the perceptions of human resources executives and other top managers on talent development and management in Zimbabwean business organisations. Six factors that show that talent is an integrated process have been identified in this study. These factors which include; addressing of strategic objectives or challenges, succession planning, clear expectations on talent, collectively harnessed talent pool and collaboration of talent, are critical for any meaningful talent development and management campaign in any business.

The approaches to talent development and management from this study in Zimbabwe include; seeking and developing career development from within organisations and that succession planning is necessary at all levels and is also done from within. This is a positive development for talent development as talent holders will be assured of the right treatment. Middle managers believe in mentoring and look forward to working with role models in their organisations.

The factor of accountability for talent development and management at board level is lowly rated for determining an integrated approach for talent development and management. This is a cause for concern as board initiative and support is critical in this endeavor for strategic purposes (Pruis, 2011). The low rating may be due to poor communication of board business below top management level. On the other hand, it could be a matter of poor board accountability for this strategic area. What is important is the fact that the issue of accountability for talent development and management is critical in organizations.

This study also indicated that attractive jobs, positions, projects and packages are important ingredients of talent development and management. These aspects provide a good occupational environment for talent development. They encourage talent as they feel rewarded as well as challenged by top job assignments. Talking about talent development and management in organizations, assists in clarifying board and top management positions on the matter.

It is pleasing to note from this study that talent development and management in Zimbabwe is positive. This gives hope to young career people in organisations. It also gives hope for continued success and prosperity in organisations as leaders are replaced through home grown managers.

Successful talent development and management in Zimbabwe requires clear policies. Zimbabwean organizations should, therefore, come up with these clear and meaningful policies in order for them to benefit from this strategic endeavor. In addition, there is a need for visible management efforts in organizations pursuing talent development and management. This should take into consideration expectations of both talent holders and the organizations. Talent holders would be more productive if management would make them feel important through challenging job assignments and attractive salary packages. Organisations in
Zimbabwe will make the talent development and management process easy if they utilize role models or mentors in this exercise. Corporate support, including board participation, is vital for talent development and management and organisations are advised to sincerely ensure this. To ensure cooperation from top managers who may feel threatened by succession planning outcomes, talent development and management should be all encompassing. It should be a collective endeavor, inclusive of all managers.

Further studies on this strategic subject are recommended, such as on the perceptions of top managers on talent development and management. Zimbabwe still requires such studies in order to produce more effective and productive managers in business organisations.

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