

# Talent Management Practice on Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Task Performance in Chinese Higher Education

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## Abstract

This paper studied the talent management (TM) practice relationship between organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and task performance based on social exchange theory (SET). A survey of 1,161 academic staffs were conducted in 10 public universities in the Guangxi Province, China to test the relationships. The results show that TM practice was negatively related to task performance. The dimensions of TM practice, such as talent culture and talent retention, have a positive effect on task performance respectively except for talent identification. In contrast, talent development was significantly negatively related to task performance. Positive relationships were found both between TM practice and employees' OCB, and between OCB and employees' task performance in higher education. The implications of these results are discussed and the limitations of the study are highlighted.

**Keywords:** Talent management practices, Organizational citizenship behavior, Task performance, Social Exchange Theory

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## Introduction

Faced with the challenges of increasingly fierce competition, the Chinese government launched and has continued

to promote the "Double Tops" construction to provide high-standard disciplines within the scope of public higher education, and universities throughout the country are implementing



talent management policies to attract and retain talents. However, for an underdeveloped region located in the southwest of China, the Guangxi Province has experienced more problems of talent attraction and retention than other developed regions (the Government Work Report of Guangxi Province, 2020).

Talent management (TM), an activity and process involving the systematic attraction, identification, development, engagement, retention, and deployment of talent (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005; Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Scullion et al., 2010), has emerged as a popular term that covers a broad spectrum of human resource management (HRM) practices with a focus on talent pools and talent more broadly (Lewis & Heckman, 2006), and can be viewed as an appropriate framework to enable organization, particularly universities to transform their current transactional human resources systems into institutional human resource systems.

Previous studies stated that effective TM can enhance both job performance (Luna-Arocas & Morley, 2015; Mensah, 2015) and OCB (voluntary and positive behaviors) (Ariani, 2008) in the workplace and supports individual performance and organizational effectiveness. In the context of China, little is known about the range of TM practices deployed to support institutional operations in higher education institutions, particularly in China under the rapid development of both the economy and higher education. Besides, while many previous studies have offered many insights into OCB, such insights and their contributions to the educational organization domain have been ignored (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2001; DiPaola & Hoy, 2005). Also, the task performance of Chinese public universities is still paid less

attention. This study explored the relationship among TM practices, OCB, and task performance from the perspective of social exchange theory.

Therefore, this study has two objectives: to investigate the role of TM practices on task performance and OCB respectively in the higher education sector; and 2. to examine the relationship between OCB and task performance. The results from this paper are expected to benefit TM practices relating to task performance in Chinese higher education and to set up future policies or TM content for human resource practitioners to improve TM practices OCB, and task performance.

## Literature review and hypothesis development

### Social exchange theory

SET holds that an organization that behaves toward employees beneficially in a manner generates reciprocity such that employees usually react positively to favor the organization (Blau, 1964). Recent literature has linked TM practices to OCB (Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Mensah, 2015). Organizations can encourage employee positive behavior and positively and significantly affect task performance (Vigoda & Gadot, 2007; Patnaik & Biswas, 2005; Kim, 2006; Jiao, C., et al., 2011, Ghalib & Suharyono, 2014). This study explored the relationship among TM practices, OCB, and task performance from the perspective of social exchange theory.

### Talent management practices

Talent management can be defined as the activities and processes that involve the systematic attraction, identification,



development, engagement, retention, and deployment of talents that are of particular valuable for creating strategic sustainable success in organization (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005; Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Scullion et al., 2010). This study mainly focuses on dimensions of TM practice that adapted Davies's Model (Davies & Davies, 2010), namely, talent identification; talent culture; training and development; attraction, and retention.

## Task performance

Task performance is defined as the proficiency (i.e., competency) with which one performs central job tasks (Campbell, 1990), and it encompasses an individual's contribution to organizational performance, actions taken as part of the formal reward system, and the fulfilment of requirements as specified in job descriptions (Williams & Karau, 1991). Work quantity, work quality, and job knowledge are examples of job-specific task competence (Campbell et al., 1990), technical proficiency (Campbell et al., 1990), or in-role performance (Maxham et al., 2008).

## Organizational citizenship behavior

OCB refers to the cooperative behavior of the employee's compliance and voluntary demonstration, which goes beyond the requirements of roles and job responsibilities; and is out the scope of formal norms and rewards of the organization (Smith et al., 1983; Organ, 1990), but contributes to the improvement of organizational effectiveness. The positive atmosphere of the university's organizational culture and

system influences faculties' OCB were further defined in this study.

## Talent management practice and task performance

Mensah et al. (2016) proposed that TM practice increases positive talented task performance. In the educational sector, Taleghani et al (2013) concluded that TM practice has a significant positive impact on the faculty performance of the university, and the promotion of TM practice can improve the performance of employees. Moghtadaie & Taji's (2016) study shows that TM practice including talent development, attracting talent, and talent maintenance is crucial in improving the performance of faculty members in educational services. The above studies have concluded that task performance is a consequence of TM practices. Applying the SET, when an organization is investing in TM practices, talented employees feel obligated to reciprocate the organization with positive behaviors (e.g., high-level performance). Similarly, SET recommends that TM practices can send out a signal to talented employees to perform better. Thus, the first research hypothesis can be stated:

*H1 There is a positive relationship between TM practices and task performance.*

## Talent identification and task performance

Talent identification, as the starting point



of any effective TM process in the TM context, is an activity to identify the key positions in the organizations that differentially contribute to the sustainable competitive advantage (Collings & Mellahi (2009). It concerns the regular talent reviews, and the degree of reliance on formal procedures and input or output (Mäkelä et al., 2010; Silzer & Church, 2009). Identifying talent is based on the organization's overall strategy, sector, and external environment and in a centrally controlled region, especially in an educational organization. SET suggests that the employees will probably reciprocate these corporate investments in positive ways when corporations invest in their employees (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Building on SET, employees who are identified as talented demonstrate higher work effort resulting in better performance than those who were not identified (De Boeck & Dries, 2018; Gelens et al., 2014). Thus, from the above empirical and theoretical supports, this research formulates the sub-hypothesis below:

*H1a There is a positive relationship between talent identification and task performance.*

### **Talent development and task performance**

Talent development involves feedback, establishment of creating clear multiple career paths to meet the identified talent expectations based on their capability and performance (Collins & Clark, 2003; Locke & Latham, 1990), and is considered to be one of the TM practices that are significant for employees in achieving positive results in an organization (Sendawula et al., 2018). To encourage and retain talented employees, organizations need to train and develop them (O'Boyle & Aguinis et al., 2012).

According to SET, when an organization provides ample talent development support to its employees, it sends a signal to the workforce that the organization is concerned about its employees, which in turn workers will reciprocate with highly productive and success toward achieving the organizational goals (Aguinis, 2009). Previous studies revealed that talent development positively influences employee performance (Sendawula et al., 2018; Wadhwa and Tripathi, 2018; Azeem & Yasmine, 2015; and Santoso & Moeins, 2019). Therefore, this research formulates the hypothesis from the above empirical and theoretical supports.

*H1b There is a positive relationship between talent development and task performance.*

### **Talent culture and task performance**

Talent culture refers to values and beliefs about talent in an organization to create an environment that is conducive to personal development and success and enables talent for future-focused activity (Annakis, 2014). Academician needs to put an effort into contributing to the academy and improving performance so that the values developed toward academician will help to enhance academy performance and productivity, and will be motivated for job involvement and job performance by creating an excellent working culture in the university (Annakis, 2014). Maina's (2016) and Aluko's (2004) studies revealed that there is a significant relationship between institutional culture and employee performance and established those employees enjoyed the industrial way of life irrespective of their cultural background. This is also consistent with Magee (2002)'s view that employees may have uniform or similar



perceptions of the organization in institutions where employee operations are characterized by organizational culture. From the above empirical support, this study formulates the following sub-hypothesis:

*H1c There is a positive relationship between talent culture and task performance.*

### **Talent retention and task performance**

Retention management is to prevent employee turnover and to utilize the skills of talented employees to maximize competitive advantage for the organization in the long term. Employers or organizations will offer talented employees the right form of currency (Berger, 2004), such as work-life balance; an effective work diversity policy; flexible working hours and work arrangements, and promotion opportunities can be used to encourage and have a positive effect on retaining talented employees (Mahapatro, 2010; Cappelli, 2008). According to the literature, organizations created a strong employer brand to formulate an employee value proposition that appeals to talents (Meyers et al., 2013; Thunnissen et al., 2013b), and may achieve a committed, motivated, satisfied, and properly engaged workforce in their organization by investing in retaining their talented employees (Aminudin et al., 2017) Bibi (2019) and Devi (2017) found that organizations can manage retention by increasing their remunerations and empowering them intrinsic and extrinsic motivations to improve employee performance. Thus, researchers have hypothesized this argument as:

*H1d There is a positive relationship between talent retention and task performance.*

### **Talent management practice and organizational citizenship behavior**

There is recent research linking TM practices to OCB. (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Mensah, 2015 and 2016). It is found that employees who belong to the more favorable group portray more discretionary effort, and OCB (Marescaux et al. 2013). SET suggests that OCB's presence help to retain and develop talented individuals, as it reduces their intention to leave the organization (Becton et al., 2017; Mensah, 2019). Based on the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner 1960) of SET, it can be extended that an organization that acts in positive ways towards employees creates reciprocity so that employees generally respond in positive ways that are beneficial to the organization (Blau 1964; Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005). Based on the logic of the SET, it can assume that TM practices will encourage talented employees to reciprocate their employer with positive results. Hence, it is hypothesized as follows;

*H2 There is a positive relationship between TM practice and employees' OCB.*

### **Organizational citizenship behavior and task performance**

The implementation of OCBs in schools are useful for employees to engage the voluntary work and other activities without any compensation to help individual students and colleagues succeed (DiPaola et al., 2005). Organizations can encourage employee positive behavior and positively and significantly affect task performance (Vigoda and Gadot, 2007; Patnaik and



Biswas,2005; Kim, 2006; Jiao, C., et al., 2011; Chiang and Hsieh, 2012; and Ghalib and Suharyono, 2014). Based on those, the third research hypothesis can be stated as follows:

*H3 There is a positive relationship between OCB and employees' task performance.*

dimensions such as talent identification (6 items), talent development (6 items), talent culture (6 items), talent retention (5 items); OCB adopted from Farh et al. (1997); and the task performance adopted from Koopmans et al. (2013). All these items were measured with a 5-point Likert scale which ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

## Measurement

Based on the aforementioned literature review, a survey instrument adopted from Annakis et al. (2014), and Oehley and Theron (2010) was developed to separately cover the TM practice

## Research model

All of the above variables and hypotheses are summarized in the research model shown in Figure 1, which consists of 3 main hypotheses and 4 sub-hypotheses.

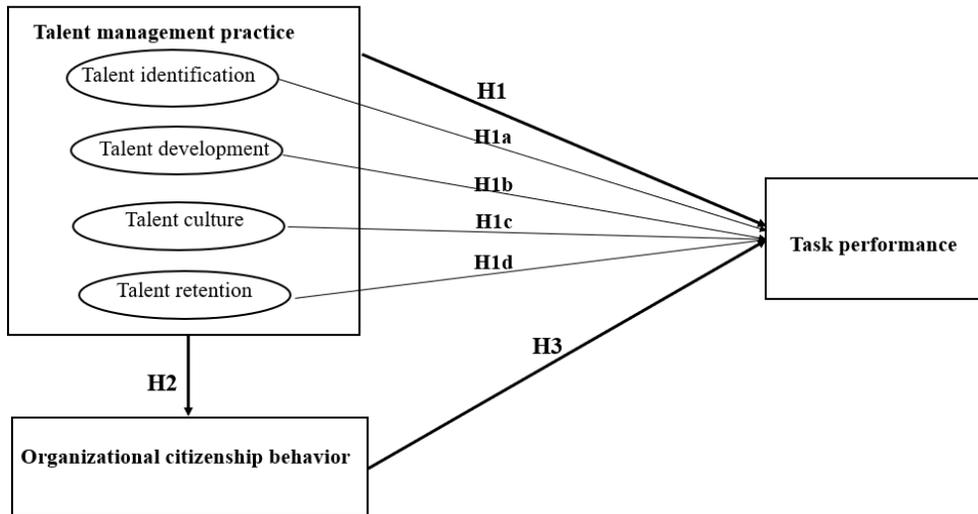


Figure 1 Research model



## Methodology

### Research design

This study adopts the quantitative research methodology and the questionnaire is used to collect the primary data. Hypotheses are tested by regression. The sample for the study consists of academic staff among Chinese public universities in the Guangxi Province, China. Currently, there are a total of 25 public universities, which are Higher Education Institutions Offering Degree Programs, located in the Guangxi, China. Data were collected from academic staff from 10 of 25 public universities in the Guangxi, China.

### Data collection

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation, the online survey was chosen at the time for data collection. The online survey was conducted in 10 public universities from April to July 2022 through the website ([www.wjx.cn](http://www.wjx.cn)). Invitation letters were sent to managers of the human resource department in these 10 public universities of Guangxi, asking them to help organize their academic staff to fill out the online questionnaires. The managers of human resource departments in 10 public universities distributed social media groups to invite their academic staff to complete a web-based survey and send a website or the QR code of the online questionnaire to their academic staff. Participants also received an online questionnaire, including instructions on how to complete the survey, a consent form, and all items. A total of 1,200

online questionnaires through the website or the QR code were received from 10 public universities in the Guangxi Province.

## Research results

### Missing values and outliers

After screening through all the responses, no missing values were found among 1,200 cases for all questions that were required to be completed before submission, and 39 cases had outlier values and were deleted. This left with a total of 1,161 questionnaire survey forms which were considered valid and usable.

### Sample characteristics

Table 1 showed that males and females represented 49.9% and 50.3% of the sample respectively. Some participants (51.6%) were aged 21–30, and another 140 participants were between 31 and 40 (33.9%). Some 324 participants (27.9%) were aged 31–40, another 257 participants were between 41 and 50 (22.1%). Education levels and positions were mostly master's degree (60.2%) and associate professor (26.7%) respectively. For both education level and professional position, the sample was nearly equal in proportion to the number of full-time teachers by academic qualification and professional rank in Higher Education Institutes by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (2021). 40.7% and 39.1% of the respondents had worked at least 6 years and 11 years respectively in the universities. The frequency of respondents from 13 departments and 10 universities.



## Descriptive statistics

As Table 2 illustrates employees' perceptions of TM practice were average (mean= 3.913), implying that employee perceived level of TM practice was not high. From the results, the talent retention mean score is higher (4.015) compared to talent identification (3.972), talent development (3.902), and talent culture (3.989). Employees identified their level of OCB as "agree" (mean = 4.175), reflecting that employees agreed that individuals should assist new colleagues in solving problems and adjusting to the working environment, as well as actively assisting in the absent colleagues.

The degree of agreement on task performance was "agree" (mean = 4.585). The correlation between each variable was significantly positive. The Cronbach alpha values for the study variables ranged from 0.819 to 0.944, suggesting good reliability. (Nunnally, 1978), except for the Cronbach alpha value of task performance is 0.660, which is considered acceptable (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, 2010). The skewness and kurtosis of the observed variables were in the range of -1.233 to 1.385, indicating that the collected data is the normal distribution and multivariate normal distribution (Kline, 2011).

## Pearson correlation coefficients

Table 3 indicates that all correlations are found to be significant. The correlation between OCB and task performance (0.351) is stronger than TM practice (0.079). Among these four dimensions of

TM practice, the strongest correlation is between talent retention and task performance in 0.315. The lowest correlation is between talent development and task performance at 0.069. The statistically significant intercorrelations between the independent and dependent might indicate the relationship with academic staff's task performance.

## Regression analysis

Table 4.1 displays the multiple regression analysis summary in which TM practice and OCB were independent variables while task performance was a dependent variable. The VIFs values between TM practice and OCB in regression models are 1.181 under the threshold value of 5 (Hair et al., 2013), indicating that there is no collinearity issue. Regression analysis showed significant results with p-value = < 0.001, F =84.402, and R<sup>2</sup> = 0.735, indicating that TM practice and OCB explicate the total variation in task performance. The results show that TM practice ( $\beta=-0.069$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) was **negatively** related to task performance and **does not support** Hypothesis 1, and OCB ( $\beta=0.378$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) has a significantly positive effect on task performance, which is supported by Hypothesis 3.

Table 4.2 displays the regression analysis between TM practice and OCB. The TM practices  $\beta$  was 0.391,  $p<0.001$ , indicating that TM practice was positively related to OCB, which was supported by hypothesis 2.

Table 4.3 displays the multiple regression analysis summary in which talent identification, talent development, talent culture, and talent retention, were



independent variables while task performance was the dependent variable. The VIFs values between independent variables in regression ranging 2.357 to 3.547 show that collinearity is not an issue. Regression analysis gave significant results as  $p\text{-value} < 0.001$ ,  $F = 42.108$ ,  $R^2 = 0.124$ , indicating that the total variation in task performance has been explicated by talent identification, talent development, talent culture, and talent retention. The findings showed that there is **no significant** correlation

between talent identification and task performance with  $\beta = 0.021$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , which was **not supported** by Hypothesis 1a. Talent development is **negatively** related to task performance with  $\beta = -0.229$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , which did **not support** Hypothesis H1b. Talent culture positively related to task performance with  $\beta = 0.224$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , which supported Hypothesis H1c. Talent retention positively related to task performance with  $\beta = 0.246$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , which supported Hypothesis H1d.



**Table 1** Sample characteristics

Demographic	Category	Sample	Demographic	Category	Sample
Variables		Frequency (%)	Variables		Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	577 (49.7)	Department	Philosophy	88 (7.6)
	Female	584 (50.3)		Literature	85 (7.3)
Age	21-30	118 (10.2)	History	74 (6.4)	
	31-40	324 (27.9)	Pedagogy	84 (7.2)	
	41-50	257 (22.1)	Sciences	84 (7.2)	
	51-60	229 (19.7)	Engineering	100(8.6)	
	61 and above	233 (20.1)	Agronomy	94 (8.1)	
Education	College diploma	24 (2.1)	Medicine	88 (7.6)	
	Bachelor’s degree	305 (26.3)	Law	97(8.4)	
	Master’s degree	699 (60.2)	Management	90 (7.8)	
	Doctoral degree	133 (11.5)	Economics	91 (7.8)	
Position	Professor	276 (23.8)	Art	82 (7.1)	
	Associate professor	307 (26.4)	Foreign language	104 (9.0)	
	Lecture	252 (21.7)	Universities	Guangxi Normal University	104 (9.0)
Assistant	326 (28.1)	Guangxi University of Chinese Medical		99 (8.5)	
Year of current position	under 3	212 (18.3)		Guangxi University of Science and Technology	102 (8.8)
	4-5	332 (28.6)		Nanning Normal University	102 (8.8)
	6-10	342 (29.5)		Guilin Medical University	104 (9.0)
	More than 10	275 (23.7)		Youjiang Medical University for Nationalities	241 (20.8)
Services year	5 or less	97 (8.4)		Guangxi University of Finance and Economics	102 (8.8)
	6 -10	473 (40.7)		Baise University	104 (9.0)
	11-20	454 (39.1)		Beibu Gulf University	99 (8.5)
	more than 20	137 (11.8)		Guangxi Normal University for Nationalities	104 (9.0)

*N=1,161*



**Table 2** Descriptive statistics results (N=1,161)

Variables	Mean	S.D	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's $\alpha$
<b>Talent Management Practice</b>	3.913	0.441	0.409	0.580	0.944
Talent Identification	3.972	0.456	0.339	0.146	0.827
Talent Development	3.902	0.463	0.380	0.425	0.846
Talent Culture	3.989	0.484	0.244	0.150	0.866
Talent Retention	4.015	0.497	0.253	0.113	0.875
<b>Organizational Citizenship Behavior</b>	4.175	0.289	0.402	0.172	0.819
<b>Task Performance</b>	4.585	0.419	-1.233	1.358	0.660

**Table 3** Pearson correlation coefficients

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>1 Talent Management Practice</b>	1						
2 Talent Identification	.770**	1					
3 Talent Development	.957**	.696**	1				
4 Talent Culture	.722**	.687**	.685**	1			
5 Talent Retention	.550**	.658**	.526**	.781**	1		
6 <b>Organizational Citizenship Behavior</b>	.391**	.471**	.375**	.578**	.641**	1	
7 <b>Task Performance</b>	.079**	.178**	.069*	.274**	.315**	.351**	1

Note: \*  $p < 0.05$  level (2-tailed), \*\*  $p < 0.01$  level (2-tailed), \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$  level (2-tailed).

**All the variables are significantly correlated with each other**

**Table 4.1** Regression coefficients between talent management practice, organizational citizenship behavior, and task performance

(Constant)	Beta	t	F	Sig.	VIF	R <sup>2</sup>
Talent Management Practice	-0.069*	-2.311	84.402***	0.021	1.181	0.126
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	0.378***	12.67		0.000	1.181	

Dependent Variable: Task Performance

Note: N=1,161, \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ .



**Table 4.2** Regression coefficients between talent management practice and organizational citizenship behavior

(Constant)	Beta	t	F	Sig.	R <sup>2</sup>	F
Talent Management Practice	0.391***	14.473	209.462***	0.000	0.152	209.462***

*Dependent Variable: Organizational citizenship behavior*

*Note: N=1,161, \*p< 0.05, \*\* p< 0.01, \*\*\* p< 0.001.*

**Table 4.3** Regression coefficients between talent identification, talent development, talent culture, talent retention, and task performance

(Constant)	Beta	t	F	Sig.	VIF	R <sup>2</sup>
Talent Identification	0.021	0.487	42.108***	0.626	2.551	0.124
Talent Development	-0.229***	-5.434		0.000	2.357	
Talent Culture	0.224***	4.332		0.000	3.547	
Talent Retention	0.246***	5.336		0.000	2.826	

*Dependent Variable: Task Performance*

*Note: N=1,161, \*p< 0.05, \*\* p< 0.01, \*\*\* p< 0.001.*

## Conclusion and discussion

### Conclusion

This paper studied the TM practice relationship between OCB and task performance in academic staffs in 10 universities in the Guangxi, China based on social exchange theory. The results show that TM practice was negatively related to task performance. Among dimensions of TM practice, talent culture and talent retention, have a positive effect on task performance respectively while talent identification has no effect on task performance. However, talent development was significantly negatively related to task performance. Positive relationships were found both between TM practice and employees' OCB, and between OCB and employees' task

performance in higher education. Thus, TM practice can predict both OCB and task performance in Chinese higher education.

### Discussion

In this study, TM practice consists of talent identification, talent development, talent culture and talent retention. The finding of this paper is consistent with the existing talent culture (Maina's, 2016; Aluko's, 2004; Magee, 2002) and talent retention (Bibi, 2019; Devi, 2017) and highlight that talent culture and talent retention play a significant and positive role affecting the task performance of employees in universities. However, both TM practice and talent development were significantly negatively related to task performance in this study, indicating that the higher level of TM practice and talent development, the less likely task



performance will be. The outcome of the study is in accordance with the studies on the negative association between TM and performance led by Mensah (2015); Son et al., (2020); Bae, (2008); Collings, (2014) and Pfeffer (2001). TM has a double-edged effect on enterprise results on organizational performance (Son et al., 2020). When poorly implemented, TM hinders the possibility of organization-specific knowledge accumulation, which could have a negative impact on organizational performance outcomes (Bae, 2008; Collings, 2014). TM practices increases innovation by engendering new and noble knowledge creation by talented individuals in universities while impact employees' attitudes toward to their jobs for perceived injustice and competitiveness either. Thus, the finding of TM practice having significant negative related to task performance reveals that preferential practice by implementing TM practice in Chinese universities, including wage, treatment dispersion, and familistic collectivism of Chinese society culture (Farh et al., 1997), and a narrow conceptualization of performance on TM without effectively aligning individuals and organizations in the generation of value that would lead to the failure to effectively manage and develop talent (Collings, 2014). In addition, overwhelming workload under talent development, and inconsistent support and recognition from the organization might potentially lead to a negative impact on employee performance despite talent development efforts. Thus, this study adds evidence that in Chinese universities both TM practice and talent development were significantly negatively related to task performance. The result also indicates that talent

identification has no significant effect on employees' performance in Chinese universities, which confirmed the previous study of Björkman and Sumelius (2013). The individuals would lower their opinion of anything they don't or can't get based on the "sour grapes" effect (Mann, Janis, & Chaplin, 1969). In social identification terms, employees may have varying levels of motivation and self-perception and value connotation (evaluative identification) strongly enough assigned to the group that can influence the outcomes of talent identification on performance (Tajfel, 1981). Thus, a perception of being identified as a talent or not would not have significant attitudinal or behavioral effects (Björkman & Sumelius, 2013).

Further, this research applied SET to study employee's OCB Chinese universities. The study proved that a positive relationship was found between TM practice and employees' OCB specified by SET in higher education, which confirmed the pioneering work of Collings and Mellahi (2009), Mensah (2015), and Mensah et al. (2016). This result implies that perceiving more TM practice will create the urge for talented employees to actively fulfill their duties, and show more discretionary behavior with reciprocity beyond their roles (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005). Thus, this study adds evidence that TM practice in Chinese universities is significantly positively related to task performance.

This research also applied SET to study employee's task performance affected by OCB in Chinese universities. The findings of this study reveal that a positive relationship was found between OCB and employees' task performance specified by SET in higher education.



The result is consistent with previous research findings including Vigoda and Gadot (2007), Patnaik and Biswas (2005), Kim (2006), Jiao, C., et al. (2011), and Ghalib and Suharyono (2014) that OCB, discretionary work-related behaviors, is a positive behavior in the workplace that positively and significantly affects task performance. In other words, concerning the reciprocity of the mutual relationship of SET, it has been argued that when staff may respond in a positive way to the interests of an organization, such as the OCB, it enables them to better participate in the task or work for the benefit of the organization. Thus, this study adds evidence that in Chinese universities OCB positively and significantly affects task performance.

## Management implications

The results of this research can provide some suggestions to related university managements in China regrading TM practice, OCB and task performance. Based on the results of antecedents of task performance affected by TM practice, including talent identification, talent development, talent culture and talent retention, university managements should implement a broad conceptualization of TM with more impartiality, suppression of collectivism and the organization's characteristics and environment (e.g., culture) consistency to enhance employee performance rather than exclusively focusing on retaining high performers. University could identify each employee as a talent, plans for individualized career development

and provides consistent organizational support, strengthens employees' identification with the organizational culture, and manage retention by increasing compensation and empowering employees intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Based on the result that OCB has a positive effect on staff task performance, university managements could encourage employees to reciprocate their universities with exhibiting more discretionary behaviors beyond their roles by improving the level of TM. The results of between OCB and employees' task performance suggest that OCB should be paid attention and encouraged to improve employees' task performance effectively and sustain university performance.

## Limitation and future research

There are three limitations in this study. Firstly, only public universities in the Guangxi Province have been chosen conveniently as the sample in this paper, thus future research can expand its scope by considering private universities in other regions or provinces of China to reach more general results. Second, as OCB positively affecting task performance, future research may further examine whether OCB has a mediating effect in the relationship between TM practice and task performance. Third, the existing research paradigm could be expanded by adding the new variables to further explore the effects of TM practice combined with other variables on task performance.



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