

## **Behavioral Factors Affecting Talent Management: Meta-Synthesis Technique**

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### **Abstract**

Talent management has been on the agenda of many organizations in recent years because of the belief in the importance of talent in achieving organizational excellence. The purpose of this study is to infer the conceptual model of behavioral factors affecting talent management. Therefore, applying the Meta-Synthesizing technique, researchers studied the findings of the articles which exist in valid databases in a systematic manner using Sandolowski and Barso's seven-step method. Then, after multiple screenings, they selected 36 appropriate articles for deeper study. To this end, behavioral factors affecting talent management were extracted and conceptual model analyses and inferences were obtained with the help of coding tools and MAXQDA v. 10 software. It is expected that the results and design of this model by improving the understanding the effective behavioral concepts on potential Human resource drive talent management to the desired status and become an appropriate tool for achieving organizational goals.

### **Keywords**

Behavioral Factors, Employees Capabilities, Meta-Synthesis Technique, Talent Management.

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## **Introduction**

Talent management is a strategic concept for organizations seeking a reliable source of competitive advantage and dynamic growth, because in today's knowledge-based economy, employees – i.e. those competent people who have been supported based on their knowledge and experience (as the rare assets) – are in fact a guarantee for the effective implementation of organization's strategies. Failure to meet the needs and demands of individuals seeking to develop the organization is often the reason why they want to leave the organization. This is why organizations face talent management issues (Wilska, 2014). It is basically related to the requirement that organizations should develop the “right talents in the right people, at the right time, in the right way, to ensure their talent pipeline has an abundant supply of management talents” (Wang-Cowham, 2011).

Significant challenges in organizations are a result of intense conditions of competition in most of the organizational activities in a multicultural context in the era of globalization. It is necessary to employ human resources who are capable in coping with the challenges such as product quality and price to expand into new geographical areas in the world and to have a better access to new markets (Alruwaili, 2018).

Talent management has a cycle that includes three main areas of identifying and attracting talents, maintaining talents, and developing talents. Today's organizations no longer seek to recruit, but seek to capture talents. This is referred to as the battle of talents or war to gain talents (Michaels, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod, 2001). Every organization has some employees who are superior to other employees. Such people can do things better than others, and can transform the organization into a productive one (Shahvazian, Mortazavi, Lagzian, & Rahimnia, 2016).

The present research aimed at identifying and investigating the behavioral factors affecting talent management, in order to create an integrated and comprehensive view of these factors and take a step towards the development of organizations in Iran. With the aim of presenting a conceptual model of behavioral factors affecting talent management, this study was carried out using a systematic review of qualitative meta-synthesis. In the following, theoretical literature on talent management, behavioral and organizational factors, and existing

talent management models are explored. Then, the methodology of this research, the conceptual model, behavioral factors of talent management and its components are presented. The researchers' purpose is to answer the following questions:

1. What are the behavioral factors affecting talent management over the 10-year period of 2009- 2019?
2. How can these factors be grouped?

### **Literature review**

We refer to talent as the intrinsic capabilities of people which are systematically involved in their favorite activities and are found by them as necessary to invest energy in. Talent provides the people with the given ability to yield a noticeable performance in some areas of work settings and score a better outcome than people of the same age or experience or have the best personal performance in a consistent manner (Nijs, Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries, & Sels, 2014).

Talent management covers all human resources, as well as administrative, and technology processes, and usually refers to matters such as choosing recruitment choices, selection, recruitment, socialization, retention, development, deployment, etc., and is accompanied by planning and analysis. In other words, talent management is associated with the acquisition and development of employees and managerial processes and can be described as “talent optimization” (Schweyer, 2010).

Talent management is to identify talents and then align them with job roles in order to maximize the involvement of individuals with the roles that match their innate strengths. In fact, talent management is to carry out a series of integrated activities in the organization to ensure the current and future acquisition, retention, motivation and development of talented employees (Haji Karimi & Soltani, 2011).

The organizational behavior management practitioners and researchers are concerned about finding some behavioral patterns regarding the appropriate ways to practice organizational behavior in the main organizations seeking excellence. Management scholars, therefore, have developed a variety of behavioral models based on the assumptions and the societies they've studied, some of which are of the global value (Moghimi, 2019).

Behavioral factors include human factors and human relationships in the organization, which form behavioral norms, informal communication, and specific patterns as the core of the organization. These content factors are considered to be dynamic and the living parts of organizations; any factor and variable directly related to human resources are in this category (Moghimi, 2004).

### Methodology

The present research is a qualitative meta-synthesis study. The qualitative meta-synthesis is an interpretive combination of qualitative findings which can explain the creation of data, and is consisted of phenomenologists, ethnographies, a mixture of theories and some consistent interpretations of phenomena and events or cases which serve as the token of what is found in qualitative studies. Meta-syntheses are integrations that are more than the sum of parts in that they offer novel interpretations of findings that are the result of interpretive transformations far removed from these findings as given in research reports (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2007).

This paper aims to identify the behavioral factors affecting talent management and integrate several studies in order to provide comprehensive and exhaustive explanations. Papers on talent management are usually quantitative and qualitative; hence the meta-synthesis method is suitable for obtaining a comprehensive compilation of this topic based on the findings of both domestic and foreign papers. The method used by Sandelowski and Barroso (2007) is one of the most prominent methods for performing meta-synthesis and provides better results than other models; therefore, this research uses this seven-step method (Figure 1).

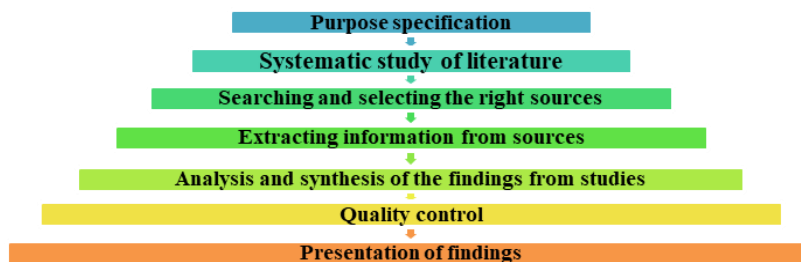


Fig. 1. General steps and methods of meta-synthesis

**Determining the research question**

The fundamental goal of this research was to reach a conceptual model of behavioral elements affecting talent management using the meta-synthesis method. Following the determination of the primary purpose of the meta-synthesis study, one should decide on the preliminary topical (what), population (who), temporal (when), and methodological (How) parameters of the study (Sandelowski & Barroso 2007).

In this paper, the foregoing question on “what” is answered and behavioral factors affecting talent management are identified. The next question on “who” has led to the inclusion of some certain databases and journals in this study. The question on “when” determines the time interval of the reviewed papers, which included domestic and foreign studies conducted from 2009 to 2019 (a ten-year period) in this research.

The final question pertains to the question “how”, which reflects the method used to collect the research data. This was performed in this study through the application of scientific methods (qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods) on talent management. In this regard, the research question for the next step of meta-synthesis is as follows:

- What are the behavioral factors affecting talent management during the ten-year period of 2009 to 2019 and how are these factors grouped?

**Systematic exploration of resources**

Qualitative research synthesis refers to the process, and is a product of scientific research to achieve a systematic examination and an official combination of results in reports of final qualitative studies (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2007). In systematic review of studies and meta-synthesis, a comprehensive result about a subject is achieved through synthesizing the results of previous studies. To implement the systematic review and meta-synthesis in this paper, the defined keywords (Table 1) were searched in newspapers, journals, and different databases published from 2009 to 2019.

**Table 1. Keywords for search**

Talent management key words	Behavioral key words
Talent management	Behavioral factors
Career management	Organizational behavior
Talent identification	Talent performance
Talent retention	Personal talents

A total seven databases, including three English and three Persian databases, were searched for the keywords in the present study from 2009 to 2019.

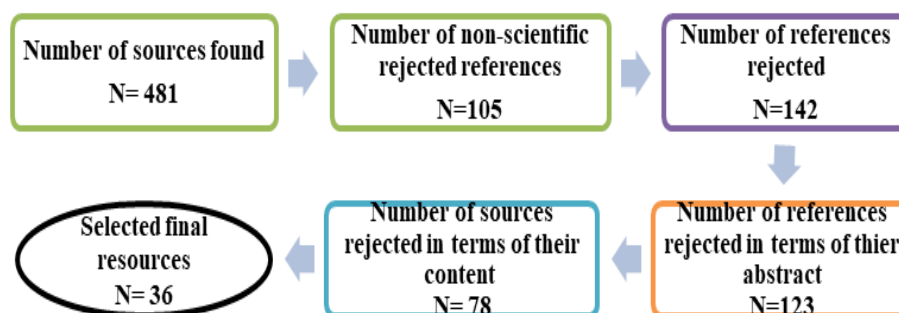
**Table 2. Databases searched in the research**

Foreign database (non-Persian)	Domestic database (Iranian)
Emerald	Iranian Magazine Database (Magiran)
Science Direct (Elsevier)	Scientific Information Database (SID)
Google Scholar	Iran doc

### Searching and selecting the right texts

Studies aimed at qualitative research synthesis need a variety of resources. Once you want to formulate your project, you have to decide which resource your project requires and find out about the availability of the resources (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2007).

In this study after several reviews and the refinement of scientific papers and theses, a number of sources were rejected and excluded from the meta-synthesis. The refinement and review process is briefly outlined in Figure 2 based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

**Fig. 2. Steps to select the research checklist from the selected databases**

### Sampling framework (study selection)

Qualitative research utilizes non-probability sampling method because it is not supposed to yield a statistically representative sample or to draw statistical inference. As a matter of fact, the need for a phenomenon appears only once in the sample (Wilmot, 2005).

The appropriate texts were also selected through the purposive sampling method in the present research considering inclusion and exclusion criteria (Table 3).

In order to determine the accuracy, validity, and importance of the research and to evaluate and select more accurate studies, the exclusion and inclusion criteria were used. At this stage, after 4 stages of refinement (Figure 1), 481 studies were identified, from which 36 studies were selected for data analysis after rejecting 445 studies.

In the present study, the inclusion criteria are referred to the criteria based on which a study is included. These criteria are developed according to scientific principles as well as researchers' and experts' viewpoints.

### Inclusion criteria (Individual appraisal)

The aims of individual assessment are to (a) decide if the reports are in compliance with your inclusion criteria; (b) guarantee that your inclusion criteria do not require any more adjustments; and (c) get to know the informational content, methodological preference, and style from part of reports (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2007).

In the present study, the inclusion criteria are referred to the criteria based on which a study is included. These criteria are developed according to scientific principles as well as researchers' and experts' viewpoints.

**Table 3. Criteria for acceptance and non-acceptance of studies in the study**

Admission Criteria	Eligibility criteria
Studies and theses published on Iran doc database	The studies with no enough information on the research objectives
Studies conducted through quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research methods	Studies with similar titles and objectives
Research with sufficient data and information regarding the research objectives	Studies lacking an appropriate methodological model
Studies reviewed by expert reviewers and printed or published online with full text	Studies lacking the necessary scientific quality published in poor-quality journals
Studies published in the related field between 2009 and 2018	Review articles and desk studies
Studies that examined the subject and the factors influencing talent management through scientific methods	Studies conducted before 2009

### Extracting the text information

This stage of the work involves characterizing the special achievements you wish to combine from all other parts of the research reports, including those findings (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2007).

Extracting the research findings and the information of research reports is categorized based on the reference of each paper, including the researcher(s) name, the paper title, the publication year, and the coordination components expressed in each paper. At this stage, the final selection of papers was studied using the content analysis method. Sandlowski (1995) considers content analysis as one of the methods of analyzing qualitative studies, which helps summarize, describe, and interpret the data. The results of this stage are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4. Factors affecting talent management with a behavioral approach extracted from selected resources (Table was separate as set based on the studies publication date)**

Code	Researcher (s)	Year	Factors affecting the talent management
1	Taghizadeh Yazdi, et al	2018	An attribute of acuniversity brand, i.e. reputation, being a model
2	Gholipour & Khazaei	2018	Perception of talent management strategy
3	Ghaffari, et al	2018	Social responsibility, management support, performance management
4	Shoghi & Mohammadi-Moghadam	2017	Learning opportunities, retention of talented employees, favorable behavioral atmosphere, attention to resources infrastructure, acquisition
5	Ahmadi, et al	2017	Teamwork, organizational culture, providing opportunities for growth, prosperity, information and communication management, organizational atmosphere, empowerment, education, improvement, school leadership, performance management, training needs assessment, clear mission, vision, appreciation, job reputation, job satisfaction, person-job fitness, job dynamics, work life quality
6	Zabihi	2017	Psychological contracts (organizational individual factors)
7	Saberzadeh	2017	The servant leadership style, work life
8	Yousefian	2017	Employer branding
9	Esmaili & Amiri	2016	participatory leadership, participation, justice, accountability, sense of ownership
10	Lashgari	2016	Identifying candidates, selecting the candidates, training and developing the candidates, conducting the performance evaluation, selecting the candidates
11	Hajikarimi & Soltani	2016	Recognition of talent management, motivation of talented forces, career support of talented forces, the creativity and innovation
12	Eslampanah & Azad	2016	Social position, flexibility, environmental factors
13	Ebrahimzadeh Pezeshki & Bordbar	2015	Transactional leadership style



**Table 4. Factors affecting talent management with a behavioral approach extracted from selected resources (Table was separate as set based on the studies publication date) (Continude)**

Code	Researcher (s)	Year	Factors affecting the talent management
14	Barghamdi & Gholipour	2015	Psychological, motivational, and social values, culture , work environment, economics, work-life balance
15	Rajabpoor	2016	Reward , organizational culture
16	Arablengh	2014	Organizational justice
17	Mahmoudi	2015	Research atmosphere, availability of educational facilities
18	Zargarani	2012	Sharing of knowledge, intellectual capital
19	Izadpanah &Safarzadeh	2012	Behavioral variables (skills, exercise, self-efficacy), environmental variables (social norms, community access), cognitive variables (knowledge, expectations, attitudes)
20	Shayanipour, et al	2018	Emotional intelligence, organizational intelligence, cultural intelligence
21	Ghaffari, et al	2018	Managerial support, performance management, internal rewards
22	Hedström	2016	Employed knowledge workers, value autonomy highly
23	Pandita & Ray	2018	Talent management activities , employee engagement initiatives
24	Muigai, et al	2018	Reward system, organizational culture, job development, work environment
25	Talha Imam & Hooi Sin	2018	Transformational leadership
26	Altındağ, et al	2018	Fairness , justice, performance evaluation systems
27	Jonathan, et al	2011	Professional development, manager support, performance management, social responsibility
28	Gandy, et al	2018	Age, gender, type , employment contract, job opportunity, job development
29	ImamAli, & Soo	2016	Distributive justice, procedural justice, interactive justice
30	Mngomezulu, et al	2015	Reward factors, enthusiasm, recognition, motivation
31	Landwehr	2015	Employees' self-efficacy, initiative, skills, personality
32	Zhang, et al	2015	Coaching leadership, educational programs
33	Singh	2012	Work culture, demography, technology infrastructures, knowledge sharing
34	Little	2010	Management learning systems, learning content management system
35	Sadeli	2012	Interactive leadership, transformational leadership
36	Agarwal	2018	Rewarding factors , fair promotion, the quality of work-life balance

### Grouping Findings and synthesis

Merging the findings is the same subject that allows you to differentiate the prevailing relationships among findings; that is to say, whether the same or different things are said about the same topic (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2007).

In the present study, an open coding method was used to analyze and synthesize the qualitative findings. For this purpose, all of the factors extracted from the studies are first considered as open codes. Then, considering the meaning of each of these codes, they are

classified in similar senses. This way, concepts (themes) of the study are formed. Table 5 shows a summary of all factors.

**Table 5. Codes and information resources (coding based on Table 4)**

Concepts	Factors	Resources	Frequency
Identification and acquisition of talents	Occupational factors	Person-job fitness (5), Job reputation (5), Job dynamics (5), Job development (24), Work life quality (5 / 36), Work environment, (12 / 24), Talents acquisition (36/ 4), Value autonomy(22)	8
	Organizational factors	Recognition, (30), Clear mission(5), Clear vision (5), Recognition of talent management (11), Social status (12), Reputation (1), Employer brand, (14/1/8), Attention to resources (4), Technology infrastructure (4 / 33), Procedural justice (29), Organizational intelligence (20), Employment contract(28)	12
	Individual factors	Employees' self-efficacy (19), Skills (19/ 31), Personality (31), Enthusiasm (30), Knowledge (22 / 19), Expectation (19), Attitude (19), Practicing (19), Flexibility (12), Initiative (31), Exercise(19), Demography (33), Employed knowledge workers(22), Age, Gender, type (28), Creativity (11), Innovation(11)	16
Development and use of talents	Career path management	Identifying candidate (10), Performance appraisal(26 / 10), Candidate selection (10), Retaining the talented staff (4), Synchronizing the talent management activities (23), Fair promotion (36), performance management (27), Career support of talented forces(11)	8
	Interactive communication	Employee engagement initiatives (23), Emotional intelligence (20), Knowledge sharing (18 / 33), Participation (9), Social norms (19), Access in society (19), Impact on others (19)	7
	Fostering employees	Providing opportunities for growth and development (5), Learning opportunities (4), Educational programs (32) Psychological capital (25), Intellectual capital (18), Learning management system (34), Learning content management system (34), Job opportunities (28), Job development (28), Training of candidates (10), Development of candidates (10), Professional development(27)	12
Retention of talents	Leadership and managerial factors	School leadership(5), Coaching leadership style (32), Interactive leadership (35), Transformational leadership (35/ 25/ 13). Participatory approach (9 / 32), Coaching (32), Servant leadership (7), Justice (10 / 16 / 26), Distributive justice (26), Procedural justice (29), Interactive justice (29)	11
	Cultural and organizational atmosphere factors	Research atmosphere (17), Perception of talent management strategy (2), Organizational culture (14 / 5 / 15 / 24), Favorable behavioral atmosphere (4), Cultural intelligence (20), Social responsibility (27), Accountability (9), Work culture (33)	8
	Motivational factors	Motivation (11/ 30), Appreciation and Encouragement (5), Rewarding factors (15 / 24 / 21 / 30 / 36), Management support (27 / 3 / 21 / 19), Job satisfaction (5), Job opportunity(28)	6
3	9		88

### Quality control

In this research, it was tried to use the reliable scientific references selected based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. In the second step, the studies with inadequate scientific credibility were excluded using the meta-synthesis technique. The Kappa index was also used to maintain the quality, validity, and reliability of the study, as described below.

### Validity and reliability of the model

In this study, researchers were also able to compare their views with another expert in order to control the concepts extracted from the studies reviewed. To this end, a separate 18-item questionnaire was designed. Data was then analyzed using SPSS 19 in order to extract the Kappa coefficient. The calculation results are shown below. The Kappa index was equal to 0.716, which was at the valid level of agreement according to Table 7.

**Table 6. Kappa coefficient calculations**

		Researcher's opinion		
		Yes	No	Total
Another expert opinion	Yes	A= 15	B=1	16
	No	C=2	D=0	2
	Total	17	1	N=18

	Value	Asymp. Std. Error <sup>a</sup>	Approx. T <sup>b</sup>	Approx. Sig.
Kappa	-0.080	0.058	-0.364	0.716
N of Valid Cases	18			

**Table 7. Kappa index status**

Agreement status	Numerical value of Kappa index
Poor	<0
Unimportant	0 / 0.2
Moderate	0.0 / 4.21
Suitable	0.41 / 0.6
Reliable	0.61 / 0.8
Excellent	0 / 1.81

### Findings

The techniques used to descriptively combine the findings of a qualitative research are numerous, similar to the qualitative research itself. Qualitative

meta-synthesis involves using one's imagination as well as the utmost communications one may have (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2007).

In this phase, after performing the meta-synthesis processes, the conceptual model of behavioral factors affecting talent management – which is composed of three layers, namely concepts, factors and criteria – were obtained (Table 8).

**Table 8. Identification and categorization criteria**

Concepts	Factors	Criteria
Identification and Acquisition of Talents	Occupational factors	Person-job fitness has been observed.
		The job is dynamic.
		The job is meaningful and has a good reputation.
		The quality of working life is appropriate.
	Organizational factors	The work environment is suitable for talented people.
		Talent Management is acknowledged.
		The organization has a clear mission and vision.
		The organization has a social responsibility.
	Individual factors	The organization has a suitable brand and reputation.
		The organization has taken the talent management resources and infrastructures into account.
		Rules and regulations are in line with talent management.
		Individuals have talent and ability to do their job.
		Individuals are self-sufficient and self-confident in doing their job.
		The character of individuals is compatible with their job.
		Individuals have enough knowledge and experience to do the job.
Individuals do their job tasks skillfully.		
Individuals are creative and innovative.		
Individuals have the flexibility to do their job.		
Individuals have an appropriate organizational intelligence to do their job		
Development and use of Talents	Interactive communication	Providing employees with opportunities to exchange information.
		Providing opportunities for updating employees' information.
		Intimate relationships between employees.
		Management support of information exchange and providing appropriate feedback.
	Career path management	Quick and easy access to information about the organization's actions and procedures.
		Sharing information related to the organization between employees.
		Helping employees progress through coaching.
		Designing and leading the job in order to successfully achieve the goals of the organization.
		Paving the way for the creativity and innovation of talented forces.
		There is a structured approach to determining the progress of the career path and succession planning.
Educational facilities, time, effort and sufficient funds for development and capacity building in talented forces.		

**Table 8. Identification and categorization criteria (Continude)**

Concepts	Factors	Criteria	
Retention of Talents	Fostering employees to greatness	Appointment and promotion of staff in the organization based on their competencies and selectivity policy.	
		Organizational support including fairness, equality, work-life balance.	
		Providing growth opportunities for talented staff.	
		Creating learning opportunities for employees.	
		Presenting and implementing employee empowerment training programs.	
		Providing facilities to help others develop.	
		Striving to develop psychological capital.	
		Striving to improve intellectual capital.	
		Leadership and managerial factors	Encouraging employees to solve problems in their field of work (Empowering Leadership).
			Considering challenging tasks to do by the staff (Empowering Leadership).
	Persuading employees to do their job in the best way (Empowering Leadership).		
	Treating with employees respectfully and nobly (Smooth Management).		
	Having an employee-oriented behavior (Soft Management).		
	Cultural and organizational atmosphere factors	Observing justice in all distributive, procedural and interactive aspects.	
		Behavioral styles are consistent with talent management.	
Performance management practices are based on talent management.			
Encouraging employees to solve problems in their field of work (Empowering Leadership).			
The organization has a research atmosphere.			
Perception of the talent management strategy is positive.			
Organizational culture is consistent with talent management.			
Cultural intelligence is suitable for people's perceptions and feelings of talent management.			
Behaviors are consistent with the strengthening of talents.			
Talent management activities are consistent with the values of the organization.			
There are shared beliefs and values among individuals in understanding the talent management environment.			
Motivational factors	Planning for recurring rewards programs based on performance.		
	Financial and material appreciation of the services of the talented staff		
	Spiritual appreciation of the services of the talented staff.		
	Making intelligent and hard efforts and encouraging employees to improve their performance, compared to the past.		
	Creating a reward system.		
Considering the successes and performance of the organization as a factor of motivation for employees.			



(2009 - 2019). The first concept involves three core codes, which in terms of listed indices are as follows: intrinsic factors with 16 indices, organizational factors with 12 indices, and occupational factors with 8 indices, which with a total of 36 indices indicate the factors affecting talent recruitment and recognition. The second concept also involves three core codes, which are prioritized as follow: staff training with 12 indices, career management with 8 indices, and the communication factor with 7 indices, which with a total of 27 in dices indicate the factors affecting staff development. The third and last concept with three core codes, which are in priority as follow: Leadership and management factors with 11 indices, environmental factor and organizational culture with 8 indices, and motivational factors with 6 indices, which with a total of 25 indices indicate the factors affecting staff retention.

The results obtained from reviewing Table 4 in this study indicate that many of the codes that were identified by the researchers are common. Here, some of them are reviewed briefly. Barghmadi and Gholipour (2015), Yousefian (2017), Taghizadeh Yazdi et al. (2018), and Agarwal (2018), identified branding code commonly. Jafari et al. (2018) and Doh et al. (2011) identified management support and social responsibility cods commonly. Leadership style code was commonly mentioned by Sabearzadeh (2017), Ismaili and Amiri (2016), Ebrahimzadeh Pezeshki and Bordbar (2015), Imam and Hoosi (2018), Zhang et al. (2014), and Sadeli (2014). Appreciation and reward factor commonly identified by Maurya and Agarwal (2018), Ahmadi et al.(2016), Rajabpour (2015), Bagherzadeh et al. (2018), and Mngomezulu et al.(2018).

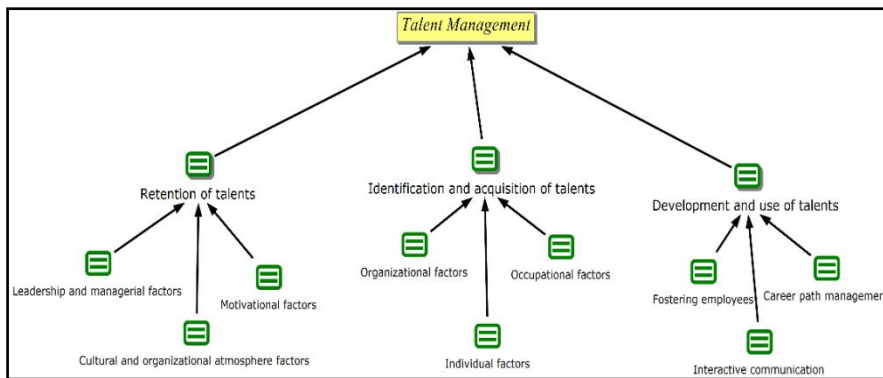
The core code of individual attributes in the basic concept of Recruitment and Recognition of talent, and training code in the core concept of Talent Development, and codes of leadership style, appreciation and reward in the main sense of Talent Retention have the most listed codes in the selected studies. Therefore, it can be claimed that the indices above are more important in comparison with other indices.

The innovation of this study can be attributed to its management of the influential factors in talent management which exist in previous research using Meta-synthesizing technique. In addition, one of the

distinctive aspects of this study is studying talent management using a behavioral approach.

Since the statistical indices related to each of the concepts of talent management are expressed more obviously and in details, it can be claimed that applying an inferential conceptual model will help organizations become more successful in optimizing the talent management process.

Figure 4, designed by MAXQDA v. 10 Software, shows the conceptual model of behavioral factors affecting talent management according to the extracted factors in Table 5.



**Fig. 4. Conceptual model of behavioral factors affecting talent management**



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