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### The Impact of Talent Management on Competitive Advantage: The Mediating Role of Organizational Ambidexterity

" An Applied Study on non-governmental universities working in Egypt "

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**The Impact of Talent Management on Competitive Advantage: The  
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**Abstract**

This study examines the direct impact of Talent Management on competitive advantage (CA) in non-governmental universities working in Egypt and exploring whether organizational ambidexterity plays a mediating role in this relationship, A field study was conducted using a sample of 298 participants operating in these universities.

Results revealed that three dimensions of Talent Management have a positive direct impact on CA and also revealed a significant positive direct impact of talent management on organizational ambidexterity, and it was also found that organizational ambidexterity has a positive direct impact on CA. Finally findings showed that organizational ambidexterity acts as a mediating variable in the relationship between talent management and CA.

**Key words:** Talent Management, Organizational Ambidexterity, Competitive Advantage, Non-Governmental Universities, Structural equation modeling, Exploration, Exploitation.

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## مستخلص الدراسة

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى اختبار الأثر المباشر لإدارة المواهب البشرية على الميزة التنافسية للجامعات غير الحكومية العاملة بمصر كما تسعى الدراسة إلى الكشف عما إذا كانت البراعة التنظيمية تلعب دوراً وسيطاً في هذه العلاقة، وقد تم إجراء الدراسة باستخدام عينة قوامها 298 مفردة من العاملين بالجامعات، وقد تم تحليل البيانات المجمعة باستخدام نموذج المعادلات الهيكلية، وقد أوضحت النتائج وجود أثر إيجابي معنوي مباشر لإدارة المواهب البشرية على تحقيق الميزة التنافسية، كما كشفت الدراسة عن وجود أثر مباشر إيجابياً لأبعاد إدارة المواهب البشرية على البراعة التنظيمية، كما أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أثراً معنوياً إيجابياً مباشراً للبراعة التنظيمية على تحقيق الميزة التنافسية وأخيراً كشفت نتائج الدراسة أن البراعة التنظيمية تلعب دوراً وسيطاً في العلاقة بين إدارة المواهب البشرية وتحقيق الميزة التنافسية حيث تؤدي إلى تعزيز الأثر الإيجابي الإجمالي لأبعاد إدارة المواهب البشرية على تحقيق الميزة التنافسية.

## الكلمات المفتاحية:

إدارة المواهب ، البراعة التنظيمية ، الميزة التنافسية، الجامعات غير الحكومية ، نموذج المعادلات الهيكلية ، الإستكشاف ، الإستغلال.

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## Introduction

The present era is marked by rapid and ongoing developments and changes that greatly influence each aspect of life. Consequently, organizations face intense competition and have a duty to attain their short and long-term objectives, within a highly competitive global business landscape. In our present information society, the evaluation of organizations has shifted from focusing only on the physical properties of the work to considering intangible factors such as knowledge-based, cognitive, and creative aspects (Othman et al,2022).

In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary for individuals or organizations to consistently analyze their current methodologies, products and services, and regulations, while continually encouraging innovative ideas that identify and implement pioneering solutions. For organizations to achieve growth and maintain a profitable and sustainable competitive advantage, it is essential that they maintain a workforce including individuals who have the ability to generate new and creative solutions (Altinoz, M et al.2013).

Talent management has emerged as a significant idea in contemporary organizational studies. Talent management is a concept of significant strategic importance in recent times and can be defined as a management process with a human resource focus. This process enables organizations to effectively overcome challenges and systematically overcome the disparity between the required talents and the talents currently available within their workforce for achieving their objectives.

As a result of globalization, organizations are more reliant on a skilled and qualified workforce. The success of an organization is heavily influenced by the presence of highly

competent individuals who possess exceptional capabilities, extensive knowledge, refined skills, and various other abilities. Conversely, the presence of improper personnel can produce many problems, including adverse impacts on productivity, flexibility, precision and the quality of products or services. Today, organizations are increasingly focusing on the recruitment of highly skilled personnel for managerial positions, with an emphasis on internal candidates. Talent management, as a new concept, handles these situations. The right utilization of talents contributes significantly to the success of work, while the right execution of tasks and responsibilities leads to success for the organization (Aksakal et al, 2013).

"Organizational ambidexterity" is another emerging concept, scholars of organizational learning argue that firms that success in a dynamic environment depends on ambidexterity. Ambidexterity refers to an organization's ability to simultaneously achieve alignment in its current operations while effectively adapting to the changing demands of its environment (Gibson&Birkinshaw,2004). The importance of ambidexterity stems from an organization's capacity to simultaneously engage in both incremental and continuous innovation and change (Tushman & O'Reilly, 2002).

This requires achieving a balance between the contradictory requirements of exploitation, which involves utilizing and developing the existing knowledge, and exploration, which involves the pursuit of a new knowledge (Levinthal & March ,1993).

Ambidextrous organizations refer to entities that possess the ability to effectively carry out conflicting knowledge management processes, where they can both leverage existing competencies and explore new domains with equal dexterity, simultaneously (Andriopoulos & Lewis, 2009).

Talent management can pave the way for ambidextrous leaders to emerge, and through being ambidextrous organization this may lead to sustain competitive advantage to the organization.

Hence the present study is seeking to evaluate the impact of talent management on sustaining the Competitive Advantage through the role of organizational ambidexterity.

### **First: Research Problem**

The competitive landscape of higher education services in Egypt has changed in many ways. Rapid technological changes, shorter process life cycles and a surge in competition has forced higher education to focus on both short- and long-term performance to achieve a competitive advantage. In this environment, short term performance focuses on competing in the existing markets by improving service and process quality, while long term performance focuses on innovating new services and processes to explore future markets.

Achieving a competitive advantage in high education services requires balancing both exploration and exploitation. Collins and Porras (2002) asserted the importance of going beyond the "Tyranny of OR" (exploration or exploitation) to embrace the "Genius of the AND" (exploration and exploitation) in order to sustain a competitive advantage. However, a quick snapshot of the business press provides many examples of organizations such as Samsung, Polaroid, and Motorola that struggled to simultaneously explore and exploited (Devan et al., 2005).

Although the challenge of balancing exploration and exploitation occurs in diverse contexts, its impact is acute in high technology organizations where firms face frequent changes in accelerated product and process lifecycles, customer preferences and increased competition. However, in service sectors there is a lack in studies that investigated this balance especially in higher education service sector. As a result, this research seeks to understand this balancing in a new context "**higher education service sector**".

Organizations usually target the acquisition and retention of individuals having the required abilities and commitment necessary for both present and future organizational achievements. Consequently, they engage in talent management strategies. Talent management signifies an organization's efforts to attract, develop, and retain skilled and valuable employees. (Baqtayan, 2014).

**In the light of the findings of previous studies related to research variables and to determine the nature of the problem, the researcher conducted an exploratory study at non-governmental universities working in Egypt** including 25 managers at different positions (president of university, vice president of university, deans, vice deans, head of academic departments and head of managerial departments) working at these universities, the study findings indicated that:

- A - These universities hiring effective managers who are talented, so they can be ambidextrous leaders and in turn they can increase the possibility of sustaining the competitive advantage of their universities.
- B - Managers rank the talent management at high ranking among the factors that affect their decision of hiring.
- C - Intense competition between the private and foreign universities leads to the repeat of some programs and the similarity of the content which means to weaken their competitiveness. This means the importance of talent management for these universities to be able to differentiate itself.
- D - Foreign universities receive unequal treatment with local universities which are backed by government support. This emphasizes the importance of organizational ambidexterity to enable universities face this unfair competition.
- E - Some universities put advanced visions where the focus is only on exploitation dimension of organizational ambidexterity, while neglecting the exploration.

Depending upon what previously mentioned, research problem can be formulated in the following questions:

- What is the impact of talent management on achieving organizational competitive advantage in non-governmental universities working in Egypt?
- Does the organizational ambidexterity play a mediating role in the relationship between talent management and complete advantage?

**Second: Research Objectives**

This study aims at:

- 1 – Investigating the impact of talent management on organizational competitive advantage in Non-governmental Universities working in Egypt and determining the most important dimensions of talent management affecting organizational competitive advantage.
- 2 – Investigating the impact of talent management dimensions on organizational ambidexterity in Non-governmental Universities working in Egypt and determining the most important dimensions of talent management affecting organizational ambidexterity.
- 3 – Investigating the impact of organizational ambidexterity on competitive advantage behaviors in Non-governmental Universities working in Egypt and determining how organizational ambidexterity affecting organizational competitive advantage.
- 4 – Clarifying whether organizational ambidexterity play a mediating role in the relationship between talent management and organizational competitive advantage.
- 5 – Coming up with convincing findings and suggestions to persuade managers of non-governmental universities, to believe in the role of talent management and demonstrate a strong commitment to organizational ambidexterity.

**Third: Research Importance**

This research derives its significance through the additions expected to be provided at both the scientific and practical level

- 1 – This research helps to fill the gap related to previous studies that can be found by studying the indirect impact of talent management dimensions on organizational competitive advantage in Non-governmental Universities working in Egypt through organizational ambidexterity that didn't study before.
- 2 – This research is dealing with two contemporary topics in today's workplace, which are talent management & organizational ambidexterity. This study will contribute to fine-tuning of these topics' literature.
- 3 – The researcher tried to aggregate the most important dimensions of talent management that affect organizational competitive advantage.
- 4 – Studying the direct and the indirect impact of talent management dimensions on organizational competitive advantage in Non-governmental Universities working in Egypt through organizational ambidexterity to improve its efficiency which in return enhance the level of educational service offered by these universities.
- 5 – Non-governmental Universities working in Egypt should grasp the importance and applying the principles of talent management in improving the competitive climate in such universities, it is crucial for managers to assess which dimensions of talent management that can be able to manage employees efficiently and to increase competitiveness in today's work life.
- 6 – Direct the research to educational sector as one of the most important service sectors that depends heavily on capturing talents to achieve more success, and to become more competitive will add to practical importance of this study.

#### **Fourth: Research Theoretical background**

The following sections deals with the research variables definitions and their dimensions:

##### **4-1. Talent Management(TM)**

Talent management (TM) has emerged as an emerging area of research within the fields of business and management in recent years (Collings et al., 2022). Talent management has attracted increasing global attention among many organizations (Ingram, 2016). In order to conduct a comprehensive analysis of talent management, it is necessary first to provide a definition of the term "talent" (Mohammed et al., 2017).

Williams (2000), indicated that the term "talent" pertains to individuals who have exceptional skills or abilities. The subjective approach differentiates between exclusive talent, which considers only a small portion of individuals with high potential or high performance, and inclusive talent, which assumes that all members of the workforce have the required skills for the job and only require suitable training and development (Iles & Preece, 2010).

The development of talent management can be traced back to McKinsey consultants' 1997 ground-breaking study, which was followed by the publication of the book 'The War for Talent' in 2001 (Axelrod et.al, 2002).

Since then, both the theory and practice of talent management have received increased global attention. This signifies a departure from the traditional sources of competitive advantage related to human resources and strategic human resource management towards the effective talent management in response to the dynamic competitive landscape of contemporary business (Van Zyl et.al, 2017).

The first notion identifies TM as an aggregation of conventional HRM practices, tasks, and activities, including recruitment, selection, training, and career development. Warren (2006) described TM as "old wine in new bottles," meaning that it is essentially a re-labelling and re-packaging of HRM. However, the process of staffing must be transformed into comprehensive policies aimed at attracting and retaining human potential. Accordingly, warren (2006:26) defined TM as: "In the broadest sense, the term can be seen as the identification, development, engagement, retention and deployment of talent, although it is often used more narrowly to describe the short - and longer- term resourcing of senior executives and high performers" (p.26). Collings et al. (2018) suggest that talent management (TM) encompasses a broad range of activities. They argue that TM practitioners should focus on specific sub-disciplines to narrow down the word, such as developing talent, creating effective programs, and recruiting the best people.

The second notion characterizes TM as an inventory of talent that distinguishes itself from others by its targeted approach, concentrating on a small portion of the workforce to ensure a steady supply of skilled individuals for key roles inside a business. However, this viewpoint on talent management implies a similar approach to succession planning and management, as well as standard hiring practices, which are linked to forecasting staffing requirements and managing employee growth through understanding the internal workforce. From this perspective, Collings and Mellahi (2009:2) set their definition: "We define Strategic Talent Management (TM) as

activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of Key Positions which differentially contribute to the organization's sustainable competitive advantage, the development of a talent pool of high potentials and high performing incumbents to fill these roles, and the development of a differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling these positions with competent incumbents and to ensure their continued commitment to the organization" (p.2).

The third concept, in contrast to the second notion, pertains to talent regardless of significant organizational plans or positions. From the first viewpoint, talent is defined as individuals with exceptional potential or outstanding performance. These individuals would be hired, supervised, and rewarded based on their performance rather than being part of a talent pool for succession planning. Ashton and Morton (2005:30) concluded that: "TM is a strategic and holistic approach to both HR and business planning or a new route to organizational effectiveness. This improves the performance and the potential of" people-the talent" who can make a measurable difference to the organization now and in the future. And it aspires to yield enhanced performance among all levels in the workforce, thus allowing everyone to reach his/her potential, no matter what that might be" (p.30)

For the purpose of research, the researcher agrees with the definition set by Silzer & Dowell (2010:18) "Talent Management (TM) is an integrated set of processes, programs, and cultural norms in an organization designed and implemented to attract, develop, deploy, and retain talent to achieve strategic objectives and meet future business needs" (p.18). The researcher regarded that this definition is strategic in nature and aimed at making Talent Management (TM) an integral part of organizational culture.

Within the context of higher education, the inclusion of talent management as an essential aspect of strategic human resources management has the potential to enhance the long-term performance of a university. This may be achieved by recognizing the strategy that is implemented through the university's talented individuals (Bradley, 2016). According to Mohammed et al. (2017), talent management is perceived as a form of investment due to the recognition of individuals as the fundamental drivers of innovation and social progress.

Generally, a review of the talent management literature reveals that 'talent management dimensions can be grouped into five core categories: (i) recruitment, attraction and selection; (ii) training and development; (iii) retention; (iv) identification; and (v) performance management of talent' (Mohammed et al., 2017, p. 1135)

Many scholars have evidently concentrated their empirical attention on talent attraction, development, and retention. These are widely recognized as the primary and significant components of talent management. In their empirical qualitative study, Mohammed et al. (2017) conducted research in six Australian universities with the aim of identifying the most effective strategies employed in talent management within the higher education sector. Both empirical researches, as represented by the case study in the higher education sector, and prior research verify that the best dimensions of talent management involve the attraction, development and retention of talented individuals. (Mohammed et al., 2019).



#### **4-2. Organizational Ambidexterity(OA)**

According to O'Reilly & Tushman (2008), being large and successful during a given period of time does not necessarily ensure continued achievement and sustainability. Many established firms that were previously considered innovative have experienced significant decline or even full collapse. This occurred regardless of their initially substantial market shares, optimized internal processes, strong brands, and strong resource base.

The conceptual roots of OA can be observed within the work of Burns and Stalker (1961). The researchers conducted an investigation of the challenges faced by well-established organizations in adapting to market instability despite their history of success. Duncan (1976) originally coined the term "organizational ambidexterity" referred to OA as the ability to successfully align the corporate management structure with present business demands while simultaneously adjusting to environmental changes (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). Though March (1991) is recognized with providing the initial definition and establishing the path for what Raisch and Birkinshaw (2008) characterized as an entirely new research-practitioner paradigm. According to March (1991), organizational ambidexterity refers to the concurrent engagement of an organization in both explorative and exploitative activity. In his initial conceptualization of the construct, the term "exploration" indicated an effort to discover new possibilities, commonly known as radical or disruptive innovation in contemporary literature. In contrast, exploitation related to activities that capitalize on established realities. To clarify, exploitative activities are characterized by the utilization of existing capabilities, while explorative activities stress the development of new capabilities (Cantarello, et al, 2012)

The organization ambidexterity paradigm asserts that managers are required to effectively perform two functions, namely exploitation and exploration. Exploitation pertains to the necessity for a corporation to continuously engage in its established practices that have historically produced economic results, growth, and market standing. Furthermore, it is necessary to provide resources and dedicate time to carefully investigate and evaluate the long-lasting transformations that are coming as well as to determine the necessary adaptations that the organization must undertake in order to encourage growth and reduce the risk of obsolescence (O'Reilly and Tushman 2008)

However, some authors argue that, very often, organizations simply fail to reconcile exploitation and exploration. In many cases, exploitation takes up all the space as they consider exploration as a long-term value for the organization. In the short term, its effects on performance are intangible. This is why organizations with very limited resources or experiencing strong pressure to obtain immediate results, which is the case of many public organizations subject to budgetary pressures, abandon exploration altogether and devote themselves entirely to exploitation. These organizations are not, or almost not, ambidextrous. When they are, it can be done in two ways: structural and contextual. (Boukamel & Emery 2017).

The procedural definition of the concept of Ambidexterity can be understood as the utilization of multiple organizational methods to effectively engage in two integrated activities concurrently. This involves the organization's capacity to effectively navigate and resolve contradictions and tensions that arise in present and future efforts across all levels of the organization.

### 4-3. Competitive Advantage(CA)

Possessing a competitive edge is a crucial factor in achieving success in any field of business (Kajanus et al., 2019). The competitive advantage can be considered as the invisible component inside the organization's strategy, and derived from the business management's ability to integrate primary and secondary resources and capabilities into well-synchronized activity systems (Negulescu, O., 2019).

The concept of competitive advantage has been regarded as a cornerstone concept in the field of strategic management (Baaij et al., 2004) because it explains what accounts for differences in firm performance (Sigalas, C., 2019). In strategic management courses and textbooks, competitive advantage is widely recognized as an essential concept in business strategy (Grant, 1998)

Competitive advantage occupies a central position in the realm of company performance within competitive markets. Following several decades of sustained growth and prosperity, many businesses have lost perspective of their competitive advantage as they strive for economic development and diversification. (Klein, 2002). Organizations employ strategic actions with the aim of attaining a competitive edge. The outcomes of strategic actions are influenced by both the internal and external environment. The organization operates within a macro-environment, micro-environment, and possesses its own unique internal environment. One of the fundamental characteristics commonly observed in various businesses is the fluctuation in rivals' levels of profitability. The firm's capacity to outperform the average profitability of other firms in the sector can be attributed to its distinctive competitive advantage. (Varadarajan & Jayachandran, 1999).

A competitive advantage is simply an element that allows a company to distinguish itself from its competitors in a strong and lasting way. Thus, gaining a sustainable competitive advantage is the ultimate goal of any firm. Although interest in discussing and conducting empirical research on the competitive advantage concept has grown in recent years (Newbert, 2008), understanding the concept and how it differs from the performance of the organization remains a challenge for the theory (Powell, 2001).

Despite being in the late 1980s, discussions on strategy was mostly conducted without the use of the term. Following historical examination of the strategy textbooks used at that period, namely Ackoff (1970) and Andrews (1971), it becomes evident that while individual strengths and weaknesses of firms were highlighted, they were not explicitly articulated within the broader framework of competitive advantage. The concept of competitive advantage has gained popularity in recent times. In the period preceding the late 1980s, the topic of strategy was rarely addressed within the context of strategic discussion.

According to Porter (1985), "Competitive advantage refers to the capacity to outperform competitors in terms of profitability by leveraging distinctive resources and capabilities. Competitive advantage enables a corporation to attain higher profit margins and a greater return on investment. However, Barney, (1991) stated that "Competitive advantage is derived from a company's possession of valuable resources that are rare, difficult to replicate, and cannot be

easily replaced, resulting in long-lasting competitive leadership”. Competitive advantage comes from leveraging resources and unique skills of the firm in order to implement a value creation strategy more effectively than its competitors. When this advantage is not affected by actions taken by competitors is considered a sustainable competitive advantage (Porter,1985).

Despite the fact that it is extremely difficult to identify a conceptually robust stipulative definition for competitive advantage in literature, Sigalas et al., (2013:p.335) mention that competitive advantage is “the above industry average manifested exploitation of market opportunities and neutralization of competitive threats.”

According to (Sigalas,2015) Competitive Advantage is the ability of the average industry to exploit market opportunities and neutralize the threat of competition. Competitive advantage: refers to a firm’s approach to achieving a competitive edge relative to competing organizations in the same or similar fields (Kajanus et al., 2019).

Based on Srivastava et al., (2013), to sustain and create competitive advantages, manufacturing organizations should consistently emphasize to produce differential products, attaining distinctive expertise, growth in intellectual properties and reshaping, or building core competencies that lead to businesses’ competitive positioning and serve as main factor to be successful company in a greatly competitive marketplace.

However, in this research the researcher acknowledges the definition of Dess et al, 2007 “Competitive advantage is the capability of a company to attain a market position that allows it to generate profits that are higher than the industry average, establish customer loyalty, protect itself against competition, and efficiently handle environmental challenges”. Their concept highlights the multidimensional aspect of competitive advantage, which includes not just financial success but also relationships with customers, market resilience, and ability to adjust to external forces. This comprehensive perspective recognizes the complex and ever-changing nature of competitive advantage, highlighting the necessity for firms to actively interact with market dynamics and customer demands in order to sustain their superiority in the industry.

Nevertheless, organizational ambidexterity is a novel concept with limited research. Moreover, when the concept is examined in the context of higher education institutions, there are even fewer studies. Specific to its relation to talent management in Egyptian universities literature, there is not a single study in this area. Therefore, in order to contribute to the field, the intermediate relationship of the OA between talent management and competitive advantage is analyzed in this research.

**Fifth: Hypotheses development**

According to what has been mentioned before and, in an attempt, to reach the research goals, hypotheses have been formulated as follows:

**\*H<sub>1</sub>: Talent management dimensions have significant positive direct impact on the competitive advantage.**

\*H<sub>11</sub>: Talent attraction has a statistically significant direct impact on the competitive advantage.

H<sub>12</sub>: Talent development has a statistically significant direct impact on the competitive advantage.

H<sub>13</sub>: Talent retention has a statistically significant direct impact on the competitive advantage.

**\*H<sub>2</sub>: Talent management dimensions have significant positive direct impact on organizational ambidexterity.**

H<sub>21</sub>: Talent attraction has a statistically significant direct impact on organizational ambidexterity.

H<sub>22</sub>: Talent development has a statistically significant direct impact on organizational ambidexterity.

H<sub>23</sub>: Talent retention has a statistically significant direct impact on organizational ambidexterity.

**\*H<sub>3</sub>: Organizational ambidexterity has a significant positive direct impact on the competitive advantage.**

**\*H<sub>4</sub>: Talent management dimensions have significant positive indirect impact on the competitive advantage through organizational ambidexterity.**

H<sub>41</sub>: Talent attraction has a statistically significant indirect impact on the competitive advantage through organizational ambidexterity.

H<sub>42</sub>: Talent development has a statistically significant indirect impact on the competitive advantage through organizational ambidexterity.

H<sub>43</sub>: Talent retention has a statistically significant indirect impact on the competitive advantage through organizational ambidexterity.

The following Figure illustrates the proposed relationships between research variables.

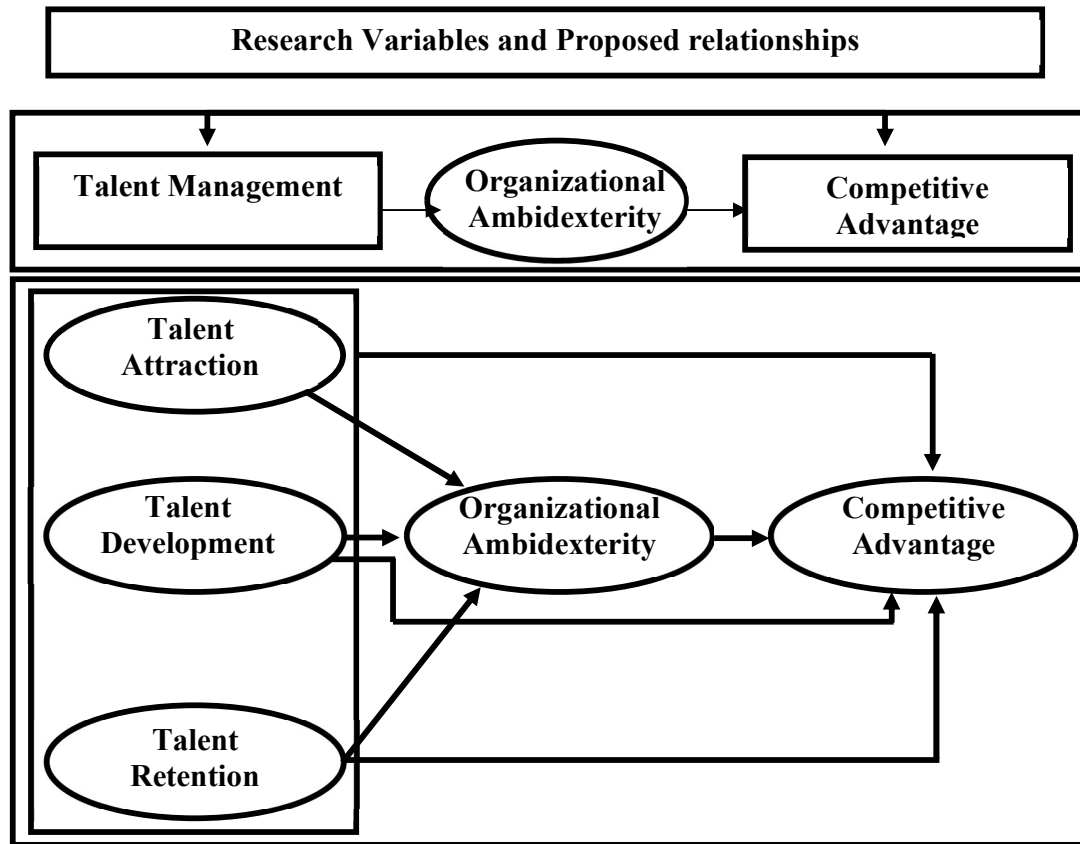


Figure 1: Research Variables and Proposed relationships

## Sixth: Research Methodology

### 6.1. Research Approach

This research depends upon the deductive approach which starts with generalists, after admitting its soundness, and ends up with particulars using logical analysis to predict some findings of the hypotheses under study. This approach seeks to use specific theories in the interpretation of phenomena discovered by the researcher by reviewing previous studies in a non-critical manner, selecting some testable hypotheses, and then collecting data to test those hypotheses using statistical methods.

### 6-2. Techniques of data collection

#### 6-2-1. Office Technique:

This method collects secondary data from sources such as books, reports, periodicals, and previous studies that are related to research variables. (Talent management dimensions, Organizational ambidexterity and Competitive advantage) in order to construct the study's theoretical framework.

### 6-2-2. Field Technique:

This technique aims to collect primary data by using a questionnaire designed specifically for the current study. This questionnaire will be distributed to a random sample of staff at non-governmental universities working in Egypt.

### 6-3. Research Variables Coding and questionnaire items

Table (1) indicates the coding of research variables and their corresponding questionnaire items as follows:

**Table 1 :** Research Variables Coding and its related items

Research Variables	Codes	Questionnaire Questions
<b>Independent Variables</b>		
Talent Management	X	1 → 33
→ Talent Attraction	X <sub>1</sub>	1 → 8
→ Talent Development	X <sub>2</sub>	9 → 20
→ Talent Retention	X <sub>3</sub>	21 → 33
<b>Mediating Variable</b>		
Organizational Ambidexterity	M	34 → 45
<b>Dependant Variable</b>		
Competitive Advantage	Y	46 → 72

### 6-4 . Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was designed to be used for collecting primary data for the study. Prior to designing the questionnaire, an extensive review of relevant literature was conducted in order to identify existing measures of related constructs, the measurement items for this study were developed by adapting measures from previous studies and modifying them to fit the Egyptian environment.

A pilot study was conducted in two ways to ensure that the items included in the questionnaire were relevant and easily understood.

- 1 – Firstly, the initial copy of the questionnaire was directed to a number of professors and associate professors who specialize in human resources management at various Egyptian universities, and they reshaped some items to make them more understandable to potential respondents.
- 2 – Secondly, the questionnaire was pilot tested among some leaders in different positions working at Non-Governmental Universities working in Egypt (18 leaders) They were instructed to answer the questions and then carefully review all items from a critical standpoint in order to identify problems such as ambiguity or redundancy. The pre-test results indicated that there was little need for revision, and none of the participants in the pre-test indicated any difficulty in interpreting the items as presented.

Following the efforts that made above, the researcher developed 72 items to measure the constructs of this study, 33 items were used to measure talent management (8) were used to

measure talent attraction, (12) were used to measure talent development and (13) were used to measure talent retention as third dimension of talent management, concerning the organizational ambidexterity 12 items were utilized to measure this mediating variable. with respect to competitive advantage 27 items were used to measure this dependent variable.

The researcher used a Likert Scale ranging from 0 to 5 to measure the respondent opinions in which 0 = "does not occur" and 5 = always occurs".

### 6.5 Study's Limitations

This research will be limited to 14 non-governmental universities in Cairo and Alexandria by focusing on members who are occupying specialized Jobs (president of university, vice president of university, deans, vice deans, head of academic departments and head of managerial departments).

### 6.6. Research Population and Sample Selection

Using sampling techniques, the researcher can collect data from a subset of the population rather than the entire population. – Kothari (2004) Stated that using samples has many advantages, such as ease of access to population elements, time and money savings, and the ability to generalize the results to the entire population. However, the sample must rely on a sufficient sample size.

According to the formal data obtained from Supreme Council Of Universities and Ministry Of Higher Education, the total number of members occupying specialized Jobs (president of university, vice president of university, deans, vice deans, head of academic departments and head of managerial departments ) is 1320, the following table shows the total number of members distributed on 14 universities included in the current study.

**Table 2:** Numerical Statistics for total number of employees selected for this study

Positions	President of university	Vice President of university	Deans	Vice Deans	Head of Academic Departments	Head of Managerial Departments	Total
University							
American University	1	3	8	12	30	33	87
British University	1	3	11	20	10	25	70
French University	1	3	3	6	6	23	42
German University	1	3	8	17	23	25	77
Russian University	1	3	8	5	40	23	80
Japanese University	1	3	5	6	9	25	49
Chinese University	1	3	4	8	24	22	62
Ahram Canadian University	1	3	4	6	9	23	46
Badr University in Cairo	1	3	16	32	96	25	173
Modern University for Technology & Innovation	1	3	9	18	67	25	123
Future University	1	3	6	18	35	24	87
October 6 University	1	3	14	42	89	25	174
October University for Modern Sciences& Arts	1	3	10	30	60	23	127
Faros University	1	3	12	14	68	25	123
Total	14	42	118	234	566	346	1320

In the light of the total population size (1320), the sample size is (298) at 95% as confidence level with 5% margin of error and 50% as population proportion.

In addition to, the class random method was used to distribute the sample proportionately in the 14 universities covering the six positions of staff included in this study.

As mentioned above 298 were directed to the respondents, the researcher collected 284 questionnaires with a response rate of 95.3%, seven invalid cases were excluded, the total number of 277 questionnaire were utilized for analysis purposes as the following table shows (3).

**Table 3:** Sample size of each university according to the staff positions

Positions  University	President of university	Vice President of university	Deans	Vice Deans	Head of Academic Departments	Head of Managerial Departments	Total
American University	-	1	2	3	7	7	20
British University	-	1	2	5	2	6	16
French University	-	-	1	1	2	5	9
German University	-	-	2	4	5	6	17
Russian University	-	1	2	1	9	5	18
Japanese University	-	1	1	1	2	6	11
Chinese University	-	1	1	2	5	5	14
Ahram Canadian University	-	1	1	1	2	5	10
Badr University in Cairo	-	-	4	7	22	6	39
Modern University for Technology & Innovation	1	-	2	4	15	6	28
Future University	1	1	1	4	8	5	20
October 6 University	-	-	3	10	20	6	39
October University for Modern Sciences & Arts	-	1	2	7	14	5	29
Faros University	1	1	3	3	15	5	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>298</b>

### 6–7. Tools of Statistical Analysis

The following are the statistical techniques that is used for analyzing research data:

#### – Alpha Cronbach Test.

Is one of the most used tests in the area of management research to validate the reliability of research variables' measures. This statistical technique examines the degree of internal consistency among the items that comprise each variable.

#### – Structural equation modeling: (SEM)

In contrast to the first generation (linear regression), SEM has the advantage of performing all path analysis at the same time. It also allows for more complicated analysis by testing the relationships between multiple independent and dependent variables (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988),



and the direct and indirect effects both can be explained by the model (Gefen et al., 2000).Therefore, SEM is the major data analytic tool used in this study.

Due to multiplicity of relationships within the model proposed for the study and the existence of a number of independent, intermediate and dependent variables, it will be more suitable to use SEM to achieve the following:

- Measuring the direct impact of talent management dimensions on competitive advantage.
- Measuring the indirect impact of talent management dimensions on competitive advantage through organizational ambidexterity.

**Seventh: Research Statistical Results and Hypotheses Testing**

**7-1. Results of Reliability Analysis**

Cronbach's Alpha Test was used to evaluate scale reliability, which measures internal consistency in order to match results across and between items located in the same instrument. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient is a good measure to assess scale reliability (Hair et al.,2006). To realize internal reliability, Alpha should be at least 0.7, as shown in table (4) coefficients of Cronbach's Alpha were greater than 0.70, which demonstrates that this measure has internal consistency, therefore all scale items will be statistically analyzed using SEM, and none will be eliminated

**Table 4:** Reliability Analysis: Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients

Research Variables		No. of items	Alpha Coefficient
Talent Management	(X)	33	,796
– Talent Attraction	(X <sub>1</sub> )	8	,863
– Talent Development	(X <sub>2</sub> )	12	.814
– Talent Retention	(X <sub>3</sub> )	13	.881
Organizational Ambidexterity	(M)	12	,824
Competitive Advantage	(Y)	27	,787

The measures of the research (Talent management, organizational ambidexterity, competitive advantage) were validated by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using AmosV.21. According to this, the quality of conformity (model fit) is evaluated by set of indicators for model fit. These indicators determine whether the model is approved or rejected. The following table (5) shows the indicators of the model fit as follows:

**Table 5:** Indicators of CFA Test

Indicators of model fit	Obtained	Suggested
CMIN /DF	2.995	CMIN/DF ≤ 5
NFI (Normed of Fit Index)	0.993	NFI ≥ 0.9
IFI (Incremental Fit Index)	0.901	IFI ≥ 0.9
TLI (Tucker- Lewis Index)	0.948	TLI ≥ 0.9
CFI (Compare Fit Index)	0.917	CFI ≥ 0.9
RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error Approximation)	0.078	0.5 ≤ RMSEA ≤ 0.08

In light of the previous table, the prior indices revealed that the model's overall fit to the data was good. However, this pertains to Convergent Validity, which indicates that the items within a scale that measure a specific concept display a strong positive correlation.

Anderson & Gerbing (1988) proposed four criteria to verify this, the first criterion is the Factor Loading (FL), which is the coefficient of the weighted standard regression for each measured variable. It should be  $\geq 0.7$  at a significance level  $\leq 0.5$ . The second requirement is that the average variance extracted (AVE) for each variable must be greater than or equal to 0.5. The third requirement is that the construct reliability must be greater than or equal to 0.5. Finally, the weighted standard regression coefficient (FL) for each measurement element should be more than twice the standard error (S.E) associated with that element., Table (6) shows the results that were used to evaluate those standards.

**Table 6:** The results of Convergent Validity

Variables	FL	S. E	C.R	Error	Value of Estima error
X1 Talent attraction	0.717	—	—	e1	0.325
X2 Talent development	0.795	0.054	9.349	e2	0.206
X3 Talent retention	0.866	0.0748	7.507	e3	0.338
M1 Exploration	0.808	—	—	e4	0.106
M2 Exploitation	0.953	0.067	15.706	e5	0.049
Y1 Teaching methods & innovation	0.759	—	—	e6	0.257
Y2 Scientific research	0.844	0.073	14.579	e7	0.255
Y3 Human& social functions	0.860	0.097	11.825	e8	0.208
Y4 Financial& economic functions	0.752	0.114	13.253	e9	0.212
Y5 Management	0.882	0.093	15.114	e10	0.369
Y6 Marketing functions	0.895	0.065	7.365	e11	0.351

Using the data mentioned in the previous table, the AVE value was calculated as well as the C.R value for each variable according to their calculation equations. Table (7) shows these values:

**Table 7:** Calculation of AVE and C.R.

Research variables	AVE	C.R
• Talent attraction	0.793	0.867
• Organizational ambidexterity	0.881	0.952
• Competitive advantage	0.832	0.937

Table (6) indicates that the FL (weighted standard regression coefficient) for all variables is above 0.70 and significant at a level below 0.05. Additionally, the loading coefficient FL for each measurement element is greater than twice the standard error (S.E), as indicated in Table (7). The results of Table (7) reveal that the AVE (Average Variance Extracted) and C.R (Construct Reliability) values for all variables exceed 0.50. This indicates that the four criteria mentioned earlier are consistent with the previously explained values, thus confirming the convergent validity of the research variables.

However, when it comes to Discriminant Validity, which determines whether the items measuring one theoretical concept are distinct from those measuring another theoretical concept, a study by Crowley and Fan (1997) established two criteria for verification. Firstly, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each variable should be higher than the coefficients of correlation between that variable and other variables. Secondly, the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) for the variable should also be greater than the coefficients of correlation between that variable and other variables. The evaluation results for these criteria are presented in Table (8).

**Table 8:** Results of Discriminant Validity

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE	Talent management	Organizational ambidexterity	Competitive advantage
Talent management	0.796	0.793	1		
Organizational ambidexterity	0.824	0.881	0.748	1	
Competitive advantage	0.787	0.832	0.770	0.516	1

It is noted from the previous table that both Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each variable and the AVE values for each variable are higher than the correlation coefficients of each variable with the other variables. This demonstrates the variable's measures have discriminatory validity. To summarize, based on the tests mentioned earlier, the scales utilized to assess the research variables demonstrate content validity (model fit), convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

**7-2. Results of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)**

SEM analysis aims to answer the research questions which examine the impact of talent management dimensions on competitive advantage in non-governmental universities working in Egypt and whether the organizational ambidexterity plays a mediating role in this relationship. AMOS V20 was used to analyze the collected data, and AMOS Graphic was used to draw a path diagram identifying four main relationships and 9 sub-relationships between research variables as illustrated in figures (2-a) and (2-b) respectively. The SEM results were used to test research hypotheses.

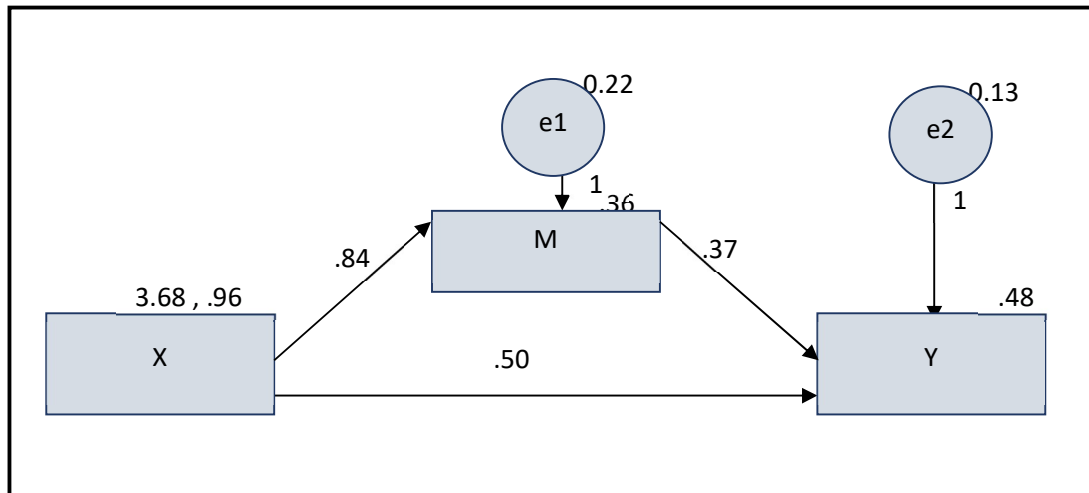


Figure (2-a) Path Diagram

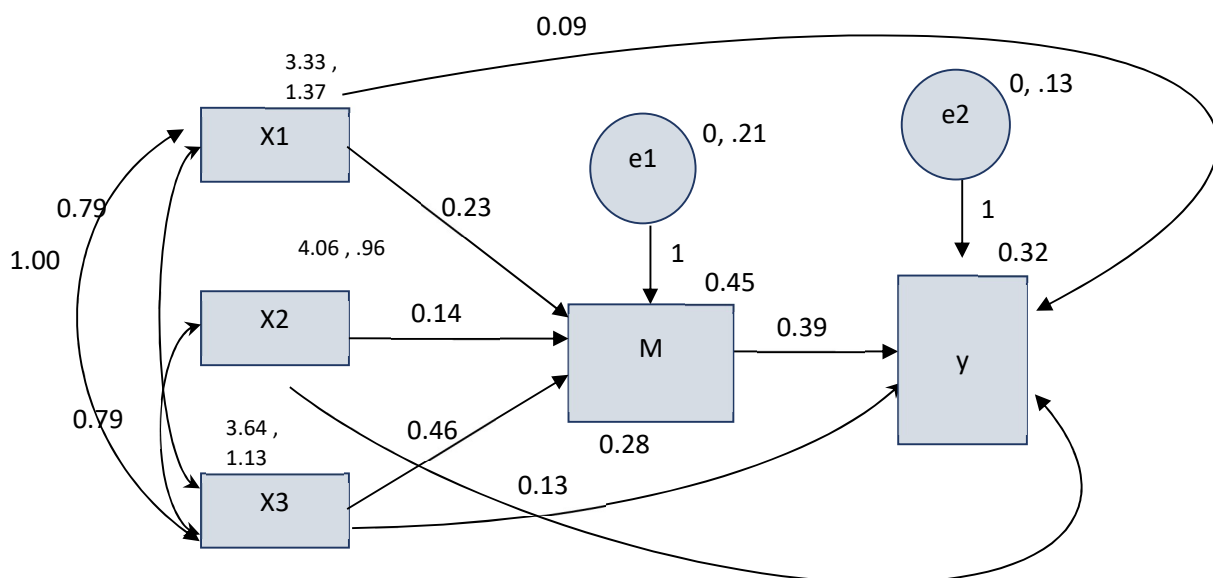


Figure 2-b: Path Diagram

With the respect to testing research hypotheses, this study either accepts or rejects the hypothesis depending on the results of the test performed on the observed data. The path estimates in the model were used to test research hypotheses, the main criteria for accepting or rejecting the hypothesis the significance of the standardized coefficient of research parameters, levels of significance that will be used in this study are 0.05, 0.01 and 0.001 reflecting strong significance, very strong significance and highly strong significance respectively.

### 7–3. Hypotheses Testing Results

In the light of the proposed research model, there are thirteen hypotheses (four main hypotheses and nine sub-hypotheses) investigating the proposed effects among research variables. The thirteen hypotheses were tested in order to examine the direct impact of talent management dimensions on competitive advantage in non-governmental universities working in Egypt, the direct effect of talent management dimensions on the competitive advantage, the direct influence of organizational ambidexterity on the competitive advantage and finally to investigate whether the organizational ambidexterity acts as a mediating role between talent management and the competitive advantage.

#### 1. The First Hypothesis:

The first main hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>) investigates the direct impact of talent management dimensions on the competitive advantage in non-governmental universities working in Egypt, it has been formulated as follows:

- \*H<sub>1</sub>: Talent Management dimensions have a significant positive direct impact on competitive advantage.
- H<sub>11</sub>: Talent attraction has a statistically significant direct impact on competitive advantage.
- H<sub>12</sub>: Talent development has a statistically significant direct impact on competitive advantage.
- H<sub>13</sub>: Talent retention has a statistically significant direct impact on competitive advantage.

**Table 9:** SEM Results Related to the impact of Talent Management Dimensions on competitive advantage

Independent Variable (X)		St. Beta	T. Value (CR)	Sig	Dependent Variable	Rank
Talent attraction	(X1)	0.113	2.567	0.010	Competitive	3
Talent development	(X2)	0.312	8.048	0.000	Advantage	1
Talent retention	(X3)	0.161	3.009	0.003		2

Analysis of Results shown in table (9) reveals that:

Talent attraction has statistically significant positive impact on competitive advantage (T-value = 2.567, B = 0.113, with P = 0.010) Therefore, hypothesis H<sub>11</sub> is strongly supported, considering the statistical findings it can be said that increasing the talent attraction efforts can increase CA, this because effective talent attraction strategies that focus on bringing in top talent enable non-governmental universities operating in Egypt to build a strong workforce, drive innovation, enhance brand reputation, foster differentiation, and create sustainable competitive advantage in the competitive higher education sector. By attracting and retaining exceptional individuals, these universities establish themselves as leaders in academic excellence, setting them apart from local competitors and positioning them for long-term success in the Egyptian educational landscape.

Regarding talent development as a dimension of talent management, the results strongly supported hypothesis (H<sub>12</sub>) which assumes that the talent development has statistically significant positive direct impact on competitive advantage. (T-value = 8.048 B = 0.312 with P = 0.000). Thus, talent development is crucial for increasing CA. by strategically investing in talent

development initiatives, non-governmental universities operating in Egypt can cultivate a skilled, engaged workforce that drives innovation, aligns with strategic objectives, adapts to change, enhances the quality of academic offerings, and ultimately, strengthens their competitive advantage in the dynamic and competitive higher education environment of Egypt.

With respect to talent retention as the third dimension of talent management, results supported hypothesis  $H_{13}$  which supposes that talent retention has a statistically significant direct impact on competitive advantage. (T-value = 3.009, B = 0.161 with P = 0.003) this means that this hypothesis is accepted, and this dimension of talent management have a statistically significant positive direct impact on CA of the universities. Considering these results of the statistical analysis, it can be said that, following policies that support retention of talents can increase the competitive advantage of the universities. talent retention plays a pivotal role in shaping organizational culture, driving employee engagement, fostering innovation, ensuring operational efficiency, and building long-term relationships with stakeholders—all of which contribute to sustainable competitive advantage in a dynamic and competitive business environment. By prioritizing talent retention strategies, non-governmental universities can cultivate a loyal, skilled workforce that forms the foundation for continued success and differentiation in the marketplace.

As a recap, results related to the first hypothesis revealed that the talent development ranked first in its positive impact on CA (B= 0.312) followed by talent retention (B= 0.161) and finally comes talent attraction (B = 0.113).

But concerning the first main hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) that examines the positive direct impact of talent management dimensions on CA in non-governmental universities working in Egypt which has been molded as follows:

$H_1$ : Talent Management dimensions have a significant positive direct impact on competitive advantage.

**Table 10:** SEM Results Related to the impact of Talent Management as a whole on competitive advantage

Independent Variable	St. Beta	T-Value	Sig	Dependent Variable
Talent Management	0.550	10.956	000	competitive advantage

As can be seen by table (10), the talent management has positive direct impact on CA in non-governmental universities working in Egypt (T-value = 10.956, B = 0.550) with  $P < 0.001$ ). Therefore the first main hypothesis is strongly supported, taking in account this findings it can be said that talent management is characterized by three dimensions in terms of talent attraction, talent development and talent retention, these dimensions are not a list, when these dimensions are combined and existed in an organization it has been found to be positively related to CA, this because By prioritizing talent management as a strategic imperative, non-governmental universities operating in Egypt can leverage their human capital effectively to drive innovation, organizational performance, and market differentiation, this can lead to achieve competitive advantage, growth, and success in a competitive educational environment. Talent management practices if done effectively form the cornerstone of organizational resilience, agility, and excellence, enabling universities to thrive and excel in a rapidly changing and globally competitive landscape.

**2. The Second Hypothesis:**

The second main hypothesis (H<sub>2</sub>) examines the positive direct impact of talent management on the organizational ambidexterity in non-governmental Universities working in Egypt, it has been stated as follows:

\* H<sub>2</sub>: Talent management dimensions have significant positive direct impact on organizational ambidexterity.

H<sub>21</sub>: Talent attraction has a statistically significant direct impact on organizational ambidexterity.

H<sub>22</sub>: Talent development has a statistically significant direct impact on organizational ambidexterity.

H<sub>23</sub>: Talent retention has a statistically significant direct impact on organizational ambidexterity.

**Table 11:** SEM Results Related to the impact of Talent Management dimensions on organizational ambidexterity

Independent Variable (X)		St. Beta	T. Value (CR)	Sig	Dependent Variable	Rank
Talent attraction	(X <sub>1</sub> )	0.279	5.559	0.000	Organizational Ambidexterity	2
Talent development	(X <sub>2</sub> )	0.149	3.270	0.001		3
Talent retention	(X <sub>3</sub> )	0.512	9.133	0.000		1

The analysis of the results as shown in table (11) reveals that:

Talent attraction as a dimension of talent management has a positive direct effect on organizational ambidexterity (T-value = 5.559, B = 0.279 with P < .001), Therefore hypothesis H<sub>21</sub> is highly supported, which means that the organizational ambidexterity will increase if the organization executed attraction policies which attracts best talents . By attracting top talent through effective talent attraction strategies, non-governmental universities working in Egypt can build a workforce that is diverse, innovative, agile, and collaborative, setting the stage for organizational ambidexterity. The combination of top talent, interdisciplinary collaboration, risk-taking propensity, and strategic resource utilization facilitates the organization's ability to explore new educational frontiers while optimizing existing capabilities, ultimately enhancing its competitiveness, innovation capacity, and long-term success in the dynamic educational environment of Egypt.

The statistical analysis indicated that talent development as a dimension of talent management has a positive direct impact on organizational ambidexterity in non-governmental universities working in Egypt (T-value = 3.270, B = 0.149 with P < 0.001), this means H<sub>22</sub> hypothesis is highly supported, A possible reason for such findings is that the organizational ambidexterity of the university will increase when management of the university execute policies that develop staff and develop their skills. Effective talent development initiatives that focus on learning, innovation and employee empowerment help create a skilled, engaged and resilient workforce that drives organizational success, supports innovation and improves competitiveness for non-governmental universities working in Egypt. By making talent development a strategic

imperative, companies can leverage their human capital to face challenges, seize opportunities and sustain long-term growth and differentiation in a dynamic and competitive educational environment.

Regarding talent retention as the second dimension of talent management and its impact on organizational ambidexterity, results reveal that this dimension has statistically significant positive direct impact on organizational ambidexterity (T-value= 9.133, B = 0.512 with  $P < 0.001$ ). It has been found that the talent retention comes first in its impact on organizational ambidexterity, this result is highly logical because after attracting and developing talents, following retention policies that ensure their stay and loyalty can lead to increasing organizational ambidexterity. So, the researcher can conclude that organizations with good talent retention policies can be ambidextrous organizations. By prioritizing talent retention as a strategic imperative, non-governmental universities in Egypt can cultivate a loyal, committed, and skilled workforce that drives innovation, excellence, and distinctiveness, ultimately leading to sustained competitive advantage and success in the competitive educational landscape.

Results also showed that talent retention comes in the first place in terms of its impact on organizational ambidexterity in non-governmental universities working in Egypt (B = 0.512), followed by talent attraction (B = 0.279), and finally comes talent development last with the standard Beta (B = 0.149).

But related to second main hypothesis (H<sub>2</sub>) that examines the positive direct impact of talent management on organizational ambidexterity, H<sub>2</sub> has been formulated as follows:

\* H<sub>2</sub>: Talent Management has a statistically positive direct impact on organizational ambidexterity.

**Table 12:** SEM Results Related to the impact of Talent Management on organizational ambidexterity

Independent Variable	St. Beta	T-Value	Sig	Dependent
Talent Management	0.868	29.118	0.000	Organizational Ambidexterity

According to the above table, the results reveal that talent management has a statistically significant positive impact on organizational ambidexterity in Non-governmental universities working in Egypt (T-value = 29.118, B = 0.868 with  $P < 0.001$ ) therefore the second main hypothesis (H<sub>2</sub>) is highly supported, bearing in mind this statistical findings, it can be said that talent management and organizational ambidexterity are related to each other and we can consider talent management as an antecedent of organizational ambidexterity. By prioritizing talent management as a strategic enabler of organizational ambidexterity, non-governmental universities operating in Egypt can leverage their human capital to navigate the complexities of the higher education landscape, drive innovation, ensure operational efficiency, and maintain a competitive edge in a dynamic environment.

### 3. The Third Hypothesis:

The third main hypothesis (H<sub>3</sub>) investigates the direct impact of organizational ambidexterity on the competitive advantage in non-governmental universities working in Egypt, H<sub>3</sub> has been formulated as follows:



\* H<sub>3</sub>: Organizational Ambidexterity has a significant positive direct impact on competitive advantage.

**Table 13:** SEM Results Related to the impact of Organizational Ambidexterity on competitive Advantage

Independent Variable	St. Beta	T-Value (CR)	Sig	Dependent Variable
Organizational Ambidexterity	0.414	8.257	0.000	Competitive Advantage (CA)

As indicated by the above table (13) the organizational ambidexterity has statistically significant positive direct impact on the competitive advantage (T-value = 8.257, B = 0.414 with P < 0.01) Therefore the third main hypothesis (H<sub>3</sub>) is strongly confirmed, which means that organizational ambidexterity plays vital role in increasing the CA in non-governmental universities working in Egypt. By embracing organizational ambidexterity as a strategic imperative, foreign universities operating in Egypt can leverage their ability to balance exploration and exploitation, drive innovation, foster adaptability, and differentiate themselves in a competitive educational landscape. Ambidextrous practices enable universities to excel in both traditional academic excellence and forward-thinking innovation, positioning them for sustained success, growth, and leadership in the dynamic higher education environment of Egypt.

**4. The Fourth Hypothesis:**

The final main hypothesis (H<sub>4</sub>) studies the mediating role that the organizational ambidexterity plays in the relationship between talent management and the competitive advantage in non-governmental universities working in Egypt, the fourth main hypothesis has been formulated as follows:

\* H<sub>4</sub>: Talent Management dimensions have significant positive indirect impact on competitive advantage through organizational ambidexterity.

H<sub>41</sub>: Talent attraction has a statistically significant indirect impact on competitive advantage through organizational ambidexterity.

H<sub>42</sub>: Talent development has a statistically significant indirect impact on competitive advantage through organizational ambidexterity.

H<sub>43</sub>: Talent retention has a statistically significant indirect impact on competitive advantage through organizational ambidexterity.

**Table 14:** SEM Results Related to indirect impact of the talent management dimensions on competitive advantage through organizational ambidexterity

Independent Variable Talent Management		St. Beta	Sig	Mediating variable	Dependent Variable	Rank
Talent attraction	(X <sub>1</sub> )	0.115	0.000	Organizational Ambidexterity	Competitive Advantage (CA)	2
Talent development	(X <sub>2</sub> )	0.062	0.000			3
Talent retention	(X <sub>3</sub> )	0.212	0.000			1

From the statistical results shown in the above table it can be noted that:

- Talent attraction has statistically significant positive indirect impact on the competitive advantage (CA) in non-governmental universities working in Egypt through organizational ambidexterity (B = 0.115 with P < 0.001), this impact is ranked second.
- Results also reveal that the organizational ambidexterity acts a mediating role between talent development and CA (B = 0.062 with P<0.001) this reflects that organizational ambidexterity reinforced the indirect effect of talent development on CA, and this effect is ranked last.
- Concerning talent retention results reveal that the organizational ambidexterity as a mediating variable sustained the positive indirect effect of talent retention on CA (B = 0.212, with P < 0.001), this indirect impact is ranked first. Path diagram shown in Figure (6. 1a) has been used to explore the indirect positive impact of the talent management dimensions as a whole on CA through the organizational ambidexterity.

Path diagram shown in figure(2-a) has been used to explore the indirect positive impact of talent management dimensions as a whole on the competitive advantage through organizational ambidexterity.

**Table 15:** SEM Results Related to the indirect impact of talent management on CA through organizational ambidexterity

Independent Variable	St. Beta	Sig	Mediating Variable	Dependent Variable
Talent Management	0.340	000	Organizational Ambidexterity	CA

Results shown in the previous table (B = 0.340, with P < 0.001) strongly supported the fourth main hypothesis (H4) which assumes that talent management has statistically significant positive indirect impact on CA in non-governmental universities working in Egypt through the mediating role of organizational ambidexterity. Considering this finding, it can be said that the effects of the three dimensions of talent management on CA are reinforced and improved when the organizational ambidexterity acts as a mediating role in the relationship between the talent management and CA.

Table (16) shows the direct, indirect and total effects among research variables.

**Table 16:** Shows Direct, Indirect and Total Effects among Research variables

Effect	St. Beta	Sig
<b>Direct effects</b>		
- X <sub>1</sub> → Y	0.113	*
- X <sub>2</sub> → Y	0.312	*
- X <sub>3</sub> → Y	0.161	***
- X → Y	0.550	***
- X <sub>1</sub> → M	0.279	***
- X <sub>2</sub> → M	0.194	***
- X <sub>3</sub> → M	0.512	***
- X → M	0.868	***
- M → Y	0.391	***
<b>Indirect Effects</b>		
- X <sub>1</sub> → Y	0.115	***

- X <sub>2</sub> → Y	0.062	***
- X <sub>3</sub> → Y	0.212	***
- X → M → Y	0.340	***
<b>Total Effects (Direct + Indirect)</b>		
- X <sub>1</sub> → Y	0.228	***
- X <sub>2</sub> → Y	0.374	***
- X <sub>3</sub> → Y	0.373	***
- X → Y	0.890	***
* P ≤ 0.05, *** P ≤ 0.001		

According to the previous table:

Talent attraction (X<sub>1</sub>) has a significant positive indirect effect on CA through organizational ambidexterity, according to the statistical results, this indirect effect increases the standardized effect of talent attraction from 0.113 to 0.228. Additionally, talent development (X<sub>2</sub>) has a significant positive indirect impact on CA of universities through organizational ambidexterity as a mediating variable in the light of the statistical result, this indirect impact increases the standardized effect of (X<sub>2</sub>) from 0.312 to 0.374.

Regarding Talent retention as the third dimension of talent management (X<sub>3</sub>) results indicated that this dimension (X<sub>3</sub>) has a significant positive indirect impact on CA of universities through organizational ambidexterity as a mediating variable, this indirect impact improved the standardized effect of (X<sub>3</sub>) from 0.161 to 0.373.

The three dimensions of talent management altogether have a joint 0.340 indirect positive impact on CA through organizational ambidexterity which causes an increase in the standardized effect of talent management on CA from 0.550 to 0.890, So the significance of the standardized effects reveals that the organizational ambidexterity acts as a mediating variable between talent management and CA of non-governmental universities working in Egypt.

#### 7-4. Summary of Research Results

Research findings revealed the first main hypothesis (H1) which examines the direct impact of the three dimensions of talent management on the competitive advantage (CA) was supported. Additionally concerning the three sub-hypotheses that are related to the first main hypothesis the statistical analysis indicated the following results:

- Talent attraction (H<sub>11</sub>) has statistically significant positive direct impact on the competitive advantage in non-governmental universities working in Egypt.
- Talent development (H<sub>12</sub>) has a statistically significant positive direct impact on competitive advantage in non-governmental universities working in Egypt, this dimension of talent management is coming in the first place in terms of its importance and its impact on CA.
- Talent retention (H<sub>13</sub>) as a third dimension of talent management has statistically significant positive direct impact on the competitive advantage in non-governmental universities working in Egypt, this dimension was ranked in the second place in its impact on CA followed by talent attraction that is coming in the third place in its effect on CA.

Regarding the second main hypothesis (H<sub>2</sub>) which investigates the direct impact of talent management dimensions on organizational ambidexterity, the results of research strongly supported this main hypothesis, Moreover, the statistical results revealed that the three sub-hypotheses included under this second main hypothesis are strongly supported as follows:

- Talent attraction (H<sub>21</sub>) has a statistically significant positive impact on organizational ambidexterity.

- Talent development (H<sub>21</sub>) has a statistically significant positive impact on organizational ambidexterity.
- Talent retention (H<sub>23</sub>) has a statistically significant positive impact on organizational ambidexterity.

Results also revealed **Talent retention** as a dimension of talent management comes in the first ranking in terms of its importance and its impact on organizational ambidexterity in non-governmental universities working in Egypt, followed by **Talent attraction** at the second place and **Talent development** at the final ranking.

With respect to the third main hypothesis (H<sub>3</sub>) which assumes that organizational ambidexterity has a statistically significant positive impact on CA in non-governmental universities working in Egypt, the results indicated that this main hypothesis was strongly supported which means that any increase in the level of organizational ambidexterity will increase the CA of the university.

Finally, concerning the fourth main hypothesis (H<sub>4</sub>) which examines the mediating role that organizational ambidexterity plays in the relationship between talent management dimensions and competitive advantage, it was found that this main hypothesis was strongly supported, which means that the talent management has a statistically significant negative indirect impact on CA through organizational ambidexterity. In addition to, the results of sub-hypotheses that are related to the fourth main hypothesis confirmed the significant positive indirect impact of three talent management dimensions on CA through the mediating role of organizational ambidexterity, this results are shown as follows:

- Talent attraction (H<sub>41</sub>) has a statistically significant positive indirect impact on the competitive advantage (CA) in non-governmental universities working in Egypt.
- Talent development (H<sub>42</sub>) has a statistically significant positive indirect impact on CA in non-governmental universities working in Egypt through organizational ambidexterity.
- Talent retention (H<sub>43</sub>) has a statistically significant positive indirect impact on CA in non-governmental universities working in Egypt through organizational ambidexterity.

So in the light of the results of the four main hypothesis and its sub-hypotheses, it can be said that the positive impact of the three dimensions of talent management on CA are improved due to the role played by the organizational ambidexterity as a mediating variable between talent management as an independent variable and CA as a dependent variable.

### **Eighth: Study's Implications and Future Research.**

In this part both theoretical and practical implications of this study are discussed, in addition recommendations for future research were suggested.

#### **8-1. Theoretical implications**

This study strives to contribute to the body of knowledge on talent management, organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage. In this regard this study makes a number of theoretical and academic contributions by integrating new streams of research that have not been examined previously and addressing some of research gaps in talent management, organizational ambidexterity and competitive advantage (CA).

**First**, this study added to talent management literature by proposing that talent management could directly and indirectly contribute to the competitive advantage. This study suggests that talent management has significant positive direct impact on the competitive advantage, this impact has not been sufficiently tested in previous studies so this study provides a start that contributes to the literature of talent management by highlighting the dimensions of talent management that predict CA.

**Second**, this study additionally indicated that talent management has a significant positive direct effect on organizational ambidexterity, this study examines how talent management can act as an antecedent to organizational ambidexterity, this contribution added to the literature by explaining how the dimensions of talent management may result in achieving organizational ambidexterity, this theoretical implication is very important because little is known about the antecedents of organizational ambidexterity, so this study to researcher best knowledge is the first attempt that highlighted the influence of talent management on organizational ambidexterity in higher education sector.

**Third**, this study contributes to the CA literature by examining the direct impact of organizational ambidexterity on CA this study further clarify how the competitive advantage is related to organizational ambidexterity, so this study is one among scarce studies that manifested the importance of organizational ambidexterity in driving CA, More specifically, the positive relationship between organizational ambidexterity and CA will be highest when there is a high level of organizational ambidexterity.

**Fourth**, this study also contribute to CA literature by investigating the positive indirect impact of talent management on CA, this indirect effect is mediated by organizational ambidexterity, the current study theoretically develops and tests the mediating role of organizational ambidexterity in the relationship between the dimensions of talent management and CA, the results of this study add to talent management literature and shows the importance of talent management in achieving CA through the organizational ambidexterity, this study draws together talent management and organizational ambidexterity to **jointly** help to explain how these two drives affect CA, the study proposes that both talent management and organizational ambidexterity are necessary to achieve CA, no research has examined how talent management and organizational ambidexterity relate to one another in driving CA, thus this study is the **first** that uncover the mediation mechanism through which talent management affects CA and supports in turn the suggestion that organizational ambidexterity plays an important role as mediating mechanism that reinforce the positive indirect impact of talent management on CA.

## **8-2. Practical Implications**

Based on the results of the field study, a set of practical implications have been provided to help managers at non-governmental Universities working in Egypt and Similar educational institutions to get benefited from this study.

- 1 – Generally, it is necessary for non-governmental universities working in Egypt to improve the three dimensions of talent management, this can be executed through:
  - A) Improving **Talent Attraction**, through the following actions:

- Implement rigorous and inclusive recruitment processes to identify and attract high-potential individuals.
  - Develop partnerships with local and international educational institutions to acquire talented faculty members and administrative personnel.
  - Leverage technology and social media platforms to reach a broader pool of potential candidates.
- B) Improving **Talent Development** through:
- Collaboration and Interdisciplinary Initiatives: Encourage collaborative work environments and interdisciplinary initiatives to foster creativity, innovation, and cross-functional expertise.
  - Promote knowledge sharing and networking among faculty and administrative staff to enhance talent development opportunities.
  - Implement performance management systems to set clear expectations and provide regular feedback to employees.
  - Offer opportunities for career development, such as continuous learning programs, workshops, and access to specialized training platforms.
- C) It is necessary for non-governmental universities through their actions emphasize the improvement of **Talent Retention**, this can be achieved through:
- Develop a clear succession plan to identify key positions and talents critical for the university's future.
  - Offer competitive compensation packages and benefits to attract and retain top talent.
  - Create opportunities for growth and advancement within the organization to retain talent.
- 2– Due to importance of organizational ambidexterity and its effect on CA, focusing on organizational ambidexterity and its development for non-governmental universities in Egypt can be vital in navigating the rapidly changing landscape of higher education. Top management at non-governmental universities should take into account the following considerations, non-governmental universities in Egypt can effectively focus on organizational ambidexterity and create a dynamic and responsive environment that balances exploration and exploitation, ultimately leading to innovation, sustainable growth, and ongoing academic excellence.
- A) Encourage a Culture of Innovation:
- Foster a culture that values and encourages innovation, creativity, and the exploration of new ideas.
  - Establish channels for idea generation, collaboration, and knowledge sharing among faculty, researchers, and students.
- B) Allocate Resources Effectively:
- Devote resources to both explorative endeavors, such as research and development of new programs, and exploitative activities, such as academic program quality improvements and infrastructure upgrades.
  - Ensure a balanced investment across traditional educational methodologies and emerging digital learning platforms.
- C) Support Interdisciplinary Collaboration:
- Promote collaboration across different academic disciplines and departments to encourage cross-pollination of ideas and approaches.
  - Facilitate interdisciplinary research projects and joint academic programs to stimulate both exploration and exploitation of knowledge.

D) Embrace Flexibility and Adaptability:

- Encourage flexibility in administrative processes to accommodate changes and new initiatives.
- Develop agile structures that can adapt rapidly to market demands, technological advancements, and academic trends.

E) Leverage Partnerships and Collaborations:

- Establish partnerships with industry, research institutions, and other universities to gain access to new knowledge, technologies, and best practices.
- Collaborate with non-governmental and governmental entities to leverage resources and expertise for both exploration and exploitation efforts.

Finally, Egyptian non-governmental universities can attain a sustainable competitive advantage (CA) by incorporating talent management practices and organizational ambidexterity into their strategic approach. The following are some guidelines on how to effectively combine these two concepts to achieve a long-term competitive advantage:

- 1 – Construct a Talent Development Office: Establish a specialized office that will be in responsible for supervising talent management efforts, leadership development, and promoting a culture of innovation within the university.
- 2 – Design Leadership Training Programs: Develop and execute training programmes for existing and prospective academic and administrative managers to develop the essential skills for directing both exploratory and exploitative operations.
- 3 – Strategic allocation of resources: By directing them towards the exploration of new opportunities, (such as courses of study, research, and technological adaptation, as well as the exploitation of existing strengths, (such as quality of education, infrastructure, and industry partnerships).
- 4 – Conduct Talent Analytics: Apply data analytics and human resource technologies to acquire knowledge about talent trends, detect deficiencies in skills, and facilitate well-informed decision-making regarding talent management strategies.
- 5 – Develop Agile Structures: Implementing agile structures and processes; ensures that the university can adapt rapidly and effectively to an evolving higher education landscape, thereby maintaining strategic flexibility through both talent development and innovative endeavors.
- 6 – Enhance Interdisciplinary Collaboration: Implement initiatives and establish programs that facilitate the integration of expertise from diverse academic fields, with the goal of fostering collaborations and knowledge sharing, thus driving innovative research and academic programs.
- 7 – Employ Dual-Focused Leadership: A leadership style that recognizes and encourages both talent management and ambidexterity develop a culture of ongoing learning, adaptability, and responsiveness. This enables the university to proactively anticipate emerging trends, capture new opportunities, and strengthen its current strength.
- 8 – Monitor and evaluate: Consistently observe, assess, and modify talent management and ambidextrous strategies in accordance to the results and knowledge acquired from different initiatives.

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