

Talent Management and Work-Life Balance in the Business Process Outsourcing Sector in South Africa: Towards the Enhancement of Competitive Strategy

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Abstract

This study investigated talent management practices and work-life balance initiatives in the South African Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector. The research aimed to achieve specific objectives: understanding respondents' demographic profiles, assessing talent management and work-life balance practices, examining the relationship between these practices, identifying current challenges faced by employees, and utilizing findings for competitive strategy enhancement. The study adopted a descriptive-quantitative and correlational-qualitative research design, surveying 281 employees from four BPO companies in Durban City, South Africa. Results indicated demographic variations influencing perceptions of talent management and work-life balance. Talent management practices, including attraction, retention, learning, and career development, were well-implemented, suggesting employee satisfaction. Work-life balance initiatives, such as family support services and financial incentives, were extensive, but flexible work arrangements were somewhat limited. Notably, talent management practices positively predicted work-life balance. Challenges faced by employees encompassed job security, work overload, inadequate training, complex access to incentives, and encounters with abusive customers. The study concluded and recommended that BPO companies could enhance their competitive strategy by investing in human resources through consistent career progression, employee recognition, protective job policies, increased training opportunities, and flexible work options. These strategies aim to enhance employee satisfaction, retention, and productivity, ultimately contributing to the success of companies operating in the dynamic BPO industry.

Keywords: Talent management, work-life balance, BPO, competitive strategy, South Africa