Article

The Mediating Effect of Emotional Intelligence on the Relationship between Talent Management Practices and Leadership Skills in Malaysian GLCs

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to investigate the relation between talent management practices and leadership skills, as well as the potential mediating role of emotional intelligence. This study accomplished its aim through a conceptual analysis by utilizing the lenses of talent management for leadership outcomes, talent-based theory, social cognitive theory, and extant literature. The study indicated that good talent management practice implementation was not adequate to develop and produce talented leadership skills in Malaysian Government-linked Companies (GLCs). The hypothesized partial mediating models were supported by talent-based theory and social cognitive theory, signifying that talent management practices with emotional intelligence will develop leadership skills. This study enhanced the use of mediatory roles of emotional intelligence to better understand the mechanism of talent management practices within the framework.

Keywords: talent management practices; leadership skills; emotional intelligence; government-linked company; Malaysia

1. Introduction

Government-linked Companies (GLCs) in Malaysia are described as firms which are directly controlled by the Malaysian Government [1]. The crucial decisions involving strategies, contract awards, mergers, acquisitions, divestment, restructuring, and financing in GLCs are made by a government-appointed board of directors and senior management [2]. Furthermore, Khazanah is the Malaysian Government's investment holding arm, which is tasked to hold and handle the government's commercial properties and making strategic investments [3]. Since the late 1990s, talent management has been a notable research topic and viewed as highly crucial and influential, as well as predictive of employee retention, organizational performance, and job satisfaction [4]. The talent management topic began to attract the extensive attention of academics and corporate leaders after McKinsey consultants invented the phrase "war of talent". Moreover, talent management is one of the business strategies that organizations believe they can modify to retain their highly proficient employees and improve organizational performance to sustain in the dynamic corporate environment [5]. In line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) skills development has been recognized as an essential prerequisite for sustainable development. It constitutes a key element of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly through Goal 4 and Goal 8. Therefore, to support the SDGs this research is committed to play a role in their fulfillment and contribute to at least two of the 17 SDGs, notably, Quality Education (Goal 4) and Decent Work and Economic Growth (Goal 8). Both goals urge people to obtain quality education and encourage lifelong learning to improve their lives and achieve sustainable development. In conjunction with this, study on talent management is seen as highly important in Malaysia to support the

Shared Prosperity Vision (SPV) 2030 and Twelfth Malaysia Plan (2021–2025). SPV 2030 is a commitment to make Malaysia a nation that achieves sustainable growth along with fair and equitable distribution, across income groups, ethnicities, regions, and supply chains [6]. Meanwhile, the Twelfth Malaysia Plan (2021–2025) focuses on strategic priorities that will transform Malaysia during the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic and global economic uncertainty. The objective is to inclusively achieve a prosperous and sustainable Malaysia, in line with SDG 2030 agenda [7]. Talent management practices at GLCs are guided by Putrajaya Committee on GLC High Performance's Initiative 8: The Orange Book Strengthening Leadership Development. The Orange Book is to help Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) to strengthen leadership development. The book offers practical guidance on what they can do and need to do to institutionalize good leadership development practices. The implementation of talent management practices in Malaysia remains in the infancy stage. Investigating whether the crucial factors involved are capable of fostering talent retention and employee engagement through perceived organizational support in the GLC context is crucial. Therefore, to succeed in the globalization era, Malaysian GLCs must have the prospective talent to add value to their organizations.

According to Prof. Datuk Seri Dr Md Zabid Abdul Rashid, the President and Vice-chancellor of Universiti Tun Abdul Razak, Malaysia is currently facing a talent crisis because the supply of competent talents is limited, and the current talent population will not be able to support the country's growth [8]. The need for talent management practices in the workplace grew significantly in recent years since many companies had started to recognize skilled workers and talents as important assets that can help elevate the company toward a superior position in the competitive environment and achieve its objectives. Through the implementation of talent management practices, organizations are able to systematically identify potential talents while the process of talent development can further enhance the knowledge and skills of identified employees [9]. Nevertheless, the shortage of talent management and skillful resource development is ongoing, although Malaysia has taken many steps and initiatives to resolve the concerning issues [10]. According to authors of [11], the five biggest talent management challenges for human resource are higher overall pay demands, a tightening talent market, unattractive organizational culture, increased employee turnover, and lack of leadership.

Talent management practices depend on the leaders' capabilities to persuade employees to invest their resources and time in new and risky initiatives, manage teamwork, and stimulate creative employee engagement, collaboration, autonomy, and independence. It is stated that the relationship between leadership and talent management in an organization is positive [12–14]. The organization will retain talented employees and identify leaders with different leadership styles. Apart from successful talent management practices that can produce a good leader that have been researched previously, the element of emotional intelligence is seemingly missing in making a greater leader for the future due to the COVID-19 pandemic. People are now entering a new phase of life in which the trends in developing employees are changing within the organization. The meaning of emotional intelligence is to understand, use, and manage emotions in positive ways; hence, helps to build a stronger relation at work to achieve career and organizational goals [15]. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the relation between talent management practices and leadership skills, as well as the potential mediating role of emotional intelligence. Meanwhile, the study findings may provide insights into the potential challenges of talent management, such as anticipating various talent needs, sustaining engagement at the workplace, and retention of high-performing talents and leaders. This study also will provide an alternative tool for legislators and policymakers to develop leadership skills in Malaysian GLCs. Finally, this study is committed to the fulfillment of SDG specifically to urge people to obtain quality education, encourage lifelong learning to improve their lives and achieve sustainable development while contributing to the Twelfth Malaysia Plan (2021–2025).

1.1. Study Conducted on Talent Management and Leadership

The general screening processes and flow of selecting relevant literature for talent management and leadership area are presented in Figure 1. The flow diagram for the database search publications was modified from [16]. In the initial stage, a total of 685 records were found (426 from SCOPUS, 88 from Science Direct, and 171 from Google Scholar). The final list of relevant publications was downloaded for further analysis. Based on Table 1, limited literature regarding talent management, emotional intelligence, and leadership skills, especially in Malaysian GLCs was available.
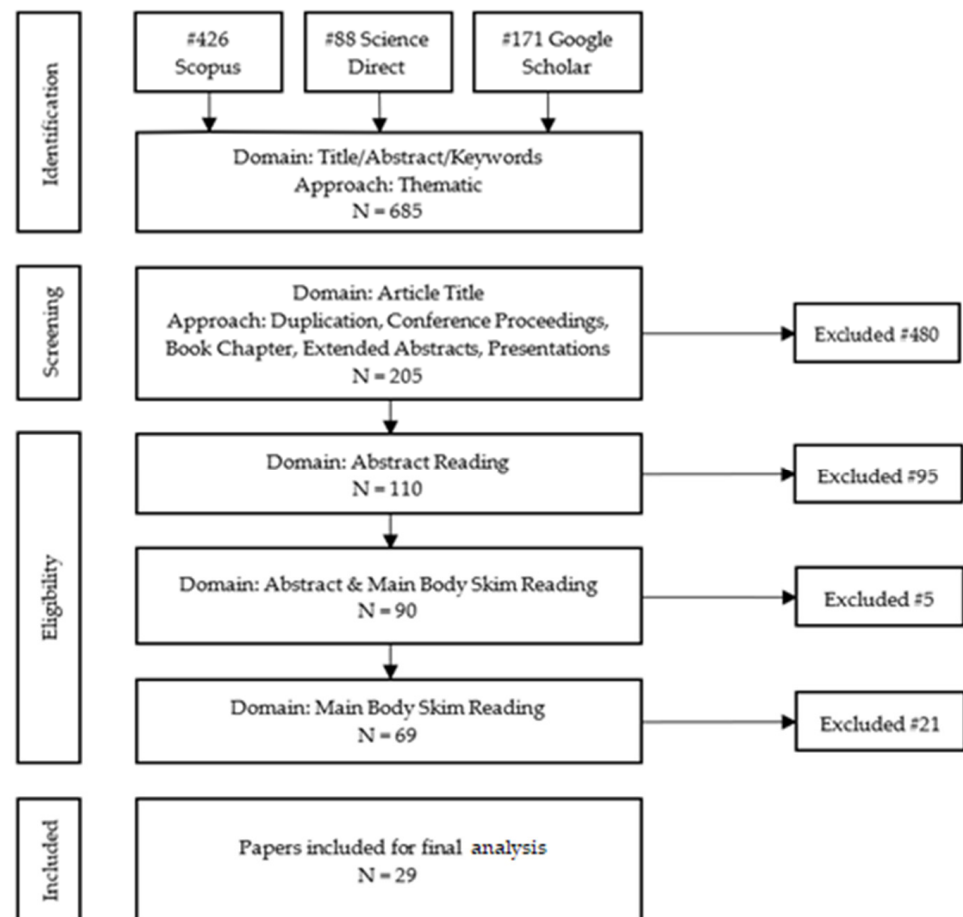

Figure 1. Process Flow.

Meanwhile, researchers have studied talent management from different perspectives. Talent management is the organized attraction, development, documentation, retention, employment, and distribution of people who are of specific worth to an association to create strategic sustainable success, includes the perception of both employee and organization [17]. Past research also found the importance of talent management practices for organizational performance and job satisfaction [18]. Also, studies had proved that there is relation between talent management and emotional intelligence [19]. Additionally, emotional intelligence is a major element that influences leadership effectiveness [20]. The importance of talent management for employee retention has also been highlighted in literature [21]. Finally, research showed that lack of leadership talent is generally a worldwide issue.

Table 1. Past studies on Talent management and Leadership.

Author/Year	Titles	Sample	Method	Finding
[22]	Developing Tomorrow's Leaders-Evidence of Global Talent Management (GTM) in Multinational Enterprises (MNE)	260 Multinational Enterprises	Quantitative	The size of the MNE has a significant effect on GTM
[23]	A Global Approach to Talent Management: High-Quality Leaders are The Key to Competitive Advantage	Literature Review	Qualitative	Behavioral assessment is a key tool in enabling an organization to take strategic approach
[24]	Talent and Leadership Development Practices as Drivers of Intention to Stay in Lebanese Organisations: The Mediating Role of Affective Commitment	238 in nine Lebanese firms	Simple Random Sampling	Talent and leadership development practices were positively related to intention to stay
[25]	Talent Management and Physician Leadership Training is Essential for Preparing Tomorrow's Physician Leaders	24 from College of Medicine	Interview	Talent management and leadership development becoming a necessity for healthcare organizations
[26]	The Effect of Leadership Style on Talent Retention during Merger and Acquisition Integration: Evidence from China	Case Study	Qualitative	An authoritative, coaching, task-focused, and relationship-focused approach has a positive influence on TR
[27]	The Relationship between Teachers' Perception about School Managers' Talent Management Leadership and The Level of Organisational Commitment	402 teachers	Convenience Sampling	TM leadership can predict teachers' organizational commitment
[28]	Talent Management for Developing Leadership: An Empirical Investigation	100 staff of IT companies	Convenience Sampling	Potential identification and employee retention contribute significantly to leadership development
[19]	The Effect of Talent Management and Emotional Intelligence on Organizational Performance: Applied Study on Pharmaceutical Industry in Jordan	1125 managers	Stratified Random Sampling	Positive relationship between IV and DV
[29]	The Study of Effect Perceived Talent Management Strategies on Job Performance with the Mediating Role of Emotional Intelligence	379 employees	Structural Equation Modeling	EI plays the mediator role between TM strategies and Job Performance
[30]	Effect of Talent Management on Nurses' Emotional Intelligence and Organisational Performance	92 staff nurses	Convenience Sampling	TM was significant predictor of nurses' EI and Organizational Performance

Table 1. *Cont.*

Author/Year	Titles	Sample	Method	Finding
[31]	Inclusive/Exclusive Talent Management, Responsible Leadership and Organisational Downsizing: A Study of Academics in Egyptian Public Business Schools	240 academics	-	Responsible leadership has no role in mediating the relationship between IV and DV
[32]	Strategic Talent Management: Implementation and Impact of a Leadership Development Program Radiology	74 executives and senior leaders	Systematic Random Sampling	Leadership development is imperative for talent-dependent firms
[33]	Bridging the Generational Gap in the Hospitality Industry: Reverse Mentoring— An Innovative Talent Management Practice for Present and Future Generations of Employees	Employees from Hotel in Romania and Switzerland	Focus Group Discussion	Romanian employees have high expectations and innovative approaches regarding the implementation of reverse mentoring
[21]	The Role of Leadership in the Talent Management and Employee Retention of Education in Abu Dhabi	371 executives	Systematic Random Sampling	Talent Management enhanced employee retention
[34]	HR Managers' Talent Philosophies: Prevalence and Relationships with Perceived Talent Management Practices	321 HR Managers	Snowball Sampling	Results did not support a link between talent philosophies and talent identification criteria
[35]	Impact of Talent Management, Authentic Leadership and Employee Engagement on Job Satisfaction: Evidence from Southeast Asian Industries	391 employees	Simple Random Sampling	TM has a positive relationship with job satisfaction
[36]	Improving Performance of Public Universities in Ghana through Talent Management: Does Leadership Support Matter	430 lecturers	Simple Random Sampling	TM practices prove to be significant in organizational performance
[17]	Relation between Head Nurses' Talent Management and their Emotional Intelligence with Organisational Effectiveness	95 nurses	Convenience Sampling	Significant positive relations between organizational effectiveness and TM and EI
[37]	Talent Transformation for Leadership Roles: Emotional Intelligence as Moderator	Interview 10 HR managers	Qualitative	TM proven to be a powerful tool to increase organizational performance
[38]	Leadership Talent Management: The Integrated Model	732 academic staff	Convenience Sampling	Largest effect was between talent performance appraisal and talent retention

Table 1. *Cont.*

Author/Year	Titles	Sample	Method	Finding
[39]	Effect of Talent Management Training Program on Head Nurses Leadership Effectiveness	120 head nurses	-	Significant improvement in head nurse's knowledge and practice
[20]	The Mediating Role of Emotional Intelligence in the Relationship between School Principals' Sustainable Leadership Behaviors and Diversity Management Skills	402 teachers	Simple Random Sampling	Ability to manage differences and emotional intelligence levels were high
[40]	Talent Management in Higher Education Institutions: Developing Leadership Competencies	12 staff	Focus Group Discussion	A set of attributes were listed that can be adopted in the future
[41]	Employer Branding as a Talent Management Tool: A Systematic Literature Revision	Literature Review	Systematic Literature Revision	Employer branding as a tool within the largest process of TM
[42]	Can Talent Management Improve Training, Sustainability and Excellence in the Labor Market?	Actualiadad Economica Magazine	Quantitative	Gender variables in the business direction do not significantly influence the overall valuation
[43]	The Digital Transformation if the Talent Management Process: A Spanish Business Case	180 companies	-	Future investments are needed to correlate the digital tools and take advantage of a better employee life cycle
[44]	Effect of Talent Management Training Program on Leadership Effectiveness and Emotional Intelligence among Nurse Managers	53 nurses managers	-	Significant positive relationship between head nurses' TM knowledge and practices, leadership, and EI
[45]	Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Sustainable Leadership: A PLS-based Study	262 managers	Convenience Sampling	EI significantly influences sustainable leadership
[46]	Talent Management in the Hospitality Sector: Predicting Discretionary Work Behavior	263 employees	-	TM dimensions have significant effects on discretionary work behavior

1.2. Research Problem

According to [47], a problem statement acts as the main agenda, whereby it helps a reader to glance at the study scope and forces the author to certify that the fundamental components have been acknowledged. First of all, the GLCs are active in different economic sectors, presenting 400,000 workers with job opportunities, 36% market capitalization in Bursa Malaysia, and 54% trade-in in the Kuala Lumpur Composite Index [48]. Nevertheless, the primary issue that hinders the success of GLCs' performance is talent shortage. According to [49], many organizations are widely facing this issue, which involves a shortage of professionals, technical support, capable managers and other skill-related positions. Akin to other nations, Malaysia relies on human resources to sustain the development of its progressively growing economy. The human capital of GLCs must be well-regulated to remain competitive nationally and internationally. Therefore, in meeting business demand

GLCs must be aware that Malaysia faces a critical insufficient talent issue. According to the IMD World Talent Ranking 2018 published by the Institute for Management Development [50], Malaysia ranked 22nd out of 63 countries in talent competitiveness. This ranking was evaluated based on the country's combined performances in three aspects: investment made toward the development of local talent (17th place), ability to attract overseas talent (26th place) and availability of skills and competencies in the country's talent pool (24th place). In other words, Malaysian companies are still lacking in attracting global staff and retaining skillful Malaysian employees in their organizations despite the considerable effort spent in developing talents [51].

Furthermore, most leaders in Vietnam GLCs lack leadership skills and qualities due to inappropriate selection of leaders, which was based on political relations rather than managerial expertise [52]. According to [53], bureaucratic meddling, conflicting objectives, over-centralization of decision-making, inadequate capitalization, and lack of managerial skills were also critical problems for GLCs. Directorship and senior managerial positions in GLCs were political patronage positions for retired military and high-level civil servants or for relatives and friends of powerful political leaders. The achievements of GLC directors have not been comprehensively examined and leadership in GLCs had received less attention; hence, leading to less committed employees and impacted the GLC performance in Malaysia [54]. Therefore, these issues faced by both organizations and employees will be the strength and motivation to carry out this study.

Although many studies to look into the issue of talent management practices were conducted to enhance the abilities and capabilities of organizations, there were limited studies on the impact of talent management practices on leadership skills in Malaysian GLCs, as depicted in Table 1. Therefore, there is a need to study on GLCs since they are key drivers of the Malaysian economy and substantial investors in the financial markets. Moreover, studies on talent management practices together with leadership skills were limited since many studies had highlighted the importance of talent management practices in the organization as these practices can identify potential talents and enhance their knowledge and skills [9]. Furthermore, there was some theoretical support for talent management–leadership, resulting in increased leader's potential [24,28]. However, there was no empirical evidence to support and verify the link that existed.

1.3. Research Questions and Research Objectives

This study had identified variables for the analysis. It was assumed that these variables had significant relations. Therefore, the research questions and research objectives are depicted in Table 2.

Table 2. Research Questions and Research Objectives.

No	Research Questions	Research Objectives
1	Are there any significant effects of Talent Management Practices and Leadership Skills on Malaysian GLCs?	To examine the significant effects of Talent Management Practices and Leadership Skills on Malaysian GLCs
2	Are there any significant effects of Talent Management Practices and Emotional Intelligence on Malaysian GLCs?	To examine the significant effects of Talent Management Practices and Emotional Intelligence on Malaysian GLCs
3	Are there any significant effects of Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Skills on Malaysian GLCs?	To examine the significant effects of Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Skills on Malaysian GLCs
4	Are there any mediating effects of Emotional Intelligence within the relationship between Talent Management Practices and Leadership Skills on Malaysian GLCs?	To examine the mediating effects of Emotional Intelligence within the relationship between Talent Management Practices and Leadership Skills in Malaysian GLCs
5	What is the level of Talent Management Practices in Malaysian GLCs?	To measure the level of Talent Management Practices in Malaysian GLCs

2. Literature Review

In this section, the study variables and envisaged relation among them were discussed. In this regard, the underpinning theory and relations between talent management practices and leadership skills, talent management practices and emotional intelligence, and emotional intelligence and leadership skills were discussed. Then, the mediating role of emotional intelligence between talent management practices and leadership skills was explained.

2.1. Underpinning Theory: Talent-Based Theory and Social Cognitive Theory

The talent-based theory is considered a useful explanatory tool for investigating talent management practices and leadership skills in Malaysian GLCs. Mechanisms are established to facilitate effective talent sorting within the study. To develop leadership skills at the executive level, Malaysian GLCs must support the processes of attracting, recruiting, engaging, developing, and rewarding identified individuals who possess the needed talents and job skills to achieve the organizational goals and objectives [55]. Meanwhile, the social cognitive theory can be considered suitable because this study focuses on the influence of emotional intelligence that will help employees to develop their leadership skills. For example, employees with high emotional intelligence can increase their self-efficacy, and thus, will be able to develop excellent leadership skills. This theory will shape employees' self-efficacy about their abilities to perform those behaviors. Employees who have high self-efficacy tend to learn and perform new behaviors more easily than employees with low self-efficacy [56].

2.2. Proposed Research Framework

The structure presented in this study is an altered and combined version of previous studies on talent management practices, leadership skills, and emotional intelligence subjects. The proposed research framework consisted of three key constructs that described the objectivity of analysis in order to analyze the role of emotional intelligence in the relation between talent management practices and leadership skills (Figure 2). The independent variable is talent management practices, the mediating variable is emotional intelligence, and the dependent variable is leadership skills.
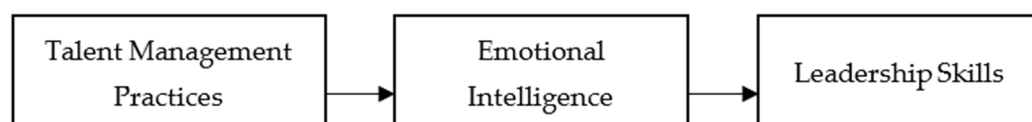

Figure 2. Proposed Research Framework.

2.3. Talent Management Practices and Leadership Skills

Based on [57], talent management is defined as the process of leadership succession in an organization or the process by which the organization ensures the development of leadership and crucial skills in the future through establishment of the leadership pipeline. Talent management can also be defined as activities and processes which involve the systematic attraction, identification, development, engagement, retention, and deployment of talents who are valuable within an organization [58]. Organizations are globally striving to identify and develop outstanding leaders who will be able to face new challenges, embrace change, deal with crises, solve real-life problems, impacting not only on their organizations, but also on society [59]. It is important to understand which leadership skills are necessary to be competitive among other organizations. The acquisition and improvement of leadership skills are influenced by individual differences in cognitive capacities, personalities, and abilities to control emotions, identities, and values resulting from both cultural context and personal experience [60]. Previous conceptualizations of leadership skill requirements [61–63] suggest that they can be understood in terms of four general categories: (1) Cognitive skills, (2) Interpersonal skills, (3) Business skills, and (4) Strategic skills. Furthermore, the authors of [64] stated that there was a significant relation between employee recruitment

and leadership development because selecting the best employee will determine the success of leadership development. Research by [65] stated that succession planning is the process of identifying critical areas and positions within a business, and it may also be an effective instrument for future leadership development. Another study conducted by [66] confirmed that succession planning has a substantial impact on shaping future leaders in Malaysia's Public Sector. Understanding any organizational support measure will guide leadership development in the organization. In addition, a work environment that encourages career development can directly impact the motivation, knowledge, leadership skills, and cognitive thinking of employees, improving their performance in tasks that involve innovation and creative problem-solving [67]. Therefore, this study hypothesizes that:

H1: *Talent Management Practices has a positive impact on leadership skills.*

2.4. Talent Management Practices and Emotional Intelligence

Interrelationships have attracted much attention, whereby emotional intelligence plays a critical role in aligning employees with their can-do-attitude. Furthermore, they will be engaged and perform highly effectively to achieve the organizational strategic goals set out by their leaders. Employees will feel valued, trusted, respected, and appreciated if they are properly emotionally treated. Darwin's contributions gave more insights into emotional intelligence. Anecdotal studies had proved that leaders are more intelligent than others in the organization since they are a critical factor in success [68]. In addition, Goleman built his contributions based on Mayor's and Salovey's theory of emotional intelligence, whereby emotional intelligence is one's ability to utilize his skills to catch up with their state of consciousness, improve self-management, and understand their own and others' feelings (empathy) by running strong relations [69].

A study by [70] has stated that there was correlation between effective talent attraction and emotional intelligence, whereby if the organization chose the right employees, emotional intelligence will be good. Talent attraction needs employees with high levels of emotional intelligence to manage relations and mitigate organizational conflicts [71]. Furthermore, a study conducted by [72] agreed that there was a relation between training and emotional intelligence as the result showed that training focused on developing master students' emotional intelligence was useful in determining the formation of contingency management skills which the initial training failed to cover completely. Meanwhile, another study revealed that before the COVID-19 outbreak, they had conducted a longitudinal study on the effectiveness of a web-based emotional intelligence training program and found that the program would increase emotional intelligence scores [73,74]. However, the literature review showed that previous research paid little attention to talent management practices that were geared toward emotional intelligence, especially in Malaysian GLCs. Therefore, this study hypothesizes that:

H2: *Talent Management Practices has a positive impact on emotional intelligence.*

2.5. Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Skills

Emotional intelligence is one of the critical skills needed for Industry 4.0 [75]. Emotional intelligence is the ability to handle and regulate oneself; empathize; and sense others' feelings, emotions, and attitudes [76]. Emotional intelligence can persuade others and resolve conflicts, making human relations more flexible and improving job performance [77]. Since it can affect positive outcomes, the authors of [78] suggested emotional intelligence as a strategy for enhancing governance integrity and curbing corruption. The authors of [79] suggested that organizations may invest more in improving emotional intelligence among workers and supervisors to foster an organizational atmosphere that will help practitioners face future development efforts and leadership selection challenges. Leaders with emotional intelligence skills must build and maintain organizational effectiveness by

using competencies, such as awareness, motivation, and self-regulation. Studies [77–80] showed that emotional intelligence also requires a service orientation to work and personally connect with others rather than being alone. Moreover, the authors of [81] emphasized the significance of emotional intelligence among working team leaders because emotional intelligence helped to change people's conduct from conflict and disagreement during task execution to a competitive atmosphere. Furthermore, with the current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, emotional intelligence is needed for employees to establish relations among themselves by showing compassion as a core value [82]. Furthermore, the requirement for public servants to be emotionally resilient to new difficulties will grow in the future as government activities transcend boundaries and silos [83]. Therefore, this study hypothesizes that:

H3: *Emotional Intelligence has a positive impact on leadership skills.*

2.6. Mediating Effect of Emotional Intelligence

The role of emotional intelligence as a mediating variable between talent management practices and leadership skills can be examined. Previous literature also found that emotional intelligence is a mediating variable in different contexts, for example, in human resource practices and customer satisfaction [84], sustainable leadership behaviors and diversity management skills [43], and transformational leadership and employee engagement [85]. The mediating role of emotional intelligence was also examined in the talent management context, as one of the recent studies carried out by [29] showed that emotional intelligence mediated the relations between talent management strategy and organizational performance. Moreover, in past studies within the talent management context, the direct relation between talent retention and leadership [28] and emotional intelligence and leadership [37] were examined. However, the indirect relationship of emotional intelligence between talent management practices and leadership skills is yet to be examined. In line with the above explorations of scholars from different contexts and contents, there was scant attention given to the mediatory role of emotional intelligence in the relation between talent management practices and leadership skills. Therefore, this study hypothesizes that:

H4: *Emotional Intelligence mediates the relationship between talent management practices and leadership skills.*

3. Methodology

This study was a quantitative study and data were collected by using a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of a five-point Likert rating scale, ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree". Convenience sampling will be used as a sampling technique. For this study, the unit of analysis is the individual, who is at the executive level and working in Malaysian GLCs, specifically in G-20. In order to develop the instrument, all data collected will be subjected to analysis by using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).

3.1. Philosophy of Research

The epistemological stance wass directed toward positivism because this study was intended to examine the relation between talent management practices and leadership skills through emotional intelligence, which it is believed can be examined objectively through the use of an established theoretical framework. Positivism holds that the scientific method is the only way to establish truth and objectivity in reality [86]. Therefore, the context of this research wass set in positivist epistemology. By using a deductive approach, the study began with talent-based theory and social cognitive theory to explain how leadership skills were influenced by talent management practices among executive level in Malaysian GLCs.

3.2. Research Design

The quantitative research method was adopted in this study because the variables were clearly described and numerical data were present [87]. Next, the deductive approach was chosen for this study. The most common way to link theory and research is through the deductive approach [88]. This study was also suitable to be categorized as a cross-sectional study because the collected data were taken at one point in time with the usage of more than two variables, which will be tested for any sort of association. Lastly, the unit of analysis was the individual, involving employees from junior executives to senior management level working in Malaysian GLCs, specifically in G-20.

3.3. Population

The study population was the total number of executive employees in G-20. According to the Malaysian G-20 company annual reports for 2020, G-20 employed 76,699 executive employees. In fact, the Malaysian Government is very concerned about strengthening the leadership in GLCs to achieve high performance as the government aspires GLCs to have several regional offices and become future global champions [89]. Currently, 17 GLCs exist under the G-20 due to various demergers, mergers, divestment, and other corporate restructuring exercises, as shown in Table 3 [90]. These G-20 companies were chosen as they were more visible, represented different industries, and demonstrated outstanding business and financial performances [91].

Table 3. Population of G-20.

List of G-20	Sectors	Population
Affin Holdings Berhad	Financial	4320
Axiata Group Berhad	Service	2444
BIMB Holdings Berhad	Financial	2600
Boustead Holdings Berhad	Service	3296
CIMB Group Holdings Berhad	Financial	13,873
Chemical Company of Malaysia Berhad	Service	177
Malaysia Airlines Berhad	Service	4730
Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad	Service	1478
Malayan Banking Berhad	Financial	19,037
Malaysia Building Society Berhad	Financial	1781
Malaysian Resources Corporation Berhad	Service	997
Sime Darby Berhad	Plantation	1189
Telekom Malaysia Berhad	Service	10,334
Tenaga Nasional Berhad	Service	6539
TH Plantations Berhad	Plantation	770
UEM Group Berhad	Service	829
UMW Holdings Berhad	Service	2305

3.4. Sampling

Generally, samples were grouped into two categories, namely probability and non-probability. Those grouped under probability sampling techniques were simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling, cluster sampling, multi-stage sampling while those grouped under non-probability sampling techniques were convenience sampling, judgmental sampling, quota sampling, and snowball sampling [92]. This study chose to use convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is the most popular sampling method used in behavioral science research [93]. In the convenience sampling method, respondents

were chosen based on their availability and willingness to respond [94]. The convenience sampling method also offers various advantages over other sampling methods. Among the advantages, it enables the researcher to collect responses within a short time, less expensive, and makes it easy to gain respondents [95].

3.5. Sample Size

The current method of determining sample size uses power analysis. This study utilized the G*Power statistical tool to perform a prior power analysis during the planning process based on several parameters, including a power level (1–β error probability) of 0.8, a significant alpha level (α–error probability) of 0.05, and medium effect size f^2 of 0.15, as suggested by [96]. The number of predictors was based on the maximum number of arrows pointing toward the endogenous construct in this study, namely 9. Based on the results of the G*Power analysis, the minimum sample size for this study was 166.

3.6. Measurement Development of Study Variable

The survey measurement development entails a systematic process that involves the development of measurement items and survey questionnaire design, followed by survey instrument validation, evaluation, and refinement [97]. Among the three main variables in this study was talent management practices as the independent variable. Second, leadership skill was the dependent variable, while emotional intelligence was the mediating variable. The existing scales in literature were utilized to construct the variables. A Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 will be adopted with the following responses: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree) (Table 4).

Table 4. Summary of Measurement Items.

Variables	Source of Scale	Number of Items
Talent Management Practices	[98]	30
Emotional Intelligence	[99]	26
Leadership Skills	[100]	21

3.7. Expert Opinion Analysis (EOA)

In this study, an initial set of items was compiled from previous literature and reviewed by experts to establish the content validity of scale. The content validity of the study instrument was assessed by six experts. Three of them were educators with a doctorate degree and the other three were practitioners in Malaysian GLCs. Basically, the experts were asked to evaluate each question based on two criteria, which were the clarity of items used as well as answer format and scoring procedure and the correspondence of items within the theoretical construct definition. Structural changes were made after getting feedback from the experts, including paraphrasing, and combining several questions to reduce redundancy (Table 5).

Table 5. List of Experts for Expert Opinion Analysis.

Name	Position	Organization
A	Senior Manager (Business Development)	Tenaga Nasional Berhad
B	Manager (Change Management)	Malaysia Airports Holding Berhad
C	Head (Strategic Leadership)	TNB Leadership Development Centre
D	Professor (Management)	Universiti Tenaga Nasional
E	Senior Lecturer (Talent Management)	Taylor's University
F	Senior Lecturer (Emotional Intelligence)	Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

4. Results

In this pilot study, several GLCs were used for a pilot test to measure the reliability and consistency of responses, such as Petroliam Nasional Berhad (PETRONAS), PLUS Malaysia Berhad, and POS Malaysia Berhad located in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur. Questionnaires were distributed online by using a Google form and 39 executives and employees participated in this pilot study. The findings of the internal consistency reliability analysis on the constructs utilized as the framework in the pilot study are presented in Table 6. The result demonstrated that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient values were acceptable, as they were all greater than 0.6, indicating that the questionnaire was reliable. The results of the pilot study showed that all scales were above the cut-off value, ranging from 0.824 to 0.959.

Table 6. Reliability Analysis.

Variables	Number of Items	Reliability
Talent Management Practices		
Talent Attraction	6	0.837
Talent Retention	7	0.853
Learning & Development	8	0.837
Career Management	9	0.904
Emotional Intelligence		
Self-Awareness	7	0.825
Self-Management	5	0.824
Social Awareness	6	0.834
Relationship Management	5	0.914
Leadership Skills		
Cognitive Skills	6	0.959
Business Skills	4	0.896
Interpersonal Skills	5	0.890
Strategic Skills	7	0.948

5. Conclusions and Limitations

Research on talent management in terms of the Malaysian context is still at its infancy stage, and thus not well-addressed and studied. This conceptual paper contributes to the talent management literature by bringing a significant mechanism from the field of leadership. This study indicates that good talent management practice implementation is not adequate for developing and producing talented leadership skills in the Malaysian GLCs; the partial mediating models hypothesized were supported by the talent-based theory and social cognitive theory, which signified that talent management practices with emotional intelligence will develop leadership skills.

The study findings will contribute significantly to benefit human resource practitioners, consultants and policymakers by enhancing their knowledge about talent management to influence leadership skills. This study will potentially provide an alternative tool for legislators and policymakers to develop leadership skills in Malaysian GLCs. Next, the study findings can also be a guideline for human resource practitioners in Malaysian GLCs to evaluate the implementation effectiveness of talent management practices through emotional intelligence in the organization. This study was also committed to play a role in the fulfillment of and contributed to the Twelfth Malaysia Plan and Sustainable Development Goals, especially to urge people to obtain a quality education and encourage life-long learning to improve their lives and achieve sustainable development. Therefore, through the analysis this study will help organizations to gain a better understanding of talent management practices and reduce the talent shortage issues of Malaysian GLCs. The process of improving human resource policy and developing new policy can be carried out with the derived empirical evidence from this study.

There are several limitations to this study. Firstly, this was a conceptual paper, and thus, there are no empirical results for this study yet. Secondly, the literature on talent

management and leadership in Malaysian GLCs is rather limited. Thirdly, the study may not cover all factors associated with talent management practices and leadership skills. Next, this study targeted only executive levels in Malaysian GLCs and was restricted to only those in the G20 group; hence, limiting the generalizability of findings in terms of covering all GLCs in Malaysia. Future studies are welcome to empirically test this conceptual framework and expand the current framework by integrating additional mediating or moderating variables into the analysis. In addition, the scope can be further expanded to include non-GLC and private companies in order to gain a broader perspective on talent management practices and leadership.

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