FUW-IJMSS
ISSN: 2635-3539 (Print)
2384-6224 (online)
Open Access
Google Scholar

EFFECT OF TALENT MANAGEMENT ON HEALTH PROFESSIONALS' RETENTION IN KANO STATE

Tsintop Ussaini Danjuma[1], Prof. Murtala Sabo Sagagi[2] & Dr Aliyu Mukhtar Daneji[3]
[1]Department of Business Administration
Federal University Wukari
tsintop8gmail.com
[2]Business Administration and Entrepreneurship
Bayero University, Kano
[3]Business Administration and Entrepreneurship
Bayero University, Kano
amdaneji.bus@.buk.edu.ng

Abstract

This study investigates the effect of talent management on health professionals' retention in Kano state tertiary health centres with the specific aim of investigating the effect of employers' branding and health professional retention, employee involvement in decision making and health professional retention, talent development and health professionals' retention lastly, employees' compensation and health professionals' retention. A survey research design was employed with a total population of 2915 and a sample size of 443. Data were collected through the use of questionnaires. Validity and reliability were carried out to determine the fitness of the instrument. Multiple regression analysis was used. Findings show a positive effect of employer branding, employees' involvement in decisions and employees' compensation on health professionals' retention in Kano State. There is a negative effect of talent development on health professional retention. The study recommends that both the federal Ministry of Health and the Kano State Ministry of Health should make and implement policies that encourage employer branding thereby enhancing health professional retention.

Keywords: *Talent Management, Health Professional's Retention, Employer Branding, Employee Involvement in Decision Making, Talent Development and Compensation.*

Introduction

The workforce is the most invaluable asset in a business and they are the cornerstone and driving force behind the survival of every firm (Thunnissen & Buttiens, 2017; Sveiby, 1997; Younas & Muhammad, 2020). Therefore, the management of high-quality personnel in enterprises is of utmost importance since the retention of employees forms the basis for competitiveness and long-term viability (Oguegbulam, Onuoha, & Nwede, 2017;

Poorhosseinzadeh & Subramaniam, 2012; Nwoke & Iyiola, 2021). An organization facing challenges in staff retention will find it much more difficult to engage in effective competition (Njuguna, 2014; Nwoke & Iyiola, 2021). Nevertheless, the issue of employee retention is becoming the foremost and crucial problem in effectively managing the workforce in the near future (Rono & Kiptum, 2017). Consequently, talent management is becoming a crucial strategic instrument for retaining employees (Nwoke & Iyiola, 2021).

Effective talent management is a crucial component of strategic human resource management that has a central and influential position in workforce management. Talent management has undergone continuous evolution in the last ten years to adapt to the diverse requirements of employees due to globalization and technological advancements. The strategic tool of talent management places significant emphasis on the management of employees to guarantee productivity, organizational growth, competitive advantage, and the retention of competent employees. This is because the success of an organization is mostly determined by the quality of its employees (Bolisani & Bratianu, 2017, Absalom & Alexander, 2021, Nwoke & Iyiola, 2021). Therefore, the implementation of talent management strategies becomes essential in order to address the barriers related to employee retention. The main objective of talent management is to effectively oversee the strategic human capital resources of a business that are considered to be distinct, invaluable, and difficult to substitute. Continual talent management is the ongoing process of cultivating skills, attracting and retaining skilled employees, and consistently motivating them to improve their performance. The main objective of talent management is to cultivate a highly motivated and committed workforce that enables organizations to fully harness the capabilities of their employees.

Talent management is a holistic corporate strategy that aims to find, attract, support, cultivate, motivate, and retain high-performing individuals for long and sustained durations. Devoting resources to employees or candidates with the highest potential enables the company to anticipate and sustain its long-term performance (Ivanna, 2020). Research conducted by Abimbola et al. (2021), Pragalata & Wibawa (2019), Ebrahim et al. (2022), and Nwokocha & Iheriohanma (2012) has highlighted talent management strategies, including employer branding, talent development, employee compensation, and employee participation in decision-making, as essential for reducing low employee retention, particularly in the health sector.

The concept of employer branding, which aims to both engage existing employees and recruit new ones, has garnered significant attention and is increasingly recognized as a vital element of corporate success (Gilani & Cunningham, 2017). Research suggests that companies that actively participate in employer branding have increased interest from potential applicants and higher levels of commitment and loyalty from existing employees (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). In addition, Han et al. (2010) asserted that including employees in the decision-making process not only empowers them to effect positive change in a company's success but also results in cost and time savings for the business by increasing employee retention and enhancing productivity. Moreover, the involvement of employees in decision-making processes reliably boosts their level of innovation (Abas et al., 2023). Koteswari et al. (2020) argue that training is essential for employees to obtain the requisite skills and knowledge to perform their job obligations, thereby influencing employee retention. Therefore, the development of human capital is essential as it enhances the confidence and morale of employees to fully engage in self-actualization. In addition,

contemporary firms consider the retention of skilled personnel as a crucial managerial approach that can generate favorable outcomes in terms of performance, productivity, and profitability (Samuel & Chipunza 2022). The phenomenon of globalization, along with the rapid progress in technology, has facilitated the migration of health professionals through international recruitment firms in pursuit of improved prospects worldwide. Given this, the task of retaining healthcare professionals in underdeveloped countries such as Nigeria is becoming more difficult (Kerr, Kerr, Özden, & Parsons, 2016, Konstantinos et al., 2021). Medical health professionals in this study encompass doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and medical laboratory scientists.

Across 57 countries worldwide, there is a deficit of 2.3 million health professionals, leading to insufficient and below-average health care provision in both industrialized and developing nations (Dalayga et al., 2021). According to the model proposed by Lopes et al. (2017), there is expected to be a deficit of 18 million healthcare professionals globally by the year 2030. Over time, a considerable proportion of African medical experts, particularly those from Nigeria, have relocated to industrialized countries. At present, the proportion of doctors and nurses who have gotten their training in Africa and are employed in industrialized countries is at 25% and 20%, respectively. Consequently, there is a deficit of more than 1.5 million health professionals in Africa (World Health Organization, 2016).

Nigeria is confronted with a significant deficit of healthcare practitioners, namely doctors and nurses, with a mere 1 doctor per 10,000 individuals, well below the stipulated minimum of 23 doctors per 10,000 individuals as recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020, daily trust 2023). Conversely, the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN) claims that in 2021, 7,000 nurses, out of the total of 15000 nurses trained in Africa, are employed in foreign countries.

Kano State, with a population of over 20 million, holds the distinction of being the most populous state in Nigeria. Nevertheless, the state contends with a dearth of healthcare practitioners, as indicated by a doctor-to-patient ratio of less than 1:16529 and a nurse-to-patient ratio of 1:60 (WHO 2020, daily trust 2023). Effectively addressing the problem of employee retention in the healthcare sector is a challenging task. According to Marieke et al. (2015), it may be necessary to implement higher employee compensation, enhance company branding, improve information systems, optimize talent development, include employees in decision-making, and invest in research and development for equipment and infrastructure. The purpose of this article is to evaluate the impact of talent management practices, including employee compensation, employer branding, talent development, and employee participation in decision-making, on the retention of health professionals in Kano State. The objective of this study is to examine the optimal mix of talent management strategies that can decrease employee turnovers and improve the retention of health professionals.

An enduring obstacle confronting Nigeria's healthcare system since gaining independence in 1960 has been the scarcity of medical professionals, which adversely affects all aspects of social progress (Salau et al., 2018; Dayel et al., 2020). According to the Medical Council of Nigeria (MDCN) 2022 and the Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (2022), there are 74,543 doctors and 125,000 registered nurses and midwives (Ezigbo, 2020). Nevertheless, a mere 50% of these physicians engage in professional practice within the nation (Muanya, 2020). Nigeria would require around 300,000 physicians and 800,000 nurses to

achieve the World Health Organization's optimal doctor-to-patient ratio of 1:600 and nurse-to-patient ratio of 1:20 (Muanya, 2020). Between 2009 and 2016, Nigeria has had a consistent annual loss of 700 doctors to industrialized nations worldwide (Okafor, 2016). Nevertheless, the inadequate number of healthcare professionals is a contributing factor to Nigeria's underperformance in the healthcare industry (Abimbola et al., 2012, 2015). Therefore, the negative consequences of inadequate healthcare professionals, such as medical tourism, which incurs an annual cost of over 1.6 billion dollars for Nigeria and contributes to significant capital flight, including a considerable impact on foreign reserves, will be reduced (daily, May 10, 2022). While both the current and past government administrations have taken deliberate efforts to reduce the problem of low health professionals' retention by increasing the annual financial commitment to the health sector, it still falls below the WHO recommended benchmark of 15%. Similarly, the number of doctors in Kano State is 1210 (daily trust 2023), which is equivalent to a ratio of 1:16529. Signifying a dearth of adequate healthcare practitioners in Kano State, which is harmful to social progress.

Objective

The main objective of this study is to investigate the effects of talent management practices on employee's retention in kano state health sector. The specific objectives of this research are as followed

i. To ascertain the extent to which employers branding influence health professional's retention in kano state.
ii. To ascertain the extent to which employee's involvement in decision making influence health professional's retention in kano state.
iii. To ascertain the extent to which talent development influence health professional's retention in kano state.
iv. To ascertain the extent to which compensation influence health professional's retention in kano state.

Research Question

The following research questions are formulated based on the objectives of the study:

i. To what extent does employer branding influence health professional's retention in Kano State?
ii. To what extent does employee's involvement in decision-making influence health professional's retention in Kano State?
iii. To what extent does talent development influence health professional's retention in Kano State?
iv. To what extent does compensation influence health professional's retention in Kano State?

Research Hypothesis

The following hypotheses are stated in its null form:

i. There is no significant effect of employer branding and health professional's retention in Kano State.
ii. There is no significant effect of employee's involvement in decision-making and health professional's retention in Kano State.
iii. There is no significant effect of talent development and health professional's retention in Kano State.
iv. There is no significant effect of compensation and health professional's retention in Kano State.

Review of Literature:

Talent Management

Talent management refers to the whole set of human resource processes involved in attracting, choosing, integrating, nurturing, and retaining highly qualified employees. Continual talent management is the ongoing process of cultivating skills, attracting and retaining skilled employees, and consistently motivating them to improve their performance. The main objective of talent management is to cultivate a workforce that is both ambitious and capable of achieving long-term success, therefore enabling organizations to fully harness the potential of their employees (Erik, 2021).

In order to address the issues of high employee turnover and migration in the 21st century, it has become imperative to implement talent management concepts such as employer branding, employee participation in decision-making, talent development, and compensation. These strategies serve as strategic tools to mitigate the problems associated with poor retention and high migration.

The notion of employer branding was introduced by Ambler and Barrow in 1996. According to researchers, it is the implementation of branding principles in human resource management to attract prospective employees and retain existing talent inside the firm. Moreover, Ambler and Barrow (1996) clarify that employer branding refers to the set of advantages offered by an employer during employment or as the set of practical economic and psychological benefits associated with employment and linked to the employing business. The notion gained widespread awareness in the 1990s as experts from many fields made contributions to its development. Sullivan (2017) classifies employer branding as a strategic approach aimed at effectively managing the awareness and opinions of employees, prospective employees, and other stakeholders about a certain company in the long run. Employer branding, as defined by Sivertzen et al. (2013), refers to the process of enhancing an organization's image and reputation as a potential employer, which in turn impacts its capacity to retain people. The concept of employer brand refers to the set of values and practices of a business that aim to attract, motivate, and retain its existing and prospective employees (Ahmed & Daud, 2016; Kashive & Khanna, 2017). Employer branding, as defined by Barik and Jain (2023), refers to the positive perception of a firm among employees and prospective recruits. Business enterprises in the 21st century are striving to establish a favorable and sustainable employer brand to effectively retain their personnel. Effective implementation of this strategy in the healthcare industry would improve the ability to retain healthcare personnel. Further understanding of the relationship between employer branding and employee retention is supported by the favorable findings of researchers such as Gupta et al. (2018), Ooko & Nzulwa (2017), and Khoshnevis & Gholipour (2017). Hence, our study supports the aforementioned findings as employer branding has a crucial role in retaining employees, particularly in the health sector.

Active participation of employees in decision-making processes is an essential strategic instrument for motivating and retaining skilled personnel in the current context. Employee engagement pertains to the organizational frameworks and procedures that enable employees to methodically contribute their perspectives to choices that impact their own job activities (Powell, 2011). Active participation of employees is essential for them to comprehend the necessity of creativity and to truly commit to modifying their behavior in the workplace in novel and enhanced ways (Daniel, 2019). A modern, progressive

organization does not withhold important insights from its staff regarding critical issues that impact them. Trust is placed in them and they are included in decision-making at all levels. The "command and control" paradigm is no longer deemed acceptable. A more transparent and coordinated structure will strategically utilize the skills and abilities of all staff members (Christensen & Hewitt-Taylor, 2015). Engaging employees in the decision-making process not only enables them to actively participate to the achievements of an organization but also results in time and cost savings for the company by enhancing productivity and minimizing the need for outsourcing. To this purpose, scholars have argued their perspective on the idea based on their findings (Anderson 2001). The authors Gogo and Okemini (2022) contend that the participation of employees in decision-making processes is crucial for the retention of health professionals. According to Tubey and Kwonyike (2019), health professionals who perceive a significant level of participation in hospital decision-making processes, namely through the formation of teams focused on enhancing the quality of healthcare service delivery, are more inclined to remain employed in the hospital compared to those who perceive this role as minimal. Ismail and Warrak (2020) believe that the participation of employees in decision-making processes is a beneficial and constructive strategy for keeping highly skilled personnel.

One of the fundamental advantages that motivates an employee to engage in any kind of contract or employment arrangement is compensation. Accordingly, the majority of employees join the company primarily for financial reasons and anticipate receiving salary and benefits. If they are not provided with remuneration that is commensurate with their performance, they will become unsatisfied (Kossivi et al., 2016). The role of compensation has become one of great significance in mitigating turnover and enhancing employee retention. The provision of compensation serves as a driving force for the employees to assume responsibility for the assigned duties, therefore fostering a sustained affiliation with the firm (Moncarz et al., 2009). Previous studies conducted by Chiekezie et al. (2017), Hanai and Pallangyo (2020), and Eke et al. (2021) have provided substantial empirical data supporting the hypothesis of a positive relationship.

Research has shown that the skills possessed by employees are the primary factor contributing to competitive advantages for organisations. There exist several retention tactics, such as remuneration, training, and promotion. Training and development are essential components of talent retention, since the growth and development of employees provide more assurance and motivation to stay with the company. Equally important is the training and development of medical workers, as they play a leading role in fostering economic growth and development. An attractive advantage for an employee is the opportunity to acquire new skills and progress in their occupational career. Implementing employee learning and development initiatives yields advantages for both the employee and the organization, as it enhances their ability to effectively address any work-related challenges that may emerge (Younas, & Waseem 2020). According to Koteswari et al. (2020), employees need training in order to acquire the necessary skills and information applicable to their job requirements. Consequently, training has an impact on employee retention. This claim is relevant to healthcare workers, particularly in cases when inadequate training and development methods have led to the loss of skilled personnel, increased migration rates, and high employee turnover in the healthcare industry. Undoubtedly, employees exhibit a strong level of dedication towards their profession when provided with the essential

training to execute tasks with efficiency and effectiveness. Moreover, the training and development of staff members enhance their job satisfaction and also foster greater dedication to the organization (Hanaysha & Tahir, 2016; Swanson et al., 2020). From a similar perspective, Jaseel (2019) concluded that providing training to employees has a direct impact on their salaries and job satisfaction, thereby improving employee retention and ultimately boosting the performance and profitability of the organization. Consequently, the employee will contribute to the company's competitive edge. Furthermore, the research conducted by Mzava and Ngirwa (2023) and Elsafty and Oraby (2022) confirms a direct correlation between the enhancement of talent and the ability to retain health professionals.

The exchange approach perspectives on organizations suggest that individuals align themselves with their organizations in exchange for certain benefits supplied by the organizations. Under this perspective, employees join the organization equipped with certain abilities, aspirations, and objectives, and anticipate an environment that allows them to apply their skills, fulfill their aspirations, and accomplish their goals. Anticipated is that the employees' impression of advantageous exchanges or rewards will lead to higher staff retention inside the firm. Conversely, if the firm fails to offer adequate incentives in return for the efforts of its employees, it is probable that there will be a significant rate of staff turnover or migration in search of perceived superior prospects.

The social-exchange hypothesis posits that employees react to perceived advantageous working conditions by engaging in behaviors that are advantageous to the organization and/or other employees. Similarly, employees respond to unsatisfactory circumstances by adopting bad work behaviors such as being absent, arriving late, and ending their employment with the company (Haar, 2006; Crede et al., 2007). The exchange theory has also been applied to elucidate the attitude of employees towards their participation in organizational decision-making and their level of commitment to the organization. The theory provides a conceptual framework to elucidate the reasons over which employees opt to increase or decrease their level of involvement in their work.

Methodology

The effect of talent management on health professionals' retention in Kano State, tertiary health centers, was investigated using survey design approach. The study's target population included all of the medical health professionals working in Kano State's tertiary hospitals. There are two thousand nine hundred and fifteen (2915) health professionals; they include National Orthopedic Hospital Dala 420 health professionals and Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital 1508 health professionals. Muhammad Abdullahi Wase Teaching 332 health professionals and Murtala Muhammed Specialist Hospital 655 health professionals Convenience and stratified sampling strategies were used in this investigation. The Krejcie and Morgan sampling table was used to establish the sample size in a scientific manner. The study's sample size is 443, which indicates that 443 copies of the questionnaire were distributed proportionately to medical laboratory scientists, doctors, nurses, and pharmacists working in tertiary health centers in Kano State, Nigeria. The primary data-gathering approach for this study was structured questionnaire use to extract data. To check the face and content validity of the instruments that were used for this study, the questionnaires were reviewed by two academics. The reliability of the items under each variable was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The overall reliability for the 27 items

was 0.928. The researcher and his assistants distributed 443 copies of the questionnaires to medical professionals, including physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and medical laboratory scientists working in tertiary health centers in Kano State, Nigeria. Multiple regression was used to predict the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables. The hypotheses were tested using regression analysis and the f-test at the 0.05 level of significance.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1; Model summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error	F Change	Sig.	Durbin-Watson
.657[a]	.432	.426	2.22997	75.356	.000	1.735

a. Predictors: (Constant), EC, EB, TD, EIDM. .b. Dependent Variable: ER

Source; Field Survey (2023)

The above table 1 shows the model summary which indicates that the four (4) independent variables (Employer branding, Employees involvement in decision making, talent development and Employees compensation) of the study explains 43% (R^2=0.43%) in the dependent variable (health professionals' retention). This implies that 43% change in health professionals' retention in Kano State Nigeria can be determined by the independent variables while the rest 56.8% is determined by other factors not included in this research. Norusis (1999) posited that the Durbn-Watson can be used in order to test the independence of the error terms and recommends that the general rule of thumb is between 1.50 and 2.50 which if achieved the assumption is not violated. Hence the Durbn-Watson for this study is 1.735 indicating that the rule was not violated

Table 2; ANOVA Table

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	166.145	4	41.535	75.356	.000[b]
Residual	218.277	396	.551		
Total	384.422	400			

a. Dependent Variable: ER, b. Predictors: (Constant), EC, EB, TD, EIDM

Source; Field Survey (2023)

The essence of the ANOVA is to determine the fitness of the model. Thus, the above table 2 shows the F value of =135.665, P<0.000 signifying the overall fitness of the model at p=0.000 indicating that the model is fit at 99.9%.

Table 3; Coefficients Table

Hypotheses	Variables	B	Std. Error	βeta	T-value	p-value	Decision
H_{01}	Employers branding	.298	.052	.280	5.742	.000	Rejected
H_{02}	Employees involvement in decision making	.211	.056	.198	3.791	.000	Rejected
H_{03}	Talent development	.046	.047	.045	-.982	.327	Accept
H_{04}	Employees compensation	.463	.056	.371	8.234	.000	Rejected
F Value	75.356						
F Sig	.000						
R^2	.432						
Adjusted R^2	.426						
Durbin-Watson	1.735						

Source; Field Survey (2023)

Regression analysis was used to determine the relative contribution of each dimension of talent management to change in health professional retention in Kano State. the unique contribution of each independent variable to change in the dependent variable is obtained under the beta standardized coefficients.

The above table shows the beta coefficient value for employer branding is 0.280, with t value of 5.742 with a significant value of .000 which is lower than 0.05. The beta value indicates that employer branding has the highest positive contribution to explaining the dependent variable (health professionals' retention). Hence, employer branding has a significant and positive effect on health professionals' retention in Kano state Nigeria. Similarly, the beta coefficient value for employee involvement in decision-making is 0.198 with a t value of 3.791 and a significant value of .000 which is lower than 0.05 implying that employee involvement in decision-making has a positive and significant effect on health professionals' retention in Kano state Nigeria. Similarly, the beta coefficient value for employee compensation is 0.371 with the t value of 8.234 and a significant value of 0.000 which is lower than 0.05 implying that employee compensation has a positive and significant influence on health professionals' retention in Kano State Nigeria. Hence, the beta coefficient value for talent development is -0.045, with the t value of -.982 and a significant value of 0.327 which is higher than 0.05. Therefore, is a negative and not significant effect of talent development on health professionals' retention in Kano State Nigeria.

Based on the results of the multiple regression coefficient as indicated in the above Table 3, shows that employer branding has a positive and significant effect on health professionals' retention in Kano State Nigeria with a standardize coefficient beta value = 0.280, t value 5.742, P value 0.000 which is lower than 0.05. 95% confidence level.

The results of the multiple regression coefficient show that employee's involvement

in decision making have a positive and significant effect on health professionals' retention in Kano State Nigeria. The standardized coefficient beta value is 0.198 with the t value of 3.791 and significant value of .000 which is lower than 0.05.

Based on the results of the multiple regression coefficient as indicated in the above table, shows that talent development has no significant with health professionals' retention in Kano State, Nigeria with a standardized coefficient beta value =0.045, with the t value of -0.982 and a significant value of 0.327 which is higher than 0.05 at 67.3% confidence level and lower than the t value cutoff point of 1.96.

From the results of the multiple regression coefficient as shows that employees' compensation has a positive and significant effect on health professionals' retention in Kano state Nigeria. With standardized coefficient beta value .371 with the t value of 8.234 and a significant value of 0.000 which is lower than 0.05. at 95% confidence level.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research examined the effect of talent management on health professional retention in Kano State Nigeria. The study was carried out with aim of proffering lasting solution to the lingering problem of health professionals' migration that has affect the health sector in Kano State and Nigeria at large. In order to achieved this particular objective, a quantitative research approach was adopted with the aid of survey research design to obtain valuable and requisite information from health professions across tertiary health centers of Kano State. Based on the findings from this study talent management component such as employer branding, employee's involvement in decision making, and employees' compensation are the major factors that influence health professionals in Kano State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with the findings of this study and the conclusions, the following recommendations are drawn.

1. Based on the objectives and findings of this study, the study recommend that both federal ministry of health and Kano state ministry of health should make and implement policies that encourage employer branding thereby enhancing health professionals retention.
2. The study recommends that employees should be involved in work-related decision to give them sense of belonging and responsibility therefore, influencing their retention decision.
3. Although talent development is important the major emphasis should not be on talent development rather the focus should be on critical issues such as employer branding and compensation.
4. Finally, health professionals' compensation should be enhanced to encourage retention and mitigate unnecessary migration.

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