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**STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND
EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN KENYA: A CASE STUDY
OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

¹Magdaline Mwai and ²Mr. David Kanyanjua

¹MBA Student, Management University of Africa

²Lecturer, Management University of Africa

Corresponding Author's Email: mmwai@mua.ac.ke

ABSTRACT

Strategic human resource practices elements are characterised by recruitment and selection, training, and development. A void is created in the organisation when talented and capable workers leave, leading to the loss of vital skills, knowledge, and professional relationships. High employee voluntary turnover rates usually affect or interfere with organizational performance. In order to fill these gaps, this study examined the relationship between strategic HRM practices and employee retention in Kenyan public institutions, using the Public Service Commission (PSC) as a case study, and the specific objective was to establish the influence of recruitment and selection, and training and development on employee retention at the PSC. Anchor theory is human capital theory, reinforced by institutional theory and goal-setting theory. A descriptive design was adopted. The target population is 539 employees of PSC. Stratified random sampling was adopted. With the help of two research assistants, structured questionnaires were utilized to collect data, and the pick-and-drop approach was employed to obtain primary data. Results were displayed using tables. The results show a substantial correlation between employee retention and the strategic human resource management practices ($p < 0.05$, $P = 0.00$). The statistical significance of variables' values ($p = 0.05$) suggests that raising their mean index should enhance employee retention. The head of PSC should be aware that recruiting, identifying, and keeping the best talent in an organisation depends on having effective selection and recruitment procedures. The study recommends that Such policies improve organizational effectiveness, fairness, and transparency when they are properly drafted. PSC should incorporate training and development into the hiring process to guarantee that new hires are not only properly positioned but also prepared to function and advance within the company. A well-organised, fair, and impact-driven T&D policy increases worker engagement, lowers attrition, and boosts organizational competitiveness. Therefore, it is necessary to do more research encompassing a large geographic region, such as the other private institutions, as well as a comparison study to look at how various SHRM affect employee retention in other private institutions.

Keywords: *Strategic Human Resource Management Practices, Employee Retention, Public Institutions, Kenya, Public Service Commission*

INTRODUCTION

Employee retention is greatly impacted by SHRM, which is important and forms the foundation of organizations worldwide. One important resource that may be strategically positioned to provide a company a competitive edge is its workforce (Denisi & Gryphon, 2020). Since an organization's success depends on the calibre and effectiveness of its human resources, Khan (2019) maintained that organizations may maintain and grow their competitive advantage through efficient human resource management. Given that workers' expertise is essential to a business's capacity to compete in the marketplace, organizations must retain skilled staff. Employee retention is becoming more and more crucial for organizations because recurring labour shortages can make it harder to find high-performing workers. As a result, workers may look for better job opportunities, and businesses may try to increase worker productivity (Yazinski, 2009). Retaining staff can be challenging, though, and businesses may struggle to draw in and keep the greatest people for a variety of reasons, some of which may be structural, cultural, or economic (Samuel & Chipunza, 2019).

Implementing effective human resource policies and procedures that help employees stay with the organization by providing a work environment that fits their demands is what leads to employee retention (Dernovsek, 2020). Given that the loss of important employees can significantly affect the success of a business, organizations are more concerned with employee retention. According to Lockwood and Ansari (2019), companies should aim to retain their current workforce because they must bear the expense of both employing and firing personnel. Retaining staff members and their valued talents allows the company to save money on hiring and training new hires, which can then be used for other initiatives that bring value to the business. Accordingly, companies should take measures to keep workers in order to prevent unneeded turnover brought on by stress, low job satisfaction, poor working conditions, and insufficient benefits (Atif, Ijaz-Ur-Rehman, Abdul & Nadeem, 2021).

From a global perspective, studies have examined employee retention and SHRM, such as Mansour (2024), which examines how, by fostering a sense of purpose in the workplace, perceived well-being-oriented human resource management (WBHRM) practices can increase job embeddedness, promote functional presenteeism, and reduce intention to leave healthcare organizations in Canada at two different time points. The research methodology used was adopting a time-lagged design. The findings demonstrated that work meaningfulness was directly improved by the way WBHRM procedures are seen. Perceived WBHRM practices indirectly encouraged work by giving it purpose, employment embeddedness and sustainable presenteeism while lowering the desire to leave. For healthcare businesses looking to increase nurse retention and recruitment through sustainable HRM strategies, this study offers insightful information. Organizations can establish a rewarding workplace that prioritizes employee growth to increase job happiness and loyalty, well-being, and a healthy workplace culture.

Furthermore, encouraging functional presenteeism and a strong feeling of purpose in one's job can enhance performance on both an individual and organizational level. This strategy guarantees long-term profitability. In addition to positioning the company as a top employer, this study substantially contributes to the corpus of HRM literature. It investigates presenteeism's benefits in a novel way, a subject that has received little attention.

Using a case study of a regional medium-sized business in Australia, Amarakoon and Colley (2023) looked at staff attraction and retention challenges and emphasised the significance of organizational context elements like place and scale when creating HR solutions. A well-designed set of HR tactics, such as strategic use of employer branding, is essential to luring and retaining personnel as well as the expansion and synchronization of HRM formality and leveraging of the regional context. The study provides empirical evidence on how employee engagement contributes to the promotion of company value propositions to employees, which aids in employee retention. The propensity to priorities studies that are more contextually sensitive over those that concentrate on larger businesses in urban areas is acknowledged in the HRM literature. By examining a medium-sized company in a regional area, this study advances our understanding of employer branding's ability to attract and retain employees, paying special attention to scale and geography. It emphasises how crucial informality-formality dynamism is.

Agile SHRM practices and employee-organizational outcomes during the new normal: data from Thailand and India was studied by Pathomphatthaphan, Das, and Jena (2024). 574 HR managers from the food processing industries (278 Indian and 296 Thai) were chosen for the study using random selection. They used a systematic questionnaire. HR practices impact organizational outcomes. Multi-group analysis (MGA) shows Indian and Thai samples differed significantly in terms of shared values, employee and organizational outcomes, and agile SHRM practices. However, it was determined that the difference between the organizational outcomes impact on society's shared values was negligible, indicating that the two countries' organizational outcomes had comparable effects on shared values. To enhance job satisfaction and staff engagement and employee productivity, all of which lead to better organizational outcomes such as customer happiness and profitability, and, in the end, to reinforce societal values, agile strategic HR practices, especially those related to reward and recognition, learning and development, and talent acquisition, need to be adapted to the national culture. In light of the ASHRM paradigm, this comparative research would also assist the Thai and Indian food industries in creating new strategies or changing current ones. The study offers a novel cross-cultural ASHRM framework that could assist firms in implementing agile career development, talent acquisition, and separation tactics to prosper in the challenging global business climate.

The dynamics of using SHRM techniques in the public sector were investigated by Fahim (2019). More specifically, this study seeks to identify a few crucial SHRM components that significantly affect employees' decisions to remain. More information on SHRM and retention in Egypt's confirmation of it is generally revealed by this empirical study. HRM practices are thought to be an exceptional strategic instrument for keeping key public personnel. Additionally, the analysis's findings demonstrate how SHRM helps NBE retain its workforce. Particularly in Egyptian governmental companies, the research's conclusions and suggestions might practically help management create policies that increase staff retention by the use of suitable SHRM activities.

In Kenya, Kiragu and Marwa (2022) investigated how strategic HRM tactics and employee retention are related. The study employed a cross-sectional descriptive research approach. The target population was the whole 198-person staff of the Private Commercial Bank. To determine which employees participated in this study, simple random selection was used. The sample size was determined using the Yamane method, and it turned out to be 93 responders. Questionnaires were distributed to the staff in order to collect primary data for the research. The study data was analysed using descriptive statistics, which included means and standard deviation. Additionally, the study variables' association was tested using regression analysis. It was demonstrated that career management and employee retention, training and employee retention, and recruitment and employee retention all had a significant positive link. It was determined by the study that enhancing employee retention required recruiting new staff. Additionally, a strong correlation between hiring and staff retention was found by the study. Given that employees react favourably to opportunities for career advancement and promotion, the HRM approach and career management techniques greatly increased the bank's staff retention rate. This was especially true given the notion that when companies encourage employee training, everyone gets the skills and information needed to do their jobs well.

Strategic Human Resource Management Practices

Three main perspectives on strategic HRM practices have been identified by research. According to the universalistic perspective, organizations may improve if certain sets of best practices are used (Alolayyan, Alyahya, & Omari, 2021). According to the contingency perspective, different organizational environments may call for different methods because certain SHRM practices are context-specific (Castro, de Araújo, Ribeiro, Demo, & Meneses, 2020). The configurational approach thus contends that the relationship between SHRM and firm performance would be enhanced if different SHRM practices and organizational strategy were well matched (Becker & Gerhart, 2020). Despite their differences, the three methods all focus on increasing commitment and retention and share certain well-known SHRM practices. Since these elements are shared by the three theories, this study concentrated on training, recruiting & selection. Bratton and Gold (2019) define strategic human resource management as a method of managing

employment relations that emphasizes the importance of utilizing people's abilities to gain a competitive edge.

Effective SHRM practices may be the primary driver of an organization's success, claims Stavrou-Costea (2020). Additionally, SHRM methods can be used to improve employees' skills and capacities and generate some good behavioural consequences. According to Nguku (2018), no list of best practices is likely to be universally applicable due to principles that, when followed, can result in more successful but distinct personnel management. Additionally, some practices like equal opportunity and family-friendly policies are marginalized, while others like profit-related compensation and employee share ownership plans cannot be applied to all industries. Best practices in HRM include things like training, selection and recruitment, and career management. These procedures will guarantee that all eligible individuals are provided equal opportunities by the organization without discrimination and that their particular skills and interests are appropriately matched with the requirements and benefits offered by the organisation in relation to their position. Additionally, frequent training and development initiatives that aim to enhance each worker's self-confidence in addition to their performance at work; and the use of flexible work arrangements that allow workers to balance work and family obligations without causing harm to either party (Njenga, 2018).

Employee Retention

Gorde (2019) defines employee retention as the capacity to retain prospective employees for an extended length of time. While Yao, Qiu, and Wei (2019) define employee retention as the method by which a firm makes sure that its workers stay on the job. Employee retention is defined by Noe and Kodwani (2018) as the organizational objective of retaining skilled workers and lowering turnover through the provision of competitive compensation and benefits and a positive work environment to encourage engagement.

Recruitment and Selection

Curtis and O'Connell (2021) define recruitment as attracting candidates to fill positions in a company. According to Opathalage et al. (2019), recruiting is the process of locating and convincing suitably qualified people to apply for job openings in the business. It is a collection of steps a business takes to draw in applicants who possess the requisite abilities and dispositions (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). The study adopted the definition by Curtis and O'Connell (2021).

Training and Development

Birou and Hoek (2022) refer to training and development as an official, continuous procedure meant to enhance worker performance and expertise. According to Dessler (2019), it is a comprehensive and long-lasting approach meant to give people the abilities and information they need to take on future duties and positions inside a company. Kodwani and Noe (2018) define it as the process of giving people specific abilities,

information, and skills to help them perform better and be more productive in their current job duties. The study adopted the definition by Kodwani and Noe (

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There are significant ramifications for organizational performance and service delivery as the retention of qualified staff in Kenya's public institutions reaches a critical point. The average rate of employee turnover in public institutions has skyrocketed to 18.7%, a 5.3% increase from the previous year, according to the KNBS 2024 report. An estimated KES 15.3 billion (about \$102 million) is lost annually in productivity and replacement expenses as a result of this talent migration. According to Kenya's Public Service Commission (PSC), 42% of public institutions lack essential skills, especially in specialized fields like project management, finance, and information technology. These disparities have resulted in a 29% drop in public satisfaction scores across a range of service delivery measures and a 37% drop in the successful execution of government programmes. The effects of this talent drain are very bad. According to a thorough assessment conducted by the Council of Governors in 2023, professional staff turnover rates in 31 of 47 counties were higher than 25%. The timely completion of development projects has decreased by 43% as a result, while audit queries pertaining to financial management have increased by 51%. According to the Ministry of Health, medical errors have increased by 62% and patient recovery rates have decreased by 48% in public hospitals with retention rates below 55%. Equally impacted is the education sector; according to the Teachers Service Commission, schools with teacher retention rates below 60% see a 33% drop in national test results.

The main question in HRM research is whether a group of strategic behaviours together constitute a distinctive method of managing human resources and are linked to employee retention. HRM practices and employee retention have been examined. A study by Taiko (2024) findings revealed strong positive correlations between career development programmes, work-life balance initiatives, and various indicators of organizational performance. The study recommends that similar studies should be done in other industries in Kenya for comparison purposes and to allow for generalization of findings on the effect of strategic human resource management practices on employee retention in public institutions in Kenya. By focusing on additional SHRM practices that were not covered in the study, future research could broaden the review.

Allui and Sahni's (2016) findings were that HRM practices may often predict the voluntary turnover rates of employees since researchers have shown that SHRM produces human capital with better commitment and reduced turnover and contextual gap. The current study examined while Branham (2015) established that employees leave due to HR practices, focusing on employee turnover. Research gaps include the need for more diversified samples and further exploration of specific areas of HR practices. As a result, the current study looked at a contextual gap. Fundamental changes or

transformations in the employer-employee relationship are reflected in this recognition and the exceptional efforts made by certain institutions to draw in and keep outstanding talent. Significant research on SHRM and ER has not been done on developed and developing countries specifically examining recruitment and training and employee retention in Kenyan public institutions, presenting a conceptual and empirical gap. It's against this backdrop the study examined the effects of SHRMP on employee retention at PSC.

OBJECTIVES

1. To establish the effect of recruitment and selection on employee retention at PSC.
2. To examine the effect of training and development on employee retention at PSC.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

For theory, practice and policy development. In theory, it adds to the corpus of information on employee retention in public professional institutions and SHRM practices. It provides research gaps that must be addressed and serves as a reference.

In practice, PSC will get important insights from the data to strengthen its HR procedures and increase employee retention. Policy Recommendations: Will inform the development of HR policies and strategies for other public institutions. Contributing to scholarly literature on SHRM is the aim of this study, particularly in developing nations, and its real contribution to skilled staff retention. With the aid of literature, the most significant SHRM activities in this context have been determined to be recruiting and selection, training and professional advancement, review, and compensation. It looks at the connection between SHRM and retention in order to enhance HRM policies on retention at the PSC before suggesting various management and administrative changes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Literature Review

Human Capital Theory

Schultz (1961) was the first to acknowledge this theory, and Becker (1964) built on it. Its basic thesis is that an organisation's ability to improve its human capital through training determines its potential to raise revenues. Companies that invest in their employees. Marginson (2019) stated that increased earnings and improved organizational output are justifications for investing in human capital within the company. If an organisation wants to improve performance, it must invest in employee development, education, and staff training to provide its employees with the tools they need to increase output, identify problems and discover solutions, and look for ways to expand the organisation's income-generating opportunities (Nafukho, Hairston, & Brooks, 2004). This idea was recognised by Gillies (2017) when he said that a portion of an organisation's capital is allocated to its employees. Profits realised and expenses incurred were used to evaluate the return on investment, and the output and productivity levels of the trainees were used to assess the training's efficacy.

Thus, the concept might clarify how workers could learn new abilities while doing their jobs through job enrichment and training programmes that expand staff roles and responsibilities, improving problem-solving, operational systems, and productivity. Training's objective is to equip employees with skills and knowledge that will improve their processing and producing capabilities. Training is used to close skill and performance disparities among employees. Investing in human capital allows for the development of a trained labour force capable of addressing workplace difficulties and increasing output. According to the theory, an organisation's human resources will define the workforce's marginal productivity, which is tied to salaries, via training and education (Fix, 2018). It is unable to account for the changes in earnings and retention rates.

Marginson (2019) criticises the idea as narrow-minded since it assumes an inflexible, one-way relationship between training and education while ignoring aspects that equally affect output, such as skills, interests, and social context. Furthermore, productivity is viewed by McLean and Kuo (2014) as an individual aspect of human capital theory that pays little attention to the social setting. Even training and educational initiatives, which take place in a common context, have varying effects on the productivity of each individual. The approach also encourages employers to invest in training. If there is no wage increase following the training, employees will lose motivation and leave the organisation (Fix, 2018). Training, mentoring, and coaching programmes that equip employees with the skills required, which motivates them to work hard. Employee retention is increased when job assignments are increased and improved since there are fewer instances of boredom. These two factors are related through the concept of human capital growth, which serves as the cornerstone of human capital theory (Fix, 2018). The concept demonstrated the significance of training elements that facilitate the growth of the company's human capital's capability and expertise. Highly qualified employees that support its operations and complete interesting job assignments.

Goal-Setting Theory

The theory was developed in the 1960s by Dr Edwin Locke. Goal-setting theory states that it aims to regulate employee behaviour inside an organisation. According to Locke and Latham (2015), research defines specific aims that lead to enhanced individual and employee retention processes. Goal-setting encompasses four motivational processes, including motivating tasks and worthwhile objectives. Theorists recognised normative, mimetic, and coercive influences on the operational orientation of an organisation. This argument applies to workstations and shows that the organization's sole responsibility is to retain employees in order to meet staffing shortfall demands. According to the statement, for people to reach their maximum potential, they require adequate earnings or compensation as well as a supportive work environment. According to Deschamps and Mattijs (2017), there are at least four sorts of motivational mechanisms: energising function, meaningfulness, perseverance, and distinguishing consideration.

Humans are constantly striving for specific goals in life, and they will not be satisfied till they achieve them. These objectives also serve as standards for assessing satisfaction and discontent levels. According to the idea, when internal forces are at work, external incentives—rather than intrinsic rewards—drive conduct, and it turns to motivators to explain why specific behaviours occur in companies. Employees can thereby achieve both their personal and organizational goals (Bipp and Kleingeld, 2011). Relationship formation can be examined using the framework that the theory offers and how they could eventually become ingrained between companies, their workers, and other actors. The idea is still relevant to contemporary organizational structures, practices, and strategies, and the various stakeholders in their surroundings affect how establishments evaluate employee retention.

Institutional Theory

The theory was created by Goguen and Burstall in 1984. According to the concept, an organization's environment plays a significant role. Environmental changes may force an organization to develop a new strategy for implementation even if it did not want to. It shows that social and cultural factors that are deemed appropriate in the workplace influence organizational decisions, as the structure of the organization, rather than being exclusively motivated by clearly defined and rational goals. It states that pressure for authenticity causes organizations to become to resemble one another. This is corroborated by the fact that companies that sell comparable goods are more likely to be impacted by the ever-changing wants of their clientele, which compels them to copy their top competitors (Gauthier, 2013). The theory also highlights organizational social behaviour, which characterises processes, norms, and formations as organizational strategies (Aksom and Tymchenko, 2020).

The theory of institutions provides a framework for analysing how businesses engage with their workers and other stakeholders and how well-functioning HR policies may help these relationships solidify over time. When organisations engage with various stakeholders, it influences how companies choose which people will advance in their careers in dynamic and competitive environments. According to institutional theory, rational objectives are not the only factors that influence organizational decisions. Theory illustrates how the organisation has changed as a result of laws and societal norms that affect how it operates. This idea was applied in this study to the pertinent regions' impacts on policy and employee retention and to elucidate how they become embedded in the organisation, which impacts how they function.

Empirical Literature Review

Recruitment and Selection and Employee Retention

Shanker (2020) looked at the recruitment process and how it affects the retention of pilots in India. Since newly hired pilots need to be trained because they lack experience, for the Indian aviation sector, finding and keeping commercial pilots is a challenge. The research

methodology was exploratory and descriptive. The study included 225 pilots. Research instruments were used to learn more about the methods these airlines employ for hiring, selecting, and retaining commercial pilots, as well as how pilots see these methods and how they connect to retention plans within the company. Regression analysis, component analysis, and Pearson's were adopted. Five aspects of retention and selection measures were identified by the data analysis: employment brand, organizational growth and self-advancement chances, external factors, organizational internal factors, and an encouraging and employee-friendly recruitment strategy. Findings reflect the possible bias and prejudice of those who participated and answered. The results might have been different if the study had been applied to another nation or economy because the data was only gathered from Indian commercial pilots. It was not possible to rule out random sampling error. The preferred, acceptable, and perceived retention and recruitment practices of the Indian aviation industry may differ from those of other nations. The results may differ from the impact of organisational, cultural, and external factors.

Spiteri-Axiak, Packer, and Ghio (2024) examined the difficulties in integrating soft skill development with retention and recruitment tactics in SMS in Guyana. In order to acquire these abilities, which affect individuals' effectiveness in today's workforce and organisations' flexibility in a competitive market, recruitment and retention are crucial. This study employs a qualitative methodology, gathering information through 14 semi-structured interviews and drawing conclusions through ongoing comparative analysis. MAXQDA software facilitates the process. The results show that hiring people with both technical and soft abilities is difficult for organisations. Despite the difficulties owner-managers and HR consultants have during the hiring process, attempts are made to retain employees by improving soft skills. The paper's uniqueness stems from its thorough examination of issues around hiring and tactics employed throughout the employee lifetime. Additionally, this study examines a small island state's micro- and small enterprises, which are typically disregarded in the literature.

Ndlela (2020) conducted a study among Kenyans to investigate the primary variables leading to discrimination against people and organisations while hiring and selecting personnel in Nairobi. It sought to address research questions on factors influencing hiring and selection, the impact of prejudice on both people and groups, and potential intervention tactics to counteract discrimination in diverse workplaces. Out of 2,527,111 people in Nairobi, 400 respondents of 18 years old were chosen for the study using mathematical methods to calculate sample size. The data that was gathered was analysed using SPSS. The survey found over 90% are aware of prejudice and that both internal and external variables play important roles in organizational recruitment and selection, with 83.5% considering the two as key contributory factors. Discrimination was influenced by a variety of criteria, including tribe and handicap. Individuals' psychological well-being and budgeting process were impacted by discrimination, according to 72.4-90.8% of respondents who said that the sin was to blame for low self-esteem, sadness, and poor

performance. According to the study, prejudice is widespread in Nairobi and is mostly motivated by tribalism (Ndlela, 2020). The research finds a methodological gap that the current study tried to fill.

Training & Development and Employee Retention

In Pakistan's post-COVID-19 workplace, Jayathilake et al. (2021) examined the retention and growth of Generation Z workers. The authors offer a conceptual framework that emphasises democratisation of training, reverse mentoring, and entrepreneurship as very necessary adjustments from the perspective of employee development to keep Gen-Z employees and boost organizational performance to stay competitive. They do this by referencing recent research and applying the social-exchange and human-needs approach. Reverse mentoring, democratised learning, and intrapreneurship all have a significant chance to help Generation Z workers grow, which may enhance corporate effectiveness and staff retention. Additionally, the effectiveness of the organisation may regulate the intention of employees to stay longer. Future studies would empirically validate the suggested conceptual framework.

Bharadwaj (2023) investigated the impact of training and development initiatives on employee retention, which is a goal centred on employer branding in India. The study's foundation is data gathered from Indian IT workers. We tested the hypotheses using PROCESS Macro and regression. Training has an effect on employee retention (ER) as an employer branding attribute, according to the regression results. Secondly, ER and OI are influenced by training and development. Developing a brand around development value is a good way to boost OI and their intention to stick around, according to the research. The data was gathered from a single source, which is the main drawback and could lead to common method bias.

Odhiambo (2020) investigated how employee performance at Safaricom Company Ltd was impacted by training and development. Targeting 1,892 employees at the Safaricom Head Office, descriptive research methodology was employed in the investigation. The stratified random selection had 377 responders. Additionally, the study found that employee performance is greatly impacted by training and development initiatives (Odhiambo, 2020). The study has gaps that require attention from an alternative organizational structure. The current study concentrated on public professional bodies, PSC, whereas the previous study was concentrated on Safaricom Company.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

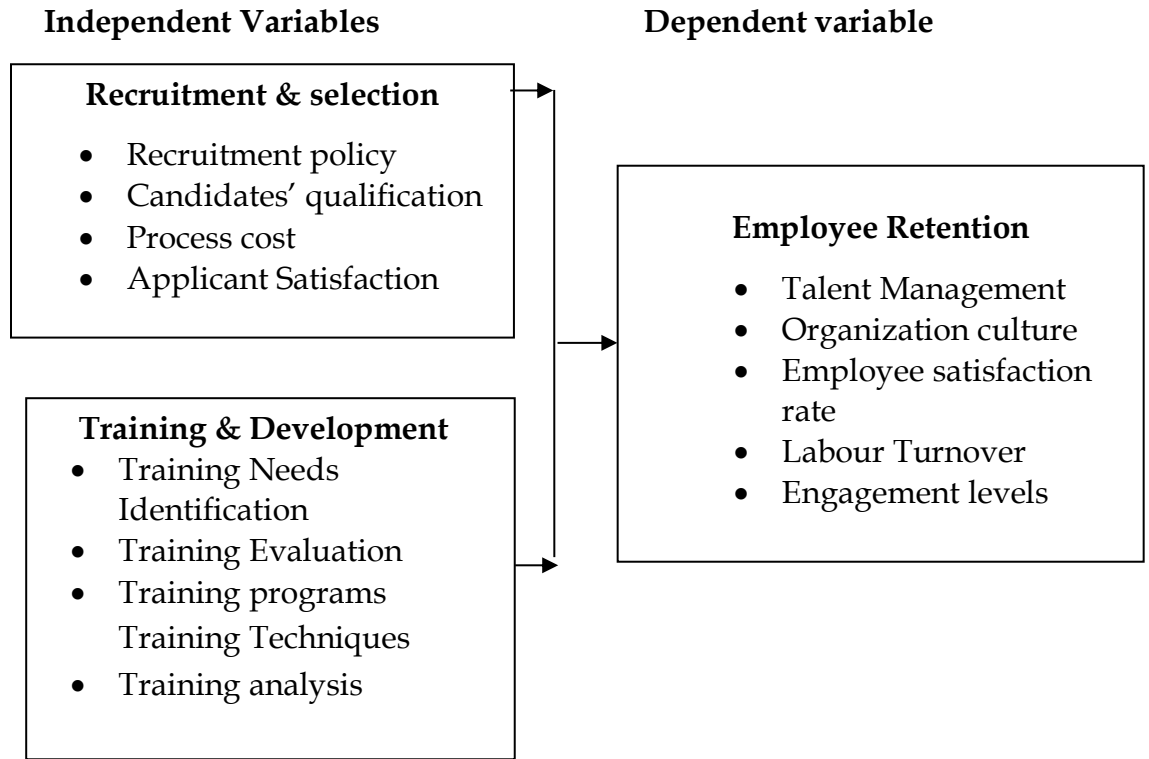


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Research design is defined as the research purpose and technique; consequently, a theoretical context is utilized to carry out the research inquiry (Bickman & Rog, 2018). A descriptive design was employed for this study because it guarantees that the data collected will offer relevant answers to questions. The design was used to analyse issues or describe the traits of the individuals. One benefit of this approach is that it can assist researchers in organizing and conducting studies that offer a comprehensive understanding of the subjects, settings, or particular issue (Bordens & Abbott, 2021).

Target Population

The target population is defined by Cooper and Schindler (2018) as the entire group of variables that one intends to generalize from the findings. Saunders, et al (2018), define population as the whole assembly of factors which the study conclusion should be generalized. Table 3 shows the population of 539 employees, who comprise of senior officers, Middle level officers, support staff and commissioners.

Table 1: Target population

Category	Target population	%
Commissioners	9	2
Senior officers	42	8
Middle-level officers	238	44
Support staff	250	46
Total	539	100

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Bordens and Abbott (2021) describe sample as accurate representation of characteristics of the population. Cooper and Schindler (2018) noted that to prevent biases, the study sample size should be random. For the study, stratified random sampling was employed, which is determined by Creswell and Creswell (2018) to be impartial and provide an equal opportunity for selection for every member of the population. Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2018) recommended that the study sample size be random in order to eliminate biases, and that 1-10% of the target population is considered an appropriate size. Cooper and Schindler (2018) agreed. Using the Cochran formula, the sample size was calculated to be 230.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

n – sample size N – Population size e – Level of significance

$$n = 539$$

$$\frac{539}{1 + 539(0.05)^2} = 230$$

Therefore, the sample was 230 respondents

Research Instruments

According to Saunders, et al (2018), the researcher employed questionnaires since they make correlational, descriptive, and inferential statistical analysis possible and easy. These questions also help to effectively enrich the qualitative methodology (Xu, Baysari, & Stocker, 2020). The questionnaire was used in the study because it has been used by other researchers in the same field of study and is thought to be more accurate, efficient accurate in terms of labor, money, and time, and it helps gather both qualitative and quantitative data in addition to providing more structure than interviews (Mweshi & Sakyi, 2020). Despite this, questionnaires are thought to be less expensive data collection tools, and the researcher can collect large volumes of data (Taherdoost, 2021).

Pilot Study

A pilot study is a small-scale, preparatory research that is carried out before to a bigger study in order to test and improve data collection techniques, research protocols, and

other study components, ultimately enhancing the main study's design and viability (Bordens & Abbott, 2021). It is possible to find ambiguous questions and indistinguishable instructions in an instrument by conducting a pilot study (Taherdoost, 2021). The pilot study's establishment of the validity and reliability of research data collection equipment is another important factor (Cooper & Schindler, 2018). Cooper and Schindler (2018) stated that to avoid biases, the research pilot size should be random, and 1-10% of the sample size is considered an appropriate size. The pilot research was conducted using 10 employees at the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC). The pilot study participants represent 2%, and they were randomly selected.

Validity

Validity, according to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2018), is the ability of a research tool to yield anticipated results. This was carried out in the course of piloting the instrument (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2018). Determining if the instrument responses supplied the necessary information to support the study in achieving its objectives as specified in the methodology is the aim of the process (Cooper & Schindler, 2018). Assistance from supervisor and experts, content validity and face validity were adopted. It is a simple, quick, and straightforward technique to begin determining whether a new statistic is beneficial immediately (Cooper & Schindler, 2018)

Reliability

During the piloting stage, the study also did a reliability test. Reliability is described by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2018) as the ratio used to test the consistency of study questionnaires. The consistency of results when a study repeats reliability between tests is determined by giving the identical test to the identical sample at various points in time. The identical test was administered twice to the same group of participants in order to assess test-retest reliability. The researcher determined how sets of results were correlated. Cronbach's alpha coefficients must fall between 0 and 1. Using a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.7, the study assessed dependability. According to Bordens and Abbott (2021), if research tools are reliable, they should provide identical results to the pilot study when applied to the larger sample size, as substantiated by Cooper and Schindler (2018).

Data Collection Procedure

Permission from Public service commission (PSC), National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI), were sought and Management university of Africa for a letter of introduction. Questionnaires were dropped and picked after five days.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Data analysis, according to Cooper and Schindler (2018), is the process of classifying and organizing unprocessed data that has been gathered using research data collection instruments in order to extract relevant information. SPSS version 28 was adopted for analyses, and findings were presented in tables. A linear relationship between the

independent and dependent variables is necessary for regression modelling to be effective (Tümen Akyıldız & Ahmed, 2021). The relationship between variables is said to be linearly dependent when the linearity surpasses 0.05 and the value of the significance probability diverges.

Ethical Consideration

Bickman and Rog (2018) define ethical consideration as the application of ethics throughout a research project. Respondents' involvement was optional. Respondents were informed study's goal and emphasized why providing data is essential to accomplishing the study's primary goal, which was a prerequisite for finishing a thesis at MUA. Before the study started, participants were fully informed of the consequences and asked to provide their consent. This allowed them to freely (voluntarily) participate in research. Voluntary participation refers to the explicit measures undertaken by the researcher to inform them that their participation is entirely on their own volition, free from any form of coercion (Kılınç & Fırat, 2017).

According to the principle of informed consent, participants must be fully informed about the study they are taking part in before giving their assent (Bordens & Abbott, 2021). This enables them to decide whether to take part in the research or not, participants was asked if they would want to take part in the study. No responder was compelled to engage in the study in violation of the concept of voluntary participation (Kothari & Garg, 2015). This suggests that participants has the choice to decline or withdraw. All citations and references made by other academics were recognized. The researcher only used information in a discreet manner and study ensured the anonymity of respondents, and the information was utilized for academic purposes. By making sure that personal information, including as views, attitudes, and opinions, is not disclosed to other parties without the subject's consent, respect for privacy is achieved throughout the conduct of research (Akaranga & Makau, 2019).

Anonymity was maintained by keeping respondents' racial or ethnic backgrounds a secret, not identifying them by name, and not disclosing any personal information about a participant. This was achieved by victimization. The anonymity of respondents is protected. The easiest way to do this is by not identifying respondents by name during the collection of data (Fouka & Mantzorou, 2019). To safeguard participants' identities, codes and pseudonyms was used. The information of the participant was managed in such a way that their identity is secured by anonymity (Bickman & Rog, 2018). This was accomplished by instructing them not to fill out any personal information on the questionnaire

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The 230 respondents who made up the sample population of 184 responded. The response was outstanding, supported by Bordens and Abbott (2021). In 184 units of analysis, males made up the majority. According to Saunders et al. (2018), the

respondent's gender determines their views about certain difficulties. The majority were 46 years and older. Bordens and Abbott (2021) assert that a respondent's age affects how they react to particular concerns. According to Saunders et al. (2018), attitudes as well as how individuals perceive and understand any specific social issue are also important. Bordens and Abbott (2021) claim that respondents with extensive experience in an organization are better able to comprehend its dynamics and provide authoritative answers to research questions.

Table 2: Recruitment and selection

	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev
Recruitment policy in our institution focuses on employee retention.	44%	52%	4%	0%	0%	4.10	.725
The most crucial aspects considered in an application is the education level, and work experience	54%	40%	6%	0%	0%	4.00	.885
A variety of recruiting and selection methods are used throughout the process.	42%	54%	4%	0%	0%	3.96	.796
The recruiting and selecting process is impacted by cost and process involved	43%	51%	3%	3%	0%	3.95	.739
Retention process is well articulated on the policy	57%	40%	3%	0%	0%	3.92	.833
Average						3.97	.796

Establishing recruitment and selection affects employee retention. Table 2 shows responses, first question asked if recruitment policy in our institution focuses on employee retention, and the following were the outcomes: There were 44% strongly agreed, 52% agreed, 4% neutral, and none strongly disagreed or agreed. SD was .725, and the average response to the research question was 4.10. According to the study, no respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed, while 40% agreed and 6% were neutral. 54% of respondents strongly agreed that the most crucial aspects considered in an application is the education level, and work experience. The mean was 4.00, and the SD was .885. If a variety of recruiting and selection methods are used throughout the process, 4% were neutral, 42% strongly agreed, 54% agreed, and none objected or strongly disagreed. 3.96(mean), with SD = .796. Responses to the question of whether the recruiting and selecting process is impacted by cost and process involved have 43% of those surveyed strongly agreed, 51% agreed, 3% disagreed, and 3% were neutral. Final

question focused on whether retention process is well articulated on the policy: 3.92(mean) and SD =833, with 57% of the responses strongly agreeing, 40% agreeing, 3% neutral, and none disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the study question. Recruitment and selection in the research had an average mean =3.97 and SD = 0.796.

This shows recruitment and selection impacts on employee retention. The study’s conclusions are akin to those of certain other studies that have examined other orientations, like the findings of Shanker (2020) findings reflect the possible bias and prejudice of those who participated and answered. The results might have been different if the study had been applied to a another nation or economy because the data was only gathered from Indian commercial pilots. It was not possible to rule out random sampling error. The preferred, acceptable, and perceived retention and recruitment practices of the Indian aviation industry may differ from those of other nations. Spiteri-Axiak, Packer, and Ghio (2024) results show that hiring people with both technical and soft abilities is difficult for organisations. Despite the difficulties owner-managers and HR consultants have during the hiring process, attempts are made to retain employees by improving soft skills. Ndlela (2020) found over 90% are aware of prejudice, and that both internal and external variables play important roles in organizational recruitment and selection, with 83.5% considering the two as key contributory factors. Discrimination was influenced by a variety of criteria, including tribe and handicap. Individuals' psychological well-being and budgeting process were impacted by discrimination, according to 72-91% of respondents who said that the sin was to blame for low self-esteem, sadness, and poor performance.

Table 3 : Training and development

	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mea n	SD
Our organization always carry out training needs analysis prior to training.	51%	40%	7 %	2%	0%	3.91	.651
We look into department demands, market developments, job skills, expertise, and abilities, before training need assessment is conducted.	47%	38%	9 %	4%	2%	3.96	.725
Our organization training evaluation process is very effective.	54%	40%	6 %	0%	0%	4.00	.799
We evaluate knowledge, abilities, and views that contradict the norms that are set both during and right after training programs .	55%	40%	3 %	2%	0%	4.10	.678

Our organization provide alternatives for both on-the-job and off-job training .	46%	51%	3%	0%	0%	4.22	.694
Average						4.04	0.690

Finding out how training and development affect the employee retention, Table 3 presents findings; If our organization always carry out training needs analysis prior to training, the researcher asked in this study 40% agreed, 51% strongly agreed, 7% were neutral, and 2% disagreed with the statement. 3.91 was the mean and 0.651 was the SD, respectively. Second question posed under the variable: "We look into department demands, market developments, job skills, expertise, and abilities, before training need assessment is conducted." With mean=3.96 and SD =.725, in addition to 47% strongly agreeing, 38% agreeing, 9% neutral, 4% disagreeing, and 2% strongly disagreeing. Our organization training evaluation process is very effective. With 4.00 (mean) and SD (.799), 54% strongly agree, 40% agree, 6% neutral, if we evaluate knowledge, abilities, and views that contradict the norms that are set both during and right after training programs. 4.10 as mean and SD of .678, 40% agreed, 40% strongly agreed, 3% neutral, and 2% disagreed. Researcher asked respondents if Our organization provide alternatives for both on-the-job and off-job training; with a 4.22 mean and SD of .694, no respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed; in contrast, 51% of respondents agreed, 46% strongly agreed, and 3% of respondents had no opinion. The variable had a mean 4.04 and a mean SD of 0.690, demonstrating how significantly training and development affects the employee retention.

The study's findings are consistent with those made by other researchers in their various studies, such as those by Jayathilake et al, (2021) reverse mentoring, democratised learning, and intrapreneurship all have a significant chance to help Generation-Z workers grow, which may enhance corporate effectiveness and staff retention. Additionally, the effectiveness of the organisation may regulate the intention of employees to stay longer, Bharadwaj (2023) training has an effect on employee retention (ER) as an employer branding attribute. according to the regression results. Secondly, ER and OI are influenced by training and development. Developing a brand around development value is a good way to boost OI and their intention to stick around, according to the research. Odhiambo (2020) study found that employee performance is greatly impacted by training and development initiatives.

Table 4: Employee retention

	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	SD
The company has a low yearly turnover rate.	43%	51%	3%	3%	0%	3.95	.739
The talent management strategies in our organization encourage the staff to stay longer	47%	38%	9%	4%	2%	3.96	.725
Our organization has witnessed high levels of staff satisfaction.	43%	52%	4%	0%	0%	4.10	.919
Attitude surveys have consistently indicated high levels of employee engagement.	43%	51%	3%	3%	0%	3.95	.739
Our organization has a succession plan and talent acquisition	38%	47%	9%	4%	2%	3.25	.725
Average						3.84	0.768

When asked if the company has a low yearly turnover rate, the average response among the respondents 3.95 mean and 739 strongly disagreed, 3% disagreed, 51% agreed, 43% strongly agreed, and 3% were neutral. The second inquiry focused on how the talent management strategies in our organization encourage the staff to stay longer. 3.96 mean and 725, SD indicate that 47% strongly agreed, 38% agreed, 9% neutral, 4% disagreed, and 2% strongly disagreed. When asked if monthly reports on the state of the project scope are created and distributed, the respondents responded with a mean=4.10 and SD=.919, with 43% strongly agreeing, 52% agreeing, and 4% remaining neutral. the study also asked if our organization has witnessed high levels of staff satisfaction, with a mean of 3.95 and a SD of 739, and if attitude surveys have consistently indicated high levels of employee engagement. 43% strongly agreed, 51% agreed, 3% were neutral, and 3% disagreed and mean =3.25 and SD =.725, 38% strongly agreed, and 47% agreed, and 9% = neutral, 4% disagreed, and 2% strongly disagreed that the organization had a succession planning and talent acquisition.

The overall mean score of 3.84 and SD of .768 show that employee retention is significantly influenced by study variables. Employee retention develops a trusting and responsible culture, which is crucial for performance. It promotes transparency and employee retention in decision-making, which improves corporate credibility and collaborative employee retention (Galgallo, 2021). Stor (2024) findings offer insightful information. They also role HRM plays in financial, innovative, and quality outcomes. They emphasise the strategic value of HRM in promoting innovation and organizational resilience. Kossyva, Theriou, Aggelidis, and Sarigiannidis (2024) found that the

combination of HRM with KM and CM strategies may help knowledge-intensive services companies retain more talent, which could improve employee engagement. Ali, Niu, and Rubel (2024) leadership styles have effect on staff retention. It has been discovered that transformational leadership (TFL) has significant direct effects on employee engagement, whereas transactional leadership (TSL) has no appreciable direct impact. Employee retention and TFL are heavily mediated by employee engagement, according to the mediation analysis's results, while TSL and employee retention have an insignificant relationship.

Inferential Statistics

Effect of Recruitment and selection and Employee retention

Table 5: Model Summary for Recruitment and selection

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.824 ^a	.457	.645	.35909

a. Predictors: (Constant), Recruitment and selection

The model demonstrates that recruitment and selection have strong effect on employee retention. With an R = 0.824 and an adjusted R² = 0.645, it can be concluded that effective recruitment and selection practices substantially enhance performance outcomes. However, since R² is 0.457, other factors beyond recruitment and selection also play a considerable role, meaning performance cannot be explained by recruitment and selection alone.

Table 6: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	24.598	1	6.875	48.411	.000 ^b
1 Residual	11.211	183	.471		
Total	35.809	184			

a. DV: Employee retention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Recruitment and selection.

Values, F = 48.411, which are displayed in Table 6, suggest that recruitment and selection heavily influence employee retention. ANOVA results confirm that recruitment and selection significantly predict employee retention. With F-value = 48.411 and significance level of p = 0.000, the model strongly supports the conclusion that effective recruitment and selection practices lead to improved employee retention. This reinforces the earlier model summary (Table 5), It demonstrated that a significant amount of the variation in employee retention may be explained by recruitment and selection.

Table 7: Regression Coefficients^a for recruitment and selection

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	1.133	.431		4.119	.001	.449	1.752
Recruitment and selection	.679	.179	.822	8.658	.000	.521	.855

a. DV: Employee retention

Holdings = 1.133 +.679 (recruitment and selection),

The regression coefficients show that recruitment and selection significant effect on employee retention. With a standardized Beta of 0.822 and a significant p-value (0.000), the results suggest that better recruitment and selection practices substantially improve employee retention levels. The following regression model describes the data seen in Table 7: recruitment and selection (0.679) + 1.133 equals employee retention. The concept emphasizes how employee retention is impacted by recruitment and selection. The conclusions are akin to those of certain other studies that have examined other orientations, like the findings of Shanker (2020); Spiteri-Axiak, Packer, and Ghio (2024); Ndlela (2020).

Effect of training and development and Employee retention

Table 8: Model Summary for training and development

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.798 ^a	.637	.634	.70916

a. Predictors: (Constant), Training and development

In a regression analysis, training and development served as the predictor component and results show a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.798, indicating a positive relationship between training and development and employee retention. The coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.637, which implies that training and development explain 63.7% of the variation. Adjusted R Square value of 0.634 further confirms the model’s reliability, accounting for the number of predictors included. The standard error of estimate (0.70916) is relatively low, suggesting that the model fits the data well. Overall, these findings indicate that training and development is a significant factor influencing employee retention.

Table 9: ANOVA^a Results for training and development

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	20.224	1	4.114	55.940	.000 ^b
Residual	10.681	183	.431		
Total	30.905	184			

a. DV: Employee retention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Training and development

ANOVA results confirm training and development has a significant effect on employee retention (F = 55.940, p < 0.000). This aligns with the earlier model summary, which showed that training and development explain 63.7% of the variance in retention.

Table 10: Regression Coefficients^a for Training and development

Model	Jstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	95.0%Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	1.480	.558		3.993	.000	.759	2.063
Training and development	.637	.095	.795	7.480	.000	.473	.814

a. DV: Employee retention

The coefficients table (Table 10) further emphasized the strength of this relationship. Unstandardized coefficient (B = 0.637) indicated that improvement in training leads to a 0.637 unit increase in retention. The standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.795) demonstrated that training has a very strong positive effect size. With a high t-value (7.480) and a highly significant p-value (0.000), the predictor’s effect is both strong and reliable. Regression model employee retention = 1.480 + 0.637 (training and development) is the formula that describes the Table 10 outcomes. The study's findings are consistent with those made by other researchers in their various studies, such as those by Jayathilake et al, (2021) ; Bharadwaj (2023); Odhiambo (2020).

Multivariate Analysis

Table 11 : Model Summary Multivariate Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.809 ^a	.654	.651	.68189

a. Predictors: (Constant), training and development, recruitment and selection

The multivariate model summary in Table 11 shows that when all predictors are considered together, Together, they have a significant impact on staff retention. The set of predictors and employee retention has a strong positive association, according to the correlation coefficient (R = 0.809). The variables together account for 65.4% of the variance in employee retention, according to R Square value of 0.654. The model's robustness is confirmed by Adjusted R Square of 0.651, which takes into account the number of predictors included. Standard error of the estimate (0.68189) is relatively low, suggesting good model fit and reliable predictions. Overall, this result demonstrates that the HR practices together provide a strong explanatory power for employee retention, making them critical determinants in organizational sustainability and workforce stability.

Table 12: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	32.678	2	8.169	26.012	.000 ^b
1 Residual	37.118	182	.337		
Total	69.795	184			

a. DV: Employee retention

b. Predictors: (Constant), training and development, and recruitment and selection

ANOVA results in Table 12 confirm that the combined predictors significantly influence employee retention. When comparing the regression sum of squares (32.678) to the residual sum of squares (37.118), it is evident that the model accounts for a significant amount of the variation in employee retention. With a significance level of $p = 0.000$ and an F-statistic of 26.012, the regression model as a whole is statistically significant and fits data better than a model without these factors. This indicates that when combined, the four HR procedures are accurate indicators of employee retention and significantly contribute to increased workforce stability.

Table 13: Regression Coefficients^a for Multivariate Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	1580	.367	1.504	.001	.876	2.281
Recruitment & selection	.559	.118	3.027	.000	.123	.592
Training & dev.	.407	.114	2.697	.000	.081	.623

a. DV: Employee retention

Multivariate regression results demonstrate that recruitment and selection, training and development, collectively have a strong and significant influence on employee retention. The model summary shows a high correlation ($R = 0.809$) with an R^2 of 0.654, meaning that 65.4% of the variation in employee retention is explained by the four predictors combined. With an F-statistic of 26.012 and $p = 0.000$, the ANOVA findings further support the relevance of the model and show that the regression model as a whole is statistically valid. Coefficient analysis reveals that all four predictors contribute positively and significantly to employee retention. Recruitment and selection ($B = 0.559$, $\beta = 0.329$, $p = 0.001$) and training and development ($B = 0.407$, $\beta = 0.274$, $p = 0.000$) emerge as the strongest predictors, suggesting that effective hiring practices and continuous employee growth are key drivers of retention. These results highlight that while each HR practice plays an important role, a holistic approach that integrates recruitment and training which was supported by Stor (2024); Kossyva, Theriou, Aggelidis, and Sarigiannidis (2024); Ali, Niu, and Rubel (2024).

CONCLUSION

The findings revealed that each of these practices significantly and positively contributes to retention when considered independently. Training and development emerged as the strongest predictor, underscoring the importance of continuous skill enhancement and career growth opportunities in retaining employees. Recruitment and selection also played a critical role, indicating that effective hiring processes are key to securing a committed workforce. The multivariate analysis confirmed that the variables collectively explained 65.4% of the variation in employee retention, demonstrating that a holistic approach is most effective. These results emphasize that organizations cannot rely on a single HR practice but rather need to integrate multiple strategies to strengthen employee commitment and minimize turnover. The study concludes by emphasising that strategic HR practice management is essential to creating a steady, contented, and effective workforce all of which are necessary for the success and sustainability of an organisation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Building a skilled, driven, and diverse team requires a carefully thought-out recruitment and selection programme. The study recommends that organisations can make sure that their hiring procedures are strategic, equitable, effective, and in line with long-term objectives by implementing the suggestions. In addition, the head of PSC should be aware that recruiting, identifying, and keeping the best talent in an organisation depends on having effective selection and recruitment procedures. Such policies improve organizational effectiveness, fairness, and transparency when they are properly drafted. A crucial component that supports hiring new employees is training, which boosts performance, ensures long-term retention, and improves skills. To create a skilled, future-ready workforce, organisations should have clear rules that explicitly connect training and development with hiring. The head of PSC should be aware that incorporating training and development into the hiring process guarantees that new hires are not only properly positioned but also prepared to function and advance within the

company. A well-organized, fair, and impact-driven T&D policy increases worker engagement, lowers attrition, and boosts organizational competitiveness.

SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDIES

This study focused on how SHRMP affects employee retention in PSCs, although it did not fully explore all aspects. The study suggested that further research is necessary to determine other factors of employee retention, and additional research should be conducted on various county governments, as this study only focused on employee retention in the PSC. Therefore, it is necessary to do more research encompassing a large geographic region, such as the other private institutions, as well as a comparison study to look at how various SHRMP affect employee retention in private institutions.

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