NAU Journal of Technology & Vocational Education, Vol. 8, No. 1, August 2023

TALENT MANAGEMENT AS CORRELATE OF EMPLOYEE PLACEMENT AND RETENTION IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH EAST NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study talent as correlate of employee placement and retention in universities in South East Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study and two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Correlational research design was employed for the study. The population consisted of 819 senior university non-teaching staff. A sample of 249 senior non-teaching staff of public universities in South-east Nigeria was used for the study. The 249 staff were sampled using proportionate stratified sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire divided into Sections 'A' and 'B'. Section 'A' contains demographic information of respondents while Section 'B' was categorized into nine clusters to cover the seven components of talent management, Employee placement and Employee Retention. The instruments were validated using the opinions of experts and their reliability coefficients were .88 and .93, these were realized using Cronbach alpha. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) to answer the research questions and Multivariate Simple Linear Regression (MSLR) with Fisher-Z test to test the hypotheses. Data analysis revealed that talent management; compensation planning and career development correlate employee placement and retention. The result also revealed that the ownership of the universities (Federal or State) determined staff responses based on the two components discussed in this study. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the universities managements should provide adequate and appropriate compensation plans both in cash, materials and conducive atmosphere for staff; in service trainings to develop and channel the talents of staff towards the attainment of institutions'' goals.

Keywords. Talent management, employee placement and employee retention.

Introduction

In recent years the concept of talent management is distinguished as fairly new and it has attracted the interest of most of the researchers, this is so because the organizations are required to distinguish between their employees according to their performances, traits, intellectual abilities etc (Kontoghiorghes, 2016). The work environment today is characterized by outsourcing, increasing mobility, looser psychological contracts between organizations and their employees, less predictable and more fluid career paths and more focus on self-directed learning. From the organization's perspective, these new workplace characteristics lead to a new challenges in securing retention of the most valuable and unique employees. Organizations are striving hard to achieve success by gaining competitive advantage, and one of the most valuable resources that can help their

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cause is the human resource they employ. Attracting and retaining talented individuals are important issues in the workplace, and talent management is a top priority for many organizations. At its essence, talent management is purported to create value (Sparrow & Makram, 2015).

Talent management is defined as the methodically organized, strategic process of getting the right talent onboard and helping them grow to their optimal capabilities keeping organizational objectives in mind. It is a constant process that involves attracting and retaining high-quality employees, developing their skills, and continuously motivating them to improve their performance. Therefore, q capital is the mixture of skills, experiences, knowledge, motivation, and capabilities of the employees. Because of that, it is important to recognize how to manage and control the talented employee, to invest in their skills, experience, knowledge and to enhance productivity and performance of organization (Máté et al., 2016).

The primary purpose of talent management is to create a motivated workforce who will stay with your organization in the long run. The exact way to achieve this may differ from one organization to other (Valamis, 2021). The process of talent management involves identifying talent gaps and vacant positions, sourcing for and onboarding the suitable candidates, growing them within the system and developing needed skills, training for expertise with a future-focus and effectively engaging, retaining and motivating them to achieve long-term business goals. This definition brings to light the overarching nature of talent management how it permeates all aspects pertaining to the human resources at work while ensuring that the organization attains its objectives. It is thus the process of getting the right people onboard and enabling them to enable the business at large.

Under the umbrella of talent management, there are a string of elements and sub-processes that need to work in unison to ensure the success of the organization. For example, when a candidate is selected for a particular post and he reports to duty, the organization has to place him or her in the job for which he or she is selected which is being done through placement. Placement is the act of offering the job to a finally selected candidate. It is the act of finally assigning the rank and responsibility to an employee, identifying him with a particular job. . Placement is usually followed by the orientation process. According to Pigors and Myers (2019), Placement is the determination of the job to which an accepted candidate is to be assigned and his assignment to that job. Suffice it to say that, placement exercise is as crucial as the selection aspect because a well-placed employee will be an asset to the organization.

An organization's responsibility does not just stop at recruitment, selection and placement of the required employees but also creating attractive atmospheres and opportunities to ensure that these selected workforces are retained, this is called employee retention, which is simply an organization's ability to retain it's workers. According to Ulhas and Maharashtra (2019), employee retention is defined as the process in which human resources are encouraged and motivated to stay in the organization for a longer period of time for the sustainability of the organization. Employee Retention refers to the ability of the organisation to retain its employees and it's emerging as a big challenge to organisations. Organisation culture, pay and remuneration, flexibility and job satisfaction highly influence the retention rate for any company (Dutta, 2019).

Talented employees refer to the caliber of employees possessing distinguishable capacity and potential to deliver jobs in an exceptionally successful manner. Since the last two decades, such employees are now considered as the most valuable assest of the organization. Universities are expected to attract the most talented and skilled workers available and create a brand that could attract potential talents but the reverse appears to be case as empirical evidence has revealed that in recent years there has been a serious decline in the succession and retention rate of its employees and this

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has led to poor institutional outcomes. The cause of these poor outcomes could be that the employees in the universities were been selected and recruited through improper approaches that might not have considered talent planning.

Hence, could talent management determine the level of staff placement and retention in universities? Therefore, the study seeks to establish the relationship between talent management dimensions and employee placement and retention in public (federal and State) in South-East Nigeria. For the purpose of this study, the researcher will adopt two (2) components out of the seven (7) key components of Talent Management proposed by Solanki (2022). These are;

1. Compensation,
2. Career development

Compensation in this context means the employee compensation and it's defined as any money or benefits paid to an employee in exchange for work. From the employee's standpoint, compensation is everything that they get for the work they put in. Compensation is one of the most important parts of an employment contract that brings in people from outside and makes them members of an organization. The pull effect of an organization's compensation system, however, varies from industry to industry and from position to position within the industry. (Nakshita, 2022).

Chiekezie, Emejulu and Nwanneka (2017) observed that there is a positive weak relationship between compensation and employee retention in the country this could be as a result of the employers of labour not applying the appropriate and timely compensations needed by the employees. Thus the weak relationship could be attributed to lack of adequate compensation which will help to retain employees and reduce job turn over and mobility of labour.

Another component of talent management is career development; Careers are all jobs or positions that are handled or held during one's work-life (Handoko, 2014). Career development is the personal improvements made by someone to achieve a career plan. Career development according to Dessler (2014) is defined as a series of lifelong activities (such as workshops) that contribute to the exploration, formation, success, and fulfillment of one's career. Career development is the support an organization provides to employee professional growth, especially to employees' movement to a new position or project within the organization.

This why Merican, Monil, Rafie and Tajuddin (2022) carried out a study on the effect of career planning, talent management and training development towards employee retention. The study determines the association of career development with employee retention in Malaysian airline industry. The results indicated that career planning, training, and development with talent management were significant and positively correlated with employee retention. Merican et.al reviewed and discussed major variables like, career planning, training and development, talent management and retention.

The main purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between talent management and employee placement and retention in the Universities in South East Nigeria. Specifically, the study determined:

1. how compensation planning in talent management relates to employee placement and retention in public universities in South east, Nigeria.

how career development in talent management relates to employee placement and retention in public universities in Southeast Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study.

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1. How does compensation planning relate to employee placement and retention in public universities (Federal and State) in South-East Nigeria?
2. How does career development relate to employee placement and retention in public universities (Federal and State) in South-East Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following corresponding hypotheses were also tested at .05 level of significant

1. There is no significant relationship between compensation planning and placement and retention of employees in public universities (Federal and State) in South East Nigeria.
2. There is no significant relationship between career development and placement and retention of the employees in public universities (Federal and State) in South East Nigeria.

Methods

This study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study comprised 819 senior administrative staff of universities which were made up of Assistant Registrars (ARs), Senior Assistant Registrars (SARs), Principal Assistant Registrars (PARs), Deputy Registrars (DRs), and Registrars in all public (Federal and State) universities in south-east Nigeria, this population is considered appropriate for this study because they are involved in recruitment and selection. The sample size of this study was 249 senior administrative staff of the public universities (Federal and State) in South-east Nigeria who were drawn using proportionate stratified sampling technique for the categories of the sample. The questionnaire titled "Talent Management Questionnaire (TMQ)", "Employee Placement Questionnaire (EPQ)" and "Employee Retention (ERQ)" which was gotten through records from the Personnel department of the Universities under the study, was developed by the researcher. Talent Management Questionnaire (TMQ) was adapted from Talent Management Instrument by Yener, Gurbuz and Acar (2017). The rest of the two (EPQ and ERQ) were researcher-constructed from literature.

Face validity of the instrument was established using the opinions of experts. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the various sections of the instruments which gave 0.878 for compensation planning scale, 0.926 for career development, The researcher, with the help of eight research assistants administered and recovered 249 copies of the questionnaire to the senior administrative staff of the public universities (federal and State) in South east Nigeria. It took the respondents two days to fill the questionnaires, Data on retention were got through an instrument accompanied by a letter addressed to the Personnel department.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) to answer the research questions and Multivariate Simple Linear Regression (MSLR) with Fisher-Z test for testing the null hypotheses. This implies that if P is less than or equal to 0.05, a hypothesis was rejected, otherwise it was accepted.

Results

The results are presented in the order of the research questions and the corresponding hypothesis.

Research Question 1. How does compensation planning relate to employee placement and retention in public universities (Federal and State) in South-East Nigeria?

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Table 1
Bivariate Correlation between Compensation Planning, Placement and Retention based on Ownership of Institution

	Federal Universities			State Universities			Overall
Variables	1	2	3	1	2	3	1
1. Compensation Planning	1			1			
2. Employee Placement	.130	1		-.020	1		.032
3. Employee Retention	-.177	.296	1	.012	.073	1	.089

Data presented in Table 1 reveal the correlation between compensation planning, employee placement and employee retention. Based on Federal universities, the Table reveals a positive low correlation between compensation planning and employee placement (r = .130) but a negative low correlation between compensation planning and employee retention (r = -.177). Conversely, for the State universities, there is a low negative correlation between compensation planning and employee placement (r = -.020) but a positive low correlation between compensation planning and employee retention (r = -.177).

Research Question 2. How does career development relate to employee placement and retention in public universities (Federal and State) in South-East Nigeria?

Table 2
Bivariate Correlation between Career Development, Placement and Retention based on Ownership of Institution

	Federal Universities			State Universities			Overall
Variables	1	2	3	1	2	3	1
1. Career Development	1			1			
2. Employee Placement	.091	1		.036	1		.089
3. Employee Retention	-.035	.296	1	-.346	.073	1	-.201

Data presented in Table 2 reveal the correlation between career development, employee placement and employee retention. For the Federal universities, the Table reveals a positive low correlation between career development and employee placement (r = .091) but a negative low correlation between career development and employee retention (r = -.035). In a similar vein, for the State universities, there is a low positive correlation between career development and employee placement (r = .036) and a negative low correlation between compensation planning and employee retention (r = -.346).

Hypothesis 1. There is no significant relationship between compensation planning and placement and retention of employees in public universities (Federal and State) in South East Nigeria.

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Table 3
Summary of Multivariate and Fisher-Z Test of Relationship between Compensation Planning, Employee Placement and Retention based Ownership of Universities

	Employee Placement					Employee Retention				
Ownership	R	R^2	F	Zcal	Ztab	R	R^2	F	Zcal	Ztab
Federal	.130	.677	2.514	-.39	-1.96	.020	.321	.567	.08	1.96
State	.177	.291	1.915			.012	.071	.358		

Note. df1 = 5, 6, df2 = 3, 14, N_1 = Federal = 123, N_2 = State = 119.

Table 3 shows the multivariate regression between compensation planning and employee placement for federal universities, R^2 = .677, $F(5, 6)$ = 2.514, and state universities, R^2 = .291, $F(3, 14)$ = 1.915. The Table also shows the multivariate regression between compensation planning and employee retention for federal universities, R^2 = .020, $F(5, 6)$ = .567, and state universities, R^2 = .071, $F(3, 14)$ = .358. The Fisher-Z test (Zcal = -0.39) for employee placement is less than the critical Z-value of 1.96. Hence, federal and state universities do not differ in the relationship between compensation planning and employee placement. Similarly, the Fisher-Z test (Zcal = 0.08) for employee retention is less than the critical Z-value of 1.96. Therefore, federal and state universities do not differ in the relationship between compensation planning and employee retention.

Hypothesis 2. There is no significant relationship between career development and placement and retention of the employees in public universities (Federal and State) in South East Nigeria.

Table 4
Summary of Multivariate and Fisher-Z Test of Relationship between Career Development, Employee Placement and Retention based Ownership of Universities

	Employee Placement					Employee Retention				
Ownership	R	R^2	F	Zcal	Ztab	R	R^2	F	Zcal	Ztab
Federal	.091	.611	4.181	.38	-1.96	.036	.031	.086	-.04	1.96
State	.035	.330	1.597			.346	.166	.647		

Note. df1 = 3, 8, df2 = 4, 13, N_1 = Federal = 123, N_2 = State = 119.

Table 4 shows the multivariate regression between career development and employee placement for federal universities, R^2 = .611, $F(3, 8)$ = 4.181, and state universities, R^2 = .330, $F(4, 13)$ = 1.597. The Table also shows the multivariate regression between career development and employee retention for federal universities, R^2 = .031, $F(3, 8)$ = .086, and state universities, R^2 = .166, $F(4, 13)$ = .647. The Fisher-Z test (Zcal = 0.38) for employee placement is less than the critical Z-value of 1.96. Hence, federal and state universities do not differ in the relationship between career development and employee placement. Similarly, the Fisher-Z test (Zcal = -0.04) for employee retention is less than the critical Z-value of 1.96. Thus, federal and state universities do not differ in the relationship between career development and employee retention.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed the correlation between compensation planning, employee placement and employee retention on employees of Federal and State universities. The result shows that there was a positive correlation between compensation planning and employee placement and a negative correlation between compensation planning and employee retention. However, in the State

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universities, there was a low negative correlation between compensation planning and employee placement while a positive low correlation existed between compensation planning and employee placement but a positive low correlation between compensation planning and employee retention. The corresponding hypothesis also shows that federal and state universities do not differ in the relationship between compensation planning and employee retention. These findings are in consonance with Suri (2016) who studied the impact of employee compensation on organizational effectiveness and found the relationship between compensation and employee satisfaction, motivation and performance. It was found that compensation had great impact on organizatinal effectiveness. The findings of the study suggested that in order to implement their strategies, institutional/organizations must design and implement reward system to focus on employees' attention on specific behaviours that are consistent with strategic goals. This also corroborates the views of Amoo, Saka and Dangana (2020) that the management of banks should maintain a desired level of benefits, attractive salary packages, training opportunities and restructure the culture of the banking firms by implementing appropriate healthcare policies that will be beneficial to employees in the sector so as to increase loyalty and higher retention rate in the banking industry.

Supporting the views of Amoo, Saka and Dangana, is Che Omar (2019) held that employee turnover is often costly and disruptive which organizations want to avoid. This prompts organizations' focus on compensation, benefit, retention, importance of employees' satisfaction and strategies aimed at in retaining employees. Based on the foregoing, it must be emphasized that without compensation planning, employee retention will not be achieved especially in this period of global economic downturn. The findings also revealed that employees in the Federal and State universities slightly differed in their compensation planning as it relates to placement and retention. The study revealed that at the Federal universities, there was a positive effect of compensation planning on employee placement and a negative relationship between compensation planning and employee retention, whereas at the State universities, there was a negative relationship between compensation planning and employee placement and a positive relationship between compensation planning and employee retention.

The findings of the study revealed the correlation between career development and employee placement and retention in public Federal universities. The results revealed that at the Federal universities, there was a positive relationship between career development and employee placement and a negative correlation between career development and employee retention. In a similar vein, at the State universities, there was a positive relationship between career development and employee placement and a negative relationship between career development and employee retention. The corresponding hypothesis 2 also showed that federal and state universities do not differ in the relationship between career development and employee placement and retention.

This Findings is in consonance with Wane (2016) who determined the effect of career development programmes on employee retention in international non-governmental organisations in Kenya. The findings of the study revealed that career development programmes affected employee retention. It was also established that organizational career planning was a fundamental human resource policy concluded that career counseling was a fundamental human resource policy in organisations. Supporting the findings of Wane, Magaji, Akpa and Ogundiwin (2021) examined career development, job security and employee retention: An empirical study of selected private universities in Ogun State Nigeria. The study revealed that career development had a significant positive effect on employee retention. This simply means that organisations and institutions should

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engage more in career development and job security to create an ambience in the work environment that will encourage employee retention.

Conclusion

The findings of this study, led to the conclusion that retention of talented workers can be achieved if these two components- compensation and career development are imbedded into management policies of universities and that appropriate placement rules and procedures exist. It is also concluded that employees in Federal and state-owned universities differ in the way they programme or strategize these components for employees.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Management of public universities should ensure that the right and appropriate compensations both in cash, materials, promotions as at when due and stable atmosphere devoid of toxic air are included in their programmes and activities. This will not only help to retain talented employees but will also bring out the best in them.
2. The National Universities Commission (NUC) should lay emphasizes on appropriate placement of employees as this is the unseen force behind employee career development and retention.

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