

Assessment of factors influencing employee retention in Tanzania's work organisations

Jackson M.E. Muhoho

Assistant Lecturer,
Department of Project planning and Management,
Tengeru Institute of community development (TICD), Arusha, Tanzania

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ABSTRACT: This paper assessed the factors influencing employee retention in Tanzania's public and private sector workplaces. The purpose of the study was to reveal and assess the factors perceived by employees as forces influencing retention at the workplace in each sector and investigating employers' psychological factors and different methods used by the organizations in retaining their best employees in each sector. The study used semi-structured, closed and open ended questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions, Key informants as well as review of documents from various libraries and online resources. This study used a sample of 60 respondents drawn from ten (10) selected organizations. Software Package for Statistical Science (SPSS) version 20.0 and excel. The study findings revealed that there is a high rate of turnover in Tanzania's work organizations and that those who stayed in the same organization were from public organizations particularly higher learning institutions. The study also revealed that, low salaries and benefits were the main reason for leaving. Furthermore, employer psychological factors including organizational justice and prestige were mentioned as influence to employee retention. Increasing salaries was mentioned to be the strategy used by the most companies in retaining their employees. The study, therefore, recommends that the selected organizations and others should conduct regular review of the remunerations, structure good retirement plans and foster a congenial or conducive work environment that provide and create opportunities for further development, continuous renewal and learning, and deepening of employee motivation to contribute stupendously to the organization's performance, workplace excellence, and competitive advantage.

KEYWORDS: Employee, employee retention, HRM, motivation strategy, talent management.

1 INTRODUCTION

This study mainly focused on the assessment of the factors influencing employee retention at work with a special attention to the Tanzania's work organizations. The retention of employees has been shown to be significant to the development and accomplishment of the organization's goals and objectives (Alkandari and Hammad, 2009). Retention of employees can be a vital source of competitive advantage for any organization (Mullins, 2010; Amstrong, 2005; Ngozwana and Rugimbana, 2010). Today, changes in technology, global economics, trade agreements and the like are directly affecting employee/employer relationships. The loss of talented employees may be very detrimental to the company's future success (Terence, Brooks, and Thomas, 2001; Carney, 1998). Outstanding employees may leave an organization because they become dissatisfied, under paid or unmotivated (Coff, 1996).

Dyer, L. and Erickson, J. (2005) argued that better employees may move to other organizations for better opportunities; the coworkers who cannot improve their positions are more likely to stay. This is especially possible when outstanding performance for high performers is not distinctively rewarded; Workplace managers are compelled to improve skills in decision making pertaining to retaining of best talents and employees (Murphy, 1985; Hong and Kaur, 2008; Abdullah, 2009). To achieve this, all this study findings suggest is to nurture and maintain conducive environment and climate that guarantee the employee stay, loyalty and highly degree of connectedness and performance in the organization which is in line with the propounding of Kotler J.P and Heskett, J.L. (1995) on the role of strong culture and workplace climate. Managers must improve their decision making and leadership styles to ensure improved work climate that fosters employee commitment

and engagement at work and to the organization overall cause and mission (Abdullah,2009;Chiboiwa ,Samuel, and Chipunza,2010;Khatri,Fern, and Budhwar,2001)

2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section covers details the sample determination and data, data collection instruments and data analysis methods

2.2 SAMPLING AND DATA

The research was undertaken within two main groups of people in the selected organizations. First group comprised company management teams and the second group comprised the remaining employees who were neither in senior nor junior management positions. The research collected the data from sixty (60) people of selected organizations management teams and employees who were not in any management cadres. 60 respondents were distributed as follows. 40 respondents filled questionnaires. 8 respondents were involved in focus group discussions (FGDs) and 12 respondents were the key informants. The selected target population was stratified basing on age and sex. They were randomly selected and clustered according their status. The sample elements selected were based on the representation of population of the interest group (Bryman, 2004). Both primary and secondary data were collected at the qualitative and quantitative levels .

2.2.1 PRIMARY DATA

Primary data were directly obtained from the surveyed organizations. It was collected from the sample population through survey, employing questionnaires, FGDs as well as interviews held with some informants in the selected organizations. Primary data was expected to be obtained from the main groups of selected organizations senior management teams and other employees including those with junior positions.

2.2.2 SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data for this study were collected from books, journals, reports and newspapers, both published and unpublished, as well as from online sources. As a matter of principle the secondary data was used to support the research findings.

2.3 POPULATION OF THE STUDY

Population means all the individuals or objects that meet certain requirements for membership in the overall group (Churchill and Brown, 2007). The population of the study included all public and private work organizations in Tanzania. However, because of limitation on time and other resources including finance, the study focused on ten (10) selected organizations that formed the sample.

2.4 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

In this study, structured and unstructured questionnaires were used in data collection. Most importantly; the questionnaires were carefully designed to avoid responses that might be biased in favor of the study objectives. They were also prepared according to the status of the targeted group. Questionnaire was chosen by the researcher because of the following reasons: - it encouraged great honest, possibilities of enquiring absent attitude and opinions, they could be written for specific purpose, within a short time, one could collect a lot of information as well as its possibilities of mailing them made them economic in term of costs(Kothari,2010)

2.5 DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

Both qualitative and simple quantitative approaches were used during the data analysis. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in data analysis. Simple frequency tables were produced as outputs from SPSS and then analyzed based on their figures. The researcher interpreted data in accordance with the quality of arguments made rather than quantity of the respondents with the same opinions. The questionnaires were classified in terms of the answers that were

similar so as to reduce the work of analyzing each questionnaire. The aim of interviewing was to allow the researcher to elicit into person's perspectives and opinions over various aspects or factors influencing retention at work

2.6 UNIT OF ANALYSIS

Under this study the unit of analysis was individuals/employees who filled questionnaires, formed the focus group discussions (FGDs) as well as those who were key informants

2.7 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THIS STUDY

The validity and reliability of information collected from the field or study points was ensured through effectively designed and administered questionnaires, interviews, focus groups discussions, data processing and analysis

3 STUDY FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section examines the research findings with the view to understand the characteristics and nature of respondents, opinions, and to assess the factors for employee retention in Tanzania's public and private work organizations. Specifically, the study assessed factors perceived by employees' retention in organizations in each sector; assessed employer psychological factors on their influence to retention in each sector (Cawe, 2006); it investigated different methods used by the organizations in retaining their best employees in each sector. Lastly, the study identified constraints facing selected organizations in retaining their best employees. The information presented in this section relied heavily on questionnaire, key informant interviews and various documents on what has been done to curb the situation as well as field data from Barclays bank offices.

3.2 DATA PRESENTATION

3.2.1 STATISTICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

This section aims at discussing the respondents' profile to enable the researcher establish the extent of judgment one might have in the area of the study. Among the researched respondents' characteristic include sex, age, marital status, education level, and experience with the organization as well as the number of the employees left the organization within the past ten years.

3.2.2 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS ON RESPONDENTS' INSTITUTION

The study aimed to investigate a number of institutions with different mechanisms used in motivating their employees. The study found that 3 (7.5%) respondents were the Tanzania Postal bank, 4(10%) respondents were from National Social Security Fund, 3 (7.5%) respondents were from Parastatal Pension Fund, 6 (15%) respondents were from the Open University of Tanzania and 5 (12.5%) were from Kinondoni Municipal Council. Also, the study found that 5 (12.5%) respondents were from TANESCO, 3 (7.5%) were from Tumaini University, 5 (12.5%) were from Zantel, 3 (7.5%) were from DAWASCO while other 3(7.5%) were from AirTel Tanzania. This statistics above indicate that organizations of different nature, different services they offer to their clients were represented. However, the majority of respondents were from the Open University of Tanzania. This was possibly contributed by the nature of the organization and therefore, organization offered cooperation in filling the questionnaires.

Table 3.2.2 Respondents' institution (N=40)

Organization of the Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Tanzania Postal Bank	3	7.5
National Social Security Fund	4	10.0
Parastatal Pension Fund	3	7.5
The Open University of Tanzania	6	15.0
Kinondoni Municipal	5	12.5
TANESCO	5	12.5
Tumaini University	3	7.5
ZANTEL	5	12.5
DAWASCO	3	7.5
AirTel Tanzania	3	7.5
Total	40	100.0

Source: research findings, (2013/2014)

3.2.3 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS ON RESPONDENTS' AGE

Age was considered as an important variable in assessing Factors influencing employees' retention in public and private sector work organizations in Tanzania. The study findings shows that 4 (10%) respondents were from the age group between 20 and 30 years. 22 (55%) respondents were from the age between 31 to 40 years. 5 (12.5%) were from the age group between 41 and 50 and 9 (22.5%) were from the age group between 51 and 60 years. The statistics signify that all age groups were considered during employments process of the selected organizations. However, a large number of employees who were more than half were from the age group between 31 to 40 years. This implies that the age group between 31 and 40 years are the one who is at the product level and available in the labor market. Therefore, many organizations prefer this age group. Table 3.2.3 illustrates.

Table 3.2.3 Respondents' age (N=40)

Age of the Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Between 20 to 30 years	4	10.0
Between 31 -40 years	22	55.0
Between 41-50 years	5	12.5
Between 51-60 years	9	22.5
Total	40	100.0

Source: research findings, (2013/2014)

3.2.4 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS ON RESPONDENTS' SEX

The study involved 40 (100%) respondents who filled the questionnaires. 21 (52.5 %) of total respondents were male and 19 (47.5 %) were female. The results in the table below reveal that there was a slight difference between male and female respondents. Therefore, gender was seriously taken into consideration to collect data from the respondents (Table 3.2.4).

Table 3.2.4 Respondents' sex

Sex of the Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	21	52.5
Female	19	47.5
Total	40	100.0

Source: research findings, (2013/2014)

3.2.5 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS ON RESPONDENTS' MARITAL STATUS

Marital status was considered as an important element to consider during this study. The findings revealed that 6 (15%) of total respondents were single. 34 (85%) were married respondents. No respondents were from the group of divorced and widows. These figures revealed that there was huge difference between married and single respondents during this study. Therefore, this statistics implies that the selected organizations recruited more married employees than from other groups of marital status (Table 3.2.5).

Table 3.2.5 marital status of the respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	6	15.0
Married	34	85.0
Divorced/divorcee	0	0
Widow/ widower	0	0
Total	40	100.0

Source: research findings, (2013 /2014)

3.2.6 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS ON RESPONDENTS' EDUCATION LEVEL

Again education level was considered as an important attribute to consider when assessing the factors influencing employees' retention in public and private sector work organizations in Tanzania. This was because, education was assumed to have a crucial role in enabling respondents to understand different questions on the factors influencing employee retention in both public and private work organizations. The study found that 2 (5%) had a qualification of certificate. 3 (7.5%) were a diploma holder. 20 (50%) of respondents were university graduates and 13 (24%) were masters' degree holders. only 2 (5%) of the respondents were having PhD and postgraduate diploma respectively. Therefore, the statistics indicate that all categories of education were considered by the selected organizations during recruitment processes. However, many respondents were those who had bachelor and masters' degree. Table, 3.2.6 illustrates.

Table 3.2.6 Respondents' education level

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Certificate	2	5.0
Diploma	3	7.5
University degree	20	50.0
Master degree	13	32.5
Others	2	5.0
Total	40	100.0

Source: research findings, (2013/2014)

3.2.7 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS ON RESPONDENTS' EXPERIENCE WITH THE ORGANIZATION

Respondents were asked to state their work experience with their current organizations. The study statistics indicate that 18 (45%) worked with their current organizations for the period of less than four years. 11 (27.5%) worked between five and ten with their current organizations. 2(5%) worked with their employer between 11 and 14 years. 9 (22.5%) worked with their employer for more than 14 years. Therefore, the statistics shows that most of the respondents were new to their employer. The study revealed that those who had long experience with their employer were from public organizations particularly higher learning institutions. Table 3.2.7 illustrates the above findings.

Table 3.2.7 Respondents work experience

Work experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 4 years	18	45.0
Between 5 and 10 years	11	27.5
Between 11 and 14 years	2	5.0
Above 14 years	9	22.5
Total	40	100.0

Source: research findings, (2013/2014)

3.2.8 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS ON THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEE LEFT THE ORGANIZATION

The study was interested in understanding the number of employees who left the selected organizations within the past ten years. The study findings revealed that 5 (12.5%) respondents pointed out that, less than 5 employees had left their organizations. 7 (17.5%) respondents reported that, employees between 5 and 10 had left the organizations. 5 (12.5%) respondents reported that employees between 11 and 15 had left the organization. 2(5%) respondents reported turnover rate between 16 and 20 employees while 21 (52.5%) reported that more than 20 employees had left the organizations within the past 10 years. Therefore, the study findings imply that there is a high rate of turnover in Tanzania work organizations. Employees tend to change organizations with different goals including looking for a greener pasture. Table 3.2.8 illustrates the above findings.

Table 3.2.8: Turnover rate

Turnover rate	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 5 employees	5	12.5
Between 5 and 10 employees	7	17.5
Between 11 and 15 employees	5	12.5
Between 16 and 20 employees	2	5.0
Above 20 employees	21	52.5
Total	40	100.0

Source: research findings, (2013/2014)

During the FGDs held with some respondents from public institutions, respondents in responding to the question on the number of employees who left within the past 10 years indicated that more than twenty had left. Similarly, in the private work organizations, respondents indicated that turnover rate within past ten years was less than twenty. Therefore, their response indicates the significance difference in turnover between private and public work organizations in Tanzania.

3.2.9 INTENTION OF QUITTING THE ORGANIZATION

The study was interested in understanding whether the employees ever considered quitting their current employer. The study found that 28 (70%) considered quitting once in their organizations. 12 (30%) never thought quitting from their organizations. The statistics implies that due to different reasons, there were huge turnover intentions in most selected organizations. Information received from the departments of human resource of the organizations indicated that intention of quitting was possibly attributed by human nature of not being satisfied from what receive as advocated by the Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory. The statistics is illustrated in the table 3.2.9.

Table 3.2.9 Intention of quitting the organization

Considering quitting the organization	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	28	70.0
No	12	30.0
I don't know		
Total	40	100.0

Source: research findings, (2013/2014)

3.2.10 PRIMARY REASON FOR LEAVING THE ORGANIZATION

The study was interested in understanding what the respondents thought to be the primary reasons for quitting the organizations. The study findings revealed that 15 (37.5%) respondents indicated that insufficient salaries were the primary reason for employee turnover. 24 (60%) pointed out that pursuing other career goals were the primary reason for employee turnover in the selected organizations. 1 (2.5%) pointed out other reasons for employee turnover in the selected organizations. No respondents mentioned insufficient retirement plans, physical working conditions, high stress working conditions as well as work hours to be the primary reasons for employee turnover in the selected organizations. Therefore, the study findings signify that people leave the organizations mostly to pursue their other career goals. Table 3.2.9 illustrates the above statistics.

Table 3.2.10 Primary reasons for leaving the organizations

Primary reason for leaving	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Insufficient salary	15	37.5
Insufficient retirement plans	0	0
Pursue other career goals	24	60.0
Physical working conditions	0	0
High stress working conditions	0	0
Work hours/shift work	0	0
Others	1	2.5
Total	40	100.0

Source: research findings, (2013/2014)

3.3 DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY FINDINGS

This part discusses the findings based on the factors by the employees' retention in the organizations, employers' physiological factors influencing employee retention, methods used in retaining employees as well as constraints facing the organizations in retaining their employees.

3.3.1 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS ON THE FACTORS PERCEIVED BY EMPLOYEES' RETENTION IN ORGANIZATIONS

3.3.1.1 IMPROVED SALARY AND BENEFITS

A well structured salary and benefits may have a positive influence on the employee retention. Contrary, when they are poorly structured they may lead to the employee turnover. The respondents were asked to rank different issues in relation to their influence on retention. The findings revealed that salaries and other benefits had influence on the employee retention. The statistics shows that 19 (47.5%) respondents pointed out that salaries very strongly determined retention in the organization. 10 (25%) argued that salaries strongly determined retention in the organizations. 11 (27.5%) fairly influenced the retention in the organizations. No respondents rejected salaries for being the influence in retaining employees. The study findings revealed that 12 (30%) respondents pointed out that benefits strongly influenced employee retention. 13 (32.5%) respondents indicated that benefits strongly influenced employee retention. 13 (32.5%) pointed out that benefits fairly

influenced retention and 2 (5%) indicated that benefits had no influence at all on employee retention. Therefore, the findings indicate that, both salary and benefits had a strong influence on the employee retention.

Table 3.3.1.1 below illustrates the study findings.

Table 3.3.1.1 Salary and benefits

Improved salary	Frequency	Percent
Very strongly	19	47.5
Strongly	10	25.0
Fairly	11	27.5
No influence at all	0	0
Total	40	100.0
Improved benefits		
Very strongly	12	30.0
Strongly	13	32.5
Fairly	13	32.5
No influence at all	2	5.0
Total	40	100.0

Source: research findings, (2013/2014)

3.3.1.2 GOOD RETIREMENT PLANS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

The study aimed to find how good retirement plans and opportunities for further development played a role in retaining employees in the selected organizations. The study findings revealed that 5 (12.5%) pointed out that good retirement plans very strongly influenced the employee retention in the selected organizations. 11(27.5%) respondents indicated that good retirement plans of the organizations selected. 17 (42.5%) indicated that good retirement plan had a fairly influence on the employee retention in the selected organizations and 7 (17.5%) respondents showed that retirement plans did not have any influence in the selected organizations. The statistics above implies that retirement plans practiced by the organizations played fairly role in influencing the retention of employees as illustrated in the table 3.3.1.2. Furthermore, the study investigated on the influence of opportunities for further development on employee retention. The findings shows that 9 (22.5%) indicated that employee opportunities for further development very strongly influenced their retention in the organization. 15 (37.5%) respondents revealed that employee opportunities for further development strongly influenced their retention in the organization. 13(32.5%) respondents revealed that employee opportunities for further development fairly influenced their retention in the organization and 3 (7.5%) did not see any influence of employee opportunities for further development on employee retention in the selected organizations as illustrated in the table 3.3.1.2 below.

Table 3.3.1.2 Good retirement plans and opportunities for further development

Good retirement plans	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very strongly influenced	5	12.5
Strongly influenced	11	27.5
Fairly influenced	17	42.5
No influence at all	7	17.5
Total	40	100.0
Opportunities for further development		
Very strongly influenced	9	22.5
Strongly influenced	15	37.5
Fairly influenced	13	32.5
No influence at all	3	7.5
Total	40	100.0

Source: research findings, (2013/2014)

3.3.2 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS ON EMPLOYER PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE RETENTION

The study findings revealed that 15 (37.5%) respondents indicated that insufficient salaries were the primary reason for employee turnover. 24 (60%) pointed out that pursuing other career goals were the primary reason for employee turnover in the selected organizations. 1 (2.5%) pointed out other reasons for employee turnover in the selected organizations. However, in the questionnaires no respondents mentioned insufficient retirement plans, physical working conditions, high stress working conditions as well as work hours to be the primary reasons for employee turnover in the selected organizations. But they pointed out that physiological factors were their secondary factors for their reasons for leaving or staying in the selected organizations. Therefore, the study findings signify that people leave the organizations mostly to pursue their other career goals as substantiated and propounded by **Armstrong M.**(2005). To capture more relevant information from the respondents on what they thought to be psychological factors influencing employee retention, various other methods were used. These included FGDs as well as the key informants. The findings reveal that respondents from the FGDs indicated organization justice and prestige which employee felt influenced the retention. The organizations which provided to the employees high security to their jobs and feeling proud of being the organizational members played an important role in retention.

Furthermore, when key informants were asked on what they thought to be employer psychological factors influencing employee retention. They pointed out that employee engagement made them feel as a part and parcel of the organizations businesses. Therefore, they felt being valued by the employer and therefore, they had no intention of leaving their organizations. They also noted that this boosted their psychological commitment they had with their employers.

3.3.3 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS ON METHODS USED BY THE ORGANIZATIONS IN RETAINING EMPLOYEES

The study findings revealed that the increased salaries, improvement of employee relations as well as improved benefits were the methods used in employee retention.

3.3.4 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS ON CHALLENGES FACING ORGANIZATIONS IN RETAINING THEIR EMPLOYEES

The study was interested in understanding challenges which were facing the organizations selected. The FGDs and the key informants were used to tap the required information on the challenges facing the selected organizations in retaining their potential employees. In the group of 8 members, 6 revealed that most of the respondents in the questionnaires pointed out to the competition among the pension schemes, law guiding pension scheme which force employer to contribute which effect regular review of employees salaries as a serious challenge towards employee retention in the selected organizations. Likewise the key informants from the departments and directorates of the visited organizations contended that meeting the demands of every employee expectations in terms of salary and career growth were among the challenges facing them. They further noted that finding the best way of keeping their potential employees considering competition in the labour markets were also alarming.

4 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This part presents the conclusion, recommendations and areas for further study. The main objective of the study was to investigate and assess the factors influencing employees' retention in public versus private sector work organizations in Tanzania and recommend strategies for improving employee retention accordingly

4.2 CONCLUSION

Since employee retention is a critical and vital force to both the organization performance and gaining competitive advantage in today's workplace market, and business environment ,companies and employers should work hard towards achieving a highly teamed up workplace and organizations through integrating and alignment of organizational goals with individual employee or personnel goals. They need to be engaged with the company at the same time being equitably remunerated and treated well accordingly. Organizations failing to equitably remunerate and treat well their employee are likely to suffer a high employee turnover rate that can, in turn, cost employers a great deal of financial distress .Managers especially in the twenty first century must inevitably sufficiently plan and invest to maintain sound employee retention climate and optimize employee engagement in order to foster retention of competent, and talented workforce

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The internal barriers that arise within the organization may be resolved within the organization, but most of the times an appropriate retention strategy must take into consideration of the external factors /constraints especially those requiring macro-level interventions in the form of government intervention. Based on these study findings the following recommendations are made hereunder:

- i. Because of availability of large turnover intentions in most selected organizations, there is a compelling need for the respective organizations to find the right and more effective ways of satisfying employees;
- ii. There should be a clear efforts by the organizations selected to work towards developing individual career of their employees. By so doing, people degree of leaving the organizations mostly to pursue their other career goals will be heavily minimized.
- iii. Salary and benefits as an important attribute should be competitive and should also be reviewed on regular basis to reflect the prevailing labor market rate;
- iv. The organizations selected should structure for a good and better retirement plans and create opportunities for further development to employees;
- v. Justice and prestige to the employees should be considered in reducing the turnover. The organizations should provide employees high security to their jobs and hence feel proud of being the organizational members.

4.4 AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The findings of this study did not cover comprehensively all factors which influence employees' retention in the Tanzania work organizations. The study provides other areas for the further research including:-

- i. Specific study to assess the contribution of the incentive schemes in employees satisfaction;
- ii. Study to investigate into strategies used by the charity based organizations in retaining their potential employees.

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