

**HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION
PRACTICE IN SELECTED PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES AS A DESTINATION IN
SOUTHWEST, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This study investigated the effect of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices on performance in private universities in Southwest, Nigeria. The study examined the effect of human resource management practices on employee retention. The investigation was compelled by the inadequate attention being meted out to adoption of HRM practices in private universities in the study area. Descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The study population frame is 3,261 (three thousand two hundred and sixty-one) involving all academic staff members from the selected private universities in Southwest, Nigeria. The Taro Yamane formula was used to statistically determine the sample size, which was 356 (three hundred and fifty-six). The study used primary data and collected responses from respondents in the selected private universities in Southwest, Nigeria through a structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics employed for data analysis were frequency counts, simple percentages, bar charts, mean scores, and standard deviations, while the inferential statistics utilized was the multiple regression with the aid of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 23. The results of the study revealed that, Human Resource Management (HRM) practices had a significant impact on employee retention in the selected private universities in Southwest, Nigeria ($\beta=.852$; $t = 12.684$, $p < .05$). The study concluded that the adoption of HRM practices such as recreational programmes, relocation benefits, educational fees assistance has improved organizational performance in private universities in Southwest Nigeria. The study therefore recommended that to allow for increased organizational performance, the variables of HRM practices namely employee retention needs to be employed by universities and it should be modelled in such a way that the employers can employ it for their university operations.

Keywords: HRM Practices, Employee retention, Private Universities, Southwest, Nigeria.

Introduction

In many centuries to come, the existence of business institutions, particularly universities, will rely heavily on the level of competence of their human capital and how they manage their institutions (Nkeobuna & Ugoani, 2020). Universities as collective organizations require a capacity to maintain their operating environment, technology, and structures. Personnel is the prevalent representation among these three. The human element is integral to the construction, design, and operation of an establishment arrangement. (Eneh & Awara, 2016) Human resource management

(HRM) practices present an inconceivable opportunity for enhancing organizational success. Many nations' commercial interdependence has increased global occupation through methodological advances and interconnection (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). This enhancement has also contributed to the increased competitiveness on domestic and international markets, which has aided the organization in recruiting and retaining highly skilled employees (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020).

Private universities in Southwest Nigeria hold untapped potential as a destination for tourism, hospitality, and events. These institutions often boast beautiful campuses with modern facilities, creating an attractive environment for conferences, workshops, and other gatherings. Additionally, the presence of a large student body creates a demand for hotels, restaurants, and entertainment options, fostering the growth of the hospitality sector (Tomasi et al., 2020). This potential is further amplified by research on human resource management practices in these universities (Yessimova et al., 2023). Metilelu et al. (2023) highlights the crucial role universities play in supplying skilled labor for the tourism industry. By focusing on employee retention and compensation practices, these universities can ensure a well-trained workforce to cater to the needs of tourists and event attendees (Michopoulou et al., 2020). This, in turn, strengthens the overall tourism, hospitality, and events ecosystem in the region.

Human resource management practices are the elements that managers and supervisors can use to retain their employees. It is essential to understand that institution instructors are one of the most important building elements of any enlightened nation (Sorasak, Jirasek, and Nutthawut, 2014). In some developed nations, authorities collaborate with instructors to determine the optimal commercial policy for their nation. Even when it comes to consensual conformance with other nations, they want instructors with knowledge of the country they intend to enter into an agreement with (Ogbu & Udensi, 2017).

Educational institutions have been forced to adopt strategies for sustaining and acquiring their competitive interest. Barney, 1991), an establishment's workforce is a significant source of combative interest. Human resource management practices play a preponderant role in attaining a sustainable competitive advantage, as they seek out the optimal employees with the specific skills and abilities that are most compatible with the organization's expectations. This entails establishing HRM rules and practices that pinpoint the organization's needs and perpetuate the achievement of a sustained competitive advantage (Hundley, 2008). The development of higher education in Nigeria began more than 80 years ago with the establishment of Yaba Higher College in 1932 and University College Hospital, Ibadan (UCH) in 1943, which was affiliated with the University of London at the time (Salihu & Jamil, 2015). First-formation universities were established in 1965, second-formation universities were established between 1974 and 1979, third-formation universities were established between 1979 and 1983, fourth-formation universities were established between 1988 and 2003, and universities established between 2003 and the present are considered fifth or new formation universities (Salihu & Jamil, 2015). Nigeria is one of the African nations with the largest and most extensive higher education systems (Obasi, 2007). Over the years, the structures of higher education in Nigeria have undergone significant development and diversification in order to compete with contemporary centres of education, which are dominated by multiple influences such as internationalization, digitalization, and globalization (Obasi, 2007). In addition, the formation of private colleges in Nigeria was largely a result of the inability of

public colleges to admit students seeking admission to advanced learning institutions (Okoro & Okoro, 2014; Salihu & Jamil, 2015). The formation of private colleges in the United States aims to provide reasonable access to higher education in areas with restricted access. Therefore, Omomia and Babalola (2014) argued that the perception of private advanced education in Nigeria is a method of acquiring liberalism to assist advanced education institutions in becoming self-managed through denationalization.

In Nigeria, the demand for private higher education stems from a few primary factors, such as the inability to meet admission requirements in higher education and the deteriorating character of university graduates (Akindele, 2013). Moreover, demographic shifts and transitions contributed to the demand for private higher education in the country, like the situation in many South-East Asian nations (Salihu, 2020). (Etebong, 2018) The present numerical issue threatening equal access to higher education is the unending population growth (or expanding population). According to Olaiya (2015), education requirements in Nigeria are significant primarily to address a lack of admission to advanced schooling, a lack of recruitment needs, and a lack of finances and assets, thereby increasing the demand for private advanced education in the country. Thus, the prerequisite for private advanced education in the country is the pursuit of international obligations and the improvement of education in the country. Similar to other advancements in various disciplines, the advancement of private advanced education in Nigeria faces convincing obstacles. Atanda (2017) emphasized that the threat posed by private advanced education in Nigeria is more multifaceted as a result of an accumulation of insufficient admission to endowments, increased cost, deteriorating quality, and restrictive course selection. Similarly, Ahunanya and Osakwe (2012) hypothesized that these trials could be shortened due to inadequate infrastructure development, personnel, and funding. Ajadi (2010) emphasized further that private institutions must examine certain trials in advance in addition to courses offered by public colleges, limited intellectual and other personnel, the reduction of tuition fees, and the quality of instruction.

In addition, the expansion of private advanced education in Nigeria is hindered by a lack of information and familiarity, insufficient human talent, and high participation costs. Establishment achievement measures how an organization achieves its objectives through planned strategy, engagement, funding, and legitimacy (Sangeeta & Karan, 2014; Shafique-ur, Raphael, & Hazeline, 2019). Effective human resource management has a significant impact on the organization, resulting in the achievement of high productivity, superior performance, and organizational objectives and goals. Okechukwu, Udochukwu, and Eze (2016) postulate that a deficient human resource management has a significant impact on the establishment or institution. Human resource plays a crucial and valued role in managerial tasks within the establishment or institution. Human resource management practices play a significant role in the accomplishments of a business, which are dependent on a number of factors. Human resource management practices are currently viewed as the primary capital of an organization, and when combined with management, they can improve an organization's performance (Bordbar, 2013). Workers are the establishment's most valuable resource, and their contributions are crucial to the organization's success (Enis, 2017). Based on the aforementioned, this study focuses on the human resource management practices and performance of designated private universities in Southwest Nigeria. Numerous researchers, including (Nkeobuna and Ugoani, 2020) and (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020), have investigated the role of human resource management practices. However, previous research did not address HRM practices and employee retention in the study region of Southwest Nigeria. As a means of advancing knowledge, this is the void that will be filled by this study.

Research Question

Based on the statement of problem, this research question was answered

- i. What is the effect of HRM practices on employee retention in selected private universities in Southwest, Nigeria?

Hypothesis formulated below

H₀₁: Human resource management practices has no significant effect on employee retention in selected private Universities in Southwest, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Concept and Definition of Human Resource Management Practices

Human resource management (HRM) practices have evolved from a state of intellectual and career irrelevance to one of planned significance (Marachi, 2013). As organizations are integrating into a more productive global business environment and the economic development of global markets continues to accelerate, issues pertaining to equivalent human talent administration practices appear to gain momentum. Human resource management practices are essential for enhancing the value of services provided by businesses. According to Becker and Huselid (2006), effective human resource management practices would increase job satisfaction, productivity, retention, and commitment or willingness to exert additional effort to achieve the organization's objectives. Despite the development of HRM studies, the subject is still evolving and requires additional research (Paauwe, 2009). This suggests that the HRM practices sector is undergoing a significant revolution. The most straightforward aspect of the HRM-achievement discussion is the efficacy of the term HRM and the set of practices used (Lepak, Liao, Chung, and Harding, 2006). Combs, Liu, Makridis, Ouimet, & Simintzi (2017); Boselie, Dietz, & Boon (2005); Combs, Liu, Makridis, & Ouimet (2017); Boselie, Dietz, & Boon (2005). Snape and Redman (2010), for instance, defined HRM system as the embodiment of consistent HR practices. Armstrong (2009) elaborated by defining HRM as an integrated and comprehensible set of mutually enhancing practices. In addition, Lepak, Liao, Chung, and Harden (2016) classified the HRM practices system as high-achievement effort systems, high-involvement systems, high-commitment systems, the HRM control system, occupational safety, and customer package. Datta, Guthrie, and Wright (2005) defined HRM practices as a system of methods for enhancing the skills, dedication, and productivity of employees.

Synergizing Education and Tourism with the Untapped Potential of Private Universities in Southwest Nigeria

Private universities in Southwest Nigeria are emerging as pivotal destinations for tourism, hospitality, and events, harboring a reservoir of untapped potential that transcends the traditional educational realm. These institutions are not merely educational centers but are becoming integral to the tourism and hospitality sector, thanks to their aesthetically pleasing campuses equipped with modern facilities. The architectural beauty and the serene landscapes of these campuses provide a perfect backdrop for various gatherings, including conferences, workshops, exhibitions, and even cultural festivals. The availability of state-of-the-art auditoriums, conference rooms, and recreational facilities makes these universities ideal venues for such events. Moreover, the presence of a vibrant student population adds to the dynamic atmosphere, creating a consistent demand for a wide range of services such as hotels, restaurants, cafes, and entertainment venues.

This demand acts as a catalyst for the growth and development of the local hospitality sector, contributing to the economic vibrancy of the region. According to a study by Tomasi et al. (2020), this interconnection between educational institutions and the hospitality industry creates a symbiotic relationship, enhancing the attractiveness of these universities as event destinations while simultaneously fostering the expansion of the local hospitality and tourism industry.

Furthermore, recent research, including that by Yessimova et al. (2023) and Metilelu et al. (2023), underscores the strategic role these universities play in nurturing skilled labor specifically tailored to meet the needs of the tourism and hospitality sectors. By implementing effective human resource management practices, focusing on employee retention, and offering competitive compensation, these institutions ensure the availability of a well-trained workforce adept at catering to the nuanced requirements of tourists and event attendees. This emphasis on quality human resource management is crucial, as highlighted by Michopoulou et al. (2020), for the sustenance and growth of the tourism, hospitality, and events ecosystem. The skilled labor pool emerging from these universities not only enhances the service quality within the region but also attracts businesses and investors looking to capitalize on the burgeoning tourism and hospitality market. As these universities continue to refine their curriculum and training programs in alignment with industry needs, they solidify their position as indispensable contributors to the region's economic development. This evolving landscape presents a unique opportunity for stakeholders across sectors to collaborate, leveraging the rich potential of private universities in Southwest Nigeria as catalysts for growth in tourism, hospitality, and events. Through strategic partnerships and initiatives, these institutions can further augment their role as key drivers of socio-economic development, enriching the cultural fabric and economic resilience of Southwest Nigeria.

Employee Retention

Training, job satisfaction, career advancement, and remuneration are a few of the general principles of personnel retention practice. The majority of public corporations in Kenya, according to Nyanjom (2013), use the following strategies to retain their employees' talent: training, compensation, empowerment, appraisal, promotion, and career growth. Nyanjom (2013) determined that personnel authorization is obtained via stress management programs, guaranteed job safety, and personnel recognition facilities. Teaching was believed to aid not only in employment retention, but also in professional development, which can be accomplished by promoting education programs that can operate concurrently with engagement. Nyangi (2011) demonstrates that Kenyan Forest Service (KFS) personnel remained in the institute's employ due to assistances such as entertaining programs, transfer benefits, worker assistance programs, educational fees, flexible work plan, transport benefits, employee compensation programmes, well-being insurance, study leave, life indemnification, promotion programmes, training and development programmes, and annuity benefits as retention strategies.

In addition, the provision of vacation and holiday benefits has been found to have a significant impact on employee retention in universities by promoting work-life balance, increasing job satisfaction, and enhancing overall well-being (Osibanjo et al., 2014; Davison & Blackburn, 2023). These benefits also reduce tension, improve performance, and attract high-quality personnel, highlighting the significance of employee satisfaction to the success of an organization (Lugaz et al., 2023). These findings lend substantiation to the importance of hospitality in various business sectors, including the hospitality industry, as they demonstrate the importance of establishing a

welcoming and supportive environment for both employees and clients. Approaches to employee retention are the primary determinants of success in reputable organizations (Half, 2018). This is mirrored by administration's capacity to transfer individuals clearly and swiftly from act to act and role to role as business requirements change; retention can therefore only be achieved through a well-integrated retention plan. For a business to qualify a mobile, high-performing workforce, it is crucial that it selects talent, manages its employees' duties, and develops the appropriate professional competencies to meet market demands. Equally important, according to Samuel and Chipunza (2009), is the need to justify acceptable staff retention strategies as a foundation for administrative performance. Even if knowledgeable personnel are hired by the institute and adequate policies to retain them are not in place, the institute is likely to engage in frequent labor adjustments that demotivate the staff, according to the scholars. This indicates that the absence of acceptable employee retention strategies is more likely to disrupt negative administrative performance in either the public or private sector. Samuel and Chipunza (2009).

Theoretical Review

Resource-Based View Theory

The RBV theory is widely utilized by researchers who investigate HRM practices (Wright, Dunford, & Snell, 2002). According to Barney (2002), a company can accomplish sustained development by leveraging its physical, human, and managerial resources in a manner that establishes unique, difficult-to-replicate standards. According to the resource-based view theory (Wernerfelt, 1984), committed employees and competitive advantage originate from the firm's fundamental resources.

The RBV theory emphasizes the interdependence of internal resources, strategy, and firm performance. It accentuates the enhancement of continuous competitive improvement through employee training and development, promotion, compensation, and performance evaluation (Torrington, 2005), as opposed to simply aligning human talent with contemporary strategic objectives. (Miles & Snow, 2004; Porter, 2005) This perspective challenges earlier conceptions of strategy that focused predominantly on external factors such as competitors, industry dynamics, and customers. The RBV provides a theoretical framework that explains how human capital contributes to a company's performance and competitive advantage.

Herzberg's Two Factor Theory

This theory was founded by Herzberg (1969). Motivation-hygiene theory contends that personnel are likely to work successfully if encouraged by intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Hygiene factors are viewed to be those job influences which must be in presence at the place of work for personnel to be encouraged to work (Kasmi, 2011). This theory opined that non-existence of these features in an establishment can lead to dissatisfaction. Hygiene features are also called contentment or upkeep influences as they mediate to reduce levels of personnel discontentment (Heggsted, 2011). The hygiene features that can make personnel achieve may include judicious pay and remunerations, adjustability of management policies, related benefits attached to personnel positions, favorable working atmosphere, good interactive relations among employees and job safety (Greenidge, Alleyne, Parris & Grant, 2012).

Aguenza and Som (2012) maintain that hygiene features are not to be the only instigators but also other features characterized as satisfiers such as distinguishing the effort of hard working personnel by top level executives, personnel ability to have a sense of accomplishment from the job, ability

of the personnel to improve his or her job in the organization through promotions, compensation, ability to accomplish deputized duties meaningfulness and successfully of the work can improve personnel fulfilment to perform. Personnel in an institution are likely to work absolutely near managerial goals if they find their jobs to be motivating or thrilling and vice versa (Bal, Bozkurt & Ertensir, 2012).

Despite the widespread submission of motivation-hygiene theory in human talent administration literature, Farman, Kashif, Syed, Muhammad and Muhammad (2013); Greenidge, Alleyne, Parris and Grant (2012) and Kimani (2017) detected that the theory has some restrictions which make contextualization and of its concepts to be undefined. The theory accepts relationship between productivity and satisfaction (Ligare, 2010). Further, it is perceived that contentment is multidimensional aspect which is influenced and strong-minded by numerous facets thus multifaceted to be measured from background to background. Furthermore, it was perceived that despite appropriateness of contentment in an institution, to some point, establishments may fail to accomplish their aims in the long-term epoch (Ghansah, 2011).

Empirical Review

Human Resource Management Practices (components) and Employee Retention

Sarfaraz, Syed, Mehboob, and Daisy (2017) analyzed the impact of three human resource management practices on the ostensible performance of private university lecturers in Peshawar, Pakistan. Our hypotheses that HRM practices have a strong correlation with scholar performance were validated by the findings of a study involving 123 scholars. Results have been examined in the context of Peshawar colleges, and college proprietors, administrators, and students of human talent administration have been commended. Abu and Mohammed (2016) examined the results of managerial culture, employee commitment, and employee retention. A survey was used to capture data to supplement staff observations. The survey targeted 300 intellectual and managerial personnel employed by five private universities in Bahrain. Using stratified sampling, two hundred eighty operational answers were determined. Using PLS (Partial Least Squares), the results were examined to determine the correlation sandwiched between variables in the model. The responses to the survey were analyzed numerically using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), which provided additional insights into the application of specific HRM practices. The study revealed a direct relationship between HRM practices, employee engagement, employee retention, and organizational culture.

Ikon and Chukwu (2017) investigated the relationship between personnel commitment and achievement at a few private institutions in Delta State, with the specific aim of determining the extent to which personnel language proficiency influences the adjustment plan of college workforces. A survey investigation plan was approved for the study, the entire population of 254 personnel at the specified private colleges was utilized, and the Taro Yamane sampling procedure was utilized to select a sample size of 155 personnel. Utilizing a survey to collect data and the Pearson product moment relationship coefficient analysis to analyze the data. The results indicate a significant positive relationship between personnel expression and personnel turnover plans in private colleges in Delta State. The results led the researchers to conclude that when employees have a say in matters that affect them, it increases their desire to remain at the institution. Abdallah (2018) analyzed the impact of discriminating human talent administration practices (Training and development, promotion, performance appraisal, and compensation) on the personnel's capabilities (attitudes, skills, and knowledge) in private Jordanian institutions. The number of learning

residents at Jordanian private institutions was 1,478, and 104 staff members were nominated as representatives. The author distributed questionnaires and collected primary data using SPSS for analysis. Human resource management (HRM) practices are prevalent and have a positive impact on the personnel's capabilities (skills, knowledge, and dispositions) in Jordanian private institutions, according to the findings. The investigator recommends that Jordanian private institutions make the necessary adjustments to their human talent administration practices (training and development, promotion, performance appraisal, and compensation) to achieve the threat benefits for their institutions.

Alsafadi and Altahat (2021) investigated the impact of human talent administration practices on the performance of educating personnel, using employment satisfaction as the intermediary variable. The demographic of their study consists of employees of Jordanian institutions that generate revenue. Utilizing structural equation modeling techniques, path analysis, and positive influence analysis, the data possessed were investigated. Human resources management (HRM) practices had a progressive effect on personnel performance (PP) and job satisfaction, according to their research. Similarly, their research revealed that personnel commitment facilitated the relationship between human resource management (HRM) practices and personnel performance (PP). Alam, Niu, and Rounok (2021) assessed the effect of green human resource management (GHRM) practices on an organization's environmental performance using green employee empowerment as a reconciling variable. Their research supported the design and distribution of a questionnaire to 340 personnel in the industrialized sector. Utilizing PLS path modeling, the data possessed were evaluated. According to their findings, GHRM practices have a significant impact on EP, and green employee empowerment mediates their retention. Fomude, Kang, Abangbila, Ganiyu, Mukete, and Meena (2020) examined the impact of HRM practices (compensation, promotion, performance appraisal, and training and development) on the performance of Microfinance organizations in Cameroon. For data collection, the study administered a closed-ended questionnaire to 240 respondents. With a significant beta coefficient of 0.388, the research revealed that inspiration and reward have a greater impact on alumni volunteer performance. In Nigeria, Nkeobuna (2020) examined the relationship between planned human talent administration and professional performance. Eighty-six (86) respondents were gathered using a straightforward stratiform sampling technique and an empirical research design.

The collected data was analyzed using descriptive and regression statistical techniques. Results indicate that strategic human talent management has a strong positive correlation with business performance in Nigeria. In addition, the study found that an organization's performance could be enhanced by analyzing and tailoring positions to the ideal candidate. Simarmata (2020) anticipated the impact of HRM practices and human capital investment on the performance of Indonesian small and medium-sized enterprises. The results indicate that HRM practice has a significant impact on the performance of an organization, as it aims to increase the contribution of its personnel to its success. Despite this, the research revealed that HRM practices were neglected in Indonesian MSMEs due to inadequate human resource quality. Daberechukwu and Kamarudin (2021) conducted a systematic literature review on the relationship between human resource management, cultural diversity, job satisfaction, and organization performance. The authors retrieved 19 articles from 2010 to 2020 that were relevant to the study's topic. The findings indicate that human resource management influences job creation, job satisfaction, and organization performance.

Makhamara (2017) investigated the influence of planned human resource management practices on personnel performance in the Kenyan health sector. One of the crucial variables was scheduled instruction and how it affects employee performance. The research was descriptive in nature. The selection of permanent personnel from the health sector was based on a proportional sample, ensuring that the health sector with more residents had more adherents. Both primary and secondary data collection methods were employed. According to the findings of the study, planned training influences personnel performance in the Kenyan health sector. Agoi (2017) investigated the effect of human resource management practices on employee satisfaction in Western Kenyan sugar industrialized enterprises. The study employed a hybrid research design. The research indicates that instructional practices have a significant impact on employee satisfaction. The findings disclosed a positive and significant impact of training practices on employee satisfaction. Kagiri (2014) investigated the role of HRM in invention growth by focusing on how HRM influences inventive processes in Kenyan municipal institutions. Teaching and development were essential components of the study. A descriptive research design was utilized. The study's findings disclosed that teaching and refinement have a significant positive effect on invention development. On the basis of the findings, it was suggested that higher education institutions be required to participate in teaching and development. Rukumba, Iravo, and Kagiri (2019) observed the impact of education and development on the performance of Kenya's Telecommunication Corporation. This study employs both descriptive and correlational research methods. The research population consisted of 300 senior administrators from Kenya's four telecommunications companies, Safaricom, Airtel, Telkom, and Equitel. The researchers selected the administrators from the four telecommunications companies using proportional sampling. Using Fisher's formula (2010), a sample size of 150 was determined. A structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data. To analyze the data, both simple and multiple regression models were utilized. Teaching and advancement, as well as the success of telecommunications corporations, were found to be inextricably and meaningfully related by the research. In addition, regression analysis revealed that education and advancement have a positive and significant effect on the performance of Kenyan telecommunications corporations. The findings indicated a significant relationship between education and advancement and the success of Kenyan telecommunication corporations.

Munjuri (2011) investigated the impact of human resources management practices on enhancing personnel performance in Kenyan Catholic university institutions. She recognized that performance-based compensation had a significant impact on the development of personnel performance. In addition, she demonstrates that teaching and personnel empowerment had a significant impact on the rising personnel achievement level. employment structure and employment security had the least impact on performance. Kipkebut (2010) also investigated human resource management practices and institution involvement in higher education. He argues that HRM practices were more influential than probability factors in fostering organization engagement. Additionally, he discovered that private institutions had superior HRM practices compared to public institutions. He suggested there was a need for both qualitative and quantitative data to examine pertinent issues in human resource management that enhance university performance.

Balatbat, Lin, and Carmichael (2010) measured the impact of human resources management practices on productivity, employee attrition, and associate financial performance. A general sample of nearly one thousand companies revealed that these practices have a statistically and

economically significant impact on both middle-level employee performance and the short- and long-term evaluation of a company's financial performance.

Methodology

The research design used survey research that involves using questionnaire. The entire academic staff of the selected private universities in Southwest, Nigeria of the study constitute the population used for the study was 3,261 from Nigerian University System Statistical Digest, 2018. The questionnaire divided into three sections: the first section contained personal demographic information of the respondents while the second section contained questions relating to HRM practices on employee retention. The questionnaire was constructed on a Five-point Likert Scale. The Cronbach alpha test was used to test the reliability of the research instrument. The result of the pilot study indicated that the research instrument is reliable, since the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient is 0.831. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed by the researcher with help of two trained researcher assistance to administer questionnaire and all the classes of lecturers in the selected private universities in Southwest, Nigeria was taking care of in this study. Out of the 356 Copies of questionnaire administered, 334 copies of questionnaire returned for the analysis, which represented 93.8% of the total. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and the multiple regression method of analysis to examine the effect of HRM practices (Independent variable) on employee retention (Dependent variable).

Results

Table 1. Descriptive analysis of Employee Retention

S/N	Statements	Responses (n) (%)						
		SA	A	UD	D	SD	Mean	SD
1	There is quality work life based in my university	148 (44.3)	43 (12.9)	51 (15.3)	34 (10.2)	58 (17.4)	3.61	1.54
2	My university has motivated staff climate	129 (38.6)	76 (22.8)	43 (12.9)	35 (10.5)	51 (15.3)	3.63	1.46
3	The university charge in administrative demand affects staff output	116 (34.7)	71 (21.3)	58 (17.4)	42 (12.6)	47 (14.1)	3.54	1.43
4	Academic staff are committed to the university goals	132 (39.3)	64 (19.1)	51 (15.3)	47 (14.1)	40 (12)	3.64	1.43
5	There is high academic turnover in the university	139 (41.6)	62 (18.6)	43 (12.9)	44 (13.2)	46 (13.8)	3.65	1.47
Grand Mean							3.61	1.47

Source: Author’s Computation, 2023

Table 1 presents results of descriptive statistics on employee retention. The results of the descriptive analysis revealed that 44.3% of the respondents strongly agree that there is quality work life based in all the universities used in the survey, 12.9% agree, 15.3% were undecided, 10.2% disagree, and 17.4% strongly disagree. On average, the respondents agree that there is quality work life based in my university

(mean = 3.61, standard deviation = 1.54). Further, 38.6% of the respondents strongly agree that their university has motivated staff climate. 22.8% agree, 12.9% were undecided, 10.5% disagree and 15.3% strongly disagree. On average, the respondents were further in agreement that their university has motivated staff climate (mean = 3.63, standard deviation = 1.46).

Further, findings revealed that 34.7% of the respondents strongly agree that the university charge in administrative demand affects staff output. 21.3% of the respondents agree, 7.4% were undecided, 12.6% disagree and 14.1% of the respondents strongly disagree. On average, the respondents agree that the university charge in administrative demand affects staff output (mean = 3.54, standard deviation = 1.43). Also, findings revealed that 39.3% of the respondents strongly agree that academic staff are committed to the university goals. 19.1% agree, 15.3% were undecided, 14.1% disagree and 12% strongly disagree. On average, the respondents agree that the academic staff are committed to the university goals (mean = 3.64, standard deviation = 1.43). The results of the descriptive analysis revealed that 41.6% of the respondents strongly agree that there is high academic turnover in the university, 18.6% agree, 12.9% were undecided, 13.2% disagree, and 13.8% of the respondents strongly disagree. On average, the respondents agree that there is high academic turnover in the university (mean = 3.65, standard deviation = 1.47). The overall mean score of responses was 3.61 with a standard deviation of 1.47 which indicates that the respondents agree with the statements on employee retention in the selected private universities.

The result of objective number one which reveals that human resource management practices adopted by the universities meaningfully affect personnel retention which agrees with Resource-Based View (RBV) theory. This theory states that personnel retention demonstrates the role that employee play in building an establishment's threat benefit, findings also shown that HRM practice is an important factor influencing establishment performance, as it aimed at increasing employees' retention and contributions towards the success of an establishment.

Test of Hypotheses One

The table below demonstrate the result of the hypothesis tested as measures of the relationship and effect of the variable proposed. The hypothesis stated that:

H₀₁: Human resource management practices components has no significant effect on employee retention of selected private Universities in Southwest, Nigeria.

Table 2. Dependent Variable: Employee Retention

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		T-Stat	Sig.
	B	Std-Error		
Constant	0.399	0.259	1.542	0.124
HRM	0.852	0.067	12.684	0.000
R	0.566 ^a			
R-Square	0.320			
Adjusted R-Square	0.318			
F	160.896.			
Overall Sig.	0.000			

Source: Author's Computation, 2023

Table 2 revealed that there is positive relationship between human resource management practices and employee retention. This shows that human resource management practices may lead to improvement in employee retention. This further buttressed by the coefficient of the variable with the value 0.852. This shows that 1% increase in human resource management practices will lead to 85.2% increase in employee retention. The reason here meant that if management of the selected universities under review improve on prompt staff evaluation and compensation, workers will be encouraged to contribute to work with their respective universities because they enjoy better treatment. However, in this study Table 2 revealed that the predictor variable of human resource management practices adopted by the universities predicts employee retention with ($\beta = 0.852$; $t = 12.684$; $p < 0.05$). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. Furthermore, the coefficient determination (R^2) with the value 0.320 indicate that human resource management practices account for 32% variation in employee retention.

Discussion of Findings

The finding reveals that human resource management practices adopted by the universities significantly affects employee retention. In line with the provisions of literature, this finding aligns with other studies, conceptually and empirically. The study is in line with the findings of Alsafadi and Altahat (2021) that revealed that human resources management (HRM) practices had a positive impact on employee retention and performance. Furthermore, it is line with the works of Fomude, Kang, Abangbila, Ganiyu, Mukete and Meena (2020) which stated that HRM practices (performance appraisal, training and development, promotion and compensation) have impact on organizational performance. Also, it is in consonance with Simarmata (2020) whose findings revealed that HRM practice is an important factor influencing organizational performance, as it aimed at increasing employees' retention and contributions towards the success of an organization.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The research underscores the crucial role of strategic human resource management (HRM) practices in enhancing the appeal and operational performance of private universities in Southwest Nigeria, particularly in their capacity as destinations for tourism, hospitality, and events. The study highlights the positive impact of HRM practices such as the provision of recreational programs, relocation benefits, and educational fee assistance on both employee retention and the overall performance of these academic institutions. By implementing HRM practices aimed at creating a welcoming and supportive environment, universities can significantly improve their attractiveness as vibrant hubs for cultural, educational, and professional gatherings. This approach not only aids in retaining a skilled and motivated workforce but also plays a vital role in attracting tourists, event attendees, and professionals, thereby contributing to the growth of the local tourism and hospitality sectors. The findings of the study reveal a strong correlation between effective HRM practices and the enhanced performance of private universities, demonstrating that these practices are integral to achieving organizational objectives and establishing the universities as dynamic destinations within the tourism and hospitality landscape. In light of these findings, the study recommends that universities adopt and model HRM practices focused on employee retention, ensuring that these practices are designed to meet the unique needs of the university environment. By doing so,

universities can leverage their unique position as centers of learning and culture to enhance their contribution to the local economy through tourism and events, fostering a richer, more vibrant community engagement.

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