

Reward Management Practices and Employee Retention in Public Referral Hospitals in Nairobi City County, Kenya

Trizah Shigadi Mwasi¹ and Dr. Jedidah Muli²

¹MBA Student, Department of Business Administration, School of Business, Economics and Tourism, Kenyatta University, Kenya

²Lecturer, Department of Business Administration, School of Business, Economics and Tourism, Kenyatta University, Kenya

DOI: 10.46609/IJSSER.2024.v09i11.005 URL: <https://doi.org/10.46609/IJSSER.2024.v09i11.005>

Received: 12 October 2024 / Accepted: 10 November 2024 / Published: 16 November 2024

ABSTRACT

Retention of healthcare workers in Kenya is a challenge occasioned by high brain drain, shortages and increased workload for the remaining employees. The ratio between health workers and patients is high over the standard set by World Health Organization. The referral hospitals report that its workers who are specialist medical workers do not intend to stay citing bad work conditions, low and delayed salaries and no room for growth. This study sought to find ways of improving retention of healthcare workers. The main focus of the study was assessing reward management practices effect on employee retention in public referral hospitals in Nairobi City County. The specific objectives included financial incentives, career development opportunities, employee recognition and employee benefits. The study was anchored on job embeddedness theory and supported by total reward and equity theories. The study adopted a descriptive research design and the target population consisted of 5,626 healthcare workers in the five public referral hospitals. Stratified and simple sampling technique was used and the Yamane formula employed to get the sample size of 373 respondents who were proportionately distributed across the strata. Primary data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires that yielded quantitative and qualitative data. The instrument was pilot tested to detect any weakness and it was edited to produce a valid instrument, while reliability was tested and the aggregate Cronbach alpha was 0.804 compared to the threshold of 0.7. A response rate of 71.6% was obtained from the returned 267 questionnaires. The researcher conducted analysis with the help of statistical package for social sciences program version 28 and findings presented in tables. The conducted descriptive analysis showed that respondents agreed that components of reward management practices led to retention of employees in the public referral

hospitals. The study also found significant and positive effect between career development ($r = 0.616$, $\beta_2 = 0.369$), employee recognition ($r = 0.681$, $\beta_3 = 0.904$) and employee benefits ($r = 0.651$, $\beta_4 = 0.781$) while financial incentives ($r = 0.413$, $\beta_1 = 0.235$) had a moderate effect to employee retention in the referral hospitals. The regression analysis showed differences in magnitude of effect among the four study variables, where employee recognition had the largest effect, followed by employee benefits, then career development and lastly financial incentives. Therefore, the study concluded that employee retention in the public referral hospital was significantly affected by reward management practices although financial incentives had moderate effect. The study recommends establishment of formal reward management programs to solve the challenge of employees leaving the sector to European nations. The management in the referral hospitals need to allocate funds and develop programs for training in the quest of equipping the employees. It was suggested to increase salaries and wages to align with economic situation and have employees stay and continue working in the referral hospitals.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The survival and thriving of any organization is dependent on its capacity to attract and retain competent and skilled workforce. Trained and experienced employees who stay longer in the organization, make it easy to execute tasks and deliver quality services and goods (Hassan, 2022). It becomes an added expense to the organizations to keep on recruiting new employees every often after the departure. Asif and Nisar (2022) posited that exit of skilled and competent employees likely disrupts the production process that leads to loss and conflicts. Therefore, the capacity to retain employees in an organization for long, is informed by working conditions, implementation of different strategies and practices that make employees comfortable, satisfied and willing to stay to play their trade in the firm. Odunayo (2022) mentioned that some strategies and practices used to retain employees for long include employee engagement schemes, employee retention strategies, work condition factors, reward and incentives management. In seeking to improve employee retention, this study will focus on reward management practices.

Alhmoud and Rjoub (2019) noted that at its core employment is based on offering services and expending energy in exchange for something in return. Thus, employees are attracted to different work arrangements based on what rewards they will get. The rewards given can be in cash, recognition, non-financial benefits, career growth and advancement as a means of enticing an employee, and this goes ahead to influence retention (Sharul & Khairul, 2021). However, management of these reward practices must be effective for creation of a good workplace culture and practices, improve employee satisfaction that contributes to high employee retention rates. Mwema, Were and Ndeto (2022) shared that administering of benefits, bonuses, salary and

salary increments, recognition and career growth makes employees feel valued and respond by staying in the organization. Thus, it is possible to enhance employee retention through effective execution of reward schemes and practices.

In the global scene, healthcare staff shortage crises experienced in rural Florida in the USA, was resolved and managed by adoption of non-monetary reward factors (Wallace, 2022). To attract and retain healthcare staffs, the hospitals focused on provision of fringe and health benefits and flexible work schedules that attracted and encouraged the health workers stay to continue serving the local communities. The retention of healthcare workers in Malaysia was influenced by different factors including job satisfaction factors, working conditions and environment work-life balance, compensation, benefits and recognition. Sija (2022) mentioned that these factors enticed the health workers to stay and service patients in the country's healthcare industry. Bharath (2023) shared that there are factors beyond pay cheques that boost employee retention and include participation in decision making, reduced workload, better work scheduling. Employee retention was thus influenced by working conditions in South Indian hospitals over and above pay cheques.

Regionally, Kamselem, Nuhu, Lawal, Liman and Abdullahi (2022) argued that retaining employees is based on adopted reward system, the job/work conditions and engagement levels of employees. Retaining the skilled personnel in Nigerian firms was based on effective implementation of employee retention practices. In Egypt, Elsafty and Ragheb (2021) mentioned that during the covid-19 pandemic, retention of healthcare workers was low. However, the hospitals that used intrinsic motivational schemes, incentives, and monetary and non-monetary rewards and benefits were able to retain many of its staffs even as the pandemic was raging on. While considering the health workers in Tanzania, Sirili and Simba (2021) stated that promotions, work relationships, training and career growth and remuneration were some of the aspects that encouraged lengthy stay of the health workers in the stated health facility. Whenever the facility manages to retain most of employees, it implies high capacity for continuous operations and continual existence of the facility and sector in serving the general public.

In Kenya, Mwema (2022) mentioned that high employee retention characterized by longer stays is largely informed by adopted reward management schemes inclusive of financial and non-financial rewards. These schemes and practices were useful in resolving the problem that Kenyan healthcare sector suffers from, especially grappling with low staff ratios stemming from inability to attract and retain healthcare workers.

Mwasi and Orwa (2023) argues that employee retention is a critical component when it comes to sustainability of organizations, and attainment of stability, high productivity and long-term success. The organizations have to put efforts in engaging and keeping its employees satisfied

and committed to the organization for high employee retention. Additionally, Wakio (2019) found that proper work environment creates a conducive work condition that enhance satisfaction, performance and retention of employees. The retention of employees in the above reviews is based on different aspects, this study focused on reward management practices.

1.1.1. Employee Retention

Employee retention refers to keeping highly skilled and talented personnel in the organization for a long time. Retention is also defined by Sharul and Khairul (2021) as the choice of employees to stay in the organization for a specific time period, with some staying in the firm until they retire while others may leave at one point. The choice to stay is based on working conditions, systems and practices adopted in the organization. Asfaw, Argaw and Bayissa (2020) perspective on employee retention is about exhibiting high levels of commitment and a deliberate decision made by employees to continue working in the same organization for years. In addition, it is the capacity for an organization to retain majority of its employees in an effort to meet its goals, mandate and sustain operations for the unforeseen future times (Alzaid & Dukhaykh, 2023). Established and successful organizations that exist for many years, are those that seek out, develop and retain its productive personnel or it is simply holding on employees that exhibit certain competencies for longer and especially for highly competitive sectors (Mwasi & Orwa, 2023).

It is the strategic objective of an organization to retain highly skilled and efficient personnel, through cultivation of a favorable work environment, engagement of employees, competitive compensation schemes and maintaining work-life equilibrium (Mpanza, 2020). The conceptualization of employee retention takes different outlooks, for instance, in their research, Saayman, Slabbert and Ottebacher (2023) measured retention in terms of number of employees who stayed in the hotel at the end of each year. It was also about employee satisfaction with the hotel sector in South Africa.

Salameh, Ullah and Abdul-Majid (2022) viewed retention of healthcare employees in developing nations such as Pakistan, in terms of employee loyalty and commitment to delivering quality healthcare services to the patients. The capacity to retain the healthcare employees is informed by their sense of loyalty and commitment to the job and assignment.

Matuga and Bula (2021) conceptualized employee retention at Kenya Airways (KQ) as lack of absenteeism, talent retention rates, employee engagement, tailor-made retention programs and employee net promoter scores. Abwavo and Muli (2020) assessed the term employee retention as the intention to either stay or leave the organization. Employee retention measures is not specific to the industry, but focus of the management must be longer stays and intention to stay for it is

most valuable and talented personnel. This is important for realization of the organizational goals (Sitati, Were, Waititu & Miringu, 2019). Thus, employee retention in this study measured in terms of level of employee commitment to the referral hospital, the employees' job satisfaction levels, loyalty to the organization and average tenure of employees as a measure of intention to stay in the organization.

1.1.2. Reward Management Practices

Reward management practices refer to the strategic and systematic approaches that organizations adopt in the designing, implementation and maintenance of fair and effective compensation of its employees (Sturman & Short, 2021). Rewards are the returns that an individual gets for services rendered and efforts expended, but there is need it to be effectively management such that it becomes a motivating factor to improve productivity outcomes (Kamselem et al., 2022). These practices are wholesome covering the recruitment, execution of assignments and attaining of organizational goals. Reward management practices aim is to attract, motivate and retain skilled employees and aligning their efforts towards realization of the organizational mandate (Wallace, 2022). Additionally, these practices include policies, processes, strategies and organizational structure that ensure that efforts and value of employees is recognized and rewarded. Brown, Muise and Cummings (2020) state that reward management practices are a deliberate action undertaken by management to acknowledge impact of employees on realization of organizational success and offering a reward package for the same.

Organizations adopt different reward management practices, for example, Marinaş, Iğreç, Triculescu and Costache (2023) shared that the assessed Romanian companies used extrinsic motivation, equity wages and salaries and working conditions as constructs of reward management. These constructs aimed at solving problems and improving performance outcomes. Sultana and Hossain (2023) conceptualized reward management practices using these elements; financial and non-financial factors. Financial factors included financial rewards, salaries and high-pay job promotion and fringe benefits, while non-financial factors included employee recognition, job security and fair opportunities for career development. Ally (2022) shared that intrinsic and extrinsic rewards formed the reward management system used to improve employee performance in Coca-Cola -Tanzania. In their research Yusuff and Minja (2023) specific constructs of reward management practices were professional development, equity in employee promotion, recognition and remuneration of employees as a means of retaining healthcare employees in Wajir County.

In this study, the assessed reward management practices include financial incentives, career development opportunities, employee recognition and benefits; as influencing factors to enhance employee retention in referral hospitals. Financial incentives is a form of rewards where the

organization offers monetary rewards to employees. The incentives are given as an exchange for contribution to high performance and achievements and serve to motivate and encourage employee retention (Oladeji, Brown, Titus, Muniz, Collins, Muriuki & Robins, 2022). Some of the commonly used financial incentives in organizations include salary and wages, allowances, overtime pay, retirement plans and health benefits. It is important for organizations to compensate employees for their time, skills and efforts for realization of high-performance outcomes (Song, Mehrotra & Rajapakshe, 2023). Performance-based pay including salaries, bonuses and wages tie an employee's individual contribution to rate of earnings, while Benhenda and Sims (2022) argued that allowances such as housing, transport and education are among performance motivators among employees. This study assessed financial incentives as salary and wages, overtime pay, housing and transport allowances and frequent salary increment.

Career development opportunities are offers for professional growth given to employees in an organization which serve to motivate (Abwavo & Muli, 2020).

The opportunities when equitable and fairly distributed, serve to improve satisfaction and attainment of individual goals. Career development allows individuals to reach new levels through gaining new skills from trainings, educational programs, and mentorship. Muleya, Ngirande and Terera (2022) share that career development comes with gaining seniority at the workplace and handling leadership responsibilities and functions and earning more. The findings by Iris (2023) state that promotions and advancement is a clear growth in career path. Therefore, causing employees to stay for longer in the organization as recognition for the investment made in equipping the employees with skills. The efforts to retain employees in referral hospitals were assessed as influenced by career development opportunities, measured as mentoring, training programs in seminars, workshops and on-the-job, job enrichment and enlargement when tasked with more roles and functions.

On employee recognition, it refers to a cultivated culture in organizations of appreciating employees for their efforts, contribution and achievements. Recognizing and appreciating employees creates a positive work environment that enhances job satisfaction and outputs (Owoeye, Kiiru & Muli, 2020). Effective recognition of employees can increase productivity in the firm and increase intention to stay in the organization. Kwarteng, Frimpong, Asare and Wiredu (2023) revealed that recognition should be timely done as acknowledgement for exemplary work accomplished. It can also be done privately or publicly, formally or informally as long the managers acknowledge and appreciate individual efforts and contribution to the success of the organization. Recognition can be done through verbal praise, or written notes on boards, social media appreciation post, certificate and award, annual reviews and feedback and parties to acknowledge best performers (Khattak, 2022). This study assessed employee

recognition in terms of verbal appreciation, awards and certificate, and meal out or party to acknowledge health workers who offer exemplary services.

Employee benefits are non-wage compensations given to employees as a means of attracting, supporting and retaining them into the organization. The benefits are excluded from the salary package and focus on the well-being of employees to support work execution (Alfred & Singh, 2023).

Some of the benefits include health and wellness initiatives such as gym membership and counselling; retirement planning through contributions to a formed scheme and paid-off days to rest and recharge. Collinson (2023) revealed that flexible working schedule and working remotely are part of work-life balance and benefits that increases productivity and encourages longer stay with the organization. Muturi, Gichunge and Nzioki (2022) shared that wellness programs and provision of transportation to and from work and pension schemes enabled the public hospitals to attract and retain its employees. In this study, employee benefits were viewed as health insurance, retirement planning through the pension schemes, paid off-days and wellness programs.

1.1.3. Public Referral Hospitals in Nairobi City County

The Kenyan health care system is organized into six levels of care for patients. Level one is at the community for promoting health and treating minor ailments, then second and third level focus on primary health care in health centers and dispensaries mainly on outpatient basis; level four and five is the secondary care and includes the county healthcare facilities and tertiary level is at the top with referral and national hospitals that offer specialized care to patients and training for healthcare workers. For referral hospitals they operate under the Kenya National Referral Health Strategy, whose main focus is ensuring linkage across the health system. Referral hospitals manage the movement of clients, specimens and healthcare experts to provide specialized diagnosis, treatment and management of patient care. The referrals cases that these hospitals handle include emergency referrals or urgent referrals needing immediate attention to save life or routine referrals when seeking a second opinion and further diagnosis (Ministry of Health -Kenya Health Sector Referral Strategy Report, 2014-2018).

In Nairobi City County, there are five hospitals categorized as referrals including Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH), Kenyatta University Teaching, Referral and Research Hospital, National Spinal Injury Hospital, Mathari National Teaching and Referral Hospital and Pumwani Maternity and Referral Hospital. KNH has the highest number of employees averaging 6000 and Mathari has the least number at 386, the other referrals average between 600-720 employee numbers who attend to the patients.

The healthcare workers in the public referral hospitals in Nairobi City County are approximately 9,300 (The National Assembly-parliamentary report on healthcare, 2022).

The referral hospitals use a number of reward management practices to motivate, compensate and encourage high performance, quality service delivery and retention in the sector and the facility. The healthcare workers are mostly compensated by the employer (government) in form of monetary rewards including salaries, wages and allowances and non-monetary rewards such as benefits -insurance, flexible work schedules and retirement planning. Pkite and Ng'eno (2023) found that improved employee performance was realized more when non-monetary rewards were used including career advancement, medical covers, better housing, recognition and training as compared to monetary rewards of salary and wages. On attaining high nurse performance at KNH, Chumba, K'Obonyo, Muindi and Njihia (2018) revealed that it was influenced by rewards in terms of pay, welfare programs and employee benefits. Thus, referral hospitals used a combination of monetary and non-monetary rewards to motivate and compensate the efforts of the healthcare workers.

The Kenya Health Workforce Report: The Status of Healthcare Professionals in Kenya indicated that 61.7% retention of nurses, 69.3% retention of clinical officers, 62.7% of the doctors and 69.5% of dentists were retained, and 76% of medical laboratories and technicians renewed their licenses and were retained in the sector. The data is based on average age of health practitioners set at 60 years. The National Treasury Report (2021) showed that there was uneven distribution of healthcare workers with some counties having shortages and others surplus and retaining workers seem a challenge. Golicha and Moguche (2022) noted that some referral hospitals are having a challenge in retention of its employees which is linked to brain drain with the sector losing 20 health practitioners every month. There is also insufficient numbers of employees in some specialization and hence the need to address these issues. This study set out to assess how to improve employee retention through adoption of reward management practices in the referral hospitals.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Retention of healthcare employees in developing nations such as Kenya is a big challenge, as there are high instances of healthcare workers leaving the service which create shortages and increases the workload for the remaining employees. The World Health Organization -WHO (2020) reports that there is 51% emigration of doctors and 8% of nurses who leave Kenya for United Kingdom and other European nations. The Nairobi City County Health Reforms Task Force Report of 2023 indicate that 300 nurses resigned citing poor working conditions, no and unfair promotions, low and delayed salaries and search for 'greener pastures' in Western nations. This is further expanding the total staffing gaps that stood at 1,916 healthcare workers in the

county. There is also brain drain as healthcare workers seek opportunities abroad. The Nairobi Metropolitan Services (NMS) and Kenya Medical Practitioners Pharmacists Dentists Union (KMPDU) 2021 report noted that retention of doctors is a challenge in hospitals linked to poor work condition, low pay, no career growth opportunities and lack of benefits. This has caused doctor-patient ratio to rise to 1:17000 against WHO standard of 1:1000. Apinde (2018) found that retaining employees of MP Shah Hospital in Nairobi was influenced by reward and better working conditions. An indication that with a good reward practice, it is possible for the referral hospitals can retain its employees, and this is then focus of the current study.

Some research has been done on reward management practices and employee retention including Alzaid and Dukhaykh (2023) on employee branding and retention in Saudi Arabia's banking sector, revealing positive association between the two variables as moderated through psychological contracts. The created contextual gap was based on differences in background setting as it was done in banking sector in Saudia Arabia. Manda, Silumbwe, Kombe and Hangoma (2023) researched on motivation and retention of healthcare workers in rural health facilities in Zambia. Motivating and retaining healthcare workers were influenced by professional development, work environment and rural community dynamics. The research did not consider the influence of reward practices on retention of healthcare workers and focus was in rural-based primary care facilities. On retention of doctors at the Kenyatta National Referral Hospital in Kenya, Robai (2023) found financial incentives greatly affected the decision to stay. However, focus was only on doctors and KNH facility and there was use of qualitative approaches. Mule (2020) assessed employee retention in Meru County as influenced by reward management practices such as work-life balance, growth and development of career, compensation and recognition. The reward management practices used different constructs and focus was an administrative unit for the Meru County.

The challenges of retention of healthcare workers and the identified research gaps in context, concept and methodology in the reviewed literature. This creates the need for further research covering healthcare workers retention. Therefore, this study sought to assess the effect of reward management practices on employee retention in public referral hospitals in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The focus was on financial incentives, career development opportunities, employee recognition and employee benefits on employee retention in public referral hospitals in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The following comprises of general and specific objectives;

1.3.1. General Objectives

The general objective of the study was to investigate the reward management practices and employee retention in public referral hospitals in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

- i. To determine how incentive payments affect public healthcare facilities in Nairobi City County, Kenya's personnel retention rates.
- ii. To look into how job development initiatives affect the continued employment of staff in Nairobi City County, Kenya's public referral institutions.
- iii. To ascertain how employee appreciation affects public referral nursing homes in Nairobi City County, Kenya's staff turnover rate.
- iv. To evaluate how employee perks affect public referral hospitals in Nairobi City County, Kenya's staff retention rate.

1.4. Research Questions

- i. What impact do monetary incentives have on the continued employment of staff members at Nairobi City County, Kenya's public referral hospitals?
- ii. What impact do possibilities for professional growth have on the staying power of staff members at Nairobi City County, Kenya's public designated hospitals?
- iii. What impact does recognizing workers have on the continuation of staff members at Nairobi City County, Kenya's public designated hospitals?
- iv. What is the impact of employee perks on keeping workers in Nairobi City County, Kenya's public referrals hospitals?

1.5. Significance of the Study

The results of this investigation is helpful to educators, public referral hospitals, leadership teams in the government industry, and legislators. It will help the decision-makers of referral facilities understand the different types of rewards that have a big impact on employee retention, which will enable them develop more effective alternative methods to improve engagement in hospitals. This will help legislators create a transparent employee reward program. The management team will be able to enhance their working environment and enable staff to flourish, ultimately providing high-quality medical care for the general public, by putting the study's suggestions for best practices and regulations into practice. Regulatory offices in the Ministry of Health and at the National Government level will also gain insight on employee retention and

develop policies to push sectoral agenda by the Government including the attainment of Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

The study will benefit the Public Sector in Kenya and Management Team in other organizations to develop and implement employee reward management practices in an effort to retain its staff. Employee retention enables the organizations to meet its target and attain its mandate, which helps in sustainability of operations. The managers will learn on the ideal time for implementation of different reward schemes for maximum outputs and also motivating employees to stay for longer.

This study will also be significant to Academic Bodies by contributing to existing knowledge on reward management practices and employee retention and hence used as part of literature review. Additionally, it can also be used as a referencing material and serve as the basis for upcoming research in this field. At the conclusion of this investigation, the limits and potential areas for further research will be highlighted to provide potential investigators with guidance on how to build upon the results.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the incentive approaches to leadership and the hiring and retention at Nairobi City County, Kenya's public referral medical centers. Conceptual scope was to consider these practices of financial incentives, career development opportunities, employee recognition and employee benefits. The study's geographical scope covered the Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study analyzed retention of employees in the five (5) public referral hospitals located in the county. **The study was grounded on job embeddedness theory and supported by total reward and equity theories. The respondents covered healthcare personnel in these hospitals, who took advantage of the study by answering the survey. On time scope, employee retention was analyzed for the last three years (2021 -2023) and the research was done within a six months period.**

1.7. Limitations of the Study

The researcher anticipated some of these limitations in the course of carrying out the exercise, including unwillingness of the employees in participating in the research. Some of the employees did not want to share critical information that may subject the organization to wider public scrutiny and criticism. Another limitation is that the busy schedule of hospital employees and though willing to take part in the research, they could be withheld by work commitments. There was also the issue of accuracy and truthfulness of the information shared in avoiding exaggeration and incomplete information on the status in the hospitals.

To curb these challenges, the researcher presented introduction and approval letter from the university, sought and obtained permission to the management in the hospitals, which helped in legitimizing the research exercise. Confidentiality and keeping identities secret was done and the information was aggregated and no one was mentioned in the research report. This helped in obtaining accurate and complete data that is needed in this research.

The researcher used all the collected information for academic purpose only and hence the respondents were free to share all pertinent information. On busy schedule, the researcher booked appointments to avoid disrupting work schedules of the respondents which could have led to hurriedly and poorly filled questionnaires. The aim was to improve response rate and get quality information.

1.8. Organization of the Study

The subsequent sections comprise of the organisation of the study activity. The introduction of the study is given in Chapter one, which also includes the study's history, issue declaration, basic and particular targets, research inquiries, importance, restrictions, dimension, and an executive summary. Chapter two will cover a comprehensive theoretical assessment, discovered gaps, and the conceptual framework. Chapter three discussed the study's technique and had elements on methodology, population targeted, sample sizes and procedures, data collection tool, and ethical consideration and examination. Chapter four presented the findings in tables and discussion and chapter five presented the key findings, conclusions and recommendations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter is arranged into sections including the theoretical review, wherein some theories are linked to the study's objectives. The empirical review provides a discussion on past relevant studies done and comprehensively synthesizes the studies and discussed as per individual study objectives. There is a section on summary and identified research gaps that show the need for the current study. The last section is on conceptual framework, which is pictorial in nature and shows the relationship and measurement indicators of all the study variables.

2.2. Theoretical Literature Review

The study was grounded on study's foundation embeddedness theory in explaining the dependent variable on employee retention. It was supported by theory of total rewards that explained financial incentives and employee benefits and the equity theory in explaining fairness in

recognizing and sharing opportunities for career growth and development for the employees. The following sections discussed in depth these three theories.

2.2.1. Job Embeddedness Theory

In their study "Why Individuals remain: Using Job Integration to Clarify the Choice," Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, and Sablinski (2001) developed the hypothesis. The collective factors that prevent an employee from quitting their job are seen from the standpoint of the job integration construction. These forces include social, financial and psychological that influence employee retention. The social, economic and human reactions form the fabric of an organization and employees who are closely linked to organization will form attention that leads to strong inclination to continue working at the company for longer. Workplace integration covers all the forcing factors that contribute to employee retention in the organization.

The theory operates on three principles; namely link, fit and sacrifice as impacts three aspects of an individual including the job, the organization and the community (Reitz & Anderson, 2011). For example, feelings and factors that influence employee retention in an organization is informed by link, fit and sacrifices towards the organization; link, fit and sacrifice with other work colleagues and community/society surrounding the organization and employee.

Attachment to the organization, co-workers/work colleagues and surrounding community causing intention to stay for longer (Lee, Burch & Mitchell, 2014). Additionally, initiatives can cause high employee retention including strategies, work environment, rewards and compensation that improve embeddedness that predict attachment and intentions to stay that influence retention rates. Therefore, Holtom and Darabi (2018) shared that to improve retention of highly skilled, experienced and talented employees, then the organization and its leadership should focus efforts on improving job embeddedness. This is made possible by fitness of the assignment to the right staff, interlinkage and connection to co-workers and correctly assessing how much sacrifice can employees lose upon exiting the organization. These three concepts will influence the choice to stay or leave and it is the focus of many organizations and managers.

Job embeddedness can be increased through increased employee participation, engagement, opportunities for growth that are open to all employees, open organizational structure and better pay and benefits (Holtom & Darabi, 2018). The researcher Granovetter (2018) found that reward and recognition are valued assets for any organization can increased job embeddedness that influence high employee retention. However, the theory is criticized for making general predictions about the functioning of organizations, without considering the differences in features, structure and operations in each organization type. Peltokorpi (2013) noted that embeddedness is more common in low-level slightly unstructured organizations than in large

structured organizations. It also does not account for individual proactiveness and passion that contributes to engagement and involvement in organizational activities that improve retention levels.

The theory helps explain the factors, strategies and initiatives that organizations can undertake to increase employee retention rates. Thus, it explains how the management of referral hospitals in Nairobi City County can increase intention to stay and employee retention of its employees. The hospital management can incorporate financial incentives, career growth, recognition and benefits for employees to improve retention. The theory explains the dependent variable on employee retention as influenced by attachment as based on job embeddedness.

2.2.2. The Total Reward Theory

The theory was developed by Lewicki (1985) and it is based on organizations providing a comprehensive reward for its employees in terms of monetary, benefits and developmental rewards for attaining individual assigned goals. The theory focuses on compensation, benefits and personal growth combined into one package and offered to high performing employees. As such, the total rewards entail tangible and intangible incentives given by the employer to its employees to encourage high performance, loyalty and retention in the organization (Beck-Krala, 2020). The tangible incentives include compensation package -salary, bonus pay, salary increment, and benefits -paid leave, pension scheme, health and medical cover and insurance benefits. The intangible incentives include professional and personal career growth and development.

Total rewards theory emphasizes a holistic-value approach system that the organization offers employees. Whatever is offered to the employees must be of value to encourage deeper attachment, engagement, and involvement resulting in better performance outcomes. Chunping, Ying and Shimin (2019) argue that combination of different incentives seeks to entrench the employee to the organization and exhibited as passion, innovation, creativity and shown desire to do better for the organization. Improving loyalty in employees and encouraging the intention to stay, according to Wamweru and Makokha (2018) is based on positive perception of the total reward system/package. Employees lean towards a total reward scheme that combines relational and transactional benefits. In applying this theory, organizations must recognize that employees' motivation is drawn from both financial and non-financial incentives and value gained from the incentives. Therefore, to improve on employee retention, there is need for the organization leaders to communicate on full benefits to be enjoyed besides salary payment by mentioning career growth opportunities, recognition, benefits and wellness programs.

The authors Karell and Widlund (2019) criticized the theory of total rewards for creating very competitive work environment, where employees seek rewards at the expense of quality of services and products and no care given to co-workers. This eventually creates a toxic work environment that ultimately leads poor performance and low retention of employees. Additionally, the theory is weak in that the employees will do anything to get the rewards including under-cutting their colleagues, unethical and illegal practices. Babich (2014) noted that use of total rewards can be costly to the organization, raising questions on sustainability of the practice and without rewards, the employees will become demotivated causing poor performance and exiting the organization. The rewards can also lose power overtime and hence fails to motivate, and encourage high performance and retention of employees.

The theory was used in the study by Mabaso and Dlamini (2018) and explained that total rewards was useful in improving organizational commitment of employees. This led to improved performance and high retention rates of employees in higher learning institutions. Rai, Ghosh and Dutta (2019) found that fair and just in the planning of total rewards enhanced the intention to stay for employees. An implication that organizations that use total rewards as a strategy can enhance intent to stay and retention of its employees. Therefore, this study sought to use total rewards as a means of encouraging employee retention in referral hospitals. The financial incentives, career development opportunities and employee benefits as a comprehensive package that enhanced retention of referral hospital employees.

2.2.3. Equity Theory

The theory was developed by Adams (1963) as a psychological construct where assessment was on individual perception of fairness in social setting and especially the workplace. The theory is also referred to as equity theory of motivation and based on employee evaluation of their work and rewards through comparison metrics. The comparisons entail inputs versus outputs -cost and rewards and benefits gained and comparisons of what other individuals in the same space, setting and rank get for their efforts.

Polk (2022) noted that an employee will compare what s/he does (input-cost) and what s/he earns (rewards and benefits) when handling certain tasks and assignments versus what the colleagues at the workplace. Whenever, the employees perceive there is an imbalance in the input-output ratio; feelings of inequity and inequality creep in causing dissatisfaction, demotivation and poor performance outcomes. In situations where the imbalance and inequality is great; then it causes the employees to leave the organization.

Adams and Freedman (1976) noted that where there is perception of inequity and imbalance, the employee reacts by adjusting their work conduct often in terms of reducing their effort in trying

to create balance. If the inequity and imbalance is from work colleagues who may earn more for the same amount of work, the employee responds by doing less tasks or seek for opportunities outside of the organization. Watters (2021) shared that organizations that fail to address employee concern on perceived inequity and imbalance, often experience high rates of turnover and intention to leave; as employees seek for employment where they will be treated fairly, recognized, acknowledged and appreciated. Alternatively, fair and equitable treatment of employees causes the employees to commit, sacrifice, put more effort in their work, and remain loyal to the organization. Therefore, high employee performance and retention of employees is pegged on fair treatment in the organization.

The theory operates on the assumption that all employees expect fair return for personal effort expended, equitable returns is based on comparisons with treatment of other individuals and distortion where inequity is corrected by either reducing/increasing inputs and outputs (Moloney & Lewis, 2023). There is also an assumption that employees experience psychological distress when they perceive unfair treatment, inequity and imbalance. Leventhal (1980) criticized the theory for placing a lot of importance of fairness in social setting and additionally, it is too simplistic and ignores some factors -demographic, psychological and social that inform on perceptions of what is fair and equitable. Since perception as a construct is difficult to measure, then its applicability in real-life situations is impractical.

Eketu (2018) noted that perception of equity is relative since an employee may see as the input vs. output; effort and reward/benefit for a specific job rank is fair but the entire compensation scheme used in the organization is unfair as compared to industry standards. This affects performance output levels, motivation and commitment of employees to the organization.

The theory has been adopted in different studies such as Inuwa (2017) who shared that job equity resulted in better employee performance and Pourgaz, Naruei and Jenaabadi (2015) realized that commitment of employees and their responding organizational behavior was influenced by perception of equitable and fair treatment. Consequently, the main ideas of the equity hypothesis have an impact on workers' higher efficiency and dedication, which may lead to higher hire rates. In this study, equity theory is applied in explaining the study objectives on employee recognition, which if perceived as fair and equity increases commitment and intentions to stay in the organization. Perception of fair and equitable distribution of benefits, financial incentives and opportunities of growth and development also cause employees to respond by staying for longer in the organization. Thus, the concept clarifies how conducting incentive hiring processes in an equitable and just way enhanced employee engagement at Nairobi City County's referral clinics.

2.3. Empirical Literature Review

This section provides a systematic discussion on the reviewed empirical studies done by different researchers. The empirical studies are based on conducted observations and experimentations from which data and conclusions are made. This discussion also shows the gaps between the past and current studies, and is presented in the following sections:

2.3.1. Financial Incentives and Employee Retention

The research by Abdelhay, Haider, Abdulrahim, and Marie (2023) examined how financial and psychosocial motivations influenced employee outcomes at UAE financial institutions. The paper was done using inductive and descriptive approach, where data will be collected using questionnaires from employees of the commercial banks. The researchers used two hypotheses: monetary incentives had no significant effect to employee performance and psychological incentives have no effect on employee performance.

The collected and analyzed data revealed that monetary and psychological incentives had significant to employee performance. Transport allowances, overtime pay, salary and salary increment affected employee performance outcomes in the banks (KIRWA, 2023). This study is done in the commercial banking sector which is a different context to healthcare sector and monetary incentives was linked to performance, while employee retention was not analyzed.

The impact of both monetary and non-monetary awards on managers' accomplishments in production firms: A case study at Kulim-hi Tech Park, Malaysia, was found in a research by Amin (2022). There were 244 company executives that participated in the research, which employed organized surveys to gather initial information. The Kulim Park's twenty-five production facilities produced the 244 managers. After using the "Smart PLS" approach to evaluate the information collected, Unreport Phrase it was discovered that although non-monetary awards significantly impacted the leaders' job efficiency, money prizes had little influence on it. The study concluded that salary, wages, bonus, housing allowance and overtime pay had little and no influence to executive performance outcomes. The non-financial rewards including appreciation, congratulatory and commendation letters resulted in improved performance. The study creates contextual gap as it was done in Malaysia and methodological gaps since it was a case study and conceptually, employee retention was not analyzed.

Bokaii (2023) researched on compensation benefits and total rewards and tested the effect on retaining of talented employees, case report of Lebanon. The study is informed by improved economy in the nation that increased the demand for highly talented employees and which companies compete to attract and retain the skilled employees. The researcher collected primary evidence from 357 participants and analysis showed that budgetary and non-fiscal factors enhanced job satisfaction and intention to stay. Comparable and standard pay for wages, salaries

and bonuses increased employee engagement and involvement in the work and created high loyalty to the firm. The companies seeking to retain its employees must offer good monetary rewards, engage and involve employees to enhance job gratification, loyalty and motive to stay. The inspection context is in Lebanon which is different to the Kenyan background setting.

Kamau and Omondi (2020) did research on remuneration and its influence on employee retention in Kenya's financial bankage and the case of Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB). The researcher used descriptive design and targeted all the 184 staffs at KCB headquarters from the HR, IT, customer care, finance and credit departments. There was use of primary and secondary data using questionnaire and data collection sheet. Descriptive analysis was done to obtain measures of dispersion and study findings revealed that remuneration affected employee retention at KCB. Fair and equitable rewards, remuneration programs and reward system motivated employee retention and reduced turnover rates. According to the investigation's findings, an attractive benefits package encouraged staff members to stay on with the institution. The present research was conducted in the medical industry with an emphasis on referral healthcare facilities, whereas the previous study was conducted in the finance industry with a sole emphasis on KCB.

Ayuma, Kiongera, and Otuya (2023) conducted study on the impact of financial reimbursement schemes on the NPS ability to provide public goods and services in the Nairobi County area. Using a quantitative research approach, the investigation focused on 400 NPS members who completed standard survey questions as part of their participation. The significant data was assessed using descriptive and inferential means. The outcomes indicated that monetary reward strategies significantly influenced delivery of services to the public by the NPS staffs in terms of quality, timely and responsive services. The null assumption was subsequently disproved by considering the results and implications show that NPS management should focus on financial rewards as a means to improve quality of services delivered to the general public. NPS officers should get higher salaries, allowances and honoring the top performers. The study did not assess retention levels and which was the focus of the current study.

2.3.2. Career Development Opportunities and Employee Retention

Houssein, Singh and Arumugam (2020) study was on employee retention in financial sector in Djibouti as influenced by work-life harmony, participation, and professional development for its employees. Employee retention is important for success and competitive advantages gaining and maintenance.

This study was done as a quantitative, survey format and used 100 respondents who filled the self-administered questions. The conducted regression analysis showed that career development

significantly influenced employee retention. Further results indicate that engaging employees influenced retention but work-life balance had insignificant influence to employee reservation. The study found that staff involvement and professional growth had a big impact on keeping workers. The recommendations indicate that human resource managers should focus on retention policies and career development such as career growth to improve retention rates of its employees. The study context was in financial sector in Djibouti, while this study was done in Kenyan health sector.

Salleh, Omar, Aburumman, Mat and Almhairat (2020) study was on career outlining and impact on turnover intention of employees in Jordan. Career satisfaction was used to moderate the connection involving intention to quit and career preparation. The research was done using a questionnaire that was administered to 412 employees of the 25 different banks located in Jordan. Utilizing the Smart PLS tool (version 328) to evaluate the statistical information gathered, it was discovered that future career preparation negatively affected employees' plans to leave, while job satisfaction somewhat moderated the link among both variables. The conducted focus group discussion also revealed that career management and career adaption negatively influenced turnover intention, since the management and planning help to identify needs, aspirations, expectations and opportunities and implementing strategies to support career growth. Since the study was done in Jordan, which is in a different context and as such, Kenya was the location of the present investigation.

Adeoye and Egwakhe (2019) carried out research on professional growth and retention of skills in Ogun State, Nigeria's public as well as private institutions. This was a cross-sectional survey where data was collected from distributing questionnaires to six universities in four regions in the state. The respondents include 1,410 employees of the six universities and the collected data was used to test the hypothesis. A regression study showed that professional growth has a large and beneficial impact on university retention of skills. These outcomes support the notion that continuing education helps institutions retain talented students, which highlights the importance of taking career advancement into account.

Employee retention is increased when there are career advancement opportunities available. In covering universities in Nigeria, the study creates contextual gaps due to differences in sector and background settings as compared to Kenya's health sector.

In Nairobi City County, Kenya, Ndiritu (2022) conducted a research on career advancement and how it affects retained staff in insurance companies. Highly talented, trained and experienced employees are attractive to a variety of employees in various sectors, which creates challenges in retaining employees. The study focus was on career development and used descriptive research design in collecting and analyzing data from 183 employees. The quantitative data was analyzed

using descriptive and regression analysis and found that career planning had the biggest effect on employee retention, followed by training and development, job enrichment, and mentoring and coaching improved employee retention rates. The study concluded that career development and its constructs influence rates of employment in Nairobi City County's insurance providers. The research was conducted in insurance-related companies, which is a distinct setting from the medical services sector under investigation at this time.

2.3.3. Employee Recognition and Employee Retention

Tirta and Amelia (2020) concentrated on comprehending the influence of work-life preparation, recognition and bonuses, and job fulfillment as an influencing factor on retained staff among Indonesian youth. It was anticipated that this study would be able to help companies create initiatives or regulations that would help them keep the Generation Y workers that now make up their employees. Through the use of probabilistic sampling, the specimens were gathered. Using partial least-squares software to analyze the framework of structural equations, a test of significance and p- results were employed for hypothesis validation. The average variation extracted (AVE) and combined reliability (CR) have been employed to assess both the reliability and validity of the instrument in question. The study's findings indicate that job happiness, life at work, and recognition and rewards all significantly improve retainer rates. That millennials appreciate regular feedback on their performance, instead of annual reviews, many prefer ongoing, constructive feedback that helps them grow and improve.

The study created contextual gap as its focus was only on millennials in firms in Indonesia unlike this study that assessed all employee age groups in Kenya's referral hospitals.

Bosire, Muya and Mutula (2021) did a study on employee recognition programs used at the Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) in Kenya to affect employee output. The relationship was moderated by the employee's union activities. The research was anchored on reinforcement theory and used descriptive and explanatory designs. The target population included all employees at KNH and through stratified sampling, 328 respondents were chosen to take part in the research. The respondents filled the questionnaire and refute the structured respond in the conducted interviews. Thus, both descriptive and inferential stats were used to gather and analyse quantitative information with the results showed that employee recognition programs inclusive of awards, promotions and supportive work environment led to improved employee output. When KNH management team recognizes, appreciates and rewards the hard-working employees, it resulted in higher employee efficiency output. The study findings showed that employee recognition programs positively and influenced work output of the employees in terms of efficient, timely and responsive service delivery. Conceptual gaps were created since recognition was not linked to employee retention, as it was the focus of the current study.

Sitati, Were, Waititu and Miringu (2019) researched on employee acceptance and employee recognition in Kenyan hotels. The study was informed by high turnover rates experienced in the sector, which was highest at 68% in 2011. The sector players also report high costs incurred in training, replacing employees who have exited while maintaining high satisfaction rates. The study population included all the 213 registered hotels and 137 were sampled to take part in the research. Structured surveys were utilized to gather primary data, and narrative, correlation, and regression evaluations were carried out. The findings indicated that improved employee retention was influenced by adoption and implementation of employee recognition practices. Conclusions showed that recognition involving appreciation, validation of efforts, acknowledgement and showing gratitude to employees for their work hard led to higher employee retention rates. The study recommended the need for recognizing employees as a means of increasing work performance, satisfaction and high retention rates for its employees.

Since this investigation focused on the medical field, there is a lack of context because the study was conducted in the hospitality sector.

Nooteboom (2023) research paper was on employee retention and turnover as influenced by recognition, valuing and supporting employees. The small talent pool has forced organizations to prevent turnovers and seek means of retaining employees to avoid instances of employee shortages that affect productivity. The study's focus was assessing how recognition, support and value for employees of Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e) affect retention. The data was collected from 185 support staffs of the university and the findings indicate recognition and appreciation of employees affected job satisfaction affective commitment and job embeddedness. Further results show that employee recognition and support is pivotal in managing employee intention to stay and turnover rates. The study concluded that implementation of recognition and support of staffs can improve the retention rates and reduce instances of turnover in organizations. The study was done in an academic set-up which create contextual gap; as the current study was done in health sector.

2.3.4. Employee Benefits and Employee Retention

Nilon (2023) research was on employee benefits and its role in recruitment and retention of employees in the public sector. The study used quantitative research design and targeted current non-academic staffs and recruiters in the University of California and its Santa Barbara Campus. The respondents filled the questionnaire in the survey such that 600 questionnaires were done by recruiters, 600 by the current employees and 600 for the recently departed employees of the universities. The analyzed data revealed that public sector competes with the private sector in recruiting and retaining of the ideal and most talented candidates. The private sector has more financial muscle and flexibility to compensate the public sector must offer better employee

benefits including standard benefits package, health insurance benefits and retirement benefits plan or the pension plan and schemes. These benefits encourage the employees to stay in the public sector for longer. Comprehensive benefits enabled the public sector to attract, recruit and retain employees who will continue to deliver on the mandate of the organization.

The study ensured that employee bonuses influence recruitment and retention of employees in the public sector. The study created contextual frameworks as it covered public sector in the USA and focused on university of California.

Samuel-Ikiroma, Gabriel and Biriowu (2023) researched on mobility perks and staff retention at Nigeria's (FR) tier-one deposit-taking banks. Information from provincial financial institutions were gathered and analysed using a design that was cross-sectional. The study's sample size consisted of 101 bank employees, and qualitative and correlational studies were used to examine the data. The results showed that whenever tier-one institutions offered mobility perks to their staff, staff retention increased. Benefits related to worker mobility as well as retention showed a high association. The research made the conclusion that mobility benefits through comprehensive mobility benefit packages inclusive of expenses to relocate, house and transport allowance, processing of transportation documents such as visas resulted in high employee retention. The study creates conceptual gaps by focusing on only one type of benefit and context was in banking sector in Nigeria.

The study conducted by Agubata, Okolo, and Ogwu (2022) focused on the impact on staff perks on organizational growth within retail businesses that are listed on the Nigerian Stock Exchange. The research project was motivated by the observation that worker happiness and mental and physical requirements have an effect on workers' productivity and the expansion of businesses. Additional information from 2012 to 2019 were employed in the study, and describing, a correlation and regression methods were used for assessment. The results from the research demonstrated that the growth of the organizations was significantly and considerably impacted by perks for employees, such as pensions, health and healthcare allowances, and gratuities pay. According to the study's findings, worker benefits boosted the growth of the company as measured by assets. The suggestions demonstrated that companies looking to expand ought to improve the amenities that they provide to employees, particularly retirement savings. Since keeping workers was not evaluated and was not related to the impact on worker advantages, the investigation had fundamental inadequacies.

The subject of Mutuiri, Gichunge, and Nzioki's (2022) study was the staff member benefits plan and how it affected workers' productivity in Nairobi City County's public medical facilities. By luring and keeping the best workers, the staff advantages strategy aims to achieve a competitive advantage and flourish in the dynamic workplace. The research project selected 1,601 staff

members of whom 310 comprised the total study dimension, and employed the equity hypothesis and a cross-sectional methodology. After the participants completed the survey questions, describing, association, and regression methods were used to examine the information. The results indicate a substantial correlation between compensation strategy and achievement, and the implications imply that personnel benefits have an impact on worker performance at Nairobi's public healthcare facilities. Since the previous study was conducted in public hospitals and focused on retention of staff, it left contextual deficiencies. The present study was conducted in referral centres.

2.4. Summary of Literature and Research Gaps

Table 2.1: Summary of Literature and Research Gaps

Author	Topic	Findings	Research Gaps	Focus of the Current Study
Abdelhay et al. (2023)	Productivity of staff members in UAE banking institutions as influenced by financial and emotional motivations.	The results show that monetary and psychological incentives had significant to employee performance.	Contextual gap as it covered commercial banks in UAE Conceptual gap - as it assessed employee performance	Examined the impact of monetary rewards on personnel retention at Nairobi City County's medical centers for referral.
Ayuma et al. (2023)	The impact of financial rewards schemes on the NPS ability to provide essential services in the Nairobi County area	Findings indicate that monetary reward strategies significantly influenced delivery of services to the public by the NPS staffs	Conceptual gap as focus was on service delivery and not employee retention of the National Police Service (NPS)	Linked financial incentives to employee retention in the referral hospitals
Ndiritu (2022)	The impact of professional growth on retained staff in insurers located in Nairobi City County, Kenya	Results imply that career development and its constructs influence the percentage of worker retention in Nairobi City County's insurance businesses	Contextual gap as The research examined insurance-related sectors and companies.	Examined chances for professional growth and personnel engagement in Nairobi's referral hospitals.
Agubata et al.	The advantages	The employee	Conceptual gap -	The main

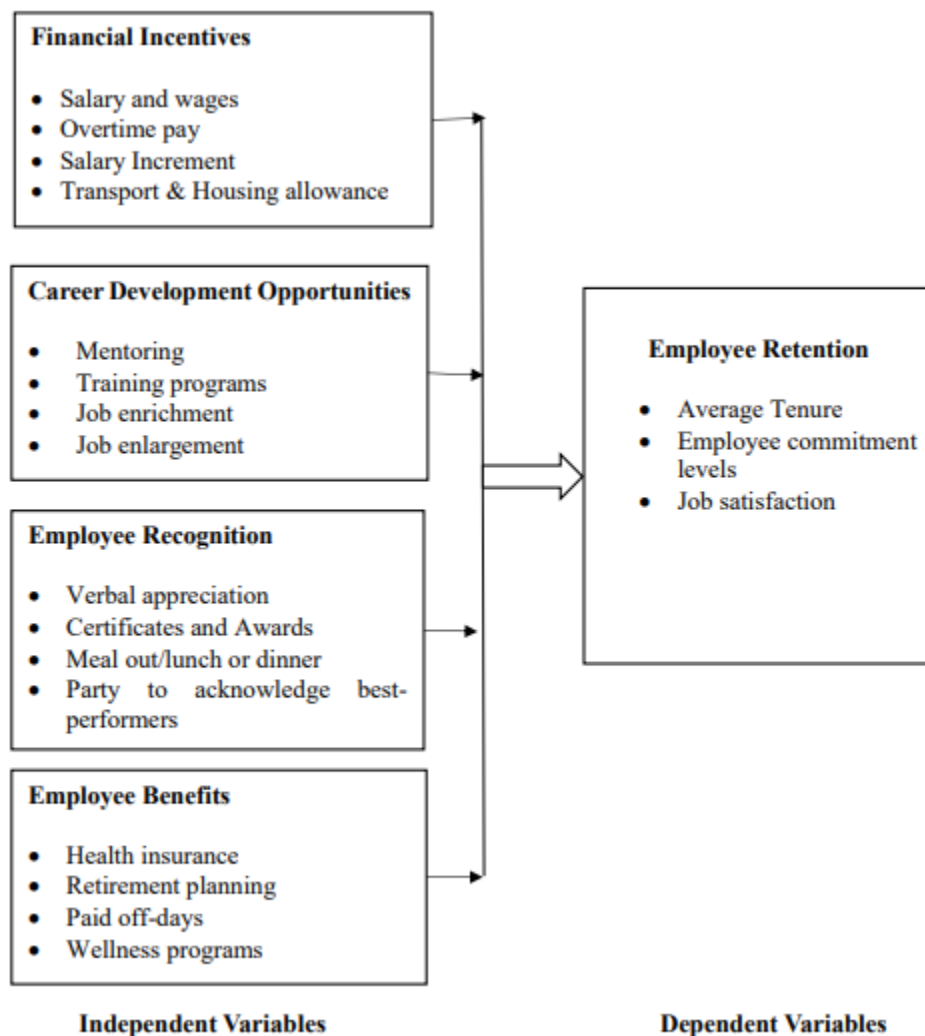
(2022)	for employees and how it affects organizational development for consumer-facing companies registered on the Nigerian Stock Exchange	benefits in terms of pension, health and medical allowances and gratuity pay enhanced growth of the organizations	since employee retention was not assessed Contextual gap as it was done in Nigeria and its listed consumer goods firms	emphasis was on evaluating the impact of wellness programs on retaining staff across all Nairobi County's referral medical centers.
Bosire et al. (2021)	Effect of employee recognition programs and employee output at KNH	Results showed that employee recognition programs inclusive of awards, promotions and supportive work environment led to improved employee output	Conceptual gaps since employee retention was not assessed Contextual gap as the study was done at KNH	The present research focused on retaining staff members and appreciation in all Nairobi City County referral medical centers.
Kamau and Omondi (2020)	The salary and its impact on keeping employees in Kenyan's financial institutions and the instance of KCB.	It was found that good remuneration package enticed the employees to remain working at the KCB bank.	Contextual gap as it was done in the banking and financial services sector Methodological gap as it was a case study of KCB	The emphasis was on keeping employees at the county's referral centers.
Houssein et al. (2020)	Professional development, participation, job-life balance harmony, and retained staff in Djibouti's banking industry	The results show that career development significantly influenced employee retention	Contextual gaps as it was done in financial sector in Djibouti	Examined the potential for professional growth as well as recruitment of staff at Nairobi City County referral medical centers.
Sitati et al. (2019)	The employee recognition and employee retention in Kenyan hotels	Results showed that recognizing employees led to improved employee retention	Contextual gap as it covered Kenyan hotels	Linked employee recognition to employee retention in healthcare sector

Source: Researcher (2024)

2.5. Conceptual Framework

This is in picture form showing the relationship between the study variables. The figure shows the reward management practices and the indicators for each variable as the independent variables and the employee retention and its measuring indicators as the dependent variables. This is highlighted and presented in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2. 1: Conceptual Framework



Source: Researcher (2024)

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The section discussed the chosen research technique, including how the target populace, recruitment, sample amount, and the study design were chosen. It also includes sections on the method, tool, and analysis used to acquire data. The instrument's experimental testing process and the research principles that directed the study are covered in this chapter.

3.2. Research Design

The descriptive research design that was used is informative, which is most suited for formal surveys according to Omair (2015) since it includes well-defined inquiry inquiries. The design enables the researcher to collect information, make summaries for the data and present the findings and interpret meanings without making any changes and clarifying the research focus. By utilizing this research methodology, the respondents were able to establish how reward management practices influence employee retention. The link between the variables was without any exaggeration and manipulation.

3.3. Target Population

As per Asiamah, Mensah, and Oteng-Abayie (2017), the target group is the whole amount of entities that share accessible attributes. In this research, the target population included healthcare workers in Kenya, who are categorized as Medical Doctors (General and Specialists) Nurses, Clinical Officers, Lab Technicians and Paramedics (Therapists, Technologists, Social Workers, Public Health Officers, Mortuary Attendants and Biochemists/Bio-medical Engineers). From the records held in the five public referral hospitals, the study targeted 5,626 healthcare workers. The distribution as per hospital and category is presented in Table 3.1:

Table 3. 1: Target Population

Public Referral Hospital	Category	Frequency	Percent
Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH)	Medical doctors	304	8.2%
	Nurses	2281	61.3%
	Clinical officers	497	13.3%
	Lab technicians	124	3.3%
	Paramedics	518	13.9%
	Sub-total	3724	100%
Kenyatta University Teaching, Referral and Research Hospital	Medical doctors	132	10.7%
	Nurses	654	53.1%
	Clinical officers	231	18.8%
	Lab technicians	67	5.4%

	Paramedics	148	12%
	Sub-total	1232	100%
National Spinal Injury Hospital	Medical doctors	11	9.4%
	Nurses	59	50.4%
	Clinical officers	21	17.9%
	Lab technicians	7	5.9%
	Paramedics	19	16.2%
	Sub-total	117	100%
Mathari National Teaching and Referral Hospital	Medical doctors	41	14.1%
	Nurses	168	57.7%
	Clinical officers	36	12.4%
	Lab technicians	17	5.8%
	Paramedics	29	9.9%
	Sub-total	291	100%
Pumwani Maternity and Referral Hospital	Medical doctors	17	6.5%
	Nurses	159	60.7%
	Clinical officers	41	15.6%
	Lab technicians	18	6.9%
	Paramedics	27	10.3%
	Sub-total	262	100%
Total		5,626	

Source: National Treasury -Health Sector Report (2023)

3.4. Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Since the population can be large and thus not convenient to study all the objects, then a sample group is selected. Singh and Masuku (2014) share that sampling is scientific processes employed in selecting a small group from the entire population size. In this investigation, a simple randomized approach was utilized to choose those participating based on a medical worker's location of employment, and stratification selection was employed to group responders according to the reference hospital in which they operate. The investigator applied the Yamane (1967) equation, which is computed at an accuracy level of 95% and a 5% precise level, to determine the right sample population. The obtained 373 respondents formed the sample size and distributed across all the five referral hospitals.

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

Where:

n = sample quantity,

N = amount of population,

e = error rate at 95% confidence level

$$\frac{5626}{1 + 5626 (0.05)^2}$$

$$\frac{5626}{15.065}$$

= 373 Respondents

Sample size of 373 respondents was proportionately distributed in the referral hospitals and there were used of proportionate sampling of: $P = n/N = 373/5626 = 0.066$ and represented in Table 3.2

Table 3. 2: Sample Size

Public Referral Hospital	Category	Target Population	Sample Size
Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH)	Medical doctors	304	28
	Nurses	2281	99
	Clinical officers	497	41
	Lab technicians	124	22
	Paramedics	518	56
	Sub-total	3724	246
Kenyatta University Teaching, Referral and Research Hospital	Medical doctors	132	9
	Nurses	654	31
	Clinical officers	231	20
	Lab technicians	67	7
	Paramedics	148	16
	Sub-total	1232	83
National Spinal Injury Hospital	Medical doctors	11	1
	Nurses	59	3
	Clinical officers	21	2
	Lab technicians	7	1
	Paramedics	19	1
	Sub-total	117	8
Mathari National Teaching and Referral Hospital	Medical doctors	41	2
	Nurses	168	9
	Clinical officers	36	4
	Lab technicians	17	1
	Paramedics	29	3
	Sub-total	291	19

Pumwani Maternity and Referral Hospital	Medical doctors	17	1
	Nurses	159	7
	Clinical officers	41	3
	Lab technicians	18	2
	Paramedics	27	4
	Sub-total	262	17
Total		5,626	373

Source: Researcher (2024)

3.5. Data Collection Instrument

This research used a semi-structured questionnaire to collect data. Questionnaire as a research tool is advantageous because of ease of collecting data, cost-efficient and getting the researcher an opportunity to establish rapport and clarify any issues. The survey was created by the researcher to address every study goal, and the degree of concurrence with the assertions were rated on a Likert scale which ranged from one to five.

3.6. Pilot Study

Pilot study is done to check for errors in the instrument and after adjustments it will yield valid data. The piloting checked that the instrument is valid and reliable and helps the researcher to fine-tune it before the final study. It helped the researcher to estimate the time needed to fill each questionnaire and guide in planning for length of study. The pilot study was done at Kiambu County Referral Hospital using 18 healthcare workers spread across all the categories and which represents 5% of the sample size.

3.6.1. Validity and Reliability

Validity is about the capacity of the research instrument to measure what it purports to measure. To check for validity of the questionnaire, expert opinion method was adopted where the supervisor helped in ensuring that the questions and instructions are clear and align to content in the document. There was use of content validity, the responses were checked to confirm if they yield the expected answers. Heale and Twycross (2015) recommended use of research experts including the university supervisor and using their advice to make adjustments to the instrument and deliver a good instrument.

For reliability, it is defined as consistent scores obtained after the instrument has been administered many times (Singh, 2017). There are various methods to check for reliability, but this study used internal consistency method and responses checked to align with information in the document. The responses were confirmed using Cronbach Alpha (α) whose range is from 0 to 1, where 0 is lowest and 1 is perfect reliability.

The alpha is set at 0.7 and above as a standard and indication of a reliable instrument (Taber, 2018), and alphas below the standard imply the need for adjusting the instrument.

3.7. Data Collection Procedure

The study got a research authorization from NACOSTI and an introductory letter from the institution prior to beginning data collection. The researcher got permission from the leadership in the referral hospital and then booked appointments on when to come back to fill the questionnaire. On the material day, the researcher went to the hospital and met with the respondents, then explained the aim of the research, confidentiality matters and use of the data. The respondents filled the questionnaire and the researcher collected it immediately. The data collection process was done in two-weeks' time.

3.8. Data Analysis and Presentation

The researcher first checked for completeness, consistency and accuracy of the questionnaire. There was cleaning, coding and entering the data into SPSS version 28 computer package for analysis. The study employed descriptive analysis which consisted of obtaining frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation. To evaluate the relationship between the two types of variables, a Pearson correlation study was performed.

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to confirm the direction and strength and it used this format:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y =Employee Retention

β_0 = coefficient of intersection

ε = error term

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ and β_4 = coefficients of regression

X_1 =Financial Incentives

X_2 = Career development

X_3 = Employee recognition

X_4 = Employee Benefits

3.9. Ethical Consideration

The study ethics serve to control the activities undertaken by the researcher when interacting with the respondents. This is to avoid infringing on the rights of the respondents, causing harm

that can be emotional or mental. As such, the researcher got permission from the hospitals and respondents and confidentiality of information that was shared was maintained.

The respondents were explained to the aim for the research and selection of respondents was on deliberate basis and their identities were kept secret. Additionally, the information was generalized in drawing conclusions and recommendations to maintain anonymity of participants. All the data sources were referenced to acknowledge the authors and researchers.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the conducted analysis in the form of descriptive and inferential analysis. There is a discussion for interpretation of the findings from the data collected from the respondents in the study period. The information is presented in tables and forms the foundation for discussions, conclusions and recommendations made in this study.

4.2. Response Rate

The researcher sought to understand the response rate, and findings are as presented in table 4.1

Table 4. 1: Response Rate

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Filled and returned questionnaire	267	71.6%
Not returned questionnaire	99	26.5%
Incomplete questionnaire	7	1.9%
Total	373	100%

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The study recorded a high response rate at 71.6% with only 26.5% of the respondents not participating in the research. Response rate of 50% is satisfactory, 60% good and 70% is excellent for generalization of findings, as shared by the researchers Höhne (2019) and Elfil and Negida (2017). Therefore, the study's response rate is representative and sufficient for drawing conclusions and formulating of recommendations. The high response rate is due to personal efforts, wide network in the sector by the researcher and being available to answer any questions raised on the questionnaire.

4.3. Reliability Test Results

Reliability test was conducted to assess the consistency, stability and predictability of the questionnaire as an indication of its fitness for use. The test results are based on the computation of the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient values. The summaries are as presented in Table 4.2

Table 4. 2: Reliability Test Results

Variables	Cronbach Alpha	No. of Items
Financial Incentives	0.835	7
Career Development	0.749	7
Employee Recognition	0.803	7
Employee Benefits	0.808	7
Employee Retention	0.823	4
Aggregate scores	0.804	32

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The results are based on Cronbach Alpha which was used to estimate internal consistency as an indication of how all the items in the questionnaire relate to each other and its relation to the total test -the internal coherence. The coefficient score ranges from 0 to 1, with higher scores, implying the instrument is reliable. Taber (2018) recommended 0.7 as the minimum standard value for the coefficient alpha for a research instrument that is deemed reliable. In this research, all the alpha values were above 0.7 and the aggregate score of 0.804, implying the questionnaire was stable, and consistent and hence a confirmation of its reliability.

4.4. Demographic Information of the Respondents

Information was sought on the gender, the position held by the respondents, length of service and highest academic qualifications for each respondent. The responses are summarized and presented in the tables below:

4.4.1. Gender of Respondents

In this study, information on the distribution of the respondents per gender was sought and findings are as presented in Table 4.3

Table 4. 3: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	138	51.7%
Female	129	48.3%
Total	267	100%

Source: Survey Data (2024)

Majority of the respondents at 51.7% were male compared to female respondents who accounted for 48.3%. The results align with the fact that in general there are more male in employment than females and additionally, the medical field is in the scientific sector that was largely male dominated. The slight gender imbalance can account for employment trends in the health services sector. The results also show there was fair distribution since neither gender occupied all the positions in this study.

4.4.2. Position Held at the Referral Hospital

The respondents were asked to indicate the position they held while working in their respective referral hospital. Table 4.4 presents the summary of the findings.

Table 4. 4: Position Held

Position	Frequency	Percent
Medical Doctor	29	10.9%
Nurse	106	39.7%
Clinical Officer	51	19.1%
Lab Technician	24	8.9%
Paramedic	57	21.3%
Total	267	100%

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The results show that most of the responses obtained was from nurses at 39.7%, paramedics at 21.3% and clinical officers at 19.1%. Some 10.9% medical officers and 8.9% of lab technicians also took part in this study. These responses imply that different categories of hospital staff took part in the research and speaks to the diverse information collected. The information forms the core of this study as a representative of all functional units within a hospital setting.

4.4.3. Length of time working at the Referral Hospital

Table 4. 5: Length of time working in the Hospital

Position	Frequency	Percent
0-5 years	41	15.4%
6-10 years	93	34.8%
11-15 years	54	20.2%
16-20 years	47	17.6%
21 + years	32	11.9%
Total	267	100%

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The study sought to know the number of years that the respondents have been working in the referral hospital. The information sought helped clarify the extent of knowledge that the respondents had in the hospital in regard to linking retention of employees to reward management practices. A large number of respondents at 34.8% had worked in the hospital for 6 to 10 years, while 20.2% had worked for between 11 to 15 years, another 17.6% of the respondents had worked for 16 to 20 years and 11.9% of the respondents indicated that they had worked for more than 21 years. Cumulatively, 84.6% of the respondents had worked for more than 5 years and meaning they had sufficient experience and in-depth knowledge on the working of the hospital, hence qualified and gave sufficient information on how reward management practices affected employee retention.

4.3.4. Highest Academic Qualifications

The study sought to know academic qualifications of the respondents, and here are the responses provided as summarized in Table 4.6

Table 4. 6: Highest Academic Qualifications

Position	Frequency	Percent
Certificate	24	8.9%
Diploma	69	25.8%
Degree	116	43.4%
Master’s Degree	42	15.7%
PhD	16	5.9%
Total	267	100%

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The results in Table 4.6 on the highest academic qualification attained by the respondents, was to assess how well the respondents understood the questions in this research. The findings show that majority of 43.4% of the respondents are university undergraduate holders, 25.8% had college level diploma, another 15.7% of the respondents had a master’s degree, 8.9% are certificate holders and 5.9% were PhD holders. These results indicate the response group consistent of a mix of educational backgrounds in the referral hospital. However, all the respondents had college level education qualification which is sufficient to read, understand and respond to the questions providing valuable information on the study topic and objectives. Therefore, the findings, conclusions and recommendations made are from well-educated and informed workforce in the referral hospitals.

4.5. Descriptive Analysis Results

The researcher did descriptive analysis on the study objectives. The respondents were to indicate the extent of agreement with each statement in line with the five-point likert scale. The scale ranged from 1 -5 where 1= Not Extent at all; 2 = Little Extent; 3= Moderate Extent; 4= Large Extent and 5= Very Large Extent; and it was used to compute means and standard deviation for the study objectives in Tables 4.7 to 4.11.

4.5.1. Financial Incentives and Employee Retention

The study sought to assess the effect of financial incentives on employee retention in public referral hospitals in Nairobi City County. The responses are as provided in Table 4.7

Table 4. 7: Financial Incentives and Employee Retention

	Mean	Std. Dev.
The employees get a monthly salary or wages for their contribution to the attainment of hospital’s mandate	3.75	1.018
The hospital staffs get overtime pay when their work schedules exceed normal working hours	3.78	1.120
The employees enjoy annual salary increments	3.69	1.106
The employees get transport allowances to aide their movement to/from the hospital	3.82	1.154
All employees are entitled to housing allowance	3.99	1.091
The financial incentives serve as a motivational factor for the hospital staffs	3.81	1.174
Financial incentives encourage employees to stay for longer working in the referral hospitals	3.55	1.122
Average Scores	3.77	1.112

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The study found that respondents agreed on employees getting a monthly salary or wages for their efforts, confirmed by these score (M =3.75 and SD = 1.018). The respondents also agreed to a large extent on hospital staff getting overtime pay whenever their work schedule exceeded the normal working hours, as cited by (M =3.78 and SD =1.120). There was annual salary increment as reported by the responses with scores of (M =3.69 and SD =1.106). The findings also show that respondents agreed to a great extent on hospital employees getting transport allowance (M =3.82 and SD =1.154), the employees are also entitled to a housing allowance, as cited by scores of (M =3.99 and SD =1.091). Further results show that respondents agreed to a large extent on financial incentives serving as a motivational factor, at scores of (M =3.81 and SD =1.174) and the financial incentives encouraged the hospital employees to stay for long, confirmed by scores where (M =3.55 and SD =1.122). In general, financial incentives affected employee retention at a large extent based on aggregate scores of (M =3.77 and SD =1.112).

The respondents were asked to share other financial incentives that they enjoyed at the hospital, some of the answers included getting opportunities to take extra shifts at the hospital and earn more money. There is also freedom of working in nearby health facilities for an extra coin as long as it does not interfere with the work schedule. The respondents also shared that the referral hospital rewards top performing employee in different units/departments.

These rewards include fully paid holiday, lunch or dinner and at times a cash reward. The respondents noted that these financial incentives motivated and encouraged the hospital employees to continue working and they served for long in the hospital.

The study findings are supported by the researchers Abdelhay et al. (2023) who found financial incentives inclusive of salaries, salary increment, payment of overtime, bonus and transport allowances enhanced motivation level of employees leading to better performance outcomes. In addition, Bokaii (2023) noted an increase in employee retention whenever organizations provided compensation benefits and total rewards. Salaries, wages and bonuses incentivized employees and encouraged longer stay in the organization. Similar results were also shared by Kamau and Omondi (2020) who noted a direct link between attractive packages and longer stay in the banking institutions. This shows that organizations that provide financial incentives gain by having its employees staying for longer in the firm.

4.5.2. Career Development and Employee Retention

Table 4.8 shows the results on conducted descriptive analysis that assessed how career development affect employee retention.

Table 4. 8: Career Development and Employee Retention

	Mean	Std. Dev.
All employees gain from mentorship offered at the referral hospital	3.74	.320
There are available training programs to enhance competencies for professional growth of the employees	3.59	.675
The hospital uses both on-the-job and off-the-job trainings to equip its employees	3.57	.549
Additional leadership responsibilities is given to employees who acquire new skills	3.68	.697
Employees enjoy enlargement of their work assignments to fully utilize their skills	3.58	.620
The more experienced employees are assigned complex assignments at the hospital	3.44	.706
Opportunities for career development improves employee retention in the referral hospitals	3.57	.728
Average Scores	3.60	0.612

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The results show that respondents agreed that they gained from the mentorship offered in the hospital at scores of (M =3.74 and SD =0.320). The respondents also agreed to a moderate extent on availability of training programs for enhancing competencies with scores of (M =3.59 and SD =0.675) and there is both on-the-job and off-the-job trainings offered by the hospital, as cited by scores where (M =3.57 and SD =0.549). Findings show that respondents agreed to a large extent on employees who acquire new skills get additional leadership roles, confirmed by scores of (M =3.68 and SD =0.697). The respondents agreed moderately on the enlargement of work assignments with the scores of (M =3.58 and SD =0.620). The respondents also moderately confirmed that complex assignments are assigned to experienced employees, at scores of (M =3.44 and SD =0.706) and at a moderate score of (M =3.57 and SD =0.728), the respondents shared on career development opportunities enhanced employee retention in the referral hospitals. In general, the respondents agreed that career development improved employee retention as confirmed by the aggregate scores of (M =3.60 and SD =0.612).

When the respondents were asked to indicate other career development opportunities available in the referral hospital, the responses given included promotion to senior management levels at the hospital, being given an opportunity to lead to unit or project or program and expanded work role. The other answers included growing from a lower job group to a higher one, are part of the reasons for retention of employees in the public referral hospitals. These results echo what the researchers Houssein et al. (2020) established that professional development of employees improves the ability of the organization to retain its top talented employees. At the same time, Adeoye and Egwakhe (2019) found professional growth and career advancement opportunities resulted in increased employee retention in the universities. To retain employees, Ndiritu (2022) advocated for career development through components such as job enrichment, career planning and training. It is therefore factual that aspects of career development are essential to enhanced retention of employees.

4.5.3. Employee Recognition and Employee Retention

Table 4. 9: Employee Recognition and Employee Retention

	Mean	Std. Dev.
The managers verbally recognize employees for their efforts when handling assigned job tasks	3.77	1.068
The hospital has a practice of verbal appreciation of top performing employees	3.87	1.079
Employees who accomplish their work tasks excellently are awarded	3.83	1.310
Managers give certification to high performing employees of the hospital	3.91	1.154
The hospital organizes a dinner in recognition of top performing employees	3.86	.988
The hospital has an annual gala for awarding top performing employees in the year	3.84	1.251
Recognizing employees has the added benefit of high employee retention in the	3.76	1.110

referral hospitals

Average Scores

3.83

1.137

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The results show that respondents agreed to a great extent on having experienced verbal recognition from the managers after doing a good job. This was based on scores where (M =3.77 and SD =1.068). The hospital has a practice of verbal appreciation of top performers, was agreed by a large number of respondents since the scores were high at (3.87 and SD =1.079). Further results show that accomplishment of excellent work is awarded was agreed to be factual and confirmed by the scores of (M =3.83 and SD =1.310). The respondents also agreed to a large extent on managers giving certificates to high performing employees, with scores of (M =3.91 and SD =1.154) and the referral hospital gives a dinner to top performers, confirmed with the score of (M =3.86 and SD =0.988). The results as confirmed by respondents is there is an annual gala event to award top performers, where the scores were high at (M =3.84 and SD = 1.251) and recognizing hospital employees led to retention of the employees, where the scores were (M =3.76 and SD =1.110). In general, respondents agreed to a large extent that employee recognition improved employee retention in the public referral hospitals, where the aggregate scores were (M =3.83 and SD =1.137).

The respondents were asked to describe how employees were recognized in the hospital, and these are some of the responses given as placing the picture and name of the employee of month on the internal notice boards and sharing an email of top performing employees to all staffs. These were efforts to recognize individual effort put in dealing with work assignments and this encouraged better outcomes. The respondents also shared on departmental managers organizing for a party to acknowledge and appreciate top performers. The other response was giving of certificate and awards. These efforts to recognize employees who do well, had an impact of creating a sense of appreciation and feeling of being seen and efforts acknowledged; that led to better team spirit and long stay in the organization. Employee recognition also contributes to the success of the organization, as it serves as a motivating factor leading to better performance outcomes.

These findings were also confirmed in the research by Tirta and Amelia (2020) and found that millennial workers in Indonesia would stay longer in the same organization when there was recognition, regular feedback and fulfilment from the work tasks. Additionally, Sitati et al (2019) stated that improved employee retention in Kenyan hotels was influenced by implementation of employee recognition practices. Recognition practices such as acknowledging, showing gratitude and appreciate for efforts and contribution of each employee led to improved retention rates of the employees. According to Nooteboom (2023) whenever organizations value, support and recognize their staff, it has a direct effect of retention of its employee. Recognition and support

are instrumental in managing turnover rates and intention to stay, and was found to affect employee retention in the public referral hospitals.

4.5.4. Employee Benefits and Employee Retention

The effect of employee benefits on retention of employees working in the public referral hospitals was assessed, and the findings are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4. 10: Employee Benefits and Employee Retention

	Mean	Std. Dev.
All employees in the hospital enjoy health insurance	3.91	.759
The referral hospital has a pension scheme for planning retirement of its employees	3.84	.957
The hospital has organized for wellness initiatives including counseling for the staffs	3.78	1.043
The hospital employees work on a flexible work schedule	3.82	1.106
The employees enjoy paid annual leave	3.84	.781
The employees are entitled to paid off-days	3.80	1.035
These benefits have improved retention rates of employees in the referral hospitals	3.66	.893
Average Scores	3.81	.939

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The findings indicate that respondents agreed to large extent on the hospital providing health insurance covers, where the scores were high at (M =3.91 and SD =0.759). The respondents also agreed on presence of a pension scheme that is available to help employees plan for retirement. The score rates were high at (M =3.84 and SD =0.957) and respondents also agreed that the hospital had organized for wellness programs to take care of the psychological needs of the employees, with scores of (M =3.78 and SD =1.043). Further results showed that respondents agreed to a great extent on hospital having flexible work schedule at scores of (M =3.82 and SD =1.106), the other benefits included paid annual leaves, agreed at scores of (M =3.84 and SD =0.781) and paid off-days that was scored at (M =3.80 and SD =1.035). The study also found that respondents agreed at a moderate score of (M =3.66 and SD = 0.893) on these benefits improving employee retention rates. At average scores of (M =3.81 and SD =0.939), the respondents agreed at a large extent that benefits given to employees led to employee retention in the public referral hospitals in Nairobi City County.

In their own words, the respondents were asked to describe other benefits that they enjoyed as workers in the public referral hospitals; the responses given included enjoying financial benefits included overtime and bonus pay and non-financial benefits such as awards, appreciation and acknowledgement. Another respondent, noted that the hospital offered monetary rewards to

employees and other benefits consisted of membership to clubs, gym and entertainment joints and programs to help in planning for development initiatives for individual employees.

The hospital also organizes for group counseling sessions and the management offers support to employees who are undergoing psychological challenges. The respondents were asked to state how the above benefits affected retention, and the responses showed that the various benefits provided by the hospital increased intention and actual longer stay by the employees. This was based on drawing on feelings of ownership, engagement and appreciation that made the employees desire and actually stayed for long in the referral hospital.

The above results were also shared by Nilon (2023) who found that benefits such as health insurance covers, retirement planning and pension schemes encouraged the employees for longer in the assessed universities. The presence of comprehensive benefit package enabled organizations to attract and retain top talented employees. Furthermore, Agubata, Okolo et al. (2022) noted that growth of the organization informed by perks and worker benefits had an additional gain in terms of retaining top performing employees. In addition, Samuel-Ikiroma et al. (2023) found that transport and mobility perks was effective in gaining higher staff retention. These reviews, confirm that benefits enjoyed by employees is associated and influences employee retention.

4.5.5. Employee Retention

Employee retention in the public referral hospital was assessed, and responses given by the respondents and computed into mean and standard deviation is summarized and presented in Table 4.11

Table 4. 11: Employee Retention

	Mean	Std. Dev.
The referral hospitals record a high average tenure rate for its employees	4	.879
The hospitals employees show high commitment levels to their work tasks	3.73	.883
The employees are satisfied with their jobs	3.52	1.148
Many employees indicate their intention to stay in the referral hospital	3.71	.958
Average Scores	3.74	0.967

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The findings show that majority of the sampled respondents agreed to a large extent that there was a high record of the average tenure rate of the employees; based on the recorded scores of (M =4 and SD =0.879). The respondents also agreed to a large extent on employees showing high commitment when handling their work assignments and tasks, where the scores are (M

=3.73 and SD =0.883). The results also show that respondents agreed at a moderate extent on employees being satisfied with their job at the referral hospital, cited by scores of (M =3.52 and SD =1.148) and a majority of the respondents indicated their intention to stay and continue working in the referral hospital, where the scores are (M =3.71 and SD =0.958). At aggregate scores of (M =3.74 and SD = 0.967), the respondents confirmed recorded high employee retention at the public referral hospital.

The other indicator for employee retention in the hospital is having the same co-workers for many years and having employees working in the same hospital until they reach the retirement age. It can also be seen as the ability of the hospital to keep the highly skilled, talented and experience workers. This is similar to what Alzaid and Dukhaykh (2023) shared that retention is where the organization retains majority of its employees in seeking to attain its mandate. Mwasi and Orwa (2023) stated that retention is the ability of an organization to retain the productive workforce for many years. It is also the number of employees present and still working at the end of the financial year. Retention of employees is conceptualized as loyalty, commitment and delivery of quality services (Salameh, et al., 2022). The results confirmed the analysed public referral hospitals were able to retain a majority of its employees for many years.

4.6. Pearson Moment Correlation Analysis Results

The relationship of the independent and dependent variable was tested using the Pearson’s correlation analysis. This was between employee retention and each of the explanatory variables, with the results shared in Table 4.12

Table 4. 12: Correlation Analysis Results

		Employee Retention	Financial Incentives	Career Development	Employee Recognition	Employee Benefits
Employee Retention	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig.(2-tailed)					
	N	267				
Financial Incentives	Pearson Correlation	.413	1			
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000				
	N	267	267			
Career Development	Pearson Correlation	.616*	.486**	1		
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000			
	N	267	267	267		

Employee Recognition	Pearson Correlation	.681*	.586**	.240**	1	
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		
	N	267	267	267	267	
Employee Benefits	Pearson Correlation	.651*	.261**	.051**	.042**	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	267	267	267	267	267

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results shown in Table 4.12 indicate that financial incentives are related to employee retention at ($r=0.413$, $p =0.000$). This imply that financial incentives had moderate effect on employee retention at the public referral hospitals in Nairobi City County. Further results show that career development was related to employee retention at ($r =0.616$, $p =0.000$) and the relationship is significant on the basis of the r values. Employee recognition was found to be related to employee retention, and the r values of ($r =0.681$, $p =0.000$) indicate that employee recognition significantly affected employee retention in the public referral hospitals. The study also found that employee benefits was related to employee retention. The obtained values of ($r =0.651$, $p =0.000$) imply that employee benefits significantly affected employee retention in the public referral hospitals in Nairobi City County.

These interpretations align with Kothari’s (2014) interpretation of correlation results such that r values of 0.5 and above show strong and significant relations between variables. If the r values range between 0.3 to 0.49, it implies moderate effect and 0 to 0.29 imply low or weak relations between the variables. Therefore, financial incentives had a moderate effect while career development, employee recognition and employee benefits have significant and strong effect to employee retention in the analyzed public referral hospitals in Nairobi City County.

4.7. Multiple Regression Analysis Results

In seeking to determine how the dependent variable was influenced by the independent variables, the researcher conducted regression analysis. The model summary in Table 4.13, shows independent variables of financial incentives, career development, employee recognition and employee benefits influenced the dependent variable of employee retention. This was calculated at 95% confidence level.

Table 4. 13: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.812 ^a	.659	.654	0.334582

a. Predictors: (Constant), Financial Incentives, Career Development, Employee Recognition, Employee Benefit

The results in table 4.13 show the R value is high at 0.812 as an indication of a close relation between the independent variable (reward management practices) and the dependent variable (employee retention). The adjusted R² was adopted in establishing the predictive power of the model. The results show that adjusted R² at 0.654, indicate that 65.4% variation in employee retention in the public referral hospitals were explained by components of reward management practices namely, financial incentives, career development, employee recognition and employee benefits. However, there is 34.6% unexplained practices that contribute to employee retention and were excluded in this study’s scope. Thus, future researches can be done to establish these other practices (34.6%) that influence employee retention in the public referral hospitals in Nairobi City County.

Table 4. 14: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	106.754	4	26.689	20.451	.000 ^b
	Residual	341.943	262	1.305		
	Total	448.697	266			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Retention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Financial Incentives, Career Development, Employee Recognition, Employee Benefit

The results in Table 4.14 show that p-values of 0.000^b is less than alpha value standard of 0.01, which implies that the regression relationship was significant in that the reward management practices inclusive of financial incentives, career development, employee recognition and employee benefits affected employee retention in the public referral hospitals in Nairobi City County. F calculated value of 20.451 was found to be greater that the F critical value (Df of 4, 262) is 2.411, confirming the overall regression model was significant in assessing the relationship between the study variables.

Table 4. 15: Beta Coefficient

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1 (Constant)	.973	1.037		.938	.000
Financial Incentives	.235	.139	.409	1.690	.000
Career Development	.369	.152	.218	2.427	.001
Employee Recognition	.904	.737	.573	1.226	.001
Employee Benefits	.781	.569	.754	1.372	.003

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Retention

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The multiple regression model equation of:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

becomes into this resultant equation model of

$$Y = 0.973 + 0.235X_1 + 0.369X_2 + 0.904X_3 + 0.781X_4$$

The above established regression equation indicates that when all the four factors (financial incentives, career development, employee recognition and employee benefits) are constant at zero, then employee retention is at 0.973. The findings show that financial incentives positively and significantly affected employee retention at the referral hospitals, basing on the beta results of $\beta_1 = 0.235$, $t = 1.690$ and p-values of $0.000 < 0.05$. These results are in tandem with findings from the research by Bokaii (2023) in the study on how compensation, benefits and total rewards affected the retaining of talented employees in Lebanon. The study revealed that standard payment of wages, salaries and bonuses enhanced engagement, involvement and loyalty levels, which resulted to retention of talented employees. Similarly, Kamau and Omondi (2020) found that remuneration in terms of fair and equitable rewards significantly affected employee retention at KCB bank.

The results also showed that career development had positive and significant effect to employee retention. The significant relationship of career development and employee retention in the public referral hospital was informed by $\beta_2 = 0.369$, $t = 2.427$ and p-values of $0.001 < 0.05$. The results are in line with the findings by Houssein, et al. (2020) whose research was on career and professional development, employee participation and work-life balance and effect on employee retention in Djibouti's financial sector. The study established that career and professional development significantly affected employee retention. In addition, Adeoye and Egwakhe (2019)

found that professional growth and development led to improved retention of skills by the universities. This was based on the study on retention of skilled employees in private universities in Ogun state in Nigeria as influenced by professional growth. Ndiritu (2022) also found that retaining staffs in the insurance companies in Kenya was significantly affected by career advancement especially career planning, training, enrichment and mentorships.

Further results obtained show positive and significant relationship between employee recognition and employee retention in the public referral hospitals within the Nairobi City County region. This is on the basis of these results where $\beta_3 = 0.904$, $t = 1.226$ and p-values of $0.001 < 0.05$. These results echo what Tirta and Amelia (2020) found when assessing retention of millennial employees in Indonesia, as influenced by recognition, work-life, job fulfilment and bonus pay. The study established that recognition and rewards significantly influenced the retention of millennial employees in the organizations. In their study on employee retention in Kenyan hotels and effect of recognition practices, Sitati et al. (2019) established from the conducted regression analysis that improved employee retention in the hotels was significantly influenced by adoption of employee recognition practices. The researcher Nooteboom (2023) established that employee recognition, appreciation and support significantly affected the intention to stay in the same organization by the employees.

Lastly, the study found that employee benefits had a significant relationship to employee retention within the public referral hospitals, as based on beta results that show $\beta_4 = 0.781$, $t = 1.372$ and p-values of $0.003 < 0.05$. These results corroborate with what Nilon (2023) in the study on the role of employee benefits on recruitment and retention of employees in public education sector. The study found that benefits enjoyed by the employees encouraged employees' longer stay in the universities in California. Additionally, Samuel-Ikiroma, et al. (2023) assessed by mobility perks affected staff retention in deposit-taking institutions in Nigeria; revealing positive and significant effect of mobility perks inclusive of relocation expenses and transport costs to employee retention. Thus, comprehensive benefits perks influenced employee retention in the institutions.

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

The chapter provides a synopsis of the research findings and recommendations. It also has a section that discusses the recommendations and suggests what future researchers can look into. This is based on the study objectives in seeking to link Retention of workers and reward approaches to leadership at governmental referral centers.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The research intended to look at the consequences of reward management practices on employee retention in public referral hospitals in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The practices included financial incentives, career development, employee recognition and employee benefits. Descriptive research methodology was chosen, and data were gathered using semi-structured surveys. data from different cadre of workforce in the public referral hospitals. The data accumulated was evaluated using descriptive in nature, regression, correlation and thematic analytical formats. The key findings are discussed here:

On the first objective in assessing the effect of financial incentives on employee retention, the conducted correlation analysis established a moderate effect between financial incentives and employee retention. The relationship was also positive and significant as confirmed by beta coefficient values. Additionally, The majority of responders agreed that monthly salaries, wage pay, overtime payment and the allowances for housing and transport encouraged the employees to stay for longer in the referral hospital. The results from the conducted analysis established that financial incentive motivated hospital workforce and led to improved employee retention in the public referral hospitals.

On career development and its effect on employee retention in public referral hospital located within Nairobi City County, the study found that the relationship was both positive and significant. The study respondents agreed that mentorship, training programs and job enlargement were some of the components of career development that contributed to improved employee retention in the referral hospitals. Furthermore, the respondents agreed that those workers who acquire new skills were allocated more leadership roles and the more experienced workers were allocated assignments that were complex. The study found that career development resulted in improved employee retention, as more healthcare workers decided to stay for longer in the public referral hospitals.

The study sought to analyse how employee recognition affected employee retention in the referral hospitals. The findings showed that respondents agreed to a large extent that verbal recognition and appreciation, awarding, giving certificates and organizing for dinners, gala and luncheon for the top performing employees; encouraged the employees to stay for longer in referral hospital. One of the main factors influencing worker retention at public hospital referral centers was recognition for workers, according to the findings of the correlation and regression analyses. Positive and substantial correlations were found between retaining workers and appreciation as attested by the obtained r values, p-values and beta coefficient results.

The study also sought to assess the effect of employee benefits on employee retention. The conducted descriptive analysis showed that respondents agreed to a large extent that provision of benefits helped encourage the employees to stay for long in the referral hospital. Some of the benefits included health insurance covers, pension schemes, wellness programs, paid annual leave and paid off-days and having flexible work schedule. The results of the conducted regression and correlation analysis revealed that employee benefits were significantly and positively associated to employee retention in the reviewed public referral hospitals in Nairobi City County. Employee retention was influenced by giving employees different benefits from time to time.

5.3. Conclusions

In seeking to assess employee retention as influenced by reward management practices, the study a robust and advantageous correlation between the two variables. Thus, the study concludes that retaining employees in public referral hospitals is affected by reward management practices. Employee retention in terms of high average tenure, high commitment levels, intention to stay and satisfied was affected by financial incentives, career development, employee recognition and employee benefits. Basing on the beta coefficient and r values, according to the survey, retaining workers was most strongly impacted by employee appreciation. Therefore, the study concluded that retention of employees in the public referral hospital was largely influenced by recognition of employees. The recognition was done through verbal means, appreciating top performers, giving certificates, dinner, paid holiday and annual galas to appreciate and award the employees of the referral hospitals.

The study also found that employee benefits had the second largest effect to employee retention. It was thus concluded that employee benefits contributed to retention of employees in the referral hospitals. The hospitals gave benefits that included health insurance covers, counseling services, pension schemes, retirement planning programs and paying for annual leave and off-days. These benefits increase the work tenure of the employees working in the public referral hospitals.

Additionally, the research found that professional advancement resulted in improved employee retention in the public referral hospitals. Therefore, drawing the conclusion that career development components of training programs, both when employed and outside of it, mentorship programs, enlargement work assignments and being assigned leadership roles, led to better intention to stay. The study concluded that career development was essential in retaining employees in the public referral hospitals.

Lastly, the study found a moderate effect of financial incentives to employee retention. Therefore, concluding that although the effect was moderate, financial incentives resulted in

improved employee retention in the public referral hospitals. Payment of salaries, overtime, bonuses and annual salary increment as well as giving employees allowances including transport and housing enhanced intention to stay in the hospitals. In conclusion, financial incentives affected employee retention of the public referral hospitals.

5.4. Recommendations

The study recommends to the senior management team in the referral hospitals to develop a formal reward management program in seeking to resolve the challenge of employees exiting the hospitals and even the sector. The healthcare sector has in the past seen many of its healthcare workers moving to European nations, and therefore, the study recommends the referral hospitals to recognize, offer benefits and financial incentives and career growth as a means of attracting and retaining top talented workforce.

The study also recommends to the public referral hospitals in Nairobi City County and other hospital categories in different counties to reward their employees as a means of retaining them for long. Since financial incentives had the least effect, the study suggests increasing monthly salaries to align with the current economic situation and providing annual salary increment to all employees. This will encourage the employees to stay for long and show commitment to their assignments as well as the organization.

The Ministry of Health should work collaboratively with referral hospitals and other health facilities in offering training, coaching and mentorship programs. The human resource directors in the referral hospitals should equally allocate finances as budgeted by the finance department to be used in training employees. The career development component will enhance skills, competencies and capabilities that elevate the employees, and have a resultant effect of retaining the top talented and high performers.

The study recommends for recognition of employees who do well by their supervisors or departmental level or overall organizational level. This is informed by the fact that fair recognition motivates the workers to remain with the company longer. It was also recommended that the referral hospital give comprehensive benefits to its employees. This is based on the fact that enjoyment of the benefits creates a feeling of ownership and being appreciate for their effort which is essential in enhancing retention of employees. The human resource management team should commission a survey to understand what benefits are most enjoyed and have the resultant effect of improving employee retention. This will ensure there is equity and fairness in distribution of benefits and the referral hospitals do not lose their top performing staffs to the competition both within or without the country.

5.5. Suggestion for further Research

The present study covered only public referral hospitals in one county - the Nairobi City County, and therefore for comparison purposes, future research can cover public referral hospitals in other counties. Additionally, the study was in the healthcare sector and to validate the findings, future researches can cover other sectors in linking reward management practices to employee retention.

The study found that the four reward management practices accounted for 65.4% change in employee retention. This study therefore suggests future studies to access the other practices that accounted for the residual effect of 34.6% of employee retention in the referral hospitals. Some of the additional practices include extrinsic motivational practice, organizational structure in managing rewards and employee remuneration and promotion practices.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With profound thankfulness, I am grateful to God for granting me the power, ability, time, resources, together with strength to complete this academic task. Throughout this research, I would like to express my profound gratitude towards the supervision of Dr. Jedidah Muli for providing needed support while developing this research work. I do also I acknowledge the administrators of Kenyatta University for providing an enabling environment and resources to undertake this research work.

REFERENCES

- Abdelhay, S., Haider, S., Abdulrahim, H., & Marie, A. (2023). Employees Performance as Affected by Monetary and Psychological Incentives (the Field of Study the Commercial Banks in UAE) a Comprehensive Review Study. *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development*, 11(3), e733
- Abwavo, F. R., & Muli, J. (2020). Career Development Programs and Employee Retention at Betting Control and Licensing Board in Kenya. *International Journal of Business & Law Research* 8(3):114-133
- Adams, J. S., & Freedman, S. (1976). Equity theory revisited: Comments and annotated bibliography. *Advances in experimental social psychology*, 9, 43-90.
- Adeoye, S. O., & Egwakhe, A. J. (2019). Career development and talent retention in private and public universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovative Research and Advanced Studies*, 6(4), 1-7.

- Agubata, N. S., Okolo, L. I., & Ogwu, S. O. (2022). Effect of employee benefits on organizational growth of consumer goods firms in Nigeria. *Studia Universitatis Vasile Goldiș Arad, Seria Științe Economice*, 32(3), 116-137.
- Alfred, K. J., & Singh, A. (2023). Design of Employee Benefits and Management System. *International Journal of Management Science Research*, 6(5), 9-15.
- Alhmoud, A., & Rjoub, H. (2019). Total rewards and employee retention in a Middle Eastern context. *SAGE open*, 9(2), 2158244019840118.
- Ally, J. S. (2022). *Impacts of Reward Management Systems on Employee Performance”: A Study of Coca-Cola Kwanza Bottlers Company Ltd in Tanzania* (Doctoral dissertation, The Open University of Tanzania).
- Alzaid, D. & Dukhaykh, S. (2023). Employer branding and Employee Retention in the Banking Sector in Saudi Arabia: Mediating Effect of Relational Psychological Contracts: a systematic review. *BMC health services research*, 8(1), 1-8.
- Amin, B. M. (2022). The Effect of Financial and Non-Financial Rewards on Executives’ performance in Manufacturing Firms: A Case Study at Kulim-Hi Tech Park, Kulim, Kedah, Malaysia. *International Journal of Innovation and Industrial Revolution (IJIREV)*, 13-27.
- Apinde, A. (2018). *Factors influencing employee retention at MP Shah Hospital in Nairobi, Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation, Strathmore University).
- Asfaw, A. W., Argaw, M. D., & Bayissa, L. (2020). The impact of training and development on employee performance and effectiveness: A case study of district five administration office, Bole Sub-City, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. *Journal of Human Resource and Sustainability Studies*, 3(15), 188-202.
- Asiamah, N., Mensah, H., & Oteng-Abayie, E. F. (2017). General, target, and accessible population: Demystifying the concepts for effective sampling. *The qualitative report*, 22(6), 1607-1621.
- Asif, R., & Nisar, S. (2022). Policies, rewards and opportunities: Antecedents of employee retention. *Indian Journal of Commerce and Management Studies*, 13(1), 18-26.
- Ayuma, S., Kiongera, F. & Otuya, W. (2023). Effect of Monetary Reward Strategies on National Police Service Delivery in Nairobi County, Kenya. *African Journal of Empirical Research*, 4 (1) 227-235.

- Babich, R. (2014). *Relationship between Employee Retention and Total Rewards of Extrinsic and Intrinsic Benefits*. Northcentral University.
- Beck-Krala, E. (2020). Total rewards. *Encyclopedia of Sustainable Management*, 1-9.
- Benhenda, A., & Sims, S. (2022). *The effect of financial incentives on the retention of shortage-subject teachers: evidence from England* (Dissertation, UCL, UK)
- Bharath, M. (2023). Something beyond paycheque to boosting employee retention: evidence from a South Indian hospital. *Vilakshan-XIMB Journal of Management*, 20(1), 114-129.
- Bokaii, L. (2023). The Impact of Compensation Benefits on Retaining Talented Employees: The Case of Lebanon. *Management and Economics Review*, 8(1), 98-108.
- Bosire, R. K., Muya, J., & Matula, D. (2021). Employee recognition programs and employee output as moderated by workers' union activities: Evidence from Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH), Kenya. *Saudi Journal of Business and Management Studies*, 6(3), 61-70.
- Chumba, R. J., K'Obonyo, P., Muindi, F., & Njihia, J. (2018). Effect of reward on nurse job performance in Kenyan National Referral Hospitals. *Journal of Human Resource & Leadership*, 2(4), 77-92.
- Chunping, T., Ying, J., & Shimin, A. (2019). Literature review and prospects of Total rewards: factor evolution, theoretical basis and research perspectives. *Foreign Economics & Management*, 41(05), 101-113.
- Collinson, C. (2023). The Future of Employee Benefits: Five Opportunities for Employers Amid the Evolving Workforce. *Benefits Quarterly*, 39(1).
- De Vries, N., Boone, A., Godderis, L., Bouman, J., Szemik, S., Matranga, D., & de Winter, P. (2023). The race to retain healthcare workers: A systematic review on factors that impact retention of nurses and physicians in hospitals. *INQUIRY: The Journal of Health Care Organization, Provision, and Financing*, 60, 00469580231159318.
- Eketu, C. A. (2018). Workplace equity: Critique for epistemological usefulness. *American Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research*, 2(7), 15-19.
- Elsafty, A., & Ragheb, M. (2021). The role of human resources management towards healthcare providers retention during Covid-19 pandemic in Egypt. *International Business Research*, 14(8), 67-76.

- Golicha, A. R., & Moguche, A. (2022). Relationship between Talent Management and Employee Retention in Selected Referral Hospitals in Kenya. *Human Resource and Leadership*, 2(1), 10-17.
- Granovetter, M. (2018). Economic action and social structure: The problem of embeddedness. In *The sociology of economic life* (22-45).
- Hassan, Z. (2022). Employee retention through effective human resource management practices in Maldives: Mediation effects of compensation and rewards system. *Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Innovation*, 18(2), 137-174.
- Heale, R., & Twycross, A. (2015). Validity and reliability in quantitative studies. *Evidence-based nursing*, 18(3), 66-67.
- Holtom, B. C., & Darabi, T. (2018). Job embeddedness theory as a tool for improving employee retention. *Psychology of retention: Theory, research and practice*, 95-117.
- Houssein, A. A., Singh, J. S. K., & Arumugam, T. (2020). Retention of employees through career development, employee engagement and work-life balance: An empirical study among employees in the financial sector in Djibouti, East Africa. *Global Business and Management Research*, 12(3), 17-32.
- Inuwa, M. (2017). Relationship between job equity and performance of employee: A literature review. *International Journal of Business and Management Future*, 1(1), 8-15.
- Iris, M. W. (2023). *Burnout of Career Development Professionals in Higher Education: An Action Research Study on Staff Retention* (Doctoral dissertation, College of Saint Elizabeth).
- Kamau, J., & Omondi, M. (2020). Influence of remuneration on employee retention in Commercial banks in Kenya: A case of Kenya Commercial Bank. *International Research Journal of Business and Strategic Management*, 1(1).
- Kamselem, K. M., Nuhu, M. S., Lawal, K. A., Liman, A. M., & Abdullahi, M. S. (2022). Testing the nexus between reward system, job condition and employee retention through intervening role of employee engagement among nursing staff. *Arab Gulf Journal of Scientific Research*, 40(1), 34-53.
- Karell, E., & Widlund, L. (2019). Rewarding Work or Working for Reward-A qualitative case study about total rewards and work motivation among white-collar workers in Sweden.

- Khattak, A. N. (2022). Organization Development and Performance: The Impact of Employee Benefit Programs on Employee Work behaviour in Pakistan. *Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management, and Innovation*, 4(1) 321-330.
- KIRWA, A. (2023). D53/CTY/PT/28252/2014. <https://ir-library.ku.ac.ke/server/api/core/bitstreams/9f2476eb-e713-4132-9eb4-1e0f963f6e4d/content>
- Kwarteng, S., Frimpong, S. O., Asare, R., & Wiredu, T. J. N. (2023). Effect of employee recognition, employee engagement on their productivity: the role of transformational leadership style at Ghana Health Service. *Current Psychology*, 1-12.
- Lee, W. T., Burch, T. C., & Mitchell, T. R. (2014). The story of why we stay: A review of job embeddedness. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.*, 1(1), 199-216.
- Leventhal, G. S. (1980). What should be done with equity theory? New approaches to the study of fairness in social relationships. In *Social exchange: Advances in theory and research* (27-55).
- Mabaso, C. M., & Dlamini, B. I. (2018). Total rewards and its effects on organisational commitment in higher education institutions. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 16(1), 1-8.
- Manda, K., Silumbwe, A., Mupeta Kombe, M., & Hangoma, P. (2023). Motivation and retention of primary healthcare workers in rural health facilities: An exploratory qualitative study of Chipata and Chadiza Districts, Zambia. *Global Public Health*, 18(1), 2222310.
- Marinaş, C. V., Igreş, R. Ş., Triculescu, M., & Costache, G. (2023). Reward Management in Romanian Companies: Some Issues and Facts. *Revista de Management Comparat International*, 24(1), 5-13.
- Matuga, L. M., & Bula, H. (2021). Human Resource Management Initiatives and Employee Retention at Kenya Airways–Kenya. *International Journal of Advanced Research and Review, IJARR*, 6(3), 11-29
- Mitchell, T. R., Holtom, B. C., Lee, T. W., & Sablinski, C. J. (2001). Why People Stay: Using Job Embeddedness to Predict Voluntary Turnover. *Academy of Management Journal*, 44, 6.

- Moloney, K., & Lewis, R. (2023). The flawed foundations of social equity in public administration: A racial contract theory critique. *Perspectives on Public Management and Governance*, 6(4), 131-136.
- Mpanza, S. B. (2020). Effectiveness of nursing employee retention strategies and performance of organizations in the private healthcare sector. *African Journal of Empirical Research*, 4 (1) 227-235.
- Mule, M. M. (2020). *Relationship between Reward Management Practices and Employee Retention in County Government of Meru, Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation, KeMU).
- Mule, M., & Moguche, A. (2020). Relationship between Career Development and Employee Retention in County Government of Meru, Kenya. *African Journal of Emerging Issues*, 2(9), 99-109.
- Muleya, D., Ngirande, H., & Terera, S. R. (2022). The influence of training and career development opportunities on affective commitment: A South African higher education perspective. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 20, 1620.
- Mutui, C. K., Gichunge, E., & Nzioki, S. (2022). Influence of Employee Benefits Strategy on Employee's Performance in Public Hospitals in Nairobi County. *International Journal of Professional Practice*, 10(1), 72-84.
- Mutui, C. K., Gichunge, E., & Nzioki, S. (2022). Influence of Employee Benefits Strategy on Employee's Performance in Public Hospitals in Nairobi County. *International Journal of Professional Practice*, 10(1), 72-84.
- Mwasi, T. S., & Orwa, B. H. (2023). A desk review of career as reward management practices and employee retention of medical personnel in referral hospitals. *International Academic Journal of Human Resource and Business Administration*, 4(3), 145-160.
- Mwema, N. W. (2022). Reward Management as A Precursor of Employee Retention in Christian Faith-Based Health Institutions in Kenya: Moderating Role Transformation Leadership. *Human Resource and Leadership*, 2(1), 25-37.
- Mwema, N. W. & Were, D. S., & Ndeto M. (2022). Reward Management as a Precursor of Employee Retention in Christian Faith-Based Health Institutions in Kenya: Moderating Role Transformation Leadership. *Human Resource and Leadership*, 2(1), 25-37.
- Ndiritu, R. W. (2022). *Career Development and Employee Retention in Insurance Companies in Nairobi City County, Kenya* (Doctoral Dissertation, Kenyatta University).

- Nilon, T. P. (2023). *The Role of Employee Benefits on Public Sector Organizations' Recruitment and Retention* (Doctoral dissertation, California State University, Northridge).
- Nooteboom, Y. F. (2023). *Employee Retention and Turnover in a Tight Labor Market; the Role of Recognizing, Valuing, and Supporting Employees*. (Dissertation, Eindhoven University of Technology -TU/e).
- Odo, Y. E., Nnamani, E., & Okechuku, E. U. (2023). Reward Management and Workers Performance in Manufacturing Firms in Enugu State. *Advance Journal of Management, Accounting and Finance*, 8(5).
- Odunayo, H. A. (2022). Effect of organizational reward system on employee performance in selected hotels in Lagos Metropolis, Nigeria. *Saudi Journal of Business Management Studies*, 7(7), 206-221.
- Oladeji, O., Brown, A., Titus, M., Muniz, M., Collins, A., Muriuki, J., ... & Robins, A. (2022). Non-financial Incentives for Retention of Health Extension Workers in Somali Region of Ethiopia: A Discrete Choice Experiment. *Health Services Insights*, 15, 11786329221127151.
- Omair, A. (2015). Selecting the appropriate study design for your research: Descriptive study designs. *Journal of health specialties*, 3(3), 153.
- Owoeye, I., Kiiru, D., & Muli, J. (2020). Recognition practices and employee performance: Understanding work engagement as a mediating pathway in Kenyan context. *Journal of Human Resource Management*, 8(3), 163-171.
- Peltokorpi, V. (2013). Job embeddedness in Japanese organizations. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 24(8), 1551-1569.
- Pkite, D. T., & Ng'eno, W. (2023). Reward Management Practices and Performance of Employees in Kenya. *Reviewed Journal of Social Science & Humanities*, 4(1), 469-482.
- Polk, D. M. (2022). Equity Theory: Evaluating Fairness. *Theories in Social Psychology*, 217.
- Pourgaz, A. W., Naruei, A. G., & Jenaabadi, H. (2015). Examining the relationship of organizational citizenship behavior with organizational commitment and equity perception of secondary school administrators. *Psychology*, 6(06), 800.
- Rai, A., Ghosh, P., & Dutta, T. (2019). Total rewards to enhance employees' intention to stay: does perception of justice play any role. In *Evidence-based HRM: a Global Forum for Empirical Scholarship*, 7 (3), 262-280

- Reitz, O. E., & Anderson, M. A. (2011). An overview of job embeddedness. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, 27(5), 320-327.
- Robai, C. (2023). *A Qualitative examination of factors affecting the retention of doctors at the Kenyatta National Referral Hospital in Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation, Strathmore University).
- Saayman, E. Z., Slabbert, M. G., & Ottebacher, T. Y. (2023). Examining Employee Retention Strategies in the South African Hotel Sector: A Comparative Study. *African Journal of Emerging Issues*, 5(5), 1–14.
- Salameh, A. Ullah, A. & Abdul-Majid, A. (2022). Does employer branding facilitate the retention of healthcare employees? A mediation moderation study through organisational identification, psychological involvement, and employee loyalty: *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 112(5)103-114.
- Salleh, A. M. M., Omar, K., Aburumman, O. J., Mat, N. H. N., & Almhairat, M. A. (2020). The impact of career planning and career satisfaction on employee's turnover intention. *Entrepreneurship and Sustainability Issues*, 8(1), 218.
- Samuel-Ikiroma, I. S., Gabriel, J. M. O., & Biriowu, C. S. (2023). Mobility Benefits and Employee Retention in Tier-One Deposit Money Banks in South-South, Nigeria. *International Research Journal of Economics and Management Studies IRJEMS*, 2(4).
- Sharul, S. & Khairul, Z. (2021). A Study on Factors Influencing Employee's Retention in Pharmaceutical Industry in Malaysia. *Electronic Journal of Business and Management*, 6 (1) 81-89.
- Sija, A. (2022). Determinants of employee retention in private healthcare. *European Journal of Human Resource Management Studies*, 5(4).
- Singh, A. S. (2017). Common procedures for development, validity and reliability of a questionnaire. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, 5(5), 790-801.
- Singh, A. S., & Masuku, M. B. (2014). Sampling techniques & determination of sample size in applied statistics research: An overview. *International Journal of economics, commerce and management*, 2(11), 1-22.
- Sirili, N., & Simba, D. (2021). It is beyond remuneration: Bottom-up health workers' retention strategies at the primary health care system in Tanzania. *PloS one*, 16(4), e0246262.

- Sitati, N., Were, S., Waititu, G. A., & Miringu, A. (2019). Effect of employee recognition on employee retention in hotels in Kenya. *Research Journal of Social Science and Educational Studies*, 6(8), 108-117.
- Song, X., Mehrotra, M., & Rajapakshe, T. (2023). An Analysis of Incentive Schemes for Participant Retention in Clinical Studies. *Manufacturing & Service Operations Management*, 25(3), 1033-1050.
- Sultana, R., & Hossain, T. (2023). Influence of Reward Management Practices on Employee Satisfaction: A Study on Some Private Commercial Banks. *Journal of Business and Development Studies (JBDS)*, 2(1), 105 -121
- Taber, K. S. (2018). The use of Cronbach's alpha when developing and reporting research instruments in science education. *Research in science education*, 48, 1273-1296.
- Tirta, H. A. & Amelia, E. (2020). Understanding the impact of reward and recognition, work life balance, on employee retention with job satisfaction as mediating variable on millennials in Indonesia. *Journal of Business and Retail Management Research (JBRMR)*, 14, (3) 142-151
- Wakio, R. (2019). *Influence of work environment on employee retention in level four and five hospitals in Machakos County* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Wallace, K. M. (2022). *Non-Monetary Rewards and Recruitment/Retention of Healthcare Workers in Rural Florida* (Doctoral dissertation, Keiser University).
- Wamweru, T. J., & Makokha, S. (2018). Relationship between total reward management systems and employee engagement: A case study of bamburi cement limited, Kenya. *Journal of Human Resource and Leadership*, 3(1), 29-51.
- Watters, E. R. (2021). Factors in employee motivation: Expectancy and equity theories. *Journal of Colorado Policing*, 6(1), 4-8.
- Yusuff, M. A., & Minja, D. M. (2023). Reward management practices and retention of public health care employees in devolved government of Wajir, Kenya. *Reviewed Journal of Social Science & Humanities*, 4(1), 355-372.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Career Development Opportunities: Refers to evenly distributed opportunities for career growth for all employees in an organization. The referral hospitals offer trainings and mentoring programs to increase staff competencies and also enlarge and enrich work tasks for those who are rated highly.

Employee Benefits: Refer to the various forms of compensation and advantages including compensated time off, pension advantages, along with medical insurance employee assisted programs that employers convey workers with benefits as an addition to their usual pay or compensation.

Employee Recognition: Refers to appreciation, and acknowledgment of employees' efforts, contributions, and achievements within the workplace, which takes forms of formal awards, promotions and advancement and verbal recognition.

Employee Retention: relates to a company's capacity to create an atmosphere at the workplace that motivates staff to keep working for long. As such, the referral hospitals are able to report longer work tenure, job satisfaction and commitment of its healthcare workers.

Financial Incentives: Comprises of tangible rewards or monetary compensation in form salary and wages, bonuses or performance-based pay provided by the referral hospitals to attract, motivate and retain its employees.

Referral Hospitals Comprises of healthcare institutions that serve as major centers for specialized medical care, advanced treatments, and medical education. These hospitals have specialized trained medical staffs, use advanced technology and focus on patient referrals.

Reward Management Practices , It includes the plans and procedures that businesses adopt to plan, carry out, and manage incentive programs for staff members. Rewards administration seeks to draw in, inspire, and keep talents by offering adequate financial incentives, recognizing top performers and fairly distributing benefits.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

HR: Human Resource

KMPDU: Kenya Medical Practitioners Pharmacists Dentists Union

KNH: Kenyatta National Hospital

NMS: Nairobi Metropolitan Services

UHC: Universal Health Coverage

WHO: World Health Organization