

**TALENT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES, A PANACEA FOR STEMMING  
NIGERIA YOUTH EXODUS IN THE HEALTH SECTOR: FEDERAL MEDICAL  
CENTRES IN FOCUS**

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***Abstract***

*The study undertook a review of talent management and mass exodus of youths in the Nigeria's health sector with specific interest in Federal Medical Centres. Two objectives of rewards and recognition and Human capital strategy were reviewed along two hypotheses. These reviews were empirical in nature and a sample size of 124 respondents guided the study. Findings revealed statistically a significant relationship between the objectives and mass exodus of our youths leaving that sector in a state of decay. Arguably, the study recommended high recognition for talent and human resource development in that sector. Similarly, conclusions were drawn that talent management is a vital aspect of employees' commitment to service which enhances service delivery and performance.*

***Keywords:*** *Talent Management, Federal Medical Centres, Reward and Recognition, Human Capital Development Strategy*

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**1. Introduction**

The main focus of talent management is the empowerment and development of human resources. The quality of an organization is determined by the people it employs and belongs to. Strategic talent management is essential in today's ultra-dynamic environment. Global

trends in the management of talent and human capital have led to a renaissance of the worker-worker-workplace equation (Ghosh, 2021). Due to the global labour shortage, companies need to meet the needs of basic organizations. Finding qualified employees is a challenge in today's market, but employee retention poses an unprecedented problem of 47 million people leaving their jobs in 2021 (Brian, 2022).

Human resources professionals are the cornerstone of any organization; who not only solve business problems but also participate in strategic aspects of the organization; talent management happens to be one of them. The success and failure of an organization depend on their human capital which constitutes the force that potentially makes the difference in the health sector. Talent management is the ability to identify and manage the abilities, abilities, and abilities of people within an organization. Organizational talent management is an ongoing process that involves not only attracting the best talent in the industry, but also sourcing, hiring, training, retaining and promoting talent while meeting the needs of the organization. A talent management strategy is a plan to optimize and enhance the performance of employees in your organization.

Organizations across the world seek to retain their high-performer talents. The loss of an employee has been proven to cause exorbitant costs of employee recruitment, selection, training and development of a replacement ( Pankaj, 2020). Talent management is anchored on the idea that the employees are the firm's most valuable asset and aims at securing the flow of talent, bearing in mind that talent is a major corporate resource (Armstrong, 2006). Talent management in an organization is the continuous process of examining, developing and effectively utilizing the talent to enhance business value and achieve business goals. A big threat to many organizations today is the exodus of mid-career talent – people in whom the organization has invested heavily and in whom it has pinned its hopes for future leadership. The main focus of talent management is finding, developing people, redeploying employees and retaining the best talent. The problem of creating a value proposition that appeals to multiple generations, developing talent management practices and programs to leverage technology and creating greater life balance has been a priority for organizations.

The mass exodus of health workers in Nigeria compare to developed countries like England, India and the Philippines has brought disruption to the healthcare ecosystems in Nigeria. Employees are quizzing organizations on well-being benefits; massive compensation, and what strategies they deployed to make work more sustainable. Newhall (2012) posits that managing

talent is a strategic priority in today's complex, global business environment. Creating a work-friendly environment is key to stabilizing the health sector. Putting policies in place to stem this exodus of highly skilled health practitioners to developed countries is imperative. Such policies must domesticize the pull factors (employment opportunities, higher income, better working conditions and facilitates, higher living standard) while minimizing the push factors (poor economic activities, conflict, extreme religious activities and political instability) that encourage emigration of a healthcare professional.

A talent management program that includes effective goal management enables organizations to create a true competitive advantage. It aligns the workforce so that employees understand how their goals connect to and support overall organizational goals, enabling the entire team to pull in the same direction (Cobb, 2012). Such goals may focus on enhancing customer service as a key pillar of a firm's competitive advantage. Talent management programmes encompass a wide variety of Human Resource functions including but not limited to: HR Planning, HR Procurement, HR retention, HR training and development and employee succession planning. This enables the organization to put the right persons into positions that allow them to utilize their talents without limitations (Newhall, 2012).

The Nigerian health sector challenges are akin to a bad ulcer. The country's health care system has been in decrepitude for a decade, afflicted by a myriad of factors ranging from the ill-motivated workforce, under-equipped, underfunded hospitals, underpaid professionals, harsh working conditions; insecurity, and poor remuneration and tough economic realities have not helped the matter. These conditions may have led to the recurrent strike action by resident doctors and the attempt by many of the health workers to leave the country for greener pastures overseas. While doctors are insufficient at home, countries such as Canada, South Africa, the United States and the Middle East have become top destinations for youth Nigeria health workers, whose values rise sharply in those countries where there is equipment to work with and much higher remuneration packages. This is evident in the recruitment exercise conducted by the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Health in recruiting doctors and consultants in Lagos.

Available statistics show that Nigeria has a doctor/patient ratio of 1:6,000 and in some areas 1:10,000 against the World Health Organization recommendations of one to 600 patients (1:600) (WHO, 2020). Government inability to address the various health challenges has led to an exodus of health workers to other countries. When health care professionals lack opportunities for professional development and a good working environment to exhibit their

skills, the choice to flee is imminent. Organizations therefore must design and articulate a value proposition that shows how the organization benefits employees' lives not just their work. organizations gaining traction are listening to the needs of their workforce, analysing the shifting needs of the organization and employee base and creating new, effective contemporary methods. With an endless tide of digital change, increase employee expectations, and hybrid and work challenges, employers and organizations must critically and swiftly rethink talent management strategies to address these challenges of youth exodus in the health sector in Nigeria.

### **Problem statement**

Organizations globally have come to believe that managing people is a strategic priority. Human factor constitutes a big impediment in talent management processes, as well as in implementation. The Nigerian health sector has witnessed problems ranging from poor medical equipment, poor working environment, failure to align their business strategies with talent management strategies, to lack of collaboration, rewards and recognition, lack of continuous improvement in human resource development and lack of planning. The challenge of calibrating talent management practices and programs to attract and engage our young entrants and health professionals is important to all organizations and particularly the health sector which depends on a strong flow of talent. Making business infrastructure more attractive to generation Y must be a high priority for organizations.

### ***Study Objectives***

- i. To determine the relationship between reward and recognition strategy and youth exodus in Nigeria's health sector.
- ii. To establish the relationship between human resource development strategy and youth exodus in Nigeria's health sector.

### ***Research Hypothesis***

- i. There is no significant relationship between reward and recognition and youth exodus in Nigeria's health sector.
- ii. There is no significant relationship between human resource development strategy and youth exodus in Nigeria's health sector.

## **2. Review of Related Literature**

### **Talent management**

Talent Management encompasses the process of hiring people to retain and develop individuals. It connotes a systematic process of hiring a suitable and qualified individual, assisting to develop both the skills, competencies and know-how of the individual to correspond with the needed vacancy and making efforts to retain the individual, through an adequate compensation plan, to achieve organizational goals and objectives (Olufemi Afegbua and Etim 2020). These processes Prachi (2001) enable an organization to compete and stand out in a competitive market.

Human resources have been a very veritable tool for the organization's growth and success; for effective utilization of the employee's talent and skills, talent management is essential. Talent management is a holistic corporate strategy aimed at finding, attracting, supporting, developing, motivating and retaining high-performing employees over a long. It enables the company to anticipate and support its performance in the long term, by relying on employees or candidates with the highest potential (Ivanna 2020). Erik (2021) envisions talent management as the full range of HR processes for attracting, hiring, training, engaging and retaining talented employees. Talent management is an ongoing process that attracts and retains talented employees, develops skills, and continuously motivates them to improve performance. The main purpose of talent management is to create an ambitious workforce that stays in the company for the long term, helping employers in the organization maximize the value of their employees.

There is no dearth of professionals but there is an acute shortage of talented professionals globally. The scenario is worse even in developing economies of Nigeria, Latin America and South-East Asia. The challenges that talent management in organizations faces today are dealing with demographic talent problems. Prachi (2001) posits that either globally or locally, talent management has to address the challenges: recruiting talents, training and developing talents, retaining talents, developing leadership talent and creating a talented ethical culture.

### **2.1. Talent management strategy**

Talent management is a strategic approach to human resources. This allows companies to anticipate and support long-term performance by relying on the most likely employees or

candidates. The development of talent management strategies is based on a balance between the skills expected of the organization and the skills available within the company, ultimately enabling the company to maintain a competitive advantage over its competitors (Ivanna, 2020). The talent management process takes place in two phases: talent recruitment and integration. Most organizations invest in human capital and focus primarily on the future through training and development, onboarding, and appropriate compensation and awards for a better employee experience (Ivanna2020).

Organization, Olufemi Afegbua and Etim (2020) with a good talent management strategy stand greater chances of recording higher performance among its employees, meeting set goals as well as reducing the cost of frequent recruitment and training of new employees. They further posit that talent management strategy is one of the vital aspects of human resource management that improves organizational effectiveness by increasing the potential of employees that are overwhelmed with prospects for the value difference in the present and future endeavours of the organization. Talent management strategy when adequately employed create a satisfying work-life that suit employees' skills and competence to distract them from considering employment elsewhere, especially in a competitive business environment (Olufemi Afegbua and Etim 2020).

### **Recognition and reward strategy**

Rewards are material and psychological payoffs given to an employee for performing a task in the workplace (Pankaj, 2020). Rewards and recognition in the views of Oztoprak and Lundmark (2007) are strategic tools used by management to formulate and implement policies and strategies that aim to recognize and reward members of the organization in a way that is consistent with organizational goals. A reward system is an HR strategy that strengthens employees' loyalty, raises motivation and increases job satisfaction among organization members. It is a tool according to Oztoprak and landmark (2007) used by managers to motivate and communicate to employees for effective important behaviour.

Rewards and recognition are tried and tested strategies to drive employee engagement and job satisfaction, leading to effectiveness, efficiency and higher productivity. Most top-tier organizations globally have adopted comprehensive systems of recognition and rewards to engage and retain their top talents. Tangible and non-tangible rewards are important for employee engagement. It makes the team hold together, to understand the company's strategies

and vision, helps to stimulate effectiveness in the team and increases the learning and motivation process in the group (Oztoprak and landmark 2007).

The migration of health workers especially in developing countries is an important human resources issue that must be carefully measured and monitored. Workforce mobility could create imbalances that require better workforce planning, attention to issues of pay and other rewards and improved overall management of the workforce. World Health Report (2003) believes that other than salary incentives, developing countries use other strategies such as housing, infrastructure and opportunities for job rotation to recruit and retain health professionals. Also, a study conducted by Zurn, Dal Poz, Stilwell and Adams (2004) posits that many health workers in developing countries are underpaid, poorly motivated and very dissatisfied with their work environment.

### ***Human Resource Development (HRD) Strategy***

The primary focus of talent development is to engage employees after they're hired and provide them with the resources and learning opportunities required to grow within the organization. Skilled human resource is very central to today's competitive environment and this can be very important in the survival of organizations of present times. The recruitment and hiring of employees are one of the necessary evils of running a business. Hiring and training new employees is an intense process. Recruitment tactics adopted by organizations can be of utmost importance in setting their long-term growth, survival and productivity strategy. Human resource development (HRD) emphasises the planning, selection and implementation of development strategies for the entire talent pool to ensure that the organization has a skilled and competent workforce for both the current and future supply to enable it to meet strategic objectives. Thite (2004) noted that talent development strategies can be embraced as a key measurement of a bundle of high-performance work practices that are connected to superior organizational performance leading to sustainable competitive advantage.

Several human resource development strategies enable one to manage its valuable resource; recruitment and hiring, training, benefits and compensation and evaluation and professional development. Armstrong (2009) posits that learning and development policies and programmes are essential components in the process of developing talent guaranteeing that employees obtain and improve the skills and competencies they need to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. Similarly, Cole (2005) also views Learning and development

activities as a deliberate move to develop managerial skills and gain the engagement and commitment of talented staff by giving them opportunities to grow in their present roles and to progress to higher-level roles.

Career development is the process of choosing a career, improving one skill and advancing along a career path. Career planning directs the advancement of individuals within an organization in harmony with organizational needs, and defined employee success profiles, performance, potential and preferences of individual members of the organization (Armstrong, 2009). The fundamentals of career management include the provision of learning and development opportunities to employees, employee retention, career planning and management succession planning. The migration of health care workers is an issue that arises when examining global health care systems. A properly trained and competent workforce is essential to any successful health care system. Brian (2022) argues that talent development serves a dual purpose of driving recruitment and acquisition, with over 70% of U.S. employees likely to leave their current company and accept an offer with a new company that's known for investing in employee learning and development. He further posits that an effective talent strategy combines both talent acquisition and development to funnel external and external employees into the talent ecosystem and fill needs within the business.

## **2.2. Theoretical Model**

### **Herzberg's Two-factor Theory of Motivation**

The study was anchored on the two-factor theory formulated by Herzberg (1959) who holds that employee job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are influenced by separate factors: **motivators** and **hygiene**. The motivators are intrinsic to the work itself and hygiene factors, which are extrinsic to the work.

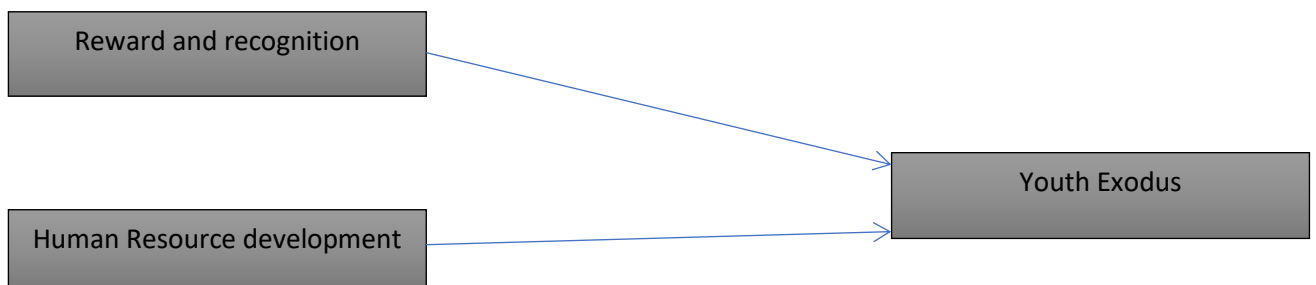
These motivating factors (achievement, career development, personal growth, job interest, recognition, responsibility) are inherent to work and yield positive satisfaction to employees. These factors are intrinsic to the job and they play a major role in employee retention in the organization. An employee is motivated to work when there is continued work and job satisfaction relationship. Motivation is described as an inner force that energizes employees to accomplish individual and organizational goals.



Hygiene factors are those job factors which are extrinsic to the organization and essential for the existence of motivation in the workplace. The hygiene factors symbolized the physiological needs that the individuals wanted and expected to be fulfilled. These factors include these factors includes pay, company policies, supervisory practices, personal life, job security and working environment.

Herzberg revealed that intrinsic factors are related to job satisfaction, while extrinsic factors created job dissatisfaction. One could therefore conclude from Herzberg that when employees s feel satisfied and happy at work, there exist conditions that are directly influencing their inner feelings and self-esteem as they interact with the environment (Herzberg, 1966). Hertzberg's concluded that only a challenging job has the opportunity for achievement, recognition, advancement and growth that will motivate personnel. This theory supports the independent variable of talent management strategy. When employees are provided with the right hygiene and motivational factors, they stay longer in the organization due to the satisfaction they derive from that organization.

### **Conceptual Framework**



**Fig 1: Conceptual framework of Talent Management and Youth Exodus**

### **2.3. Empirical Review**

A study conducted by Sunanda (2018) on the impact of rewards and recognition as a talent retention strategy in Indian corporates was exploratory and explored the rewards recognition factors in determining retention success. The sample of the study comprised 150 respondents from the employee of Indian MNCs. The study concluded that salary structure, yearly bonus, overtime salary and performance-based incentives are significantly positive with work performance. The study further concluded that reward, recognition and satisfaction have a great impact on employee retention to stay in the organization.

Similarly, Lehka and Bino (2016) confirmed that there is a strong relationship between talent management strategy and exodus in the education sector. The study focused on talent management and the challenges faced by talent attraction, talent shortage and retention. The sampling area was limited to six management institutes affiliated with Mahatma Gandhi University in the Southern part of Ernakulum district in Kerala. The finding of the study shows that lack of growth, advancement opportunities, and lack of competitive compensation and rewards were factors responsible for the talent exodus in the education sector in Kerala state India. Oztoprak and Lundmark (2007) examined a study by Hay Research on the pay plan. The finding of the study shows that companies that have a successful payment plan have 34% higher performance, 30% higher trust, 28% more encouragement to take initiative and 18% higher pressure for performance than the companies with an unsuccessful plan.

A study conducted by Chepehumba and Kimutai (2017) shows that compensation increases the probability of employee staying by 13.9% and decrease their intention to leave by 26.2%. It was revealed in the study that small organizations lose their talents more often than large organizations due to the discrepancy in their respective compensation packages.

### **3. Methodology**

A survey method was adopted in the course of carrying out this study in which a detailed description of the use of talent management and youth exodus in the health sector and using an analytical review of related literature. This helped the researchers in evaluating the subject matter to ensure a meaningful conclusion. The data was collected using structured questionnaires that contained both structured and unstructured questions that were both open and closed ended. This ensured uniformity and consistency of the answers given by various respondents. The researchers generated primary data from selected Federal Medical Centres in Edo and Delta States. These FMCs are situated in Asaba, Delta State and Benein City, Edo State Nigeria. The overall number of individuals from which this study sample was drawn, is 180 respondents. The sample size (n) which gave 124 out of a population of 180 was used for the number of questionnaires distributed in the organization was determined using the Taro Yemeni Formula.

**4. Results and Interpretations**

**T-Test**

**Table 1**

Group Statistics					
	Talent Managemnt	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Reward and Recognition	YES	86	4.70	.462	.050
	NO	35	4.43	.608	.103
Human Development Strategy	YES	87	4.98	.214	.023
	NO	36	5.00	.000	.000

**Table 2**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Reward and Recognition	Equal variances assumed	11.373	.001	2.642	119	.009	.269	.102	.067	.471
	Equal variances not assumed			2.356	50.729	.022	.269	.114	.040	.498
Human Development Strategy	Equal variances assumed	1.686	.197	-.642	121	.522	-.023	.036	-.094	.048
	Equal variances not assumed			1.000	86.000	.320	-.023	.023	-.069	.023

## **Test of Hypothesis**

The student t-test was used as an analytical tool for determining the comparison between the variables. The p-values in the independent sample test table were used for testing the study hypotheses.

### **Hypothesis One**

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between reward and recognition and youth exodus in FMCs in Nigeria

Since the P-value calculated in table 4.1 is less than the critical level of significance ( $0.001 < 0.05$ ), the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted this implies that reward and recognition has a significant relationship with youth exodus in the health sector in Nigeria.

### **Hypothesis Two**

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant effect between Human development strategy and mass exodus of youth in FMCs in Nigeria,

Since the p-value calculated in table 4.1 is greater than the critical level of significance ( $0.197 > 0.05$ ), there was a need to accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternate hypothesis. This showed that there is no significant effect between Human development strategy and mass exodus of youth in Nigeria.

## **5. Discussion of Findings**

Following the data analysis conducted and the review of the related literature, the discussion of the findings of this study is presented thus:

Based on the results the study found that reward and recognition has a positive influence on mass exodus of youths in the health sector. This position supports Zurn, Dal Poz, Stilwell and Adams (2004) who posited that many health workers in developing countries are underpaid, poorly motivated and very dissatisfied with their work environment.

The study revealed that there is a positive relationship between human capital development strategy and mass exodus of youth in the health sector. This is in line with . Brian (2022) who argued that talent development serves as a dual purpose of driving recruitment and acquisition, with over 70% of U.S. employees likely to leave their current company and accept an offer with a new company that's known for investing in employee learning and development

## **6. Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study has reviewed the economic and psychological powers of talent management which essentially positions the employer in the hiring of a suitable and qualified individual, assisting to develop both the skills, competencies and know-how of the individual to correspond with the needed vacancy and making efforts to retain the individual, through adequate compensation plan, to achieve organizational goals and objectives. This principles brings about reward and recognition, human resource development and other wise that when negated at any point is capable of disrupting the entire work eco system and employee's physic. From the result of the test of the hypothesis, the alternative hypothesis was accepted, meaning that, reward and recognition and human capital development indices facilitates health care and service delivery in any developing nation. .

### **Policy Recommendations**

1. Government should continue to uphold talent management and increase service delivery and the competitiveness level the health sectors as is practiced globally. National Health Scheme (NHS) in the United Kingdom as a case in point. .
2. Health care institutions should also ensure that developmental goals of the individual employers is held paramount in the annals of their labour relationship.

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