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A CRITICAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The development and recognition of any organization depends mostly on the quantity and quality of its workforce. There are several factors that contribute to employee retention however, motivation attributes are key since motivated workers remain relevant and productive to the organization. Motivation is the great way to boost employee retention. Highly motivated employees bring out their best output in performance in their daily tasks. The majority of work organizations equate motivation with money and other extrinsic reward, however, motivation offers a powerful perspective on how and why individuals are motivated. This study critically reviewed motivational attributes and their contribution to employee retention by looking at the past scholar's research work. Detailed literature review was done to evaluate the influence of motivation attributes such as job design, recognition of employees, work-life balance and career development on employee retention. By reviewing past research work, it was found out that motivational attributes enhance employee retention. Therefore, this paper focused on examining the role of human capital management as a fundamental element of enhancing retention of top talent based on findings and recommendations from reviewing past research literature reviews. The study findings may help to streamline the motivation attributes and their contribution to employee retention in the public sector by providing strategies of employee retention and give them the competitive edge in Kenya. The study would provide a basis for future scholars, researchers and other stakeholders to use the results as a reference while also enabling researchers to carry out more investigation on other attributes that enhances employee retention. The County governments in Kenya would also gain from the findings of the study to further enhance their administrative skills in handling challenges of employee retention and understand factors which lead to high performance.

Key Words: *Employee Motivation, Employee Retention*

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INTRODUCTION

Global economy is faced with challenges that are forcing organization to find ways of staying at the competitive edge in retaining top talent. It is no doubt that human capital management is the top imperative aspect in organizations to implement practices that will achieve employee retention. Organizations are investing majority of their time, effort and resources into their employees, from job design, recognition, work life and career development. Lack of retentions of employees not only eliminates talent from an organization, but it also represents a loss of the organization resources invested in the employee. Employee retention theory is therefore philosophy centred on considering how to retain and engage employees for long periods of time in one organization.

According to Momanyi (2013) in his research of motivation attributes on employee retention in the private sector in Ghana, found out that motivation has significant positive effect on employee retention and further recommended that future scholars should include demographic factors and job satisfaction to assess their contribution to employee retention in the public sector. In his research Sivakumar (2018) he found on the different person needs different motivational factors at different point of time due to the difference of personal needs, educational levels, social status and environmental factors. The manager's selection of appropriate motivation tools after evaluating the employees, determine the degree of success in employee motivation. In some cases monetary tools may become more appropriate than psychological elements. Managers should choose the right tools by considering those factors which affect their employees.

In their research, Jauri and Sehgal (2013) demonstrated that recognition of employees is important in employee retention. In another research Lupfer, (2012) identified that 69 percent of employees worked hard if they were recognized for

their performance, while 49 percent of them would leave their jobs for a company that recognizes their performance. She also found out that 89 percent of the employees believe that their managers would support them in front of their customers and to management. As explained by Jauhari and Sehgal (2013) recognition of employees could be exhibited in terms of share options offered to employees or other bonuses. Another aspect of motivating and retaining employees is through displaying a caring attitude of the employer by establishing childcare facilities and flexible work hours.

In the recent past organizations are witnessing intense completion which is profoundly impacting the organizations globally. In the new emerging economy in which services, communication and information technologies play a significant role, has created new avenues for developing countries endowed with skilled labour. Competition among organizations is relatively high due to fast track innovations, shorted product cycles and ever fast changing markets due to variance in demand of the consumers. Today, organizations are undergoing constant substantial change due to many internal and external forces. These changes are impacting on organizational career mobility of the management and employees, (Kondratuk, Tammy, Hausdorf, Korabik, Karen and Hazel 2004). Under such circumstances talent retention has become a big problem for the business and organizations (Bhardwaj & Sharma 2010). The uncertainties of a changing economy, increasing completion and diversity in the workplace have compelled the organizations to hold on to their top talent at whatever cost they have to incur. It is challenging for the recruiters to hire top talent with right skill set all over again. Thus the focus has shifted from numbers to quality and from recruitment to retention (Kondratu et al 2004).

Statement of Problem

Employee retention has become a global challenge. According to Hay Group, the employee turnover rate

has experienced a severe increase within 2014 and 2018 where more than 49 million employees have shifted from one job to another compared to 2012 making it a total number of 192 million employees globally (Hay Group, 2013). Education trends also intensify the effect on talent retention, with certain degrees being highly profitable in some regions and the increase frequency of partnerships between career development and organizations. In this era of globalization, employees are honoured with good job opportunities. As the competition in the market heats up, it is very hard for the organizations to acquire skills, top talent and knowledge. The moment a worker feels dissatisfied with the current employer or with current job, they immediately switch over to the next job. It is becoming very difficult for employers to keep great talent and if they fail to do so they are left without competent workforce, (Saha 2012).

The study by Association for Talent Development (2013), which surveyed 738 managers worldwide, found that retention issues affect organizations differently from one geographical region to another. In the United States and Asia, managers reported that their highest levels of attrition occur in employees younger than 25, followed by midlevel and frontline managers. Managers were in agreement that the three major causes of high turnover were insufficient compensation and benefits, lack of growth and development opportunities and lack of recognition for achievements by management. Managers globally also agreed that the best ways to combat high turnover were to reverse afore mentioned causes and adding a fourth strategy which is ensuring a healthy work-life balance. Providing career progression opportunities for key employees and incentives that strengthen employee loyalty are must haves for an effective retention strategy.

Lack of retention strategies in organizations, has resulted in an increase in employee turnover. A study by Kottolli (2010) found out that employee retention

increased organizational productivity. Article 235 of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 (RoK, 2010), empowers the public sector to establish offices and employ professionals performing functions allocated to them in the fourth schedule. A lot of resources are being used on staffing and less on other resources essential to deliver the services to the people.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a developmental psychology theory proposed by Maslow (1943). This theory puts forward the idea that individuals move through a fundamental number of hierarchical motivations, in a unique order, based upon both physiological and psychological needs. Maslow's defining work was the development of the hierarchy of needs. Managers need to find ways of motivating employees by devising programs or practices aimed at satisfying emerging or unmet needs in order to retain them (Mumbua 2017). Managers have the responsibility to create a proper climate in which employees can develop to their fullest potential and make them feel part of the organization. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is applicable in this study because the fundamental employee's need is to get shelter and clothing followed by other hierarchy of needs. Failure to provide basic needs to any employee would theoretically increase employee frustration and could result in poor performance, lowering job satisfaction, and increasing withdrawal from the organization (Nazir, 2013).

The criticism that concerns Maslow's assumption is that the lower needs must be satisfied before a person can achieve their potential and self-actualization. This is not always the case since in Kenya some intelligent and creative people come from very poor families who cannot afford good shelter, food and clothing and they are still capable of higher order needs such as love and belonging, (Mumbua, 2017). Maslow's needs hierarchy is based

on USA cultural values which are basically individualistic. This theory has found little support in countries such as China, Japan and Korea, which have collectivist cultures, belonging and security are significantly more important than growth or self-actualization, (Nyamekye, 2012). Therefore, although the needs that Maslow identified may be universal, the logic or sequence of the hierarchy differs from culture to culture.

Self-determination theory was developed by Ryan, Kulh and Deci in 1997. SDT is an approach to human motivation and personality that uses traditional empirical methods while employing the importance of employee evolved inner resources for personality development and behavioural self-regulation. Self-determination theory expounds the issue of self-directed motivation. Personal motivation makes employers prefer temporary contracts as a form of flexible working as this initiates better productivity and innovations yielding into job satisfaction. A research done by Nahali & Nithila, (2018) claimed that self-motivation theory can be categorized into autonomous that relates to relationships such as family whereas controlled motivation relates to relationships such as power and instrumental to achieving specific goals.

Criticism of self-determination theory argues that although the theory is imperative to the study since most employers are shifting to temporary contract engagement as a form of determining employees' performance in any given organization, the theory relevance does not emphasize on employee retention however it gives prominence on employee motivation factors.

Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory which is also known as the two-factor theory is based on actual knowledge of the workers; Herzberg (1959) divided two distinct lists of factors (Kuranchie & Tawiah, 2016). The first factor illustrates "hygiene" factors such as job security, salary, vacation, work condition,

working relationship, company policy & administration. This second factor illustrates the sense of maintenance factors that are essential for existence of motivation at workplace. These factors deal with job design leading to job dissatisfaction (Aydin, 2012). If these maintenance factors are not achieved, employees will not be motivated at work. The second level is the sense of encouragement factors called "motivators" factors such as recognition for one's achievement, challenging in work or involvement in decision-making (Kuranchie & Tawiah, 2016). These factors deal with job content and lead to job satisfaction (Aydin, 2012). Encouraging factor is satisfying the needs of higher level and maintain satisfaction. Motivating staff requires a combination of both maintenance and encouragement factors, which focuses on both factors.

Criticism of Herzberg theory argue that the two factors are observed because it is natural for people to take credit for satisfaction and to fault dissatisfaction on external factors, and that job satisfaction does not necessarily mean a high level of motivation or productivity.

Employee Retention

In this era of globalization employees are blessed with good opportunities. As the global market competition heats up, it is not easy for the organization to attain skills, talent and knowledge. The study by Association for Talent Development (2013), which surveyed 738 managers worldwide, found that retention issues affect organizations differently from one geographic region to the next. In the United States and Asia, managers reported that their highest levels of attrition occur in employees younger than 25, followed by midlevel and frontline managers. Managers worldwide agreed on the three major causes of attrition being, insufficient compensation and benefits, lack of growth and development opportunities and lack of recognition for achievements by management. Managers worldwide

also agreed on the best ways to combat attrition: reversing the three causes afore mentioned, and adding a fourth strategy—ensuring a healthy work-life balance Delloitte, (2013).

In her study Nyamekye, (2012) on impact of motivation on employee retention, a case study of Standard Chartered Bank Ghana Limited, the study adopted a total of 180 respondents using the simple random sampling method. The survey questionnaire was designed to collect data from respondents. The primary aim of this study was to discover the impact of motivation on the retention of employees. In this study retention of human resources has been shown to be momentous to the development and the accomplishment of the organization's goals and objectives. Retention of employees can be a vital source of competitive advantage for any organization. Employee exits can have a significant effect on the execution of business plans and may eventually cause a parallel decline in productivity. The results of the study show motivational factors such as salary and fringe benefits rated as most important to the employees of the bank followed by job security and relationship with co-workers. The three strategies rated most important to the workforce were recognition, career development, openness and trust, promotional opportunities, and effective communication. Considering the major findings from the research, it is recommended that the human resource management should put in place structures that will bring about an improvement on salaries of employees. Fringe benefits such as free medical care, transportation, canteen services etc should be provided. In addition, it is suggested that management encourages their employees to take courses such as distance learning, correspondence courses to help improve on their skills. It is foreseen, that this study will lead to increased awareness of retention processes among managers and the need for further research in the subject area.

In their study Ndua and Wambua (2017) found out that retention of employees is becoming a real challenge in the recent time as employers begin to realize the value of people that make up their organizations. The banking sector in Kenya is experience high staff turnover in that banking sector is capping the immerse staff turnover by restricting bonuses to employees who have work for long with the company. Any loss of any employee in an organization is disruptive even and replacing employees is costly, both in recruiting and training employees to obtain satisfactory levels of performance over periods of time. The target population comprised of all 42 commercial banks in Kenya as the unit of observation and the respondents as a unit of analysis. Stratified sampling was employed in the determination of the sample size. Data was collected by use of structured questionnaire which was administered using drop and pick later method. The collected data was analyzed using multiple regression analysis. The findings indicated that the four independent variables that were studied explained 94.6% of the staff retention in commercial banks as represented by the results. The study concluded that some human resource practices as significant and have a positive relationship with staff retention. The study recommended that commercial banks should work around the clock to retain the highly qualified and skilled employees through career progression, work life balance and good reward scheme to help prevent shortage of employees in the near future.

Job Design and Employee Retention

According to Tsuma and Omondi (2015) in their study, they found out that managers in Kenya and around the world are faced with the challenge of predicting whether their employees are satisfied with their jobs. There is need to determine the way a job is designed and whether it will have an impact on an employee's satisfaction level. The purpose of this study was to determine the role of job design on

employee satisfaction levels in private universities in Kenya. The study used a case study research design and had a sample size of 89 respondents drawn from a total population of 176 employees of Mount Kenya University, Thika Campus. The sample was selected through stratified sampling techniques. Primary data was collected through questionnaires. A pilot study was undertaken on 5 employees to test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. The qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis and descriptive statistical tools like frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation were employed. Inferential statistical tools such as correlation and regression were used to determine the relationship between the variables. The findings of the regression analysis showed a significant relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable. The study found out that job design affects employee retention and satisfaction levels. It was recommended that employees should be optimally utilized at the workplace with careful observation not to overwork them. It is also recommended that job rotation should be practiced as a routine and employers should consider giving employees some control over their work.

Kariuki and Makori, (2015) carried out a study to ascertain the role of job design on employee retention. The target population was 535 employees working at the top management, middle level management and low level management at the Presbyterian University of East Africa. A sample of 84 employees of the target population was considered by use of stratified sampling method. The primary data was collected through the use of questionnaires and secondary data was obtained from published documents such as journals, periodicals, magazines and reports to supplement the primary data. A pilot study was conducted to pre-test the validity and reliability of instruments for data collection. The raw information was analyzed to yield qualitative and quantitative data. The variables were regressed and

study findings showed that skill variety, task identity, job design and job feedback significantly and positively influenced employee retention. This implied that the variables understudy affected employee retention and recommends for effective policies and strategies to enhance appropriate job designs for improving employee retention and performance.

Work-life balance according to Kariuki and Makori, (2015) is experiencing a sense of control and staying productive and competitive at work while maintaining a happy, healthy home life with sufficient leisure. It is also attaining focus and awareness, despite seemingly endless tasks and activities competing for time and attention. As such in the current work place employees face a greater workload which increases pressure at work and obstacles in personal and management demands due to unsatisfying job designs. In a turbulent economic environment characterized by high staff turnover and brain drain, human resources practitioners' major challenge is to find ways of attracting and retaining creative and dedicated staff committed to the organization. They also have to determine which working conditions stimulate employees to give their best, to be engaged, to go beyond what is expected and persist in the face of difficulties, (Kariuki and Makori 2015)

Looking at most of the existing literature, it is evident that job design affect retention, performance and personal life, hence satisfaction levels of employees. From the research studies carried out by different scholars, the aspect of job design does not come out well since they are looking at job design as a whole. Specification is not valid of the exact area that needs to be addressed, whether it has to be job enrichment or job enlargement.

Employee Recognition and Retention

Employee recognition is very important to organizations and is associated with several benefits.

When employee is recognized they feel that their work is appreciated and adds value to the organization. This result in morale and motivation becoming high enhances the employees' loyalty to the organization. These employees will develop a sense of ownership creating a supportive and conducive work environment and significantly improving retention. Managers should endeavor to map and retain highly skilled workforce by acknowledging their effort and commitment to the organization. In this way the organization will avoid dissatisfaction and prevent employees' turnover.

According to Muthoni M. and Mwangi, B. (2014), employee retention is an attribute that measures an employee's commitment to a given organization. The study therefore sought to establish the effect of employee engagement on job performance in Kenya's public sector, taking a case study of Nakuru Water and Sanitation Company Limited. The study employed a descriptive research design. The target population comprised of 49 employees of Nakuru Water and Sanitation Company. A census method was used since the sample was equal to the target population. A pilot test was then conducted on 5 respondents which were randomly selected with the objective of determining both reliability and validity of the research instrument questionnaire. A structured questionnaire was then administered to the respondents which captured the respondent's profile and data relevant to all the study variables. Data was collected, processed and then analyzed both descriptively and inferentially. The study findings it was concluded that organizational support and growth opportunities foster learning which enhances employee competence. It was further concluded that engaged employees are more involved in organization's achievement and perform better. Employees work harder if they are recognized more. The study recommended that organizations should provide growth and development opportunities for

their employees in attempts to enhance their competence and performance.

Employee recognition and retention is becoming a challenge as employers begin to realize that highly skilled workforce make up their organizations. Employment procedure is undergoing fundamental changes that have implications of attracting, developing, recognizing, setting work-life balance among others to retain and engage skilled workforce, (PW, 2013). Talent shortage has resulted in high competition for skilled workforce. Initial effect was in the private sector but public is hit hard as devolved government is ready to absorb the skilled talents due to shortfalls in counties.

Work Life and Employee Retention

Technology has improved employees lives in different aspects. Employees can live longer and healthier lives because of technology advancement. Resources to access vast information to complete different tasks and talk to a thousand people miles away are now available. Work life concept is gaining a lot of attention in the organizations. Due to tough competition in the labour market, workload is increasing day by day and this leads to various challenges in employee retention. It is the responsibility to the human resource managers to segregate balance between work and leisure. Employees often quit jobs if they do not find appropriate balance between personal lives and professional obligations. The human resource management department has to work to avoid such scenario and help employees in finding right work life balance to enhance retentions.

In the study on effect of work-life balance on employee productivity and retention in Universities in Kenya, Murithi (2017) looked at problems that may arise as a result of poor balance between life and work as well as the benefits that may be experienced. This study sought to find out work life balance practices by Kenyan universities, and establish the

level of employee retention and find out the relationship between the two in Kenyan Universities. The study sought to achieve four objectives, to determine the effect of flexible working arrangements on employee retention, to determine the effect of employee health and well-being initiatives on employee retention, to find out the effect of career development on employee retention and to assess the effect of leave arrangements on employee retention. The study used descriptive survey; the research design was stratified random sampling because of the distinctive nature of the population. The sample size was 352 respondents comprising of both teaching and non-teaching employees from KCA University and Jomo Kenyatta University of Technology. The data was collected using structured questionnaires which were administered by the researcher. Data collected was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Data was analyzed and results obtained indicated that work life balance initiatives were significant as strength of the relationship between employee retention and each of the independent variable performance measurement was valid. Multiple regression analysis was positively significant and presented using tables.

In her study, Yadav and Rani (2015) focused on the challenges and opportunities of work life balance in the Indian companies. A connection of authoritative trends in the early 21st century is weighing heavily on employers to reorganize their employee practices and regulations. Certainly, the timing is accurate to make work life a strategic focus for organizations, as well as a public policy priority. These challenges, workforce aging, increasingly competitive labor market, information technology and increasing benefit costs generate new prospective for employers to achieve organizational objectives and goals while at the same time meeting employees individual objectives. On the other hand, plentiful employees are experiencing a shortened quality of work life. This is most

outstandingly in work-life imbalance and job stress. Work life & personal life are the two sides of the same coin. In the world full of difficulties, inconsistency job design and family errands, work life balance has become a major challenge in the organizations. Typically managing a balance between work and life was measured to be an employee's concern. This research tackled work-life balance and the stress factors faced by all professionals. It also highlights the merits of stopping from addressing these arguments and recognizes good practices from around the world and policies that can help moderate them while benefiting employees, organizations and societies at large. This will ensure an pleasurable work place and make work more significant, (Yadav & Rani 2015).

Distress and fatigue from excessive time on job can lead to decline in performance of employees and also affect the safety levels. A large amount of time at work is not a predictor of high productivity and it is observed that periods of time away from work can be extremely beneficial to the quality and productivity of work. Employee willingness to opt for reduced hours program is not simply a matter of arrangement, it involves redesigning work arrangement which leads to change in organization culture and careers. Viable reduced hours career option requires simultaneous changes in the areas of compensation, assignments and promotions. It is more cost effective and productive for the management to design the work arrangements to fit the workforce than to force them to fit in the system. (Anjali & Nithila 2018)

Career Development and Employee Retention

Career development, diversity and inclusion are taking shape in the recent aspects of development and improvement of skills. Practices are becoming more diverse and changing workplace to remain a focus area. The essence of modern globe lies in diversity. Employees' talent is a competitive advantage for organizations and when employees feel as part of the organization, it builds the virtuous cycle

of achievement. Organizations have to invest and introduce micro learning models, e-assistants who will recommend what is required in the competitive market and provide a platform to answers questions and connect employees with e-training platforms.

In a new study, Glassdoor data scientist Morgan Smart looked at 5,000 job transitions from a sample of thousands of résumés shared by job seekers on Glassdoor from 2007 to 2016, (Chamberlain, 2017). He discovered that despite favourable pay, industry, job design, and many other factors, employees tend to leave for another organization if they languish in their current role. If they do not see their progression clearly with their current role to a better role in the organization they will end up exiting. Thus career development opportunities are related to employee retention. According to (Kossivi, 2016), there is a direct correlation between career development or opportunities for growth and job retention. On the other hand, a study by Kroon & Freese (2013) mentioned that development opportunities positively increase an employee’s commitment to stay in an organization.

In her study Mulievi and Juma (2019) found out that capacity building practices on another hand had influence on employee retention in the health sector in the County Government of Kakamega. The study was anchored on Kirkpatrick’s Model. The study employed a descriptive survey design. The target population was 1,153 health workers in Kakamega County drawn from 11 health facilities and a sample

size of 297 respondents was used. The Data was collected by the questionnaires which was the main instrument to collect primary data. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive inferential statistics (correlations and regression analyses). Results indicated that the relationship between capacity building practices and employee retention in the health sector in the County Government of Kakamega was positive and significant. It was concluded that capacity building practices accounted for 68.3 percent of employee retention of employee retention in the health sector in the County Government of Kakamega.

The study recommended that organizations should proactively invest more in training their workforce at all levels of the health system. The study findings may help to streamline the retention of staff in the health sector in Kakamega County by providing strategies of employee retention. The study provided a basis for future scholars, researchers and other stakeholders to use the results as a reference while also enabling researchers to carry out more investigation on other strategies that increase employee retention. The core organizations strategy that influences employee retention and human capital management is continuous career development. To enhance career progression and innovative ideas in their work, employees need career development to continue working with one organization for a long period of time. Concurrently, there are many other factors which affect the level of employee retention.

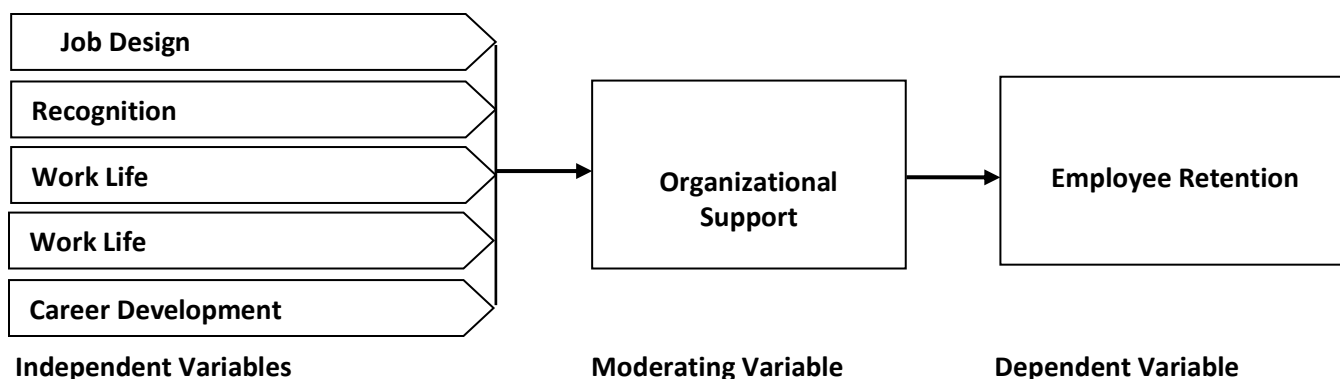


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework Showing Interaction of Variables (PhD Scholar 2020)

According to Anis (2011), skills can become obsolete as technology changes. Hence, organizations need to give career development to their employees to keep pace and sustain the competitiveness. According to past scholars, the skills of employees should be developed and thus the organization ought to conduct analysis and assessment on the need of training as well as identify the areas that need to be focused on. The researchers also found out that employees tend not to remain in the organization without increment in compensation after their career development because they feel that there is an increase in their abilities and perfection in their profession.

We have work life, we have home life and we have in all the probability forgotten how to keep them separate. Moving up the organization ladder often requires employees to work long hours and deal with difficult and complex issues. One day can be fun and positive and another day tension filled and stressful. A common predicament for many people is how they manage all of the competing demands in work and life and avoid letting many negative effects of work spill over into their personal lives. Work life balance is about creating and maintaining supportive healthy work environment which enables employees to have balance between work and personal responsibilities and thus strengthen employee retention.

Employment procedure is undergoing fundamental changes that have implications of attracting, developing, recognizing, setting work-life balance

among others to retain and engage skilled workforce, (PW, 2013). Talent shortage has resulted in high competition for skilled workforce. The public sector should know that the monopoly of enjoying employee retention is over and they have to compete with the private sector in acquisition and retention of top talent.

Organizations can further keep their top talented employees by focusing on the role of motivation attributes towards enhancing employee retention. In this context, the role of motivation attributes included the use of career development, which consisted of several interventions that can be applied to give effect on retention. The elements of attracting and retaining talented employees must be considered as a strategic business priority. By utilizing fully the motivational attributes, management can focus on defining the role people play to execute that strategy by clearly communicating the business strategy to employees. Creating good working environment to work in can keep employee motivated despite the rewards and recognition given to them by the organization. Retaining talented employees also needs some extra effort by the organization as there is a global war of talent in the recent past. Employees must be motivated to stay and be loyal to the organization. Moreover the management needs to develop encouragement practices by having job design, recognition, career development and work-life balance programs, to improve on retention.

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