Daniel Kibet Koech – Esayas Degago Demissie – Dr. Edina Molnár – Dr. Attila Péter Szabó – Dr. Attila Szakács

Internationalization and Human Resource Diversity Retention Management Strategies: a Literature Review

SUMMARY

The rising number of international students and staff working globally in the current decade can be attributed to the various internationalization strategies that various public and private employers, have put in place to achieve globalization goals. The presence of international human resource capital on the other hand in the global human resource sector is a significant indicator that retention management strategies are being practiced by employers across the board. During their study period in foreign universities, most international students engage in part-time jobs which retain them after their studies through a work permit strategy among others. This review sought to discover and review the retention management strategies that employers utilized in managing and retaining the international human resource capital often brought to their disposal by higher education. It will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on Internationalization and human resource management retention. This review involved relevant scholarly articles on internationalization, employability, and diversity retention management. The outcome recommends the provision of; a robust and effective selection and hiring process, a safe and conducive job environment, full support from top management, humane treatment, collaboration, cultivation of a multicultural atmosphere, training and, development, financial incentives, and benefits, job enrichment initiatives, career development, equal access to promotion opportunities, flexible work opportunities, performance appraisals, and job evaluations, equal opportunities, opportunities to explore side jobs unlimited access to family-friendly benefits to all the multicultural staff.

Keywords: Internationalization, Higher Education, Employability, Retention Management, Employee Diversity.
Jel-code: F22; F55

INTRODUCTION

Workforce diversity can be defined from various perspectives. This consists of primary dimension such as gender, ethnicity, race, age, mental/physical abilities (Mazur, 2010), secondary dimension which includes religion, culture, sexual orientation, lifestyle, political orientation, work (Ferris, Frink, & Galang,1993) or tertiary dimension comprising beliefs, assumptions, perceptions, attitudes, feelings, values (Mateescu,2017). The modern workforce in organizations globally are witnessing an influx of international employees. This has been a consistent trend for the past two decades where scholars and policy developers have been crafting policies to accommodate multicultural workforce by valuing their differences and tapping their talent. (Amaram, (2007). Further development in in the acceptance multicultural human resource led to the coining of the term workforce diversity in the 1990s. a term that describes heterogeneous employees (Mor Barak & Travis 2013). Workforce diversity determines employee well-being by encouraging positive attitude towards working and interacting with an international workforce. (Ilmakunnas, & Ilmakunnas, 2011). The goal of workforce diversity management is to effectively utilize the multicultural talent to increase the effectiveness and organization's operations efficiencies. (Ferris, et.al, 1993). These previous scholarly works focus on workforce diversity leaving a study gap on retention management strategies tailored for a multicultural workforces, a gap which this literature review addresses.

The General Objective of the Review

This review seeks to discover and review the best retention management strategies that employers can use to bind and improve the degree of loyalty and performance among their international staff.

Research Question

What are the most appropriate retention management strategies that can enhance employee satisfaction, loyalty to an organization, prevent exit and improve organizational performance?

METHODOLOGY

The process of conducting this review was iterative, semi-structured, multi-layered, and involved narrative synthesis in arriving at findings and conclusions as recommended by Juntunen & Lehenkari, (2021). The process started with topic selection (Pickering et al. 2015), followed by defining a clear objective (Bearman et al. 2012) and formulating the specific research question (Xiao & Watson, 2019). A narrative review protocol informed the step-by-step process beginning with topic selection and culminating in the conclusion. This review was guided by the keywords; Internationalization, Higher Education, Employability, Retention Management, and Employee Diver-

sity to identify the most suitable scientific articles from Web of Science, Scopus, ProQuest, and Google Scholar. A backward search was also used to guide the researcher in identifying supplementary articles from the reference list of each article reviewed as recommended by Xiao &Watson, (2019). Article selection criteria were further guided by research questions, skimming and scanning through the articles in the online scholarly databases, and making summary notes. After a critical analysis of the selected articles, the review process arrived at a summary of the appropriate retention management strategies that organizations can implement to enhance employee satisfaction, their loyalty to their organization, prevent their exit and improve organizational performance.

Higher Education and Internationalization

Aigner et al (1992) explain that there are three main reasons why higher education institutions across the world are implementing internationalization. These include interest in national security, economic interests, and multicultural diversity interests. There is often confusion between internationalization and globalization as acknowledged by Altbach, (2007). The internationalization of education is the vehicle towards the attainment of globalization goals that transport human resources across the world. Globalization should be seen from a socioeconomic and political context as the force that puts international institutions on the global map in active involvement in international affairs.

The rigorous campaign by higher education institutions to implement internationalization programs in their institutions' Universities as a contingency response to globalization needs has led to the development of a multicultural workforce being witnessed in many organizations. (Rauer et al., 2021). These developments have prompted institutions of higher education to tailor their curricula to meet global awareness needs in preparation of intercultural- oriented job market. The current globalization wave sweeping across universities across the world is triggering a competitive race to adopt result-oriented internationalization strategies all driven by multicultural diversity goals. (Wang, 2014). Transnational education programs have been implemented by universities across the world to promote multicultural diversity (Altbach & Knight, 2007)

There are massive investments in worldwide knowledge industries where higher education is taking the leading role. This is a paradigm shift from the local to an international sphere which has led to the creation of a knowledge society that highly depends on skilled and educated human resources. Many scholars engaged in the research on internationalization often indulge in endless debates on what internationalization is and what is not, proving the existence of the definitive dilemma of the term. On many occasions, the term internationalization has often been used intentionally to refer to globalization and at times mistakenly (Harris, 2008 &de Witt, 2011). The intensive scale of debate on internationalization started a long time ago in the 1980s and still dominates the modern research topic pool as Knight (2004) acknowledges.

Internationalization and Employability

Internationalization, Globalization, regional integration, migration, education, and demographic changes create new preconditions for the inter-mingling of individuals and cultures and pose new challenges to organizations, which encounter representatives of different cultures and social groups in domestic and global markets (Repečkienė, Kvedaraitė, & Jankauskienė, 2011).

There is a need for a balanced approach toward internationalization to ensure its success and sustainability Beck, 2012; Egron-Polak, Howard, Hunter, & de Wit, 2015). In Human Resource development, internationalization can be examined from the instrumentalist approach which according to Knight (2008), equips the students for the job market for profit and wealth maximization. This is done by integrating students in socio-cultural and economic activities through internships, research and development, and placement in job markets. According to Beelen & Jones (2015), there is a strong connection between internationalization and employability among students from the perspective of shaping the students to become competitive human resource capital in the globalized world. In a study by (Lambert and Usher 2013), exposure to jobs in unfamiliar cultural environments equips students with better chances of securing good jobs after university.

Findings from a study carried out by the European Commission on the impact of Erasmus scholarship in 2014 concludes that the majority of employers are interested in internationalized human resource equipped with globalization traits such as openness and curiosity, self-confidence, multicultural tolerance, and the ability of potential employees to work in diversity teams. This view is supported by Killick (2017), who advocates for cultural dexterity among employees. Challenges surround the task of linking internationalized classroom graduates to the global human resource market which may be solved through global internship programs which offer real-time cultural immersions to the employees (Ramburuth & Welch, 2005).

In a study on *Measuring and assessing internationalization*, Green(2012) outlines 10 drivers for internationalization as follows; To prepare students for 'global citizenship' (also related to human resource development; To prepare students for the global workforce; To enhance the quality of teaching and research; To strengthen institutional capacity; To enhance prestige and visibility; To generate revenue; To contribute to local or regional economic development; To contribute to knowledge production on global issues; To solve global problems and to increase international understanding and promote peace.

Out of the ten, only two drivers are about human resource development; a key indicator is that there is minimal focus on human resource development as institutions of higher education put a lot of weight on promoting the political and economic rationales for internationalization (Jones & de Wit, 2012). On internationalization and employability, studies indicate a mismatch between employers' and employees' perceptions of important employability attributes; a problem associated with a lack of awareness among higher education graduates to develop and take the skills seriously. Archer and Davison (2008), give an illustration where a majority of employers look for good communication skills among job seekers, only to discover that satisfied that good communication skills are not the only ideal indicators for excellent performance among employees.

According to a comparative study of students, higher education institutions, and employers, graduates must possess inter-

national experience for employability with clearly acquired attributes including networking, good communication, and language skills as well as the tendencies towards intercultural understanding and peaceful coexistence (Crossman & Clarke 2010). Waters &Brooks (2011) link international experience and qualifications to significant chances of human resource market rewards through employment. Exposure and participation in international environments enhance the graduates' Curriculum Vitae and chances of high visibility for employment opportunities across the world (Fielden et al., 2007). Rizvi & Lingard (2000) argues that overseas education exposes students to intercultural and multicultural experiences which results in a globalized mindset useful in decision-making and problem-solving.

Diversity, Employees Turnover, and Retention Management Strategies.

The employee diversity concept recognizes the truth that employees consist of a uniquely diverse population characterized by physical and abstract differences ranging from diverse gender, age, ethnicity, race, religion, ability, nationality, character, and work beliefs. Organizations tapping these valuable differences achieve successful productivity and competitive advantage over others. (Kandola & Fullerton, 1994)

According to Abassi & Hollman (2000), employee turnover refers to the movement of employees around the job market; from one firm to another, one job to another, between occupations; and from the state of unemployment to employment and vice versa. Palich, Hom, & Griffeth (1995). considers employees' turnover as a voluntary severance of employment ties while Booth & Hamer (2007), see employees' act of exiting their jobs as either voluntary (turnover decision mainly made by employees leaving to exit) or involuntary turnover (turnover mainly made by the organization).

Voluntary turnover poses a major headache to employers as compared to the involuntary exit of employees from their jobs because it comes with significantly higher direct costs (replacement costs, recruitment, and selection costs, temporary staff hire costs, management time costs), indirect costs (demoralized remaining staff, increased work-load pressure on remaining staff, costs of training and re-organizing existing staff, product, and service quality costs, organizational image costs) as well as social capital strain (Dess &Shaw, 2001).

Despite employee turnover's view by many researchers and organization managers as a costly burden putting a strain on an organization's stability, it can be a blessing in disguise. As a result of employee turnover, poorly performing employees can be replaced, and new employees can bring anticipated change, creativity, and flexibility. Moreover, the tainted organization's image and adaptability can be improved. (Zhang, 2016). According to Armstrong (2009); Somaya & Williamson (2008), staff turnover can bring desirable benefits including new inputs and ideas from the new employees, elimination of job stagnation, and establishment of smooth career progression, new skills and talent from new staff, fresh knowledge and desired work experience acquisition, an improved and less cost-effective organizational management.

What motivates employees to leave their jobs? Unfortunately, many employers have no clue what makes their employees exit their current jobs (Powell & Greenhaus, (2012), and surprisingly the same employers have no understanding of the costs associated with employee turnover(Lucas,2013). Much blame points back at the management as one of the major reasons for employee turnover (Cloutier, Felusiak, Hill, & Pemberton-Jones,2015). Research attributes most employee turnout to a shortage of opportunities for professional development, poor remuneration and compensation package, work/life imbalance, Workplace environment and job-related stress, and unfair treatment within the organization. (Cloutier, Felusiak, Hill, & Pemberton-Jones,2015).

Employees leave their jobs as a result of job-related stress and lack of job satisfaction. This would be even more evident for women and minorities within a less diverse workplace. In their study, they identify demographic factors such as pay or salary, job position, and employees' highest education level as key determinants of job satisfaction which is always attached to the extent to which employees derive pleasure from their jobs. (Hasin & Omar 2007).

According to Gbrevbie (2008), employee retention refers to a deliberate effort of decision-making behavior put in place by organizations to retain their competent workforce for performance. ALDamoe et al. (2012) and James &Mathew (2012) call it a voluntary process practiced by organizations to deliberately make the environment conducive, encouraging and motivating for employees "to feel at home", remain, and work for the maximum period. Cascio (2003) defines retention management as initiatives enacted to prevent employees from exiting the organization through rewards for excellent performance, employee-friendly working relations with the management, and the provision of a safe, healthy work environment for the employees.

There have been many human resource strategies provided to retain employees for the advantage of the organizations. These strategies are aimed at avoiding employee turnover. Mobley (1982) defines turnover as the cessation of membership in an organization by individuals who have received monetary compensation from the organization.

The reasons for employee retention include the high cost of employee replacement which organizations must meet (Huang, Lin, & Chuang, 2006) as this will involve the corresponding human resource, work-unit, and organizational readjustments (Chhabra & Mishra 2008). These costs cover recruitment, selection, and training of new employees which studies indicate often exceed 100% of the year's remuneration for the position being filled. This also comes with work disruption costs, direct costs, and loss of trained, seasoned human resource capital (Rogelberg, Allen, Shanock, Scott & Shuffler 2010).

According to Fielden et al. (2007), most organizations looking for employees consider graduates who possess first-hand experience studying and living in an international community. They give value to these graduates who have a global perspective and employers will always do everything to retain these employees in their organizations (Archer and Davison (2008). Fielden (2007) argues that Multinational organizations are always hiring talented graduates with a strong background in awareness of other cultures and mastery of more than one language who can work anywhere in the world. Kim (2012) postulates that the high cost associated with the loss of talented employees has reinforced the need for contemporary organi-

zations to identify and implement management retention practices that support employees.

Yamamoto (2011) advises employers to enhance employee benefits including housing, medical care, and childcare support to promote employee retention while Ghosh et al. (2013) recommends the creation of positive organizational culture to prevent employee exit. In addition, De Vos & Meganck (2008) further found that employee priorities range from career progression opportunities, social atmosphere, job content, financial rewards, and work-life balance as compared to retention factors such as training, career perspective, financial rewards, performance management, and communication, which are often the priorities from the human resource managers. For new employees, human resource managers should organize orientation and socialization to help reduce the stress associated with the first days on the job (Chapman 2009) For Huang et al. (2006), employers must consider marriage, gender, honored employee status when sourcing new employees because they are key predictors of employee turnover and turnover intentions. According to Sengupta & Dev, (2013), Human resource managers should consider intrinsic motivation, employee involvement, age, and level of education as the primary determinants of employee retention management.

According to Cox, & Blake, (1991): and Lambert, (2016)., a culturally diverse workforce enhances an organization's level of competitiveness in the market, leads to cultural diversification of markets, promotes creativity and innovation, improved the problem-solving and decision-making, improved the organization's flexibility and reduced costs associated excellent integration and tapping of multicultural talent and skill.

Retention of multicultural human resources is guided by three paradigms; Discrimination and Fairness Paradigm which actualizes equal opportunities to equal treatment and social equality, access, and legitimacy Paradigm which recommends employment of staff from different cultures and nations to maintain strong relationships with customers and expansion of competitive market share. Finally learning and effectiveness paradigm emphasizes learning and more effective planning of the work process. Companies pursuing this strategy seek to implement the concept of the learning organization, which enables successful international cooperation. (Ely & Thomas,2001). According to Byram, Kühlmann, Müller-Jacquier, & Budin, (2014), Human resource Managers should exercise;

– Tolerance for ambiguity- the ability to tolerate the lack of ambiguity and to conduct oneself appropriately.
– Behavioral Flexibility ability to adapt flexibly to a changed situation.
– Communicative Awareness – the ability to determine the connection between ways of linguistic expression and content of culture, to align one's form and content of communication to the partner of the foreign country.
– Knowledge Discovery – knowledge about different cultures and the ability to use them while communicating
– Respect for others – developing trust for other cultures
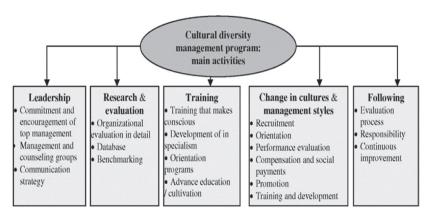– Empathy – the ability to intuitively understand what other people think and how they feel in a specific situation.

Figure 1.0: Cox & Blake (1991): model of cultural diversity management

CONCLUSION

To produce internationally competitive human resource capital, institutions of higher education should endeavour to always produce a multi-culturally talented workforce by going beyond the conventional formal educational training and development by providing extra training opportunities. This will enable the employees to swiftly develop their careers and also to improve their marketability in agreement (Glen 2006). Human resource practices should also focus on training and career development, opportunities for employee promotion, enhanced remuneration and recognition of employees, and work-life balance as observed by Ansari (2011) & Mahal (2012).

There is an urgent need for organizations to implement employee retention best practices to avoid staff exit which may result in unnecessary costs associated with loss of staff to competitors. (Chew & Chan 2008). Scholars delving into the topic of internationalization and retention management have seen their effort culminating in a wide array of strategies that organizations can implement to safeguard against unprecedented human resource exit from their jobs.

According to Subramaniam et al., (2015), flexible work opportunities offer international staff flexible working arrangements involving work schedules that allow employees to make decisions on when, where, and how they want to perform work. The best and most available options are job sharing, flexitime, working-from-home opportunities, staggered hours, part-time jobs, compressed hours, and early retirement (TalentCorp, 2018). Flexible work opportunities have always led to a decline in staff turnover rate and a variety of business benefits. (Managing Work-Life Balance, 2003)

Performance appraisals and job evaluations are the best tools for selecting employees to benefit from organizations' decisions for promotions, pay rises, detailed and valuable feedback, and career progression. Kampkötter, (2017). Performance appraisals and job evaluation are instrumental in retaining staff because measurable and challenging goals motivate employees to put more effort (Locke & Latham (2002), goal-setting improves employees' satisfaction by informing their pay-rise decisions. (Green & Heywood, 2008); Bryson et al. 2012).

Equal opportunities training is one strategy for increasing retention rates among international staff (Ongori & Agolla, 2007). Training and development should be implemented through a standard diversity training program designed to educate all the organizations' staff to harmoniously work with their co-workers without ethnic, backgrounds, and cul-

tural, religious, racial, and gender discrimination among other segregation vices. Training opportunities equip the staff on work ethics, organizational culture, competency development, career progression, and organizational direction. To make employees own and value the organization's vision and mission, equal training opportunities should be given fairly. This will motivate and satisfy their need for recognition and personal development. Employee development programs prepare the staff for their future career progression by identifying their specific training requirements in line with the organization's goals and objectives and facilitating their training needs. (D'Netto, & Sohal, 1999).

Side jobs offer multicultural employees an extra source of income to subsidize their living abroad. Because of increased inflation across the world, international staff working away from their home counties need their side hustles to meet their living costs abroad. Managers should give their international staff freedom for side hustles as a safety net (Allen, 2005) to make them comfortable and prevent any thoughts of exiting their jobs. Side hustles have become more common, as a passion project and an avenue for extra income.

Family-friendly benefits are meant to prevent work-family conflict which may trigger employee turnover. For multicultural employees to prolong their stay in an organization, family-friendly benefits should be provided. (Hobson, Delunas, & Kesic, 2001), These include; telecommuting, the ability to take work home, flexitime, and family leave among others.

Proposals

Based on the scholarly studies by; Clarke & Herrmann (2007); Taplin & Winterton (2007); De Vos & Meganck (2008); Dey (2009); Gberevbie (2010); Gilmore & Turner (2010); Khan (2018); Rose & Gordon (2010); Ananthan & Sundheendra (2011); James & Mathew (2012); Kim & Moon (2012); and Pritchard (2014), this review recommends the following strategies for effective retention management of international staff;

– Robust and effective selection and hiring process for new multicultural employees.
– The organization should provide international employees with a safe and conducive job environment
– The top management should offer full Support to the multicultural staff
– The organization should cultivate humane treatment for international staff through words of encouragement
– Establish collaboration with the multicultural staff by celebrating their various ethnic, racial, cultural, gender, religious, and other differences by celebrating together and respecting them and arranging time and space for their activities.
– Cultivate a multicultural atmosphere by developing internationalization aims, goals, and objectives and incorporating them into the organization's culture, and reflecting them in the organization's service charter.
– Establishment of financial incentives and benefits to reward and show recognition and appreciation for good employee performance. This is done through salary or wage increases, provision of bonuses, overtime payment, providing refreshments, staff meals, recognition prizes, and gifts among others.
– Job enrichment initiatives: To increase their self-confidence multicultural staff should be given room to practice and use

a variety of skills in performing their tasks to relieve their boredom. Task identity gives the international staff sense of achievement if they are allowed to perform tasks from start to finish. They should also be enlightened on the importance of their contribution to transforming the lives of others. Multicultural staff should be encouraged to work autonomously to gain personal responsibility for the quality of their outputs. Job enrichment initiatives between channels of multicultural employees and the management and among employees themselves should be seamless, free-flowing, and free from bureaucracy.

– Career development including long-term training, education, and development activities aiming at improving employees' job competency are the key components of a career plan. To achieve this, the organization should empower employees to make their list of long and short-term targets that they plan to attain within a set time in their career journey. It includes performance-based plans, objective-driven, succession-based, and ad-hoc career development plans.
– Equal access to promotion opportunities should be offered by management to all staff without discrimination. Merit, work experience, and performance at the workplace should be the determining factors when selecting employees for promotion opportunities.

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