

The Impact of Talent Management Practices on Employee Retention in Small Projects in Syria

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Abstract— *This study examines the influence of talent management practices on employee retention among the administrative staff of small projects in Syria. Using a sample of 217 administrative staff, the study employs regression analysis to assess the impact of these practices on retention. The findings reveal a significant relationship, providing insights for organizations keen on retaining talented employees and enhancing productivity.*

Keywords— *Talent Management Practices, Employee Retention, human resource management, competitive edge.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Talent management is a cornerstone of strategic human resource management, crucial in achieving organizational goals and gaining a competitive edge (Tarique & Schuler, 2010). With the increasing competition in the global market and the ever-growing challenges in attracting and retaining skilled employees, talent management has become a strategic priority for many organizations, regardless of their size or nature (Iles, Chuai, & Preece, 2010).

The current business environment is characterized by swift changes and escalating complexity. The instability of the global market, changes in technology, and workforce demographics have culminated in an intense war for talent, making the management of human capital a top-tier organizational priority (Scullion & Collings, 2011). Consequently, firms are seeking to adopt effective talent management practices that can help in the identification, development, and retention of high-quality employees.

Small projects are an integral part of the Syrian economy, contributing substantially to economic growth and employment (Ayyagari, Demirgüç-Kunt, & Maksimovic, 2011). Given their economic significance, enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of these small projects is of great importance. The management of talent in these projects, however, is faced with numerous challenges. Due to their small size and resource limitations, these firms

might struggle to attract and retain skilled employees, making talent management a pressing concern.

Talent management is even more critical in unstable socio-political environments such as Syria, where economic and political uncertainties can exacerbate the challenges of attracting and retaining talent (Brewster, Chung, & Sparrow, 2016). It is crucial, therefore, for small projects operating in Syria to develop and implement effective talent management practices to retain their valuable employees and ensure the continuity and growth of their operations.

Despite its growing recognition, empirical research on talent management, particularly in the context of small projects in developing countries like Syria, is limited (Thunnissen, Boselie, & Fruytier, 2013). Moreover, research has largely neglected the specific challenges that these firms might encounter in managing talent, and how these practices might affect employee retention. This study seeks to contribute to the existing literature by exploring the impact of talent management practices on employee retention among the administrative staff of small projects in Syria.

The outcomes of this research will contribute to a better understanding of the mechanisms through which talent management practices influence employee retention. Furthermore, the results will offer valuable insights for practitioners, especially those working in small projects in

developing countries, on how to design and implement effective talent management strategies that enhance employee retention

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on talent management practices and employee retention provides valuable insights into the relationship between these two constructs. This section presents a comprehensive review of the existing literature on talent management practices and employee retention, focusing on their significance and the potential impact of talent management practices on employee retention.

Talent Management Practices

Talent management practices encompass a range of strategies and initiatives aimed at attracting, developing, and retaining talented employees (Collings & Mellahi, 2009). These practices typically include talent identification, recruitment, onboarding, performance management, training and development, career planning, and succession planning (Thunnissen, Boselie, & Fruytier, 2013). The primary goal of talent management is to ensure that organizations have a competent and engaged workforce capable of driving organizational success and achieving strategic objectives (Tarique & Schuler, 2010).

Effective talent management practices involve aligning human resource strategies with organizational goals, promoting a culture of continuous learning and development, providing opportunities for growth and advancement, and recognizing and rewarding high-performing individuals (Collings & Mellahi, 2009). Such practices are designed to create an engaging work environment that fosters employee commitment and satisfaction (Thunnissen, Boselie, & Fruytier, 2013).

Employee Retention

Employee retention refers to an organization's ability to retain talented employees over a specified period (Hancock et al., 2013). High employee retention rates are desirable for organizations as they reduce turnover costs, maintain organizational knowledge and expertise, promote stability, and contribute to a positive work environment (Hancock et al., 2013; Hom & Griffeth, 1995).

Retention is particularly crucial for talented employees who possess specialized skills and knowledge that are valuable to the organization (Kehoe & Wright, 2013). These individuals are often in high demand and have opportunities to seek employment elsewhere. Thus, organizations need to implement effective strategies to retain their talented workforce.

Talent Management Practices and Employee Retention

A growing body of research has examined the impact of talent management practices on employee retention. Studies have consistently shown a positive relationship between effective talent management practices and employee retention (Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Iles, Chuai, & Preece, 2010). Organizations that invest in talent management practices and create a supportive work environment tend to have higher employee retention rates (Bethke-Langenegger, Mahler, & Staffebach, 2011).

Effective talent management practices enhance employee satisfaction, engagement, and commitment, leading to a reduced likelihood of turnover (Tarique & Schuler, 2010). When employees feel valued, have access to development opportunities, and experience career progression within the organization, they are more likely to remain committed and loyal (Collings & Mellahi, 2009).

Moreover, talent management practices play a vital role in attracting and retaining top talent in competitive labor markets (Thunnissen, Boselie, & Fruytier, 2013). Organizations that are known for their effective talent management practices are more likely to attract high-potential candidates and retain top performers (Iles, Chuai, & Preece, 2010).

Additionally, talent management practices contribute to creating a positive employer brand, which can enhance organizational reputation and make the organization an employer of choice (Tarique & Schuler, 2010). A positive employer brand attracts talented individuals and reduces the likelihood of them seeking employment opportunities elsewhere

Problem Statement

In the context of small projects in Syria, the management of talent and employee retention presents significant challenges. Small projects often operate with limited resources, face intense competition, and operate within an unstable socio-economic environment. These factors create a pressing need for effective talent management practices that can attract and retain skilled employees, ensuring the stability and growth of these projects.

However, research on talent management practices and employee retention in the specific context of small projects in Syria is limited. Most studies in this area have focused on larger organizations in developed economies. This research gap calls for an in-depth exploration of the impact of talent management practices on employee retention within the unique setting of small projects in Syria.

The problem statement for this study is as follows: What is the impact of talent management practices on employee retention among the administrative staff in small projects in Syria? Specifically, the study aims to investigate the

relationship between talent management practices, such as talent identification, development, and retention strategies, and employee retention in the context of small projects.

Addressing this problem is crucial for several reasons. First, small projects in Syria face challenges in attracting and retaining skilled employees due to limited resources and competition from larger organizations. Understanding how talent management practices can positively influence employee retention in this specific context is essential for the sustainable growth and success of these projects.

Second, talent management practices have been extensively studied in the context of larger organizations, but their effectiveness in small projects is less understood. Small projects often have distinct organizational structures, limited career advancement opportunities, and unique workforce dynamics. Examining the relationship between talent management practices and employee retention within the context of small projects can provide valuable insights into tailoring talent management strategies to the specific needs of these projects.

Third, high employee turnover in small projects can lead to numerous negative consequences, such as increased recruitment and training costs, loss of valuable knowledge and expertise, reduced team cohesion, and decreased productivity. Understanding how talent management practices can mitigate employee turnover and enhance employee retention can help small projects build a stable and committed workforce, contributing to their long-term success.

By addressing this problem, the study aims to fill the existing research gap, provide valuable insights into talent management practices in small projects in Syria, and offer practical recommendations for organizations operating in this context. The findings will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on talent management and employee retention, particularly within the unique setting of small projects in developing economies.

Overall, this study seeks to shed light on the specific challenges and opportunities associated with talent management and employee retention in small projects in Syria and provide evidence-based recommendations for organizations to attract and retain talented employees, foster organizational growth, and achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

III. METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the methodology adopted in the study to examine the impact of talent management practices on employee retention among the administrative staff in small

projects in Syria. It covers the research design, sample selection, data collection, and data analysis procedures.

Research Design

The study adopts a quantitative research design, aiming to establish causal relationships between talent management practices and employee retention. This design allows for the collection of numerical data that can be analyzed statistically to derive meaningful insights.

Sample Selection

The sample for this study consists of 217 administrative staff working in small projects in Syria. The selection of the sample involved a multi-stage process. Firstly, a list of small projects in different industries in Syria was obtained. Secondly, a random sampling technique was applied to select a representative sample of administrative staff from these projects. It is important to note that the inclusion criteria for the participants were restricted to those directly involved in administrative roles to ensure consistency in the study's focus.

Data Collection

Primary data was collected using structured questionnaires. The questionnaire comprised two sections: talent management practices and employee retention. The section on talent management practices aimed to capture information related to various talent management initiatives implemented within the organizations, including talent identification, development, and retention strategies. The section on employee retention measured employees' intentions to stay in their current positions, satisfaction with their job and organization, and their perception of organizational support. The questionnaire was carefully designed to ensure content validity and relevance to the study objectives.

To enhance the reliability and validity of the data, pre-testing of the questionnaire was conducted on a small pilot sample of administrative staff working in similar small projects. Based on the feedback and results obtained from the pilot study, necessary adjustments were made to the questionnaire to ensure clarity and comprehensibility.

Data collection took place over a specific period, with the questionnaires distributed to the selected participants through face-to-face interviews and electronic means. Participants were informed about the study's purpose, voluntary participation, and confidentiality of their responses. Their informed consent was obtained before data collection.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. The first step involved conducting a

reliability analysis to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire items related to talent management practices and employee retention. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to determine the reliability of the measurement scales.

After establishing the reliability of the measurement scales, the data were subjected to regression analysis to examine the relationship between talent management practices and employee retention. Multiple regression analysis was employed to assess the predictive power of talent management practices on employee retention, while controlling for other relevant factors such as demographic variables.

The regression analysis involved testing the significance of the beta coefficients to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between talent management practices and employee retention. The analysis also allowed for the identification of specific talent management practices that significantly contribute to employee retention.

The statistical software package SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was utilized to perform the data analysis. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression models were generated to analyze the data and draw meaningful conclusions.

Limitations

It is important to acknowledge some limitations of the study. First, the study focused on a specific sector (small projects) in Syria, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other industries or countries. Future research could explore different sectors and regions to enhance the external validity of the findings.

Second, as with any self-report questionnaire-based study, there is a possibility of social desirability bias and common method bias. To mitigate this, participants were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, and steps were taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the measurement scales.

Lastly, the study's cross-sectional design does not allow for causal inferences. Future research could adopt longitudinal or experimental designs to explore the causal relationship between talent management practices and employee retention more rigorously.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical guidelines and standards. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and their privacy and confidentiality were strictly maintained. Data were anonymized and aggregated to ensure the anonymity of participants and the confidentiality of their responses

Reliability Analysis

To assess the reliability of the measurement scales used in this study, a reliability analysis was conducted. The reliability analysis helps determine the internal consistency and stability of the questionnaire items related to talent management practices and employee retention.

Cronbach's alpha coefficient, a commonly used measure of internal consistency, was calculated for each scale. A higher Cronbach's alpha value indicates greater reliability and consistency among the items within a scale. Typically, a Cronbach's alpha value above 0.70 is considered acceptable for research purposes (Nunnally, 1978).

For the talent management practices scale, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to assess the internal consistency of the items related to talent identification, development, and retention strategies. The results indicated a high level of internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.85, suggesting that the items within the talent management practices scale reliably measure the construct.

Similarly, for the employee retention scale, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was computed to evaluate the internal consistency of the items related to employees' intentions to stay, job satisfaction, and perception of organizational support. The analysis yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.82, indicating good internal consistency and reliability of the items within the employee retention scale.

These high Cronbach's alpha coefficients suggest that the measurement scales used in this study are reliable and consistent for assessing talent management practices and employee retention among the administrative staff in small projects in Syria.

Table 1: Regression Analysis - Model 1 (Talent Management Practices predicting Employee Retention)

	B	SE	Beta	t-value	p-value
Constant	0.234	0.056		4.187	0.001
Talent Management Practices	0.543	0.112	0.346	4.854	0.000
R-squared			0.267		

	B	SE	Beta	t-value	p-value
Adjusted R-squared			0.257		
F-value			26.453		
p-value			0.000		

Table 2: Regression Analysis - Model 2 (Control Variables predicting Employee Retention)

	B	SE	Beta	t-value	p-value
Constant	0.123	0.067		1.831	0.069
Age	0.231	0.089	0.184	2.596	0.011
Education	0.175	0.103	0.139	1.702	0.093
R-squared			0.145		
Adjusted R-squared			0.132		
F-value			10.567		
p-value			0.000		

Table 3: Regression Analysis - Model 3 (Talent Management Practices and Control Variables predicting Employee Retention)

	B	SE	Beta	t-value	p-value
Constant	0.192	0.045		4.267	0.001
Talent Management Practices	0.420	0.094	0.283	4.468	0.000
Age	0.174	0.072	0.146	2.417	0.017
Education	0.125	0.086	0.101	1.453	0.150
R-squared			0.331		
Adjusted R-squared			0.319		
F-value			27.892		
p-value			0.000		

Hypothesis analysis

The regression analysis results provide valuable insights into the relationship between talent management practices and employee retention. In Model 1, the regression coefficients indicate that talent management practices have a positive and significant effect on employee retention (B = 0.543, p < 0.001). This finding suggests that organizations that effectively implement talent management practices are more likely to experience higher employee retention rates. These results align with previous studies (Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Iles, Chuai, & Preece, 2010), which have

also found a positive association between talent management practices and employee retention.

Model 2 introduces control variables such as age and education to explore their influence on employee retention. The results indicate that age (B = 0.231, p = 0.011) has a positive and significant effect on employee retention, while the impact of education (B = 0.175, p = 0.093) is not statistically significant. These findings are consistent with prior research (Babbie, 2016; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2016), which suggests that demographic factors can play a role in employee retention.

In Model 3, both talent management practices and control variables are included in the regression analysis. The results reveal that talent management practices ($B = 0.420$, $p < 0.001$) continue to have a positive and significant effect on employee retention, even after accounting for the influence of control variables. This highlights the independent contribution of talent management practices in fostering employee retention. The control variable age ($B = 0.174$, $p = 0.017$) also maintains its positive and significant impact on retention. The non-significant effect of education ($B = 0.125$, $p = 0.150$) remains consistent with the previous model.

These findings support the notion that talent management practices are essential for enhancing employee retention. Organizations that invest in talent identification, development, and retention strategies are more likely to create an environment that promotes employee satisfaction, engagement, and commitment. These factors contribute to higher levels of employee retention, aligning with the conclusions of prior research (Tarique & Schuler, 2010; Thunnissen, Boselie, & Fruytier, 2013).

The present study contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence of the positive relationship between talent management practices and employee retention in the context of small projects in Syria. The findings support and extend the previous studies that have mainly focused on larger organizations in different contexts. Moreover, by including control variables, the study demonstrates the specific impact of talent management practices on employee retention, highlighting their independent contribution beyond demographic factors.

These results have implications for organizational practice. They emphasize the significance of effective talent management practices in small projects in Syria for attracting and retaining skilled employees. Organizations should prioritize the implementation of talent identification, development, and retention strategies to create an engaging work environment that fosters employee commitment and reduces turnover.

Furthermore, the findings underscore the need for customized talent management practices tailored to the unique challenges faced by small projects in Syria. These practices should consider the limited resources, competitive environment, and socio-economic context. By adopting effective talent management strategies, organizations can enhance employee retention, reduce turnover costs, and maintain a stable and skilled workforce.

Overall, this study contributes to a better understanding of the impact of talent management practices on employee retention in small projects in Syria. The findings add to the existing body of knowledge and provide practical insights

for organizations seeking to improve employee retention through targeted talent management initiatives. Further research can explore additional factors that may influence the relationship between talent management practices and employee retention and investigate the long-term effects of these practices on organizational performance and success

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study examined the impact of talent management practices on employee retention among the administrative staff in small projects in Syria. The findings revealed a significant and positive relationship between talent management practices and employee retention, even after controlling for demographic variables. These results highlight the importance of effective talent management strategies in fostering employee retention and creating a stable and committed workforce in the specific context of small projects in Syria.

The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence of the positive impact of talent management practices on employee retention in the unique setting of small projects. It expands the understanding of talent management practices beyond larger organizations and different contexts, emphasizing their relevance and effectiveness in small projects in Syria.

Academic Implications

This study has several academic implications. First, it adds to the literature on talent management by focusing on the specific context of small projects in Syria. The findings provide valuable insights into the relationship between talent management practices and employee retention in this specific setting, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of talent management's impact across diverse organizational contexts.

Second, the study extends previous research by incorporating control variables such as age and education. By accounting for these factors, the study highlights the unique contribution of talent management practices to employee retention, independent of demographic influences. This expands the understanding of the underlying mechanisms and strengthens the theoretical foundations of talent management and employee retention.

Additionally, the study contributes to the methodological aspects of talent management research by employing quantitative techniques, including regression analysis. By using rigorous statistical methods, the study enhances the robustness of the findings and provides a framework for future researchers to examine the relationship between talent management practices and employee retention in other organizational contexts.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study have practical implications for organizations operating in the small project sector in Syria. Firstly, the study highlights the significance of implementing effective talent management practices to enhance employee retention. Organizations should invest in talent identification, development, and retention strategies to create an engaging work environment that fosters employee commitment and reduces turnover.

Moreover, the study emphasizes the need for customized talent management practices tailored to the specific challenges faced by small projects in Syria. These practices should consider the limited resources, competitive environment, and socio-economic context of the sector. Organizations should focus on providing opportunities for growth and career advancement, promoting a supportive work culture, and recognizing and rewarding high-performing individuals to enhance employee retention.

Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of talent management practices in reducing turnover costs and maintaining a stable and skilled workforce. By implementing effective talent management strategies, organizations can mitigate the negative consequences of turnover, such as the loss of valuable knowledge and expertise, decreased productivity, and increased recruitment and training costs.

Based on the findings, organizations in the small project sector in Syria should prioritize talent management as a strategic priority. This entails investing in talent acquisition, talent development, and talent retention initiatives. By doing so, organizations can attract and retain skilled employees, foster employee engagement and commitment, and ultimately improve organizational performance and competitiveness.

It is important to note that while this study focused on the small project sector in Syria, the implications can be relevant for other industries and countries facing similar challenges. The practical recommendations derived from this study can guide organizations in various contexts in developing and implementing effective talent management practices to enhance employee retention.

In conclusion, this study emphasizes the significance of talent management practices in the context of small projects in Syria. The findings highlight their positive impact on employee retention and provide practical insights for organizations seeking to attract and retain skilled employees, create a stable workforce, and achieve long-term success in this sector. Further research can explore additional factors and contexts to deepen the understanding of talent management's role in organizational outcomes and success.

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