

## Effect of Human Resource Practices on Employee Retention in Public Universities in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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**ABSTRACT** Recently, organisations are brought to work in an increasingly competitive socio-economic environment due to the context of globalisation in which they operate. The purpose of this research is to gain insight into the way in which HR practices operate at the department level and contribute to the degree of retention of the employees in the educational organisation. The dependent variable is employee retention. The study employed a quantitative approach in which the empirical data was collected through a survey, and systematic questioning of a large number of people on a large number of questions. The data obtained have been analysed using the statistical computer program Statistical Package for Social Science SPSS. The results of the regression analysis shows that rewards, aimed at motivating employees, positively influence employee retention, whereas, the research found there is no relationship between recruitment and selection, development and career opportunities and employee retention.

### INTRODUCTION

It is clear that in recent decades the way the role of human resource (HR) in organizations has changed drastically (Fahim 2018). One big change today is that human resources managers take a pragmatic approach to their role and understand important ties between organizational and human resources management approaches. The strategic human resource management (SHRM) mainly emphasizes the increasing shift of the human resources management (HRM) role from prescriptive, reactive and managerial to descriptive, constructive and executive. The SHRM definition was related to the effective incorporation of HRM activities into the company's business strategy (Torkzadeh et al. 2019).

On the other hand, the attraction of skilled staff is today more urgent from a managerial point of view than ever. A variety of trends such as globalization, increasing knowledge, rapid technological advancement and intensified competitiveness makes it necessary for organizations to gain distinctive intellectual resources to gain competitive advantage and growth (Ayodele et al. 2020). The selection of these important team members often is a crucial technique in this context for HR managers. There is sufficient evidence that management have been deeply worried with

retaining skilled workers in terms of rising levels and costs of employee turnover (Sishuwa and Phiri 2020). Managers around the world have adopted HR programs that effectively minimize the turnover of staff and encourage retention (Lee et al. 2018).

While there has been considerable theoretical expansion in retention and attrition research in the recent years (Ayodele et al. 2020), there was no adequate work on the relation between the human resource practices and retention of employees, particularly in the higher education sector, as this study examined the relationship in public universities in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).

Due to the increasing market forces in public universities, the emphasis is increasingly shifting to quality and efficiency in education. Given the increasing competition and the increasing demands and expectations of students, public universities will have to respond to this. In addition, the public university sector suffers with a shortage in the labour market, as a result of which institutions are struggling to achieve sufficient find and retain qualified personnel. Educational organisations are, therefore in favour of significant challenges. Faculty plays a crucial role in these challenges, as they will have to change to improve quality, safety and efficiency.

Educational organisations have a relationship between the employee and the students or client centre (Habhab and Smith 2014). A university employee is a major determining factor for the quality of the education provided. Good Human Resource Management (HRM) can help educational institutions get the most important capital, the people who get to work and keep moving. Employees have the right capabilities, motivation and opportunities needed to participate in changes in the educational sector and contribute to departmental performance. Employee retention with the organisation affects the performance of an organisation.

When employee retention increases, this improves performance and will also decrease absenteeism and staff turnover (Kadiresan et al. 2015). Absenteeism due to illness in the public university is higher compared to the rest of the labour market (Maimako 2016). So, there is still profit to be made for educational institutions to achieve. Especially in the educational sector, where there is growing competition and staff shortages can be a significant commitment to maximise employee productivity (Maimako 2016).

Practical research in educational institutions shows that intensive use of HRM activities positively impacts employee retention, work organisation and effectiveness of the organisation (Alwaheeb 2019). Public universities consider it essential that their employees are involved in the university and the changes. A high degree of retention is valuable for organisations because committed employees do their utmost for the organisation (Al-Tit 2016). It is therefore useful for educational institutions to gain more insight into the relationship between human resources practices and employee retention.

### **Problem Analysis**

There is sufficient empirical evidence about the added value of human resources management (HRM), which thus demonstrates its importance (Alwaheeb 2019). Many researchers (including Jehanzeb et al. (2015), Ahmad (2015), Imna and Hassan (2015) and Nasir and Mahmood (2016a)) state that there is a positive relationship between HRM and organisational performance. Allui and Sahni (2016) describe the relationship between HR activities, HR outcomes and the performance of the organisation. This concerns the presence of HRM activities in rela-

tion to the performance of the organisation. However, less is known about how employees contribute to organisational and departmental performance and the role of HRM policy in this. This is seen as the 'black box' in HRM science. More research on how HR practices affecting organisational performance is desirable (Kadiresan et al. 2015). It is essential to note the many variations in the way HR practices are implemented, received and interpreted within organisations (Habhab and Smith 2014). The relationship between HR practices and the employees on this mainly takes place at the department level. The actual one, the response of the employees to HR practices, is visible in the workplace. The HR practices are actually deployed on the work floor and the employees follow these practices. This research is therefore conducted at the departmental level zoomed in on the relationship between HR practices and employee outcome retention.

HR practice combinations are more valuable than individual HR practices separately. For a successful HRM, it is, therefore, essential that the HRM activities are coordinated (Maimako 2016). HRM discusses the HRM bundles. The individual HRM activities such as personnel planning, recruitment, selection and socialisation coordinate to make a contribution as a whole, and can deliver to the performance of the organisation (Alwaheeb 2019). This research is based, inter alia, on the theory of the AMO model (Ability, Motivation, Opportunity) of Amin et al. (2014), wherein the HR are practices divided into the following three bundles, that is, recruitment and selection procedures and development opportunities, remuneration and assessment systems, and participation options and communication. These three bundles focus on three components that employees need to perform well on, namely skills, the right motivation and the possibility to participate in the organisation. When proper HR practices are used for this, this is done through the attitude and behaviour, including through retention and influence organisational performance (Edgar et al. 2016). This is further elaborated in the theoretical framework.

### **Objective of the Study**

The objective of this research is to gain insight into the way in which HR practices operate at the department level and contribute to the

degree of retention of the employees in the educational sector.

### **Problem Definition**

To what extent do HR practices at the department level influence the retention of staff members?

### **Sub-questions**

- ◆ To what extent are recruitment and selection procedures and development opportunities available at the department level and influence employee retention?
- ◆ To what extent do reward and appraisal systems affect the retention of employees?
- ◆ To what extent do participation opportunities and communication at a departmental level influence employee retention?

### **Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Model**

Through the theoretical framework, the theoretical concepts used in this research are further explained. The most important concepts from the problem definition and the sub-questions are HRM, HR practices and retention. These concepts and the relationship between these are elaborated below, which ultimately leads to a conceptual model with associated hypotheses.

#### ***Human Resource Management***

Haider et al. (2015) define HRM as a specific approach to personnel policy, which strives to gain and maintain a competitive advantage by making strategic use of highly involved and skilled employees, and in this, use a range of cultural, structural and personnel techniques. The three underlying thoughts are that people are the most essential capital in organisations and that it is important that HR activities and business strategies are in line and are coordinated (strategic fit), and hence the importance of developing and developing human capital (Kakar et al. 2019).

Matching HRM policy to the organisational strategy, the Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) can be seen as a key factor for success. Many studies have already indicated

that effective use of HRM improves the performance of the organisation (Haider et al. 2015). The relationship between HR practices and organisational performance is not straightforward (Madanat and Khasawneh 2018).

#### ***HRM Practices***

The use of so-called High-Performance Work Practices (HPWPs) where attention is paid to the skills of employees and to motivation and information of employees can contribute to better organisational performance (Al-Tit 2016). Within the HRM field, a lot of attention is devoted to creating these specific HR practices aimed at managing employees towards organisational success (Haider et al. 2015). A High-Performance Work System (HPWS) is a bundling of these HR practices aimed at improving business results (Madanat and Khasawneh 2018).

The AMO model shows the positive relationship between HPWSs and organisational performance. This model has been the most used since 2000 theoretical framework when it comes to HR practices (Mohammad 2015). At the AMO, three components of an HPWS are important, namely, ability (A), motivation (M) and opportunity to participate (O). These parts of an HPWS have via employee outcomes influenced the performance of the organisation (Madanat and Khasawneh 2018). So the possession of knowledge and skills or the ability to develop them, it receives incentives that create motivation and the opportunity to participate and have an influence on the behaviour and attitude of employees (Abdulrab et al. 2017; Saad and Abbas 2019).

#### ***Retention***

Motivated employees who have enough space to participate are more likely stay in their jobs. The reaction of the employees on HR practices in the form of attitude and behaviour determine to what extent these practices improve the performance of an organisation (Purcell and Kinnie 2007). Employee retention in the organisation is such a response.

When employees receive support from the organisation, this increases retention, employee loyalty and performance (Ruvimbo and Hlanganipai 2016). The support received gives them

a sense of obligation to make a meaningful contribution to the organisation (Ruvimbo and Hlanganipai 2016). Employees experience the presence of HR practices as a form of retention from within the organisation (Madanat and Khasawneh 2018). HR retention influences the performance of organisations through their impact on employee retention (Kumudha and Harsha 2016). By investing in recruitment, employees have enough selection procedures and development opportunities with qualified colleagues allowing them to focus on their own activities. A good reward system ensures that the employees feel that they are receiving a fair and just reward. When there is a lot of space for communication and participation, the employee understands the competitive position of the organisation, making it more capable of a successful contribution to the organisation. The retention influences the way employees view obligations, agreements and emotions that are part of the work situations and therefore influences its employee behaviour (Sutanto and Kurniawan 2016). The different HR practices aimed at each of these three dimensions have an effect on retention in their own way (BinBakr and Ahmed 2015).

### ***HRM and Retention***

Organisations can achieve more effectiveness when they implement HR practices in a targeted manner on increasing employee retention (Aldossari and Robertson 2016). Staff members who experience the positive effects of HR practices focused on retention tend to respond positively (Maimako 2016). When employees see HR practices as a means to reduce costs and to improve it using staff has a negative effect on retention (ibid.). HR retention systems will increase employee retention in contrast to HR systems that focus on control (Haider et al. 2015). Abubakar et al. (2014) indicate that HPWSs increase organisational retention. Development opportunities, measures aimed at motivation and participation opportunities have a positive effect on retention (ibid.). HR practices are the skills, attitudes and behaviours of the workforce from the organisation (Mehmood and Maitlo 2020). These skills, attitudes and behaviours, in turn, have an influence on the performance of the organization (Alwaheeb 2019).

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Study Design**

The aim of this research is to determine whether the hypotheses derived from the theory are supported by empirical data. It is quantitative test research in which the empirical data were collected through a survey, systematic questioning of a large number of people on a large number of questions (Edgar et al. 2016). This way of collecting data made it possible to approach many respondents in a short time and to get enough data to make reliable and representative statements based on analysis. The data consists of the answers of the respondents. The questionnaires are completed by the respondents, resulting in one measurement moment. The data obtained have been analysed using the statistical computer program SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science).

### **Research Population and Sampling**

The research population consists of all employees in public universities of Saudi Arabia. King Saud University employees have been approached along with other several separate public universities in Saudi Arabia to participate in a study on HRM in public universities. Merged data answers several research questions. This is why multiple HR themes have been included in the questionnaires.

The organisations that participated in this research are King Saud University, King Khalid University, Taif University, Taibah University and Umm Al Qura University. The settings and departments all received the same brochure prior to the investigation information about the study. For actually distributing the surveys the students have made individual agreements with the departments. Most departments have agreed that not all employees would complete a survey. For many departments, the burden on employees would be too great when everyone should complete a survey.

This has increased the response of the people who received a questionnaire. The data were obtained at the departmental level. Two different questionnaires were used, one for the managers of the department and one for the employ-

ees. The questionnaires were administered to 40 departments. The criterion was that one department manager works in the department and that this department manager leads at least 5 employees. This increased the reliability of the research.

### Measuring Instruments

This study tested whether there is a relationship between the various HR practices and the degree of retention with the employees. The dependent variable is employee retention. The independent variables are the three various HR bundles, namely, 'recruitment and selection and development opportunities', 'rewards and evaluation/assessment' and 'participation options'. There are three items in the questionnaire to measure employee retention used that focus on affective retention (Abubakar et al. 2014). The employees answered these questions. Each question consists of a statement with seven answer options, ranging from completely agree to completely disagree. An example of an item is the statement: 'I experience problems of this organisation as my own problems'.

Five categories of HR practices have been used to measure HR practices, based on Jehanzeb et al. (2015) and Ahmad (2015). These categories are recruitment and selection, development opportunities and career opportunities, rewards, evaluation of performance, and participation and communication. The scales that allow the use of these five categories were previously used by Imna and Hassan (2015).

The HR practices conducted were measured with these scales. The department leaders have answered the questions. The questions have four answer options, positive for all employees, positive for more than fifty percent of employees, positive for less than fifty percent of the employees and negative for all employees.

Two questionnaires were used with the measuring instruments mentioned above prepared to obtain information on the HR practices at the department level and on the retention at the employee level. The answers of the department leaders about the HR practices conducted make it clear to what extent HR practices are present. The answers of the employees indicate to what extent they feel motivated in the organisation. The relationship between these two variables at the departmental level was tested to get an answer to the research question. That is, what are

the HR practices conducted by the departments in relation to the degree of employee retention at the department level.

The questionnaires also include questions about gender, age, position, level of education, organisation and type of department. These are variables that affect the relationship between HR practices and retention.

## RESULTS

### Reliability of Variables

The reliability analysis shows that the reliability of the scale for Employee Development and Career Opportunities (Cronbach's Alpha of 0.73) is sufficient. The scale of the variable 'participation and communication' is reliable because the Cronbach's Alpha (0.63) is just above 0.6. According to Nasir and Mahmood (2016a), a scale is not reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha is below 0.6, but this depends on the number of items included in the scale. With a small scale with less than 10 items, an Alpha of 0.5 is also sufficient. Therefore, the scale for 'rating' with a relatively low Cronbach's Alpha (0.53) is considered reliable. After all, this scale only consists of five items. The scale for 'recruitment and selection' is not reliable (Alpha is 0.22) but when one item is omitted in the analysis, the Cronbach's Alpha is 0.80. The scale is therefore reliable without this item. The item that is left out is questioning the department leaders whether selection interviews are used. Upon answering this question, fifty-one percent of the department leaders answered 'for all employees' and thirty-three percent answered for 'no employee'. With all other items the largest percentage of answers (>88%) was 'with no employee'.

This significant difference probably prevents the item about the selection interviews contribute to the reliability of the entire scale. One reason the answers from this item may vary so widely is that department leaders may not use the word 'selection interview' as being understood the same way. The 'rewards' scale is also unreliable with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.29.

When two items are omitted, the Alpha rises to 0.58. With three items this scaled can be considered reliable. The questions that have been removed are about an individual performance bonus in addition to the base salary and a team or departmental performance-related pay.



In answering all questions about rewards there is some variation, that is, the answer 'for no employee' is more than seventy-seven percent of all answers. This is probably the reason for the scale for rewards despite the item being removed is still not very reliable. A substantive reason for this the fact is that there is so little variation in the answers that it could be that in education one works with a rigid reward system. The reward system in a public university is based on an established job rating system given which executives have little room to deviate from it. Despite the relatively low reliability, this scale is nevertheless included in the further analysis. The items that come with two scales have been removed to increase reliability and in the further statistical analysis, they are not included.

The reliability of the scale is for the dependent variable retention sufficient with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.77. Table 1 lists all of Cronbach's Alphas shown.

#### Validity Variables

Use was made to test the extent to which the variables measure the desired construct made

from factor analysis. Provided the factor analysis of the different scales and that the scales for 'recruitment and selection' and for 'rewards' measure one factor with an eigenvalue greater than 1. The validity of these scales is therefore sufficient. The scale for 'employee development and career opportunities' measures according to the factor analysis two factors with an eigenvalue greater than 1. These eigenvalues are 2.8 and 1.5. Of these two factors, one factor explains a substantially large part of the variance, 30.9 percent. The other factor explains only 20.7 percent. Because of this relatively large difference, this scale can be seen as valid. The scale for 'assessments' also measures two factors with an eigenvalue greater than 1. These values are 1.9 and 1.1. Hereby, also a large part of the variance is determined by one factor, namely thirty-eight percent. The other factor determines twenty-one percent of the variance. This scale can, therefore, be considered valid.

The scale for the dependent variable retention measures one factor by one eigenvalue of 2.04, making this scale valid. Table 2 provides an overview of the various factors with the eigenvalues and the corresponding percentages of the variance that these factors measure.

**Table 1: Variables with corresponding Cronbach's alpha**

Concept	Items original scale	Cronbach's Alpha (Original Scale)	Items new scale	Cronbach's Alpha (New Scale)
Recruitment	4	0.22	3	0.80
Employees development and career opportunities	7	0.73	7	0.73
Rewards	5	0.29	3	0.58
Review	5	0.53	5	0.53
Participation and communication	11	0.63	11	0.63
Involvement	3	0.77	3	0.77

**Table 2: Variables with associated eigenvalues and factor loads**

Concept	Self-esteem factor 1 (% variance)	Self-esteem factor 2 (% variance)	Self-esteem factor 3 (% variance)	Self-esteem factor 4 (% variance)	Self-esteem factor 5 (% variance)
Recruitment and selection	2.31 (76.9%)				
Employees development and career opportunities	2.78 (30.9%)	1.45 (20.7%)			
Rewards	1.80 (60.1%)				
Review	1.90 (38.1%)	1.07 (21.4%)			
Participation and communication	2.56 (23.3%)	1.82 (16.5%)	1.72(15.6%)	1.39(12.6%)	1.18(10.7%)
Involvement	2.04 (67.9%)				

## Relationship between HR Practices and Retention

### Correlation Analysis

A correlation analysis was performed to gain insight into the relationship between all variables. Pearson's correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) was used as the measure of the correlation. In the correlation table, the extent to which HR practices correlate with each other will be presented. The significant correlations can be seen between 'recruitment and selection' and 'rewards', between 'development opportunities' and 'participation and communication' and between 'reward' and 'participation and communication'. The latter relationship is negative, meaning when the HR practice 'rewards' is more present, the HR practice 'participation and communication' is less present, and vice versa. HR practices do not correlate significantly with retention. It is remarkable that retention and 'participation and communication' have a negative relationship. The more relevant the HR practice retention of is, the less is 'participation and communication'. This relationship is therefore not significant. The control variables also do not correlate significantly with retention. However, there are interrelationships between the control variables that are significant to be. If there are correlations of  $r > 0.9$  then this may be a case of multicollinearity. This means that these independent variables are about the same, and they should not be included in one regression analysis (Edgar et al. 2016). Based on the correlation analysis, it can be determined that there is no multicollinearity since Pearson's correlation coefficients are  $< 0.9$ . The control variables all have a significant relationship to one or more of the independent variables. It is, therefore, useful to take this into consideration in the regression analysis. All variables are based on the correlation table included in the multiple regression analysis.

### Regression Analysis

To test the hypotheses, for all variables from the model, multiple regression analysis is performed. A regression analysis was performed with two models. In model 1, only the control variables are included in the analysis and in

model 2 the five HR practices are added. All variables explain in the model 2.36 percent of the variance of retention. This is displayed by the R Square, which is 0.36. The R Square change gives the percentage of the variance explained by the added variables in model 2. This is 0.27, which means that adding HR practices gives twenty-seven percent extra explanatory power.

Table 3 shows that the variable remuneration and the control variable training have a significant impact on retention. The educational level has a significant effect (Beta 0.04) of 0.81 on retention and HR practice rewards has a significant effect (Beta 0.045) of 2.1 on retention. The effects of the other independent variables are not significant.

**Table 3: Regression analysis**

Variables	Model 1		Model 2	
	Beta	Sig	Beta	Sig
<i>Control variables</i>				
Age	-0.12	0.544	-0.15	0.52
Sex	0.19	0.388	0.18	0.427
Education	0.16	0.454	0.51	0.041
Department type	-0.24	-0.218	-0.218	0.623
<i>Independent Variables</i>				
Recruitment and selection			-0.5	0.207
Employees development and career opportunities			0.43	0.191
Rewards			0.8	0.045
Evaluation and assessment			0.17	0.382
Participation			-0.41	0.081
R square	0.1		0.36	
Adjusted R square	-0.03		0.12	
R square Change	0.1		0.27	
Sig. F Change	0.55		0.13	

The adjusted R Square in model 2 is 0.12. This means that the variable training and rewards together explain twelve percent of the variance in retention found. The Sig F Change of 0.13 ( $p > 0.05$ ), however, indicates that this explanatory power is not significant. On the basis of this regression analysis, it can be concluded that its education level and HR practice rewards have a positive effect on employee retention. Together they explain twelve percent of the variance of retention, but this effect is not significant.

This means that for hypothesis 1, the more recruitment and selection procedures there are developmental opportunities and the affective

retention at the department level will be higher in this sample, and hence this study should be rejected. For hypothesis 2, the more rewarding and rating systems there are, the affective retention will increase in the department level, and this may be partially accepted. Only more reward systems have been shown to have a positive effect on retention. This does not apply to rate systems. For hypothesis 3, more possibilities for participation and communication will have a higher effective retention at the departmental level, and this must also be rejected.

### DISCUSSION

The theoretical framework indicates that the use of HR practices is aimed at knowledge and skills, and motivation and participation have a positive influence on retention of employees (Kumudha and Harsha 2016). This research shows that this only applies to HR practices and rewards aimed at motivating employees. A significant relationship is found between HR practice rewards and retention. It is a fact that the other HR practices have no significant influence on retention and does not match the expectations of this study based on the theory of Allui and Sahni (2016). It is striking that only HR practice has proven that rewards are effective when it comes to increasing employee retention at the department level. Certainly, because a public university structure is used fairly with a well-defined job evaluation system, this means that it is available for departmental level managers to have relatively little freedom to use this HR practice to a greater or lesser extent. The majority of the study population consists of scholars and post-doctorate. Therefore, it is a fact that the salary is seen by this profession as the most important factor in making the profession more attractive (Sutanto and Kurniawan 2016), which a possible explanation for the positive relationship between HR practice rewards and commitment. Because employees find the salary very important, it is possible that the use of more reward systems at the department level is strong, and it is appreciated that this affects retention.

A significant relationship has also been demonstrated between educational attainment and retention. Employees with a higher education appear to be more motivated in the organisation. This result is in line with earlier research on

retention and reasons for the departure of nurses (BinBakr and Ahmed 2015) in which the connection between educational level and retention has also been demonstrated. Research shows that higher educated people are more involved and less likely to leave the organisation (Akhtar et al. 2015).

Importance in the significant relationship between HR practice rewards and retention is that HR practice rewards along with education level, which explains 11.5 percent of the variance. This percentage is very low. In addition, the explanatory power of all variables is only 36.4 percent. This means that in addition to HR practices other aspects also play a role when it comes to the degree of retention in the organisation. From the theoretical starting point that the retention of employees is increased by the support they experience from the organisation (Nasir and Mahmood 2016b) it is plausible that other aspects besides HR practices involved in public university employees in Saudi Arabia are seen as support from the organisation. It is possible that the aspects that employees experience in addition to HR practices as support from the organisation also contribute to retention. This can be seen as an explanation for the fact that only a relationship was found between the retention and the HR practice rewards and level of education. The AMO model of Amin et al. (2014) identifies three components of knowledge and skills, motivational incentives and participation opportunities. When HR practices focus on these aspects they increase employee outcomes. There is no relationship in this study found between HR practices, aimed at increasing knowledge and at participation options and employee retention. It is possible that these components from the AMO model (Akhtar et al. 2015) in the public university have little influence on employee retention. Perhaps these are aspects more important when it comes to other employee outcomes, such as confidence in management, intrinsic pay, job satisfaction and work-related stress (Aldossari and Robertson 2016). This may explain why all HR practices do not connect with retention.

### CONCLUSION

In the context of this report, its key aim was to investigate the connection between human resource practices and the employee retention



in higher education institutions, in particular in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). The paper concluded that, while quality improvement efforts were needed, the hiring of the best HRM practices helped to maintain key university's employees. This study has both an influence on theory and practice, first by formulating a methodological structures that define HR practices that support employee retention. Secondly, it provides a hands-on guidance for managers and policy-makers, especially in the Saudi higher education sector.

In conclusion, this research shows that HR practice rewards, aimed at motivating employees, positively influence employee retention. Use of more reward systems at the departmental level means that people get motivated and therefore the degree of retention increases. HR practices that affect employee retention affect performance of the organisation. This means that when university institutions make more use of remuneration systems at the department level, the performance of the organisation increases. Educational institutions can do this by using more reward systems at the departmental level, and therefore, make a positive contribution to the performance of the organisation.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Most educational institutions have to deal with fixed frameworks, when it comes to rewarding systems. It makes sense for educational institutions to use the limited possibilities that are available to use at the department level through HR practice rewards, which increase employee retention. This will improve performance in public university institutions in Saudi Arabia. The findings of this study may also contribute to the discussion about more differentiated reward systems in the public university. When using a more differentiated reward system, it means that more reward systems will be deployed at the department level, and this will be one make a positive contribution to the retention of employees and thus to the performance of public universities. Management of public universities should use HR practices to encourage employee retention and ensure staff remain within their organizations through the provision of training and development, recruitment, employee devel-

opment and career opportunities, rewards, review, participation and communication. To maintain main employees on higher education, the latter must bring exposure to a shared perception and incentive strategies and terms of jobs for workers in order to meet their desires and to acknowledge their contributions. This means that HRM 's retention approaches in the higher education sector will focus at protecting such key points, such as consistent goals and objectives, ensuring that workers do not burden them with substantive jobs, making them feel appreciated, supported and treated equally, and focusing in their employment. This study shows that the use of HR practice has an effect on rewards on retention. For educational institutions, this means that they ensure quality, safety and increase the efficiency of education by using the HR practice rewards at the department level.

### LIMITATIONS

When interpreting the conclusions, it makes sense to take into account the limitations of this research. This is a cross-sectional study in which the data is measured at one measurement point. The results, therefore, depend on the conditions of the measurement moment. A second comment concerns the representativeness and generalizability of this research. The different organisations do not all make the same contribution to the research population. As a result, the research is not the same for all the organisation's representatives. The research population was created by a select group via a random sample in public universities of Saudi Arabia. Because of this, the results are generalizable to public universities. But the size of the sample (269 employees) is relatively small in relation to the domain (> 1.8 million employees). This lowers external validity.

The internal validity of this research is limited. Despite the fact that work has been done the questionnaires were scored in this study with pre-standardised questionnaires, which are not good with reliability analysis. It was necessary to delete items to increase reliability. This raises the question of whether these questionnaires are suitable for the educational sector. This study shows that there are few questions with some questions variance is in the answers. This

may be because the degree of presence of certain HR practices in public universities is very standardised. The usefulness of the questionnaires for the educational sector was not examined beforehand. Nor has it been investigated beforehand whether the five HR practices questions can be aggregated for every three HR measure bundles from the research questions.

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