

MEDIATING ROLE OF EMPLOYEES' COMMITMENT BETWEEN TALENT MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE OF ACADEMIC STAFF IN KOGI STATE-OWNED TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

Aliyu Mohammed Kudu

emkayali22@gmail.com

+234 8062244153

Dr. SalisuUmar

salumar2002@gmail.com commiaminuscoholar@yahoo.com

+234 8065825865

Dr. M. I. Aminu

+234 8034994298

ABSTRACT

The growth of any institution hinges significantly on the attainment of its human resources. In the context of state-owned tertiary institutions in Kogi state, Nigeria, there is a pronounced concern regarding the subpar performance of academic staff, which has pervasive effects on institutional performance. This research, galvanized by the human capital and Social Exchange Theory (SET) and an extensive literature review, explored the probable intermediating role of employees' commitment in the relationship between talent management and employee performance. Despite the existing literature, there remains a dearth of knowledge on the specific mediating function of employees' commitment in this dynamic. To address this gap, the study investigates the potential intermediating role of employees' commitment in the context of academic staff attainment in state-owned tertiary institutions in Kogi state. Employing proportionate stratified sampling, 485 questionnaire were distributed, and data analysis focused on 408 completed responses, utilizing PLS-SEM path modeling in SMARTPLS2. The findings underscore a significant and affirmative relationship between talent attraction, talent development, and talent retention with academic staff performance. Importantly, statistical evidence illuminates that employees' commitment serves as a potential mediator solely in the correlation between talent retention and academic staff performance. In light of these results, the study recommends that managers of tertiary institutions in Kogi state prioritize attracting the right talents, ensuring continuous talent development, and implementing effective talent retention strategies.

Keywords: Employees' Commitment, Employees' Performance, Talent Attraction, Talent Developing and Talent Retention.

INTRODUCTION

The achievement levels of staff across all sectors of society are indicative of their effectiveness in fulfilling assigned duties and responsibilities within an organization. Within educational systems or sectors, academic staff play a pivotal role as contributors to the development of citizens through education. In addition to their significance in modern civilized society, academic staff serve as social engineers with extensive awareness of various issues affecting human society. However, several indices suggest that academic staff in tertiary institutions in Nigeria are not performing up to par. These indices include the global rankings of Nigerian tertiary institutions and the employability of their graduates (Molefe, 2010). Notably, none of the Nigerian tertiary institutions made the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings in 2018, and consistent poor performance has been observed in international ratings (The Times Higher Education World University ranking, 2017). This consistent underperformance raises concerns, and part of the attributed reason is the inadequate performance of academic staff (Molefe, 2010).

Authors have posited that students' performance in tertiary institutions directly mirrors the performance of academic staff. Interactions between teachers and students are expected to yield positive learning outcomes, and the failure to achieve improvement may indicate an issue with the teacher (Owolabi & Adebayo, 2012). Academic personnel, central to each educational system, shape the overall quality of

the school system and its potential (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). This perspective is supported by Bonney et al., (2015). The attainments of educators in Nigerian graduate schools may thus be connected to students' performance.

Reports on the employability of Nigerian graduates emphasize their unpreparedness for the job market, leading to a preference for graduates from foreign institutions by both domestic and foreign corporations operating in Nigeria (Roy, 2014). Bongo (2017) notes a high unemployment rate among Nigerian high school graduates, attributing it to an incompetent human resource base. The low level attainment of educators in public graduate schools contributes to this issue and warrants urgent attention.

Employee performance is intertwined with talent management (Mangusho et al., 2015) and employee commitment (Karuri, (2015). Talent management encompasses human capital management, focusing on people, knowledge, and skills (Onwuka et al., 2015). This multi-dimensional variable is often measured through talent attraction, development, and retention (Koltapeh et al., 2015; Oladapo, 2014; Shirkhani & Nazari, 2014). Efficient talent attraction, swift talent development, high talent retention, and strong employee commitment are linked to high employee performance (Kaleem, 2019; Knott, 2016; Akinremi & Adedeji, 2019; Karuri, 2015). Conversely, poor talent attraction, development, retention, and low employee commitment may result in low employee performance.

Employees' commitment is crucial in predicting performance, with committed employees considered highly motivated and dedicated to achieving corporate objectives (Hunjra et al., 2010). Factors such as talent attraction, development, and retention are essential for fostering employee commitment (Irefin & Mechanic, 2014). These three factors are recognized as potential predictors of employees' commitment, which, in turn, is seen as a predictor of staff attainment.

Despite the potential intermediating role of employees' commitment connecting talent management and employee attainment, previous revises have primarily focused on the direct relationship, overlooking possible indirect relationships. To address this gap, this study assesses whether employees' commitment truly mediates the relationship between proxies of talent management and staff attainment. Specifically, the study evaluates the mediating role of employees' commitment in the relationship between talent attraction, talent development, talent retention, and the performance of educators from state tertiary institutions in Kogi State, Nigeria.

To achieve the objectives of this study, the following questions will be answered:

- i. To what extent does talent attraction affect the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State?
- ii. To what extent does talent development affect the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State?
- iii. To what extent does talent retention affect the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State?
- iv. To what extent does employees' commitment affect the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State?
- v. To what extent does employees' commitment significantly mediate the relationship between talent attraction and the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State?
- vi. To what extent does employees' commitment significantly mediate the relationship between talent development and the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State?
- vii. To what extent does employees' commitment significantly mediate the relationship between talent retention and the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State?

Therefore, we put forward that:

Hypothesis 1:Talent Attraction (TA) does not significantly predict the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State.

Hypothesis 2:Talent Development (TD) does not significantly predict the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State.

Hypothesis 3:Talent Retention (TR) does not significantly influence the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State.

Hypothesis 4:Employees' Commitment (EC) is not significantly related to the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State.

Hypothesis 5:Employees' commitment does not mediate the relationship between talent attraction and the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State.

Hypothesis 6:Employees' commitment does not mediate the relationship between talent development and the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State.

Hypothesis 7: Employees' commitment does not mediate the relationship between talent retention, and the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Employee Performance

Bello and Adebajo (2014) define employee performance as the execution of work tasks. Analyzing it in terms of quantity, efficiency, timeliness, workplace engagement, and effectiveness, Mathis and Jackson (2009) emphasize its multifaceted nature. Dorcas et al.,(2014) conceptualize employee performance as work-related behavior aimed at achieving specific objectives. In essence, employee performance signifies the capacity to efficiently and effectively fulfill organizational goals, reflecting the efficacy of employees' actions aligned with their job descriptions. Mubbsher and Maryam (2013) emphasize that employee performance encompasses both output and efficiency, indicating growth. The degree to which organizations anticipate excellence and quantity from every employee defines employees' performance (Samar et al., 2015). This underscores that good performance results from a combination of efforts, abilities, and direction, contributing to the achievement of organizational aims. Recognized as a vital criterion by Peter (2014), employee performance significantly influences organizational success or failure (Mubbsher & Maryam, 2013).

Talent Management

Talent management has sparked debates across management, engineering, and social and pure sciences, reflecting its growing importance in organizational success (Edeh & Mlanga, 2019). Evolving from regular administration to complex design and planning tasks in the 1980s and 1990s, talent management now theater a crucial role in human resource management (Gardner, 2002). Fueled by talent shortages, companies globally grapple with recruiting and retaining talent to achieve organizational objectives. Cappelli and Keller (2014) define talent management as the premeditated process of attracting, inspiring, deploying, retaining, and leading individuals to fulfill potential demands in organizational events. Talent management has become a major obstacle in human resource management for achieving organizational goals (Gupta & Aggarwal, 2012). In this context, talent attraction, development, and retention are critical indicators of talent management, as highlighted in previous studies (Koltapeh et al., 2015; Oladapo, 2014; Shirkhaani & Nazari, 2014).

Dimensions of Talent Management

The dimensions of talent management encompass various variables and their measuring proxies, with talent recognition, growth, and commitment identified by Anwar et al. (2014) and talent attraction, assessment, and growth emphasized by Beheshtifar et al., (2012). Chitsaz-Isfahani and Boustani (2014) introduce additional dimensions, including work know-how, schooling, mentorship, training, estate forecast, and occupation management. However, talent attraction, development, and retention remain central in the literature (Koltapeh et al., 2015; Oladapo, 2014; Shirkhaani & Nazari, 2014), aligning with this study's focus on talent attraction, development, and retention as key indicators of talent management.

Theoretical Review

This study is anchored in the Human Capital Theory by Becker (1964), revealing human capital as a central driver of employee performance and Social Exchange Theory (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) underscores the understanding of workplace behavior, reinforcing the interdependence between talent management, employee commitment, and performance (see Figure 1).

Talent Management

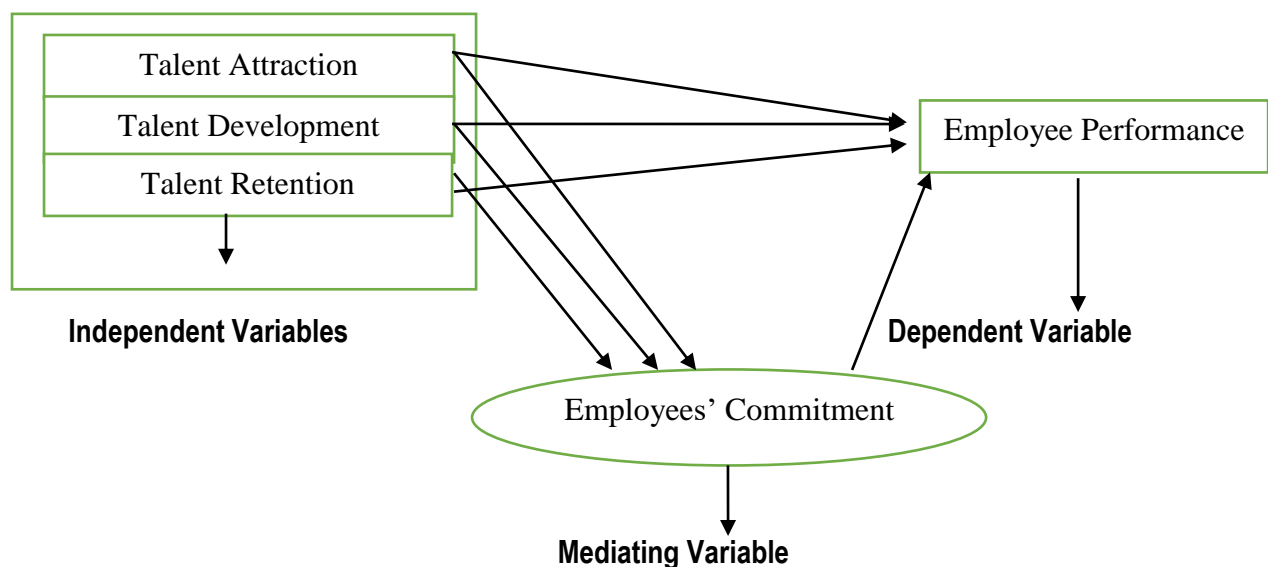


Figure 1: Conceptual model of the study

Empirical Review

Khaleem (2019) assessed the influence of talent attraction on the attainment of employees'. This revise sampled workers in public sector graduate schools in the United Arab Emirates. The study used 200 copies of questionnaire for final scrutiny distributed using stratified sampling technique. The study concluded that talent attraction influences the attainment of employees'. Similarly, Rita et al., (2017) examined the effect of talent attraction on organizational attainment of firms listed in the Nairobi Securities Exchange. This revise adopted a Descriptive and correlation survey study designs. The target populace was 534 top managers of listed companies in the NSE and a sample range of 224 respondents was picked from the listed firms. The conclusion indicated that talent attraction explains and had consequence on organizational attainment.

Najm and Manasrah (2017) investigated the cause of talent management on organizational performance in Jordanian banks. This revise aimed to determine the effect of TM dimensions on organizational attainment criteria. Four dimensions of TM were identified, which are: aligning TM to strategy, maintaining, developing, and finally attracting and renewing talents. The revise found that there is an affirmative outcome of talent attracting on attainment of all six banks, which characterize the revise sample.

Akinremi and Adedeji (2019) analyzed talent management and its influence on the performance of employees. The revise sampled employees of selected banks in Akure, Ondo State. Descriptive statistics and appropriate inferential statistics were utilized for the data scrutiny. The revise concluded that talent retention ultimately leads to elevated performance on the part of employees.

More so, Masri and Suliman (2019) assessed the outcome of talent management on the attainment of employees in research institutions. 180 randomly selected staff were sampled for the revise. It was concluded that talent management affects the attainment of employees in the study institutions.

Khaleem (2019) studied the weight of talent development on attainment of employees'. This revise sampled workers in public sector graduate schools in the United Arab Emirates. The revise sampled 200 copies of questionnaire and established that talent development influences the attainment of employees'. This means that the more employees believe that they are being developed on the profession, the more they attain knowledge useful for the occupation, and hence perform higher.

A revise by Hitu and Baroda (2018) empirically examined whether talent management practices affects how employees perform. The revise unruffled data from employees of private sector banks. The revise examined talent attraction as a proxy of talent management. The revise found out that talent attraction affects extensively how employees perform.

Salau et al., (2018) considered talent management practices and innovation attainment of academic staff in a technology-driven private graduate school in Nigeria. The revise adopted a quantitative approach with a survey explore design to establish the major determinants of talent management practices. The revise utilized 313 copies of questionnaire for final investigation and was analyzed with the use of structural equation modelling. The conclusion revealed that talent development strategies as predictors for facilitating innovation attainment in the sample graduate school.

Ndolo (2017) similarly addressed and examined the connection between talent management and the attainment of employees' of commercial state corporations in Kenya. The purpose of the revise was to assess the consequence of talent management on the attainment of employees' of Commercial State Corporations. A total of 48 parastatals were preferred using simple random sampling procedure. The result showed that talent development had a positive significant consequence on the attainment of employees of Commercial State Corporations in Kenya.

Mkamburi (2017) assessed the pressure of talent management on the attainment of employees' at the United Nations. This revise used the world food programme as a case revise. Specifically, the revise seeks to appraise the influence of talent retention on the attainment of World Food Programme in Kenya. The revise established that talent retention has a significant outcome on the attainment of employees at the United Nations.

In addition, Singh and Pooja (2017) examined the consequence of talent management practices on the performance of employees. The revise used private banks and insurance companies as case study. One of the specific objectives of the revise was to appraise how talent retention relates to the

performance of employees in the sampled organizations. The study concluded that there is a significant correlation flanked by the two variables.

Udu and Ameh (2016) studied the effect of employees' commitment on organizational attainment in banking industry with particular reference to First Bank Nigeria, PLC Enugu Zone offices. The study concluded that increase in employees' commitment will lead to increase in employees' attainment.

Ahmad and Shahrul (2016) examined whether organizational commitment mediates the relationship between training and job attainment in Syrian Private graduate schools. The study concluded that employees' commitment mediates the relationship between employee training and employee attainment.

Tutei et al., (2017) in their study investigated continuance commitment and the attainment of employees' at University of Eastern Africa, Baraton Kenya. The revise recognized that there was a weak negative connection between continuance commitments and employees' attainment and that continuance commitment have no significant influence on the attainment of employees' at University of Eastern Africa, Baraton et al., (2017) investigated the influence of organizational commitment on work attainment in the context of Omani governmental organizations. Contextual and task performance were used to evaluate work attainment. The empirical results indicate that all organizational commitment subscales (affective, normative, and continuance) have a significant impact on work attainment.

Andrew (2017) studied employees' commitment and its impact on organizational accomplishment. The purpose of this revise was to identify the impact of employees' commitment on organizational accomplishment. The research findings reveal that there exists positive relationship between employees' commitment and organizational accomplishment.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a cross-sectional research design in retrieving the information from respondents at a single point in time using a structured questionnaire adapted from various sources. Measurement of talent attraction, talent development, and talent retention utilized items developed by the Human Capital Institute (2008), while academic staff commitment was gauged based on the work of Meyer and Allen (1997). Furthermore, the measurement of employees' (academic staff) performance drew from the revise conducted by Koopman et al., (2014). This study population encompassed all seven state-owned tertiary institutions in Kogi State.

Table 1

Population and Sample Size

Name of Institution	Target Population	Sample size
Kogi State University, Ayimba(KSU)	1193	251
Kogi State Polytechnic, Lokoja(KSP)	485	102
Kogi State College of Nursing and Midwifery, Obangede(SONO)	97	20
Kogi State University Teaching Hospital, Anyigba(KSUTH)	121	25
College of Health Science and Technology, Idah(CHST)	95	20
Kogi State College of Education, Ankpa(KSCOE)	230	48
Kogi State College of Education(Technical), Kabba(CHST)	86	18

The total population of the study was 2,307. Following Dillman's formula (2000), the minimum sample size was determined to be 373. To account for potential errors, such as incomplete responses, an additional 30 percent of the minimum sample size, as suggested by Israel (2013), was added, resulting in an estimated sample size of 485. Therefore, 485 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the survey respondents.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table 2

Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Item	Loadings	AVE	CR
Talent Attraction	TA1	0.76	0.63	0.90
	TA2	0.85		
	TA3	0.79		
	TA4	0.83		
	TA5	0.73		
Employees' Performance	EP1	0.82	0.71	0.92
	EP2	0.81		
	EP3	0.85		
	EP4	0.86		
	EP5	0.86		
Talent Developing	TD1	0.84	0.75	0.92
	TD2	0.89		
	TD3	0.89		
	TD4	0.85		
Talent Retaining	TR1	0.74	0.59	0.70
	TR2	0.79		
	TR3	0.81		
	TR4	0.82		
	TR5	0.68		

	TR6	0.77		
Employees' Commitment	EC1	0.76	0.65	0.92
	EC2	0.79		
	EC3	0.79		
	EC4	0.83		
	EC5	0.82		
	EC6	0.86		

Note: AVE represents Average Variance Extracted; CR represents Composite Reliability. Some items were deleted due to measurement issues.

Ensuring the robustness of our measurements, we adhered to the criteria set by Hair et al. (2014), requiring item loadings to exceed 0.4, AVE to be above 0.5, and composite reliability to surpass 0.7. Examination of Table 2 reveals that all items exhibit loadings surpassing 0.5, AVE values are above the 0.5 threshold, and composite reliability coefficients consistently exceed 0.7.

Table 3

Measurement Model: Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Lacker Criterion)

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Employees' Commitment	0.81				
2	Employees' Performance	0.64	0.84			
3	Talent Attraction	0.64	0.63	0.79		
4	Talent Development	0.66	0.64	0.58	0.87	
5	Talent Retention	0.66	0.64	0.57	0.58	0.77

Note: The bolded diagonal values match the square root of the AVE of the constructs.

We evaluated discriminant validity utilizing the standard established by Fornell and Larcker (1981). The bolded numbers in the analysis denote the square root of AVE. For the constructs to fulfill the discriminant validity criteria according to the Fornell-Larcker criterion, correlations with the bolded square root of AVEs should be lower than the corresponding bolded numbers (see Figure 2). Examination of Table 3 reveals that the correlations with the bolded numbers are indeed lower than the bolded numbers themselves. Consequently, employing the Fornell-Larcker criterion, we authenticate that the constructs have successfully met the criteria for discriminant validity.

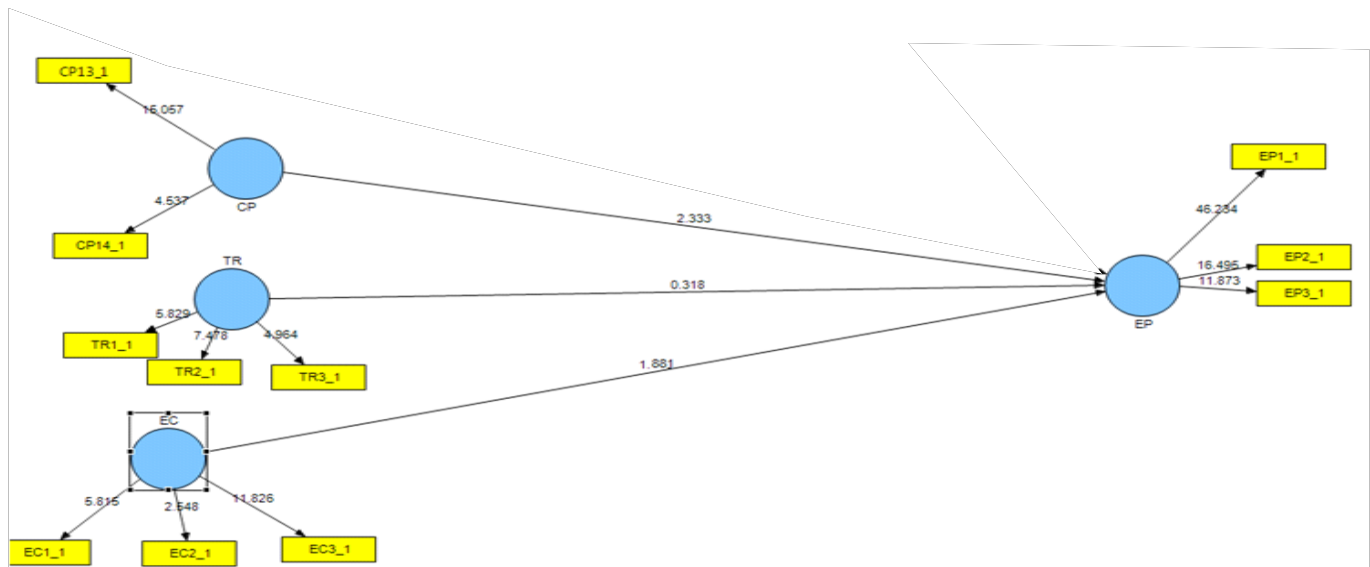


Figure 2:Structural model analysis

Table 4

Examination of Hypotheses for Direct Relationships

Structural Model: Examination of Significance for Direct Relationships

Hypotheses	Relationships	Beta	SE	T Statistics	P Value	Decision
H ₀₁	TA-EP	0.24	0.05	4.86	0.00	Rejected
H ₀₂	TD-EP	0.25	0.06	4.01	0.00	Rejected
H ₀₃	TR-EP	0.25	0.05	5.08	0.00	Rejected
H ₀₄	EC-EP	0.16	0.08	2.14	0.03	Rejected
R Square	58%					

*** $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$; * $p < 0.10$

Table 4 reveals the outcomes of the bootstrapping analysis examining the direct relationships within the study. Analysis of the table illustrates that Talent Attraction (TA) significantly predicts the attainment of academic staff in public graduate schools in Kogi State ($\beta = 0.24, p < 0.01$). Consequently, H₀₁, asserting the absence of a significant relationship between talent attraction and the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State, is empirically rejected. Similarly, Talent Developing (TD) significantly predicts the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State ($\beta = 0.25, p < 0.01$), leading to the empirical rejection of H₀₂. Likewise, Talent Retention (TR) significantly influences the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State ($\beta = 0.25, p < 0.01$), resulting in the empirical rejection of H₀₃. Finally, Employees' Commitment (EC) is significantly related to the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State ($\beta = 0.16, p < 0.01$). Thus, an escalation in the commitment of academic staff in public graduate schools in Kogi State is correlated with a simultaneous increase in their performance. Furthermore, H₀₄, positing no significant relationship

between employees’ commitment and the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State, is also empirically rejected.

The *R-square* value is 58%, indicating that the combination of talent attraction, talent development, talent retention, and employee commitment accounts for 58% of the variance in the attainment of academic staff in public graduate schools in Kogi State. In simpler terms, the independent variables in this study are responsible for a 58% change in the attainments of employees (academic staff) in public graduate schools in Kogi State.

Table 5
Appraisal of the Effect Size for Direct Relationships: F-Square

Construct	Included R ²	Excluded R ²	f ²	Effect Size
Talent Attraction	0.58	0.55	0.07	Medium
Talent Developing	0.58	0.55	0.07	Small
Talent Retention	0.58	0.55	0.07	Small
Employees’ Commitment	0.58	0.56	0.05	Small

Table 5 illustrates the effect size of talent attraction, talent development, talent retention, and employees’ commitment on the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State. The investigation reveals that talent attraction has a small effect size on the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State. Likewise, talent development, talent retention, and employee commitment all exhibit small effect sizes on the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State.

Table 6
Predictive Relevance for Direct Relationships: Q-Square

Construct	SSO	SSE	1-SSE/SSO
Performance	2210.0000	1314.6702	0.41

Note: SSO represents the Sum of squared observed omitted values; SSE represents the Sum of Squared Error

In evaluating the predictive relevance of the independent variables on the dependent variables, the study employed Stone-Geisser’s Q² value. The findings, presented in Table 6, reveal the cross-validated redundancy of the direct associations between talent attraction, talent development, talent retention, and staff commitment to the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State. Notably, the Q² value exceeds zero (i.e., 0.41), signifying the predictive relevance of the direct path model. Consequently, the model exhibits a high degree of predictive relevance concerning the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State.

Test of Hypotheses of Mediating Relationships

In testing mediating relationships, the study followed the measures outlined by Hair et al., (2014). The initial step, as per Hair et al., (2014), involves evaluating the significance of the direct effect exclusive of incorporating the mediating variable in the PLS path model. Subsequently, the mediating variable is introduced into the path model, and the significance of the indirect effect is assessed (see Figure 3).

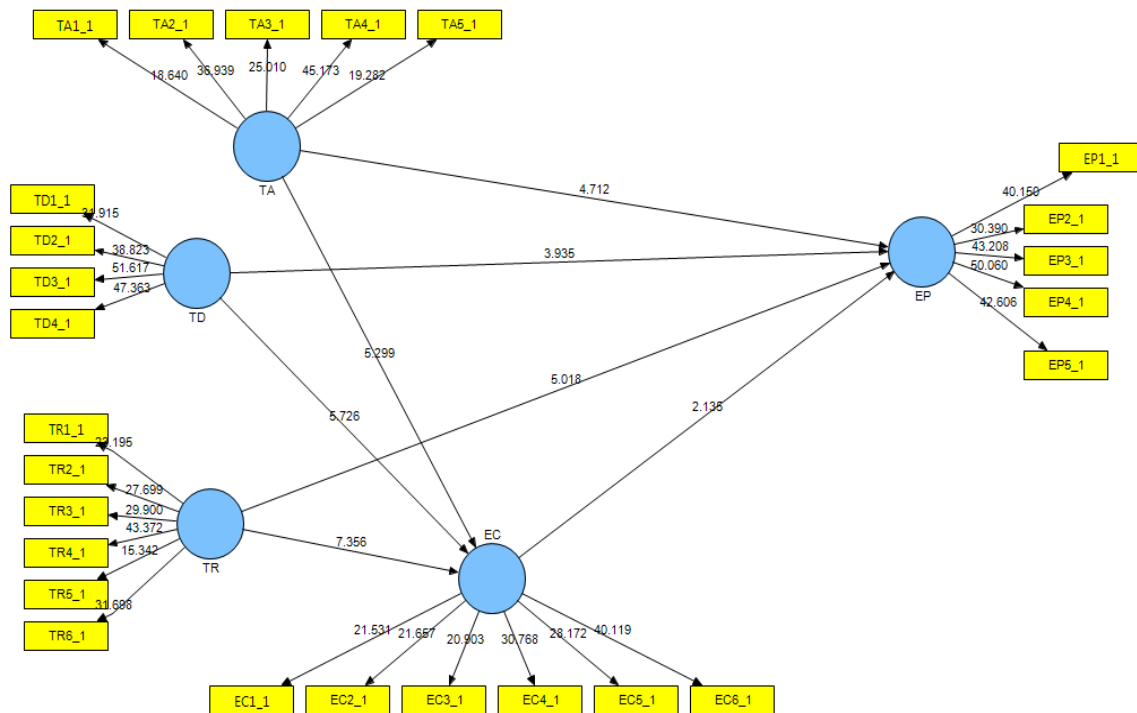


Figure 3: Structural Model of Mediating Relationships

Table:7
Structural Model: Bootstrapping outcome for Indirect Effect

Path a	Beta	Path b	Beta	Indirect Effect (a*b)
TA->EC	0.28	EC -> EP	0.16	0.04
TD->EC	0.31	EC -> EP	0.16	0.05
TR->EC	0.32	EC -> EP	0.16	0.05

Hair et al. (2014) claimed that potential intermediation effects can be ascertained through indirect effects. Table 7 details the calculation of indirect effects for the exogenous latent construct. These indirect effects are computed through multiplying the bootstrapped path 'a' by 'b'. To assess the potential significance intermediation effect, *t* values can be employed, using the indirect path coefficient. The *t* value is determined through dividing the indirect effects through the standard error, expressed as (a * b / SE).

Table:8

Structural Model: Examination of Significance for Mediating Relationships

Hypotheses	Relationship	Beta	SE	T Statistics	P Value	Decision
H ₀₅	TA-EC-EP	0.04	0.03	1.33	0.18	Not Rejected
H ₀₆	TD-EC-EP	0.05	0.04	1.25	0.21	Not Rejected
H ₀₇	TR-EC-EP	0.05	0.02	2.50	0.01	Rejected

***p < 0.01; **p < 0.05; *p < 0.10.

Table 8 reveals the outcomes of assessing the significance examination of mediating relationships by means of *t* values. The analysis shows that employees’ commitment does not mediate the bond between talent attraction, talent development, and the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State ($\beta=0.04, p>0.10$), ($\beta=0.05, p>0.10$). On the other hand, employees’ commitment significantly mediates the relationship between talent retention and the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State ($\beta=0.05, p<0.05$). This implies that as members of academic staff are retained in their respective institutions, their commitment increases, leading to higher levels of performance.

Table:9

Coefficient of Determination intended for Mediating Relationships: R-Squared

Construct	R Squared
Employees’ Performance	0.58
Employees’ Commitment	0.60

Table 9 illustrates that talent attraction, talent development, talent retention, and employees’ commitment collectively contribute to a 58 percent variance in the attainments of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State. Conversely, talent attraction, talent development, and talent retention account for a 60 percent variance in the commitment of academic staff in public graduate schools in Kogi State.

Table 10

Appraisal of the Effect Size of the entire Relationships on Performances: F-Square

Construct	f ² (EC)	Effect Size	f ² (EP)	Effect Size
Talent Attraction	0.10	Small	0.07	Medium
Talent Developing	0.13	Small	0.10	Small
Talent Retention	0.15	Medium	0.07	None
Employees’ Commitment	NA	NA	0.02	Small

NA refers to not applicable

Table 10 presents the effect size of talent attraction, talent development, talent retention, and employees’ commitment on the attainment of academic staff of public graduate schools in Kogi State. Talent attraction and talent development exhibit a small effect size on employees’ commitment.

However, talent retention displays a medium effect size on employees' commitment, signifying that talent retention predicts better employees' commitment compared to talent attraction and talent development. Additionally, talent attraction has a medium effect size on employees' performance, while both talent development and employees' commitment exhibit small effect sizes on employees' performance. In contrast, talent retention shows no effect size on employees' performance.

Table 11

Predictive importance for Mediating Relationships on the Dependent Variable: Q-Square

Construct	SSO	SSE	1-SSE/SSO
Employees' Performance	2210.0000	1319.8748	0.40
Employees' Commitment	2652.0000	1614.6593	0.39

The study employed Stone-Geisser's Q2 value to evaluate the predictive importance of the independent variables. The analysis in Table 11 reveals that the Q2 value for performance exceeds 0, standing at 0.40. This indicates that talent attraction, talent development, talent retention, and employee commitment hold a high degree of predictive importance concerning the endogenous construct, performance. Similarly, the Q2 value for employees' commitment is 0.39, suggesting that talent attraction, talent development, and talent retention exhibit a high degree of predictive importance for the commitment of workers in the public graduate schools in Kogi State.

Discussion:

The study's findings shed light on the intricate interplay between talent management practices and academic staff performance in public graduate schools in Kogi State. The positive and significant relationships identified between talent attraction, talent development, talent retention, and employees' commitment to academic staff performance underscore the critical role these factors play in shaping the educational landscape. These results align with existing literature emphasizing the importance of strategic talent management in academic settings (Mangusho et al., 2015; Karuri, 2015). The study's contribution lies in its specific focus on the Nigerian context, offering insights that can inform management practices in the region's higher education institutions.

Furthermore, the identification of employees' commitment as potential significant intermediary in the relationship between talent retention and academic staff performance adds depth to our perceptive of the underlying mechanisms. This suggests that retaining talented staff not only directly impacts performance but also fosters a sense of commitment among employees, further enhancing their effectiveness. The study's findings carry practical implications for institutional leaders, urging them to adopt holistic talent management strategies that go beyond mere recruitment and encompass development and retention initiatives. As the academic scenery continues to evolve, addressing these aspects becomes imperative in favor of sustaining a high-performing and committed academic workforce.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study establishes a positive and significant impact of talent attraction, talent development, talent retention, and employees' commitment on the performance of academic staff in the sampled tertiary institutions in Kogi State. Furthermore, the research concludes that employees' commitment plays a significant intermediating role in the association between talent retention and the performance of educators in these graduate schools.

- i. It is recommended that managers of state-owned tertiary institutions in Kogi State implement structured recruitment processes to attract top talents.
- ii. Continuous investment in extensive training and development programs for academic staff is crucial for fostering talent development.
- iii. Additionally, creating a work culture that encourages staff retention is essential. Managers should focus on building an environment that makes academic staff want to stay with their respective institutions.

While these recommendations offer practical insights, it is significant to acknowledge that the study has limitations, such as the focus on a specific geographic region. Future research should explore a broader context to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

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