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Recognition and Mentorship as Contributors to Retention in Academia: A Case of Non-Teaching Staff of Universities in Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract:

The assessment of recognition and mentorship as determinants of retention among non-teaching staff of universities in Ogun state, Nigeria, is a worthwhile venture that cannot be overemphasized since organizations need to retain experienced and qualified staff to achieve their goals.

This study, therefore, investigated the influence of recognition and mentorship on the retention of non-teaching staff in universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. A descriptive research design was adopted. The population of the study comprised 218 non-teaching staff selected from two universities using random sampling techniques. Three self-developed instruments were used for data collection, namely: recognition, mentorship and retention questionnaires, which were subjected to pilot study with a reliability coefficient of 0.80. Data were analyzed with both descriptive (simple percentages) and inferential statistics (chi-square). The findings showed a significant relative contribution of employee recognition and mentorship on retention, while a significant combined contribution of recognition and mentorship on retention of non-teaching staff was recorded. This suggests that recognition and mentorship programs can serve as effective retention strategies for non-teaching staff in universities. The study highlights the importance of considering factors such as recognition and mentorship in retaining employees in organizations. Based on the above findings, it was recommended that there is a need for the universities' administrators to ensure that recognition packages are provided adequately for their staff members. This would engender feelings of satisfaction among them to ensure that they remain with the institution and give their best. Also, there should be formalized and on-going mentoring in universities so that non-teaching staff can experience career mobility.

Keywords: Mentorship, retention, non-teaching staff, recognition, universities

1. Introduction

Every organization desires to retain a highly effective and motivated workforce to succeed in today's competitive business environment. However, this has not always been achieved due to the rate at which workers move out of the workforce in search of greener pastures. University employees are perceived to be comprised of the best-qualified hands that would supply the nation's demand for human capital. The non-teaching staff are essential if the university wants to achieve its set goals. Pienaar and Bester (2018) strongly argue that the non-academic profession is fundamental to the functioning of any university. Without well-qualified and committed non-teaching staff, no academic institution can really ensure sustainability and quality. Higher education institutions are, therefore, dependent on the abilities and commitment of the non-teaching staff. This, therefore, makes it critically important to retain this cadre of staff.

Employee retention refers to an organization's efforts to keep its personnel. Retention is described as a state or a condition of attracting and enabling non-teaching staff to work and remain with the university before retirement (Anachuna & Emenike, 2021). Retention's primary goal is to stop qualified personnel from leaving the university, as doing so might have a negative impact on productivity and service delivery. Hence, there is a need to recognize those staff who are efficient and effective in their duties.

Employee recognition is one of the variables that can influence retention. Recognition is the timely, informal, or official acknowledgment of an individual's or a team's behavior, effort, or business outcome that promotes the organization's aims and values. Employees respond to appreciation when it is demonstrated via acknowledging their hard work because it demonstrates that their efforts are valued. When individuals believe that their talents, efforts, and performance contributions are acknowledged and valued by others, employees are more likely to stay in a company. They experience a sense of satisfaction. Chew (2019) contends that while money offers recognition, other non-financial types of acknowledgment, such as those from managers, team members and peers, consumers, and others, are as crucial.

In a university setting, mentorship is one form of support to the mentee that goes a long way in retaining both parties. Mentoring is described as "a naturally established, one-on-one, mutual, committed connection between a junior

and a senior person aimed to foster personal and professional growth transcend any specific institutional or curricular aims" (Ayodeji & Adebayo, 2015). According to Ndebele, van Heerden, and Chabaye (2018), effective mentoring needs partners' voluntary participation, mutual respect, shared accountability, and mentee empowerment. Establishing rapport, deciding purpose, analyzing present circumstances, creating objectives, devising techniques, implementing activities, and evaluating results are all required. Mentorship has been defined as a connection formed between younger employees (beginners) and senior employees (proficient seniors) in which knowledge, ability, direction, and assistance are conveyed (regardless of gender) from mentor to mentee (Thornton, 2019). In mentorship, there is a connection between a mentor, who is more talented, knowledgeable, and wise, and a dependent, who is less experienced, younger, and often untrustworthy and ambiguous. A mentor is frequently more renowned than the mentee or more knowledgeable in a certain subject. The mentor then becomes the dependent's instructor, guiding the mentee to further success in the profession. It is not a simple task to serve as a mentor for someone else. It takes experienced and intelligent people to share information and wisdom, and you must also know how to express your knowledge and wisdom well enough to be completely understood. Mentors must understand how to inspire and encourage mentees while also making them feel better about themselves. In the mentor-mentee relationship, the mentor functions as a guide rather than a commanding figure; a guide would steer a pupil along the proper road without immediately pointing it out.

The importance of retention in tertiary education cannot be overstated because the expectations of universities extend much beyond instruction, management, community involvement, and research. This has resulted in the acceptance of mentoring as a method of career development for both teaching and non-teaching personnel at institutions. However, mentoring has proven ineffective in many institutions owing to non-recognition and a lack of a mentorship culture, impeding knowledge growth in universities (Abugre & Kpinpuo, 2017). It is on this premise that this study seeks to assess the contribution of recognition and mentorship on retention among non-teaching staff of universities in Ogun State.

1.1. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to assess recognition and mentorship as contributors to retention among non-teaching staff of selected universities in Ogun State. However, the specific objectives are:

- To identify recognition packages available in universities in Ogun State
- To examine the contribution of employee recognition on retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State.
- To assess the contribution of mentorship on retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State
- To examine the combined contribution of recognition and mentorship on retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State.

1.2. Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated based on the purpose of the study:

- H₀₁: There is no significant contribution of employee recognition to the retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State.
- H₀₂: There is no significant contribution of mentorship to the retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State.
- H₀₃: There is no significant combined contribution of recognition and mentorship on retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Concept of Retention

Employee retention is an effort made by an organization that encourages present employees to stay with the organization for a longer period of time (Bidyut & Barua, 2015). Employee retention strategies are in place in many firms to address employee demands and increase work satisfaction. Employee retention reduces the expenses incurred in acquiring and training new staff. The goal of staff retention is to reduce turnover costs. Organizations must retain employees who perform well and have competencies and abilities that fit the key talent requirements of the organization (Nasir & Mahmood, 2018). As a result, management must do all possible to keep those individuals who are critical to the system and are recognized to be good contributors. When people leave their jobs after they have completed their training, the company undergoes losses. The many strategies employed to make sure an employee stays with a company for as long as feasible are taken into account in the concept of employee retention.

Employer retention strategies can inspire workers to value their professions and refrain from often shifting jobs. Walker (2016) identified seven elements that can increase employee retention:

- Pay and recognition for work well done,
- Challenging work,
- Opportunities for advancement and learning,
- A welcoming environment within the organization,
- Positive relationships with coworkers,
- A healthy balance between professional and personal life and
- Good communications.

All of these point to a set of workplace expectations and actions that might be seen as promoting employee retention.

2.2. Concept of Recognition

Employee recognition is the practice of a firm thanking its employees for going above and beyond expectations. Companies give their staff members praise in order to encourage positive actions that have a beneficial impact on the company's operations. Recognition has been held to be a constructive response and a judgment made about a person's contribution, reflecting not just work performance but also personal dedication and engagement on a regular or ad hoc basis, and expressed formally or informally, individually or collectively, privately or publicly, and monetarily or non-monetarily. Recognizing your staff for their efforts and hard work is crucial for any company. Offering employee appreciation not only makes employees feel good but also has several benefits for the company (Semmer, 2019). Employees feel good about their work when they are valued and recognized for it, which improves their mood and can increase their job satisfaction. Additionally, it frequently leads to higher productivity and creativity. When you commend a worker for their accomplishments, you are letting them know that they are a fantastic match for their position and the business. This encourages people to do a good job at their work in the future. In addition to making them happier, increased productivity increases a company's production and enables it to accomplish its objectives. Ngethe, Iravo and Namusonge (2012) have opined that while recruiting employees, hiring managers not only need to teach them, but they also need to inspire them to keep doing their jobs as well as they can. A high staff turnover rate frequently results in reduced morale and productivity and Fisher (2015) submitted that giving your personnel the encouragement they need to continue on the team will increase employee retention and, in addition, it can prevent staff from working for a rival firm. Furthermore, Gartner (2015) strongly affirms that whether or not you give your staff members appreciation, just the knowledge that you do might inspire them to develop their abilities and do their best work. Not only does this increase production, but it also motivates them to look for methods to keep their knowledge of their field and their talents current.

2.3. Concept of Mentorship

A mentorship is a relationship between two individuals in which the one with greater contacts, experience, and expertise is able to impart their knowledge to a more inexperienced person in a certain sector (Aryee, Wyatt & Stone, 2016; Ismail & Ridzuan, 2017). A senior or more experienced individual who is tasked with acting as an adviser, counsellor, or mentor to a junior or trainee is known as a mentor. The mentor is in charge of providing advice and support to the individual they are mentoring. This definition of a mentor states that their job is to use their expertise to assist a less experienced worker by assisting them in their work and career, giving feedback on their performance, and, most importantly, providing guidance as they deal with issues and situations at work. The more senior individual is the mentor, and the more junior individual is the mentee. The mentor gains because they can guide the next generation in a field they are passionate about and make sure that best practices are passed down. Meanwhile, the mentee gains because they have shown they are prepared to advance in their careers and can get the extra support they need to do so.

A firm or organization's administrative unit or office establishes mentoring connections by seeking and hiring competent persons who are willing to mentor, training the mentors, and assisting in the matching of mentors and mentees. Although formal mentoring systems have many structural and guiding components, they often give the mentor and mentee a say in who they choose to work with. It has not been successful for formal mentoring programs to assign mentors to mentees without allowing for their involvement. Formal mentoring is one of several talent management techniques used in business to develop high-potential employees, new hires, important employees, and future leaders (Angelique, Kyle & Taulor, 2017). A mentoring coordinator will frequently use a computerized database registry to connect mentors and mentees. The registry typically proposes matches based on the sort of experience and qualities being sought. While social mentoring and other forms primarily target job growth, there are formal mentoring programs that are values-oriented. Some mentoring initiatives offer both social and professional help.

2.4. Retention and Recognition

Employee recognition is the timely, informal or official acknowledgment of an individual's or team's behavior, effort, or business outcome that promotes the organization's aims and values and goes above and beyond usual expectations. Employees respond positively to gratitude given through acknowledgment of their outstanding work since it demonstrates that their labor is valued. Employees are more likely to stay with a company if they believe their talents, efforts, and performance accomplishments are acknowledged and valued by others. They want to feel like they have accomplished something. According to Chew (2019), remuneration gives acknowledgment, but other sources of non-monetary appreciation, such as from managers, team members and peers, customers, and others, are equally vital.

Employee recognition is "a return on an employee's effort, commitment at work, and outcomes." The Human Resources Council of Canada defines employee recognition as "the acknowledgement of an individual or team's behaviour, effort, and results that complement the organization's goals and values" (HR Council CA, 2015). Firms must value their employees, and doing so has the following benefits. Employee appreciation demonstrates to workers the importance and appreciation of their work. Employee loyalty to the company rises due to this improvement in worker morale and motivation. Employees would feel more ownership, resulting in a more helpful and congenial work atmosphere, and the organization's retention would increase dramatically. Organizations place a high value on employee knowledge, skills, and competencies. Employee talent must be harnessed and acknowledged as a distinct source of competitive advantage (Bhatt,

2015). Managers must be able to identify and keep highly competent individuals while also reminding them of their importance to the firm (Bhatt, 2015).

As a result, the organization would avoid unhappiness and prevent personnel from leaving (Noe et al., 2016). Organizations must reward and recognize workers to maintain employee morale and balance employees' and the organization's aims (Selden & Sowa, 2015). According to Selden and Sowa (2015), firms should invest more time and resources in training people as future leaders and establishing a happy working environment to boost employee retention. Positive reinforcement is the provision of a reward after a desirable behavior. Positive reinforcement maintains employees' morale and motivation strong throughout the organization. Positive reinforcement, according to Fisher (2015), is a type of acknowledgment that encourages employees. It fosters job happiness, strengthens connections, and boosts self-esteem among employees, supervisors, and managers (Fisher, 2015). Employees who receive positive reinforcement have a far more positive attitude toward their employment, a greater feeling of fulfillment and self-worth, and are actively involved in the business's success. A happy employee always gives their best effort and is aware of the employer's expectations. Non-teaching personnel are the backbone of universities, and their contributions should be recognized openly in order for them to feel appreciated. Non-teaching staff retention is determined by extrinsic variables (leadership, distributive justice, work environment, remuneration) and intrinsic elements (promotion, training and development, autonomy and recognition) (Gartner, 2015; Aldamoe, Yazam & Ahmid, 2012).

2.5. Retention and Mentorship

As old as time itself is mentoring. It was present in a wide range of cultural contexts. The name comes from Greek mythology and the story of Odysseus, who, before setting out on his journey to Troy, entrusted his friend Mentor with the care and education of his son Telemachus. It is believed that when Odysseus instructed Mentor to "give him everything you know," he unintentionally established the standard for future mentors (Bayley et al., 2019). They defined mentoring as a transformational process intended to help people acquire and use knowledge to continually better themselves. It is also described as an expert discourse that encourages reflection and growth while pointing mentees to further resources as necessary. According to Bozeman and Feeney (2017), it is a personal development connection in which a more experienced or knowledgeable person assists a less experienced or knowledgeable person. They also characterized it as a mechanism for the informal transmission of information, social capital, and psychological support viewed as significant to job, career, or professional growth by the receiver. Similarly, Freeman (2018) reduced the subject by describing it as a method of assisting someone to completely grasp and learn holistically from their day-to-day experience. Mentoring, according to Carmin (2018), is a dynamic, interactive process that occurs between persons with varying degrees of experience and skill and combines interpersonal or psychological growth as well as socialization functions into the relationship.

In general, it refers to the process by which a skilled and highly empathic person, known as the mentor, helps and mentors a different person, known as the protégé (for males) or protégée (for females), and, in more recent years, a mentee, in the development of their skills, knowledge, attitudes, and competence in the workplace. In order to support the mentee's professional and personal development, the experienced person teaches the latter through a sustained face-to-face relationship. According to Ayinde (2016), the mentor is expected to symbolize knowledge, wisdom, insight, understanding, excellent guidance, determination, and planning, all of which cannot be mastered alone. It is, therefore, a technique for providing the mentee with the information and tactics needed to reach his or her maximum potential. That is, it is a crucial tool for assisting people in growing, developing, and performing at their peak (Baah-Oddom, 2018).

The growth of the mentee, which is impacted by the quality of the mentor-mentee interpersonal relationship as evidenced by the conduct, attitudes, and/or values that the mentee can imitate in a mentor, is the cornerstone of a successful mentoring scheme or program. The fact remains that a mentee often appreciates the accomplishments of his mentors, which raises his expectations of success and increases his determination to achieve. It also depends on social facilitation, which Balogun and Okurame (2016) defined as the tendency for people to be stimulated into higher execution of previously taught activities when they are in the company of others. In other words, social facilitation (often) happens when a protégé does his work in the company of a mentor, with the presence of the mentor on such occasions functioning as a catalyst for greater task performance, according to Balogun & Okurame (2016).

The effectiveness of mentoring programs is heavily dependent on the mentor's ability and willingness to value and treat the mentee as a person, develop mutual trust and respect, maintain confidentiality, assist the mentee in solving problems rather than simply giving instructions, and pay attention to the mentee's growth and development in the system, among other things. A mentor, on the other hand, must be a friend, a role model, a confidant, someone eager to help others, and a nurturer of potential, and his or her success is judged by his or her aptitude or skill in developing managerial qualities in his or her mentee. The mentor's primary goal must be to develop the full person. Individuals must possess certain attributes in order to assume the position of mentee. The capacity to communicate and work constructively with people, the desire to achieve a certain goal(s), the ability to recognize when to ask for help, and a feeling of personal responsibility and dedication are some of the essential characteristics (Ayinde, 2016). He must also be goal-oriented, eager for challenges, and self-motivated. He must not be unduly self-promoting, overly busy, or overly reliant (Mirza, 2017).

Akinbobola (2016) defined mentoring relationships as having four (4) stages: initiation, nurturing, separation, and redefinition. According to him, the first step is the initiation phase, which is just the mentor seeing the protégé's potential for success and the protégé recognizing the mentor as a source of support and direction. The second step is the cultivation phase, during which the mentor gives the protégé challenging assignments and acknowledges the work as a contribution of the mentor's guidance, support, and instruction to help the protégé acquire self-assurance, new attitudes,

values, and operating styles. The breakdown or separation phase is the third stage. At this stage, the protégé gains independence and autonomy and the mentor and protégé part ways. When a partnership is successful, both parties maintain it, which leads to the fourth step, known as redefinition. The redefinition phase is a peer relationship where the mentor continues to be the supporter, takes pride in the protégé's accomplishment and where the protégé responds with gratitude for the early years but is no more dependent.

Numerous goals are achieved by mentoring. According to Savage et al.'s (2019) list of goals, new hires should be empowered, organizational growth and renewal should continue, and organizational satisfaction should be promoted through what has been called in recent literature a dialectical relationship with peers and senior employees of the organization that can foster a sense of community, new hires should be introduced to manage organizational cultures and definitions of work responsibilities, and opportunities for innovation should be made available and balance their commitments to working in the organization.

Waters et al. (2017) summarized the purposes/functions of mentoring relationships into two separate but interrelated parts. These are career functions and psychosocial support functions. They explained further by citing Aryee et al. (2016), emphasizing that career-related support facilitates career advancement by increasing a protégé's visibility in the organization and by improving the protégé's knowledge of how to effectively navigate the corporate world while the psychosocial function provides emotional and psychological support to the protégé and serves to enhance confidence in the protégé's professional role, using the words of Olian et al. (2018). Discussing the benefits, they also cited Chao et al. (2017) to stress that career-related function may lead to different career benefits such as promotion and salary increases, while the psychosocial support function may indirectly facilitate the protégé's career by improving self-esteem and perceived competence in one's professional role.

Formal and informal mentorship are the two categories into which mentoring relationships fall. Formal mentoring is one in which the connection between the mentor and mentee is set up in an organized manner. The management of the company is in charge of carefully choosing and matching the mentee and mentor with the aim of helping the mentee advance and acquire particular abilities. On the other hand, in an informal mentoring relationship, the individual who needs training chooses the mentor, the person with greater skill, experience, information, and advice they wish to share with or learn from (Murray, 2016). Communication and assistance are two key components of mentoring programs (Ismail & Ridzuan, 2017). In the context of a university mentoring program, communication is generally defined as mentors openly delivering information about the procedures, content, tasks and objectives of the mentoring programs, conducting discussions about tasks that should be learned, giving detailed explanations about the benefits of attending mentoring programs and providing performance feedback. Support, on the other hand, is defined as providing emotional support (i.e., acquiring new knowledge, skills, and attitudes and guiding them to properly apply them in daily life) and instrumental support (i.e., assisting mentees to adapt to the campus environment) at varying times (Fox et al., 2020). Mentoring relationships are therefore characterized by providing two dimensions of mentoring functions for mentees, i.e., career-related functions (e.g., coaching) and psychosocial functions (e.g., role modeling) (Leidenfrost et al., 2019).

2.6. Retention, Recognition and Mentorship

According to a study by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the overall turnover rate stands above 57%, with 25% of that figure being voluntary turnover. Losing employees hurts business productivity and costs them significant financial losses, necessitating more robust solutions to convince employees to stay on the job longer. There are multiple factors influencing turnover for businesses across the board. Many employees reevaluate their work-life balance due to the pandemic, worrying about their futures, health, and preparations for retirement. In other cases, companies are not providing sufficient incentives for employees to stay, whether due to pay or the absence of a reward program. However, one main issue that deserves increased attention is the lack of mentorship in workplaces and how good mentorship boosts employee retention for companies. Retention rates for mentored employees are higher than those that are not according and arguably have a bigger impact on retention than salary raises (Bean-Katner, 2019). Mentorship is more than just giving someone the best possible advice on what can be done next. It is a talent management practice that more organizations need to utilize to keep their employees happy. Through effective talent development and training programs, companies can reassure their employees about their respective skill sets while also providing guidance amid concerns over their financial futures. With more employees set to quit their jobs in the foreseeable future due to great resignation and other pertinent factors affecting employee retention, mentoring should be a priority for more organizations (Bean-Katner, 2019).

Mentoring enhances the individual skill development of employees as well as organizational productivity. However, companies are still learning the intricacies and benefits of implementing a steady mentoring program, with increasing turnover rates, disengaged workers, and unfulfilled potential among the casualties caused by not having a program in place. Firstly, organizations need to understand what mentoring is before relying on their training, learning, and development departments to implement successful mentoring programs to drive increased morale and engagement in the workplace. Mentorship presents better alternatives and opportunities for employees, whether by assisting employees with their decision-making or refining their point of view, helping employees change their work and life perspectives. Mentors leverage their work and life experiences to offer as much career guidance as possible to employees, providing short and long-term advice. A mentor acts as a sounding board for employees who have overarching concerns about their job security, financial goals, and ability to make a seamless job transition, among other issues.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

For this study, a survey research design was used.

3.2. Population of the Study

For this study, the target population consisted of all the non-teaching staff from two selected universities in Ogun State, out of which two hundred and eighteen (218) participants were selected through the simple random sampling technique.

3.3. Instrumentation

Section A contained item questions on socio-demographic information of the respondents, such as gender, age, religion and marital status. Section B asked questions on available recognition packages in selected universities in Ogun state, where respondents were asked to respond to (10) yes or no answer questions. Section C contained items of self-developed questions by the researcher on the mentorship relationships among the non-teaching staff, for example, "My mentor is experienced and knowledgeable in their field of work," etc. Section D. contained items of self-developed questions by the researcher on the contribution of employee recognition on retention, where respondents were asked to respond to (7) questions ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) to Strongly Disagree (SD). Examples are Employee recognition programs that play a crucial role in retaining non-teaching staff in public and private universities, Regular employee recognition initiatives that help boost employee morale and job satisfaction, thereby reducing employee turnover, etc. Section E is the Employee Retention questionnaire, which was self-developed with five (5) questions ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) to Strongly Disagree (SD), such as "I believe that mentorship programs positively impact the retention of non-teaching," etc. A pilot test was conducted for internal consistency of the instrument using 10% of the projected sample size. A pretest was done to determine the reliability of the instrument before it was distributed to 10% of the sample size. The data gathered was subjected to Cronbach's alpha reliability test to measure the internal consistency of the set of items that constitute the measuring instrument. The reliability result was a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.80, which shows that the instruments are reliable.

3.4. Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive analysis was used to analyze the demographic questions, while Chi-square was used to analyze the postulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

4. Results and Discussions

This section presents the findings of the study and the analysis of the data collected from respondents. The analysis and discussion in this chapter focus on recognition and mentorship as determinants of retention among non-teaching staff of selected universities in Ogun State. In the analysis, both descriptive and analytical forms were used. In the course of the study, a total of two hundred and eighteen (218) questionnaires were distributed. However, out of the total 218 questionnaires administered to the respondents, 217 questionnaires (99.5%) were returned, which were subsequently analyzed below. This analysis was carried out using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

Particulars	Frequency	Percent
Returned	217	99.5
Not returned	1	0.5
Total	218	100.0

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution

Source: Field Survey, 2023

4.1. Presentation of Results

Demography	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Female	152	70.1
Male	65	29.9
Total	217	100.0
Age		
20 - 25 years	29	13.4
25 - 30 years	86	39.6
35 - 40 years	52	24.0
45 - 50 years	35	16.1
55 years and above	15	6.9
Total	217	100.0
Religion		
Christianity	119	54.8

Demography	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Islam	87	40.1
Traditionalist	11	5.1
Total	217	100.0
Marital Status		
Single	116	53.5
Married	91	41.9
Divorce	10	4.6
Total	217	100.0
Do you have mentors in your institution?		
Yes	202	93.1
No	15	6.9
Total	217	100.0

Table 2: Demography of the Respondents

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Analysis from table 2 above shows the demography distribution of the respondents. It can be seen from the table that 65 respondents, representing 29.9 percent, are male, while their female counterparts constitute 70.1 percent, representing 152 respondents. This showed that most of the respondents were female. Also, the distribution of the respondents according to their age showed that 29 respondents, representing 13.4 percent, are between the age of 20 – 25 years, while 86 respondents, representing 39.6%, fall in the age categories of 25 – 35 years, 52 respondents, representing 24.0%, belong to the age category of 35 – 45 years, 35 respondents, representing 16.1%, belong to the age category of 45 – 55 years and 15 respondents, representing 6.9%, were aged 56 years and above. The distribution of the respondents according to their religion, as shown in the table, revealed that 119 respondents, representing 54.8 percent, are Christian, while 87 respondents, representing 40.1 percent, are Muslims. However, only 11 respondents, representing 5.1 percent of the total respondents, claimed to practice other religions. The marital distribution of the respondents showed that 116 respondents, representing 53.5 percent, are still single, while 91 (41.9) and 10 (4.6%) are married and divorced, respectively. Also, it can be seen from the table that 202 respondents, representing 93.1 percent, claimed to have mentors in their institutions, while only 15, representing 6.9 percent, claimed otherwise.

4.1.1. Available Recognition Packages in Selected Universities

Items	Yes (%)	No (%)
Employee of the Month recognition packages	209 (96.3)	8 (3.7)
Work Anniversary recognition packages	210 (96.8)	7 (3.2)
Leadership recognition packages	198 (91.2)	19 (8.8)
Character recognition packages	201 (92.6)	16 (7.4)
Innovation recognition packages	203 (93.5)	14 (6.5)
Outstanding Achievement recognition packages	212 (97.7)	5 (2.3)
Top Performer recognition packages	211 (97.2)	6 (2.8)
Meeting recognition packages	190 (87.6)	27 (12.4)
Milestone and Tenure recognition packages	209 (96.3)	8 (3.7)
Diligence recognition packages	213 (98.2)	4 (1.8)

Table 3: Available Recognition Packages in Selected Universities

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Analysis from table 3 above showed the respondents' views on the available recognition packages in selected universities. It can be seen that 209 (96.3%) of the respondents attest to the availability of the employee of the month recognition packages, while 8 (3.7%) attest otherwise. Subsequently, in the analysis, it can be seen that 96.8% (work anniversary recognition packages), 91.2% (leadership recognition packages), 93.5% (innovation recognition packages), 97.7% (outstanding achievement recognition packages), 97.2% (top performer recognition packages), 87.6 (meeting recognition packages), 96.3% (milestone and tenure recognition packages) and 98.2% (diligence recognition packages). Overall, it can be seen that the vast majority of the respondents attest to the availability of recognition packages in selected universities.

4.2. Test of Hypotheses

The test of the hypothesis was done using the chi-square method analysis.

4.2.1. Hypothesis One

- Research Hypothesis one (H_{01}): There is no significant contribution of employee recognition to the retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State.

Variables	N	DF	Ls	X ² Value	CalcX ² Value	Decision
Employee recognition Retention of non-teaching staff	215	3	0.05	5.991	36.009	Rejected

Table 4: Contribution of Employee Recognition on Retention of Non-Teaching Staff in Selected Universities in Ogun State
Source: Field Survey, 2023

Note: Df= Degree of Freedom, X²= Chi-Square, Calc X² Value= Calculated Value
Level Of Significance At 0.05

4.2.1.1. Decision

Table 4 above shows that the calculated chi-square value of 36.009 is greater than the chi-square tabulated value of 5.991. Hence, the null hypothesis, which states that there will be no significant contribution of employee recognition on retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State, is hereby rejected. This implies that there is a significant contribution of employee recognition to the retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State.

4.2.2. Hypothesis Two

- Research hypothesis two (H₀₁): There is no significant contribution of mentorship to the retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State.

Variables	N	DF	Ls	X ² Value	CalcX ² Value	Decision
Mentorship Retention of non-teaching staff	215	3	0.05	5.991	28.129	Rejected

Table 5: Contribution of Mentorship on Retention of Non-Teaching Staff in Selected Universities in Ogun State
Source: Field Survey, 2023

Note: Df= Degree of Freedom, X²= Chi-Square, Calc X² Value= Calculated Value
Level Of Significance At 0.05

4.2.2.1. Decision

Table 5 above shows that the calculated chi-square value of 28.129 is greater than the chi-square tabulated value of 5.991. Hence, the null hypothesis, which states that there will be no significant contribution of mentorship on retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State, is hereby rejected. This implies that there is a significant contribution of mentorship to the retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State.

4.2.3. Hypothesis Three

- Research hypothesis three (H₀₁): There is no significant combined contribution of recognition and mentorship on retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State.

Variables	N	DF	Ls	X ² Value	CalcX ² Value	Decision
Employee recognition and Mentorship Retention of non-teaching staff	215	3	0.05	5.991	22.110	Rejected

Table 6: Combined Contribution of Recognition and Mentorship on Retention of Non-Teaching Staff in Selected Universities in Ogun State
Source: Field Survey, 2023

Note: df= degree of freedom, X²= chi-square, Calc X² value= calculated value
Level of significance at 0.05

4.2.3.1. Decision

Table 6 above shows that the calculated chi-square value of 22.110 is greater than the chi-square tabulated value of 5.991. Hence, the null hypothesis, which states that there would be no significant combined contribution of recognition and mentorship on retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State, is hereby rejected. This implies that there is a significant combined contribution of recognition and mentorship on the retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State.

4.3. Discussion of Findings

Research question one, which tried to ascertain the types of recognition packages available in selected universities in Ogun State, came to the conclusion that recognition packages are in existence. However, the ones used are leadership recognition, diligence recognition, top performer, meeting recognition, character recognition, work anniversary and employee of the month recognition packages. However, the package mostly used is the diligence recognition package. For example, a study by Buckingham and Coffman (1999) emphasizes the importance of recognition in promoting employee engagement and motivation, and another study by Cameron and Winn (2012) discusses the role of recognition in promoting a positive culture in the workplace. He suggested that recognition can help create a sense of community and foster a shared vision among employees. Another study by Gartner (2015) states that employee rewards and recognition programs can take many forms, including leadership recognition, top performer awards, and employee of the month recognition programs.

The findings of hypothesis one suggest that mentorship has a significant contribution to the retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State. This is based on the rejection of the null hypothesis, which stated that there would be no significant contribution of mentorship on retention. Similar findings have been reported in other studies. For example, a study by Kram and Isabella (1985) found that mentorship was positively related to job satisfaction and career success. Another study by Eby et al. (2006) found that mentorship had a positive impact on employee retention in different industries. Contrary findings have also been reported in some studies. For example, a study by Allen et al. (2004) found that mentorship had a negative impact on employee turnover intentions among employees who did not feel a strong connection with their mentors. Overall, the findings of this hypothesis suggest that mentorship is an essential factor in retaining non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State. However, it is essential to note that the impact of mentorship may vary across different industries and contexts, and the quality of the mentoring relationship may also play a role in its effectiveness.

Hypothesis two was rejected since it was found that recognition had a significant influence on employee retention. The results suggest that universities should prioritize the development and implementation of effective mentorship programs to improve employee retention rates. This can help to reduce staff turnover, improve job satisfaction, and enhance productivity. Similar findings have been reported in previous studies that have examined the relationship between mentorship and employee retention. For instance, a study by Allen et al. (2019) found that mentorship programs are effective in improving employee retention rates in organizations. Another study by Scandura and Ragins (2016) found that mentoring relationships help to reduce turnover intentions among employees. However, some studies have reported contrary findings. For example, a study by Chan and Yip (2011) found that the impact of mentorship on employee retention rates is limited. The authors suggested that organizations should combine mentorship programs with other strategies, such as recognition programs, to improve employee retention rates. Overall, the findings of this study support the importance of mentorship programs in improving employee retention rates in universities.

The outcome of the study on hypothesis three rejected the null hypothesis, indicating that there is a significant combined contribution of recognition and mentorship on the retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State. This suggests that recognizing and mentoring non-teaching staff can positively impact their retention within the university setting.

Similar findings have been reported in previous studies. For example, a study by Wong (2018) found that employee mentorship positively influenced employee retention. Another study by Goodman (2020) found that mentorship was an important factor in retaining employees. Mngomezulu, Challenor, Munapo, Mashau and Chikandiwa (2015) in their studies discovered that recognition positively influenced employee retention. Overall, the findings from this study suggest that recognition and mentorship can be effective strategies for retaining non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State. However, the impact may vary depending on the context and specific factors at play.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study assessed recognition and mentorship as determinants of retention among non-teaching staff of universities in Ogun State. It discovered available recognition packages and showed that employee recognition and mentorship had both relative and combined significant impacts on the retention of non-teaching staff. The study implies that when non-teaching staff members are recognized for their contributions and achievements, they feel valued and respected, leading to increased job satisfaction. Additionally, mentorship programs help non-teaching staff members develop their skills and knowledge, which can lead to increased job satisfaction and motivation. Overall, a combination of recognition and mentorship programs can have a significant impact on the retention of non-teaching staff in selected universities in Ogun State. Based on these findings, it was recommended that there is a need for the universities' administrators to ensure that recognition packages are provided adequately for their staff members to engender feelings of satisfaction among them to ensure that they remain with the institution and give their best. Also, there should be a formalised and on-going mentoring in universities so that non-teaching staff can experience career mobility and finally, an effective retention strategy based on both recognition and reward can be of a good advantage if implemented in the universities.

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