

# Talent Management and Talent Outcomes Amidst Covid-19 Pandemic: The Findings from the Healthcare Sector in Nigeria

Okeke Emma Obum, Beni Widarman Yus Kelana  
Azman Hashim International Business School, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.

## Abstract

This study responds to recent calls for research examining the effective contribution of talent management on talented employee outcomes in Nigerian federal healthcare centres. The study attempts to incorporate components from the individual and organisational levels, thus, providing a more thorough understanding of the dynamic relationship between talent management, talented healthcare workers' job satisfaction, and organisational citizenship behaviour in Nigeria Government Hospitals. A pilot study was conducted on one of the healthcare centres whereby a 52-item questionnaire measured talented employee turnover, talented employee job satisfaction, OCBs and talent management in the healthcare sector. Descriptive analysis was performed to analyse the data using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 25.0 software). The findings indicated that good talent management is not adequate to sustain and retain talented employees in Nigeria's public healthcare, it requires both talented employees' job satisfaction and OCBs to reduce talented employees' turnover. Again, findings suggested that TM has not only a direct effect but also an indirect effect on talented employee outcomes. This research contributed that the Nigerian healthcare sectors improve their talent retention through the effective implementation of talent management practices with adequate mechanisms through which TM affects talent outcomes mostly during this global covid-19 pandemic.

**Keyword:** Talent Management, Employee Attitudes, Nigeria's Public Healthcare, Covid-19

## Introduction

At present, a very large number of organisations operate in a perplexing, diverse, dynamic, profoundly competitive and incredibly unstable condition, and face issues that have often not yet even developed or emerged (Tarique & Schuler, 2010). Today healthcare organizations often face issues such as uncertainty as a result of covid-19 alteration, increased turnover rates, increased job dissatisfaction, increased workplace stress, decreased productivity levels and lack of commitment among employees. Covid-19 has altered many things in our continents, countries, cities, economies, healthcare and individuals. Leaders and managers of firms had to make decisions within a very short time to ascertain whose employees should go home (retrenchment) and virtually, some employees should be working from home (Caligiuri et al., 2020).

The present extreme shock of the pandemic has highlighted the difficulties and increase in cross-border distance challenges. The exogenous shock has offered organisations insight into

utilising the unanticipated benefits of a virtual workforce. Extant talent management literature does offer actionable and effective insight for today's work settings, but outstanding knowledge gaps remain as the global work environment changes. Looking ahead, there is a research gap on how talent management influences talented employee outcomes under uncertainty, and even in global work setting redefining organisational performance is pertinent as a result of covid-19 exogenous shifting (Caligiuri et al., 2020).

The global healthcare organisations feel anxious as they struggle to array and mobilise their talent pool through this global pandemic. This global health crisis has speeded up the adoption of physical and social distance and virtual working which is pointing to future talent management practices. Organisations must address the difficulty of realizing how to adequately manage their human capital so they can create and keep a sustainable competitive advantage (Dries, 2013). They are responsible for initiating and converting profitable innovative opportunities for their high-performing employees by enriching their capabilities, skills, and knowledge (Husin et al., 2021). The ever-growing competition among the firms of different sectors for the attraction and retention of talented employees is rising globally (Anlesinya et al., 2019c). Meanwhile, the implementation of effective talent management in any organisation has significant growth and transformative power as a result of its varied direct positive contributions (Anlesinya et al., 2019b).

This research topic is contemporary and highly relevant, given its links with human resources, organizational behaviour management, and talented individual capabilities. Navigating the increasingly uncertain business world requires organizations and employees to be highly adaptive to threats and changes. During COVID-19, the dual threats to health and job security have been especially salient for frontline employees.

Additionally, Western and Eastern models frequently serve as the foundation for empirical talent management knowledge. Therefore, a study of the subject in understudied regions, particularly in Africa, would result in the creation of evidence-based knowledge on the subject that takes distinct cultural and healthcare sectors into account. Therefore, this is congruent with (George et al., 2016) who emphasise that it is time to include Africa in mainstream academic research and theory creation if management scholarship is to go beyond its current focus on developed nations in the West and the East. Thus, this study is therefore required to explore the diversity of opportunities that sustainable HRM might generate and to develop approaches to handle the difficulties of sustainability and human resources in scenarios that have not yet been adequately studied. This study also suggests that additional empirical research be done on a variety of sustainable HRM issues internationally, especially in understudied nations and regions like Africa, given the current wave of talent management sustainability, which is being driven by the formulation of sustainable development goals.

To improve human resource practices and outcomes, especially in healthcare sectors, scholars agreed that focusing and investing in human capital to achieve sustainability, and effective talent management is a vital and critical competitive tool for organisations (Mahjoub et al., 2018). Nonetheless, ensuring the satisfaction and well-being of talented employees' work lives is essential for sustainable employee productivity. Thus, dissatisfaction among talented employees is reviewed to be an outcome of a lack of effective talent management practices (Jing et al., 2019). Therefore, an important implication of this study posits that increased investment in effective talent management practices enhances not only the quality of healthcare in Nigeria but also influences employee behavioural outcomes such as satisfaction and citizenship behaviour through which employee turnover can be reduced (Deinne & Ambakederemo, 2020).

**Research Problem Statement**

The severe shortage of talented employees has become a great challenge to the Nigerian healthcare sector and, is worsened by the emigration of the talented workforce to developed countries (Anlesinya et al., 2019a; Salami et al., 2016). World Health Organisation (WHO) reported that nations' economies are being drained by poor health outcomes such as the costs resulting from productivity losses due to emigration of the workforce and poor workforce management (World Health Organization, 2017).

Consequently, few research works show that Nigeria has a relative number of healthcare facilities but the performance of the healthcare sector is predominantly hindered by a lack of qualified health workers (Salau et al., 2018; Dayel et al., 2020). However, insufficient talent health workforce contributes to Nigeria's poor performance in the sector (Abimbola et al., 2012, 2015). Furthermore, limited human resource has been one of the biggest challenges of healthcare organisations in Nigeria since her independence, and it has been a fundamental detriment to every area of social development (Chidinma & Bright, 2018; Salau et al., 2018; Dayel et al., 2020).

Prior study is in terms of empirical studies related to the research of talent management, fewer studies are done on talented employee outcomes such as job satisfaction, organisational citizenship behaviour and talented employee turnover, especially in the healthcare sector in Nigeria. According to Web of Science accessed on 22/02/2021 as much 5,426 publications in various document types on the topic of talent management, only nine (9) publications were done in Nigeria, and do not specifically state the relationship between talent management and talented employee outcomes although there are some relevant terms used. This statement is also supported by the systematic literature review published in Africa on the topic of talent management from 2008 to 2019 in various research databases, there are only 41 research articles published over 12 years period, thus, research on talent management in Africa is very low and also appear not to be increasing at an impressive rate (Anlesinya et al., 2019b). Most of the previous studies focusing on empirical talent management outcomes neglected micro-level outcomes such as talented employee outcomes but focused mostly on firm-level outcomes (Anlesinya et al., 2019b). To fill this gap, this study was conducted to examine the impact of talent management on talented employee turnover through the mediatory roles of talented employee job satisfaction and OCBs.

**Literature Review**

Talent management has been widely and extensively recognised as a key driver of firm performance. Most theoretical and empirical work is drawn on social exchange theory to suggest that talent management significantly affects organisational performance by inculcating positive outcomes such as high employee commitment and job satisfaction among the firm's talented employees (i.e., high potential and high-performing employees).

**Talent Management**

Lack of proper work support such as workplace culture, professional development, rewarding which are attributes of talent management has been explored to be negatively and directly associated with the healthcare workforce turnover rate (Akinremi and Adedeji, 2019; Bogonko & Kathure, 2015) The act of an organisation to deploy differentiated strategic human resource management (SHRM) practices to achieving differentiated values with the effective management of differentiated resources in a differentiated workforce segment is called talent management (Vaiman & Collings, 2013).

With an emphasis on the strategic issues related to talent flow across the organisation, talent management strategies have evolved along with changes in the workplace (Ashton & Morton, 2005). Strategic talent management is a process of ensuring the organization has an adequate pool of high-performing, high-potential employees who can fill critical roles in the organization. TM has limitations if confined to "top talent" only, (Beechler & Woodward, 2009) argue, and an inclusive approach is needed.

Talent management is viewed and interpreted by talented employees as an organisational support system that enhances the quit intention among them (Thunnissen, 2016). It has an indirect negative relationship with employee retention (Chami-Malaeb & Garavan, 2013; Gelens et al., 2015; Luna-Arocas & Morley, 2015) Scholars have explored talent management (TM) practices and authenticated to have a significant impact and effect on employees' behavioural and performance outcomes from the previous research finding (Bjorkman et al., 2013; Gelens et al., 2015; Luna-Arocas & Morley, 2015; Mensah, 2019; Mensah & Bawole, 2017). Nonetheless, there is a direct negative effect of talent management on employees' counterproductive behaviours (Mensah, 2019), and an indirect effect on talented quit intention (Gupta, 2019; Mensah & Bawole, 2017). Talent management facilitates talented employee retention and innovation performance (Salau et al., 2018). However, the study on the relationship between TM and talented employee turnover is limited. In this current study, when employees perceived management support through talent management practices, their motivation increased and their turnover intention decreases.

Scholars have explored in the past that implementing effective talent management practices and policies fosters the right skills, attitudes and behaviours to achieve differentiated transformational value and also respond to external and internal pressures (Collings et al., 2015). Past researchers have found a significant relationship between talent management practices and individual output (Bratton & Waton, 2018); differentiated workforce value (Collings et al., 2015); organisational commitment (Luna-Arocas et al., 2020); sustainable development (Mwila & Turay, 2018); creativity (Othman & Khalil, 2018); employee behavioural and performance outcome (Eva Gallardo-Gallardo & Thunnissen, 2016).

### **Talented Employee Turnover**

The high turnover rate among workers has certainly represented one of the greatest challenges and significant issues for organisations. Employee turnover has become an urgent priority in recent decades which has affected businesses across the world (Manzano-García & Ayala-Calvo, 2014). Thus, employee turnover intention increases when an employee perceives and evaluates negative and threatening changes. Meanwhile, if an employee observed threatening changes, one's satisfaction with the job will decline because working in an uncomfortable work environment generates dissatisfaction among employees (Cunningham, 2006). Again, the attitudes of employees toward the organisational changes result in their turnover intention, which consequently results in employee turnover. Nonetheless, a high employee turnover rate is a result of unfulfilled psychological contracts of an employer to the employees (Hartmann & Rutherford, 2015). This plays a significant role in understanding and managing the worker's attitudes and behaviours effectively.

Past studies have suggested that high employee turnover may be due to various factors such as a lack of effective management practices within an organisation, lack of opportunities for development and career advancement, complex work relationships, work overload, and long work shifts (Alniaçik et al., 2013; Gadi & Kee, 2018; Kumar, 2022; Wong et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2019). In any organisation, setting effective management practices reduces the intention

of its workforce to quit (Li et al., 2017). Nevertheless, employee turnover is defined as a conscious and deliberate wilfulness to quit the job (Al-Suraihi et al., 2021; Bonds, 2017; Meyer & Tett, 1993). It is pertinent to know that a high employee turnover rate affects the quality and performance outcome of an organisation and also brings severe economic losses to a nation.

### **Talented Job Satisfaction**

The concept of job satisfaction is to provide sustainability and employee productivity in organisational development (Polites et al., 2012). Employees can be supported by the organisations through taking care of their well-being which significantly promotes their positive work outcomes (Crawford et al., 2010; Qu & Zhao, 2012) and this perceived support by the employees can generate and build their job satisfaction (Witt & Beorkrem, 1991). Job satisfaction entails the feeling of contentment and it posits influential and futurist concerns in every sector both for employees and employers (Alfayad et al., 2017; Thies & Serratt, 2018). Also, talented employees` job satisfaction comprises of pleasurable, positive emotional state, and individual attitude towards someone`s appraised work experience (Alegre et al., 2016; BRAYFIELD et al., 1954; Munir & Rahman, 2016)

Job satisfaction has been explained by the past research as a mix of three aspects, that is psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances, and employees react to their perception of overall satisfaction based on these concepts (Dhamija et al., 2019). Therefore, the quality of work-life outcomes of any employee determines their job satisfaction and well-being (Owen et al., 2018). Talented employees` job satisfaction can be enhanced by improving the quality of work-life (Chmiel et al., 2017; Drydakis, 2017; Permarupan et al., 2021; Permarupan et al., 2020). Thus, job satisfaction in this current study is designed to focus on overall job satisfaction rather than specific aspects of job satisfaction (Munir & Rahman, 2016).

### **Talented Organisational Citizenship Behaviour**

Organisational citizenship behaviours for talented employees can be defined as the discretionary behaviours that are performed voluntarily besides formal obligations that benefit healthcare organisations and their high-performer employees (Eatough et al., 2011; Williams & Anderson, 1991). The prerequisite for organisational effectiveness and accomplishment lies in employees` organisational citizenship behaviour (Banahene et al., 2017; García-Cabrera & García-Soto, 2011; Mensah, 2019). Thus, organisational citizenship behaviour is being identified as a mechanism for improving the performance of the individual and the organisation. Again, several studies have pointed there is a positive influence of OCB on enhancing the overall performance in the organisation and reducing counterproductive work behaviour (Mensah, 2019; Shahin et al., 2014; Tufan & Wendt, 2020; Xu et al., 2022). Consequently, organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) improves effectiveness, and social capital and enhances individual work performance and organisational functions (Tufan & Wendt, 2020; Xu et al., 2022). Overall, researchers have found that adverse employees` attitudes and behaviours are drastically influenced through inculcating and building employees` OCB within an organisation, attitudes and behaviours such as absenteeism, turnover intention, performance, and motivation can be reduced by enhancing the mechanism of talented employee citizenship behaviour (Podsakoff et al., 2009; Shahin et al., 2014).

## Research Methodology

### Sample Characteristics and Overview of Data Collection

This research adopted the quantitative approach to identify the impact of talent management in its relationship with job satisfaction, OCBs and talented employee turnover from individual (employee) level outcomes in one of the federal healthcare centres in Nigeria. This research used descriptive analysis for data and statistical mean calculation. The federal healthcare organisation is selected not only because it plays an important role in the healthcare development in Nigeria's economy, but also because it has implemented a talent management system. A letter of permission was sent to the head of human resource management of the organisation to conduct the research, and based on agreement, questionnaires were given to the HR managers to administer to talented employees in their talent pools. Meanwhile, the questionnaires were returned by the participants to the human resource managers, which were subsequently handed over to the researchers. Out of 90 questionnaires distributed, a total of 52 were returned, counting for a 57.7% response rate. The majority comprises of Male at (69.2%) and females (30.8%), while the average age was 30.5 years. Most of the respondents are in the position of doctors/physicians at 48.1%, Nurses (9%), Medical Lab. (8%), Management (4%) and administration (6%) and the average length of service in their present organisation was 7.5 years.

### Measures

All constructs were measured using multi-item scales derived from previous studies. All the items allowed respondents to answer on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Talent management was measured with 25 items, job satisfaction with 8 items, OCBs with 14 items and talented employee turnover with 8 items.

## Results and Discussion

### Validity

This research deployed experts in the relevant field for evaluating and validating the instrument developed to ascertain the validity of the content. The feedback consisted of clarity, comments and quality of each item.

A pilot study was conducted to enhance the quality and efficiency of the main research (Fuzi et al., 2017). In the pilot study, 52 questionnaires were coded and analysed with SPSS statistics software version 25 and the reliability was tested as well. In the pilot test, 90 questionnaires were distributed via face-to-face approaches and 52 usable questionnaires were returned. This research targeted talents (high performers) in the federal healthcare centre.

### Reliability

Based on Cronbach's alpha value of 0.70 to <0.80 is accepted and has good reliability (Sekaran, 2010), while the alpha value ranging from 0.80 to <0.90 is a very good reliability value (Tang et al., 2014). In this study's results, all items indicated very good reliability with Cronbach's alpha value above 0.80. **Table 1** below presents the reliability analysis test results for the variables.

Table 1

*Reliability analysis test results for the variables*

Variables	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha( $\alpha$ ) Coefficient (CA)	Composite reliability (CR)	Item for deletion
Talent management (TM)	25	0.940	0.947	Nil
Job satisfaction (JS)	8	0.860	0.891	Nil
Organisational Citizenship behaviours (OCBs)	14	0.821	0.869	Nil
Employee turnover (ET)	8	0.865	0.901	Nil

**Table 1** shows a very good reliability test. These results indicated that the reliability analysis of the pilot data in all variables scored alpha values above 0.70 (0.821 - 0.940). Hence, the items of the variables could be employed to collect the actual data among the federal healthcare organisations in Nigeria.

The values for Cronbach's Alpha in this study are based on **Table 1**, ranging from 0.821 to 0.940 in the study. Items that have the highest Cronbach's Alpha are Talent management as measured by the scale (0.940), then Talented Employee Turnover Intention (0.865), Job Satisfaction (0.860) and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) the weakest (0.821). All of the Cronbach Alpha values in this study met the 0.7 threshold suggested by Hair et al (2010).

The use of Cronbach's Alpha as a metric to evaluate reliability has been debated. According to some, Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) values underestimate actual reliability (Hair Jr. et al., 2017; Waldman & Lilienfeld, 2016). As a result of this weakness, (McNeish, 2017) proposed the Composite Reliability (CR) Index as a substitute reliability test. Chin (1998) believes that composite reliability is a more accurate measure of reliability than Cronbach's Alpha because it may assess whether or not certain indicators adequately represent the relevant constructs. The composite reliability must be greater than 0.7 to maintain internal consistency (J. F. Hair et al., 2011). All of the numbers exceeded the 0.7 cut-offs, which showed that the measurement model had an acceptable level of reliability.

Table 2

*The mean and std. deviation analysis test result*

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Talent management (TM)	3.70	0.575	2
Job satisfaction (JS)	3.25	0.884	3
Organisational Citizenship behaviours (OCBs)	4.27	0.304	1

**Table 2** The overall mean score for each variable was obtained to identify the impact and implementation of the variable in the Nigerian healthcare sector. Furthermore, (Chan & Idris, 2017) posits the mean scores on the scale, that is based upon the scale of 1 to 5, mean scores can be explained as 1.00 to 2.33 (low), 2.34 to 3.67 (moderate) and 3.68 to 5.00 (high).

However, the results show that mean scores for constructs varied from 3.25 to 4.27. The talented OCB achieved the highest mean score with 4.27, indicating that respondents had

high perceptions that organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) is the most implemented in federal healthcare facilities. On the other hand, talent management achieved a moderate mean value of 3.70, indicating that respondents had moderate observations that TM is being implemented in the healthcare sector. Similarly, job satisfaction had the least mean score with 3.250 and this explained how low the job satisfaction implementation is in the Nigerian healthcare sectors.

The purpose of this paper was to provide an overview of the relationship between talent management, job satisfaction, OCBs, and employee turnover intention based on prior literature. This study's findings showed that talent management can influence talented employees' turnover intention through the mechanisms of job satisfaction and OCBs. Additionally, the results showed that all of the research's variables had excellent levels of validity and reliability and can be deployed for the actual empirical study in the Nigerian public healthcare sector.

### The Discriminant Validity

HTMT approach was used in this study to assess discriminant validity. The between-trait correlation to within-trait correlation ratio is known as HTMT (Roemer et al., 2021). To put it differently, HTMT is a rough estimate of what the actual correlation between two constructs would be if they were fully measured.

Table 3

*Correlation for talent management practices, Job satisfaction, OCBs on Employee turnover (Discriminant validity < 0.85)*

Variables	JS	OCB	TET	TM
JS				
OCB	0.351			
TET	0.121	0.160		
TM	0.675	0.350	0.079	

**JS** = Job satisfaction, **OCB** = Organisational citizenship behaviour, **TET**

Talented employee turnover intention, **TM** = Talent management.

First, the HTMT technique checks to see if the value of the HTMT is higher than the HTMT.85 value of 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015) for the initial approach, which denotes problems with discriminant validity. Table 3 shows that when applying the PLS Algorithm, none of the related constructs contradicts HTMT.85, confirming that the measurement model has established construct validity. The results were shown that all the constructs are connected.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, it may be contended and argued that talent management practices are helpful to organisations in western countries as well as have positive effects when applied in the healthcare sector in Africa. The findings also indicated that the instruments utilised in this study were valid and reliable, supporting their usefulness in future research on the relationships between talent management, job satisfaction, OCBs, and talented employee turnover. The results of this study can also be applied to other studies. The practical implications of this study are to communicate the opportunities for effective implementation and management of talent management in the Nigerian healthcare system. Also, there will be a systematic structure from the model on how to foster individual work satisfaction and



employees` OCB, combat the crisis in the healthcare organisations particularly in human capital management, and how institutionalize the TM practices toward policy development for outstanding performances. Management ought to understand and satisfy the expectations of talented employees so that they can reciprocate and respond with positive outcomes.

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