

Effects of the Adoption of Human Resource Management Practices on Employees' Exit Decisions in Pharmaceutical Companies in Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government, Ogun State, Nigeria

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doi: <https://doi.org/10.37745/ijbsber.2013/vol12n493111>

Published October 02, 2024

Citation: Siyanbola T.O. and Aromona K.G. (2024) Effects of the Adoption of Human Resource Management Practices on Employees' Exit Decisions in Pharmaceutical Companies in Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government, Ogun State, Nigeria, *International Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship Research*, Vol.12, No.4, pp.,93-111

ABSTRACT: *This paper identified key Human Resource Management Practices (HRMPs) espoused by the pharmaceutical companies sampled, and explored the relationship between the practices and employees' exit decisions. The study employed quantitative methodology to source data from 314 employees of selected pharmaceutical companies in Ogun State, and analysed it using SPSS v26 to extract both descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings showed that five of the HRMPs were mostly adopted in this descending order: leadership type (ranking 1st), performance evaluation (2nd), adequate career planning and recognition by employer (3rd), compensation and benefits (4th), and training and development (5th). Also, HRMPs had significant influence on employees exit decisions; more specifically, and in descending order, rewards and career development ($t=3.170$; $p \leq 0.01$), communication and expectations, ($t=2.342$; $p \leq 0.01$), and supervisory autonomy and review/evaluation ($t=2.132$; $p \leq 0.01$) have the most impact on exit decisions. In conclusion, effective HRMs are cost effective to the pharmaceutical companies sampled.*

Keywords: HRMPs, employee exits, pharmaceutical companies, Ogun state, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Chong, Ngolob and Palaoag describe Human Resource Management Practices [HRMPs] as "...a process of attracting, motivating, and retaining employees to ensure the survival

of the organisation...” (2020, p. 121). From this description, it is obvious that organisations that are smart are expected to be deliberate in preventing unwarranted exits from their organisations to prevent the potentially negative consequences of frequent exits of their employees, particularly, those valuable to such organisations. Pham (2020) argues on the need for studies into HRMPs that are capable of laying the groundwork for improving human resource management regimes in enterprises that the author believes need significant attention from both researchers and business executives. Lim and Ahmad (2021) and Alsafadi and Altahat (2021), in their studies, were able to connect HRMPs to employees’ performance in organisations. The latter authors further explain that employees’ job satisfaction is part of the equation that connect human resource management practices to employee performance. From the foregoing, one could argue that an adequately performing employee with appropriate level of job satisfaction is likely to have a lower tendency of leaving such organisation.

The art of being able to satisfy the human resource (HR) in an organisation is one of the most difficult tasks that the majority of firms are confronted with in most 21st century organisations, given that opportunities abound for competent and talented employees elsewhere; with this, it is becoming increasingly challenging for companies to attract and keep such talents (Dessler and Varkkey, 2005). Every company strives to achieve a primary purpose of retaining qualified, knowledgeable, and competent people in order to stay ahead of the competition curve, but in reality, it’s always a constant struggle. The human resource is arguably the backbone for other assets, be it the physical, financial, or material resources; people are the true assets of an organisation (Chukwuka and Nwakoby, 2018; Kakar, Raziq and Khan, 2015). Organisations are consistently on the lookout for talented, efficient, and qualified people to enhance the organisation’s performance, though retaining the recruited individuals within a business is always a source of significant concern for the businesses, especially in this era of intense competition; this is despite the efforts by most organisations to provide their employees with adequate and relevant amenities for the purpose of job satisfaction.

Navigating the intricate realm of human resources management continues to present confounding puzzles, given its profound impact on an organisation's fate. The prowess of this valuable resource indicates its ability to either propel a company's ascent, or trigger its downfall. The cornerstone of successfully managing the colossal resource lies in the company’s ability to sustain their commitment, as the HR holds the ace that can shape an organisation's reputation and secure it for an enduring growth for the foreseeable future. Yet, retaining and satisfying these invaluable resources has evolved into one of the most formidable impediments for businesses. The factors influencing an employee's decision to stay or exit are multifaceted, and originate from both external and internal sources (Siyanbola and Gilman, 2017).

Such variables differ, not only within various employee groups, but also among individual employees whose expectations and demand are multidimensional; this creates further complications for organisations' management. While some factors, like skill scarcities and insatiable compensation expectations appear to be beyond an employer's sphere of control, others are firmly within management's influence. For instance, recognising the internal catalysts for controlling incessant exits of employees is the initial step toward effecting positive changes (Ashar et al., 2013) by controlling avoidable exits of employees of value. A search through extant literature regarding studies on Human Resource Management Practices (HRMs) indicate a dearth in that area, hence the call to intensify such studies by various authors, particularly in core areas of HRMPs. For example, the necessity to prioritise staff training and career development is echoed from the study by Imna & Hassan (2015) and Onafadeji (2017); the authors assert the significance of nurturing career growth to bolster employees' staying in an organisation. Similar findings are echoed by other authors regarding reward and compensation practices, and employee loyalty (Godbless and Obaro, 2023; and Amaeshi, 2014).

Similarly, Okbagaber (2019) and Sharma (2017) urge management of these organisations to harmonise the previously discussed practices; it has been argued that when employees feel valued, their contributions acknowledged, opportunities for growth cultivated, and unwavering trust in leadership is fostered, the environment would be perceived as conducive for them. Furthermore, Swaroopa and Sudhir (2019) reckon that performance that is grounded in skill-based training, adaptive work structures, fair compensation, fair expectation regarding performance evaluation, and decentralised decision-making, can elevate employee performance for organisation's benefit.

Emmanuel, Dato'Mansor, and Rashid (2021), spotlights empowerment as a conduit linking *Green HRM practices* to employee exit decisions and retention; it is opined that studies in this area are fertile ground for HR research development, giving room to further studies on employee turnover or exits decisions (Emmanuel et al., 2021). In line with this discussion, Godbless and Obaro (2023) probes the complex relationship between advanced HR policies and the performance of pharmaceutical professionals, with specific attention to the harmonious relationship between corporate culture, employee engagement, innovative HR practices, and performance; these combinations are avenues for further research on these subject matters. In the same vein, Krishnamoorthy and Aisha (2022) explored employee retention through the lens of organisational culture. To this end, and given some of the identified gaps in existing studies in current literature, this paper presents a conduit that aimed to bridge these gaps by carrying out an in-depth exploration of the interplay between HRM practices (e.g. career planning, leadership styles, performance management etc.), and employee exit decisions.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The main aim of this paper is to identify the key Human Resource Management Practices (HRMPs) adopted in the pharmaceutical companies sampled, and explore the nexus between these practices and employees' exit from the organisations.

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS FOR THE RESEARCH

This paper is anchored on both the *equity theory* as espoused by Adam (1965) and the concept of Human Resource Management Practices (HRMPs) as adapted from extant literature (e.g. Armstrong and Taylor, 2023; Anwar and Abdullah, 2021). The next section discusses Adam's theory of fairness with relevance to the paper's subject matter of employee's exit decisions from organisations, and presents the conceptual framework for the paper, based on the assumed relationship between HRMPs and employees' exit decisions from organisations.

Adam's Equity Theory of Motivation

As a process model of motivation, Adam's (1965) Equity theory laid the ground work for many potential studies in the area of psychology and relevant disciplines. It is built on the idea that an individual is motivated by fairness, and expects that the rewards in return for the efforts he/she has expended need to be *compensated commensurably*; this is concerned with an exchange relationship of fairness where an individual gives something supposedly viewed by both sides as proportionate. In Adam's 1965 edifice, the author notes that the concept of *equity/inequity* relates to the perception of justice vs injustice, or relative gratification vs relative deprivation; in essence, both the antecedents and consequences of perceived justice/injustice are in play when equity is discussed.

Bell (2011) and Bell and Martin (2012) present an understanding of feelings of inequity and managerial communication situations as a few of the challenges organisations may have to cope with in respect of rewards for the efforts expended to making the organisation a *going concern*. The Equity Theory by Adam (1965) is built on exchange, dissonance, and social comparison theories that predicts how individuals manage their relationships with others (Hatfield, Huseman, and Miles, 1987). Shore (2004) in testing Huseman et al.'s (1987) assumption in a laboratory setting confirmed that benevolent individuals reported the highest *pay satisfaction, perceived pay fairness, and lowest turnover intentions*. It was reported that all the three equity sensitivity groups in the experiment preferred to be over-rewarded to having equitable rewards; they were also relatively distressed when they perceived being under-rewarded. According to Bell and Martin (2012), three assumptions

capture the essence of the equity theory in most situations where employees' sense inequity and seek to reduce it; they are discussed better in the next sub-sections.

Assumption 1 (Bell and Martin, 2012, p. 109):

The “*equity norm*” is a social assumption that an employee will expect a fair return for the contribution to the job they do (Adams, 1965). As an example, if individual 1 is hired as a customer service representative, he/she will need to know the requirements for completing the position satisfactorily, and such person will want to be sure he/she is receiving a fair wage for the job being performed compared to others doing the same or similar job. The more individual perceives inequity, the more distress he/she will feel. However, the individual will feel less distressed when equity is perceived and seen to be implemented; hence, a desire to want to stay with the organisation.

Assumption 2 (Bell and Martin, 2012, p. 109):

The “*social comparison*” assist employees to determine whether their outcome is equitable compared to others' inputs and outcomes (Adams, 1965). In essence, individual 1, who earns £10 an hour, will realistically expect that all other colleagues in similar situations will also earn £10 per hour and be treated in similar ways in terms of benefit increases, promotions, and scheduling. Individual 1 may get annoyed if he/she becomes aware that individual 2, with same experience, training and education, and who works the same number of hours, earns £14 an hour while he/she makes only £10 every hour; this has a likelihood of creating a sense of inequity for individual 1. Inequity in rewards leads to high level distress when employees feel others' equity is greater than their own; potentially, the idea of exiting may come to mind for individual 1.

Assumption Three (Bell and Martin, 2012, p. 110):

When employees feel their equity is less than other's equity, they may attempt to reduce the inequity indifferent ways:

- i. *cognitive distortion*, whereby the individual cognitively distorts inputs and outcomes by making a psychological adjustment to justify the perceived imbalance, or the behaviours they engage in to reduce the imbalance;
- ii. altering his/her inputs by restricting work inputs to reach a perceived level par with the outcomes being received;
- iii. *quitting the organization* altogether (Adams, 1965).

This last scenario (iii), in particular, forms the essence of why this equity theory has a place in this paper.

An employee may use these three assumptions to obtain equity on the job based on how he/she perceives it. So, while management may have control over pay, peripheral benefits, promotion and advancement, job security, and working conditions, the employee's perception of how the organisation compares him/her to others limits management's control over such employee's sense of accomplishment, competence, feeling of personal worth, feeling of achievement, and sense of confidence. Management cannot control employee's perception of recognition for good work, status, feelings of belonging, appreciation from others, and to an extent, friendships on the job (Huseman and Hatfield, 1990).

Gupta (2007) contends that each individual must be treated with respect at work; employees are required not to operate in a vacuum, and to ensure that employees weigh their contributions to a workplace environment against the results they obtain in return. They are then expected to compare their contribution to result ratio with that of their peers with whom comparability is relevant. In the unlikely event that the proportions are equal, it is claimed that a condition of value exists; employees would believe that their situation is acceptable, and equity exists. Where an employee perceives injustice, this feeling can influence an employee's decision on whether to leave or stay; therefore, the mobility of work, whether inside and outside the company, is impacted by such perception (fairness vs unfairness). According to equity theory, a person's degree of motivation is correlated with how they see value, rationality, and equity in how those things are managed; all these appear to impact how employees interact within pharmaceutical industries in Nigeria, and how exits decisions are made. Equity theory provides support for this study because it explains that perception about HRMPs of compensation, availability of training and development opportunities, helpful career planning, recognition, fair performance appraisal management, appropriate leadership style, work-life balance, and conducive workplace environment are among the elements that affect how motivated individuals view their work, helping them to make informed decisions about whether an employer is worth staying with or not.

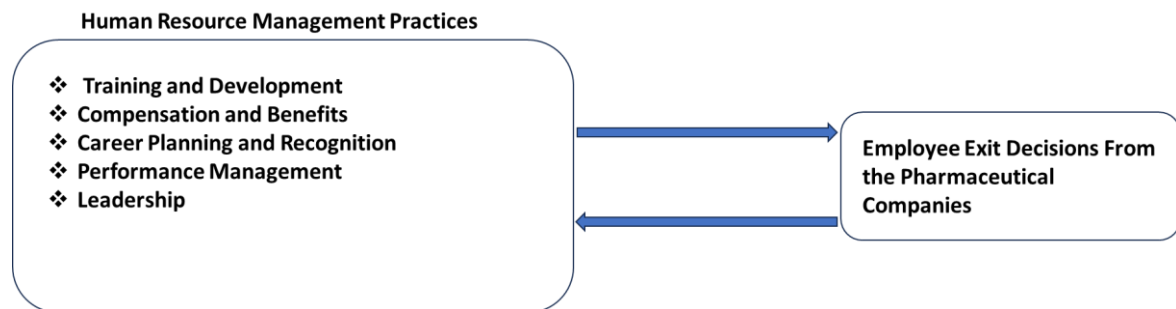


Figure 1: The Assumed Relationship between HRMs and Employees Exit Decisions from the Pharmaceutical Companies Studied

Source: Armstrong and Taylor (2023); Anwar and Abdullah (2021); Tiwari and Saxena (2012)

METHODOLOGY

The study employed quantitative research design, adopting survey questionnaire to collect the data. A total of 420 questionnaire were distributed, and 314 were retrieved in usable form for further analysis. The concept of HRMPs was operationalised using five key sub-concepts as shown in figure 1: *training and development, compensation and benefits, career planning and recognition, performance management and leadership* (e.g. Armstrong and Taylor, 2023). Each of these concepts are further broken down into four or more items that make them easily measurable; and altogether, the questionnaire items that measured HRMPs are 26 in number. Employees sampled range from those at the shop floor, up to those at management level. Data was analysed with the aid of IBM SPSS v26, with both descriptive and inferential statistics adopted.

Prior to main analysis, each of the five main concepts was analysed for multi collinearity using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient; the coefficient for the concepts ranged from 0.582 to 0.760, suggesting that they are almost all reliable for further analysis given that the threshold of acceptable alpha coefficient can range between 0.56 to 0.83 or higher, depending on the number of items in the questionnaire and the mean correlation (Schrepp, 2020); even a figure that is as low as 0.5 is deemed acceptable rather than throw the data away (Helms et al., 2006).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part of the paper describes the findings from the data collected and analysed with respect to the key objectives of the paper that explored the types of HRMPs adopted in the

organisations, and the nexus between the HRMPs of the pharmaceutical companies and the exit tendencies and decisions among their employees.

Types of HRMPs Adopted in the Pharmaceutical Companies Sampled

This section assesses the types of Human Resource Management Practices (HRMPs) adopted within the organisations. The frequency of different HRMPs were classified into three: *low, moderate, or high* to enable comparison among these practices (table 1); the same result is depicted in figure 1 for visual comparison purposes. The figure suggest that the organisation has established a strong foundation in terms of *leadership, performance appraisal practices, and career planning plus recognition*; however, there may be room for improvement with regards to *employee compensation & benefits, and training plus development*, given that the latter duo ranked last (4th and 5th) amongst five measures of HRMPs.

With regards to *leadership*, 7.6% of participants perceived the adoption as low, 47.5% as moderate, and 44.9% as high. This suggests that the organisation emphasises leadership practices, with over 92% of the respondents perceiving it to be at a moderate to high level. Notably, Leadership practices emerged as the most widely embraced among the surveyed companies. This signifies a strong commitment to nurturing effective leaders who can drive employee engagement and organisational success. Following closely in terms of significance is *performance appraisal (PA)*, as only 11.1% of respondents perceived the level of adoption as low, with about 89% viewing it as moderate to high. This indicates that the organisation has a strong focus on performance appraisal practices, with a substantial number of respondents perceiving it positively; hence, PA garnered significant attention. This suggests a widespread recognition of the value in assessing and enhancing employee performance, fostering continuous growth and development within the workforce.

Next down in the continuum is *career planning and recognition* practices that exhibited an encouraging trend, with a cumulative adoption rate of 86.6% in the moderate to high range. This underscores the importance placed on fostering a supportive environment that empowers employees to envision their professional trajectories while feeling valued and recognised for their contributions.

As for *career planning and recognition*, 13.4% of employees perceived the level of adoption as low, 51.3% as moderate, and 35.4% as high. This suggests that the organisation places a significant emphasis on career planning and recognition, with more than one-third of respondents perceiving it to be at a high level. In terms of *compensation and benefits*, 16.2% of participants perceived the adoption as low, 50.3% as moderate, and 33.4% as high. This demonstrates that a considerable number of employees perceived the organisation's compensation and benefits practices to be moderate, with a notable portion

perceiving it as high. *Compensation and Benefits* practices demonstrated a strong standing, albeit in the 4th position in terms of ranking, standing at 83.8% for moderate to high adoption levels. Organisations seem increasingly aware of the significance of competitive compensation packages in attracting and retaining top talent. Lastly, the study found *training and development* practices as occupying the least of place in the organisations sampled. While showing a moderate to high adoption rate of 83.1%, it presents room for growth. This indicates the potential for organisations to further invest in equipping their workforce with the skills and knowledge needed to excel in an ever-evolving, but competitive business landscape.

A substantial majority of employees expressed their endorsement for various HRM practices, including regular training programs, provision of time-off for external training, and the opportunity to enhance skills through transfers across departments. Moreover, the support for having a senior employee or supervisor to guide and support new employees was also noteworthy. These results are consistent with previous research, particularly the work of Amaeshi (2014), which underscored the positive impact of HRM practices, especially in the domain of remuneration and perks, on employee retention in Nigeria's manufacturing sector. This highlights the significance of nurturing employees' growth and development to foster a loyal workforce.

Table I: Types of Human Resources Management Practices adopted in the Pharmaceutical Companies

HRMPs	HRMPs Adoption Level within the Organisations			Rank	Total Of Moderate and High
	F (%)				
	Low	Moderate	High		
Training and Development	53(16.9)	138(43.9)	123(39.2)	5 th	261(83.1%)
Compensation and Benefits	51(16.2)	158(50.3)	105(33.4)	4 th	263 (83.7%)
Career Planning and Recognition	42(13.4)	161(51.3)	111(35.4)	3 rd	272 (86.7%)
Performance Appraisal	35(11.1)	151(48.1)	128(40.8)	2 nd	279 (88.9%)
Leadership	24(7.6)	149(47.5)	141(44.9)	1 st	290 (92.4%)

Source: Field Survey, 2023

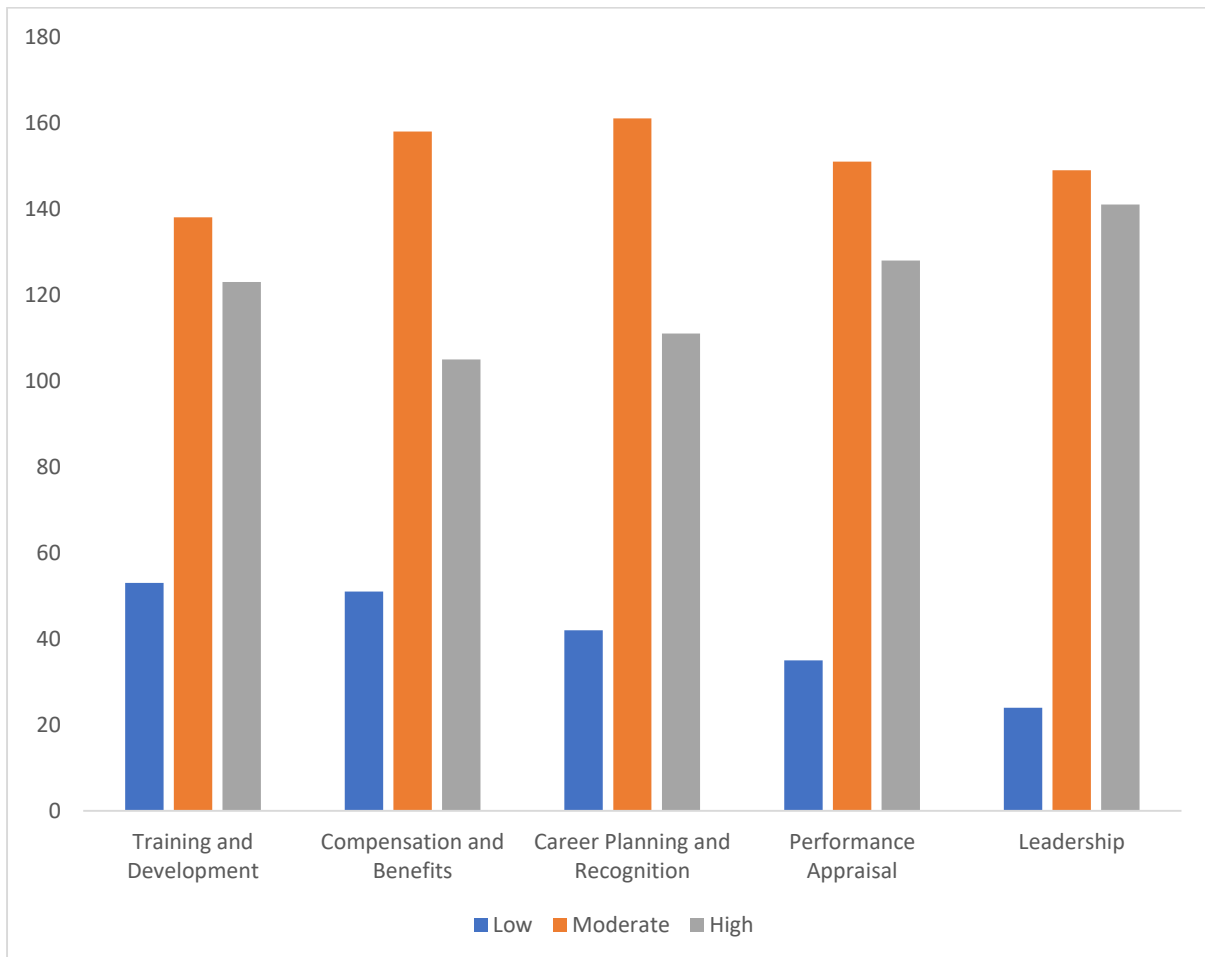


Figure 2: Visually depicting the Types of Human Resources Management Practices adopted in the Organisations

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Factors Influencing Employee’ Exit Decisions

The correlation analysis examined factors influencing employees' decisions to leave an organisation. Table II shows that all the 26 influencing factors are significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed). This implies that each of them have a role or another to play in the decision of an employee to exit or stay in their place of work. Despite the results, it is assumed that it is unlikely that all the factors play equal parts in employees’ exit decisions from the pharmaceutical companies studied. A decision was therefore made to extract the most important factors driving such; to achieve this, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was deployed; the result is presented in tables III and IV, and discussed in the next section.

Table II: Correlation Analysis Output for the 26 Independent Variables

Statements	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
In my organisation during working hours training programs are conducted regularly	.180**	0.001
In my organisation employees are given time-off from their job to attend training programs that are conducted out-side of the organisation	.164**	0.004
In my organisation there is a routine to transfer employees from one job to another in different departments to develop skills and experience	.168**	0.003
In my organisation a senior employee, manager or supervisor is assigned to help, support and guide a new employee	.191**	0.001
In my organisation financial (monetary) rewards are given for good performance	.321**	0.000
In my organisation employees who excel in their tasks are recognized (giving awards such as employee of the month or year) by celebrating the achievement of employees	.207**	0.000
In my organisation employees are given paid leave and paid organisational trips and other non-financial benefits	.333**	0.000
In my organisation pay rises, bonuses and other financial rewards are offered to employees based on their performance and length of service	.244**	0.000
In my organisation employees are given meaningful tasks along with the freedom to make their own decisions in relations to the job the employee performs	.285**	0.000
In my organisation there is a clear structure of succession planning	.162**	0.004
In my organisation there is a clear process of identifying and planning of the workforce development to retain key talents (employees)	.317**	0.000
In my organisation leadership development programs are conducted to prepare employee for responsibilities	.221**	0.000
In my organisation there are structured career development plans for employees	.361**	0.000
In my Organisation there is a self-assessment process practiced that helps to choose the appropriate career	.254**	0.000
In my organization feedback is provided to employees on what is expected from the duties assigned	.303**	0.000
In my organisation there is a clear structure of two-way communication between employees and managers regarding the employee performance	.281**	0.000
In my organisation employees and managers are directly involved in setting targets and goals, and the agreed targets will be then clearly communicated to employees	.262**	0.000
In my organisation every year there is a performance evaluation of the employees and managers to assess we have achieved the agreed targets	.263**	0.000
In my organisation there is a periodic review and evaluation of employees and manager performance every year or 2 years	.266**	0.000
Leaders and managers enjoy a high level of trust from employees	.277**	0.000
Recognition and praise from seniors for a job well done	.273**	0.000
Managers communicate frequently and honestly about issues affecting employees	.253**	0.000
Managers keep employees informed and up to date	.238**	0.000
Managers empower employees informed and up to date	.294**	0.000
Managers show fairness and respect in their interactions with employees	.266**	0.000
Supervisor gives freedom to do job as one sees best	.257**	0.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS Output, V26

Exploratory Factor Analysis on Factors Determining Employees' Exit Decisions

To ascertain the major factors impacting employees' exits decisions as explained in the previous section, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted on the 26 questionnaire items used to measure respondents' perception on HRMPs. The KMO that measures sampling adequacy of items within the model shows a value that is bigger than the recommended .6 at **.0893**; the Sphericity test indicates a significant value (table III) which means that factors can be extracted from the items. Table IV shows that much of the total variance in employees' exit decisions are explained by the six extracted factors/components namely: *organisational communication and expectations, managerial engagement and transparency, rewards and career development, skill development and support, supervisory autonomy and employee review, and performance evaluation and self-assessment*. The clue to the factors identification can be found in Appendix I attached to this paper; the name attached to each of the six is an aggregate of the factors that loaded highly to each of the components as shown in the appendix table. A more detailed description is available in the next section. Essentially, the excluded 20 factors from the original 26 were either redundant within the model, or of low explanatory power at best.

Table III: KMO and Bartlett's Exploratory Factor Analysis Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.893
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2165.059
	Df	325
	Sig.	.000

Source: SPSS Output, v26

Table IV: Showing the Six Key Factors that Determine Much of the Variance in Employees' Exit Decisions in the Pharmaceutical Companies

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Total Variance Explained			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.253	27.895	27.895	7.253	27.895	27.895	3.014	11.592	11.592
2	1.426	5.483	33.378	1.426	5.483	33.378	2.652	10.200	21.791
3	1.328	5.109	38.487	1.328	5.109	38.487	2.532	9.739	31.530
4	1.140	4.384	42.871	1.140	4.384	42.871	2.183	8.395	39.925
5	1.095	4.211	47.081	1.095	4.211	47.081	1.460	5.616	45.541
6	1.054	4.053	51.134	1.054	4.053	51.134	1.454	5.594	51.134
7	.971	3.736	54.870						
8	.889	3.421	58.291						
9	.888	3.417	61.708						
10	.849	3.264	64.972						
11	.810	3.115	68.087						
12	.759	2.920	71.007						
13	.743	2.857	73.864						
14	.726	2.791	76.655						
15	.660	2.539	79.194						
16	.637	2.451	81.645						
17	.617	2.373	84.018						
18	.595	2.287	86.305						
19	.553	2.128	88.432						
20	.538	2.069	90.501						
21	.502	1.929	92.431						
22	.477	1.834	94.265						
23	.444	1.707	95.972						
24	.393	1.513	97.485						
25	.341	1.313	98.798						
26	.313	1.202	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Source: SPSS v26

Multiple Regression Analysis to Identify the Factors Influencing Employees' Exit Decisions

A Multiple regression analysis was conducted and the results in tables V indicate that the model has an adjusted R-squared value of 0.243 (table V), meaning approximately 24.3% of the variability in employee exits decisions can be attributed to the six predictor variables, namely: *organisational communication and expectations, managerial engagement and transparency, rewards and career development, skill development and support, supervisory autonomy and employee review, and performance evaluation and self-assessment.*

The ANOVA results in table VI shows that the regression model as a whole is statistically significant ($F_{(6, 307)} = 17.787, p < 0.001$), indicating that the combined effect of the predictor variables significantly contributes to explaining the variance in employee exit decisions.

The coefficients of the predictor variables in table VII reveal that ***rewards and career development*** have the most significant positive impact on employee exit decisions ($\beta = 0.223, p = 0.002$). This suggests that practices relating to rewarding and supporting employees' career growth play a crucial role in whether employees leave or stay with the organisation. ***Organisational communication and expectations*** ($\beta = 0.164, p = 0.020$) and ***supervisory autonomy and employee review*** ($\beta = 0.121, p = 0.034$) also show positive relationships with employee's decision to stay or exit, albeit to a slightly lesser extent than the first factor. On the other hand, *skill development and support, as well as performance evaluation and self-assessment*, appear to exhibit non-significant relationships with employee exit decisions.

The study indicated varying perceptions among employees about the effectiveness of the organisation's job retention policy practices. This echoes the findings by Chukwuma (2015), who identified discriminatory hiring practices in the Nigerian manufacturing industry; the implications for this can be enormous with respect to employee retention within businesses. Organisations, therefore, may need to enhance their job retention strategies to ensure clearer understanding, not only among existing employees, but also the potential ones. Additionally, the study revealed mixed perceptions among employees regarding various HR practices such as career planning and recognition, performance appraisal, leadership, and non-financial benefits. This finding is consistent with the conclusions drawn by Chukwuka and Nwakoby (2018); the authors reported limited correlation between HRM strategies and employee exit or stay decisions in the Nigerian insurance industry. It suggests that employees' perceptions may differ concerning the effectiveness of these practices in influencing retention rates. In essence, management of the pharmaceutical companies need to make more concerted efforts to ensure that their HRMPs and policies could encourage higher retention rates, and are better communicated to existing and potential employees.

In terms of the factors influencing employees' exit decisions, the study identified *leadership, compensation and benefits, and performance appraisal system* as significant contributors to such. These findings align with the conclusions drawn by Okbagaber (2019) and Fajana et al. (2011); the authors in various ways emphasise the need to align HR rules with the business plan, while also highlighting the impact of HRM practices. Some of these include promotion and employee-supervisor relations, if management's efforts at curbing employee incessant exits would be fruitful. These results also underscore the significance of effective leadership and fair performance appraisal processes in retaining valuable employees.

Table V: EFA Regression Analysis Model Summary

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.508 ^a	.258	.243	.66009	1.793

a. **Predictors:** (Constant), Performance Evaluation and Self-Assessment, Supervisory Autonomy and Review, Managerial Engagement and Transparency, Skill Development and Support, Organisational Communication and Expectations, Rewards and Career Development

b. **Dependent Variable:** Employees' Exit Decisions

Source: SPSS v26

Table VI: EFA Regression Analysis ANOVA Output

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	46.500	6	7.750	17.787	.000 ^b
	Residual	133.764	307	.436		
	Total	180.264	313			

a. **Dependent Variable:** Employee Exit Decisions

b. **Predictors:** (Constant), Performance Evaluation and Self-Assessment, Supervisory Autonomy and Review, Managerial Engagement and Transparency, Skill Development and Support, Organisational Communication and Expectations, Rewards and Career Development

Source: SPSS v26

Table VII: EFA Factors Regression Analysis Coefficients Output

Model		Coefficients ^a					Collinearity Statistics	
		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.501	.205		7.333	.000		
	Organisational Communication and Expectations	.148	.063	.164	2.342	.020	.492	2.033
	Managerial Engagement and Transparency	.089	.057	.099	1.560	.120	.601	1.665
	Rewards and Career Development	.211	.067	.223	3.170	.002	.490	2.042
	Skill Development and Support	-.062	.058	-.069	-1.063	.289	.577	1.732
	Supervisory Autonomy and Review	.094	.044	.121	2.132	.034	.749	1.336
	Performance Evaluation and Self-Assessment	.086	.045	.111	1.934	.054	.737	1.357

a. **Dependent Variable: Employee Exit Decisions**

Source: SPSS v26

IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

Cost-effective HRMPs are of the essence to all organisations, be it profit, or non-profit. In spite of this significance, available extant literature, particularly on African businesses and those resident in the West African sub region, is quite sparse with respect to the nexus between HRMPs and the exit decision of employees in the pharmaceutical sector of the economies. This study provides relevant knowledge and rich data for academic research and professional practice on the subject matters.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that most of the pharmaceutical companies sampled have policies regarding HRMPs, but many of them appear not to be impactful to curb high exit rates of employees from the businesses, except the few that were found quite significant. In view of the few of the HRMPs found valuable, organisations' stakeholders need to make use of them to their advantage. With regards to the connect between HRMPs and employee exit decisions, the identified factors were significantly crucial to employees' exit decisions in varying degrees; they are *leadership type*, *performance evaluation*,

adequate career planning and recognition by employer, compensation and benefits, and training and development. In more concise term, ***rewards and career development, communication and expectations, and supervisory autonomy and review/evaluation*** in that descending order have significant effects on the decision by employees about *leave or stay*.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Studies into the relationship between a company's HRMPs and either retention or exit of employees, especially in the food and drug sectors of the African continent's economy, still has a lot to offer. Hence, reliable studies in this area have a lot of room for knowledge contribution, and data availability.

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Appendix I: The Rotated Component Matrix Showing How the Six (6) Key Factors were Extracted from the 26 Sub- Factors in the Questionnaire

	Rotated Component Matrix ^a					
	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
In my organisation feedback is provided to employees on what is expected from the duties assigned	.703					
In my organisation there is a clear structure of two-way communication between employees and managers regarding the employee performance	.640					
In my organisation there is a clear process of identifying and planning of the workforce development to retain key talents (employees)	.591					
In my organisation employees and managers are directly involved in setting targets and goals, and the agreed targets will be then clearly communicated to employees	.493					
Leaders and managers enjoy a high level of trust from employees	.465					
Recognition and praise from seniors for a job well done	.455					
Managers communicate frequently and honestly about issues affecting employees		.714				
Managers empower employees informed and up to date		.631				
Managers show fairness and respect in their interactions with employees		.613				
Managers keep employees informed and up to date		.559				
In my organisation during working hours training programs are conducted regularly		.476				
In my organisation leadership development programs are conducted to prepare employee for responsibilities			.736			
In my organisation financial (monetary) rewards are given for good performance			.564			
In my organisation there are structured career development plans for employees			.520			
In my organisation there is a clear structure of succession planning			.488			
In my organisation employees who excel in their tasks are recognized (giving awards such as employee of the month or year) by celebrating the achievement of employees			.472			
In my organisation employees are given paid leave and paid organisational trips and other non-financial benefits			.471			
In my organisation employees are given meaningful tasks along with the freedom to make their own decisions in relations to the job the employee performs			.430			
In my organisation there is a routine to transfer employees from one job to another in different departments to develop skills and experience				.768		
In my organisation employees are given time-off from their job to attend training programs that are conducted out-side of the organisation				.538		
In my organisation pay rises, bonuses and other financial rewards are offered to employees based on their performance and length of service				.530		
In my organisation a senior employee, manager or supervisor is assigned to help, support and guide a new employee				.465		
Supervisor gives freedom to do job as one sees best					.666	
In my organisation there is a periodic review and evaluation of employees and manager performance every year or 2 years					.447	
In my organisation every year there is a performance evaluation of the employees and managers to assess we have achieved the agreed targets						.592
In my organisation there is a self-assessment process practiced that helps to choose the appropriate career						.556

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.