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SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

**AN ASSESMENT OF THE CAUSES OF EMPLOYEE ATTRITION IN THE HEALTH
SECTOR**

A CASE STUDY: MINISTRY OF HEALTH OF UGANDA

BY

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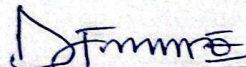
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DECLARATION

I, DOREEN AKITENG, 2021/HD06/20390U, declare that dissertation, titled "*An Assessment of the Causes of Employee Attrition in the Health Sector: A Case Study of the Ministry of Health of Uganda*," is my original work and has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree or qualification at any university or institution.

Signature: 

Date: 26th / 11 / 2024

APPROVAL

This dissertation, titled "An Assessment of the Causes of Employee Attrition in the Health Sector: A Case Study of the Ministry of Health of Uganda," has been examined and evaluated. I, the undersigned, certify that this dissertation meets the academic standards and requirements for the award of the Master of Business Administration from Makerere University.

Signature:



Date:



Dr Christopher Muganga

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family, whose unwavering support, love, and inspiration have been invaluable to me. Their encouragement and faith in my abilities have played a crucial role in my academic journey.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to the completion of this dissertation. I am especially thankful to my supervisors for their guidance and support throughout the research process, which was invaluable. I also appreciate my family for their unwavering love and understanding during this journey. My friends and colleagues deserve thanks for their encouragement and shared experiences that enriched my work. Finally, I extend my appreciation to all participants for their insights, which were crucial to this study.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

WHO: World Health Organization

UNICEF: United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

MoH: Ministry of Health

HR: Human Resources

HRM: Human Resource Management

DCE: Discrete Choice Experiment

HEWs: Health Extension Workers

CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to assess the causes of employee attrition at the Ministry of Health. The research objectives included identifying the underlying root causes of employee attrition in the Ministry of Health, determining the strategies for enhancing employee retention, and examining the consequences of employee attrition. The study employed Systems Theory and utilized a descriptive survey design. Data were collected using self-administered questionnaires and stratified random sampling, resulting in a 95% response rate. This distribution indicated a predominance of female respondents in the study. The findings revealed several root causes of employee attrition, including heavy workloads, inadequate resources, poor working conditions, low salaries, lack of professional development, and insufficient management support. These factors contributed to employee dissatisfaction and turnover. Additionally, the consequences of this attrition incurred hidden costs related to recruitment and replacement and raised concerns about its impact on organizational performance and service delivery, indicating a need for deeper analysis in these areas. To enhance employee retention, respondents emphasized the importance of competitive compensation, career development opportunities, a supportive work environment, work-life balance initiatives, employee engagement, and recognition programs. Addressing these factors was crucial for the Ministry to foster a more stable and committed workforce, ultimately leading to improved service quality and organizational effectiveness. The study faced several limitations, including a potentially biased sample if the respondents were primarily those who were dissatisfied and chose to participate. Future research should explore the long-term impacts of employee attrition on organizational performance and service delivery within the Ministry of Health, including how turnover affects patient outcomes and continuity of care.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the background of the study, problem statement, and purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, scope, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

Attrition is the reduction in the number of employees in an organization (Immaneni & Sailaja, 2021). This can be voluntary or involuntary, through retirement, resignation or even death. The attrition of employees has become a major problem in many organizations (Jeen, 2014). Organizations put in a lot of resources like time and money in their employees through inductions and trainings, employee development in a bid to retain them and thwart their intentions to leave. De winne et al (2018) state that employee attrition has been said to have led to losses for organizations because of the social and human capital depletion and this would negatively affect the performance of the organization. When employees are recruited into the organization, they undergo trainings which helps them to acquire knowledge and skills to perform tasks, however when they leave it creates very big gap in the organization.

On average most employees generally change jobs 10 to 15 times before they finally pick their lifetime career job or during his or her career (Doyle, 2018)

It is a common concern for managers why people leave and the effects it would have on the organization. Employee attrition can be defined as a voluntary reduction in an organization's manpower through resignation or retirement (Sundararajan, 2016).

Employee attrition occurs in different forms. Involuntary attrition arises when the organization takes decision to terminate the services of an employee. With voluntary attrition the decision is undertaken by an employee to terminate his/ her service by resignation from the organization. The focus of this paper is employee attrition with respect to employee resignation.

In real world, employees will always continue to leave one job for another. For most employees the reasons for such decision could be attributed to their desire for the pursuit of career development, job security, and lucrative remuneration among others. According to Alex Gray in

World Economic Forum (Gray, 2017), “people leave jobs mainly to go to a firm with a better organizational culture and value, career opportunities, compensation, and benefits. Nevertheless, there are some other reasons for attrition (Ocean & Meyer,2023). At a certain point in life, individuals may have to assess their careers and if they are not happy with results will take appropriate actions (Omar, Aluwi, Fauzi & Hairpuddin, 2020). Such action therefore, will lead to the pursuance of career opportunities, or simply leave the workforce, among others (Reyhanoglu & Akin, 2022). In addition, the leadership styles within an organization could as well be a catalyst for at the rate with which employees leave an organization (Zamanan & Alkhaldi, 2020). Many employees leave because they could not get along with their immediate supervisors, managers or the leadership. They want to build their capacity, aspire for more advanced position that can help them perform optimally (Reknes, Glambek & Einarsen, 2020). Most employees who benefitted from capacity building programmes often remain in their same old position without reward or promotion whatsoever (Peete, 2021).

Based on Human Capital Theory, the level of education increases the chances of getting a better paid job and earning a higher income (Sotula & Anning, 2022). Such employees are more likely to leave once the opportunity comes their way. On the other hand, organization may try to discourage or block employees from undertaking career building programmes which they did not sanctioned. Putting an embargo on the salaries and incentives of such staff does not augur well, hence this equally accelerate the rate of attrition (Kanteh & Gibba, 2019). Attrition is the biggest problem faced by institutions more so the public sector institutions (Kanteh & Gibba, 2019). It is argued that the public sector employs more "knowledge-based individuals" compared to the private sector making it harder for governments to replace lost expertise (Mugabe, 2022).

According to the World Health Organization, Uganda was commended on the performance of the health sector in 2021/20221 (World Health Organisation, 2023). However, the health sector also faced some challenges, such as the death of Prof Anthony Kabanza Mbonye, the former director general of Health Services (Daily Monitor , 2023), and the decline in the government allocation to the health sector from 7.9% of the national budget in 2019/2020 to 5.1% in 2020/2021 (UNICEF, 2021).

In the case of Uganda, the Ministry of Health has made efforts to address staff attrition, such as implementing a human resource information system and developing HR policies and guidelines

(Ministry of Health, 2020). However, challenges such as high turnover of healthcare workers, and inadequate infrastructure continue to impede the implementation of effective HRM practices in the health sector (Arasa, 2019). For example, despite efforts to increase salaries for healthcare workers, they remain relatively low, leading to job dissatisfaction and attrition (Ogunbote, 2020).

Based on the information provided in the Annual Health Report 2020, it is not entirely clear if the Ministry of Health's HR practices are different from those of the general public service. However, the Ministry of Health has introduced various incentive schemes, such as the Health Workers' Performance Bonus and the Hard-to-Reach Allowance, to motivate healthcare workers and improve their performance and retention in the public sector. Despite these efforts, the human resources for health audit report for 2019/2020 shows that there is still a significant number of vacant positions, with a vacancy rate of 22%, indicating that there may be challenges in the recruitment, retention, and management of healthcare workers in the country. The report also highlights the need for continued efforts to address HR challenges in the health sector in Uganda and the importance of effective HR management practices to ensure the availability of competent and motivated healthcare workers. This study, therefore, is conceived to help identify and provide empirical evidence on factors responsible for employees' voluntary resignations from the health sector.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The Ministry of Health in Uganda, akin to many public organizations, confronts a formidable challenge of employee attrition in the health sector, backed by compelling statistics. As evident in the 2019/2020 Human Resource Health Audit Report, the Ministry has been grappling with persistent attrition issues despite its efforts to address HR challenges and bolster staffing levels. Notably, the report reveals that staffing levels in public sector health facilities improved only marginally, with a filling rate of 78% compared to 76% in the fiscal year 2017/18. This modest increase, amounting to a mere 1,377 additional healthcare workers, underscores the ongoing challenges in recruiting and retaining skilled healthcare professionals (HRM Audit Report, 2019/2020). These departures not only impede the Ministry's objective of filling vacant positions, but also jeopardize the availability of competent and motivated healthcare staff, a critical factor in delivering quality care and ensuring long-term workforce stability. To address this pressing

concern effectively, it is imperative to delve into the core reasons for employee attrition within the Ministry of health.

1.3 The purpose of the study.

The purpose of the study was to assess the causes of employee attrition at the Ministry of Health.

1.4 Research objectives

- i. To identify the underlying root causes of employee attrition in the Ministry of Health.
- ii. To identify the strategies for enhancing employee retention in the Ministry of Health.
- iii. To examine the consequences of employee attrition in the Ministry of Health.

1.5 Research questions

- i. What are the primary underlying root causes of employee attrition in the Ministry of Health?
- ii. What are the consequences, both immediate and long-term, of employee attrition in the Ministry of Health?
- iii. What strategies can be identified and recommended to enhance employee retention in the Ministry of Health?

1.6 Significance of the study

This study holds significant implications for the employees of the Ministry of Health. By uncovering the root causes of attrition and exploring strategies for retention, it can directly impact their professional lives. Employees may benefit from improved career development opportunities, a more satisfying work environment, and increased job security. Additionally, the implementation of effective retention strategies could lead to greater workplace stability, enhancing the quality of work life for current and future staff members. Ultimately, this research has the potential to positively influence the experiences and well-being of the Ministry of Health's employees

This study will also offer valuable insights into labor policies, workforce planning, and healthcare management. It will equip them with evidence-based data to make informed decisions about resource allocation and labor regulations. The findings can guide the development of policies aimed at improving healthcare workforce retention, ensuring that the hospital can maintain a skilled and stable workforce. In essence, this research serves as a foundation for crafting policies that support the long-term sustainability and efficiency of the Ministry of Health and similar healthcare institutions.

This study will contribute to the body of research on employee attrition and retention in healthcare settings, offering a case study that researchers can build upon. It adds to the academic understanding of workforce dynamics within hospitals and can serve as a benchmark for comparative analyses in other healthcare institutions. The identification of trends and patterns in attrition and retention can inspire further research and scholarly publications, advancing knowledge in the field of healthcare workforce management. Researchers can use the study's findings to explore new directions and innovative solutions for addressing attrition challenges in healthcare settings.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter explores the literature concerning the causes of employee attrition at Ministry of health. The review will focus on identify the underlying root causes of employee attrition in Ministry of health, the strategies of enhancing employee retention in Ministry of health, and the consequences of employee attrition in Ministry of health.

2.2. Theoretical review

The Systems Theory, pioneered by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in the 1960s, provides a robust theoretical foundation for understanding organizational dynamics across diverse disciplines. At its core, Systems Theory emphasizes the interconnectedness and interdependence of various components within an organization, positing that these components must function harmoniously to achieve overarching organizational goals (Von Bertalanffy, 1968). This holistic approach encourages managers to view organizational processes not as isolated functions but as integrated systems where leadership practices, reward management strategies, and work-related factors interact synergistically to drive performance and foster organizational effectiveness.

In practical terms, Systems Theory enables organizational leaders to adopt a comprehensive perspective when analyzing workplace dynamics. By examining how different parts of the organization interact and influence one another, managers can identify patterns, anticipate potential challenges, and implement cohesive strategies that align with the organization's strategic objectives. For instance, within the Ministry of Health, where operational efficiency and service delivery are critical, Systems Theory can provide insights into optimizing workforce management practices to mitigate attrition risks and enhance employee engagement.

However, while Systems Theory offers a valuable macro-level framework for understanding organizational behavior, it may overlook the nuanced dynamics within specific departments or critical units like healthcare delivery teams within the Ministry of Health. These specialized areas often face distinct challenges such as high turnover rates, which can significantly impact service continuity and quality of care. Therefore, while overarching organizational strategies are essential,

tailored approaches that address department-specific needs are equally crucial for sustainable workforce management.

Moreover, the Ministry of Health has implemented job matching strategies as part of its recruitment and retention efforts. The Job Matching Theory, as conceptualized by Burdett (1978) and Jovanovich (1979), posits that organizations actively seek to match employees with roles that align with their skills, capabilities, and career aspirations. This theory recognizes that optimal employee-job matches are dynamic and may evolve over time, necessitating continuous adjustments in human resource allocation strategies to maintain alignment with changing organizational needs.

In the context of healthcare delivery, where the demand for specialized skills and competencies fluctuates with evolving patient care requirements and technological advancements, the Job Matching Theory offers valuable insights. By facilitating a strategic alignment between workforce capabilities and organizational objectives, healthcare institutions can optimize resource utilization, improve job satisfaction among employees, and ultimately mitigate the risks associated with turnover.

In summary, the integration of Systems Theory and Job Matching Theory provides a comprehensive framework for examining and addressing the complex issue of employee attrition within the Ministry of Health. By leveraging these theoretical perspectives, this study aims to inform evidence-based strategies that promote workforce stability, enhance employee satisfaction, and sustain organizational resilience amidst the dynamic challenges of healthcare service delivery.

2.3 Empirical review

2.3.1 The underlying root causes of employee attrition in health sector

In South Africa, a study by Ruggunan & Singh (2013) conducted a study on Sector switching among histopathologists in KwaZulu-Natal, and identified several factors contributing to employee attrition among healthcare workers. The study used a cross-sectional design with a discrete choice experiment (DCE) to understand employment preferences and factors influencing job retention. The research was conducted across multiple regions and involved healthcare workers from both public and private sectors. Key findings highlighted that heavy workloads, inadequate resources, poor working conditions, and limited opportunities for professional development were

primary drivers of attrition. Additionally, the disparity between public and private sector remuneration and work conditions played a significant role in influencing migration between sectors and even emigration abroad.

A mixed-methods study conducted in Ethiopia by Tekle, Wolde, Medhin, Teklu, Alemayehu, Gebre & Arora (2022), investigated the factors affecting attrition and intention to leave among Health Extension Workers (HEWs). The study involved a cross-sectional survey of 688 HEWs across 64 woredas (districts) and included in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with health administrators and former HEWs. The research revealed that low salaries, lack of career progression opportunities, poor working conditions, and insufficient recognition and support from supervisors were significant contributors to attrition. Furthermore, the study found that HEWs in rural areas faced additional challenges, such as isolation and inadequate infrastructure, which exacerbated their intention to leave.

Research by Adzei and Atinga (2012) in Ghana explored the retention and attrition of health professionals in the Greater Accra Region. The study employed a qualitative approach, using semi-structured interviews with 30 health professionals who had left their positions and 20 current employees. The findings indicated that low wages, high job stress, poor management practices, and lack of professional development opportunities were key reasons for leaving. Additionally, the study noted that the perceived lack of respect and recognition from the government and community significantly influenced health professionals' decisions to leave their jobs.

In Kenya, a study by Ayubu & Mose, (2023), focused on the attrition of nurses in public hospitals. The research utilized a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews. Conducted in Nairobi and rural areas, the study found that poor working conditions, limited career advancement, low salaries, and high workload were significant predictors of nurse attrition. Moreover, the study noted that inadequate support from hospital management and lack of necessary medical supplies contributed to job dissatisfaction and eventual departure.

2.3.2 The strategies of enhancing employee retention

One key strategy is the implementation of competitive compensation and benefits packages. Research by Zhang, Yang, and Huang (2019) emphasized the importance of fair compensation practices in retaining hotel employees. By offering attractive salaries,

performance-based incentives, and comprehensive benefits such as healthcare and retirement plans, hotels can incentivize their employees to stay. A study by Chen and Choi (2020) supported these findings, revealing that competitive compensation positively influenced hotel employee retention rates in a global context.

Another effective employee retention strategy highlighted in the literature was the provision of opportunities for career development and advancement. Zhang et al. (2019) noted that offering training programs, mentoring, and growth pathways within the organization positively impacted employee retention rates. This sentiment was echoed by a study conducted by Ali, Raza, and Mukhtar (2019), emphasizing the importance of career development opportunities in reducing employee retentions among hotel employees. Creating a positive work environment emerged as a crucial factor in retaining hotel employees. Research by Yeung, Lock, and Cheung (2019) highlighted the significance of organizational culture, leadership, and employee relationships in enhancing employee satisfaction and, consequently, reducing turnover rates. The study emphasized the importance of supportive management styles, open communication channels, and recognition programs to foster a positive work environment.

Work-life balance was identified as a key retention strategy during this period. Li and Lee (2020) found that hotels that offered flexible work arrangements, such as flexible scheduling or remote work options, experienced higher employee retention rates. The study highlighted the positive influence of work-life balance policies on employee job satisfaction and commitment to the organization. Employee engagement initiatives were also identified as effective strategies in retaining hotel employees. Alalwan, Rana, and Baabdullah (2020) explored the impact of employee engagement on employee retention in the hotel industry. Their findings indicated that initiatives such as employee involvement in decision-making, team-building activities, and regular feedback mechanisms positively influenced employee retention rates.

In Europe, a key employee retention strategy is the implementation of work-life balance initiatives. Research by Kostopoulos, Spanouli, and Panagiotopoulou (2020) revealed that European hotels emphasized the importance of flexible work arrangements and employee well-being programs to retain their workforce. By providing options such as flexible scheduling, telecommuting, and wellness programs, European hotels aim to enhance employee satisfaction and reduce

turnover rates. In the American hotel sector, career development opportunities have been identified as a prominent retention strategy. Research conducted by Baggio, Shani, and Scott (2020) highlighted the emphasis placed on employee training, mentorship, and growth opportunities in the American context. American hotels recognize the value of investing in their employees' professional development to increase job satisfaction and encourage long-term commitment to the organization.

In Europe, a key employee retention strategy is the implementation of work-life balance initiatives. Research by Kostopoulos, Spanouli, and Panagiotopoulou (2020) revealed that European hotels emphasized the importance of flexible work arrangements and employee well-being programs to retain their workforce. By providing options such as flexible scheduling, telecommuting, and wellness programs, European hotels aim to enhance employee satisfaction and reduce turnover rates. In the American hotel sector, career development opportunities have been identified as a prominent retention strategy. Research conducted by Baggio, Shani, and Scott (2020) highlighted the emphasis placed on employee training, mentorship, and growth opportunities in the American context. American hotels recognize the value of investing in their employees' professional development to increase job satisfaction and encourage long-term commitment to the organization hotels focused on supportive management styles, teamwork, and employee recognition programs to create a conducive work environment. By nurturing positive culture, African hotels aim to enhance employee satisfaction, motivation, and loyalty. Employee engagement initiatives play a crucial role in retaining hotel employees in Europe. Research by Bakker, Albrecht, and Leiter (2019) highlighted the significance of engaging employees through empowerment, involvement in decision-making, and feedback mechanisms. European hotels recognize that engaged employees are more likely to stay committed to the organization, leading to reduced turnover rates.

In the American hotel sector, competitive compensation and benefits packages are instrumental in retaining employees. Research by Ukpabi, Karjaluoto and Wirtz (2019) emphasized the importance of fair compensation practices, performance-based incentives, and comprehensive benefits in the American context. Competitive remuneration and benefits help American hotels attract and retain talented individuals, reducing turnover rates. Across Africa, employee recognition and rewards programs have proven effective in employee retention. A study by

Adekoya et al. (2020) highlighted the significance of recognizing employee contributions and providing rewards for exceptional performance. African hotels acknowledge the importance of acknowledging and appreciating their employees' efforts to foster a sense of belonging and job satisfaction

Harris (2023), conducted a study to identify emerging practices in higher education institutions (HEIs) and how implementation impacts remote employee engagement and retention. The research data were derived from four research questions designed to detail the importance of leaders identifying and implementing emerging practices to benefit their university's organizational culture. The study data was collected through semi structured interviews with 23 participants. Those participants included HEI leaders, remote work industry experts, and full-time remote employees (academic/nonacademic) in nonprofit universities in select regions within the United States. The thematic analysis process was used to code and determine the themes from the study data. The study findings revealed the importance of embracing emerging practices in remote work and implementing executive and mid-level management coaching and training specifically for remote work environments. Streamlining the human resources employment practices to include flexible work schedules, hybrid work options, and contracts that accommodate the remote employees' specific work needs were also revealed as emerging practices. Additionally, setting meeting norms that eliminate back-to-back meetings, allow for comfort breaks xiii between sessions, reduction of long sessions, and the implementation of one day a week with no meetings scheduled were themes. HEI and other organizational leaders could use the results of this study to implement new practices, protocols, and standards that support engagement, retention, and a healthy organizational culture for remote employees.

The study conducted by Ikram et al. (2021) investigated the interplay between internal branding, internal Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and employee retention among faculty members in higher education institutions in Lahore, Pakistan. Utilizing variance-based structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM), the research examined data from 377 faculty members from both private and public sector institutions. Their findings indicated that robust internal branding practices significantly influenced faculty members' intention to remain with their institutions. Effective internal branding, which included cultivating a cohesive organizational culture and enabling employees to utilize their capabilities fully, enhanced engagement and satisfaction among faculty.

Moreover, the study revealed that internal CSR initiatives further bolstered employee commitment by providing opportunities for faculty to contribute meaningfully beyond their academic roles, aligning their values with institutional goals. These insights underscored the strategic importance of internal branding and CSR in fostering a supportive environment that mitigated turnover intentions and enhanced organizational resilience within academic settings, particularly relevant for institutions navigating challenges in branding and retention in developing country contexts like Pakistan.

2.3.3 The consequences of employee attrition

POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES

Enhance individual work performance

When few currently on the job employees' exhibit insubordination or inefficiency, any organization may apply involuntary employee attrition and this would result in reduction of negative effect of people or employees working against the organization. Then, the organization must hire new employees which results in injection of new blood having unique talent, skill, knowledge and desire to work hard. According to Staw (1980), the new arrival may be more highly motivated than the old employee and may possess greater abilities and training. He also stated that while experience may contribute positively to job skills and knowledge, effort or motivation may be at its highest when the individual arrives in the organization. The new employees may be characterized as optimistic, energetic, but also naïve and in contrast, the long-term employee may be wise, but also cynical and sluggish. From this one can generalize that employee attrition can enhance individual work performance via talent infusion or creating fear upon existing employees when the organization fires disengaged workers.

Reduction of entrenched conflict

Most of the time the main cause of employee turnover is conflict or disagreement that might be created among workers and supervisors, different administrative bodies, departments, organizations and so on. Sometimes, conflicts are not easily resolved and might emanate from differences in core beliefs and during this time turnover become the ultimate safety valve for organizational strife, given the fact that the conflicting parties have alternatives of where to go.

Thus, employee attrition can be taken as a conflict resolution mechanism by departing the conflicting parties.

Increasing mobility and morale

Most of the time employees who are competent and capable of doing a better job are not delegated authority due to different reasons and if incapable one leaves the organization, it creates a better opportunity for the competent one through upward mobility. Guest (1962) also mentioned that if undesirable supervisors or coworkers leave the organization, this event might obviously cheer some members. And an organization with little turnover may have nowhere to promote highly competent workers with upward mobility strivings unless the organization is expanding rapidly.

Setting the culture right (Innovation and adaptation)

Various studies supported the benefits of turnover in settings requiring exploration or innovation. Dalton and Todor (1979) and Staw (1980) note that the worker mobility implied by turnover may serve as a source of new knowledge for firms. Furthermore, an experimental study conducted by Argote et al. (1995) finds that, although the average impact of employee withdrawal on work group performance is negative, this effect is less pronounced for complex tasks than for simple tasks. They attribute this difference in turnover's effect to the fact that the performance of simple tasks doesn't require greater innovation than complex tasks requiring greater innovation which is also known as exploitation. Employee attrition is a very major means by which reorientation of the organization occurs and also a reason for organizational adaptation in the dynamic environment. For instance, changes in top level management can be followed by major changes in organizational policy and this can happen in order to cope up with the environment and helps to set the culture right. Also measurement (like fire) taken on employees who don't care for a lot of organizational policies results in setting the culture right.

Cost savings

The last positive consequence of employee attrition can be cost saving which means reducing higher manpower costs. Majority of the time employees' having long service years will be paid high pay scale which is indirectly the burden for the organization. Thus, if currently on the job employees' exhibit insubordination or inefficiency, any organization must apply involuntary employee attrition and this would result in reduction of negative effect of people or employees

working against the organization and reduce the negative effect. Through this mechanism any organization can reduce higher manpower costs and cost savings can be implemented.

NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

Employee attrition has a negative impact on organizational performance, productivity and profitability. Phillips and Connell (2003) (as cited in Aman, 2015) concur and enumerate the costs of turnover including recruiting costs, selection and placement costs, orientation costs, training costs, lost wages/salaries, administrative costs, lost productivity, loss of human capital, and customer satisfaction problems. Philips (1990) also mentioned that employee turnover has many hidden costs and these invisible costs are the result of incoming employees, co-workers closely associated with incoming employees, co-workers closely associated with leaving employees and position being filled while empty and all these hidden costs incurred by the organization affect the profitability of the organization.

On the other hand employee withdrawal affects customer service and satisfaction (Kemal et al., 2002). Numerous studies clearly showed that turnover affects the profitability of the organization and if it's not managed correctly it would have the negative effect on the profit of the organization. However, voluntary turnover incurs significant cost, both in terms of direct costs including replacement, recruitment and selection, temporary staff, management time and also in terms of indirect costs including reduced morale of existing staffs, costs of learning, product/service quality, and pressure on remaining staff and the loss of social capital (Dess et al., 2001).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology employed in this research. It details the research design, the study population, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques used to achieve the study's objectives. Additionally, it describes the area of study and the sampling techniques applied.

3.1 Area of Study

The research was conducted in Kampala District, specifically at the Ministry of Health. This location is selected due to the prevalent employee attrition issues at the Ministry and for the convenience of data collection.

3.2 Research Design

A research design is a comprehensive framework that defines the study's structure, the variables, and the methods for data collection and analysis (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). It serves as a systematic plan that guides the study's structure, data collection methods, analysis approach, and outlines any research limitations (Trochim, 2006). This study employed a descriptive survey design, which Kothari (2008) describes as an effective method for gathering data on population characteristics, practices, conditions, or needs. This design is appropriate for capturing data on phenomena that are not directly observable, offering detailed responses that encompass past, present, and future aspects, thus providing a thorough understanding of the subject matter. It is particularly useful for examining social issues within communities, such as gender, culture, and traditions, and for discussing various topics related to background information, socio-cultural influences, legal aspects, financial support sources, and factors influencing employee attrition at the Ministry of Health.

3.3 Population of the Study

The target population refers to a group of individuals, objects, or entities with shared characteristics, even if they are not in the same location. According to Mugenda (2003), the target population is the entire group identified for the study. For this research, the target population includes all 11,280 staff members at the Ministry of Health.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

This study made use of stratified random sampling to get a study sample. The researcher used Taro Yamane formula:

To determine the sample size, the Yamane (1967) formula was used

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where;

n=sample size (responses required)

N = population size

e² = sampling error limit

N= 11,280 (staff at ministry of health)

e = 0.09

1= Designates the probability of the event occurring

$$\text{Sample size } n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$
$$\frac{11,280}{1+11,280(0.09)^2}$$

n = 122.12

n=122

Therefore, the sample size for the study at the Ministry of Health is 122.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

Primary data for this study was collected using self-administered questionnaires. A semi-structured questionnaire, combining both closed-ended questions, were used. Kombo and Tromp (2006)

describe a semi-structured questionnaire as one that uses pre-formulated questions throughout the study. Secondary data was sourced from books, journals, and magazines.

3.6 Instruments for Data Collection

Questionnaires were distributed to participants, who were informed that these instruments are for academic research only. Respondents were assured of the confidentiality and privacy of their input and was informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher used a drop-and-pick method for the collection of completed questionnaires.

3.7 Data Analysis

After collecting the questionnaires, the researcher cleaned the data to ensure completeness and consistency. Descriptive statistics was used for data analysis, employing tools like SPSS version 27 and Excel to provide a comprehensive data portrayal. Likert scale responses were converted into numerical codes and scored on a 1 to 5-point scale. The findings were presented through tables and graphs, accompanied by textual explanations to provide context. This approach aims to generate quantitative reports using tabulations, percentage calculations, and measures of central tendency.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher, with the help of supervisors, developed the questionnaire. A pilot test was conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the research instruments. Official documentation, including an introductory letter from local authorities and the Ministry of Health, was obtained. Research notifications were provided to the heads of departments at the Ministry of Health.

3.9 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis involved examining the collected data and deriving conclusions. This process includes identifying underlying structures, extracting variables, pinpointing anomalies, and testing assumptions. Quantitative analysis encoded responses into categorical variables, followed by SPSS analysis (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The findings were analyzed using descriptive statistics (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003), providing a qualitative description of study objectives or units. Data was tabulated and presented in tables to visually represent individual units, from which descriptive statements was drawn based on the sampled content.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The data collection process adhered to ethical principles, ensuring respondent confidentiality and sourcing information directly from participants and relevant authorities. Transparency, integrity, and honesty was maintained, and the research objectives were clearly explained to participants in advance.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0. Introduction

This chapter covers the analysis, presentation and interpretation of the results according to the objectives of the study. The purpose of the study was to assess the causes of employee attrition at the Ministry of Health.

The study was guided by objectives such as; to identify the underlying root causes of employee attrition in the Ministry of Health, to identify the strategies for enhancing employee retention in the Ministry of Health, and to examine the consequences of employee attrition in the Ministry of Health.

4.1 Response Rate

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Questionnaires respond ended to	116	95%
Questionnaires not responded to	6	5%
Total	122	100%.

Source: Primary data 2024

The study involved distributing 122 questionnaires, of which 116 responses were received, resulting in a 95% response rate. As noted by Dillman et al. (2014), achieving a high response rate is critical in survey research as it increases the representativeness of the sample and reduces the potential for nonresponse bias, which can significantly affect the validity of the research findings.

4.2 Demographic characteristics of the survey study.

This section presents proportions of demographic characteristics of respondents who expressed their viewpoints regarding employee attrition at the Ministry of Health.

4.2.1 Gender of respondents

Table 4.2: Gender of respondents

Category	Frequency	Percent
Female	67	57.8%
Male	49	42.2%
Prefer not to say	0	0.0%
Total	116	100%

Source: Primary data 2024

The demographic breakdown of the respondents revealed that 57.8% identified as female, while 42.2% identified as male. This distribution may indicate a predominance of female respondents in the study. If women do have higher attrition rates, it could be attributed to various factors, such as workplace culture, lack of support for work-life balance, limited career advancement opportunities, or specific challenges related to gender dynamics in the workplace. Furthermore, the experiences of female employees may vary significantly from those of their male counterparts, potentially influencing their decisions to leave the organization.

4.2.2 Age Group

Table 4.3 : Age Group

Category	Frequency	Percent
18-24 years	4	3.4%
25-34 years	63	54.3%
35-44 years	30	25.9%
45-54 years	15	13%
55 and above	4	3%
Total	116	100%

Source: Primary data 2024

The age distribution of respondents revealed that the majority (54.3%) fell within the 25-34 years age group. This was followed by the 35-44 years group at 25.9%, suggesting a significant presence

of employees in the early stages of their mid-career phase. Conversely, younger employees aged 18-24 years and older employees aged 55 and above represented only 3.4% and 3%, respectively. The findings suggest that the Ministry's workforce is largely composed of younger employees. This demographic profile may reflect the Ministry's ability to attract fresh talent, which is crucial for fostering innovation and addressing the evolving needs of the healthcare sector.

4.2.3 Marital status

Table 4.4: Marital status

Category	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 year	3	2.6%
1-3 years	24	20.7%
4-6 years	2	1.7%
7-10 years	87	75.0%
More than 10 years	0	0.0%
Total	116	100%

Source: Primary data 2024

A predominant majority of respondents (75.0%) reported being married for 7-10 years, suggesting that many employees are likely to be in stable relationships, which may influence their perspectives on job security and work-life balance. In contrast, a smaller percentage of respondents are newly married, with only 2.6% indicating marriages of less than one year and 20.7% married for 1-3 years. This distribution suggests a potential focus on retaining employees during critical phases of their personal lives, particularly for those who may be navigating the complexities of early marriage and career development. The absence of respondents married for more than 10 years may indicate a younger workforce.

4.2.4 Level of education

Table 4.5: Level of education

Category	Frequency	Percent
Certificate	30	25.9%
High School Diploma	7	6.0%
Bachelor's Degree	62	53.4%
Master's Degree	17	14.7%
Doctorate	0	0.0%
Total	116	100%

Source: Primary data 2024

The data on the level of education among respondents indicates a diverse educational background, with the majority (53.4%) holding a Bachelor's Degree. This suggests that a significant portion of the workforce at the Ministry of Health is equipped with higher education qualifications, which could contribute to a skilled and knowledgeable employee base. Additionally, 25.9% of respondents possess a Certificate, indicating that there is also a notable presence of employees with vocational or specialized training. On the other hand, those with Master's Degrees make up 14.7%, and there are no respondents with a Doctorate, which may suggest a gap in advanced academic qualifications within the organization. The relatively low representation of employees with Master's Degrees could indicate limited opportunities for advanced studies or may reflect the Ministry's recruitment focus on Bachelor's level qualifications. The low percentage of employees with a High School Diploma (6.0%) may imply that the Ministry prioritizes hiring individuals with at least some post-secondary education, aligning with the skills needed in the healthcare sector.

4.2.5 Number of years spent working with the company

Table 4.6: Number of years spent working with the company

Category	Frequency	Percent
Full-time	17	14.7%
Part-time	28	24.1%
Contractual	39	33.6%
Temporary	9	7.8%
Other (please specify	23	19.8%
Total	116	100%

Source: Primary data 2024

The data on the number of years employees have spent working with the Ministry of Health reveals a diverse range of employment types. The largest category is Contractual employees, comprising 33.6% of the respondents, indicating that a significant portion of the workforce is engaged on a contract basis. This could suggest that the Ministry relies heavily on contractual arrangements to meet its staffing needs, which may reflect flexibility in managing workforce demands. Part-time employees account for 24.1%, while Full-time employees represent 14.7%. This distribution indicates that many staff members may be working part-time, possibly to balance other commitments or due to the nature of their roles. The presence of a notable number of part-time workers may necessitate the implementation of specific strategies to ensure their engagement and integration within the organization. The Temporary category, at 7.8%, suggests that a smaller proportion of employees hold short-term positions, which may impact overall workforce stability. The Other category, comprising 19.8%, indicates that there are additional employment types that respondents identified, which may include various forms of employment not categorized above.

4.3 Descriptive statistics

4.3.1 The root causes of employee attrition in the ministry of health.

The data presented in Table 4.6 revealed several critical factors that contributed to employee attrition at the Ministry of Health.

Table 4.7: The root causes of employee attrition in the ministry of health.

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
Heavy workloads are responsible for employee attrition at the Ministry of health.	1	0.9%	0	0.0%	11	9.5%	54	46.6%	50	43.1%
Our organization faces inadequate resources and poor working conditions.	1	0.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	39	33.6%	76	65.5%
There are limited professional development opportunities in our organization.	7	6.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	55	47.4%	54	46.6%
Low salaries compared to industry standards influence employee departures.	2	1.7%	6	5.2%	0	0.0%	22	19.0%	86	74.1%
Lack of support from supervisors impacts employees' decisions to leave.	1	0.9%	9	7.8%	7	6.0%	46	39.7%	53	45.7%
Poor management practices lead to employees leaving their positions.	10	8.6%	35	30.2%	0	0.0%	51	44.0%	20	17.2%

High job stress is a recurring issue in our organization.	1	0.9%	17	15.5%	0	0.0%	56	50.9%	36	32.7%
We face challenges with insufficient medical supplies and equipment.	1	0.9%	9	7.8%	0	0.0%	53	45.7%	53	45.7% ^[H2]

Source: Primary data 2024

[H3]

A significant majority of respondents indicated that heavy workloads were a substantial factor in employee attrition, with 89.7% either agreeing (46.6%) or strongly agreeing (43.1%). Only 0.9% strongly disagreed, while 9.5% remained unsure. This overwhelming agreement suggested that the Ministry placed considerable demands on its employees, likely leading to burnout and job dissatisfaction.

Furthermore, an overwhelming 99.1% of respondents agreed (33.6%) or strongly agreed (65.5%) that inadequate resources and poor working conditions significantly influenced attrition. Only 0.9% strongly disagreed with this statement. This finding highlighted a critical area for intervention, as improving the physical and material work environment could enhance employee morale and retention.

The lack of professional development opportunities also emerged as a significant concern, with 94% of respondents agreeing (47.4%) or strongly agreeing (46.6%) that this issue contributed to attrition. Only 6.0% strongly disagreed. This indicated that many employees felt stagnant in their roles, which likely led to dissatisfaction and potential departures from the Ministry.

The data indicated that low salaries compared to industry standards were a primary factor influencing employee departures, with 74.1% of respondents strongly agreeing and an additional 19.0% agreeing. Only 6.9% expressed disagreement. This result underscored the need for the Ministry to evaluate its compensation structure to remain competitive.

A significant portion of employees, approximately 85.6%, agreed (39.7%) or strongly agreed (45.7%) that a lack of support from supervisors impacted their decisions to leave. Only 8.7%

disagreed. This finding emphasized the importance of effective leadership and management practices in influencing employee satisfaction and retention.

Although 61.2% of respondents agreed (44.0%) or strongly agreed (17.2%) that poor management practices led to attrition, there was also a notable divide, with 38.6% disagreeing (30.2%) or strongly disagreeing (8.6%). This discrepancy suggested that while many employees experienced dissatisfaction with management, others had positive experiences that mitigated their concerns.

High job stress was identified as a recurring issue, with 83.6% of employees agreeing (50.9%) or strongly agreeing (32.7%) that it contributed to attrition. Only 16.4% expressed disagreement or uncertainty. This pointed to the need for the Ministry to implement stress management initiatives to help reduce burnout and improve overall employee well-being.

Lastly, the respondents expressed that 91.4% agreed (45.7%) or strongly agreed (45.7%) that challenges related to insufficient medical supplies and equipment were significant factors in employee attrition, while only 8.7% disagreed. This concern not only affected employee morale but also impacted the quality of care provided to patients, making it imperative for the Ministry to address resource shortages.

4.3.2 The consequences of employee attrition in the ministry of health

The analysis of the consequences of employee attrition at the Ministry of Health revealed significant insights into how turnover impacts the organization. The survey results illustrated three primary areas of concern: hidden costs associated with attrition, the impact on organizational performance and productivity, and the effects on customer satisfaction and service quality.

Table 4.8: The consequences of employee attrition in the ministry of health

	Strongly Disagree			Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Count	Row %	N	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %

Employee attrition is associated with many hidden costs for example, cost of recruitment and replacement selection.	12	10.3%	18	15.5%	6	5.2%	66	56.9%	14	12.1%
High employee attrition negatively impacts organizational performance and productivity due to increased recruitment and training costs.	46	40.4%	43	37.7%	13	11.4%	5	4.4%	7	6.1%
Turnover can lead to decreased customer satisfaction and service quality as a result of disrupted continuity and staff shortages.	22	19.0%	26	22.4%	14	12.1%	29	25.0%	25	21.6%

[H4]Source: Primary data 2024

In response to the statement regarding hidden costs associated with employee attrition, 69.0% of respondents either agreed (56.9%) or strongly agreed (12.1%) that attrition incurs significant costs, such as recruitment and replacement selection. Only 25.8% of participants disagreed (10.3% strongly disagreeing and 15.5% disagreeing), while 5.2% were unsure. This majority perspective indicates a strong recognition among employees that turnover results in financial burdens for the Ministry, emphasizing the importance of understanding these costs in broader organizational budgeting and planning.

When examining the impact of high employee attrition on organizational performance and productivity, the responses were more divided. 78.1% of respondents disagreed (40.4% strongly disagreeing and 37.7% disagreeing) with the notion that high attrition negatively impacts performance due to increased recruitment and training costs. Only 10.5% agreed (4.4% agreeing and 6.1% strongly agreeing) that turnover adversely affects performance. This divergence suggests that many employees may perceive the Ministry's ability to maintain performance despite turnover, possibly due to effective onboarding or training processes.

Regarding the statement about the effect of turnover on customer satisfaction and service quality, 46.6% of respondents agreed (25.0% agreeing and 21.6% strongly agreeing) that attrition could lead to decreased satisfaction due to disrupted continuity and staff shortages. Conversely, 41.4% disagreed (19.0% strongly disagreeing and 22.4% disagreeing) with this assertion. This finding indicated a notable split in perceptions, suggesting that while a significant portion of employees recognized the potential negative impact of turnover on service delivery, others felt confident that the Ministry could maintain quality despite personnel changes. For the researcher, this inconsistency suggested an opportunity to investigate further how the Ministry's service delivery mechanisms could adapt to turnover and what strategies might enhance continuity and customer satisfaction.

4.3.3 The strategies of enhancing employee retention in the ministry of health.

The survey results regarding strategies for enhancing employee retention at the Ministry of Health provided significant insights into employee perspectives on various initiatives aimed at reducing turnover.

Table 4.9: The strategies of enhancing employee retention in the ministry of health.

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Not sure		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
Competitive compensation and benefits packages are essential for retaining employees.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	40	34.5%	76	65.5%
Providing career development opportunities, such as training and mentoring are very fundamental.	0	0.0%	5	4.3%	1	0.9%	34	29.3%	76	65.5%

A positive work environment, characterized by supportive management and open communication, is crucial.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	40	34.5%	76	65.5%
Need for Work-life balance initiatives, such as flexible scheduling and remote work options.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	59	50.9%	57	49.1%
Employee engagement initiatives, including involvement in decision-making and regular feedback, are vital.	0	0.0%	9	7.8%	14	12.1%	59	50.9%	34	29.3%
There is need to invest in career development opportunities is seen as a primary method for improving employee retention.	0	0.0%	18	15.5%	11	9.5%	47	40.5%	40	34.5%
Recognition and rewards programs are effective in fostering employee loyalty.	0	0.0%	8	6.9%	0	0.0%	61	52.6%	47	40.5% ^[H5]

Source: Primary data 2024

A substantial 100% of respondents acknowledged the importance of competitive compensation and benefits packages, with 34.5% agreeing and 65.5% strongly agreeing that these factors are essential for retaining employees. This unanimous support indicates a clear recognition among employees that financial incentives play a critical role in their decision to remain with the organization. For the researcher, this finding highlights the necessity for the Ministry to regularly assess and enhance its compensation packages to attract and retain top talent effectively.

The survey also revealed a similar emphasis on career development opportunities, with 94.8% of respondents either agreeing (29.3%) or strongly agreeing (65.5%) that providing training and

mentoring is fundamental for retention. Only a small percentage expressed disagreement (4.3% disagreed and 0.9% were unsure). This strong endorsement reflects the employees' desire for growth and advancement within their roles. Consequently, the researcher identified the need for the Ministry to implement robust career development programs that foster a culture of continuous learning and professional growth, thereby enhancing employee retention.

Moreover, the data indicated that 100% of respondents viewed a positive work environment, characterized by supportive management and open communication, as crucial for retention. With both groups of respondents affirming this perspective (34.5% agreeing and 65.5% strongly agreeing), the results underscore the significance of workplace culture and interpersonal relationships in influencing employee decisions to stay. For the researcher, this finding points to the need for the Ministry to cultivate a supportive and communicative environment that enhances employee satisfaction and loyalty.

Additionally, the results highlighted the importance of work-life balance initiatives, with 100% of respondents agreeing (50.9%) or strongly agreeing (49.1%) that flexible scheduling and remote work options are vital for retention. This finding emphasizes the significance of accommodating employees' personal needs and preferences in their work arrangements. Therefore, the researcher suggested that the Ministry should consider implementing or enhancing flexible work policies to support employees' work-life balance, ultimately contributing to improved retention.

Furthermore, the survey indicated that 80.2% of respondents either agreed (50.9%) or strongly agreed (29.3%) that employee engagement initiatives such as involvement in decision-making and regular feedback—are vital for retention. A smaller percentage (7.8% disagreed and 12.1% were unsure) acknowledged the importance of employee engagement. This finding suggests that fostering an environment where employees feel involved and valued can significantly enhance their commitment to the organization.

The significance of investing in career development opportunities was further emphasized, with 75.0% of respondents agreeing (40.5%) or strongly agreeing (34.5%) that such investments are a primary method for improving employee retention. This shared understanding underscores the importance of prioritizing career development initiatives as a means of retaining talent. Consequently, the necessity for the Ministry to focus on these initiatives to foster a more dedicated workforce.

Lastly, regarding recognition and rewards programs, 93.1% of respondents either agreed (52.6%) or strongly agreed (40.5%) that these programs effectively foster employee loyalty. The absence of disagreement on this matter further emphasizes the value employees place on acknowledgment and appreciation for their contributions. This finding suggests that implementing or enhancing recognition programs could be a key strategy for improving employee retention.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides the discussion of findings, conclusions and recommendations in regards to the study objectives. This chapter also highlights the methodological limitations of the study and areas for further research. The purpose of the study was to assess the causes of employee attrition at the Ministry of Health.

The study was guided by objectives such as; to identify the underlying root causes of employee attrition in the Ministry of Health, to identify the strategies for enhancing employee retention in the Ministry of Health, and to examine the consequences of employee attrition in the Ministry of Health.

5.1 Summary of Findings

5.1.1 The Root Causes of Employee Attrition in the Ministry of Health

The findings revealed that a significant majority of respondents identified heavy workloads as a primary factor contributing to employee attrition within the Ministry of Health. Most employees reported feeling overwhelmed by the demands placed on them, which likely led to feelings of burnout and job dissatisfaction. In addition, nearly all respondents expressed concern regarding inadequate resources and poor working conditions, indicating that these factors substantially influenced their decisions to leave. The lack of professional development opportunities emerged as another critical issue, with many employees feeling stagnant in their roles, leading to dissatisfaction. Low salaries compared to industry standards also ranked as a significant factor in attrition, as the majority of employees recognized the need for the Ministry to improve its compensation structure. Moreover, a considerable number of respondents indicated that insufficient support from supervisors and poor management practices contributed to their decisions to leave, highlighting the importance of effective leadership in employee retention.

5.1.2 The Consequences of Employee Attrition in the Ministry of Health

The consequences of employee attrition were also thoroughly examined, revealing that a majority of respondents recognized the hidden costs associated with turnover, particularly in recruitment and replacement. This understanding emphasized the financial burden that attrition imposed on the

Ministry. However, when considering the impact of high employee turnover on organizational performance and productivity, the responses were more divided. While some respondents acknowledged that attrition could negatively affect performance, a substantial minority believed that the Ministry could maintain its performance levels despite staff changes, suggesting confidence in effective onboarding and training processes. Regarding customer satisfaction and service quality, perceptions were notably split. Some employees recognized that turnover could disrupt continuity and negatively impact service delivery, while others felt the Ministry could sustain quality despite personnel changes. This inconsistency indicated an opportunity for further investigation into the Ministry's service delivery mechanisms and how they could adapt to turnover challenges.

5.1.3 The Strategies for Enhancing Employee Retention in the Ministry of Health

The strategies for enhancing employee retention revealed overwhelming support among respondents for the necessity of competitive compensation and benefits packages. This unanimous consensus indicated that employees viewed financial incentives as crucial for their decision to remain with the organization. The importance of career development opportunities was also highlighted, with a majority of respondents expressing a desire for training and mentoring to foster professional growth. Furthermore, employees unanimously agreed that a positive work environment characterized by supportive management and open communication was essential for retention. Additionally, the significance of work-life balance initiatives, including flexible scheduling and remote work options, was recognized by all respondents, suggesting that accommodating personal needs is vital for retention. Employee engagement initiatives, where employees feel involved in decision-making and receive regular feedback, were deemed important by a substantial majority. Lastly, recognition and rewards programs were widely viewed as effective in fostering employee loyalty, indicating that appreciation for contributions plays a crucial role in retention strategies.

5.2 Discussion of the Findings

5.2.1 The Root Causes of Employee Attrition in the Ministry of Health

The findings indicate that a significant majority of respondents identified heavy workloads as a primary factor contributing to employee attrition within the Ministry of Health. This is in line with Ruggunan & Singh (2013) that heavy workloads and inadequate resources as primary drivers of

attrition among healthcare workers in South Africa. They noted that overwhelming demands lead to feelings of burnout, which aligns with the findings expressed by the majority of employees in your study.

Most employees reported feeling overwhelmed by the demands placed on them, likely leading to feelings of burnout and job dissatisfaction. This is supported by Tekle et al. (2022), who found that poor working conditions and high job stress significantly influenced attrition rates among Health Extension Workers in Ethiopia. Your respondents' concerns about inadequate resources and poor working conditions further reinforce these findings, indicating that these factors substantially influence their decisions to leave.

The lack of professional development opportunities emerged as another critical issue, with many employees feeling stagnant in their roles. This aligns with the findings of Adzei and Atinga (2012), who identified limited opportunities for professional development as a key reason for attrition among health professionals in Ghana. The recognition of low salaries compared to industry standards as a significant factor also echoes the research by Ayubu & Mose (2023), which found that low salaries were a predictor of nurse attrition in public hospitals.

Moreover, the concern about insufficient support from supervisors and poor management practices was noted as contributing to attrition. This supports findings from multiple studies, including the work of Tekle et al. (2022), who identified a lack of recognition and support from supervisors as significant factors in attrition among health workers.

5.2.2 The Consequences of Employee Attrition in the Ministry of Health

The consequences of employee attrition were thoroughly examined, revealing that a majority of respondents recognized the hidden costs associated with turnover, particularly in recruitment and replacement. This is consistent with Phillips and Connell (2003), who enumerated various costs associated with turnover, such as recruiting, training, and lost productivity. The understanding of these costs emphasizes the financial burden that attrition imposes on the Ministry.

When considering the impact of high employee turnover on organizational performance and productivity, responses were more divided. Some respondents acknowledged that attrition could negatively affect performance, which aligns with Phillips (1990), who noted that employee turnover has many hidden costs that affect profitability. Conversely, a substantial minority

believed that the Ministry could maintain its performance levels despite staff changes, suggesting confidence in effective onboarding and training processes. This perspective highlights an area for further investigation into the Ministry's service delivery mechanisms.

Regarding customer satisfaction and service quality, perceptions were notably split. Some employees recognized that turnover could disrupt continuity, echoing Kemal et al. (2002), who indicated that turnover negatively affects customer service and satisfaction. However, others felt the Ministry could sustain quality despite personnel changes, pointing to the need for a deeper exploration of how the Ministry adapts its service delivery to turnover challenges.

5.2.3 The Strategies for Enhancing Employee Retention in the Ministry of Health

The strategies for enhancing employee retention revealed overwhelming support for competitive compensation and benefits packages. This is in line with Zhang et al. (2019), who emphasized the importance of fair compensation practices in retaining employees. The respondents' consensus indicates that financial incentives are crucial for their decision to remain with the organization.

The importance of career development opportunities was also highlighted. This finding resonates with research by Ali et al. (2019), which noted that offering training programs and mentorship positively impacted employee retention rates. Additionally, employees expressed a desire for a positive work environment characterized by supportive management and open communication. Yeung et al. (2019) similarly underscored the significance of organizational culture and supportive management styles in reducing turnover rates.

The recognition of work-life balance initiatives also aligns with findings by Li and Lee (2020), who noted that flexible work arrangements positively influenced employee retention rates. This indicates that accommodating personal needs is vital for retention.

Moreover, the importance of employee engagement initiatives, where employees feel involved in decision-making and receive regular feedback, was supported by Alalwan et al. (2020). They found that such initiatives positively influenced employee retention rates, which aligns with the findings expressed by a substantial majority of respondents in your study.

Lastly, the recognition and rewards programs viewed as effective in fostering employee loyalty echo the findings of Adekoya et al. (2020), who highlighted the significance of recognizing employee contributions to enhance job satisfaction and retention.

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, the investigation into employee attrition within the Ministry of Health highlights several root causes, including heavy workloads, inadequate resources, poor working conditions, low salaries, lack of professional development, and insufficient management support, all of which contribute to employee dissatisfaction and turnover. The consequences of this attrition not only incur hidden costs related to recruitment and replacement but also raise concerns about its impact on organizational performance and service delivery, indicating a need for deeper analysis in these areas. To enhance employee retention, respondents emphasized the importance of competitive compensation, career development opportunities, a supportive work environment, work-life balance initiatives, employee engagement, and recognition programs. Addressing these factors is crucial for the Ministry to foster a more stable and committed workforce, ultimately leading to improved service quality and organizational effectiveness.

5.4 Recommendations

For the Government: The government should consider increasing funding for the Ministry of Health to address resource shortages, allowing for better salaries, enhanced working conditions, and more professional development opportunities. Implementing policies that support flexible work arrangements can help alleviate employee burnout and improve work-life balance.

For Employees: Employees should be encouraged to communicate their needs and concerns regarding workloads and working conditions to management. Participation in decision-making processes can empower employees and foster a culture of open dialogue, which is essential for creating a supportive work environment.

For the Ministry of Health: The Ministry should prioritize developing a comprehensive employee retention strategy that includes competitive compensation packages, robust career development programs, and regular training opportunities. Implementing effective leadership practices and providing managerial support will be critical in creating a positive work environment. Additionally, establishing recognition and rewards programs will help in appreciating employee contributions, thereby enhancing loyalty and retention.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

This study faced several limitations, including a potentially biased sample if the respondents were primarily those who were dissatisfied and chose to participate. The reliance on self-reported data

may have introduced inaccuracies, as participants might have underreported or overreported their experiences and perceptions. Additionally, the study's scope was limited to the Ministry of Health, which may not be representative of other governmental institutions or health organizations. Furthermore, the cross-sectional design of the study restricts the ability to draw causal conclusions about the relationship between identified factors and employee attrition. Future research could benefit from a longitudinal approach to better understand the dynamics of employee retention over time.

5.6 Areas for Further Study

Future research should explore the long-term impacts of employee attrition on organizational performance and service delivery within the Ministry of Health, including how turnover affects patient outcomes and continuity of care. Comparative studies across different government ministries could provide insights into varying attrition rates and retention strategies. Investigating the specific effects of work-life balance initiatives on employee satisfaction and retention could also yield valuable findings. Additionally, examining the role of employee engagement initiatives in fostering a positive organizational culture may uncover effective practices that enhance retention. Finally, qualitative studies involving interviews or focus groups with employees may provide a deeper understanding of the nuances surrounding attrition and retention within the healthcare sector.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE TOOL

Dear Participant,

I am Doreen Akiteng, a student at Makerere University currently conducting research for my Master of Business Administration degree. As part of my research project, I am investigating the topic: "An Assessment of the Causes of Employee Attrition in the Health Sector: A Case Study of the Ministry of Health of Uganda."

You have been selected to participate in this study, and I kindly request that you complete the following questionnaire. Your responses will provide valuable insights into the factors contributing to employee attrition within the health sector.

Please be assured that all information provided will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Doreen Akiteng

Makerere University

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Kindly tick the correct answer and fill in the blank spaces where applicable.

1. Gender:

- A. Male
- B. Female
- C. Prefer not to say

2. Age:

- A. 18-24
- B. 25-34

- C. 35-44
- D. 45-54
- E. 55 and above

3. Years of Service in the Health Sector:

- A. Less than 1 year
- B. 1-3 years
- C. 4-6 years
- D. 7-10 years
- E. More than 10 years

4. Educational Qualification:

- A. High School Diploma
- B. Bachelor's Degree
- C. Master's Degree
- D. Doctorate
- E. Other (please specify): _____

5. Employment Status:

- A. Full-time
- B. Part-time
- C. Contractual
- D. Temporary
- E. Other (please specify): _____

SECTION B: THE ROOT CAUSES OF EMPLOYEE ATTRITION IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by ticking (√) appropriately: (Key: 5= strongly agree, 4=Agree, 3= Not sure, 2=Disagree and 1= strongly disagree)

S/No.	Statements	Scholar	SA	A	NS	D	SD
1	Heavy workloads are responsible for employee attrition at the Ministry of health.	Ayubu & Mose, (2023),	5	4	3	2	1
2	Our organization faces inadequate resources and poor working conditions.		5	4	3	2	1
3	There are limited professional development opportunities in our organization.	Adzei and Atinga (2012)	5	4	3	2	1
4	Low salaries compared to industry standards influence employee departures.		5	4	3	2	1
5	Lack of support from supervisors impacts employees' decisions to leave.		5	4	3	2	1
6	Poor management practices lead to employees leaving their positions.		5	4	3	2	1
7	High job stress is a recurring issue in our organization.		5	4	3	2	1
8	We face challenges with insufficient medical supplies and equipment.		5	4	3	2	1

SECTION C: THE CONSEQUENCES OF EMPLOYEE ATTRITION IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by ticking (√) appropriately: (Key: 5= strongly agree, 4=Agree, 3= Not sure, 2=Disagree and 1= strongly disagree)

S/No.	Statements	Scholar	SA	A	NS	D	SD
1	Employee attrition is associated with many hidden costs for example, cost of recruitment and replacement selection.		5	4	3	2	1
2	High employee attrition negatively impacts organizational performance and productivity due to increased recruitment and training costs.		5	4	3	2	1
3	Turnover can lead to decreased customer satisfaction and service quality as a result of disrupted continuity and staff shortages.	Kemal et al (2002)	5	4	3	2	1

SECTION C: THE STRATEGIES OF ENHANCING EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by ticking (√) appropriately: (Key: 5= strongly agree, 4=Agree, 3= Not sure, 2=Disagree and 1= strongly disagree)

S/No.	Statements	Scholar	SA	A	NS	D	SD
1	Competitive compensation and benefits packages are essential for retaining employees.	Albrecht, and Leiter (2019)	5	4	3	2	1
2	Providing career development opportunities, such as training and mentoring are very fundamental.		5	4	3	2	1
3	A positive work environment, characterized by supportive management and open communication, is crucial.		5	4	3	2	1
4	Need for Work-life balance initiatives, such as flexible scheduling and remote work options.		5	4	3	2	1
5	Employee engagement initiatives, including involvement in decision-making and regular feedback, are vital.		5	4	3	2	1
6	There is need to invest in career development opportunities is seen as a primary method for improving employee retention.		5	4	3	2	1
7	Recognition and rewards programs are effective in fostering employee loyalty.		5	4	3	2	1

Thank you