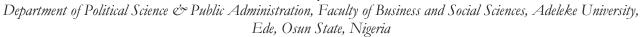# Implementation of Management Strategies and Academic Staff Retention in Private Universities in Southwest, Nigeria

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Abstract:

Implementing management strategies to retain staff is an important issue for universities as it impacts the institution's quality of teaching, research, and administrative services. The study examined the implementation of management strategies and their impact on academic staff retention in nine selected private universities. The research sample comprises 1,736 academic staff members from these institutions. The study investigated the various management strategies employed by private universities to retain their academic workforce and explored their effectiveness in promoting staff retention. The paper utilized a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. A survey questionnaire was distributed among academic staff members to assess their perceptions of management strategies and their impact on retention. Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted with key university administrators to gain insights into the specific strategies employed and their rationale. The findings highlighted the management strategies that private universities adopt to retain academic staff and the implications of enhancing their staff retention efforts. The findings also informed university administrators and human resource professionals about the strategies that can greatly impact academic staff retention if implemented properly.The study concluded that formulation and effective implementation of management strategies will improve academic staff retention. By identifying successful practices and addressing areas for improvement, universities can enhance their ability to attract and retain talented academic staff. This, in turn, will contribute to the overall quality of the universities.

Keywords: *Implementation, Management Strategies, Academic Staff Retention, Private Universities, Southwest, Nigeria.*

Introduction

The management of private universities has always considered management strategies as major tools in staff retention. The ability of these universities to retain their workforce will contribute immensely to the quality of students

that are turned out, which will make them compete with their counterparts from public universities. The management strategies through rewards such as adequate payroll, benefits, compensation, and talent improvement in the various universities, determine to a great extent, the ability of the universities to retain good and effective academic staff. It is observed that private universities are struggling to retain their staff, most especially academics, due to their inability to implement the various concepts of strategies they have developed.

The assertion that the universe has shrunk into a global village conveys the university's central role in national development. By virtue of its mandate, the university serves as the village headmaster, providing direction and purpose while illuminating the path to progress (Adebayo and Adeoye, 2012). The university's primacy warrants that its staff's must be developed and managed for better academic and administrative performance. Private Universities in Nigeria depend on funds provided by their founders to run their academic programmes and administrative activities, particularly as it affects human resources (academic staff).

Management strategies to maintain the developed human capital are essential in staff retention. The management strategies for implementing the retention process are intended to provide employees more influence over their work, resulting in higher job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Management strategies focused on meeting employees' demands are undertaken, regardless of the organisation's size, to retain the top skills hands. Retaining capable staff' provides a competitive advantage that cannot be matched by other competitors in terms of developing high morale and satisfied employees who will give better customer service and increase productivity (Hong et.al, 2012).

Johnson et al. (2000) avers that staff retention is the capacity to keep the organisation's desired staff for a longer period without allowing competitors in the industry to snatch them away. Also, Chaminade (2007) describes retention as an organisation's voluntary decision to create an atmosphere that keeps staff engaged over time. Sultana Nazia and Bushra Begum (2013) describe staff retention as a deliberate effort by employers to establish and cultivate an atmosphere that encourages current employees or staff to stay employed by having policies and practices that satisfy their divergent needs. It is also a process through which employees are urged to stay with the company for as long as possible.

Bushe (2012) posits that staff retention is an institution's ability to not only hire qualified personnel, but also keep them by providing a good work-life, a positive work environment, a good place to work, and being an employer of choice, all of which are dependent on the formulation and implementation of best practices in human resource and management strategies. In attaining staff retention, various management strategies are designed and deployed to accommodate a variety of staff demands to improve job satisfaction and reduce the high costs of hiring and training new employees. This entails influencing staff's decisions to be committed and stay with the organisation, even when career chances are not available within the work settings, by decreasing structural change, administrative demands, and quality review needs while maintaining high standards.

The university system exists such that changes and innovations are needed to maintain excellence. Usen (2009) posits that insufficient provision for training opportunities for staff to acceptable standards constitutes one of the major sources of staff turnover which, in turn, contributes to the poor quality of education in many schools in Nigeria and the entire globe. The emergence of private universities has, to a great extent, solved the problem of the irregular school calendar; students admitted there can finish their academic programme within the period allocated for the programme without interruption. They have been able to create jobs for the unemployed even though the challenge of retaining employees poses a threat. Many of these private universities are owned by faith-based organizations and a few by a sole proprietorship. Ownership management

strategies of staff before establishment or commencement of operations usually becomes styles of proprietors' implementation.

The management of private universities has always considered management strategies as a major tool in staff retention. The ability of these universities to retain their workforce will contribute immensely to the quality of students that are turned out, which will make them compete with their counterparts from public universities. The management strategies through rewards such as payroll, benefits, compensation, and talent set improvement in the various universities determine, to a great extent, the ability of the universities to retain good and effective academic staff. It is observed that private universities are struggling to retain their staff, most especially academics, due to their inability to implement the various concepts of management strategies they have developed. Staff routinely migrates from one job to another consequent of juicy and attractive offers simultaneously given by other local and international universities or organizations. It is against this background, that it becomes pertinent to examine the management strategies employed in the selected private universities in South-West, Nigeria as a means of retaining their academic staff. Further, the paper examines the management strategies used in ensuring the retention of academic staff in the selected private universities in South-West, Nigeria and investigates the effect of management strategies on academic staff retention in the selected private universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Conceptual Underpinning

The primacy of the university warrants that staff must be developed and managed for better academic and administrative performance. Private Universities in Nigeria depend on funds provided by their founders to run their academic programmes and administrative activities, particularly as it affects human resources (academic staff). Aremo, in Adesulu (2017), states that funding is a causative factor in quality human capital development that translates into high academic outputs. In the words of Ogujiuba (2013), Nigeria can only reposition

herself as a potent force through the quality of her products from all levels of education (primary, secondary and tertiary) as well as by making her manpower relevant in the highly competitive and globalized economy through structured and strategic planning of her educational institutions. Private universities are not left out in contributing immensely to the growth of Nigeria's economy through academic and moral fortification of the youth for a better nation.

Management Strategies

Management strategies are an important aspect of management that elicits research interest among scholars and practitioners. This can be attributed to the universal application of this aspect of management disciplines. One of the conceptual studies in Nigeria by Ujunwa and Modebe, (2012) advocates for the adoption of a management strategy approach to ensuring capital market efficiency following the perceived pivotal role of the capital market in economic development. The strategic management measures they reviewed ranged from effective regulation to achieving a favourable macroeconomic environment. They posit that these strategies will promote economic performance. Despite this, insufficient empirical work exists to measure the level of association between the adoption of these techniques and organizational performance (Askarany & Yazdifar, 2012).

Management strategy has to do with deploying a firm's internal strengths and weaknesses to take advantage of its external opportunities and minimize its external threats (Adeleke, Ogundele & Oyenuga, 2008). Batman and Scott define it as a process that involves managers from all parts of the organisation in the formulation and implementation of strategic goals and strategies. They define strategy as a pattern of action and resource allocation designed to achieve organizational goals. Thomson and Strickland (2003) define it as the managers' tasks of crafting, implementing, and executing company goals in its chosen market arena, competing successfully, pleasing customers, and achieving good business performance.

Management strategy plays a crucial role in staff retention by creating a positive work environment, providing opportunities for growth and development, and fostering employee engagement and satisfaction. A well-crafted management strategy can help organizations attract and retain top talent, reduce staff exodus, and enhance organizational performance. According to a study by Gong, Law, and Chang (2019), effective management strategies, such as providing supportive leadership, clear communication, and opportunities for skill development, can significantly increase employee job satisfaction and reduce staff exodus. Additionally, a study by Karatepe and Kilic (2020) found that employees' perceptions of their managers' supportive behaviour positively influenced their affective commitment to the organization, which significantly impacted their intention to stay with the organization.

Staff Retention

Cascio (2010) considers staff retention as a managerial initiative to keep employees in the organisation and includes practices and policies on employee reward and compensation management, fostering an enabling, healthy, and safe work environment, and improving interpersonal relationships.

Akila (2012), asserts that employee retention relates to the system intended to encourage long-term organizational engagement with employees. It is a prerequisite for organisational success and effectiveness today for institutions to have the right workforce to gain market competitive advantages. Naris and Ukpere (2010), assert that organisations should be proactive in developing employee retention strategies given the scarcity of qualified employees while Branham, (2005), posits that being that employees are an organization's most valuable assets, employee retention is a key pillar in enhancing competitive advantage and developing core competencies within the organization and it is in the best interest of the organization to place emphasis and more efforts in retaining their best-talented employees rather than frequent recruitment due to high turnover rates.

Retaining employees is the most imperative target for entities. On one end, retention serves as a critical factor because organizations desire to keep workers they have hired through rigorous processes while on the other, training and orientation of new workers prove costly (Park & Shaw, 2013). Research indicates that employee replacement cost is almost twice the annual salaries of the employees being replaced and further that when an employee leaves their job, organisations lose both the worker and the clients who are loyal because of the services offered by the specific employee, organisations must focus on employee retention (Haar & White, 2013).

Even though there is an increase in focus on employee retention in most organizations, it is still a challenge in privately owned institutions like universities with studies indicating substantially high turnover rates, most especially among academic staff in developing countries.

Methodology

The Study Area

The study used a descriptive survey methodology. It enabled the selection of a representative sample from the population that could be extrapolated to a wider population. Additionally, answers were gathered using a pre-existing questionnaire that used a four-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 4 = Strongly Agree). One thousand, seven hundred and thirty-six (1,736) academic staff members from nine private universities in South-West Nigeria made up the study population.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Procedures for multistage sampling were used for the investigation. Three states in South-West Nigeria, namely Ogun, Ondo, and Osun, were purposefully chosen for the initial stage because of the relative proximity and prevalence of the private university dispersion. A stratified sample technique was employed in the second stage to choose participants from the cadres of

Professorship, Associate Professorship, Senior Lecturers, Lecturer I, Lecturer II, Assistant Lecturer, and Graduate Assistant. The study delivered the questionnaire to selected academic staff based on the university programmes and academic structures, and participants were chosen using a random sampling technique. Three hundred forty-six (346) people made up the sample, which constituted 20% of the population, according to the sample fraction formula.

f= 20%   /   N = 1,736   n = 346

f=\fran{n}{N}, where n is the sample size and N is the population size

Table 1. Sample Population of Academic Staff

s/n	Name of Universities	Number of Academic Staff	20% of the population
1	Achievers University, Owo, Ondo State.	162	32
2	Adeleke University, Ede, Osun State	183	36
3	Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State.	584	113
4	Elizade University, Ilara-Mokin, Ondo State.	158	30
5	Hallmark University, Ijebu-Itele, Ogun State.	62	16
6	Joseph Ayo Babalola University, Ikeji-Arakeji, Osun State.	190	38
7	Mountain-Top University, Ibafo, Ogun State.	130	26
8	Redeemers University, Ede, Osun State.	200	40
9	Wesley University, Ondo, Ondo State.	67	15
	Total	1,736	346

Data Presentation

Table 2. Management Strategies used in Ensuring the Retention of Academic Staff

Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std.Dev.
Provision of standard health facility for staff	99 (30.3%)	124 (37.9%)	87 (26.6%)	17 (5.2%)	2.93	0.88
Prompt payment of adequate salary	120 (36.7%)	155 (47.4%)	46 (14.1%)	6 (1.8%)	3.19	0.73
Prompt payment of benefits /remunerations	111 (33.9%)	144 (44.0%)	64 (19.6%)	8 (2.4%)	3.09	0.79
Financial support for academic staff towards further education	57 (17.4%)	125 (38.2%)	102 (31.2%)	43 (13.1%)	2.60	0.92
Provision of communication skills	47 (14.4%)	164 (50.2%)	111 (33.9%)	5 (1.5%)	2.77	0.70
Provision of problem-solving skills	52 (15.9%)	157 (48.0%)	113 (34.6%)	5 (1.5%)	2.78	0.72
Implementation of mental health programmes for staff creativity and enhanced experience	49 (15.0%)	150 (45.9%)	112 (34.3%)	16 (4.9%)	2.71	0.77
Implementation of emotional well-being programmes for staff creativity and enhanced experience	48 (14.7%)	150 (45.9%)	113 (34.6%)	16 (4.9%)	2.70	0.77
Periodic in-house, on-the-job and off-the-job training	46 (14.1%)	160 (48.9%)	99 (30.3%)	22 (6.7%)	2.70	0.79
Modification of viable strategies	47 (14.4%)	181 (55.4%)	96 (29.4%)	3 (0.9%)	2.83	0.66
Giving of long-term service award	63 (19.3%)	190 (58.1%)	73 (22.3%)	1 (0.3%)	2.96	0.65

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Note: Weighted Mean = 2.84 Standard Deviation= 8.43 Key: Strongly Agree (SA=4); Agree (A=3); Disagree (D=2); Strongly Disagree (SD=1). Decision Rule: 1-1.49 = SD (Strongly Disagreed), 1.5-2.49 = D (Disagree) 2.5-3.49 = A (Agree), 3.5-4 (SA) Strongly Agreed. The criteria mean = 2.5, i.e. 4+3+2+1 = 10/4 = 2.5. This implies that any score less than 2.5 were considered low.

Table 2 revealed the management strategies used in ensuring the retention of academic staff in the respondents' Universities, 99 (30.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the school ensured the provision of standard health facilities for staff, 124 (37.9%) agreed, 87 (26.6%) disagreed and 17 (5.2%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement with a mean and standard deviation of ($\bar{X}$ = 2.93, SD = 0.88).

120 (36.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the school ensured prompt payment of adequate salary, 155 (47.4%) agreed, 46 (14.1%) disagreed and 6 (1.8%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement. This is with a mean and standard deviation of ($\bar{X}$ = 3.19, SD = 0.73).

111 (33.9%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the school ensured prompt payment of benefits /remunerations, 144 (44.0%) agreed, 64 (19.6%) disagreed and 8 (2.4%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement with a mean and standard deviation of ($\bar{X}$ = 3.09, SD = 0.79).

57 (17.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the school ensured there is financial support for academic staff towards further education, 125 (38.2%) agreed, 102 (31.2%) disagreed and 43 (13.1%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement. This is with a mean and standard deviation of ($\bar{X}$ = 2.60, SD = 0.92).

47 (14.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the school ensured that there was the provision of communication skills, 164 (50.2%) agreed, 111 (34.6%) disagreed and 5 (1.5%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement with a mean and standard deviation of ($\bar{X}$ = 2.77, SD = 0.70).

52 (15.9%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the school ensured the provision of problem-solving skills, 157 (48.0%) agreed, 113 (34.6%) disagreed and 5 (1.5%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the

respondents agreed to the statement. This is with a mean and standard deviation of ($\bar{X}$ = 2.78, SD = 0.72).

49 (15.0%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the school ensured the implementation of mental health programmes for staff creativity and enhanced experience, 150 (45.9%) agreed, 112 (34.3%) disagreed and 16 (4.9%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement with a mean and standard deviation of ($\bar{X}$ = 2.71, SD = 0.77).

48 (14.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the school ensured the implementation of emotional well-being programs for staff creativity and enhanced experience, 150 (45.9%) agreed, 113 (34.6%) disagreed and 16 (4.9%) strongly disagreed, this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement. This is with a mean and standard deviation of ($\bar{X}$ = 2.70, SD = 0.77).

46 (14.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the school ensured periodic in-house, on-the-job, and off-the-job training as management strategies, 160 (48.9%) agreed, 99 (30.3%) disagreed and 22 (6.7%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement with a mean and standard deviation of ($\bar{X}$ = 2.70, SD = 0.79).

47 (14.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the school ensured modification of viable strategies, 181 (55.4%) agreed, 96 (29.4%) disagreed and 3 (0.9%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement. This is with a mean and standard deviation of ($\bar{X}$ = 2.83, SD = 0.66).

Lastly, 63 (19.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the school ensured the giving of long-term service awards as management strategies in the school, 190 (58.1%) agreed, 73 (22.3%) disagreed and 1 (0.3%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement with a mean and standard deviation of ($\bar{X}$ = 2.69, SD = 0.65).

Table 3. Effect of Management Strategies on Academic Staff Retention

Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev
Management strategies encourage long-term service	136 (41.6%)	182 (55.7%)	8 (2.4%)	1 (0.3%)	3.39	0.55
Management strategies enhance the universities' academic productivity	131 (40.1%)	190 (58.1%)	6 (1.8%)	0 (0.0%)	3.38	0.52
Management strategies make productivity levels increase due to satisfied staff who are happy to work	132 (40.4%)	186 (56.9%)	7 (2.1%)	2 (0.6%)	3.37	0.56
Management strategies reduce the frequency of recruitment thereby saving the university from time and cost	117 (35.8%)	185 (56.6%)	22 (6.7%)	3 (0.9%)	3.27	0.62
Management strategies help to retain members of staff who have greater skills and knowledge of the university's products/services and internal processes.	113 (34.6%)	204 (62.4%)	6 (1.8%)	4 (1.2%)	3.30	0.56
Management strategies increase confidence and morale through performance appraisal.	119 (36.4%)	199 (60.9%)	8 (2.4%)	1 (0.3%)	3.33	0.53
Management strategies improve communication skills	107 (32.7%)	209 (63.9%)	10 (3.1%)	1 (0.3%)	3.29	0.53
Management strategies improve problem-solving skills	124 (37.9%)	191 (58.4%)	11 (3.4%)	1 (0.3%)	3.34	0.55
Management strategies improve returns on all employee-related costs	102 (31.2%)	208 (63.6%)	15 (4.6%)	2 (0.6%)	3.25	0.56

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Note: Weighted Mean = 3.32 Standard Deviation= 5.02 Key: Strongly Agree (SA=4); Agree (A=3); Disagree (D=2); Strongly Disagree (SD=1). Decision Rule: 1-1.49 = SD (Strongly Disagreed), 1.5-2.49 = D (Disagree) 2.5-3.49 = A (Agree), 3.5-4 (SA) Strongly Agreed. The criteria mean = 2.5, i.e. 4+3+2+1 = 10/4 = 2.5. This implies that any score less than 2.5 was considered low.

Table 3 showed the effect of management strategies on academic staff retention in the respondents' Universities, 136 (41.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed that management strategies encouraged long-term service, 182 (55.7%) agreed, 8 (2.4%) disagreed and 1 (0.3%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement. This is with a mean and standard deviation of (X = 3.39, SD = 0.55).

131 (40.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed that management strategies enhanced the universities' academic productivity, 190 (58.1%) agreed, 6 (1.8%) disagreed and 0 (0.0%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement with a mean and standard deviation of (X = 3.38, SD = 0.52).

132 (40.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed that management strategies made productivity levels increase due to satisfied staff who were happy to work, 186 (56.9%) agreed, 7 (2.1%) disagreed and 2 (0.6%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement. This is with a mean and standard deviation of (X = 3.37, SD = 0.56).

117 (35.8%) of the respondents strongly agreed that management strategies reduced the frequency of recruitment thereby saving the university from time and cost, 185 (56.6%) agreed, 22 (6.7%) disagreed and 3 (0.9%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement This is with a mean and standard deviation of (X = 3.27, SD = 0.62).

113 (34.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed that management strategies helped to retain members of staff who had greater skills and knowledge of the university's products/services

and internal processes, 204 (62.4%) agreed, 6 (1.8%) disagreed and 4 (1.2%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement. This is with a mean and standard deviation of (X̄ = 3.30, SD = 0.56).

119 (36.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed that management strategies increased confidence and morale through performance appraisal, 199 (60.9%) agreed, 8 (2.4%) disagreed and 1 (0.3%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement with a mean and standard deviation of (X̄ = 3.33, SD = 0.53).

107 (32.7%) respondents strongly agreed that management strategies improved communication skills, 209 (60.9%) agreed, 10 (3.1%) disagreed and 1 (0.3%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed with the statement. This is with a mean and standard deviation of (X̄ = 3.29, SD = 0.53).

124 (37.9%) of the respondents strongly agreed that management strategies improved problem-solving skills, 191 (58.4%) agreed, 11 (3.4%) disagreed and 1 (0.3%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement. This is with a mean and standard deviation of (X̄ = 3.34, SD = 0.55).

102 (31.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed that management strategies improved returns on all employee-related costs 208 (63.6%) agreed, 15 (4.6%) disagreed and 2 (0.6%) strongly disagreed; this showed that most of the respondents agreed to the statement with a mean and standard deviation of (X̄ = 3.25, SD = 0.56).

Results and Discussions

Research Question 1: What are the management strategies used in ensuring the retention of academic staff in the selected private universities in South-West, Nigeria?

Table 2 revealed the management strategies used in ensuring the retention of academic staff in the respondents' Universities. Most of the respondents agreed that: their school ensured the provision of a standard health facility for staff and ensured prompt payment of adequate salary and prompt payment of benefits /remunerations. The schools also ensured the availability of financial support for academic staff towards further education and there is the provision of communication skills and problem-solving skills as well as the implementation of mental health programmes for staff creativity and enhanced experience. The implementation of emotional well-being programmes for staff creativity and enhanced experience, periodic in-house, on-the-job, and off-the-job training as management strategies and modification of viable strategies among others are management strategies used in ensuring academic staff retention in the schools. The study agrees with Alika and Aibeyi (2014) in their study "Human Capital Definitions, Approaches and Management Dynamics" that all the above-mentioned are management strategies for ensuring staff retention. Micheal and Crispen (2009) in their study on staff retention and turnover also revealed that staff in both public and private organisations are to a very large extent, influenced to stay in their organisations by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivational strategies which are training and development. Their findings are not specifically on academic staff but on organisational staff in general. Their findings had general implications for the research question. However, few participants disagreed on the availability of management strategies in their institution.

Research Question 2: What are the effects of management strategies on academic staff retention in the selected private universities in South-West, Nigeria?

Table 3 unveiled the effect of management strategies on academic staff retention. Most of the respondents agreed that: management strategies encouraged long-term service and enhanced the universities' academic productivity. Management strategies increased productivity levels due to satisfied staff that were happy to work and reduced the frequency of recruitment thereby saving the university time and cost. It helped to retain members of staff who have greater skills and knowledge of the university's products/services and internal

processes. Management strategies increased confidence and morale through performance appraisal and improved communication skills. It also improved problem-solving skills and management strategies and improved returns on all employee-related costs. Some respondents disagreed that management strategies are not implemented in their school, so, they cannot ascertain the effect. Akila (2012) asserts that the ability of the organization to retain its staff is based on the effect of the various management strategies employed employee retention can be measured. Though Akila's submission was not listed but, he agreed that management strategies were pre-exquisites for organizational success and effectiveness.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study explored primary and secondary data, to investigate the effect of management strategies implementation on academic staff retention in selected private universities in South-West, Nigeria. The respondents gave their candid opinions on the state of management strategies in their universities, these opinions guided the researcher's recommendation. The study concluded that the implementation of management strategies has a significant positive effect on academic staff retention in the selected private universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

• There is a general need to maintain organizational reward strategies as the study revealed that they are the best predictor of employee retention. The management of the selected private universities should ensure that the policy governing the level of compensation should be improved to enhance a higher rate of staff retention.

• Ensure the availability of a comprehensive range of training (local and international), skill and career development which is a key factor in staff attraction and retention.

• The work environment should be equipped with modern equipment and important facilities that will allow staff to go on knowledge searches.

• The universities should join the global trend of implementing management strategies and deviate from archaic styles.

• The university management should be sensitive to the needs of staff and try to meet their needs appropriately. The fact that senior management staff are well paid should not make them careless, some respondents term the act as wicked.

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