FACULTY OF COMMERCE

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

TALENT RETENTION STRATEGIES IN A COMPETITIVE ICT INDUSTRY: CASE OF TWENTY THIRD CENTURY SYSTEMS GLOBAL (ZIMBABWE)

BY

PARTSON KUDAKWASHE MURONGAZVOMBO
(B0420243)

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS IN BUSINESS LEADERSHIP AT BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

SUPERVISOR
MR E. MOYO

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APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommend to the Bindura University of Science Education for acceptance, a dissertation with title, “Talent Retention Strategies In A Competitive ICT Industry: Case of Twenty Third Century Systems global (ZIMBABWE)” by Partson Kudakwashe Murongazvombo, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Masters in Business Leadership (MBL).

Partson Kudakwashe Murongazvombo  ____________________                      __________________
AUTHOR  SIGNATURE                      DATE

E Moyo  ____________________                      __________________
SUPERVISOR  SIGNATURE                      DATE

FACULTY CHAIRPERSON  ____________________                      __________________
SIGNATURE                      DATE
RELEASE FORM

NAME OF AUTHOR 
PARTSON MURONGAZVOMBO

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2015

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I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the award of a degree of Masters in Business Leadership (MBL) and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no materials previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

Partson Kudakwashe Murongazvombo ____________________________

SIGNATURE DATE
DEDICATIONS

I dedicate this work to my wife Ruth and my son Steven who supported me every step of the way. God bless you.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I am grateful to Almighty God for his protection and mercies for helping me through to the completion of my thesis. Secondly, I would like to thank my beloved wife, Ruth, for her unwavering support and consistent encouragement. Even when the pressure of work became unbearably too much, she still stood by me. Thirdly I would like to appreciate my son Steven for being patient and understanding even when I couldn’t give him enough attention during the time I was working on the dissertation.

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ABSTRACT

In today’s competitive ICT driven global business environment matters of human resource management specifically talent management have become a valuable part of organizations, with issues of talent retention being key to the development and the accomplishment of the organization’s goals and objectives. Organizations with weak retention strategies in the ICT industry, continue to lose expertise to those that are better placed. Against this background, this research sought to identify causes of employee turnover and assess best practices retention strategies used in the ICT industry, against a high staff turnover at Twenty Third Century Systems. It also sought to establish effective retention strategies that can help in curbing the rate of employee turnover for organisational effectiveness. TTCS requires to maintain a steady experienced and consistent employment for the talented staff if it is to remain a highly effective business entity and maintain its market share.

The research adopted a qualitative approach. The research studied a total of 172 employees of the company using structured questionnaires and interviews. The results showed that the main reason why people are leaving is because of lower salaries as compared to competitors in the region. It also emerged that the flexible contract offered by competitors, lack of medical aid benefits and delays in the payment of salaries are also major contributors to why employees leave. Research further points to that apart from training and development there are no other retention strategies in place. A major observation is that TTCS leadership needs to put in place structures that will bring about an improvement in the salaries of workers. Benefits such as free medical aid and transportation of employees to and from work, could also be provided to retain staff.
# ABBREVIATIONS/ ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information Communication Technology</td>
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<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
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<td>HRM</td>
<td>Human Resources Management</td>
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<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>TTCS</td>
<td>Twenty Third Century Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAP</td>
<td>Systems Applications and Products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHRM</td>
<td>Society for Human Resources Management</td>
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<td>SST</td>
<td>Seven Seas Technologies</td>
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Business survival in the current global economic environment is fast becoming a mammoth task as growing pressures of globalisation impact on the operations of organisations. In that regard, organisational effectiveness must be understood as a holistic concept that entails the overall accomplishment of an organisation’s goals. As highlighted by the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) (2006) in the research “Talent Management: Driver for Organizational Success”, talent management amongst other aspects is gradually becoming a key strategic driver of business success in today’s global economy. Harnessing this talent or individuals’ diverse skills and potential is not only a critical factor that differentiates an organization from its competitors but is a crucial value creation tool in the modern business environment.

With increasing globalization, there have been massive and far reaching vicissitudes in global organizations. These changes are the product of fierce global competitive pressure faced by organizations operating in the global space encircled with knowledge driven productive economy (Wokoma and Iheriohanma, 2010). The new demands of global competitiveness and dramatic advances in Information and Communications Technologies (ICT), new patterns of consumer demands for goods and services have driven organizations across the globe to significantly change and adopt new approaches of production and organization of work. This situation has exceptionally enhanced the mobility of individuals, in so doing accelerating the level of employee turnover in organizations. Ulrich (1998) notes that these challenges in the business environment affect all organizations regardless of their size, or the nature of industry or location. The growth of any organization depends predominantly on the quantity and quality of its personnel and one way to guarantee this is to determine how driven the workers are to remain relevant and productive to the organization (Al-Aamri 2010).

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have become the key driver to the efficient running of virtually all facets of the national economy, surpassing every industry and service (Shanker, 2008). Kabanda (2011) asserts that ICT, in addition to being a strategic
resource and basis of every economic activity, is fast becoming the harbinger and epicentre of global socio-economic transformation. Consulting firms, particularly in the ICT industry have not been spared from this wave given their unique business environment characterised by quality of service, innovation and where time is a critical determinant for survival and success. Kilby and De Meuse (2007) affirm that a business is similar to a machine in many ways. They argue that, operating in the consulting business environment requires a major source of power of which proper leadership and human capital fuel the business machine and as such, talent becomes the most important driver of organizational effectiveness. While talent management is the main contributor of organisational success; competition for talent itself has become highly intense hence making it more important for organisations to retain what they already possess.

An analysis of workforce trends in the United States of America points to an impending shortage of highly-skilled employees who possess the exquisite knowledge and ability to perform at high levels. This means that organizations failing to retain talented employees will be left with a short-staffed, unexperienced staff that eventually impedes their ability to remain competitive (Rappaport, et al, 2003) with managers facing a difficult challenge of motivating and retaining the employees in an environment of increased uncertainties (Mitchell, 2002).

1.2 Background of Research

In the past 10 to 15 years, Zimbabwe has witnessed a steady growth in the ICT. ICT increases competitiveness, as well as economic and societal development, because of its revolutionary supremacy as a key catalyst for transformation, modernisation and innovation, linking up people and societies, refining standards of living, and establishing new trade prospects both locally and globally. The Government of Zimbabwe in its Ministry of Information Communication Technology Strategic Plan for 2012 to 2014 has identified ICT as one of the pillars for economic turn-around.

Among the companies that have made a major impact in ICT one can notably cite Twenty Third Century Systems Global (TTCS) as a major player. TTCS is a consulting firm in the ICT Industry that is involved in the development and implementation of the Systems Applications and Products (SAP), an Enterprise Resource planning (ERP) software. This software mainly enables organisations to run all their operations in Finance, Human resource management,
Procurement, Production planning, motor vehicle management and records management only to name a few. The firm employs more than 200 full time consultants working in various functional areas. The company also has operations in Malawi, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia and Nigeria. The operating environment for TTCS is characterised by high competition from players who implement the same software such as Design technologies (Zimbabwe), EOH (South Africa), Indra (Kenya) and others who implement other competing ERP software such as Pastel Zimbabwe, Dexcel and others. TTCS’s development and implementation work on the SAP software is based on projects executed for clients in various sectors of the economy like Government Institutions such as the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority, State Procurement Board and the Government of Zambia, Mining sector such as Marange Resources, Mbada diamond and Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation and other private sector organisations such as Sakunda Pvt Ltd. TTCS face stiff competition for talent from firms within Zimbabwe and outside Zimbabwe especially from Nigeria, South Africa and Kenya.

TTCS has achieved considerable successes in its business ventures and to note are the recent accolades that the organisation was awarded for its successes in the ICT industry. SAP awarded TTCS the top ICT project of the year for the Zimconnect eGovernment project, top ICT businessman of the year for the visionary leadership of its CEO and top ICT Company of the year in 2014. The company has also had success in penetrating the region and now boast of having established offices in Zambia, Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria. Nevertheless in the past three to four years the company has observed an average of 18.36% annual staff turnover which is considered to be high by Bernadette Kenny (2007). The majority of the employees go to nearby countries like South Africa, Botswana and Kenya after being lured by TTCS competitors. As a result, TTCS has struggled to complete most of its projects doted around the continent on time, as most of the productive time is spent on training new employees resulting in serious project completion delays. The organization is now virtually training consultants for competitors. This has also resulted in the company facing some financial problems, as some customers would delay paying for the delayed project deliverables. The financial problems results in the company failing to pay its employees on time.

Given the background above, timely completion of projects and pursuance of high quality is a key factor for organisational success. Firms operating in ICT industry out to have the right mix of talent and managers need to recognize the employee as a major contributor to the successful implementation of projects (Abbasi et al; 2000). Brewster, at al (2004) assert that talent
retention should play a pivotal role in taking advantage of the expertise and knowledge of employees in order to attain competitiveness.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Talent management is a broad concept that involves employee attraction, development, performance management and retention. According to Leadership in Business Worldwide Consulting (LBW) the cost of replacing an talent varies from 29% (non-management) to 46% (management) of an employee’s yearly salary. In addition there are the sunk costs for instance, orientation and training costs, other managerial costs incurred on the employee and costs are also incurred when a replacement carries out the employee’s job in the interim. This leads to the domino effect on employee costs which on average would be 25% of the yearly salary. There is also the likelihood that the new person’s remuneration would be higher. Firms are progressively recording and comparing employee retention and hiring costs and ultimately retention is emerging as a cost effective tool.

TTCS’s approach to hire permanent employees puts it in a highly vulnerable position from its opportunistic competitors especially from South Africa who only employ consultants for specific assignments and discharge them after the project is finished. The greatest setback for TTCS is the fact that its competitors practice flexible employment approach. Flexible firm model offers worthwhile packages that will be difficult for TTCS staff to resist or ignore once an offer is made. As a point of fact Kanter (2011) claims that the major characteristic of high tech employees is that they do not necessarily get tied to an employer but are free spirited and seek to accumulate skills and experience.

TTCS like any ICT company has a set of critical roles or jobs that must be performed well for the company to achieve its objectives. Functional and Technical Consultants, Developers as well as Project Managers form the core of the critical staff of TTCS. From 2011 to date the turnover rate calculated was way over 15 % mainly from the consulting staff, which has been stated by researchers such as Bernadette Kenny (2007) reporting in the Forbes magazine as being an unhealthy turnover rate. TTCS has lost money in training costs in SAP certification with the cost of training and certifying one consultant running up to $10 000 locally and close to $7 000 in South Africa.
1.4 Research Objectives

i.) To identify the causes of talent turnover at TTCS.

ii.) To evaluate the strategies being used by TTCS to retain talent.

iii.) To establish strategies that can be used by TTCS to curb talent turnover.

1.5 Research Questions

In undertaking the study an attempt to answer the following questions will be done:

i.) What are the causes of talent turnover at TTCS?

ii.) To what extent are the talent retention strategies being used by TTCS effective in retaining talent?

iii.) What strategies can be used by TTCS in order to curb talent turnover?

1.6 Justification of Study

Organisations have always believed that financial capital, the latest technology and machinery are at the helm of organisational success and competiveness. However with the dynamism of the business environment there is a major refocus where organisations are realising that apart from these tangible assets there are intangible elements that are also at the core of any business success which are the skills, knowledge, experience, potential and capacity endowed in their employees. As allude to by Reichheld (2001), the retention of talent has been shown to be significant to the development and the accomplishment of the organization’s goals and objectives. Despite the vast literature on the reasons why employees leave their organisations and possible solutions as to how best to retain talent, there is still a gap in terms of industry specific push and pull factors that influence employees. This research provides a point of reference for organisations particularly for ICT consulting firms on best practices in terms of strategies that aid in retaining its top talent. The research provides a board of knowledge on the
current trends in employee expectations and the best retention practices in the current environment.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

a) Due to work commitments, some staff could not answer and return the questionnaire on time which is the reason why only 116 questionnaires were considered. The researcher sent out email reminders and also called the respondents.

b) Respondent took a longer period to complete the questionnaires as they were most times busy with their work. Thus leading to a delay in the collection of data.

1.8 Definition of terms

Human Resources Management: is the efficient management of employees at work. It examines what can or ought to be done to make employees more productive and content (Ivancevich and Hoon, 2002).

Talent Management: is the commitment to recruit, develop and retain the most talented and exceptional candidates available in the job market.

Talent: Any employee who is highly efficient and is able to make a significant contribution to the achievement of an organisation’s objectives (Lawler and Edward, 2008).

Talent Retention: The practice of ensuring that talented employees are discouraged from leaving thereby remain with the organization for the maximum period of time or until the completion of the project (Hom, 1995).

Talent Turnover: The rate of movement of talent in and out of an organization, normally Armstrong (2010)

1.9 Conclusion

The chapter gave a detailed background of the ICT environment in Zimbabwe in particular TTCS in relation to Talent. It also outlined the challenges faced by TTCS in retaining talent as
well as the repercussions thereof. Chapter two focuses on the review of related literature on talent management and retention from both the Zimbabwean and international scenario.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Chapter one provided a background introduction of the study as well as the research objectives, Chapter two provide a comprehensive literature review to the study. The literature review focus on theoretical framework and empirical evidence on the causes of talent turnover and talent retention practices.

2.2 Macro discipline: Human Resources Management

The major discipline that inform the research is HRM. The aim of HRM is to use practices that assist in the development of innovative, flexible and committed employees. The HRM practices are built on the belief and evidence that people provide firms with a competitive edge (Pfeffer, 1998).

2.3 MESO discipline: Talent Management

Talent Management, often times referred to as Human Capital Management, is the process of recruiting, managing, assessing, developing and maintaining an organization’s most important resource- people. It’s clear that human resources are any business’ most essential assets. This research focused on talent retention, which is a discipline of talent management involved with ensuring that the recruited employees are retained within the organization.

2.4 Micro discipline: Talent Retention

Business all over the world today is very challenging, as internal and external operating environment factors continue to challenge corporate performance and revenue growth. Consequently to stay profitable in the highly competitive and challenging global economy, all the factors of production including machines, materials and the human aspect should be
properly managed. As Herman (1999) puts human element is indispensable for any kind of an organization to be successful beginning with exceptional leadership, good management and a team of people with knowledge, skills, aptitudes, and attitudes to perform at a sufficiently high level of production to accomplish the organization’s mission. When an organization loses its human resources, skills, experience and knowledge are also lost in the process. Human resources retention has been proven to be momentous to the development and the accomplishment of the organization’s goals and objectives.

Retention of human resources can be a fundamental source of competitive advantage for any business organization. Organizations rely on the skills, expertise, and capacity development of their human resources in order to compete favourably and gain competitive advantage in the international market. However, recent studies have shown that retention of highly skilled employees has become a difficult task for managers, as this category of employees are being attracted by more than one organization at a time with various kinds of incentives (Micheal, 2008). Staff turnover can have a considerable effect on the execution of business plans and may ultimately result in a decline in productivity. Cascio (1992) also asserts that “Organizations are managed and staffed by people. Without people, organizations cannot exist.”

With the increasing growth of the worker knowledge, employee expectations have shifted vastly. This has seen a shift in the employment contract with employees moving away from expecting job security to being marketable and the employer moving away from demanding loyalty to transferable/ portable competencies (Armstrong, 2007). Regardless of these notable changes organisations are still finding it hard to offer a retention strategy that will ensure that they retain the talent that will carry their vision through. Some of the factors cited that tend to influence talent retention are interesting and valued work, opportunities for education and development, professional advancement, work life balance, a quality work conditions and equipment, recognition and respect, adequate remuneration and recently there has been a lot of wave on workplace wellness programs (Yip, 2012). Given this contortion of activities organisations can engage in to retain talent, the most critical issue is to understand your employees, their needs and wants and to engage them in every way in all the strategic issues that affect the organisation.
2.5 Theoretical Framework

2.5.0 Develop-Deploy-Connect model

The major framework used by the study is the Develop-Deploy-Connect model developed by Deloitte Research in 2004. It also uses existing theories on motivation as a way of showing how organizations can make their employees happy and therefore enticing them to stay with the organization for longer productive periods. This is emphasized by the fact that employees who are well developed, strategically deployed and are highly motivated will be able to bring in line their efforts towards the success of the organization. Furthermore, ultimate failure to retain and motivate key staff will not give the organization the opportunity to fully harness their potential. Figure 1: Illustration demonstrating the Develop-Deploy-Connect model.

Figure 1: Illustration of the Develop-Deploy-Connect model

![Develop-Deploy-Connect Model](image)

The Develop-Deploy-Connect model should be at the core of an organization’s talent strategy. By focusing on these three elements, organizations can generate capability, commitment, and alignment in key workforce segments, which in turn improve business performance. When this happens, the attraction and retention of skilled talent largely take care of themselves.

Source: Deloitte Research (2014)

The Develop-Deploy-Connect model shows the direct link that exists between the key components of a talent management framework. The model is based on the connecting effects of a three layers of talent management pillars and their effect on organizational performance.
The outer layer shows the effect of the Develop, Deploy and Connect pillars that result in the inner second layer of Capability, Commitment and Alignment pillars that will ultimately affect the central pillar of performance. The basis of this model is the fact that employees are the most critical resource in an organization as they are responsible for turning other resources into tangible materials that result in organizational success. As such the employees must be developed in such a way that they become efficient and effective in every facet of their work life so that they are able to achieve their assigned responsibilities. It is imperative to note that highly developed employees are not only highly productive but are also highly motivated to achieve for the sake of the organization. This ties this research model on Talent Management by Deloitte to the classical theories on motivation and also tries to unlock the reason why organizations are always working hard to keep their employees happy and to retain them.

The second Pillar of this talent management model critically underlines the need to strategically deploy the developed workforce. Employees will become more motivated to do the work that they like and that which they have been developed to do. In this situation the employees are highly motivated because they are doing what they know best because they have been developed and also what they like doing because they have been correctly deployed. The definition of the concept of Human Resource Management by John Storey (1987) also sums up the need to achieve competitive advantage through the strategic “deployment of a highly capable and committed workforce”. According to the Deloitte Research, organizations must concentrate on the things that matter most to the employees of which personal development is one key aspect and also the fact that they need to be given work that completely engages them so as to deliver.

Thirdly, the Deloitte Research suggests that employees need to have their efforts connected to the foundation which is the achievement of the organization’s goals. Employees will be very motivated and committed to continue delivering for the organization when they realize that whatever effort they are putting has a direct bearing on the outcomes of the organization. It is highly refreshing and highly cherishable to employees to note that their contributions are not only valued but are also discernable in the overall outcome of the organization. Employees also require to be connected to the people who aid them in so far as achieving both their individual goals and the organization’s goals are concerned.

The Deloitte Research findings show that the correct mix on the Develop, Deploy and Connect pillars will lead to the unlocking of capability, commitment and alignment which ultimately
will lead to enhanced individual and organizational performance. This model in itself interlinked as changes in one aspect will affect the other aspects. For example, the development of an employee will affect their potential to be deployed in other key operational areas and this will ultimately affect their overall contribution to the performance of the organization. All these variables will affect the organization’s ability to retain its staff and become an employer of choice. The correct connection of the talent management pillars will make it difficult for employees who are within the organization to leave hence making it difficult for those who are outside the organization to come in.

For organisations to come up with a solution on how to best retain employees, one must first examine what motivates individuals within organizations for that which motivates employees is what organisations can harness in order to better attract and retain talent. There are various theories that explain employee behaviour and the Expectancy Theory by Vroom is a classic one. Expectancy Theory according to (Vroom, 1964) illustrates that individuals make decisions based on whether they will likely capitalize on pleasure and minimize pain in every aspect of their lives. This theory is one of the most widely accepted theories of motivation to explain how and why people make decisions. The basic idea behind the theory is that people will be motivated because they believe that their decision will lead to a desired outcome. This has a practical and positive benefit of improving motivation because it can, and has, helped leaders create motivational programs in the workplace.

The main tenets of Vroom’s theory noted that people will perform better if there is a desirable outcome or reward and the reward must be something that is not only desirable but also something that will make the effort exerted worthwhile (Borkowski, 2005). One thing for sure is that organizations must first understand what type of things will motivate their staff because what works for one individual may not be a reward that is desirable to another individual. The organization must understand many aspects of their individual employee’s personalities in order to see what types of benefits will motivate their workforce for example some individuals may be motivated by recognition from their supervisors while others are motivated primarily by bonuses or benefits.
2.5.1 HRM Practices for Talent retention

Retention is a complicated concept and there is no distinct technique for keeping employees within an organization. However, leaders have to know which strategies work and what they should focus on to retain and motivate their employees. For example, a talent retention strategy that allows employees to find mentors, build a network and help them develop while feeling more connected and engaged is one means of retaining talent. There are many strategies that have been explored as pedals to increase retention, including compensation packages, benefits, rewards, and work/life balance initiatives. Each strategy may have a place in an organization’s portfolio of retention strategies.

Research studies on retention have indicated that retention is driven by several key factors, which ought to be managed systematically and these are: organizational culture, communication, strategy, pay and benefits, flexible work schedule and career development systems (Logan, 2000). As a fact, literature on talent retention as stated by Davidow & Uttal,(1989) demonstrates that retaining an organisation’s existing talent through employee development or talent management programmes costs less than recruiting new employees. From the researches it is evident that retention strategies go beyond the traditional salary and benefits package and incorporates the needs and desires of employees at any age which enhance levels of individual job satisfaction, loyalty, and commitment (Boomer Authority, 2009). As noted by Cunningham (2002) “Employees rank employer recognition, flexibility and training as top priorities for prolonging individual employment, while Walker (2001 et al) call for establishing a supportive learning and working climate for employee retention. It is quite evident that with the continual changes in the business environment especially in ICT consulting firms in terms of work patterns employee needs and expectations are also changing. Considering that business is heavily reliant on its talent pool in order to achieve organisational effectiveness it is quite imperative that they strategize their retentions initiatives and come up with a comprehensive talent management package that ensures the organisation has the talent it needs.

Agrela, et al (2008) emphasises the necessity of focusing on the strategies that influence retention leading to growth and success of businesses. Research has shown that retention strategies, that efficiently fulfil the needs of all employees subsequently improves the ability of organization to acclimatize more effectively to continuous organizational change Chandranshu (2012). Weinberg (1997) states that many in the past companies relied on two
traditional strategies for managing turnover which are; raising wages until the situation stabilized and if that failed to work, they would increase training budgets for new hires and first-level supervisors but these strategies don’t work anymore. The intense competition globally for talent has made it important for organizations to radically change and initiate new workplace trends that will provide for sustainable and attractive retention strategies for their talent (Gupta, S, at al, 2014).

Managing talent turnover is a mammoth task especially for companies employing high technology specialists (Dockel, 2001). Managers have to bolster IT experts’ sense of self-worth by regarding them as intellectual resources, not operational costs, and by assisting them shape and direct their professions, so they can gain experience within the enterprise rather than outside it (Pare´ and Tremblay, 2000).

The best way to improve employee retention and to keep them focused on the goals of the organisation is to understand what employees want and need from the workplace and provide it. The illustration provided below in figure 2 is a representation of the variables under question in the study based on the literature reviewed. It describes the aspect of talent retention and how a properly structured strategy can influence employee behaviour so that they are more committed to the achievement of organisational objectives. The basic assumption is that when employees positively view their experience with the organisation and their job they are likely to feel satisfied, committed and proud and in the end contribute to both job and organisational effectiveness.
Furthermore when these needs have been gratified it is anticipated that employees will feel an overwhelming sense of engagement or loyalty towards their employer. Employees have needs and wants or expectations from the employment contract and when the employer meets their needs and wants a sense of gratification will evidently translate to increased work efficiency. Overall when the employer has happy employees this will translate to increased productivity, retention of employees, increased customer satisfaction and profitability. Thus talent retention becomes a crucial factor in the need to achieve effectiveness and efficiency. It ensures that the organisation has motivated people with the knowledge and experience that will drive the vision of the organisation and ensure enhanced effectiveness.

Based on review of literature mainly work done by Yazinski (2009) and Brewster, at al (2004:585), there are basically nine retention practices that captures the main types of interventions discussed in the HR literature that most organization in the ICT Industry practice.

**Figure 2: illustration on research variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Talent retention strategy</th>
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<tr>
<td>Recruitment and Orientation</td>
<td>Employee efficiency</td>
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<td>Training</td>
<td>Productivity</td>
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<td>Career Development</td>
<td>Retention</td>
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<td>Performance Appraisal</td>
<td>Profitability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job Flexibility</td>
<td>Reputation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication and Employee Participation</td>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superior Subordinate relationship</td>
<td>Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition and Rewards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.5.1.1 Recruitment and Orientation

Retaining talented employees begins with recruiting the right kind of people in the first place. Research has shown that how companies recruit and how they provide orientation in the first days on the job can be of crucial importance to keeping workers over the longer term (Oracle white paper 2012). The failure by management to effectively hire and orient new staff may impose substantial separation and replacement expenses down the road. Smith (2001) attributes 60% of detrimental turnover to bad recruitment decisions on the part of the employer. A lot of employees in the ICT sector are offered new contracts elsewhere within just three months of joining which leads to increased recruitment and training costs. Consequently, it is very crucial to hire the right candidates and keep them engaged so that they will not leave the organization (Bhavnagar 2008). By assessing the organization’s areas of strength in its workplace programs and policies, HR may identify possible segments of the labour force to target. By focusing on workers with disabilities, some companies have managed to get an excellent source of talent. At IBM for instance, 42% of the organization’s disabled personnel possess key skills such as software engineering, IT hardware architecture and marketing (Tucker, 2005).

Orientation and induction plays a vital role in talent retention and increases loyalty of new employees towards the organization (Gaurav Bagga 2013). If proper orientation of new staff is not done properly, they will tend to leave the organization within first three months. Orientation and induction program must be planned in such a way that it will help retain these new employees. Finally, providing a good orientation to the newly-hired employee helps to integrate that employee into the organization, make the employee feel welcomed as well as provide him or her with information about how to handle the demands of the new environment, and any possible problems that may arise (Dibble, 1999). These can be essential elements of the socialization process, and some organizations spend about two weeks or more on orientation and induction alone. During this time the new employees are provided with information about the company, its values, structure, goals, objectives, clients, customs, and history (Foundation for Enterprise Development, 1994).

2.5.1.2 Training

Training is a key retention factor for employees at any age. Statistical evidence shows that training is an important factor for personal and professional development (United States Department of Labor, 2009). An organization that provides training will be more productive
and thus competitive which will result in it winning the loyalty of its employees (Smith, 2001). On the job training opportunities as well as staff development strategies enhance talent retention and commitment (Deery; 2008). Managers must provide sufficient training to employees to attain the necessary knowledge and skills to perform better, so that older employees in the organisation are at the same expertise level as compared to their younger counterparts (Taplin, at al; 2007).

Whilst retention reflects a desire to maintain talent in the company it is also concerned with maintaining the critical skills that an organization requires in order to meet its goals and objectives thus the providing training is a way of developing those skills. The training will not just benefit the organization but will also benefit the those who receive it by equipping them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to function autonomously and responsibly (Guest, 2002), which makes for a very powerful approach to doing business. As Sarah Leidner (2013) would put it, well developed employees stay loyal to their organization as opposed to employees that not trained. Moreover, training improves retention and enables employees to handle change in the work environment (Guest, 2002). Giving appropriate training to supervisors and managers on how to recognize profile of each individual within the organization, coupled with training in how to turn around perception that the organization controls, can significantly improve retention efforts (Rossi, 2000).

Study has shown that both the organizational benefits and cost savings related with training programs outweigh the initial cost it incurs (Prenda & Stahl, 2001). Eisen (2005) states that training programs available to all employees correlate with a 70% increase in employee retention rates. Research indicates training methods that engage workers with career challenges, advancement opportunities, work incentives, competitive wages/benefits, and supportive work environments are effective retention strategies for employees of any age (Eisen, 2005).

Many organizations will surely say that there is a risk of losing the employees to other opportunities once they have been trained (Parthasarathy and Zimmermann; 2012). This is no doubt a rational concern amongst the majority of employers where even workers often operate in a high-demand labour market. Because of this reason, many organizations are only prepared to offer training at the least possible level or to arrange for more extensive training on proprietary equipment and processes (Parthasarathy and Zimmermann; 2012).
2.5.1.3 Career Development opportunities

Career development is the ability for an employee to move upward within the organization based on career interest coupled with high performance. It is a formalized and organized system, which is planned in line with striking a balance between the individual career needs and the organization’s workforce requirement. Career development opportunities are considered to be one of the crucial factors affecting talent retention. Its variables include planned training and development, fair promotional opportunities and professional growth.

Every company ought to have a procedure for planning, encouraging and investing in high technology employee’s professional development (Dockel, 2001). For employees who are ambitious and aspire to advance to a higher level in the company, career development may play a key role in affording them with job satisfaction which naturally leads to talent retention (Intyre 2012). Therefore employee development programs play an important role in job satisfaction (Shelton, 2001). Gaurav Bagga (2013) argues that, only when employees can see a clear career path in the company that they are working for, can they choose to remain with the organization for a longer period. Providing great career development opportunities makes the employees to want to remain with the organization for long and at the same time boosts their devotion to the company. Hsu, at al, (2003) suggests that an organization that desires to reinforce its bond with its workforce must invest in the professional development of these employees. This demands availing opportunities for advancement within the organization and also affording prospects for training and critical skills development that permits personnel to improve their employability competitively on the internal and/or external labour market (Butler and Waldrop, 2001). People regard training and development as critical to their overall career advancement, development and goal accomplishment and will be interested to remain and build a career within a company that offers them such opportunities (Samuel, 2008). However, O’Herron and Simonsen (1995) concludes that organizations must accept that this process may lead to some employees leaving the organization to pursue outside opportunities eventually.

2.5.1.4 Performance Appraisal and Performance Management

Employee perceptions regarding the performance management and appraisal system used by an organization, just like any other retention practices, can critically impact on their decision to leave or stay with an organization (Mbugua, at al, 2015). Mbugua, at al (2015) further asserts
that effective performance management calls for a system that is fair, and that employees trust as being just, both in terms of procedure and in terms of the potential benefits arising from such assessments (e.g., training, professional development). Managers are held responsible for talent retention and establishing opportunities for talented employees through the performance management system. According to Meyer et al (2003), performance management aligns the goals of individual employees to those of the organization with which they are associated. CCHREI (2000) says that performance management seeks to develop an objective basis for talking about performance, let employees know the difference between acceptable and unacceptable results, increase job satisfaction by letting teams know when a job is well done, let new staff know about expectations regarding job performance, and encourage an open and trusting relationship with employees.

Employee retention is closely linked to an organization’s performance management system. Expectations of skill requirements, behaviour, experience, and performance are recommended to be clearly articulated by a compensation package. The package should be designed to drive high performance at every skills level within the organization (Phillips et al, 2009). A perfectly designed performance management system, encourages employees and managers to communicate frequently about development plans and goals that can encompass informal and unstructured learning opportunities. In that case, the review process will just seek to promote bidirectional communication between managers and their employees about their performance. Consequently meaningful dialogues and clear communication between the two parties are very important for employee engagement and retention (Oracle, 2012). Performance management can be a very effective retention instrument, when closely aligned with the professional development of the employee.

2.5.1.5 Job Flexibility

Creation of work flexibility entails work-life balance in the organization. Work-life balance is a policy that defines how the organization intends to allow what they do at work to align with the responsibilities and interests they have outside (Armstrong, 2003). Job flexibility is essential to the employees because they attribute much importance to quality of life owing to the ever increasing pressure work (Cappelli, 2011). Academics describe the significance of employment flexibility such as scheduling variations that better accommodate individual
workloads, work times, responsibilities, and locations around family responsibilities (Pleffer, 2007). If managers incentive performance with money only, they will be losing the essence of retention since there are other more powerful ways of influencing talent to stay such as freedom and flexibility in the organisation (Hays, 1999). Research has established that "flexibility" enables individuals to facilitate a healthier equilibrium between the job and personal responsibilities (Eyster, et al., 2008). Prenda & Stahl (2001) say that personnel having job flexibility choices are reported to having higher levels of individual concentration, loyalty, commitment, productivity, satisfaction, and mental capacity. Offering work life balance (flexibility) to employees assists organizations in reducing turnover (Osman M. Karatepe 2013).

2.5.1.6 Communication and Employee Participation

Based on Harris and Brannick (1999), shutting out talented employees of the loop of corporate information and communication is the fastest way of changing them into a group of disengaged, disgruntled, and discouraged job seeking workforce. Contrariwise, they say, the feeling that one is in the loop strengthens the employee’s connection to the organization. Most if not all of the retention practices performed by organizations highly depends on communication meaning that it is just a basic foundation of any effective retention practice. Companies ought to understand what their employees’ value in the organisation as that would lead to a better retention policy which can be achieved by means of open communication process and negotiation (Meganck, 2009). Organizations should have good communications in place so that if there are any grievances within the workforce, they can be acted upon immediately (Gaurav Bagga 2013). Gopinath and Becker (2000) asserts that information on strategies, goals, values, competitive performance, and changes that may affect employees’ enthusiasm should be provided by organizations.

Managers who are not frequently communicating with their subordinates giving the feedback on issues are the ones who are often surprised to receive unexpected resignation letters from talented employees. Feeling appreciated as a contributor and constantly receiving feedback is very crucial for employee engagement and retention (Oracle, 2012).

When communication is combined with employee participation results in an engaged and motivated employee. It gives employees some individual voice in the decisions that govern
their workplace (Iheriohanma, 2007). The repercussion here is that, when employees are incorporated into the decision-making process of the organization, they will feel appreciated, accommodated and this will suppress their intentions to leave the organization.

2.5.1.7 Superior Subordinate relationship

Once an employee has been hired, the majority of the responsibility for talent retention shifts to the managers. It is the manager’s role to guide and evaluate the employee (Oracle; 2012). Managers, supervisors and team leaders who guide and interact fairly with employees have the greatest contact on employees’ satisfaction levels with their jobs. Thus “problems with the boss” is the main reason as to why employees leave the company. Employee satisfaction and commitment factors are in control of the manager, supervisor, or team leader. Not giving importance to the employees, not listening to them, failing to recognize employees’ accomplishments, not praising them, providing only negative feedback, taking credit for others ideas, blaming others for one’s own mistakes, betraying trusts or confidences, favouritism, setting unrealistic goals and deadlines, and not helping good performers to grow in their careers lead to not being able to retain employees in the organisation. Any effective program must have strong support from people in senior management positions, and these people must also serve as positive role models to subordinates (Zenger, at al, 2000). Coaching employees is valuable in helping them meet their goals, but it is also important for managers to simply show that they care. It is an intangible incentive that can make a big difference in employee motivation (Moses, 2000).

2.5.1.8 Recognition and Rewards

Recognition and rewards as part of a more comprehensive effort at keeping workers or adopting good workplace practices, contributes to increased retention. Studies indicate fulfilling peoples need for acceptance by acknowledging individual work accomplishments prolongs employment of employees (Redington, 2007). The category “Recognition and Rewards” is in some ways a catch-all phrase as it includes a diverse range of formal and informal, financial and non-financial, incentives given to individual employees, groups of employees or to an entire staff. They come in all shapes and sizes: small employee of the month awards (e.g., gift certificates, recognition plaques), company-sponsored sports teams, company parties, prizes, clothing, etc. They are often incorporated into a company’s overall HR policy, but are just as
often awarded “as the need arises” and at the discretion of middle-level managers or team supervisors. A Study by Yazinski (2009) show trends of an increased number of job applicants seeking out companies that encourage employee input, growth, education, and teamwork, beyond the traditional compensation/benefit packages offered by employers. Thus, both skill recognition (ranging from verbal praise to incentives/rewards) and learning opportunities (growth/development) enhance individual performance, effectiveness, and retention (Agrela, et al., 2008).

2.5.1.9 Compensation

Vance (2006) states that compensation consists of financial (pay and benefits) and non-financial elements (Perks), such as on-site day care, employee assistance programs, subsidized cafeterias and travel discounts. Compensation has a strong and significant relationship to organizational commitment (Dockel, 2001). According to Samuel (2008), money acts as a “scorecard” which enables employees to assess the value the organization places on them in comparison to others. Salary is a significant factor that affects a person’s decision to stay or leave the company. Challenging work of compensation department is salary differentials, both within the organisation and in the industry. A valued employee should be given a salary package at par or more than the existing industry average to get him/her to stay within the organization. Whatever their circumstances, companies that successfully incorporate compensation and benefits into their retention efforts have a clear understanding of their business objectives and use compensation as a tool for influencing organizational and employee behaviour (Lawler, 1990). For example, pay systems and practices can have a major impact on employee retention by motivating membership-oriented behaviour (commitment). Pay systems may also affect knowledge sharing and transfer if sharing, teamwork, suggestions, etc. are rewarded or recognized.

While a focus on competitive pay packages to attract and retain talented cadres is clearly effective in manifesting job motivation, complimentary strategic HR practices are profoundly important in reducing staff turnover (Chew, 2005). However Stone (2002) argues that compensation is less a factor in retention but more in recruitment that is, employees are less likely to look for a job because of their compensation, but are more likely to accept a job offer based on the level of compensation offered.
2.5.2 Talent Turnover in Organizations

Price (1977) defines talent turnover as the ratio of the talented employees of organization who left in a particular period of time to the average number of employees in that organization during the same period of time. Whenever a position of an organization is vacated, a new employee must be hired and trained. This replacement cycle is called employee turnover. A huge concern to most companies, Talent turnover is a costly expense especially in lower paying job roles, for which the Talent turnover rate is highest. Many factors play a role in the Talent turnover rate of any company, and these can stem from both the employer and the Talents. Wages, company benefits, Talent attendance, and job performance are all factors that play a significant role in Talent turnover.

The deployment of stable, rare, valuable and difficult to imitate (Steen, 2009) human resources in an organization has always been regarded as a way of gaining and maintaining advantage over competitors (Armstrong, 2010; Blomme, et al., 2008). In fact, human resources are viewed as key in developing and utilising other resources (land, capital & enterprise) in ways that create and sustain a competitive advantage to the organisation (Blomme, et al., 2008; Steen, 2009). It is against this observation that the concept of employee turnover carries with it negative connotations of management failure to motivate and retain employees. Given the potential negative implications of employee turnover on organizational success, Human Resource (HR) practitioners in many organizations have become preoccupied with crafting sound employee retention strategies (Armstrong, 2010). As research has proven, while it is imperative for organisations to attract quality employees to the organization, it is equally important for managers to device strategies with which to retain the talented employees in organizations in order for the organization to harness the investments made in them (Chiboïwa, et al., 2010)

Intention to leave an organization is according to Mobley (1982) considered as part of a sequence in the psychological withdrawal of an employee from the job process. Mobley (1982) identifies job satisfaction, promotional opportunities, work environment, job performance, management style, employee commitment, remuneration and many other factors as playing a significant role in shaping employee turnover.
Price & Muller (1981) observes that job dissatisfaction influenced actual turnover indirectly through its direct effect on turnover intention. The variables that affect job satisfaction are pay, promotion opportunities, immediate supervisor, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, rules and procedures, relation with co-workers, type of work done, and communication within the organization. High labour turnover may mean poor personnel policies, poor recruitment policies, poor supervisory practices, poor grievance procedures, or lack of motivation (Costly et al., 1987). All these factors contribute to high employee turnover in the sense that there is no proper management practices and policies on personnel matters hence employees are not recruited scientifically, promotions of employees are not based on spelled out policies, no grievance procedures in place and thus employees decides to quit.

Magner et al. (1996) argues that if employees are not involved in some form of decision making they are bound to leave the organization because they wouldn’t be comfortable in an environment that they do not fully understand. Callier (2011) further asserts that employee turnover intentions are influenced by lack of participation. Participation is a process in which decision-making is shared among individuals who are not generally considered to have equal status in the organisation (Callier, 2011). Manu et al. (2004) argue that employees quit from organization due economic reasons. Using economic model they showed that people quit from organization due to economic reasons and these can be used to predict the labour turnover in the market. Nature of leadership influences the individuals’ intention to leave or stay in the organisation (Gwavuya, 2011). A poor relationship with the management can be an important reason for the employees to leave their jobs. As the Herzberg (1966) theory in Mbah & Ikemefuna (2011) views, strict employee supervision is an extrinsic factor and a “dissatisfier” as well as a “demotivator”.

### 2.5.3 Effects of talent turnover

Employee turnover can be considered as natural and healthy phenomena in organisations but the actual effects of turnover do not necessarily send the same note. The loss of an employee or employees always has financial as well as emotional connotations with loss in productivity, loss in employee morale being the most obvious. As noted by Mobley, (1977:34) “Labour markets trends in high tech industries appears to be considerably different from traditional turnover models in that traditional labour markets employees view job change as a sequential process of dissatisfaction, withdrawal cognitions, and evaluation of alternatives, while in high
there is an element of free agent where employees are not tied down to one employer and changing jobs is the natural cycle of things.” Likewise, because information on job openings is continuously available on-line and through professional associations like “LinkedIn’ or “classifieds” there is high likelihood that employees will compare their situation with what is on the market and be enticed to consider other better offers.

Despite the fact that attrition is a normal feature for any organisation, it is quite evident that each time an employee leaves the organization, productivity drops adversely. Also, the loss of critical and irreplaceable intellectual capital adds to these costs, since not only do organizations lose the human capital and relational capital of the departing employee, but other competitors are potentially gaining these critical assets (Meaghan and Nick, 2002). It is therefore suggested that since turnover is an indicator of organizational effectiveness, it then requires the attention and comprehensive understanding of information on turnover. This will be relevant for planning and prediction of employee expectations which in the long run will assist in creating strategies that are relevant to the needs of the employees. Turnover also makes it difficult for organizations to maintain a steady and successful operation. Research estimates that hiring and training a replacement worker for a lost employee costs approximately 50 percent of the worker’s annual salary (Cascio, 2010).

2.6 Empirical Literature

2.6.0 Reasons for Talent Turnover in Organizations

A research done by Deloitte and Touché (2009) revealed that engaged employees are 7 times likely to leave a company in the next year and 1.5 times more likely to stay for at least five years. The ability of organizations to retain their ICT staff has been a critical factor in the effort to achieve strategic business goals. In the United States, the average annual turnover rate for IT departments in companies is between 25% (Lu, 1999) and 40% for business managers and management information systems (MIS) professionals (Igbaria, 1992). In 2002, turnover rates in IT ranged between 25% and 35% (Moore & Burke, 2002). These figures are still disturbingly high even though there seems to have been some decrease from a decade ago. According to Gaan (2011), employee turnover has been a major issue pertaining to IT personnel. It has been noted frequently that IT personnel have a stronger than average tendency to leave their current employer to work for another organization.
In a research conducted by Moyinhan & Pandey (2008) they classified this multiplicity of factors that influence turnover intentions in organisations into three distinct categories:

a) Individual factors – These are factors that emanate from the employees themselves such as age, length of service, gender, family responsibilities, education etc.

b) Organizational factors - These refers to organisational policies and practices such as opportunities for progress, supportive management, supportive HR policies, organisational culture and other factors

c) External environmental factors - These are factors external both to the employee and to the organization normally referred to as PESTEL factors.

A study by Gwavuya (2011) particularly affirms that incompetent leadership results in poor performance, high levels of stress, low commitment, low job satisfaction and high turnover intentions. The study also proved that leadership in organisations plays a significant role in employee motivation and retention especially if the employees “receive regular positive feedback and recognition”. Dissatisfied employees forms the bulk of employees who leave organizations. As noted by Callier (2011) in the United States alone 77% of employees are unhappy with their current jobs and are considering leaving better alternatives. As noted above, a poor relationship between leaders and subordinates can cause employees to lose commitment and satisfaction with their jobs (Morrow, et al., 2005). In fact according to Morrow, et al. (2005), the number one reason people quit is that they are treated poorly by their bosses. Those who remain in their jobs, working for poor bosses, have lower job satisfaction, lower commitment, psychological distress and subsequently high turnover intentions (Callier, 2011; Morrow, et al., 2005).

Parthasarathy, R. and Zimmermann (2012) conducted a research on Talent Management Practices and the Mechanisms behind the retention of employees: Evidence from case studies in Multinational Organizations in India, focusing on IT professionals and found out that organizational identification, organizational commitment, and empowerment and employee engagement were the main reasons why employees would want to stay with an organization. Employees who either left the organization or wanting to leave the organization in future didn’t show any organizational identification or sense of belonging Also these employees felt that they were not engaged fully in the organization, so they feel they were not committed to the organization where they worked.
2.6.1 Effects of turnover on organizations

A lot of researchers and authors have in one way or another endeavoured to discover the reasons why employees are increasingly becoming mobile but despite these revelations it seems that organisations are still grappling with the challenge of how best they can retain talent in their organisations. Talent management as stated by Ilies, Chuai and Preece (2008), is a term that is common today but materialised in the 1990’s when McKinsey and Company first referred to it in their report The War for Talent. During the period that the report was compiled it was noted that organizations experienced high turnover, or attrition, as employees moved from one job to another for the most critical professions such as those for skilled employees (Michaels, et al., 2001). Stone (2002) highlighted that the study brought a lot of attention to the seriousness of the shortage of talent worldwide. To illustrate this situation, data according to a survey based on 33,000 employers from 23 countries revealed that 40 percent of them had difficulty in finding and hiring the desired talent and approximately 90 percent of nearly 7,000 managers indicated talent acquisition and retention were becoming more difficult Axelrod, et al. (2001) quoted in Shrivastava and Bhatnagar (2008). In the war for talent, the findings demonstrated for awareness by leadership of the companies surveyed that performance and competitiveness can only be achieved via better talent, in other words, talent was the means to competitive advantage. Losing high performers also charges organizations since turnover can cost between $7,500 and $12,000, not counting salary, for the least technical hourly job (Stone, 2002).

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the various literatures from other authors with respect to talent retention, talent turnover reasons and general talent retention practices practiced by organizations in trying to mitigate talent turnover all over the world. The conceptual framework of this study was designed based on the findings of previous research and the literature reviewed. Chapter three provides details of the research methodology. The supporting sections include the research method, research design, population and sampling, ethical research, data collection, data collection technique, data analysis, and reliability and validity.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter three discusses all salient steps and techniques involved in the process of a research design or planned sequence in conducting a research such as the sources of data, the methods employed to gather data, the tools to be used when collecting the data and how the data will be presented. Descriptions of the procedures used in collecting data enables readers of this study appreciate the particular strengths and limitations of the study.

3.2 Research Method

Research methodology is the philosophical basis on which research is founded. The techniques employed and the ways they are applied in conducting any research, can considerably affect the result of a study. Therefore, a judicious choice of methodology and how these methods are used can simplify and facilitate the collection and analysis of data Kumekpor (2002). It is therefore imperative that reliable methods are devised to obtain information in such a way as to make the results tenable, dependable and predictive. Research methodology simply put seeks to provide answers to questions on what will be done and how it will be done.

The main focuses of this research was to evaluate the current retention strategies being used by TTCS and ascertain how effective talent retention strategies can be crafted in order to ensure full engagement of employees for organisational effectiveness. The research methodology employed in this study was qualitative research. Cresswell (1994) describes qualitative research methodology as a process of perception based on different traditional research methods that explore social or human problems or issues. In the qualitative approach the researcher builds a difficult holistic picture and analyses words, reports, detailed views of informants in a natural setting. Best and Khan (2003) stated that the qualitative approach allows for a study that is not ordinarily expressed in quantitative terms but where other means of description are emphasized. This research approach springs from the phenomenological or interpretive research paradigm, (Morse, 1991). A qualitative research approach was found mostly appropriate as the nature of the study requires a highly open ended and flexible research
approach that seeks for depth and richness of understanding as opposed to a quantitative research approach based on the positivistic paradigm that seeks for standardized, neat and precise conclusions. As further espoused by Hussey and Hussey (1997), qualitative researchers employ methods that view issues in real life and this allows them to examine the experiences of human beings and how they attach meaning to everyday issues. As such this method will be most appropriate for this research because of the depth of knowledge acquired in the whole process. The value of qualitative research is that it is more open to the adjusting and refining of research ideas as an inquiry proceeds (Creswell 1994).

### 3.3 Research Design

Collis and Hussey (2003) state that a research design is the science and art of coming up with techniques for carrying out a research so as to get the most authentic results, therefore in order to meet the information needs of any research project, a befitting research design needs to be chosen. The research method employed for this research is qualitative and this research makes use of the descriptive case study of twenty Third Century Systems.

A case study is defined as a strategy for doing research that involves an empirical investigation of a particular phenomenon within its real life context with the utilization of various source of evidence. The data collection methods applicable with this method include questionnaires, interviews, observation and documentary analysis (Saunder et.al 2003). Case studies explore and investigate observable facts through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of conditions and their relationships (Zainal, 2007). This research design was suitable for analysing how best organisations can attract, retain and develop their talent by first analysing TTCS’s current talent management strategy and then proffer solutions as to the best way forward. According to Carcary (2009), it is crucial to uphold a level of consistency when using a qualitative design. Ramchander (2004) further asserts that a qualitative research approach is grounded in the interpretive social sciences paradigm, which means that it focusses on describing, exploring and interpretation of themes, behaviours and trends where there is lack of information, in order to understand viewpoints and to develop deeper levels of meaning. Critics of the case study method believe that the study of a small number of cases can offer no grounds for establishing reliability or generality of findings. The best qualitative studies engage the reader (Creswell, 2007), and that is exactly what this research aims to do.
3.3.0 Case Study

As stated in the research design, the study is using a case approach, which is the Twenty Third Century Systems Global. The company was chosen because it is one of the leading ICT companies offering business solutions consulting services in Zimbabwe. The company operates in a number of countries in Africa puts the TTCS in a unique position in the industry. It was deemed prudent that the head office is the ideal place that offered the researcher the opportunity to get sufficient research participants to be used for the study. The availability of participants to be studied made the head office the prime choice for the study. According to the Human Resource Department of the TTCS, the turnover rate averages 17.5% annually. On the average, 40 – 60 employees leave the organisation yearly, and for the past 3 years (2011 – 42; 2012 – 46; 2013 – 53) workers left the organisation. It is against this high rate of labour turnover that the company was chosen as the study area.

3.4 Population and Sampling Techniques

3.4.0 Population

Population are the study objects, which may be individuals, groups, organisations, human products and events, or the conditions to which they are exposed (Kruger, 1999). According to Saunders et al (2009), the population is a complete set of group members under study. The population includes all individuals whom the researcher is interested into obtaining information from and makes inferences. The population for this study consisted of all the 256 employees of Twenty Third Century Systems Global in Harare. TTCS Global has three subsidiaries in Zimbabwe, namely, TTCS Zimbabwe, TriplePlay Communication (TPC), Seven Seas Technologies Zimbabwe (SSTZ). It was important to include all the divisions in order to gain a comprehensive appreciation of turnover trends in all the divisions and a wholesome view of TCCS and the different areas of the ICT industry.

3.4.1 Sample Frame

A sampling frame is a complete list of individuals or groups of members of the whole population that one would like to study. The sample frames for this research was the list of all 256 employee of TTCS Zimbabwe. From each division two groups of respondents were chosen namely consultants and managers who make up 67% (172) of the total population. Considering
that the organisation has a sizeable number of employees all the 153 consultants were purposively chosen to comprise the sample frame as well as 19 managers respectively.

3.4.2 Sampling Size

The sample size used for this research was 153 consultants and 19 managers coming to a total sample size of 172 employees.

Table 1: Sample size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsidiary</th>
<th>Employee categories (Strata)</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TTCS Zimbabwe</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Functional Consultants</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technical Consultants</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SST Zimbabwe</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technical Consultants</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TriplePlay Communications</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technical Consultants</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>172 employees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4.3 Sampling Procedure

According to Saunders et al (2009), stratified random sampling is when a population is divided into two or more relevant and significant strata based on one or a number of attributes and a random sample is then drawn from each strata. Dividing the population into a series of relevant strata means that the sample is more likely to be representative, since each of the strata is represented proportionally within the sample. The research relied on the stratified random sampling method for the sampling of the whole TTCS Global population. The population was first put into clusters of the population namely TTCS Zimbabwe, TriplePlay Communication
and Seven Seas Technologies Zimbabwe. Furthermore through stratified random sampling the
divisions in the organisation was further divided into grouping of employee. The strata were
the Functional Consultants, Technical Consultants and the management group namely middle
managers/senior managers. From each stratum, random sampling was applied to select
individuals who responded to the research questionnaires. For example out of the 168
functional consultants in TTCS Zimbabwe, 117 were selected to participate in the survey. The
168 functional consultants were allocated numbers from 0 to 168 in a computer program and a
selection was made. The functional consultants whose numbers were selected by the program
were then sent questionnaires to complete. Stratified random sampling was used because it
ensured that everyone in the population had an equal chance of being selected

3.5 Research Instruments

In collecting data, a questionnaire (APPENDIX 1) which was designed based on the guidelines
by Charlesworth and Morley (2000), was used to collect data from respondents. A
questionnaire is a list of carefully structured questions, chosen after considerable testing, with
a view to eliciting reliable responses from a chosen sample. The aim is to find out what a
selected group of participants do, think or feel (Hussey and Hussey, 1997). This instrument
was chosen due to the fact that it is easy to administer and also makes it possible for much data
to be collected within a short time. A questionnaire survey is cheaper and less time-consuming
than conducting interviews and very large samples can be taken although their main
disadvantages are that they require a lot of time and skill to design and develop, they limit the
range and scope of questioning and the response rate can be low. To prevent the researcher’s
bias from coming into play in the line of questioning, outmost care was taken to avoid the
situation where the researcher influences the type of responses that are provided by the
respondents.

An interview guide (APPENDIX 2) was also drafted for the TTCS Management including the
Group Talent Executive to gain prior knowledge about retention strategies in place at TTCS.
The advantages of interview guides are that they provide the researcher with a general
framework for the interview and enable the researcher to unfold and lead the discussion in a
logical manner.
3.5.0 Pilot Testing

The questionnaire was pilot-tested on 10 workers of Twenty Third Century Systems Zimbabwe. The purpose of the pilot - test was to remove ambiguities, and unnecessary items in the questionnaire. Pilot testing of the questionnaire helped to unearth the face and content validity of the questions in measuring what it was intended. The questionnaire was then amended accordingly for use in the field. The refining of the items in the questionnaire was intended to make the items very simple for the respondents to understand so that they could provide the appropriate response to the items. The pilot - test also gave a fair idea of the responses to be obtained from the field.

3.5.1 Reliability

The researcher ensured that the instrument developed was reliable. This was done by ensuring that the instrument clearly defined some concepts and constructs used to frame the items that highlight the concept or constructs used. Another means that was used to determine the reliability of the instruments was the pre-test conducted to ascertain the dependability and the consistency of the items in the questionnaire. The same interview questions were used on all the interviews carried out.

3.5.2 Validity

Pilot study was carried out to validate the statements in the questionnaire for use in a population screening study for employee turnover and retention. Validity is the amount of systematic or built-in error in measurement (Radhakrishna, 2007). The author stated that validity is established using a panel of experts. Within the department, people who have completed or have advance research techniques were requested to validate the questionnaires before disseminating them to the participants. Amendments were effected and the questionnaire refined for the users.
3.6 Data collection methods

Data collection may take various forms among which include questionnaires, interviews, observations, consultations of records and documents. It is also observed that using more than one method of collecting data is often a prudent procedure. Data collection was done utilising both primary and secondary sources of data during the course of this research.

3.6.0 Primary sources of data collection

Primary source of data was collected through the use of questionnaires.

3.6.0.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was used by the researcher to get the required information from the respondents who were mainly consultants (both Technical and functional consultants). Brown (2001) described a questionnaire as any written mechanism that presents respondents with a sequence of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers. The questionnaires was composed of both closed and open ended question in order to gain comprehensive knowledge on employee feelings and expectations without necessarily limiting their responses. The questionnaire was electronically administered to all the 153 consultants though printed ones were still available. The researcher used the electronic survey method because it is instantaneous and available 24/7. It also gives geographical flexibility as TTCS operations are geographically spread with most of TTCS consultants working at the customers’ sites in Zimbabwe as well as outside Zimbabwe. This method also removes interviewer influence, provides anonymity of the respondent and is very cheap as described by Zikmund (2003).

The steps that were followed are as follows:

a. Get emails list of population from the IT Department;

b. Sensitise sample units about questionnaire, explaining intention of the questionnaire, the value it will add to the organization as well as the academic world, and how long it will take to complete the questionnaire;

c. Distribute the questionnaires via email;
d. Follow up all despondences using phone calls to ascertain if they had seen the Questionnaire;

e. Send a reminder to all that had not completed the questionnaire after one week;

f. Send a final reminder to all that have not completed five days before closure of survey;

g. Capture questionnaire data.

The questionnaire tested employees on their understanding of what the employer expects them to do and what they expect in return which will likely persuade them to stay or leave. One of the most agreed merit of using questionnaires is that large amounts of information can be collected from a large number of people in a short period of time and in a relatively cost effective way. However this research instrument is not without its own weaknesses and according to Corner (1991) one of the weaknesses of a questionnaire is that it lacks validity and there is no way of telling how truthful a respondent is being. The researcher provided one hundred and fifty three (153) copies of the questionnaires and received one hundred and sixteen (116) completed questionnaires after 10 days. The high response was due to the rapport that was initially established and the systematic follow-up via phone calls and emails.

3.6.0.2 Interviews

Face to face interviews with semi structured questions were also conducted for the personnel in the HR department and line managers which was a sample of 19 employees. The quests of the interviews was to get an idea of general policy issues with regards to retention of talent to acquire further information on policy issues. Face-to-face interviews enabled the researcher to build rapport with respondents and control the discussion. Telephone interviews were also utilised as an alternative as face-to-face interviews could not be conducted on some of the Managers who were out of the country at the time of the research on work assignments. 15 Managers were interviewed. An interview guide was used with which the researcher asked questions and noted responses from the interviewee. The advantages of interview guides are that they provide the researcher with a general framework for the interview and enable the researcher to unfold and lead the discussion in a logical manner. The face to face interviews helped the researcher discover more about the interviewee by what they say or think and how they answer specific questions.
3.6.0.3 Observation

Where necessary direct observation of employee behaviour formed part of the data collection methods since the researcher is part of the researched group.

The use of more than one data collection tools helps to increase the validity and reliability of data collected as limitations of one instrument will be covered by the other.

3.6.1 Secondary Sources of data collection

According to Kumekpor (2002) secondary data is information that has been gathered previously for some purpose other than the current research project. Hussey and Hussey (1997) argue that by exploring what others have contributed to the area of interest, one will be able to find what is already known, identify gaps, see how one’s ideas compare with what has gone before and develop existing ideas or create new ones. In order to put the research into context the researcher will make use of the following sources of secondary data

- Internet, magazines and HR books – these sources will provide current trends with regards to retention and talent management in general.

- HR manpower statistics- from manpower statistics the researcher will be able to probe into the attrition levels as well as general organisational staff budgets

- HR exit interviews- the researcher will gain useful information on employee expectations and feelings towards their employer

3.7 Methods of data presentation

The data handling exercise was started with field editing to check the appropriateness, consistency and accuracy of the information provided by respondents. This exercise made it possible to contact some respondents afresh when it became necessary for clarification of certain issues and some also to complete certain questions that they left unanswered. All the data, results obtained from the case study was presented in graphs, pie charts, tables and
inductive reasoning. In inductive reasoning the researcher did not have any preconceived notions on the likely results but analysed responses from the consultants and managers formed the basic conclusions of the research. It is important, though, to realise that just because qualitative information is presented in a graph, it does not suddenly become quantitative. The researcher used graphs, pie charts and tables because they provide a visual appeal to the results which makes it easy to interpret. The researcher also used inductive reasoning because the evidence of the findings can easily be linked with assumptions or beliefs we hold about something.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues confront every researcher who embarks on a study involving humans as subjects. Coolican (1992: 249), highlights that “It is difficult to conduct much research at all without running into ethical arguments”. The most important ethical agreements that prevail in social research include, harm to participants, voluntary participation, anonymity and confidentiality and deception. Before embarking on professional work the ethical implications should be considered as part of the work context together with legal, professional and other frameworks. Research ethics deals primarily with the interaction between researchers and the people they Study. Professional ethics deals with additional issues such as collaborative relationships among researchers, mentoring relationships, intellectual property, fabrication of data, and plagiarism, among others. Whenever a research conducted on people, the well-being of research participants must be the top priority. The research question is always of secondary importance. During the course of the research the following guideline of code of ethics was followed:

a. The Subject Firm: Be granted permission by TTCS to conduct the research in the organization. Consent from the responsible authorities was obtained prior to carrying out this research (APPENDIX 3).

b. Confidentiality/anonymity: In order for the respondents to remain anonymous their names or positions were not put on record but remained in the confidence of the researcher. The researcher was indebted to share her experiences with the respondents and respective authorities.
c. Informed Consent: Have to inform potential participants of the purpose of the research and to obtain their agreement to their participation.

d. Dignity: Not to embarrass, stress, ridicule, exert pain, harm or discomfort to participants during and after the research.

e. Objectivity: the researcher regardless of the fact that he was part of the case study, carried out the research objectively with no preconceived notions or biases.

f. Publications: Behaviour and objectivity as a researcher and the acceptance of the dissertation on completion.

g. Openness: The researcher exercised great caution and maintained an active dialogue with the participants.

3.9 Conclusion

Chapter three outlined the various research methodologies that were used in carrying out a research. It described the specific methodology that was used in carrying out this research and the reasons for the selection. Chapter four is concerned with the presentation and analysis of the data collected.
CHAPTER FOUR
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This section presents findings of the study from the questionnaires and interviews carried out. It explains and illustrates the data collected from the population of the study as sampled. This is done in the form of tables, figures and graphs. The responses for both questioners and interviews will be presented in accordance with the research objectives.

4.2 Response rate for questionnaires

As per the sample the researcher distributed 153 questionnaires to all consultants in the three subsidiaries TTCS Zimbabwe, SST Zimbabwe and TriplePlay Communications. However only 116 (76%) questionnaires were received back by the researcher and 37 (24%) questionnaires were never returned. Figure 3 below is a representation of the distribution of respondents whose questionnaires were received by the researcher.

Figure 3: Response rate for questionnaires
4.3 Response rate for interviews

The semi structured interview guide was designed in accordance with the objectives of the study. As per the sample the researcher planned to interview 19 managers from the three divisions TTCS Zimbabwe, SST Zimbabwe and TriplePlay Communication who were purposively sampled. However only 11(58%) interviews were conducted and 2(11%) of the interviewees opted to provide a written responses. Of the 6(32%) of the interviews that were not conducted the respondents were either away on projects or were busy to attend to the researcher. 9 (69%) of the interviews were from the TTCS Zimbabwe, 3(8%) were from SST Zimbabwe and 1(15%) Figure 4 below is a representation of the respondents to the semi structured interview guide.

Figure 4: Interviews response rate

4.4 Demographics for questionnaire and interviews

The table below gives an overview of the distribution of variables such as age, gender, marital status, years in service and title of the 116 consultants who responded to the questionnaires and the 13 managers who were interviewed In the initial semi- structured interview the option for interviews to declare their positions was omitted from this presentation of findings in order to maintain the anonymity of the interviewees.
Table 2: Demographic distribution of questionnaire and interview respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Questionnaire responses</th>
<th>Interview responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Under 25 years</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25 to 39 years</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40 to 54 years</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>54 and above</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Title</td>
<td>Functional Consultant</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technical consultant</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work experience</td>
<td>Below 5 years</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 to 10 years</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above 10 years</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the employees who completed the questionnaire were between the ages of 25 and 39 years. Those under 25 years of age were 23 (20%), 25 to 39 years of age were 89 (77%), 40 to 54 years were 4 (3%) and there were no respondents who were above 54 years of age thus 0 (0%). Of the 13 interviewees none were under the age of 25 and one above the age of 54 years. For ages 25 to 39 there were 9 (69%) interviewees, 40 to 54 years were 4 (31%). In terms of gender 44 (38%) of the questionnaire respondents were males and 72 (62%) were females.
Nonetheless the majority of the interview respondents were males who constituted 77% (10) and the females being just 3(23%). In terms of marital status for the questionnaire 53 (46%) respondents were single, 40 (34%) were married, 3 (3%) were divorced, 6 (5%) were widowed whiles 14(12) did not provide their marital status when responding. Two job titles for the questionnaire respondents were represented in the table as 87 (75%) functional consultants, and 29(25%) being Technical consultants. Marital status and job title was not required in the interview schedule and therefore not presented in the table. In addition the table above indicates the number of years of service with their current employer for the questionnaire respondents with 102 (88%) being below 5 years of service, 12 (10%) were between 5 to 10 years and 2(2%) were more than ten years in service. Of the 13 respondents that were interviewed 4 (31%) were below 5 years in terms of service, 7 (54%) were between 5 to 10 years in service and above 10 years there were only 2(15%) respondent.

4.5 The causes of talent turnover at TTCS

One of the main key objectives of the study was to establish the causes for talent turnover at TTCS. In order to establish the causes of talent turnover the research subjects were asked a series of question and one of them was on what they thought causes staff to leave TTCS. Some of the reasons cited were low salaries, lack of retirement benefits, flexible contracts by competitors, no medical benefits, lack of promotion, inability by the organisation to offer loan facilities, lack of career advancement and growth, no recognition and the economic environment in Zimbabwe. The distribution of respondents with regards to the reasons above are illustrated in figure 5 below
In addition the consultants in response to what and where they thought the problem 54(58%) of the consultants cited mismanagement of funds by leadership as one of the major problems. 65(70%) of the consultants cited the current economic environment as the major hindrance to the capacity of the organisation to provide more favourable conditions for its employees. 22(24%) of the consultants cited misguided priorities as the major reason why TTCS is failing to come up and implement strategies that attract employees to stay with them. Moreover another reason cited by 10 (11%) of the consultants was lack of participation by employees on issues that affect citing that there has never been an employee representative forum to advance their concern which might be the reason why the employer is not coming up with solutions that are permanent and are for the employees.
Nonetheless the managers reiterated the issue of an unfriendly and volatile economic environment as one of the challenges the organisation has been facing in trying to effectively retain talent. 12(92%) of the managers noted that the unstable business economic environment had hampered the capacity of most business who were not operating on full capacity and as such the returns were where meagre. As such in the end TTCS suffered with most of their clients failing to honour their debts. The managers further highlighted that this had severely affected the organisation’s capacity to offer more enticing incentives that had the potential of motivating and increasing employee loyalty. Four (31%) of the managers cited the unlike its competitors TTCS employs permanent employees instead of contract employees and thus has to face a myriad of challenges which his counterparts don’t have to. In the end it becomes difficult to compete when the playing field is uneven. In addition 3 (23%) of the managers cited that because of the complexities of high tech industries, by nature of the environment the employees are highly mobile in search of new projects, experiences and referrals which naturally poses a challenge on management on how they can effectively tame this group of critical staff into staying longer with an employer. Two (15%) of the managers cited that the company does not have clear cut policies or strategies in terms of retention of talent. Furthermore as noted by the respondents there is an assumption that all the different groups in the organisation are the same and the same strategies apply across the board which is not necessarily true

Furthermore as a follow up to the above question the respondents were asked whether they thought it was important to retain employees in the organisation which was also a crucial question in trying to understand the courses of talent turnover. All the consultants agreed that it is important to retain employees. Some of the reasons listed by the consultants on why it is important to retain talent were that retention of employees enables business continuity and stability, the organisation is ensured of experienced and seasoned staff, cheaper as the organisation saves on hiring and training costs, seasoned employees have a strong sense of belonging or acculturation, it enhances employee motivation and lastly it enhances employee loyalty. The figure 6 below illustrates the distribution in terms of responses
4.6 To evaluate the strategies being used by TTCS to retain talent

The second most notable objective was the need to establish the strategies that affect retention and as a follow up this objective the respondents were asked to state some of the practices the organisation had put in place that had the consequence of enhancing loyalty and commitment of employees. The consultants were so reluctant to state the strategies that they felt had been put in place by the organisation that has the consequence of enhancing the loyalty and commitment. The main strategy identified by most consultants who responded to this question is the provision of training and certification for the consultants. 43(37%) of consultants stated training and certification as one of the strategies put in place by TTCS. The only other strategy identified by consultants is the provision of lunch which was stated by only 15 (13%) of the consultants.

However 58 (50%) of the consultants stated that there were no strategies in place to retain talent and 15(13%) of the consultants did not provide and answer to the question to provide an
answer. The figure 7 below provides an illustration on the response rate on the practices that affect retention at TTCS from the consultants.

**Figure 7: Responses on strategies that affect retention**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provision of lunch</th>
<th>Training and certification</th>
<th>No practices</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trippleplay</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SST Zimbabwe</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTCS Zimbabwe</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand the managers when interviewed on the practices put in place by the organisation to retain employees did not have a mouthful to say. All the managers cited training and development of employees were the employer aid for the certification as one strategy TTCS employed to retain talent. Five (39%) managers cited Performance management system as another strategy used by TTCS to retain talent. Four (31%) of the managers noted team building sessions as another strategy that allows employees to bond with each other so that they can effectively work together and create harmonious working environments. In addition Six (46%) of the managers also cited that the organisation uses recognition of employee contribution through awards citing what has been done in the past were employees during a team building session were given vouchers for outstanding performance in different discipline (communication, hard work) and long service awards. However they were all quick to note that whilst this strategy was in place, lack of funds have been the reason why the awards have not been done in last two years.
In line with assessing the effectiveness of retention practices adopted by TTCS the respondents when asked whether or not TTCS has been successful in retaining consultants in the past two years the general consensus among the consultants was that the company had not been successful in maintaining a stable pool of talent. 107 (92%) of the consultants were in agreement that TTCS has not been able to retain consultants for the past 2 years. Most of the consultants cited that most of the seasoned consultants left during this period and the company is now staffed with new trainee employees. Seventeen (15%) of the 116 consultants highlighted that most of the employees that left were head hunted by competitors or left for greener pastures. 44 (38%) of the consultants noted that the current environment has not been positive for most organisations where in most cases the entire country has experienced high mobility among the skilled workforce. They further noted that there has been high turnover rate not only for TTCS but for most organisations and this problem is countrywide.

Moreover 4 (31%) of the managers when interviewed noted that the organisation has been successful in retaining talent. The managers indicated that despite the harsh economic environment that it has been operating in the organisation has been able to maintain a stable pool of employees. They further noted that attrition is a common feature in any company or economy and as such it is expected that some of their employees are going to leave them for greener pasture as part of their growth. On the other hand 8 (62%) of the managers noted that for the past year it has been difficult to retain talent with most of the seasoned consultants leaving for greener pastures and better salaries. Two (15%) of the managers noted that attrition was a common feature of high tech industries were employees are in most cases mobile moving from one project to another, as such because TTCS is different in that it tends to recruit permanent employees the effects of attrition have a profound effect on them than their competitors who employ on part time basis. Two (15%) managers highlighted that critical staff were leaving because they were frustrated because they were not progressing in terms of career growth and others frustrated with the monotony of the job, once you have mastered the concepts it becomes routine and monotonous.

In addition to further shed light on the effectiveness of TTCS retention practices the consultants gave responses on how well TTCS retention strategies fared with competitor strategies. 52 (56%) of the consultants were of the opinion that the incentives they receive from TTCS were lower than market rate as compared to competitors. Some of the practices listed by employees
that were compared with competitors were salaries- which were said to be lower than those given to their counterparts in the region like in South Africa, flexible working arrangements- were most consulting firms do not employ on a permanent basis but employees are engaged on assignments which means better salaries and flexible working arrangements and also commissions calculated as per assignments. Additionally the immediate response by 5 (39%) of the managers in terms of how TTCS fares with competitor strategies was that TTCS is faring averagely considering the current economic turmoil in the country. The company’s debtors are not paying up and as such the company was being forced to operate at a minimal and some of the incentives they believed would assist in retaining talent were put on hold until the organisation reached stability. Three (31%) of the interviewees noted that TTCS is still making headways in terms of penetrating the market as it is the first SAP partner in Zimbabwe and some of its competitors in the region like south Africa have wealth of experience in the field. As such it is difficult to measure up to some of the high standards set up by these competitors in terms of competitive retention practices and strategies.

4.7 To establish effective strategies to curb talent turnover.

The distribution in terms of responses is as given in figure 8 below
In addition as recommendations on how TTCS can come up with an effective retention strategy it was the general contention among the managers that there is need for the organisation to rethink their retention strategy and structure it in a way that it involves employees and addresses their real needs in a way that will motivate them to stay longer with the organisation. Seven (54%) of the managers cited the need for management to take serious note of exit interviews and try to investigate the underlying factors which are driving out employees. By taking great care into analysis turnover trends the respondents emphasised that this will be an eye opener on the actual metrics that the company is losing or having to send on retraining and developing new employees. Three (23%) of the managers noted that there is need for the organisation to come up with incentives that complement the basic salary such as employee wellness programmes, resuscitating of medical aid scheme and pension scheme as well as introduce a loan facility for employees.
4.8 Secondary sources of data

The HR department was very generous with some of their secondary sources of data such as consultancy meetings minutes. The researcher was able to come up with the following information that explains the status quo at TTCS in the past three years.

4.8.0 Annual consultants’ revenue generation targets

From the quarterly consultants meeting minutes the results showed that TTCS Zimbabwe has failed to meet their set revenue generation target. For example in 2012 target revenue for the consulting division was 18 million dollars but by end of year they had only managed to achieve 9 million dollars which was way below the expected level. And also in 2013 the target was at 30 million but by the end of 2013 the revenue was at 12 million dollars only. Some of the reasons cited by the project managers were that because they had new or novice consultants coming into projects the project cycles were now longer and thus more resources had to be channelled into the projects.

4.8.1 Turnover trends for the past 3 years

In the past two year at TTCS there has been a mass exodus of experienced consultants leaving the company for greener pastures and this information was extracted from minutes from a quarterly consultancy meeting. The figure 9 below is an illustration of the turnover tends from 2011, 2012 and 2013 with a total of 141 seasoned consultants having left in that period.
In addition figure 10 below gives an illustration on how the training costs skyrocketed in the last three years owing to employees leaving and new employees coming in requiring training in SAP. There was a tremendous increase in training cost during the 2011 to 2013.
4.9 Analysis of findings

4.9.0 To identify the causes of talent turnover at TTCS

The most noted challenge by the managers and employees was the current economic environment which stifled the company’s ability to offer attractive incentives to their employees. Considering the age range of the bulk of the consultant who are still below thirty, movement for higher salary is common among this group of young professionals. Other lures like better job opportunities, higher posts and overseas assignments are also major factors in the attrition rates. This has been sure a challenge for the organisation in such a volatile environment in trying to match the salaries of competitors. However as noted by Yip (2012) money is not the only motivator, despite the low salaries an organisation can touch on other non-monetary elements such as creating challenging and interesting work and providing opportunities for them to grow and fulfil their individual goals.

In addition as highlighted by Kilby and De Muse (2007) the level of stability or employee retention is a strong measurement that shows that the organizational is healthy and highly profitable. This assertion in actual fact is a true reflection of the conditions at TTCS where
from the secondary sources on turnover rates there was evidence of high attrition with a total of over 80 seasoned consultants having left TTCS in the last 3 years. This inevitably affected the level of profitability of the organisation as evidenced in the low production results from the consultancy quarterly meeting where the department was cited to have failed to achieve set target.

From the interviews with the managers it was the same tone that employees are a valuable asset as compared to other assets and as such the knowledge and skills inherent in them is invaluable to the success of any organisation. Despite arguments advanced by Peter and Waterman (2002) that the idea of lifelong careers in the service of one employer is now a thing of the past and recent labour market statistics typically showing that an employee will change jobs anywhere from five to ten times over the course of their career, there is still a need for talent retention. With all the money it takes to recruit, hire, and train new workers and the context of the ICT industry, where service quality and consistency can make or break your reputation, holding on to a core staff of knowledgeable, well-trained team members is particularly important. The real significance of retaining talent goes beyond dollars; it is more about the employees who are well known for their unique talents and experience. In the case of TTCS their consultants, their innovativeness, technical abilities, and dynamism can play a crucial role in making sure that the company has a competitive advantage.

4.9.1 To evaluate the strategies being used by TTCS to retain talent

There was a level of reluctance by employees in completing the section where they had to state the strategies that they felt the organisation had put in place that had the consequence of enhancing the loyalty and commitment. This is a clear indication that TTCS has not managed to create an environment that engages and motivates employees to want to stay and contribute to the effectiveness of the organisation. 58% of the consultants highlighted that none of their current incentives could enhance loyalty and commitment to their organisation and more so they felt that the employer was not so much concerned with perks. The employees cited that the employer had on many occasions went back on his promises on many occasions. The most cited case was that of commission were most of the respondents noted that they had been promised commissions from projects on their initial contracts and 3 years down the line nothing had materialised. Management was also in agreement during the interviews that it had not done
much in terms of coming up with practices that were enticing to the employees and that had the effect of enhancing loyalty and commitment to TTCS.

In terms of the effectiveness of TTCS practices it is evident from the turnover statistics that the organisation was not successful in retaining talent. The consultants in their assessment of how effective the practices have been were quick to note that TTCS had failed to maintain a stable pool of experienced consultants. This is also evident in the demographics were the statistics show that the bulk of the consultants have less than 5 years of service with TTCS which means that most of them are recent college graduates with little or no experience in the SAP field. When asked the same question 5 out of 12 of the managers were quick to defend the organisation citing the current challenges as a major hindrance to the success of strategies put in place by TTCS. A few of the managers were frank enough to note that the practices have not been forthcoming in terms of addressing employee issues and engaging them so that they feel committed and loyal to stay with the company.

Moreover on comparison with competitor retention strategies 52% of the consultants commended that TTCS strategies as compared to others were lower. Salaries and allowances were the ones that were more prevalently compared with competitors and deemed to be much lower. It is evident that despite the high level of attrition management was just looking from afar and did not necessary steps to unearth the underlying causes why employees were leaving the organisation. Even from the HR department there was little evidence of a thorough research into exit interviews and assessing what were employee expectation in this current environment and the levels of engagement in the organisation. It seems the general feeling in the organisation was that considering the influx of new college graduate, the organisation felt they could easily replace those that had left not weighing the full ramifications of the situation in the long run. As such the research brought out a critical revelation on the role of managers in providing frequent feedback and making the employee feel valued.

4.9.2 To assess the challenges faced and proffer recommendations

The consultants and managers revelation the fact that there was a lot that needed to be done to improve talent management at TTCS. Though competitive salaries were high on the agenda there was also general consensus on the importance of non-monetary incentives. It can be argued that the use of money as a motivator in the skilled labour environment depends on how
it is deployed and for employees to be effectively motivated; Karp, Sirias and Arnold (1999) propose that the bulk of rewards that organisations offer their employees should be expanded to include non-financial incentives. These incentives should include issues such as work/life benefits, training and development, opportunities, promotion and autonomy.

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter presented and analysed the data collected from the participants. For interpretation and analysis of data, tables, graphs pie charts and descriptive analysis was used. Chapter 5 provides the summary and conclusions from the research as well as recommendations for action and further study.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter four presented and analysed the data collected from the participants. Chapter five provides a summary and conclusions from the research findings, with a focus on recommendations for action and future research.

5.2 Summary

The purpose of this research was to identify causes of employee turnover and assess the current retention strategies being used in the ICT industry using a case of TTCS and eventually establish effective retention strategies that can help in curbing the rate of employee turnover for organizational effectiveness. The research commenced with a brief background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions and its justification and answering the specific questions identified for the evaluation. The findings of this research will have wide implications for effective retention strategies TTCS must adopt to retain its talented staff.

Motivated employees come out with new ways of doing things that improve the competitiveness of organizations. They are quality oriented and more productive. When an organization loses a valuable employee, there is a negative impact on innovation. Retention of key employees is critical to the long-term health and success of any organization. It is a known fact that retaining your best employees ensures increased production which in turn improves the competitiveness of the organization. Intelligent employers always realize the importance of retaining the best talent. The rewards given to employees must be meaningful in order to attract their perception of the organization and therefore have a marked influence on its retention efforts.

It was found that high staff turnover causes reduction in work productivity. The results showed that the main reason why people are leaving is because of lower salaries as compared to competitors in the region. It also emerged that the flexible contract offered by competitors, lack of medical aid benefits and delays in the payment of salaries are also major contributors to why employees leave. The results also showed that apart from training and development there are
no other retention strategies in place as the company is being affected by the economic situation in the country. A major observation is that TTCS leadership needs to put in place structures that will bring about an improvement in the salaries of workers. Benefits such as free medical aid and transportation of employees to and from work, should also be provided.

5.3 Conclusions

Acquiring skilled workforce is not just enough in today’s changing economy. Instead a lot needs to be done to retain them for losing knowledgeable and trained staff can cause serious damage to the company’s progress and performance in the market. Today’s dynamic global business environment, together with the ever-growing, challenge of a highly mobile workforce, requires a well-planned, detailed approach towards talent management. Fortunately both employees and management from the case study recognize that talent is a critical driver of business performance. Given the cost implications and destructive tendencies of turnover to organisations, it is important that more research be carried out in the area of intention to quit. When managers perfectly understand why employees want to leave, it is then that a workable retention strategy can be devised to arrest such intentions. There is also the need for organisations to properly align retention practices with the needs and values of employees and those of the organisation. A fit between these variables is a sure recipe for a talent retention strategy that enhances organisational effectiveness. Moreover it is evident that Talent management is more than merely implementing human resource practices but should be a mind-set that should be built in the culture of an organization. It is no longer about hiring the best person for a position now, but about keeping the people that you have bearing in mind that their experience and expertise will be crucial in ensuring organisational effectiveness.

This study has provided readers with a better understanding of tools to motivate and retain individuals through best techniques available. These strategies help the companies in minimizing employee turnover, drain on management time, cost of training new employees, interruption of work and reduction in productivity.
5.4 Recommendations

5.4.0 Creation of a talent management culture

Talent management is a mind-set that should be built in the culture of an organization. As such rather than coming up with reactive solutions to turnover Talent management should focus on building pools of talent in the organisation with the aptitude and abilities to meet the current and future organizational needs. It is no longer about hiring the best person for a position now, but also about ensuring that the employees that you have in the organisation share the same vision and their goals align well with the goals of the organisation.

5.4.1 Ensure there is a shared vision

Talent retention today is also more about everyone in the organisation understanding what it is the organisation wants to achieve and their role in that vision. When employees do not really understand their role in the equation there is always conflict of goals which in the end translate to misconceptions on what is due to them in terms of compensation.

5.4.2 Managers to play a significant role in talent retention

Managers have a significant role in influencing employees to stay with the organisation. Through their leadership and guidance they are able to influence employees into making decisions about their careers, goals and aspirations which are directly or indirectly linked to the achievement of the organisations goals. As such organisations need to invest more into the development of their managers or leaders in the organisation in order to ensure that the organisation has a unison vision.

5.4.3 Initiate and maintain an open dialogue

Today’s workers like to feel that their input is welcomed and appreciated. Likewise, when they perform well, they want to know that you value their contribution. Therefore there is need to
keep the lines of communication open and flowing both ways as well as allow employees to participate in forums where issues that concern them are discussed.

5.4.4 **Make work more meaningful and more fun.**

For employees today work is much more than just getting a basic salary. If they don’t feel fulfilled and personally inspired in their role, they’re more likely to be on the lookout for open positions elsewhere. Managers need structure job responsibilities for their employees with a deeper meaning and not be afraid to inject a sense of humour, play, and fun into the workplace when appropriate. Nothing’s more certain to scare off young employees than a stuffy, uptight organizational culture.

5.4.5 **Find out what makes employees tick**

Today’s employees take pride in their individuality and they have a natural resistance to any effort to group them in with the crowd. That’s precisely why many traditional retention strategies tend to fail. Instead of taking a collective approach to retaining your employees management should engage each employee as an individual. There in need to display genuine interest in finding out what it is that will take for them to foster their loyalty.

5.4.6 **Keep them on their toes**

When it comes to retaining employees, boredom is the kiss of death for workers in the age groups that employees at TTCS are at. There is need by management to make a concerted effort to challenge its staff members, offer them meaningful responsibilities, thorny problems, and plenty of opportunities for professional development. An actively engaged employee is much more likely to develop a sense of loyalty to the company and to act accordingly.

5.4.7 **Transparent compensation plans**

The first principle in creating compensation plans is to ensure that it is clear and easy to understand. Everyone should be able to easily recite the goal and how they are being rewarded.
In addition, the incentive compensation needs to pay out frequently and in a timely manner. Finally there is need for frequent recognition with communication that highlights those that are winning and those that are making significant improvement. Public recognition and communications are important and helps create a culture of winning.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Study

It came out in the research that the current economic environment is affecting the morale of the employees resulting in them leaving the organization. Recommendations for further study include expanding the research area by comparing at least two organizations in the ICT consulting sector in the country. The comparison of two organizations may help identify other factors causing attrition so that better strategies for retention in this particular sector may be crafted.
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APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

RECIPIENT: STAFF OF TWENTY THIRD CENTURY SYSTEMS GLOBAL

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

My name is Partson Murongazvombo, a final year student at Bindura University of Science Education writing a thesis on Talent Retention Strategies in a Competitive ICT Industry as part of my Masters in Business Leadership. The finding of this research will be presented to the University in the form of thesis. The data will be confidential and used for statistical purposes only and identity of sources of information will not be disclosed. Your cooperation in providing honest and prompt responses to the questionnaire would be very much appreciated. You are also assured of the privacy and confidentiality of your responses. Thank you very much.

Section A: Personal Information

The following section is designed to obtain demographic information that is of importance to the study, please indicate your responses by ticking the appropriate response in the boxes below.

i. Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Under 25 years</th>
<th>25 to 39 years</th>
<th>40 to 54 years</th>
<th>54 and above</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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ii. Gender

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Female</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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iii. Marital status

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<th>Married</th>
<th>Divorced</th>
<th>Widowed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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iv. Years in service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Below 5 years</th>
<th>5 to 10 Years</th>
<th>Above 10 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

v. Title

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional Consultant</th>
<th>Technical Consultant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Section B Express your opinion in the spaces provided

1. Is staff retention viewed as a key contributor of organisational success at TTCS?

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

2. Do you think it is important to retain employees in the organisation? Explain

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
3. In your opinion, which specific HRM practices has the organisation put in places that have the consequence of enhancing the loyalty and commitment of employees?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

4. Does TTCS pay a lot of attention to incentives and perks offered to you?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

5. Has TTCS been successful in retaining its critical skills over the past 2 years?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

6. How well do TTCS retention strategies compare with competitor strategies?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

7. Do retention strategies at TTCS enable employees to achieve their individual goals?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
8. Would you say that retention initiatives are tied to organisational strategy?

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

9. What in your opinion are the major reasons why employees tend to leave TTCS (You can name more than one and explain)

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

10. Where do you think the problem lies?

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

11. What recommendations can you give to reduce talent turnover at TTCS?

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW GUIDE

RECIPIENT: MANAGER OF TTCS GLOBAL

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

This is an academic exercise aimed at gathering primary data on the topic —Managing Talent Retention for Enhanced Organisational Effectiveness in the ICT Industry of Zimbabwe. A Case of Twenty Third Century Systems Global.

Position of key respondent ______________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Under 25 years</th>
<th>25 to 39 years</th>
<th>40 to 54 years</th>
<th>54 and above</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years in service</td>
<td>Below 5 years</td>
<td>5 to 10 years</td>
<td>Above 10 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. What would you say are the reason why employees leave TTCS?

2. What would you say is the level of staff turnover among consultants?

3. What do you think is the overall net contribution of TTCS employees as compared to other factors that contribute to business success like financial and technological resources?
4. What initiatives has TTCS put in place to retain its critical employees?

5. Which specific HRM practices has the organisation put in places that have the consequence of enhancing the loyalty and commitment of your critical staff?

6. How successful has TTCS been in retaining its critical skills over the past 2 years?

7. How well do TTCS retention strategies compare with competitor strategies?

8. What do you think is the net contribution of talent retention to the achievement of TTCS goals?

9. What challenges has the organisation faced in trying to create an effective talent retention strategy?

10. What recommendations can you give to enhance effective talent retention at TTCS?
APPENDIX 3

APPROVAL REQUEST LETTER

20 Lyndale Gardens
1 Gilchrist Road
Marlborough
Harare
Zimbabwe.

21 November 2014

The Group Talent Executive
Twenty Third Century Systems
Kenilworth Gardens
1 Kenilworth Road
Newlands
Harare
Zimbabwe.

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: REQUEST TO CARRY OUT A RESEARCH USING TTCS AS CASE STUDY IN
FULFILMENT OF MY MASTERS IN BUSINESS LEADERSHIP DEGREE

This letter serves to request your approval for me to conduct a research study on Talent retention in TTCS Global. I am currently a Master’s in Business Leadership student at the Bindura University of Science Education. The study is about “Managing Talent Retention for Enhanced Organisational Effectiveness in the ICT Industry of Zimbabwe”. The purpose of the study is to investigate the current retention practices at TTCS, establish their effectiveness and recommend viable options.

The organization will benefit a lot from the information obtained and the resultant recommendations for management’s decision-making and problem solving. The results of this
study will also assist a lot for the retention of critical staff and ensure that the organisation obtains maximum value from the knowledge inherent in their employees for increased organisational effectiveness.

Thanking you in anticipation for your forthcoming positive response.

Yours faithfully

Partson K. Murongazvombo
Manager: Technical Consulting
Cell : 0773491494
E: pmurongazvombo@ttcs.co.zw
21 November 2014

Parston Murongazvombo:
C/o Twenty Third Century Systems (Pvt) Ltd
Kenilworth Gardens
1 Kenilworth Gardens
Newlands
Harare

Dear Partson

RE: RESEARCH APPROVAL

I am pleased to inform you that Management has approved your request to conduct your research using Twenty Third Century Systems as your case study.

I wish you all the best in your studies.

Yours sincerely

For: Twenty Third Century Systems (Pvt) Ltd

BEDNOCK MARIFII
GROUP TALENT EXECUTIVE