Factors Influencing Labor Turnover in Public Organizations in Tanzania: A Case of Tanzania Electric Supply Company Limited, Arusha Region

Wiljames Daniel Mmari[1] & Fredrick Baraka Mwangela[2]
Institute of Accountancy Arusha (IAA), Tanzania
[1]Department of Information Systems, Faculty of Informats
[2]Department of Business Management, Faculty of Business Management
[1]ORCID: https://orcid.org/009-0003-4813-4868
[2]ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-008-5544-6356
Email: jamesdaniel0755@gmail.com/fredricck1988@gmail.com

Abstract: Labour turnover is a major challenge that affects workforce stability, organizational performance, and service delivery in public and private enterprises worldwide. In Tanzania, the Tanzania Electric Supply Company Limited (TANESCO) continues to experience high levels of employee turnover, negatively influencing operational efficiency and long-term sustainability. This study aimed to examine the factors influencing labour turnover in public organizations, with a specific focus on TANESCO in the Arusha region. Guided by Herzberg's Motivation–Hygiene Theory (1959) and Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964), the study applied core motivational frameworks to explain turnover-related behaviours. A quantitative research approach was adopted, using a descriptive research design to assess turnover factors without manipulating variables. The target population comprised 65 TANESCO employees, from which a sample of 56 respondents was selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using structured questionnaires with closed-ended items aligned to the study objectives. Ethical considerations, including anonymity, confidentiality, informed consent, and voluntary participation, were strictly observed. Descriptive statistical techniques such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to analyse the data. The findings revealed that inadequate compensation, limited career development opportunities, poor working conditions, and insufficient recognition significantly contributed to labour turnover among TANESCO employees. The study concludes that improving human resource management practices, strengthening motivation mechanisms, and establishing clear internal career development pathways are essential for reducing turnover. These findings offer practical implications for policymakers and organizational managers seeking to improve retention and enhance performance in Tanzania's public sector.

Keywords: Labor Turnover, Public Organizations, Employee Retention, TANESCO

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1. Introduction

Labor turnover, often known as employee turnover, is defined as the ratio of the number of employees leaving a company due to dismissal or resignation to the total number of employees on the payroll in a given period of time, and it is also used to measure employee retention (John, 2016). Harman (2010) distinguished between two types of employee turnover: voluntary and involuntary turnover. Employee turnover in public organizations is a critical issue that affects organizational performance and service delivery. In Tanzania, this challenge is particularly evident in public institutions such as the Tanzania Electric Supply Company Limited (TANESCO), which plays a vital role in the nation's energy sector. Despite its importance, TANESCO faces significant labor turnover, especially in regions like Arusha.

It is believed that employees are the backbone of every successful business and that they must be retained, motivated, and appreciated inside an organization at all costs in order for the corporation to be globally competitive in terms of boosting performance and productivity (Shija, 2011). The organization would achieve a long-term investment return on staff. Managers inside firms must identify the reasons that contribute to employee turnover and recommend the best solutions to handle the situation and retain employees in the organization while increasing their competitiveness in the present globalization world (MacDonald, 2012).

Previous studies have highlighted the causes of employee turnover rather than the variables affecting and solutions. For example, Ongori (2007) conducted a related study in Botswana; the study discovered that among the factors that influence employees' turnover in any organization are insufficient information, including physically powerful communication systems on effective performance, uncertain supervisors' desires and peer employees, as well as conflicting job functions, which stands as an acknowledgement gap. Furthermore, Lyengi (2014) illustrated the assessment of employees' turnover in the private sector. Mubondo (2013) also explored the variables that contribute to high worker turnover in Tanzanian non-governmental organizations.

According to information acquired from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' (2018) basic statistics, the organization saw a high rate of employee turnover from 2013 to 2017, with the highest rate of employee turnover occurring in 2016, and the lowest rate of employee turnover occurring in 2013. This information implies that not a single year in the last five years has passed without the firm losing staff. As a result of this circumstance, the organization has seen a high rate of personnel mobility, as well as low

organizational performance. For example, about 10,000 civil officials in the public sector and other organizations lacked or faked certificates in 2018. As a result, there is still a vacuum in our present understanding of the various factors impacting worker turnover in Tanzanian government organizations.

This reveals a clear knowledge gap; limited empirical evidence exists on the specific factors driving labor turnover within Tanzanian public utilities, particularly TANESCO in the Arusha region. Therefore, the factors contributing to employee exits within this critical organization remain insufficiently explored. To address this gap, the present study examines the underlying factors influencing labor turnover at TANESCO in Arusha. Guided by Herzberg's Motivation–Hygiene Theory and Vroom's Expectancy Theory, the study explores how intrinsic and extrinsic workplace conditions shape employees' decisions to remain or leave, offering insights that can inform human resource policies and enhance employee retention.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Employee turnover remains a significant challenge for public organizations in Tanzania, including the Tanzania Electric Supply Company Limited (TANESCO) in the Arusha region. Despite TANESCO's critical role in providing electricity across the country, the organization faces persistent issues related to labor turnover, which adversely affect its operational efficiency and service delivery.

Several studies have identified key factors contributing to high employee turnover rates in public organizations in Tanzania. For instance, a study by Mboya and Mwakalila (2024) highlighted that low salaries and benefits, poor leadership and supervision, limited opportunities for training and development, delayed promotions and re-categorization, a shortage of working tools and infrastructure, job dissatisfaction, lack of incentives, and late or absent payments and other monetary rewards are significant contributors to employee turnover in local government authorities in Dar es Salaam City Council. Similarly, research by Mrema (2024) emphasized that inadequate training, lack of career advancement opportunities, and poor working conditions are critical factors influencing employee retention in public sector organizations.

In the context of TANESCO, institutional factors such as low wages, unrecognized work performance, poor hygiene, and lack of opportunities for training and development have been identified as significant contributors to employee turnover. Additionally, a study on TANESCO in

Dodoma revealed that employees place a high value on benefits and allowances, indicating that dissatisfaction with these aspects can lead to increased turnover. Furthermore, data from Tanzania Electric Supply (2021) indicated that from 2019 to 2021, new staff transfers to TANESCO increased by 320%, while the rate of transfers to other institutions increased by 114%, suggesting a growing trend of employee mobility within the organization.

1.3 Research Objective

The objective of the study was to examine the factors influencing labor turnover in the Tanzanian public sector, a case study of Arusha region.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

The study adopted two theories, which are Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory and Expectancy Theory.

2.1.1 Motivation-Hygiene

The study adopted Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene theory. According to Waheed, & Hong, (2011) Herzberg's Motivation Hygiene theory and job satisfaction was introduced in 1956 that came with two factors that are also known as the two-factor theory; that it's divided into two dimensions that are job satisfaction factors also known as intrinsic factors that are also known as satisfiers/ motivators which are sense of achievements, recognition, meaningful at work, status, responsibility, advancements, growth and promotion opportunities. While the extrinsic factors, also known as dissatisfiers that relate to the job dissatisfaction called hygiene/ maintenance factors) are supervisions, company policy, relationship with supervisor, working conditions, salary, relationship with peers, personal life, relationship with the subordinates, status and security, these factors are required to avoid dissatisfaction through which it distract the morale and motivation and affect a good employee's performance. Henceforth, the theory relates to the study as Herzberg's theory, which describes motivators as the factors that stimulate employees to put their best efforts; enhances employees' performance, which motivates employee retention, and reduces turnover. Through which he also stipulated that one cannot achieve higher performance and reduce turnover only by improving wages and working conditions, but job enrichment is the key to job satisfaction and high organizational performance.

2.1.2 Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory explains why individuals choose one behavioral option over another. The basic idea behind the theory is that people will be motivated because they believe that their decision will lead to their desired outcome, whereas expectancy theory suggests that employees' motivation and retention depend on the relationship between performance and the expected outcome (Redmond, 2010). The theory is built upon the idea that motivation comes from a person believing they will get what they want in the form of performance or rewards. The theory states that individuals have different sets of goals and can be motivated if they believe that there is a positive association between efforts and performance. Favorable performance will result in a desirable reward, and lastly, the reward will satisfy an important need. The desire to satisfy the need is sufficient to make the effort worthwhile (Lawler, et al, 2009). Thus, when employees feel that their expectations are not being met, they may be compelled to seek better opportunities elsewhere, where they believe their needs will be fulfilled. This can lead to increased employee turnover, thereby linking the theory directly to the focus of this study.

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

According to Joseph & Thomas (2015) discussed the challenges of employee turnover is the critical issue faced by the unorganized hospitality sector in India; a case of the hospitality industry in Kerala. The study exemplified that the Global research depict that the hospitality industry is characterized by higher employee turnover. Whereas hotels, resorts, and other hospitality service providers spend a huge amount every year on hiring and training new employees. It is no longer surprising that the cost of losing an employee is between half and one-and-a-half times their annual salary. Many companies in the hospitality sector are making intensive efforts to control employee turnover through enhanced remuneration and compensation, benefits, or incentive systems, as well as by training managers. However, it is unfortunate to state that the hospitality industry is still facing challenges from the highest rate of employee turnover. The study concluded that the hospitality industry faces a high degree of employee turnover, which reduces productivity and increases costs in the organizations. The study recommends huge investments in human resources concerning efforts of hiring, training, and development, also to recognize passion, commitment, and satisfied workforces as to keep their employees.

Moreover, Ogony & Majola, (2018) researched the impacts of employee turnover on the efficiency of the Organization in South Africa. The study discussed the challenges and

impacts of employee turnover. The findings showed that public services in South Africa have been struggling with the issue of holding skilled employees, as they have been moving to better-paying corporate organizations in the private sector, which causes additional work to the remaining employees until their positions are covered. The study was done quantitatively, involving a structured questionnaire that was provided to 127 KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts and Culture employees. The Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS). Furthermore, the study recommends that the Human Resource Management and the top owners and managers of the organizations must take appropriate measures to curb employee turnover in the department and other public services in the country.

Employee turnover in Tanzanian public organizations, including TANESCO, has been extensively studied, revealing several critical factors influencing labor mobility. A study by Mboya and Mwakalila (2024) on the Dar es Salaam City Council identified low salaries and benefits, poor leadership and supervision, limited opportunities for training and development, delayed promotions, and inadequate working conditions as significant contributors to high employee turnover. Similarly, research by Mtawa, Ngowi, and Ibrahimu (2024) in Njombe District Council highlighted that factors such as low wages, unrecognized work performance, poor hygiene, and lack of opportunities for training and development are prevalent in Tanzanian public organizations. These findings underscore the importance of addressing these issues to improve employee retention in public sector institutions.

In the context of TANESCO, a study by Kweka and Sedoyeka (2014) revealed that low wages, unrecognized work performance, poor hygiene, and lack of opportunities for training and development significantly influence employee turnover. Additionally, a study by Mwakiluma (2024) on Tanzania Ports Authority found that employee turnover negatively impacts organizational performance, leading to increased recruitment and training costs, loss of skilled human resources, and decreased service provision. These studies highlight the critical need for effective human resource management strategies to mitigate turnover and enhance organizational performance.

Furthermore, research by Mboya and Mwakalila (2024) emphasized the role of motivational and hygiene factors in influencing employee turnover. They noted that while motivational factors such as recognition and achievement can enhance job satisfaction, hygiene factors like working conditions and salary levels must be adequately addressed to prevent dissatisfaction and subsequent turnover. This dual approach underscores the complexity of factors influencing employee retention and the need for comprehensive strategies to address both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators.

3. Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research approach systematically to collect and analyse numerical data concerning labor turnover. A descriptive research design was adopted to provide a detailed and organized account of the phenomenon under investigation, without manipulating any variables. The target population consisted of all employees at TANESCO in the Arusha region relevant to the study. To ensure equal opportunity for selection, a simple random sampling technique was used to select 56 respondents from the population of 65 employees at TANESCO Headquarters in the Arusha region. Using this method, a representative sample of participants was randomly selected to provide insights into the factors influencing labor turnover. Data were collected through structured questionnaires, which were carefully designed to align with the study's objectives. The questionnaires included closed-ended questions to allow for easy quantification of responses and to maintain consistency across participants.

For data analysis, descriptive statistical methods were employed, with particular emphasis on percentages. This approach facilitated the organization, summarization, and interpretation of the collected data. Technically, the descriptive statistics used the mean and standard deviation. The ethical standards and guidelines were adhered. Subsequently, the researcher ensured the originality of the work, obtaining necessary permissions from the relevant authorities for data collection in the study area. Data collected from respondents was handled confidentially, and personal information was protected and stored securely to maintain privacy. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study without penalty. Furthermore, the anonymity was used to present the narrations. The researcher's relationship with participants was guided by professionalism and respect before, during, and after the research process.

4. Results and Discussion

The findings in Table 1 show that majority (80%) of the respondents agreed that good staffing and selection policy are well conducted in their organisation while the remaining 20% of the respondents strongly agreed the fact that most of the of the staffs in the management, some of the staffs have enough knowledge on good staffing and selection policy. This implies that in order for the organisations to ensure good employee turnover, they have to ensure and maintain good staffing and follow up on the selection policy in their daily activities. According to Pires

(2016), there are nine steps an organization can take to reduce employee turnover. Pires (2016) says hiring employees with the right fit ensures compatibility, which is critical to retention. Behaviour-based interviewing and 4 competency screening go a long way in determining personality, work style, and potential match and success within your company. Consider hiring older candidates who are seeking stability. Older applicants may not be looking for the development opportunities that their younger counterparts may be in need of. Make sure you describe the job as accurately as possible so candidates will know what is expected. Misconceptions regarding the job responsibilities and work environment are one of the major causes of employee turnover show that the majority have accepted that a good supervisory system in the management is available, while the remaining 19% of the respondents have strongly agreed the fact that most of the respondents are aware that a good supervisory system in the management is well practiced.

The study implies that most of the respondents agree that in organisation management, leaders have a good supervisory system in place which helps them to ensure employee turnover. The study concluded that in order for the management to maintain employee turnover, it is by ensure a good supervisory system in the management. The resources invested by the organization are lost by the people who leave the organization. This includes time and money in making competent employees. The organization does experience significant damage when trained, experienced, and competent and talented staff decide to leave for another company, which is the competitor of the previous employer. Ghosh et al. (2015) further argue that if the turnover is high, it is an indicator that the organization is managed poorly. The researcher argues that workers, as human beings, are dissatisfied with the job they used to do or with their employer would prefer to look for another employer. High rate of turnover sends a bad (negative) alert message to consumers and hence creates an image that is not good in the labour market organization, which has a high rate of turnover, and finds it hard to recruit good performers in the future.

Results further show that the majority of the respondents, which are 91% have accepted that there is a strong grievance procedure, and the remaining 9% of the respondents have strongly agreed the fact that most of the respondents accept that having strong grievance procedures helps in improving employee turnover. The study implies that most of the respondents have accepted that the management is doing its best to have a strong grievance procedure for its members. The study concluded that in order for any management or organisation to manage and ensure employee turnover, they should ensure that they have a strong grievance procedure in their daily activities. There are multiple causes of labour turnover

intentions, and they vary from one organization to another. The organization's management needs to identify relevant signals and take appropriate measures. Nzobanaliba (2019) advocated that absenteeism, frequent late coming can connote turnover since they represent signs of withdrawal from work. Attitudinal behavior plus other organizational factors may influence turnover. Chandra and Anjaiah (2019) added that co-workers' intentions are also significant for others to leave the organization. It is learnt that the more positive intentions of coworkers to leave, found to have a strong impact on other employees to quit as well. When dissatisfied workers leave an organization, they are likely to convince their peers to leave. However, most people vacate from organizations fuelled by economic factors reasons which can be used to envisage labour turnover in the market.

Large organizations have been able to scale down labour turnover through the provision of advancement chances and high wages to safeguard employee retention (Kilonzo, 2018). On the same line, Mustafa (2016) discloses that stressors cause employees' turnover. This can be due to a mismatch between what is expected and how to meet such expectations. Organizational politics are inevitable, and they are found in all organizations regardless of their differences. They involve tactics of executing power and authority in realizing desired goals. Despite the positive impacts resulting from political games, they also cause negative impacts such as conflicts, unethical practices, loss of reputation, and turnover acceleration in organizations (Hussain &Xian, 2019). Certain political behaviors favor those who engage and are accepted by the authority and negatively affect non-player players of organization politics, hence leading to turnover intentions.

Study findings indicated that to a large extent, respondents agreed that decentralized leadership and employment policy minimize employees' turnover. A common reason for resignation is the feeling that management in general and team leaders in particular are not providing the leadership they should, or are treating people unfairly, or are bullying their staff. This problem should be remedied by selecting leaders with well-developed leadership qualities, training them in leadership skills and in methods of resolving conflict and dealing with grievances, and introducing better procedures for handling grievances and disciplinary problems, and training everyone in how to use them (Hubert 2017).

The findings in the table below show that the majority of the respondents who are 70% have agreed that employees are well motivated, and the remaining 30% of the respondents have strongly agreed on that fact. The study found that respondents agreed on how organisation perform their best to motivate their employees in different activities, so that they can have the courage to keep on

working better in their daily activities. The study concluded that organisations should ensure that they have a better way of motivating their employees through different techniques, as they will have more courage and confidence in working better. Rewards have been seen to be a vital instrument in employee performance. A well-rewarded employee feels that he/she is being valued by the company that he/she is working for (Markova and Ford 2019). They are also encouraged to work harder and better if they are aware that their well-being is taken seriously by their employers, and that their career and self-development are also being honed and taken care of by their company. Employees are the engine of the organization's vehicles, while reward is the fuel. No organization can achieve its stated objectives without its employees (Vilma and Egle, 2017). The importance of motivated employees cannot be highlighted enough in an organizational context (Lotta, 2018). Motivated employees are more productive, more efficient, and more willing to work towards organizational goals than employees who 25 are experiencing low levels of motivation (Hunter, 2018). Entwistle (2017) is of the view that if an employee performs successfully, it leads to organizational rewards, and as a result motivational factor of employees lies in their performance. The highly motivated employees serve as a competitive advantage for any company because their performance leads an organization to the successful accomplishment of its goals (Rizwan and Ali, 2019)

Findings also show that the majority of the respondents, which are 60% have accepted that there is a great contribution between managerial factors and employee turnover, and the remaining 40% of the respondents have strongly agreed with that fact. The study found that most of the respondents accept that managerial factors do have a great contribution to employee turnover. The study implies that for any improvement of employee turnover in several activities that are to be done in the management, they need managerial factors to support. Factors influencing employee turnover include managerial factors in the organisation. The findings of this study are similar to those of Eatough (2010) and Batt (2019). In their studies, work-related behavior, management style, limited resource availability, incorrect job instructions/job descriptions, autonomy, team collaboration, training, fairness, and leadership styles were revealed to be the causes of turnover intentions. Though they are not categorized into groups like in the current study, they still portray similar factors for turnover intentions. Regarding leadership styles, it is among the reasons why individuals decide to leave or stay in a company (Batt, 2019). More emphasis is added that leadership styles significantly impact turnover intentions and cause a significant impact (Donkor, 2021). Based on findings from regression analysis, the positive and significant influence of organization factors implies that factors such as salaries and benefits, promotional changes, organizational policies, and job security have a strong influence on turnover intentions. As such, salary review, provision of promotional opportunities, enhancement of job security, and supportive policies enhance retention and lower turnover intentions. How we structure compensation, promotional changes, and policies is essential to employees' satisfaction. Fair compensation based on their productivity and sense of equal value to all employees needs to be emphasized.

Table 1: Managerial factors on employee turnover

Variable	SD%	D%	N%	A%	SA%	Mean	Std. Dev
Good staffing and selection policy are well-conducted	0	0	0	80	20	4.56	0.599
A good supervisory system in management is available	0	0	0	81	19	4.73	0.816
There is a strong grievance procedure	0	0	0	91	9	4.62	0.656
Employees are well motivated	0	70	30	0	0	2.78	0.618
Managerial factor influences employee turnover	0	0	0	60	40	4.76	0.786

SD=Strongly Disagreed, D= Disagreed, N=Neutral, A= Agreed, SA= Strongly Agreed

The study's findings imply that most of the respondents agree that in the organisation management, leaders have a good supervisory system in the management, which helps them to ensure employee turnover. The study implies that most of the respondents have accepted that the management is doing its best to have a strong grievance procedure for its members. The study found that respondents agreed on how organisation perform their best to motivate their employees in different activities, and that they dare to keep working better in their daily activities. The study found that most of the respondents accept that managerial factors do have a great contribution to employee turnover.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

This study examined the factors influencing labor turnover at TANESCO in the Arusha region and found that most of the employees in the organization prefer employment security, workplace organization, and the working environment, which were the most important factors that employees consider, which will positively maintain employee turnover in the organization. The study found that most of the respondents have accepted that if the workplace lacks important facilities, such as proper lighting, furniture, clean restrooms, and other health and safety provisions, employees won't be willing to put up with the inconvenience for long. The study found that flexible work schedules lead to greater work-life balance and can offset work stress and increase employee turnover. The study found that most of the organisations should be in a position to provide their employees with the opportunity to work flexible hours. The study found that most of the respondents accept that good job characteristics do have a great contribution to employee turnover. Overall, the study concludes that improving working conditions, enhancing job design, and strengthening employment security are essential strategies for reducing labor turnover and improving organizational performance at TANESCO.

5.2 Recommendations

Top management should provide the opportunity for career and personal growth through training and education, challenging assignments, and more responsibility. The management should keep employee compensation and benefits aligned with current economic status, paying employees a fair going wage for their work (or better) and offering them competitive benefits. As well as the management should ensure work-life balance among employees by encouraging and giving employees' opportunity to connect through acts of generosity, and the

expression of gratitude. The study also recommends that the management should consider improving the work environment, like the provision of safe working conditions provision of a flexible working schedule. Further research should look beyond Arusha to generalise throughout the TANESCO regions. Mixed-methods research to capture quantitative trends and qualitative insights on employee motivations and work satisfaction is also recommended. Future research should examine the long-term financial impact of labor turnover on organizational performance and explore sector-wide comparisons between public and private energy utilities in Tanzania. Such investigations would deepen understanding of turnover dynamics and better inform policy and managerial interventions.

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