

Incentives as Determinants of Job Retention among the Private Security Guards in Kenya: A Case of Radar Security Company.

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Abstract: The purpose of the study, was to examine incentives as determinants to Private Security guard's job retention in Kenya. Private Security Firms are faced with how to retain their Security Guards with incentives so as to improve the overall firms' performance and service. The study was able to establish that incentives is determinants to guards' job retention. Victor Vroom's Expectancy theory which explains a person's actions in terms of the goals a person wants to be achieved, was used. The consideration of the relationship between incentives as the independent variable in this study and job retention as the dependent variable was sought. The study employed a case study design, and the researcher first picked the groups of respondents by stratified random sampling method before using simple random sampling to select respondents in each group to take part in the research. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics like percentages, average and mean then presented the data on tables, graphs and pie charts. The following recommendation was made: private security guards to be engaged on knowledge of high priority incentives. The findings of the study will be of significance: to the industry as it strives to improve its service, will be useful to the human resource planners within the industry, provide the stakeholders with an in-depth understanding of the expectations of the guards, add knowledge to the community of academia and stimulate further study on incentives as a job retention determinant in other fields of interest.

Keywords: Employee Retention, Private security guards, Private security firms, Retention, security, Incentives.

Date of Submission: 01-06-2018

Date of acceptance: 18-06-2018

I. INTRODUCTION

In a world of perceived uncertainty and threats, the desire for security becomes among the most prominent basic needs of human beings. Against the threatening forces of unpredictability, rapid transformation and complexity, that can cause emotional, economic or physical harm. Threats prevention is a worthy cause and anything that can be so labeled by implication carries a good deal of favor. Security is no longer only the concern of military defense. Security then can be defined as '... the absence of acute threats to the minimal acceptable levels of the basic values that a people consider essential to its survival'.¹ Security has also been defined as a low probability of damage to acquired values.² More values are being added in daily lives of people: assets, personnel and even profitability of the organizations against theft, fire, fraud and criminal damage gained momentum in the public sector. As more values are being added in daily lives of people, increased attention is now being paid to other actors within the "security system". These actors include the Private security firms.

Although the PSCs are largely recognized as playing an important role in creating favorable conditions for development, the sector has a number of challenges including high turnover, and demotivated employees.³ The growth of societies and businesses has made it increasingly necessary to attract and retain highly competent employees which sometimes can be a difficult task.⁴ In organizations and particularly in private security firms, employees have psycho-social needs, desires, goals and objectives other than physiological needs and social security.⁵ The employees in the private security firms who are the security guards, want to be satisfied psychologically and socially, by not only seeking financial compensation but also having non-financial considerations like whether the PSCs provide a pleasant environment, convenient hours, an attractive benefit program and opportunities for growth and advancement of career. People, who do not achieve their goals and objectives and who do not meet their needs are doomed to be inefficient and they are likely to fail.⁵ When the private security guards are not effective and the likely to fail, then assets, personnel and even profitability of the organizations against. Are not secured from theft, fire, fraud or criminal damage.

1.1 Private Security guards

Private security guards are those self-employed and employed individuals providing security-related services to specific clientele for a fee, for the individual or entity that retains or employs them, or for themselves in order to protect their persons, private properties or interests from various hazards.⁶ They can also be defined private security as those individuals, organizations, and services other than public law enforcement agencies, which are engaged primarily in the prevention of crime, loss, or harm to specific individuals, organizations, or facilities.⁷

From a historical perspective, the private security guards played a major role in the history of the USA and their national presence has expanded since the 19th century. The growth of the industrialization sector, the great westward expansion of America in the 1840s and 1850s, and the U.S. railroad systems, were the major factors in the 19th century which contributed to that expansion.⁸ Trains carried large stashes of cash and precious minerals, as they passed through sparsely populated areas that provided bandits with several areas perfect for robbing them.⁹ The Railroad owners fight back, to protect their investments by hiring services of armed private security guards.⁹ Henry Wells and William Fargo in 1850 formed Wells and Fargo.¹⁰ Allan Pinkerton invested in private security, creating his national security firm, with its “never sleeps” motto being the first nationwide commercial security guards.¹⁰ Consequently, by the late 1800s, robbing trains then turned into an increasingly tough and dangerous job.

Private Security guards are employment with private security firms, which have become a major feature around the world and in Africa.¹¹ A review of 70 countries, estimated that the formal private security sector employs between 19.5 and 25.5 million people worldwide.¹¹ Private security firms operate in more than 50 states including Angola, Britain, Columbia, Iraq, Liberia, Russia, Saudi Arabia and USA, providing services for governments, international institutions, embassies, business and corporations with guards in their employment.¹²

Despite the growth of the sector, there is a notable turnover of private security guards who perceive the job as a stepping stone for absorption in other sectors of the economy. Private security guard's poor working conditions and with low pay has contributed to low rates of job retention by security guards.¹³

1.2 Job retention

Previous researches have suggested several factors play a pivotal role in employee retention. The factors which are considered and have a direct effect are; career opportunities, work environment, work life balance, organizational justice, and existing leave policy and organization image.¹⁴ An employee can stay and be loyal to such an organization where an employee has value, sense of pride and work to their full potential.¹⁵ Some of the reasons guards stay in employment with PSCs are; organizational reward system, growth, and development, pay package and training and skills and job retention is critical to the long-term security and success of any PSC.¹⁵ The retention of experienced guards ensures customer satisfaction, increased sales, satisfied colleagues and reporting staff. It further promotes effective succession planning, and deeply imbedded organizational knowledge and learning. Hence, continuous turnover of guards is a costly proposition for PSCs.¹⁶

1.3 Incentives

Guarding is a notoriously low-paid occupation, and this is also the case in Kenya, where guards often work very long hours for very little remuneration. A common practice in many companies is to pay guards different wages depending on which contract they are assigned to, thus causing considerable discontent as guards at the same level of experience can earn very different wages. It is hard for an employee to remain committed to an employer, and remain motivated and working effectively when such employer's levels of commitment in return are in doubt.¹⁷ But an employee can stay and be loyal to such organization where an employee has value, sense of pride and working to their full potential.¹⁵ Employee incentives can be defined as being, about how people are rewarded in accordance with their value to an organization.¹⁸ He continues to include both financial and non-financial rewards in the concept. It can also be broadly defined rewards as those material and psychological payoffs for performing tasks in the workplace.¹⁹ Motivation of devoted employees, relay on a certain intrinsic and extrinsic features that are collaborated with positive results. Those tangible incentives are functioning in growing performance for duties that are not completed earlier, and to inspire as a smart thinking accomplish organizational goals.²⁰ Moreover, incentives are the most favored factors for the employee retention. The tangible incentives are effective in increasing performance for work assignment that not completed before and encourage effectively thinking which assist both quality and quality in achieving goals.¹⁷ Incentives, rewards and recognition are the major aspects that influence on employee motivation. Incentive make employees to be involved in their working activities as it is for their benefits, and feel motivated as their activities are enjoyable and satisfactory.²¹

In current environment where insecurity has increased with the inception of terrorism related activities, security guards have to be retained by the private security firms. Any high turnover related to incentives among

the private security guards, has to be curtailed. Consequently, this study seeks to examine incentives as a determinant to Private Security guard's job retention in Kenya.

II. VICTOR VROOM'S EXPECTANCY THEORY

The study will be guided by the Victor Vroom's Expectancy theory of 1964. This theory explains a person's actions in terms of the outcome or the goals a person wants to achieve.²² Choices are made or alternatives sort to get that outcome, and the outcome has to be attractive enough to prompt an individual to start working towards it.²³ Expectancy theory links effort, performance and outcome. The employee should have the belief that the more the effort, the better the performance and the better performance the higher will be the reward. The reward has to fascinate the person to motivate them to work for it such that there should be a positive co-relationship between a person's effort in performing a job and a desirable outcome for the person which he values.²⁴ This in other words translates to a worker's personal outcome which is the reward such that if the worker takes certain steps he will be able to achieve the outcome which will result in the getting promised reward.²⁵ The means or actions require establishing a relationship between the performance and the reward such that the worker should know what level of performance will bring what reward.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted case study descriptive design based on the quantitative procedure in an attempt to analyze incentives as an influence to retention of guards in RADAR security firm. Nairobi is home to many multinationals and international organizations that use the services of PSGs and having the most diverse experiences of PSGs at work. Its results would be a clear representative of other parts of Kenya. It's on a 269sq mi and with a population of approximately 3.5 million by 2009.²⁶ Stratified sampling was used to cluster the respondents as either guards or the management, and also to cluster the guards having more than 2 years of experience. The technique was appropriate as it involves a careful in-depth study of income as a factor that influence employee's intention on whether to remain within the organization by using multiple sources of evidence and also establishes a chain of evidence to construct validity. A sample size of 10 % is advisable for a large population but the study will use 15% of the target population of the RADAR Security guards in Nairobi was chosen.²⁷ It is approximately 360 respondents picked by Random sampling. A sample size of 20% of a smaller target population but the study will use 50% of management staff which was approximately 15 respondents.²⁸ The research data collection instrument were questionnaires for both the guards and the management that had both closed-ended and open-ended questions. This was on view of further probing in view of getting in-depth responses. Quantitative data was analyzed using graphs

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Incentives as Determinants to job retention

The following were pointed out as incentives and rated as in the graph below: Career development, Sacco loans, Job security and overdrafts.

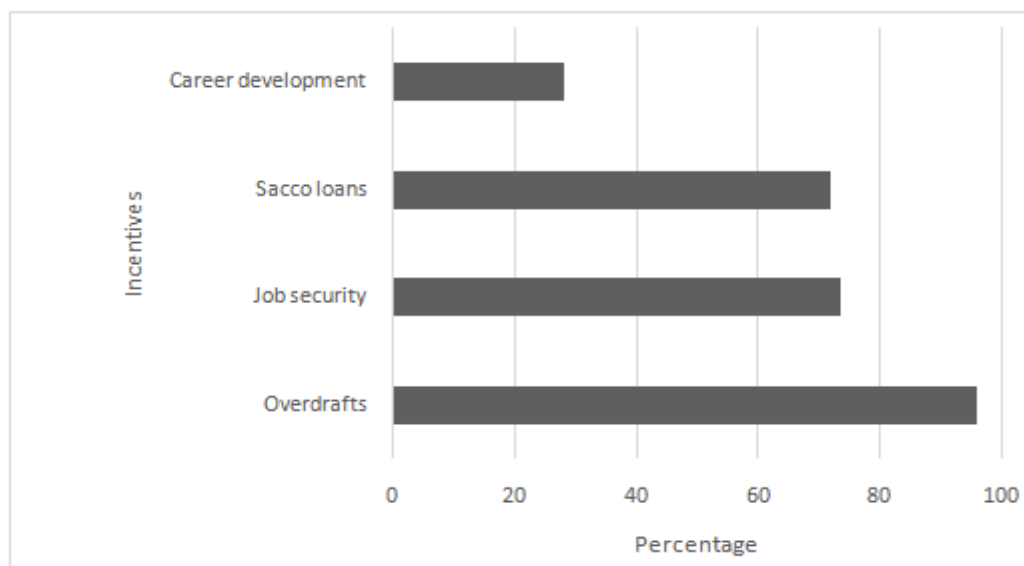


Figure 1: Incentives

Interestingly, a majority 95.73% of the participants stated a positive opinion about overdrafts from the banks as a determinant to PSG's job retention. According to this result, which we evaluate as statistically significant, the security guards have a good opinion about the overdrafts from the banks and them being incentives of job retention at RADAR. This fulfills what Victor Vroom's Expectancy theory that, for the guards to be motivated to retain their jobs, they must trust that they will get rewarded.²³ The study found out that is a determinant because most guards are always on loans.

Job security was mentioned and came in second. The security guards had a positive attitude towards job security as an incentive of job retention at RADAR Security Company. 73.48% felt that job security is a determinant to their job retention. In terms of gender, men exhibited more optimism than women on the subject. This concurs with the Victor Vroom's Expectancy theory dealing with outcomes, which explains a person's actions in terms of the outcomes they want to achieve.²² Choices such as job retention are made to get the outcome of Job Security, and the outcome has to be attractive enough to prompt an individual to start working towards it.

The study respondents also mentioned the loans facility from Sacco as valuable. An important majority (71.65%) stated that they care about the loans facility from Sacco. This is also very true according to Victor Vroom's Expectancy theory that, the employee should have the belief that the better the performance and the better performance the higher will be the reward.²⁵ The reward has to fascinate the person to motivate them to work for it such that there should be a positive co-relationship between a person's effort in performing a job and a desirable outcome for the person which he values. This theory further asserts that the more a reward is wanted, the more determined the worker to get the outcome.

Nearly a quarter of the Security guards believe that there is a possibility of career development related to their job. 28.05% of security guards stated a positive opinion on this issue. Career Development entails training and skills for the guards, which prepares PSGs for emergencies they may have to respond to while on the job.²⁹ Training courses as a guard develops in Career also focus on loss-prevention skills, which include access and loss control, fire-prevention and alarm systems, the identification of equipment and crime control, as well as maintenance skills.³⁰ This situation shows that this sector does not shut career development for the guards as the training and skills development will determine and enhance its guard's retention. This is true according to Victor Vroom's expectancy theory which is the means or actions required to get the outcome.²⁴ To be motivated to do the work, the worker must trust that if the outcome is achieved, the person will get the reward. This in other words translates to a worker's personal outcome which is the reward such that if the worker takes certain steps he will be able to achieve the outcome which will result in the getting promised reward. An employee then stays and gets to be loyal with such organization where an employee has value, sense of pride and work to their full potential.¹⁵

4.1 Incentives according to the management at RADAR.

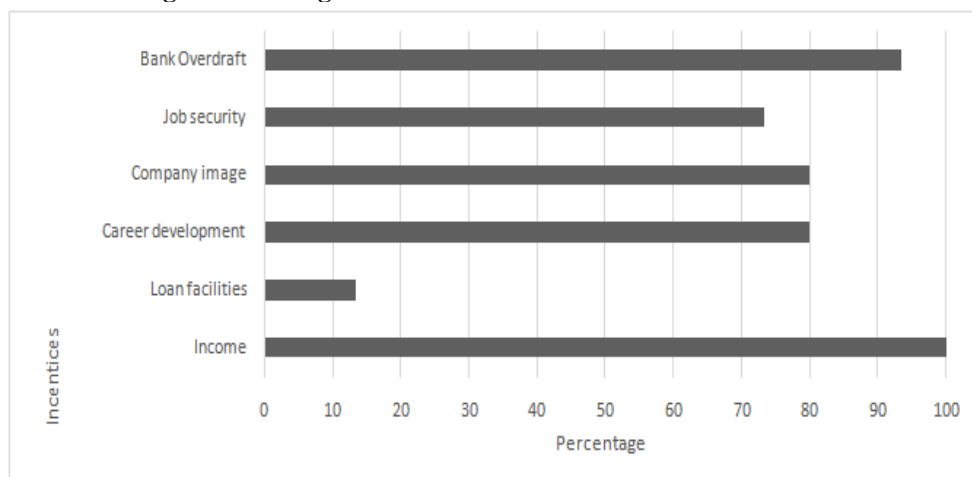


Figure 2: Incentives according to the management at RADAR.

The management staff also believe that income, bank overdrafts, and job security are the key determinants to the retention of PSGs at RADAR. They seem to also agree that any determinant having a monetary tag is a source of motivation to the guards. Two determinants are now showing up from the management as strong points according to them and they are career development and company image. Both career development and company image have scored 80% as determinants to job retention, whereas according to

the guards, the two had tallied dismally at 28.05% and 19.21% respectively. This is a new discovery on how divergent the guards are with the management.

V. DISCUSSION

As a result of this research, the researcher found Incentives as a determinant of PSG's job retention because both the PSGs and management feel nearly the same way. The research justifies that with proper incentives and strategies in place, this can help reduce job turn-over amongst the Private Security Guards. Career development, Sacco loans, Job security and overdrafts, were the four mentioned by the guards and management. The biggest diversion in views among the guards and the management, was with, career development and company image as an incentive to job retention. Incentives, are thus a practice that should be part of an organizational culture. This is because, incentives will increase the rate of job retention which will translate into an organization's productivity. The job retention of employees in an organization as a whole will contribute to the better working of the organization, so that the organization can reach its objectives.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study recommends, that the RADAR Security Company, Security Companies and other stakeholders with interest in Private security matters should pay attention on incentives as a strategy that can ensure proper Job Retention within the PSCs in Kenya.

Secondly, this study only targeted RADAR Security guards. To get a comprehensive picture of incentives as determinants to job retention within the Security Industry, it is recommended that more research on all PSCs and PSGs, in Kenya can be undertaken.

Last but not least, the research targeted only the Private Security Guards who had served for more than 2 years with RADAR. To provide a better understanding of Incentives of Job Retention within the Security Industry, it is recommended that all employees whether new or old on the job, be studied.

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IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) is UGC approved Journal with Sl. No. 5070, Journal no. 49323.

Gerald Peter Mutonyi "Incentives as Determinants of Job Retention among the Private Security Guards in Kenya: A Case of Radar Security Company." *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*. vol. 23 no. 06, 2018, pp. 01-06.