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Decent Work and Academics' Retention in Nigerian Private Universities: Evidence from Ado-Odo Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between decent work and employee retention of private universities in Ado-Odo Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria. The research focuses on compensation, job content and promotion as predictors of employee retention. A survey research design was employed, and data were collected from 80 academics. The collected data were analysed using regression analysis. The results reveal that compensation (0.001; P=0.995) and job content (0.555; P=0.313) have a non-significant positive impact on employee retention, while promotion (0.970; P=0.000) has a positive and significant influence on employee retention. The findings of the study suggest that Job promotions are essential for retaining employees as they acknowledge an individual's hard work, dedication, and competence within the organisation. The study therefore recommends that organisations should prioritise improving their promotion policies. Well-defined promotion criteria and consistent communication regarding advancement prospects can inspire employees to work towards career growth within the company. Offering training and development programmes can also ready employees for more advanced roles.

***Key Words**: SDG 8; Decent work; Employee retention; Sustainable development; Job Promotion*

1.0 Introduction

Employee retention is a significant challenge for firms in a competitive world (Sorn et al., 2023). Consequently, with the advent of the era of the knowledge economy, employees not only pursue material rewards but also desire to gain decent work, which can enable them to have fulfilling and productive working experiences (Ferraro et al., 2023). Nigerian universities exhibit achievement and made significant advancements, although they face issues with retention and hurdles that hinder their ranking on the global education scale.

One of the key issues for businesses is to synchronise their objectives with the increasing desire for a harmonious organisational environment that fulfils fundamental human needs and in which work is associated with personal satisfaction. Motivating staff to exceed expectations is a crucial component of every company. Sustainable development involves not just environmental conservation but also socio-economic issues that enhance the standards of life in society (Henderson & Loreau, 2023). Scholars from several professions are focusing on retaining personnel in the workplace to address the issues of turnover intentions, human capital flight, and redundancy in academia in Nigeria (Susanto & Rony, 2023; Ibidunni et al., 2023; Marczewska et al., 2024)).

Nowadays decent work has been promoted all over the world at theoretical, practical, and research levels (Pereira, 2019; Leal Filho et al, 2021) and applied to various population groups from high-skilled occupations (e.g., knowledge workers like college/university faculty members) to low-skilled ones (e.g., domestic workers) (Su et al., 2023). In Nigeria, the growing quantity of universities, alongside the inadequate amount of trained academic personnel, is concerning, particularly at public institutions.

Furthermore, there are crises of internal governance, vulnerability, favouritism and unsatisfactory work situations such as poor condition of services (Ibidunni et al., 2016), severe administrative and organisational structure (Osibanjo et al., 2014), under-funding (Ajayi & Ekundayo, 2010) and inadequate learning and teaching facilities (Abdulsalam & Mawoli, 2012), etc. Of all the crises, unsatisfactory working conditions (Soenanta et al, 2020; Salau et al., 2018), have been recognised as the most critical and worrisome (Pekerşen & Tugay, 2020). Since 1980, the frequent strikes and resignations of university academic staff in Nigeria have been a significant worry for university administration and the government.

The 2018 report from Times Higher Education (THE) revealed that no Nigerian educational institutions were ranked among the top 1,000 universities globally. It was observed that Nigerian state universities have not featured in the first 3,500 universities in the world (Salau et al, 2020). Most Nigerian universities will not score competitively on global ranking tables based on these characteristics. Studies indicate that a significant number of academics depart Africa annually, with Nigeria contributing the majority of this exodus.If the current decrease in retention continues, achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG Goal 4: Quality Education, may become difficult.

Examining the research gap, the topic of employees getting 'decent work' has not been extensively researched in the Nigerian context. Also, researchers have not attempted to identify the varying standards for decent work between older and younger generations, which is a gap in the literature. Understanding what defines decent work among employees in Nigeria would help influence practice and policy actions aimed at retaining talented personnel in alignment with United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 8, which focuses on decent work. In addition, there is less study on the comprehensive concept of Decent

Work from a psychological viewpoint, particularly within the professional category of academic staff (Pereira, dos Santos, & Pais, 2017).

The purpose of this research is to study the effect of decent work on employee retention. This is an innovative study that would empirically support the theoretically adopted perspective that Decent Work plays an important role in the promotion of employee retention (Duffy et al, 2017; Ferraro et al., 2016). This study will enhance the current understanding of Decent Work by including the subjective perspectives of academics and researchers. This research seeks to elucidate the experiences of distinguished scholars and to emphasize the need for a favourable work-life balance, equitable compensation for civic engagement, social safeguards, avenues for professional advancement, and protection against psychological and physiological hazards in the workplace.

2.0 Literature Review

Decent work is a notion that includes respect, self-esteem, safety, equity, productivity, and significance in an environment of autonomy (Yeh & Wang, 2024). Developed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 1999, it is currently included as one of the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. The ILO's approach encompasses four principal values: freedom, equality, security, and human dignity, which include notions such as work-life balance, career management, unemployment, participation, and pay. The notion of decent labour has seven dimensions: Fundamental Principles, Adequate Working Time and Workload, Reasonable Remuneration for Civic Participation, Social Protection, Opportunities, and Health and Safety (Dinis et al., 2024). These elements underscore the significance of justice, dignity, freedom, acceptance, equity, trust, explicit standards, participation, solidarity, and mental well-being.

Gender equality is a fundamental component of decent work, guaranteeing the absence of discrimination and equitable opportunity and compensation for both men and women (Kemechian et al., 2023). Quality employment benefits all stakeholders, including individual employees, markets, companies, politicians, and national leaders. Decent work is a notion that profoundly impacts workers' motivation and well-being, mediated via many forms of motivation and Psychological Capital (Kaan Namal et al., 2024). It is also associated with independent motivation and positively influences employee resilience and productivity. Research indicates a favourable correlation between certain aspects of Decent Work, including engaging and productive employment, core ideals and values in the workplace, significant compensation for civic participation, and intrinsic motivation (Su & Chan, 2023).

From a sustainable development standpoint, decent employment entails working circumstances that respect workers' basic rights, including health and safety, remuneration, physical and mental well-being, personal development, social inclusion, empowerment, and equal opportunities (Randev & Jha, 2023). Employee retention and work satisfaction are essential for an organization's competitive edge, influencing efficiency, productivity, and sustainability. Skilled employees play a crucial role in businesses and economies worldwide, prompting companies to seek competent personnel to foster economic development and cultural diversity.

The notion of sustainability has expanded to include economic and social dimensions, with a significant focus on enhancing society by addressing poverty, hunger, gender inequality, health, education, and equitable employment (Custodio et al., 2023). According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), decent work has four primary elements: employment, social protection, workers' rights, and social dialogue. Optimal working

circumstances foster dignified living standards, mitigate inequality and poverty, and enhance health and quality of life. Engaged employees have a pleasant disposition, are emotionally, cognitively and physically committed to their tasks, and actively get enjoyment from and dedicate themselves to their jobs. A robust work ethic offers several advantages for a firm, including enhancing employee health, motivating more diligence and commitment, and yielding superior outcomes (Imam & Kim, 2023).

Employee retention is essential for firms to achieve sustained success. Factors influencing employee turnover include human elements such as familial circumstances, professional advancement, and attractive employment options, alongside organizational components like inequitable treatment, insufficient promotion chances, and conflicts between individual and collective beliefs (Wai et al, 2024). Employee engagement is affected by commitment and discretionary effort, which are two elements of employee engagement. Both pull and push factors must be evaluated when studying turnover, since positive allure may prompt workers to explore other career prospects. Organizations must comprehend their motivating factors and objectives to retain their most competent employees.

Research has concentrated on customer-oriented methodologies and employee equality tactics in workforce retention. Elements like acknowledgement, awards, workload, and inflexibility might impact family life (Kossek et al., 2023). A confluence of incentives, including competitive remuneration, robust leadership, and avenues for professional advancement, may mitigate turnover. Priyanka and Dubey (2016) found eight variables influencing employee turnover intentions: inadequate management practices, insufficient remuneration, restricted career advancement chances, deficient support systems, limited educational options, hazardous working environments, ineffective communication, and job insecurity.

Kossivi and Kalgora (2016) highlighted autonomy, social support, leadership style, work environment, compensation, work-life balance, opportunities for growth, and training and development as possible factors influencing employee retention. Training and development, corporate culture, and autonomy are often overlooked in comparison to leadership and supervision. To enhance staff retention rates, organizations should reform management compensation and evaluation methods, do retention-oriented interviews periodically, and adopt tactics addressing both pull and push aspects.

2.1 Theoretical Review

Decent work is an essential element of human existence, intricately connected to accomplishment, bodily and mental health, and overall well-being (Chigbu & Nekhwevha, 2023). The Psychology of Working Theory (PWT) was first introduced at the macro level to facilitate equitable access for both men and women to secure and meaningful employment, grounded on the principles of freedom, equality, security, and human dignity (Di Fabio et al., 2023). It has been included in PWT as a fundamental variable at the micro level, including a secure working environment, suitable compensation, robust medical security, sufficient leisure time, and alignment of values with one's family and community.

PWT elucidates the influence of environmental and psychological elements on an individual's capacity to get satisfactory employment and the subsequent impact on the fulfilment of personal requirements (Wan & Xiong, Q., 2024). Economic constraints and marginalization are contextual elements that affect the psychological dimensions of decent employment, including work volition and career adaptability (Su et al., 2023). A proactive personality, critical awareness, social support, and economic conditions may affect the effect of economic

constraints and marginalization on employment choices and career adaptability (Shen et al., 2024).

Quality employment is anticipated to foster job satisfaction and well-being by fulfilling basic survival demands, social connectivity requirements, and the desire for self-determination (Smith et al., 2024). Recent empirical research has validated the theory's predictive capacity, revealing that social status, economic constraints, and financial stress influence job quality via work motivation among minority workers. Recent research has discovered more determinants of satisfactory employment within a PWT framework, including the workplace environment perceived by working people, the workplace climate experienced by LGBTQ employees, and the psychological ownership individuals have over their occupations. Research has shown favourable relationships between the Decent Work Scale (DWS) and the fulfilment of survival requirements, social connection needs, and self-determination needs, which forecast work and life satisfaction (Gill, 2023).

The PWT writers formulated their notion of decent work according to the ILO's decent work guidelines, which include safe physical and interpersonal working conditions, hours that permit leisure and sufficient rest, organizational values that align with familial and social values, fair compensation, and access to adequate healthcare. An ideal employment must have five essential elements: a secure working environment, appropriate compensation, sufficient rest, company ideals that align with familial and societal principles, and equal healthcare access. The decent work agenda calls on vocational psychologists to promote inclusive workplaces that provide equitable job opportunities to all individuals, particularly those from underprivileged areas.

2.2 Empirical Review

Numerous studies, such as those conducted by Aruoren and Echewa (2023); Elsafty, and Oraby (2022), demonstrate the crucial impact of staff training and development on improving employee retention. Aruoren and Echewa (2023) study of consumer products firms in Rivers State, Nigeria, identified a favourable and substantial association between employee training, development, empowerment and retention rates. Elsafty and Oraby's (2022) study in the Egyptian private sector highlights training and development as essential measures for employee retention; yet, they observe that not all businesses adequately engage in these activities owing to perceived expenses.

These results align with Human Capital Theory and Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory, indicating that workers see training as an investment in their personal and professional development, resulting in increased job satisfaction and organizational loyalty. In both instances, firms that proactively invest in the training and development of their employees cultivate a feeling of worth and belonging, which is crucial in mitigating turnover.

The concept of decent employment is strongly included in the research conducted by Su and Chan (2023); Wan and Duffy (2022). Su and Chan's meta-analysis demonstrates that decent work has a moderate correlation with employee well-being ($r = .48$) and career skills ($r = .44$), highlighting the worldwide significance of decent work in enhancing overall career satisfaction and growth. Their results indicate that decent work universally predicts professional well-being and progress, irrespective of a country's developmental state or workforce demographics.

Wan and Duffy (2022) similarly investigate the adverse correlation between decent work and turnover intentions within the Chinese environment, mediated by job satisfaction. They

contend that conducive work settings enhance job satisfaction, thereby reducing workers' intent to resign. This corresponds with the Psychology of Working Theory (PWT), which emphasizes that favourable work conditions fulfil survival requirements and mitigate workplace tiredness, hence improving job satisfaction and retention.

Graca et al. (2021) substantiate these results, demonstrating that aspects of decent work forecast labour participation in the higher education sectors of Portugal and Brazil. Elevated engagement levels stem from satisfactory working circumstances, indicating that investment in such conditions not only keeps people but also boosts their productivity and commitment.

Salau et al. (2021) examine the relationship between retention methods and sustainable performance within Nigeria's academic sector. Their results indicate that retention tactics substantially influence academic staff performance, with a correlation coefficient of r = 0.660. These results align with those of Hanai (2021), who determined that workplace characteristics, including job responsibility and institutional reputation, greatly influence employee retention in Tanzania's banking industry. Both studies demonstrate that systematic retention techniques are essential for sustaining a steady and high-performing staff, especially in sectors reliant on specialized workers, such as academia and banking.

Furthermore, Owolabi and Adeosun (2021) investigate the efficacy of succession planning in reducing turnover rates. Their research indicates that firms with well-defined succession plans are more adept at retaining individuals by offering long-term career trajectories, hence underscoring the need for systematic retention measures. Ushakov and Shatila (2021) provide a new perspective by proposing that informal work settings, marked by enjoyable activities and managerial endorsement of social contacts, enhance employee retention. Their results suggest that, in addition to formal retention tactics like as training and favourable working conditions, cultivating a culture of camaraderie and friendliness among workers helps mitigate turnover by promoting informal relationships.

Duffy et al. (2021) examine the psychological and health-related effects of decent work, concluding that it reduces workplace weariness and enhances physical health outcomes, including overall health and health habits. The research establishes a correlation between favourable work environments and less stress, indicating that a healthy workplace enhances employee retention and significantly influences their physical health, an essential element for long-term retention.

3.0 Methodology

The research used a cross-sectional survey research design, specifically chosen for its suitability in gathering the opinions of respondents. This type of research design is considered the most appropriate due to its cross-sectional approach, which allows for the collection of diverse viewpoints and perspectives. Survey research offers several advantages when studying decent work and employee retention.

This study focuses on the relationship between selected dimensions of decent work and academics' retention at private universities, in Ado-Odo Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria, located in the southwestern region of the country, which is recognised as the "Gateway State" due to its proximity to Lagos, the major commercial centre in Nigeria. With a diverse population, Ogun State is home to various private universities and private universities. Within the university premises, there are academics, making it an ideal setting for examining the impact of decent work and employee retention. A survey was appropriate for gathering academics' assessments of their working conditions and their stated intention to remain with their

institution. Because all responses were collected at one point in time. The analysis identifies associations rather than changes in employment behaviour or causal effects. The study covered academics at Covenant University, Bells University of Technology, and Crawford University. Data were collected through an online questionnaire between February and March 2024.

3.1 Participants and Recruitment

Academics working at the three universities were eligible to participate. The study used purposive recruitment to reach people with direct experience of academic work in these institutions. A link to the online questionnaire was circulated using social networking sites after creating the questionnaire. The recruitment target was 200 participants, and 80 usable questionnaires were obtained for analysis. The respondents were aged 20-60 years, consistent with the age categories reported in the survey results. No birth restriction is applied in this account of eligibility. The final sample was recruited purposively.

The dependent variable was academics' retention with their current institution, rather than observed employee retention. The explanatory variables were respondents' assessments of compensation, job content and promotion. These variables capture selected aspects of the academic work experience; they do not constitute a complete measure of decent work. The questionnaire contains 27 items. To enhance study accuracy, we assured participants that the questionnaire would remain anonymised and survey data would be solely utilised for academic reasons. The standard threshold of statistical significance, $p < 0.05$, was employed for this purpose. The study's data were collected from primary sources

3.2 Data analysis

The 80 responses were summarised using frequencies and percentages. inferential statistics were used to analyze the hypothesis. Multiple regression analysis was used to investigate the relationship between variables and test the hypothesis. The researchers used multiple regression analysis to find possible predictors and evaluate their influence on the dependent variable. This statistical tool helped to investigate important linkages and measure their impact.The study employed a questionnaire as the research tool.

The data analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). SPSS is a commonly used programme that offers a variety of statistical methods for analyzing data. The application in this study guaranteed the effective and precise analysis of the data, facilitating the interpretation of results and the formulation of significant conclusions. The quality of research is greatly impacted by the tools and data-collecting techniques, with validity and reliability being crucial factors. The validity and reliability of the research instrument were ensured in this study. Both construct validity and content validity were utilized during the validation procedure. Construct validity assesses if the instrument measures its intended concept, whereas content validity confirms that the instrument covers all important topic areas.

A peer review was undertaken to improve the instrument's validity. Experts in the area reviewed the questionnaire to evaluate its suitability, clarity, and relevance to the study's aims. Their opinions and recommendations were used to enhance and validate the instrument. Reliability pertains to the consistency and stability of the data-collecting process. Reliability was evaluated in this study using Cronbach's alpha coefficient

3.1 Population of the study

The population of this study consists of academics in the three private universities in Ado-Odo Ota Ogun State. These individuals form the population for this study, providing valuable insights into the impact of decent work on employee retention. The breakdown of the population is as follows:

S/N	Institution	Population	Source
1	Covenant University	444	Covenant University Human Resource Unit, (2024)
2	Bells University of Technology	207	Tongo and Ajayi (2023)
3	Crawford University	74	Signalhire (2017)
	Total	725	
	Sample size using Yamane's formula	**257**	

Source: Authors Compilation (2024)

Model Specification

Based on the objectives of the study, the model for this study becomes:

$$Retentioni = \beta 0 + \beta 1 Compensationi + \beta 2 Job\ contenti + \beta 3 Promotioni + \varepsilon i$$

INT = f(COMP, JCONT, JPROM) (1)

$INT = \beta_0 + \beta_1 COMP + \beta_2 JCONT + \beta_3 JPROM + u$ (2)

Where:

RET = Retention

COMP = Job Compensation

JCONT = Job Content

JPROM = Job Promotion

β_0 = the intercept term and

$\beta_1 - \beta_3$= the coefficient of the independent variables.

3.2 Sampling and Sampling Technique

The sample size of a research is determined by the cost of data collection and statistical power. The sample population consists of the total academic staff from diverse departments of private universities in Ota. Nevertheless, the Yamane approach was used to ascertain the sample size based on the population's magnitude. Yamane's method is used to calculate a sample size that accurately reflects the population. The sample size is determined using a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error calculation. The computed sample size was 257.

4.0 Data Analysis and Interpretation

4.1 Respondent Characteristics

The demographic information collected from the respondents consisted of their gender, age, educational level and level of income.

Table 1. Characteristics of respondents (n = 80)

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Men	44	55.0
	Women	36	45.0
Age	20–40 years	36	45.0
	41–60 years	44	55.0
Highest qualification	Bachelor's degree	12	15.0
	Master's degree	36	45.0
	Doctorate	32	40.0
Reported income category	Low	12	15.0
	Medium	36	45.0
	High	32	40.0

Source: Field Survey (2024)

The demographic information of the study participants regarding their gender is presented in Table 1. The table provides the frequency and percentage distribution of male and female respondents. The data was collected through a field survey conducted in 2024. According to the table, out of the total 80 respondents, there were 44 males, which accounts for 55% of the sample. Similarly, there were 36 females, also constituting 45% of the sample. The cumulative percentages indicate that 55% of the respondents were male, while the remaining 45% were female. The age distribution of the study participants is presented in Table 2, showcasing the frequency and percentage distribution across different age brackets. Out of the 80 respondents, 45% (36 individuals) were in the age group of 20-40, and 55% (44 individuals) were aged between 41-60. The cumulative percentages reveal that a significant portion of the respondents fell within the age range of 40-60. This indicates that the majority of the respondents were relatively old-aged individuals, with 55% above the age of 40.

The educational qualification distribution of the study participants is presented in Table 3, displaying the frequency and percentage distribution across different age brackets. Out of the 80 respondents, 15% (12 individuals) had their bachelor's degree, 45% (36 individuals) had their master's degree qualification and 40% had doctorate degrees. The cumulative percentages reveal that a significant portion of the respondents had a master's degree. This indicates that the majority of the respondents were relatively educated.

The table above displays the respondent's income distribution into three categories: low, medium, and high. Three categories—low, medium, and high—are used to organize the dataset. Of the whole sample, the low-income category is the most prevalent (15%). The respondents with the biggest proportion, the medium-income level, make up 45% of the respondents. The lowest income level is 15%, while the highest income level is 40%. The whole set of data is devoid of any missing values. Eighty people make up the sample in general; the majority are in the medium-income range, followed by those in the high-income range.

4.3 Reliability Analysis

Reliability is essential for ensuring consistency in test or survey measurements. According to Zikmund and Carr (2013), a reliability coefficient of 0.90 or higher is excellent, 0.80 to 0.89 is good, 0.70 to 0.79 is adequate, and below 0.70 may have limited applicability.

Table 2: Cronbach's Reliability Results

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Remarks
0.941	27	Adequate

Source: Author's Computation (2024)

Table 2 presents the results of the Cronbach's alpha test for reliability. The obtained Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.941, indicating adequate reliability. The test was conducted using a total of 27 items in the questionnaire. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.941 suggests that there is a reasonable level of internal consistency and reliability among the items in the survey.

4.4 Analysis of Research Objectives

Table 3: Working Condition categories

Category	Recorded selections	Share of 268 selections
Physical environment	56	20.9%
Work intensity	32	11.9%
Working time quality	68	25.4%
Social environment	28	10.4%
Earnings	40	14.9%
Career prospects	44	16.4%
Total	**268**	**100.0%**

Source: Author's Computation (2024)

According to the analysis above, a significant portion of employees prioritise factors such as physical environment, work intensity, working time quality, social environment, earnings, and future career opportunities. The majority of respondents (21%) are concerned about the physical conditions in their workplace. Work intensity (12%) is also a major concern, with 12% focusing on workload or the demand for effort. Working time quality (25%) is a major concern, with 25% citing factors such as flexibility and consistent working hours. The social environment (11% of respondents) is a major concern, with 11% mentioning interpersonal relationships and team dynamics. Earnings (15%) are of concern to 15%, with 15% focusing on financial aspects such as salary and benefits. Future career prospects (16%) are also of concern, with 16% mentioning future career opportunities.

The analysis emphasizes the variety of concerns that employees have, focusing not only on monetary aspects but also on factors such as work environment, time quality, and social issues. Prioritisation of these factors varies, with working time quality and physical environment ranking higher than work intensity or social environment. Employee well-being and satisfaction extend beyond financial considerations, and career prospects indicate a desire for long-term development and growth opportunities. Understanding these factors can help

employers and policymakers create a work environment that meets employees' diverse needs and concerns.

Table 4: Decent Work Parameters for Young and Older Generation Employees

parameters	Young generation employees	Older generation employees
1	Working Time Quality (32)	Working Time Quality (36)
2	Physical Environment (28)	Physical Environment (28)
3	Work Intensity (20)	Prospects (28)
4	Social Environment (16)	Earnings (24)
5	Prospects (16)	Work Intensity (12)
6	Earnings (12)	Social Environment (12)

Source: Author's Computation (2024)

The table4 above represents different parameters related to decent work, with scores for both young-generation employees and older-generation employees. From the table, it can be seen that in terms of physical environment, it is an important determinant for decent work for all employees of different age factions. This dimension pertains to the physical hazards experienced by employees in their workplaces. Decent work requires safe working conditions in a physical sense. Ergonomic risks, ambient conditions, biological factors, and chemical hazards significantly impact employee health. An enhanced physical environment is linked to advancements in personal growth, learning opportunities, and the professional development of employees. An appropriate physical environment can enhance employees' energy levels, resilience to workplace challenges, and ability to focus on tasks, all of which are crucial for work engagement.

Also, from the analysis above, it can be seen that work intensity is an important determinant of decent work for young generation employees. A job that involves fast-paced work, strict deadlines, and high emotional demands, such as dealing with emotionally distressing situations, can create a work environment that hinders motivation and ultimately impacts work engagement negatively.

The level of work intensity is essential for young employees for a multitude of reasons. It enhances their career advancement by offering a range of tasks and challenges, speeding up their learning process. It aids in cultivating a robust work ethic by introducing individuals to demanding tasks and fostering resilience, discipline, and responsibility. Intense work can accelerate advancement in the organization, promoting a feeling of accomplishment and career growth. The rapid pace of high work intensity can improve adaptability and skill acquisition, which are crucial for young professionals starting their careers. It resonates with their entrepreneurial mindset, as numerous young professionals are entrepreneurial-oriented and eager to exert additional effort to enhance their projects or companies.

Highly demanding work environments can lead to new career prospects within the organization and the larger job market. It enables young professionals to establish a network within the organization and acquire insights into various industry aspects. High work-intensity environments can assist young professionals in achieving ambitious goals by providing the challenges and opportunities needed. Work intensity is a valuable asset for young professionals aiming to enhance their skills and accomplish their career objectives.

Furthermore, in relation to working time quality, it can be seen that older generation employees are keen on working time quality; the level of work intensity is essential for young

employees for a multitude of reasons. It enhances their career advancement by offering a range of tasks and challenges, speeding up their learning process. It aids in cultivating a robust work ethic by introducing individuals to demanding tasks and fostering resilience, discipline, and responsibility. Intense work can accelerate advancement in the organisation, promoting a feeling of accomplishment and career growth.

The rapid pace of high work intensity can improve adaptability and skill acquisition, which are crucial for young professionals starting their careers. It resonates with their entrepreneurial mindset, as numerous young professionals are entrepreneurial-oriented and eager to exert additional effort to enhance their projects or companies. Highly demanding work environments can lead to new career prospects within the organisation and the larger job market. It enables young professionals to establish a network within the organisation and acquire insights into various industry aspects. High work-intensity environments can assist young professionals in achieving ambitious goals by providing the challenges and opportunities needed. Work intensity is a valuable asset for young professionals aiming to enhance their skills and accomplish their career objectives.

Table 5: Model Summary of Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Durbin-Watson
1	.819[a]	.670	.657	94.51866	.670	2.350

a. Predictors: (Constant), promotion, Compensation, job content

b. Dependent Variable: Employee Retention

Source: Author's Computation (2024) using SPSS

The Model Summary result in Table 5 indicates that the predictors, which include promotion, Compensation, and job content collectively account for 66% (R Square = 0.670) of the variance in Employee Retention. This indicates a high level of association between decent work and employee retention in private universities of Ado-Odo Ota Ogun State. The adjusted R Square value of 0.657 suggests that approximately 66% of the variance in Employee Retention is accounted for by the predictors after controlling for the number of predictors in the model. The R-Square suggests that more than half of the variation in Employee Retention can be explained by the combined effects of decent work. The standard error of the estimate indicates the average distance between the observed and predicted values of Employee Retention, with a lower value suggesting a better fit of the regression model. These findings suggest that decent work, encompassing promotion, Compensation, and job content; plays a significant role in influencing employee retention in private universities of Ado-Odo Ota Ogun State.

Table 6: ANOVA Result

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1380753.794	3	460251.265	51.518	0.000[a]
	Residual	678967.006	76	8933.776		
	Total	2059720.800	79			
a. Dependent Variable: Employee Retention						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Promotion, Compensation, Job content						

Source: Author's Computation (2024) using SPSS

The ANOVA table, as shown in Table 6, presents the results of the analysis of variance for the regression model examining the relationship between decent work and employee retention in private universities of Ado-Odo Ota Ogun State. The ANOVA results indicate that the regression model is statistically significant (F = 51.518, p= 0.000), suggesting that the predictors collectively contribute to the prediction of employee retention. The regression model explains a significant portion of the variance in employee retention, as evidenced by the sum of squares for the regression (1380753.794) being larger than the sum of squares for the residual (678967.006). The mean square value for the regression (460251.265) indicates the average amount of variability explained by each predictor in the model. The significance level (Sig.) of 0.000 suggests that the predictors (Promotion, Compensation, and Job content) significantly contribute to the prediction of Employee Retention.

These results provide statistical evidence that decent work predictors have a significant impact on the employee retention of private universities in Ado-Odo Ota, Ogun State. The ANOVA analysis supports the notion that the combined effects of Promotion, Compensation, and Job content play a crucial role in determining employee retention in private universities of Ado-Odo Ota, Ogun State.

Table 7: Regression Coefficients

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-11.711	21.222		-0.552	0.583
	Compensation	0.001	0.152	0.001	0.007	0.995
	Job Content	0.555	0.546	0.089	1.015	0.313
	Promotion	0.970	0.090	0.779	10.742	0.000
a. Dependent Variable: Employee retention						

Source: Author's Computation (2024) using SPSS

Table 7 presents the regression coefficients for the variables included in the regression model assessing the relationship between decent work predictors (Promotion, Compensation, Job content) and employee retention in private universities of Ado-Odo Ota, Ogun State. The results show that compensation has a positive impact on employee retention, as evidenced by the positive coefficient (0.001) with a t-value of 0.007 (p > 0.995). This suggests that for every one-unit increase in compensation, employee retention is expected to increase by 0.1%. Similarly, Job Content has a positive impact on employee retention, with a coefficient of

0.555 and a t-value of 1.015 (p = 0.313). This suggests that an increase in Job Content is associated with an increase in employee retention by 56%.

However, Promotion has a positive and significant impact on employee retention, as indicated by the significant coefficient (0.970) and a t-value of 10.742 (p = 0.000). This implies that promotion has a substantial influence on employee retention in private universities of Ado-Odo Ota, Ogun State. In summary, the regression coefficients indicate that compensation and job content play important roles in driving employee retention, while promotion has a significant impact. These findings provide insights into some specific areas of decent work that can contribute to enhancing employee retention in private universities.

4.5 Discussion of Findings

The results of this study shed light on the relationship between decent work and employee retention in private universities of Ado-Odo Ota, Ogun State. The regression analysis revealed that compensation and job content had a positive impact on employee retention, while promotion significantly contributed to employee retention in private universities of Ado-Odo Ota Ogun State. These findings are in line with that of Evans and Judith (2020), which revealed that job promotion has a positive significant influence on employee retention. This is because Job promotions are essential for retaining employees as they acknowledge an individual's hard work, dedication, and competence within the organization. This acknowledgement enhances morale, job satisfaction, and dedication to the company. Promotions offer employees a defined career trajectory, demonstrating the company's commitment to their professional growth. The feeling of advancement and upward mobility can inspire employees to remain with the organization for an extended period, fostering a deeper sense of loyalty and dedication.

Promoting employees internally can greatly affect the organizational culture and unity of a company (Qomariah et al., 2023). Internal promotions display the company's values and cultivate its talent pool, promoting a positive work atmosphere. Internal mobility can enhance the skill level and engagement of the workforce. Promoting from within can be more cost-effective than hiring externally because internal candidates are already acquainted with the company culture, processes, and goals.

Companies should implement clear and meritocratic promotion policies to ensure fairness and equal opportunities. Establishing specific promotion standards, conducting routine performance assessments, and fostering transparent discussions regarding career progression can enhance a supportive workplace atmosphere. Training and development programmes can expand the pool of potential internal candidates for promotion. Job promotions positively influence employee retention by enhancing feelings of recognition, career advancement, and job satisfaction.

Furthermore, the study of Bibi et al (2017) affirms the research findings, which express that organizations that provide proper compensation and care for their employees are more likely to retain them and maintain their loyalty. Employees who receive adequate compensation feel more satisfied and obligated to repay their employers, leading to positive attitudes and loyalty. Additionally, the research findings suggest that academics, who prioritize career development over financial gain, are more likely to stay with an organization.

The research findings also prove the Psychology of Working Theory focuses on how work affects individuals psychologically and their general well-being. Key components consist of identity, workplace equity, professional growth, and psychological and financial welfare. Implementing effective promotions and compensation policies can improve employee engagement, and talent retention, and foster a positive organizational culture. The policy

implications involve clear promotion criteria, competitive compensation packages, and opportunities for professional development.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

This study investigated the relationship between Decent Work and employee retention in private universities of Ado-Odo Ota Ogun State. The findings revealed that compensation and job content positively influenced employee retention in private universities of Ado-Odo Ota Ogun State. Moreover, job promotion contributed significantly to employee retention. Further research is required to explore additional factors or contextual influences that might play a more substantial role in determining employee retention. These findings are in line with that of Evans and Judith (2020) which revealed that job promotion has a positive significant influence on employee retention. This is because Job promotions are essential for retaining employees as they acknowledge an individual's hard work, dedication, and competence within the organization.

This acknowledgement enhances morale, job satisfaction, and dedication to the company. Promotions offer employees a defined career trajectory, demonstrating the company's commitment to their professional growth. The feeling of advancement and upward mobility can inspire employees to remain with the organization for an extended period, fostering a deeper sense of loyalty and dedication. Promoting employees internally can greatly affect the organizational culture and unity of a company. Internal promotions display the company's values and cultivate its talent pool, promoting a positive work atmosphere. Internal mobility can enhance the skill level and engagement of the workforce. Promoting from within can be more cost-effective than hiring externally because internal candidates are already acquainted with the company culture, processes, and goals.

Furthermore, promotion is a notable accomplishment that provides employees with increased salary, accountability, power, autonomy, and prestige. It gauges employee satisfaction and can be completed by either internal or external candidates. External candidates are preferred for higher-level positions, but internal candidates are also eligible to apply. The study discovered a direct correlation between job advancement and employee retention. Higher likelihood and aspirations for promotion result in higher retention rates, whereas lower likelihood and aspirations lead to lower retention rates. For promotion to influence employee retention, it needs to be an ongoing process and a favourable experience for employees.

The Research findings suggest the following recommendations:

i. Improve Compensation Packages: Since compensation has been recognized as a key factor in influencing employee retention, private universities should evaluate and improve their compensation packages.
ii. Emphasize Job Content and Design: The beneficial influence of job content on employee retention indicates that private universities should prioritize the nature and structure of work. Institutions have the option to invest in job enrichment by offering employees challenging and meaningful tasks that match their skills and interests.
iii. Enhance Promotion Policies: Given the study's findings that promotions play a crucial role in employee retention; organizations should prioritize improving their promotion policies. Well-defined promotion criteria and consistent communication regarding advancement prospects can inspire employees to work towards career growth within the company.

iv. Employee Recognition Programmes can amplify the positive impacts of compensation, job content, and promotion by acknowledging and valuing employees for their contributions.

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Competing Interest

The authors have no competing interests to declare that are relevant to the content of this article

Ethical Standard

Documentation of compliance with ethical standards available on request

Data Availability Statement

The data utilised in this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

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