CORPORATE GOVERNANCE, SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYEES AS A VALUABLE RESOURCE

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Abstract

The aim and value added contribution of this article is threefold. Firstly, it can potentially raise awareness among board members, directors and managers regarding the importance of both attracting and retaining employees as a resource to create and maintain a competitive advantage and sustainable organisational development. Secondly, it provides insight into the perspectives of a group of employees from Australia and South Africa (as one example) regarding both the attraction and retention factors they valued. Thirdly, it provides a summary of how these insights could be used to develop strategies to increase both the attraction and retention of employees within an effective Corporate Governance (CG) and sustainable organisational development framework.

Keywords: Corporate Governance, human resource management, Employee attraction, Employee retention

Introduction

The aim and value added contribution of this article is threefold. Firstly, it can potentially raise awareness among board members, directors and managers regarding the importance of both attracting and retaining employees as a resource to create and maintain a competitive advantage and sustainable organisational development. Secondly, it provides insight into the perspectives of a group of employees (as one example) regarding both the attraction and retention factors they valued. Thirdly, it provides a summary of how these insights could be used to develop strategies to increase both the attraction and retention of employees within an effective Corporate Governance (CG) and sustainable organisational development framework.

There are numerous approaches to CG. The traditional (and narrow) approach is regularity and prescriptive; focuses on mechanisms, rules and systems to direct and control companies; and is about compliance, transparency and accountability to shareholders (Cadbury, 2000; MacMillan, Money, Downing & Hillenbrad, 2004 ; Jamali, Safieddine & Rabbath, 2008). Another is a broader approach focussing on answerability to all stakeholders (Jamali, Safieddine & Rabbath, 2008). In contrast, Young and Thyil (2008) supported a holistic (more descriptive) model with a multidisciplinary and all-encompassing approach, including both micro-internal and macro-external components. CSR, human resource management and organisational culture are included as important components along with shareholders and stakeholders.

In addition to effective CG, a range of stakeholders (including employees, regulatory agencies) are prompting boards to have an increased involvement in strategy formulation, decision making and control making the strategic role of boards increasingly important (Jamali, Safieddine & Rabbath, 2008).

Similar to numerous views regarding CG, there are different views and explanations of competitive advantage. The resource-based view (RBV), as one view, focuses on internal reasons for superior performance and competitive advantage and that the possession of key resources and capabilities, their effective development and deployment provide a unique group of elements to create and maintain a competitive advantage (Clulow, Gertsman & Barry, 2003; Lopez, 2005). The RBV shifted the attention from external market and industry factors (as explanation for a firm's competitive advantage) to the internal resources (and an intra-organisational explanation of competitive advantage) of the firm (Lopez, 2005; Sun & Tse, 2009). In rapidly changing environments companies need resources and capabilities to survive over the short and long-term. Firms need to acknowledge, acquire, develop and retain the needed resources to ensure a competitive advantage and consistently outperform their rivals (Clulow, Gertsman & Barry, 2003). Within a RBV, Khandekar and Sharma (2005) and many others (Boxall, 1996; Boxall & Steeneveld, 1999; DeSaa-Perez &

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Garcia-Falcon, 2002; Hatch & Dyer, 2004) view employees as a valuable resource contributing significantly to organisational effectiveness and thus regarded as a source of competitive advantage.

Based on the previous brief discussion (which will be extended in the theoretical frameworks discussion) and for the purpose of this article, the author accepts the following assumptions:

- The broader approach to CG (suggested by Jamali, Safieddine & Rabbath, 2008) which means the company is answerable to all the key stakeholders; the author regards employees as key stakeholders.
- The holistic perspective of CG (suggested by Young & Thyil, 2008) including micro-internal (firm-specific) perspectives, human resource management, organisational culture and stakeholders as components.
- A RBV, which implies a company that possess and exploit resources and capabilities that are both inimitable and non-substitutable, in addition to being valuable and rare will create and sustain a competitive advantage and ongoing organisational development.
- As employees are internal stakeholders (within a broader CG approach), a key component (within a holistic perspective of CG) and are valuable resources and capabilities (within a RBV of the firm), it is crucial to utilise employees optimally through effective attraction and retention strategies.

From all assumptions, it was evident that employees are a key resource and both the attraction and retention of valued employees are crucial. In addition Lehman (2007, p. 162) stated 'companies that truly engage themselves with what their people want will be the ones that thrive'. Philips (2006) added that without effective relationships (which the employees created and maintained) all other assets such as raw materials, customers and services are at risk as they all depend on the relationships between people. Therefore, it is crucial companies attain the needed human resources (by attracting high quality and well-qualified employees); retain and optimally develop their human resources to create and sustain the competitive advantage and on-going sustainable organisational development. Along this logic, a set of questions arose for the author and these included:

- What are the factors attracting employees to a particular company?
- What are the factors retaining the employees in employment with a particular company?
- What strategies (to enhance both attraction and retention) could directors, boards and managers implement to enhance the company's ability to create and sustain a competitive advantage (and sustainable organisational development) in a particular context?

Firstly, this article will discuss various theoretical frameworks which the author used as a basis for the arguments and the study. Secondly, it will discuss the methodology, reflect and discuss findings from an international research project involving participants form Australia and South Africa. Lastly, is will provide a summary (based on feedback from the participants in the study and applicable literature) of strategies to increase both the attraction and retention of employees.

Theoretical frameworks
Corporate Governance (CG)

There are many different views and approaches to CG and these have developed and changed over time. The traditional view is that CG is mainly the system to direct and control companies and is about compliance, transparency and accountability to shareholders. There is a focus on mechanisms and rules designed to align the interests of the owners of capital and the managers of corporations. This approach is regulatory and prescriptive (Cadbury, 2000; MacMillan, Money, Downing & Hillenbrad, 2004 ; Jamali, Safieddine & Rabbath, 2008). CG generally includes a set of universal attributes to ensure accountability to shareholders and stakeholders, and to create mechanisms controlling managerial behaviour. This ensures laws are followed and reporting systems are effectively implemented. CG means companies are accountable to follow the letter of the law. Along this vein, CG provides protection against abuse; it sets the tone and defines exertion of power and how decisions are made; and in general, it is the way a company is run. Good CG aims to continuously refine laws and regulations governing the companies' operations to ensure shareholder rights are protected and stakeholder interests are reconciled. Companies are encouraged (and expected) to promote and practise ethics, fairness, transparency and accountability in all their dealings. In addition, effective CG includes designing effective leadership and strategic management processes incorporating stakeholder and shareholder value as well as enhancing accountability and corporate performance (Dunlop, 1998; Keasy & Wright, 1997; Jamali, Safieddine & Rabbath, 2008; Tricker, 1994).

Good CG goes beyond just compliance and accountability to ensure implementation of all the codes. Good CG means board structures and all the procedures incorporate and reflect best practice (Money & Schepers, 2007). Jamali, Safieddine and Rabbath (2008) suggested two approaches to CG. Firstly, a narrow approach to CG that includes transparency, compliance and accountability. Secondly, the broader approach to CG that includes due regard to all stakeholders and ensuring companies are answerable to all stakeholders.

Young and Thyil (2008) advocated for more than the traditional view of CG and suggested a holistic model. This holistic model encapsulated a broader view of CG and included internal and macro perspectives across regulatory, legal, sociological, ethical, hu-

man resource management, behavioural and corporate strategic frameworks. The aim of this model was to summarise and illustrate the broad and all-encompassing nature of CG and is an extension from a prescriptive and regulatory approach (that limits action) to an approach that is more descriptive and provides an explanation of the reasons for actions and decisions. This holistic model is distinctive in three ways. Firstly, it combines the firm-specific (micro-internal) with the country-specific (macro-external) factors illustrating that CG at firm level is ineffective if not used in synchronisation with the external environment of the firm. Secondly, it highlights shareholders and stakeholders, CSR, human resource management and organisational culture as important components. Thirdly, it moves away from the narrow view focussing on legal and regulatory, accounting and ethics to dealing with CG using a multi-disciplinary view.

Not only do companies need to practice effective CG, but also the strategic role of boards is increasingly important. A range of stakeholders (including employees, regulatory agencies) expect and are prompting boards to have an increased involvement in strategy formulation, decision making and control (Jamali, Safieddine & Rabbath, 2008). Part of the strategic role of directors, boards and managers is to ensure sustainable organisational development, creating and maintaining the competitive advantage of the company.

Resource-based view (RBV) of the firm

There are many views and explanations of competitive advantage. For example, industrial organisation economics theories focus on external influences including industry structure, government intervention, collusive arrangements and revolutionary innovations. In addition, this view argues firms have commitments for significant periods leading to privileged market positions and rivals have no/or very little incentive to compete head on with these firms. In contrast, some strategic management theories (eg Porter) focus on external factors, the competitive position of the firms and the role of a firm's strengths and weaknesses (Clulow, Gertsman & Barry, 2003; Lopez, 2005). For the discussion in this paper, the author focuses on the RBV of the firm as one view of competitive advantage and acknowledges that the different views and explanations are inextricably linked. The RBV looks at intrinsic imitability of a firm's resources, which means the resources must be unique and rivals must find it difficult and/or expensive to imitate. Therefore, the RBV shifted the attention from external market and industry factors (as explanation for a firm's competitive advantage) to the internal resources (and an intra-organisational explanation of competitive advantage) of the firm (Lopez, 2005; Sun & Tse, 2009).

The RBV focuses on internal reasons for superior performance and competitive advantage. In the RBV the reasoning is that the possession of key resources and capabilities, their effective development and deployment provide a unique group of elements to create

and maintain a competitive advantage. Resources need four characteristics, namely value, rareness, inimitability and non-substitutability in order to provide a sustainable competitive advantage. Along this vein, it means resources meeting these criteria need to be invested in (attained), upgraded (developed) and deployed (utilised optimally) to provide superior returns (Clulow, Gertsman & Barry, 2003). Within a RBV of the firm, a company, which possesses and exploits resources and capabilities (such as human capital) that are both valuable and rare will attain a competitive advantage. In addition, if these resources and capabilities are also both inimitable and non-substitutable, the company will sustain this competitive advantage and enhance short and long-term performance. The magnitude of a company's competitive advantage is a function of its resources and capabilities, leading to the notion that companies with resources and capabilities of great value will likely attain sizable competitive advantage. This notion is based on the assumption that the company is able to utilise those resources and capabilities optimally. The latent value of the resources and capabilities is made available to the company through its idiosyncratic dynamic capabilities. The company must demonstrate the ability to alter these resources and capabilities in such a way that the full potential is realised (Hatch & Dyer, 2004; Newbert, 2007; Newbert, 2008).

Survival and success in a highly competitive, very dynamic business environment combined with increasingly information-based, knowledge-driven and service intensive economies requires speed, flexibility and continuous renewal as crucial capabilities. Skilled and motivated people are central to create and maintain competitive advantage and sustainable organisational development. Scarce knowledge and expertise drives new product development and relationships with clients are core to flexible market responsiveness. Given this logic, human resources are a key strategic resource and the current business environment requires excellent human resource competencies combined with the processes to manage these resources effectively and optimally (Barlett & Ghoshal, 2002; Khandekar & Sharma, 2005).

Employees as a valuable resource for sustainable organisational development

In rapidly changing environments companies need resources and capabilities to survive over the short and long-term. Companies need to acknowledge, acquire, develop and retain the needed resources to ensure a competitive advantage and consistently outperform their rivals (Clulow, Gertsman & Barry, 2003).

Within a RBV, Khandekar and Sharma (2005) and many others (Boxall, 1996; Boxall & Steeneveld, 1999; DeSaa-Perez & Garcia-Falcon, 2002; Hatch & Dyer, 2004) view employees as a valuable resource contributing significantly to organisational effectiveness and thus regarded as a source of competitive advantage. Human resources (employees) possess scarce

knowledge and expertise which cannot (like capital) be accumulated at the top of the company and then distributed to projects when needed but are embedded at every level of the organisation and all relationships. The employees are the closest to the customers, products, competitors and technology (Barlett & Ghoshal, 2002).

Human resources (capital) are most valuable and inimitable when they are firm specific and reside in the environment where they were originally optimally developed. When a firm acquires human capital (employees) from its rivals, it will gain some of the rival's knowledge. Conversely, if human resources (capital) leave a firm that firm looses knowledge, which might impact on the particular firm's competitive advantage. However, in the process of learning within a particular firm, human resources become more firm-specific and less useful to rivals (Hatch & Dyer, 2004). The collective knowledge of the employees (which is inimitable) and developed over a period (rare) is valuable to the firm (Khandekar & Sharma, 2005). In addition, Newbert (2008) and Sun and Tse (2009) argued that these applicable resources must fit the idiosyncratic business model of the company as resources valued in one market or industry might not be equally valued in others. Collins and Montgomery (1995) added durability, appropriability and superiority of the resources.

A firm's competitive advantage gained through human capital may be sustained (although some of the knowledge is imitable) as human capital provides on-going superiority in the rate of knowledge creation and cost reduction across multiple generations of products and over the life of a product. Experienced human resources are inimitable. Human resources become a repository for both codifiable and tacit knowledge. Codified knowledge can be articulated and thus be expropriated by rivals. On the other hand, tacit knowledge cannot be articulated and is isolated from rivals as it is embedded in the processes, routines, human skills and relationships of the particular firm. Human capital (as employees with knowledge and skills) must, firstly, be attained through recruitment and selection processes. Secondly, the employees must be development and optimally utilised to increase firm specificity and decrease imitability. Lastly, the employees must be retained to contribute to sustainable competitive advantage (Hatch & Dyer, 2004). Employee competencies connect the strategic vision and goals of the company to effectiveness and competitiveness within the particular context where the company wants to function, survive and thrive. In addition, employees create and implement ideas, plan tactics, recognise and deploy other assets, and create and maintain value for the shareholders (Anonymous, 2007; Bridges & Harrison, 2003; Ledwidge, 2007). Within the current competitive and dynamic business environment, employee commitment is crucial and employees are critical in retaining customers. Satisfied employees lead to more satisfied customers and create value for the shareholders, enhance the competitive advantage and sustainable organisational development of the company.

Although human resources (as human capital) are less measurable and visible than financial capital they form the 'heart and soul' of company (Bridges, Marcus & Harrison, 2003; Simmons, 2008). Employee performance and human resource development impact shareholder value (Fenwick & Bierema, 2008).

Although companies implement isolating mechanisms (such as firm specific training and learning) to protect resources from expropriation, human resources are highly mobile and move with ease between companies (Hatch & Dyer, 2004; Lavie, 2006). Simmons (2008) was of the opinion commitment and contribution of employees must be elicited and not assumed. This means recruiting new employees and retaining existing employees, developing, optimally engaging and deploying employees are crucial human resource management functions to improve the business performance (Malensek, 2008). One view concluded a company's competitive advantage depends on its ability to both attract and retain employees (human capital) with skills related to the core competencies of the company (Khanderkar & Sharma, 2005). Converting recruitment from a human resource function to a strategic task means an ongoing commitment to locating and attracting the best employees to all levels within the company (Barlett & Goshal, 2002). Retention of employees is a combination of the effort of employers to keep desirable employees in the workforce in order to meet business objectives and the result of mutual satisfaction between the employees and the employers. The employees seek to fulfil their own needs and the employers seek to retain the satisfactory employees whose abilities suit the needs of the company (Frank, Finnegan & Taylor, 2004; Kontoghiorghes & Frangou, 2009).

It is clear from the literature that companies need to both attract and retain top quality employees (rare and valuable resources) and then develop and optimally deploy these employees (increasing the inimitability and non-substitutability) to create and sustain a competitive advantage and sustainable organisational development. Human resources are highly mobile and might be expropriated by or leave for rivals.

This article and discussion is based on a study where the author explored both the factors attracting employees to and retaining employees in employment at a particular company by engaging participants within the Health context from South Africa and Australia. The aim was to gain a rich understanding of these factors and not to differentiate between or compare the different groups and/or feedback from the participants in the different countries.

Ethical aspects

The researcher has been an academic at an Australian University since 2001 and has previously been an academic at a South African University (1991-2000) and therefore is conversant with the ethical research guidelines in both countries. As the study was conducted under the auspices of an Australian University, the

applicable Australian guidelines for ethical research were used (NHMRC, 1999a; NHMRC, 1999 b; NHMRC, 2000). The study was approved and monitored by Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee. All study data (including electronic data) was managed and stored according to specified protocols and results reflected and communicated in aggregated format to ensure individual and organisational anonymity. The researcher adhered to the ethical principles of justice and veracity, respect for people (their customs, cultural heritage), their privacy and avoidance of harm. The highest standards of intellectual honesty were served; recruitment, selection, inclusion and exclusion of participants fair and non-discriminatory. All participants received a detailed information letter accompanying the survey and signed a consent form.

Research design

This was a descriptive, contextual and exploratory study (Mouton, 1998). The researcher selected a qualitative and contextual research design (Cresswell, 1998) to gain insight into perspectives of the participants and the meaning they attach to their experiences (Cresswell, 2003). The researcher used a positive approach suggested by Fuimano (2003) who stated a positive approach explores an issue from a more positive perspective by asking what is working well and why it is working well. Therefore, this study focused on both factors attracting participants to and retaining them in employment at a particular hospital rather than on the factors causing participants to leave the particular employment.

Research methods
Sample
Seven hospitals (public, private, smaller, bigger, training) in Australia and South Africa were involved in the study. The participants included Directors of Nursing (top-level managers), Nursing Managers (middle level managers), Nursing unit Managers (first level managers), different levels of clinical, registered professional nurses, staff and enrolled nurses. A contact person was nominated in each participating hospital; randomly selected applicable participants who had worked at that specific organisation for at least 2 years prior to the study; co-ordinated the distribution and return of surveys.

Data collection
For this study, data was collected through a survey, which was divided into 3 sections. Section A (collecting quantitative data) focused on biographical information (for example, area of practice, qualifications etc.) identified as important in the attraction and retention of nurses (Numerof, Abrams & Ott, 2004; Pieper, 2003; Vaughn, 2003) and contained mostly closed ended questions aimed at contextualising the qualitative findings from Sections B and C (collecting qualitative data). Section B (which focused on factors which attracted the participant to that particular hospital)

contained one open-ended question (as a written narrative inquiry) and asked:

> *"Please describe in your own words the factors (aspects, things) that motivated you to select this particular hospital to work at."*

Similar to Section B, Section C (which focused on the factors retaining the participants in employment with that particular hospital) was one open ended question (as a written narrative) and asked:

> *"Please describe in your own words the factors (aspects, things) that are motivating you to remain working at the particular hospital."*

It was decided to provide for both Section B and C only one open ended questions (as a written narrative inquiry) to allow the participants freedom to write their own narratives without the limitations of predetermined categories.

Narrative inquiry focuses on interpreting events and understanding intentions, beliefs, values, emotions and meanings rather than explaining and predicting. Therefore, information from narrative inquiry reflects social reality rather than an objective reality. Narratives provide insight into knowledge that individuals have gained through experience. Along this vein, narratives elicit and collect the stories of participants and serve as a window into their world. In addition, narratives could provide insights into the experiences of multiple participants who shared the same phenomena. The narrative inquiry aims to understand phenomena from the perspective of the person/people who experienced it; to enhance practice or draw lessons from practice; and to unveil implicit shared meanings (Dodge, Ospina & Foldy, 2005). Following this logic, narrative inquiry invites practitioners into the research process acknowledging they are people with specific perspectives and wisdom worth hearing. Practitioner perspectives are powerful windows into their experiences offering insight into life in organisations (Ospina & Dodge, 2005 b; Jabri, 2006). Narrative inquiry elicits knowledge that enhances understanding of cultural, organisational or participant specific experiences. It explores the aspects unique to particular contexts (Ospina & Dodge, 2005 a).

Data analysis
As the data collection used both quantitative and qualitative research methods, the researcher used the appropriate quantitative and qualitative research analysis methods. Data from section A (containing quantitative biographical data), was analysed through basic descriptive quantitative methods which aimed (for the purpose of this article) to contextualise the qualitative findings from sections B and C. Therefore, a detailed discussion of findings from section A is not provided. Data from both section B and C (as qualitative data) was analysed through qualitative data analysis methods. During the analysis, the researcher read the participant feedback, identified and coded the main and subthemes (Cresswell, 1998) by using active reasoning and decision-making skills. The researcher used the context of the study (hospitals) as a guideline during

the decision making process for identifying and coding the themes and sub-themes. During this process, comments were only categorised once but comments by one participant regarding two different factors ("good salary" and "availability of parking") were grouped into the same category ("conditions of employment"). This is common in qualitative data analysis. In addition, the two research assistants independently identified and coded the main and sub-themes. After a consensus discussions between the researcher and the two research assistants, the final main and sub-themes were identified and coded. Thereafter, the researcher (with the assistance of the two research assistants) used N*Vivo software for data management.

Findings

Four hundred (400) surveys were distributed in Australia, 153 (38.25%) were returned, 139 (34.75%) were fully completed and analysed. Three hundred questionnaires were distributed in South Africa, 150 (50%) were returned and 123 (41%) were fully completed and analysed.

As this was not a comparative study but aimed to gain an understanding of both the attraction and retention factors, all the data was analysed and reflected as one cohort. As the findings reflect the perspectives of participants within a specific context, the aim is not to generalise the findings and insights to all contexts but to provide these findings as one example to draw from.

Although the data was categorised into main and sub-themes, the author regards all themes and sub-themes of equal value and importance. The author acknowledges these factors are inextricably linked, interconnected and interrelated. However, the focus of this article is on CG, human resources as a valuable resource within a RBV, creating, and maintaining a competitive advantage and sustainable organisational development. For the purpose of structure and discussion in this paper, the attraction and retention factors are reflected separately. Figures 1 and 2 provide a summary of the main themes, whereas Tables 1 and 2 provide a summary of the main and corresponding sub-themes.

INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE

To gain a deeper understanding and insight into the main themes (main attraction factors), sub-themes (which provide a more detailed description of the main theme) were allocated to each of the main themes. The main and sub-themes related to overall attraction factors are summarised in Table 1.

INSERT TABLE 1 HERE

The main themes regarding the retention factors are summarised and reflected in Figure 2.

INSERT FIGURE 2 HERE

To gain a deeper understanding and insight into the main themes (main retention factors), sub-themes (which provide a more detailed description of the main themes) were allocated to each of the main themes. The main and sub-themes related to overall retention factors are summarised in Table 2.

INSERT TABLE 2 HERE

After the findings were analysed separately into the attraction and the retention factors, the researcher was interested to determine if there were aspects included as both attraction and retention factors. Findings elucidated that the participants identified particular factors valued for both attraction and retention. These findings may be of interest to both academics and practitioners (in this case directors, boards and managers). From an academic viewpoint, these findings provide insight and understanding of the attraction and retention factors from the perspective of employees within a particular context. On the other hand, from a practitioner viewpoint these findings provide the opportunity to design strategies for implementation in a company for increasing both attraction and retention rates and to create and maintain a competitive advantage and sustainable organisational development. Table 3 depicts an overall summary of the attraction and retention factors.

INSERT TABLE 3 HERE

From the overall participant feedback it was evident that a competitive salary (and additional benefits) combined with economical reasons for selecting the particular hospital (such as close proximity and/or easy access to and use of public transport) were valued. In addition, other attractors and/or retainers were 'non-controllable' by directors, board and/or managers or not easily changed. One example is when Government controls salary structures, the location of an existing hospital and diversity of speciality areas available.

However, there are non-economic and 'controllable' attractors and retainers, which directors, boards and/or managers could utilise. These strategies are deducted from the main and sub-themes of the participant feedback. For example, one main theme reflected 'employment conditions' with sub-themes such as 'salary packaging, accommodation, available and/or subsidised childcare, safe parking, flexible work hours; considerate towards personal and family needs; fixed and limited night duty' grouped within this main theme. This means the managers could implement these sub-themes as overall attraction and retention strategies.

These non-economic and 'controllable' attractors and retainers are summarised in Table 4. As one aim of narrative inquiry, used in this study, is to enhance or draw lessons from practice (Dodge, Ospina & Foldy, 2005 b) it is important to move from the conceptual to the operational. This means to develop strategies for

implementation to enhance attraction and retention rates in a particular company based on some of the lessons learned from these participants in one practice context. The scope and the restraints of one article prevent a full discussion of the possible strategies available to directors, boards and managers. As a result, the author provided a summary (see Table 4) reflecting the main non-economic and 'controllable' attractors and retainers, combined with applicable literature and recent studies as resources for inspiration and examples of participant feedback to reflect the 'voice of the participant'.

INSERT TABLE 4 HERE

In addition, many of these factors are 'controllable' through the implementation of effective human resource policies and practices, effective leadership and management strategies (Naude & McCabe, 2005) and improved interpersonal relationships between all groups of employees.

Conclusion

The role and responsibility of boards, directors and managers is complex with a diverse range of views to draw from. Within the broader view and holistic perspective of effective CG and within a RBV of competitive advantage, the employees (as internal stakeholders) are valuable resources and capabilities. Therefore, it is crucial to both attract and retain these quality employees.

Feedback from the participants in this study provided an insight into both the attraction and retention factors from the view of employees within a particular context. The first key finding (regarding both the attractors and retainers) elucidated that there are both 'controllable' and 'non-controllable' factors. A second key finding indicated that although some of the valued attractors and retainers are related to economic factors many others are related to intangible aspects (such as respect, equity in teams, opportunity for challenges and development). A third key finding elucidated that improved interpersonal relationships combined with effective management, leadership and human resource practices are effective strategies.
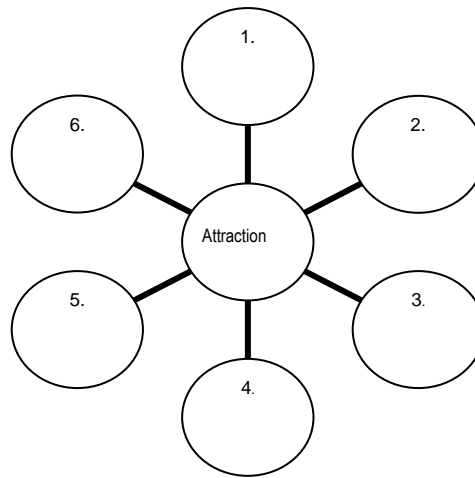
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Appendices

Figure 1. Summary of main themes regarding attraction factors

	1. Hospital location; convenience; type of hospital 2. First impressions; Overall atmosphere; Familiarity; Recommendation 3. Ongoing professional development opportunities 4. Employment conditions 5. Diversity of specialisation 6. Standard and quality of nursing care

Table 1. Summary of main and sub-themes regarding attraction factors

Main themes	Sub-themes
Hospital location; type of hospital; limited options	Proximity of the hospital, availability and ease of transport, economic considerations
	Private hospital; small (creates a 'family' feel); Big (provides opportunities); multiracial
	First hospital to give me a job; Response was the fastest; Needed the job and the money; Previous hospital closed down; Limited options
First impressions; Overall atmosphere; Familiarity; Recommendation	Good physical environment and area
	Personal, friendly, welcoming atmosphere and staff
	Was a patient or visited a patient; Worked part time

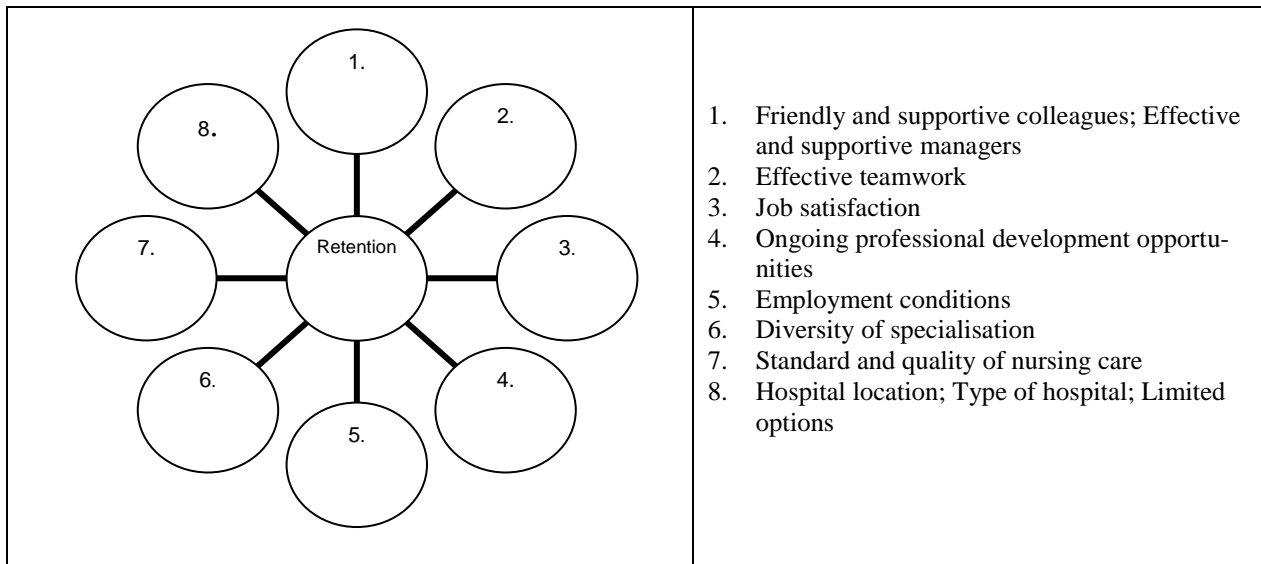|	
	Recommended by a friend
Ongoing professional develop-ment opportunities	Informal learning
	Studies and study opportunities
	Training opportunities in a variety of disciplines
	Ongoing training program with a variety of courses
Employment conditions	Good conditions of employment (competitive salary, salary packaging, accommo-dation, available an/or subsidised childcare, safe parking)
	Flexible work hours; Considerate towards my personal and family needs; fixed and limited night duty
Diversity of specialisation	Offered position in preferred area of interest or specialisation area
	Diverse range of specialisation areas; Job variety
	Provides job satisfaction (like the job and the people; adequate staff, equipment and an effective support system).
Standard and quality of nursing care	Up-to-date with adequate equipment and supplies, well trained and experienced staff
	Excellent reputation
	Employs registered nurses only

Figure 2. Summary of main themes regarding retention factors

1. Friendly and supportive colleagues; Effective and supportive managers
2. Effective teamwork
3. Job satisfaction
4. Ongoing professional development opportu-nities
5. Employment conditions
6. Diversity of specialisation
7. Standard and quality of nursing care
8. Hospital location; Type of hospital; Limited options

Table 2. Summary of main and sub-themes regarding retention factors

Main themes	Sub-themes
Friendly and supportive col-leagues; Effective and suppor-tive managers	Friendly, supportive, encouraging and caring colleagues
	Good relationships; formed friendships; mutual respect and trust
	Caring, approachable managers willing and able to work alongside employees
Effective Teamwork	Effective teamwork; team spirit
	Equity in teams
	Individual contributions valued and recognised
Job satisfaction	Working in specialty area
	Job provides professional fulfilment

Ongoing professional development opportunities	Ongoing training programs; support for further studies
	Opportunity for new challenges and innovation
	Variety of departments, cases, activities
	Graduate support programs
	Informal mentoring and coaching
Employment conditions	Competitive salary, benefits (pension fund, leave)
	Subsidies (child care, parking, study)
	Flexible hours, work areas
Standards and quality of nursing care provided	Up-to-date with adequate equipment and supplies
	Patient focus; high ethics and values
	Excellent discipline and control
	Excellent reputation; accreditation
Overall environments and atmosphere	Good physical environment and area
	Personal and friendly atmosphere
	Subsidised events; personal touches
Hospital location; type of hospital; Limited options	Proximity of hospital; availability and ease of transport; economic reasons
	Particular type (small, big, private)
	Financial reasons provide limited options (need salary and pension); contractually bound

Table 3. Overall summary of attraction and retention factors

Main themes	Sub-themes
Hospital location; type of hospital; limited options	Proximity of the hospital, availability and ease of transport, economic considerations
	Private hospital; small (creates a 'family' feel); Big (provides opportunities); multi-racial
	First hospital to give me a job; Response was the fastest; Needed the job and the money; Previous hospital closed down; Limited options
Overall atmosphere	Good physical environment and area
	Personal, friendly, atmosphere and staff (as an attractor) Friendly and supportive colleagues, effective and supportive management (as a retention factor)
	Teamwork; equity and respect (as a retention factor)
	Subsidised events, personal touches
Ongoing professional development opportunities	Informal learning
	Studies and study opportunities
	Training opportunities in a variety of disciplines
	Opportunity for new challenges
	Ongoing training program with a variety of courses
Employment conditions	Good conditions of employment (competitive salary, salary packaging, accommodation, available an/or subsidised childcare, safe parking)

	Flexible work hours; Considerate towards my personal and family needs; fixed and limited night duty
Diversity of specialisation; Job satisfaction	Offered position in preferred area of interest or specialisation area
	Diverse range of specialisation areas; Job variety
	Provides job satisfaction (like the job and the people; adequate staff, equipment and an effective support system).
Standard and quality of nursing care	Up-to-date with adequate equipment and supplies, well trained and experienced staff
	Excellent reputation
	Employs registered nurses only

Table 4. Non-economic and 'controllable' attractors and retainers

Main and sub-themes	Example statements from participants	Supportive literature and recent studies
Overall atmosphere Personal, friendly, atmosphere and staff (as an attractor) Friendly and supportive colleagues, effective and supportive management (as a retention factor) Providing opportunities for subsidised events and get togethers Teamwork; equity and respect (as a retention factor)	*"I work with other hard working staff who try to support one another."* *"I find that the staff as a whole is very encouraging and caring people."* *"I've built relationships and share trust and respect with management and doctors."* *"People at ward level are motivating, friendly and supportive."* *"My manager helps out and works with us in the team when we are very busy"* *"Manager of the ward is understanding and pleasant and works with us"* *"They [management] take very good care of their staff. They [management] try to keep everybody happy."* *"Hospital subsidised social events eg. Christmas party and anniversary parties."* *"Socials like barbeques are great to increase the 'personal' feel and let us know and support each other at a more personal level."* *"We work as a team in the wards and the team spirit is great."* *"Staff members work as a team assisting each other according to their patients load."* *"Equity among team members is promoted and transparent."* *"I am treated as an equal – respected as a midwife and am thoroughly enjoying my work."* *"The hospital values and recognizes teamwork and the contribution by the different members."*	Friedrich, 2001; Gaylard, Sutherland & Viedge, 2005; Holtom, Mitchell & Lee, 2006; Karsan, 2007; Meyer, Naude & van Niekerk, 2004; Perrine, 2009; Pieper, 2003; Raiden, Dainty & Neale, 2006; Saul, 2007.
Ongoing professional development opportunities Studies and study opportunities Training opportunities in a variety of disciplines Opportunity for new challenges Ongoing training program with a variety of courses	*"I am allowed to work in other departments like neonatal intensive to increase my knowledge."* *"Variety of cases and other duties."* *"Interesting and challenging job not 2 days are the same."* *"I have plenty of opportunity to regain and practice my clinical skills as it is a very busy ward."* *"Large operating department so I will be able to develop a variety of skills and become confident in this area."* *"Learning opportunities and development."* *"The more experiences nurses are great at teaching us."* *"As a team we just learn from each other."* *"My manager is my mentor and guides me."*	Curtis & Wright, 2001; Casey & Warlin, 2001; Friedrich, 2001; Holtom, Mitchell & Lee, 2006; Klein 2009; Kock & Burke, 2008; Meyer, Naude & van Niekerk, 2004; Numerof, Abrams & Ott, 2004; Pieper, 2003; Pillay, 2009; van Leeuwen, Pieters & Crawford, 2005.
Employment conditions Flexible work hours; Considerate towards my personal and family needs; fixed and limited night duty	*"In my current position I have flexibility to work the hours to suit my personal circumstances."* *"Flexibility with regards to leave, shifts, work area and different departments."* *"Flexible roster with minimal night duty is extremely important to me."* *"Flexibility with regards to leave, shifts, workplace."* *"The manager has been fair and flexible."*	Byrne, 2005; McCabe, Nowak & Mullen, 2005; Messmer, 2006 a; Messmer, 2006 b; Reis & Costello, 2007.