

Motivation and Employee Retention in Savings and Credit Co-Operative Societies in Nairobi City County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to assess how motivation affect employee retention in Savings and Credit Co-operative societies in Nairobi City County. The researcher conducted the study in SACCO societies located in Westlands sub-county. The objectives were as follows: to determine the effect of employee rewards in promoting employee retention in SACCO societies; to establish how job design affect employees retention in SACCO societies; and to evaluate how career opportunities affect employee retention in SACCO societies. The evaluation was done using questionnaires tailored towards collecting primary data in line with the objectives of the study. Due to the broad nature of the study, a descriptive research study design was used. The target population of the study was 270 SACCO societies located in Westlands sub-county. The researcher used simple random sampling to select senior staff and junior staff of employed in deposit taking SACCO societies, non-deposit taking SACCO societies, public service SACCO societies to arrive at a sample size of 83. The researcher distributed 83 questionnaires to the respondents of which 62 were returned representing a 75% response rate. The data collection instruments were checked for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha method. The researcher used descriptive statistics to analyse data using mean and standard deviation and inferential statistics using regression analysis, and analysis of variance. The researcher employed multiple regression analysis at 5% level of significance to establish the association between the variables. The study findings established that the employee rewards, job design and career opportunities are crucial factors that positively affect retention of employees. The study recommends that SACCO societies should formulate well-structured employee rewards with supportive policies. The societies should improve on these rewards to improve the level of employee retention. The study also recommends that the SACCO societies should have a variety of career opportunities to satisfy different employee needs. The study suggests that in future, researchers should carry out a longitudinal study to establish the extent to which employee rewards, job design and career opportunities affect employee retention in SACCO societies.

Key Words: Motivation and Employee Retention, Employee Rewards, Job Design, Career Opportunities

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1. Introduction

A co-operative refers to an enterprise comprising of independent groups of people who come together voluntarily with the intention of accomplishing mutual economic, social, and cultural goals democratically (Figueiredo & Franco, 2018). The Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers of Great Britain was the earliest known consumer cooperative. Launched in 1844 in Great Britain, the co-operative introduced the practice of paying a patronage dividend to its members and eventually laid a solid foundation for present-day co-operative movements. (Walton, 2015). Even though people had previously launched a number of co-operatives at the time, the Rochdale Pioneers' co-operative became the model example for later companies in Great Britain by coming up with the Rochdale Principles, which have been widely used by many cooperatives in the world today to carry out their operations smoothly. After only one decade from the time Rochdale was launched, the co-operative movement in Great Britain had approximately one thousand co-operatives (MITC, 2014). In the African region, the African Confederation of Co-operative Savings and Credit Associations (ACCOSCA) oversees the activities of cooperatives in the region. Established in the year 1968, this non-governmental co-operative uses domicile laws as well as its constitution to govern active African cooperatives (Onyango, 2016). The associations' main objective is to facilitate the creation of an all-inclusive institutional framework to mobilize SACCOs while nurturing capacity building, accelerating dissemination of information, providing financial and technical assistance, as well as refining research and development. According to Feather & Meme (2018), there are 27 member countries forming the General Assembly of ACCOSCA in Africa. The association carries out annual meetings through its Annual Savings and Credit Co-operative Association of Africa (SACCA). By giving every country equal chance to host the event in rotation, it ensures all their scheduled plans are appropriate to address the existing challenges affecting African cooperatives.

Sathyamoorthi, Mbekomize, Radikoko & Wally-Dima (2016) state that the various programs established by ACCOSCA have constantly focused on motivating members of SACCOs to find sustainable solutions to socio-economic issues affecting the African continent. This has been successful because the association has partnered with a number of research agencies, development organizations, and governmental entities to mobilize the right people to work towards mitigating the modern-day challenges. Furthermore, the association supports its members by effectively acting as a bridge for providing services to the local people even if they formal sectors do not provide them. By partnering with the World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU), ACCOSCA conjointly facilitates various activities that nurture the development of cooperative societies in Africa. It is important to note that the association has an exclusive department that caters for the financial needs of women across the continent (Maleko & Msuya, 2015). Kenya is the leading country in SACCO growth in Africa (Mathuva & Kiweu, 2016). The history of co-operatives in the country can be traced to the year 1908 when Lumbwa Farmers' Cooperative Society was established as a dairy society. About two-and-a-half decades later, a number of cooperatives that were established after Lumbwa merged to establish the Kenya Farmers Association in 1923 (Feather & Meme, 2018). By the time Kenya attained independence, there were 600 registered co-operative societies with a membership of 200,000. Discussions were held among the co-operative leaders to form an apex organization for the countries co-operatives. This culminated in the founding of the Kenya National Federation of Co-operatives (KNFC) which was registered in the year 1964. Gazette (2008) state that in 2008, a SACCO Societies Act was legislated in order to acknowledge the increasing significance of the cooperative movement, and

to facilitate the spirited implementation of practical standards for the SACCOs. Consequently, the SACCO Society Regulatory Authority was established to oversee and regulate the deposits obtained by SACCOs. The organization body conscripted the management guidelines of the SACCOs' as well as their Prudential Standards on assessment and audits to promote a culture of best management practices and acceptable corporate governance. According to Wathanga (2017), the founding of the Ethics Commission for Co-operative Societies (ECCOs) was a major boost for the cooperative movement in Kenya because it assisted them in incorporating good governance practices.

SASRA which is the acronym for SACCO Societies Regulatory Authority, is a semi-independent body of the government that carries out its mandate through the Ministry of Industry Trade and Co-operatives. The government established it through the SACCO Society's Act, which was enacted in 2008 and passed into law the following year (Wathanga, 2017). SASRA key role is to license and oversee all the Deposit Taking SACCOs (DTS) operating in the country as a way of protecting them. The governmental agency is part of the reform process by the government of Kenya to care for SACCO members including their interests in order to increase public confidence in SACCO sector. In an effort to outgrow the country's economic growth, the government mobilises domestic savings from SACCO societies through SASRA (Mathuva & Kiweu, 2016). In the past decade, Kenya's co-operative sector has impacted the socioeconomic development of many ordinary Kenyans because they offer both financial and non-financial services. Financial cooperatives include workers cooperatives, investments co-operatives, and housing societies. On the other hand, Kavulya (2018) defines non-financial cooperatives as those that market various products and services such as agricultural produce, livestock, dairy, coffee, tea, handicraft and others on behalf of its members. Some other benefits include the provision of education for members and fewer reasons to take risks.

Ndungo, Tobias & Florence (2016) acknowledge that the number of SACCO societies in Kenya have tremendously increased in the last decade. The Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Co-operatives (KUSCCO) Limited receiving an award through ACCOSCA in the year 2014 as a leader in the rapid growth of cooperative societies in the continent. Approximately 2.7 million Kenyan citizens have been recruited by SACCO societies that take deposits (Kavulya, 2018). Furthermore, it is important to note that more than sixty per cent of citizens eke a living from their operations both directly and indirectly to contribute to approximately 45% of the Gross Domestic Product GDP in the country (Wanjala, 2015). According to Infotrak Research Company, Westland sub-county is among the 17 sub-counties in Nairobi City County, in Kenya. It has an area of 72.4 square kilometres and has a population of approximately 176,689. The sub county which was formerly known as Westlands District has a total of 270 registered Sacco societies as per the statistics from the ministry of Industry Trade and Co-operatives.

2. Statement of the Problem

The key challenge facing several organisations today is to attract the most suitable employees and retain them with the intention of sustaining their growth and productivity. The modern-day work environment is largely dynamic and managers must come up with effective ways of motivating their employees to stay committed towards improving performance. Motivation is directly associated with the commitment of employees as well as their capacity to realise an improved productivity in a firm (Kimani, 2016). Cooperative societies that constantly lose their highest performing employees to other companies tend to slow down in their quest to achieve their

business goals. Furthermore, the permanency of staff usually provide the firms with a clear depiction of the employee's abilities, which helps to attract and retain people with comparable talents (Nyaribo, 2016). The SACCO sector in Kenya is currently facing major challenges, such as mergers& acquisitions, political and legal issues, corruption, and staff retention. In this regard, this sector has not been able to properly address issues of employee motivation. Many employees are dissatisfied with the Human resource employment terms presented by their employers. Failure to adequately motivate employees in SACCO societies has resulted to high labour turnover which eventually has affected productivity. Despite the employee retention challenges facing the SACCO sector in Kenya, there exist only a few or inadequate scholars in Kenya addressing the issue of employee retention through motivation. This study will however focus on a few motivation strategies that lead to employee retention in SACCO societies, using Westlands sub-county as the case study.

3. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study was to examine motivation and employee retention for SACCO societies in Nairobi City County.

The specific objectives that guided the study were:

- i. To determine the effect of employee rewards in promoting employee retention in SACCO societies in Nairobi City County.
- ii. To establish how job design affect employees retention in SACCO societies in Nairobi City County.
- iii. To evaluate how career opportunities affect employee retention in SACCO societies in Nairobi City County.

4. Theoretical Review

The study used specific theories to explicate the basis of various assumptions, while at the same time challenging the extent to which such knowledge can be used in describing the expectations. With respect to the abovementioned, this study used the following theories and frameworks to investigate motivation and employee retention in SACCO societies: Instrumentality Theory, Content Theory, and Process Theory.

4.1 Instrumentality Theory

Coined by Graen (1969), the instrumentality theory of work motivation is based on the hypothesis that in order to make people change their behaviours, there must be rewards or punishments or rather "carrots or sticks". According to the author, instrumentality predicts the conviction that one action leads to a reaction or simply, people will conduct themselves in desired ways if there is a prize, in most cases, money. This theory was established in 1969 with the intention of rationalizing labour and the resulting economic outcomes. If the performance of workers is weighed with respect to their rewards and penalties, they will be motivated to work effectively. According to Steers, Mowday & Shapiro (2004), the instrumentality theory has a direct relationship with Taylorism. In addition, the instrumentality has its roots in the principle of reinforcement, which states that it is possible to lay conditions on people in order to make them act in a desirable manner (Bindra, 1969). Using this method to motivate employees has been named the law of effect because it has been successful in a number of varied circumstances; however, it had been reported to ignore some human needs and it strictly uses a system of external controls.

4.2 Content Theory of Motivation

Coined by Maslow (1954), content theory mainly centres on the need to recognise and understand people's needs so that they can feel motivated. According to Smith, Atkinson, McClelland, & Veroff (1992), motivating people starts with taking the necessary steps to fulfil the needs of others in order to influence their behaviour. This theory is based on the premise that needs and motivation are complementary to each other or in other words, needs are the content of motivation. An unfulfilled need usually leads to a tensed work environment as well as a state of uncertainty. In order to reinstate stability, the manager must always identify a specific goal that will fulfil the acknowledged need, and an influential behaviour that will result in the accomplishment of that particular goal. Therefore, unfulfilled needs motivate people to behave in certain ways. Maslow (1954) proposed the model of a hierarchy of needs which are essential in the development of a person's personality. According to the author, five major categories of needs apply to all individuals in general. They include physiological needs (oxygen, food, water and sex), safety needs (protection against danger), social needs (love, affection and acceptance to a group), esteem (high evaluation of oneself, prestige), and self-actualization (realisation of one's potential).

Maslow's theory postulates that as soon as people fulfil a lower need, the subsequent highest will dominate their attention in order to fulfil it. With such considerations, Gouveia, Milfont and Guerra (2014) state that it is almost impossible to fulfil the need for self-fulfilment, because a 'man is a wanting animal'. As people move towards the apex of the hierarchy, they develop their psychological skills because the progress is not direct and lower needs remain in existence. Herzberg et al (1957) came up with a two-factor model and substituted the term 'needs' with 'satisfiers' and included 'dissatisfiers' in order to investigate the factors influencing job satisfaction as well as dissatisfaction among engineers and accountants. The author based the research on the assumption that people can accurately describe the circumstances that made them feel satisfied or dissatisfied in the workplace. The study found out that the subjects felt exceptionally good about their jobs during periods that involved achieving their objectives, promotions, accepting responsibilities, recognition, and working autonomously. Contrariwise, 'bad' periods involved the context of the job, such as salaries, company policies, working conditions, and supervision. As echoed by Alston (2017), this research divided employees into two groups. The first one were concerned about using their occupation to develop personally and professionally, while the second one focussed on the need for fair compensation, conducive working conditions supervision, and non-discriminatory policies as well as friendly administrative practices. Elements in the first group are known as satisfiers or motivators, while those of the second group are known as dissatisfiers, which generally refers to the working environment and its influence on positive job attitudes. According to Yeboah & Abdulai (2016), the second group of elements were termed hygiene factors to signify that they are both environmental and preventive.

4.3 Process Theory

Otherwise known as cognitive theory, the process theory explains the perceptions of people on their working environment as well as the best approaches for interpreting and understanding the same. As stated by Solomon & Corbit (1973), process theory is the most suitable methodology to examine motivation because they provide more accurate direction on the methods of motivating people. The theory depends on expectations (expectancy theory), goal achievement (goal theory), and equity (equity theory) respectively. Vroom (1964) invented the concept of expectancy.

According to the author, Valency signifies value, instrumentality connotes the view that one action will lead to another action, and expectancy refers to the likelihood that certain actions will result in a desirable ending. In a deeper perspective, Vroom equates the concept of expectancy with a person who is cornered into choosing options that would lead to uncertain outcomes. In this way, the author posits that the behaviour of individuals are influenced by their preferred outcomes as well as their belief in the possibility of those outcomes. The model by Porter and Lawler (1968) was developed from this theory by echoing Vroom's concepts that two factors determine a person's effort at his place of work: the rewards' value and the perception that the rewards depend on their efforts. Therefore, individuals would put more effort to receive the awards with greater value in a particular circumstances. But then again, the authors state that in order to produce the desired performance outcomes, an individual must exert effective effort with reference to two variables: ability and role perceptions. Ability refers to distinct characteristics, for example intelligence and experience, while role perceptions refers to the individual's thoughts of what he needs to do. According to Barba-Sánchez & Atienza-Sahuquillo (2017) an individual's intelligence and skills should correspond his viewpoint of the organization. They perform poorly if their views differ with that of the organization.

5. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework illustrated the graphical depiction of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables in this research. The drawing demonstrates that the independent variables (Employee Rewards, Job design and Career opportunities) are all associated to the dependent variable (Employee Retention) as shown in Figure 1.

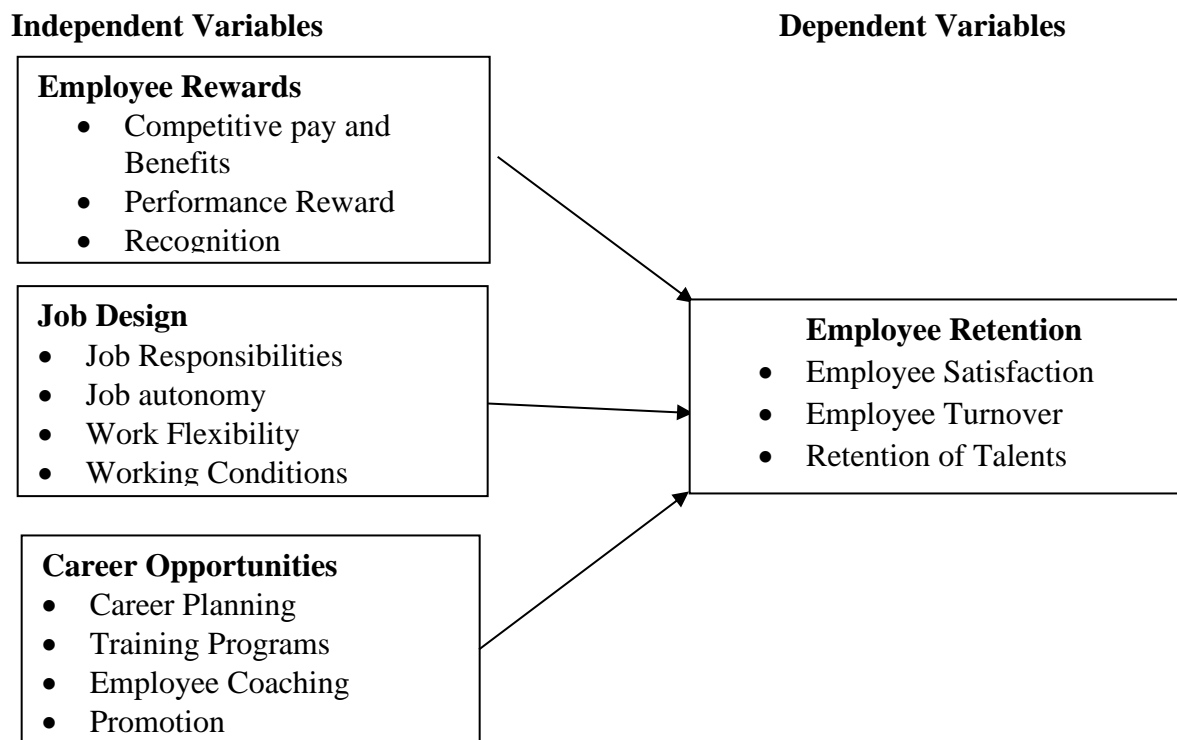


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author (2020)

Employee rewards refer to competitive pay and benefits; performance reward; and recognition, which take account of salaries/wages, bonuses, and incentives along with additional benefits, such as vacations, company vehicle, health insurance, etc. Such rewards results in employee retention because they motivate workers to carry out their day-to-day tasks effectively. Job design includes job responsibilities, job autonomy, work flexibility, and working conditions. An organisation that incorporates these characteristics will have highly motivated employees involved in various jobs to bring about employee retention in the process. Career opportunities takes into account career planning, training programs, employee coaching and promotion. Organisations that promote a culture of career development usually build their brand rapidly to have a competitive edge in the industry, while retaining employees to experience progression in their working life through a series of rewarding roles or occupations.

6. Research Methodology

This research study used a descriptive research design to obtain data that go a long way in pinpointing specific unique characteristics of a population. This approach facilitated the collection of detailed information to examine the extent to which each response was related to the variables to establish the motivation factors that promote employee retention in SACCO societies situated in Nairobi City County. This study targeted 270 SACCO societies situated in Nairobi City County. The target group was divided into three categories: Deposit taking SACCO societies, non-Deposit taking SACCO societies and public service SACCO societies. Simple random sampling was used to select the sample by chance in order to gather data from every member of the population that represented the larger population of SACCO societies. The sample size should have 30% or more test units to qualify for the accurate generalization of research findings (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Since the population was heterogeneous, the research randomly selected a sample size of 83 respondents, which included both senior staff, and junior staff members from each SACCO. The research used primary data collected using structured questionnaires. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) was also used to analyse the data. Inferential statistics included correlation, regression analysis, and analysis of variance. The researcher also employed multiple regression analysis to establish the association between the independent variables (Employee Rewards, Job Design, and Career Opportunities) and the dependent variable (Employee Retention).

7. Data Analysis Results

The study used a regression model to establish the statistical relationship between the dependent variable (employee retention) and the independent variables (Employee rewards, Job Design and Career opportunities). The researcher adopted the model below and regressed the variables.

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.911 ^a	.808	.827	.4317

a. Predictors: (Constant) Employee Rewards, Job Design, Career Opportunities

According to Table 1, the model depicted that the coefficient of the adjusted R Square is 0.827, which further explains that a strong relationship exists between the independent variables (Employee Rewards, Job Design, and Career Opportunities) and the dependent variables (employee retention). The results showed that the independent variables had an 82.7% effect on

the dependent variables. The other 17.3% are caused by other factors external to the study objectives.

The researcher also sought to analyse the significance level of the study using the ANOVA test. With the aim of analysing each predictor variable to determine their independence levels, the researcher used the ANOVA test to show the relationship between the four independent variables and the dependent variables. Table 2 presents the findings.

Table 2: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	32.114	4	8.028	2.521	.000 ^b
Residual	17.178	62	.177		
Total	49.292	66			

Source: Author (2020)

The findings established the extent to which each of the four predictor variables had an effect on employee retention in SACCO societies in Nairobi City County. The F-value of 2.521 at 5% level of significance expressed as $0.000 < 0.05$, revealed that if all other factors are constant, the three predictor variables or independent variables (Employee Rewards, Job Design, and Career Opportunities) had a significant effect on the dependent variables (employee retention) in SACCO societies. To compare the independence levels of the variable, the researcher used regression coefficients to establish the level at which they affect employee retention in SACCO societies. Table 3 shows the results.

Table 3: Regression Coefficients for Employee Retention

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	.235	.299		.456	.247
Employee Rewards	.258	.126	.116	2.235	.000
Job Design	.189	.081	.222	3.125	.029
Career Opportunities	.077	.126	.301	1.698	.017

Source: Author (2020)

According to the regression coefficients results, the study established that employee rewards, job design and career opportunities (the independent variables) had a significant positive effect on employee retention. The researcher established that when all other factors are constant, the independent variables positively affected employee retention in SACCO societies. This implies that a unit increase in employee rewards led to a 0.258 improvement in employee retention and a unit increase in job design led to a 0.189 employees retained in the firms. In addition, a unit increase in career opportunities led to 0.077 improvement in employee retention in the SACCO societies. Generally, the study findings established that career opportunities had the least positive effect, while employee rewards had the highest positive effect on employee retention in SACCO societies. Therefore, the regression model for this study is: **Employee Retention** = $0.235(\text{coefficient of intercept}) + 0.258(\text{Employee Rewards}) + 0.189(\text{Job Design}) + 0.077(\text{Career Opportunities})$.

8. Conclusion

The study concluded that the employee rewards, job design and career opportunities are crucial factors that contribute toward promoting retention of employees in any organization or society. The study thus concludes that employee rewards positively affect retention of employees. Further, the study concludes that well-structured reward policies are crucial in promoting employee retention. A variety of employee rewards are necessary to address and satisfy employees at different management levels, including their responsibilities and needs. Therefore, this study concluded that SACCO societies highly prioritise intrinsic rewards to gain a competitive advantage when it comes to retention. From the regression results, it is clear that job designs positively affect employee retention. The study concluded that well-structured job designs guarantee clear job responsibilities and flexibility and thus providing a conducive working environment which promote employee retention. Many SACCO societies' today implement comprehensive programs to counter the costly outcomes of creating new positions especially when it comes to mergers and acquisitions. The firm use various characteristics to describe jobs, and the findings of this study revealed that firms that incorporate these characteristics in job designs usually have highly motivated employees. The study also concluded that it is important to have a variety of career opportunities as they play a pivotal role in enhancing employee retention. A variety of career opportunities help address the different needs of different employee at different levels. From the regression results, it is clear that career opportunities have a positive contribution towards employee retention. Career opportunities help in the growth of the employees which then promotes retention of talents and employee retention in the SACCO societies. By providing employees with several career development programs, it shows that the SACCO societies have the capacity to nurture skills and talent through such career opportunities.

9. Recommendations

The success of any business depends on retaining highly skilled employees for business consistency and growth. This is possible if the employees are well rewarded, have properly structured job designs and clear career opportunities. The study recommends that SACCO societies should formulate motivating employee rewards with supportive policies. The societies should improve on these rewards to improve the levels of employee retention. The study also recommends that the management should have clear job designs as they also enhance on the retention of the employees. The study also recommends that the SACCO societies should have a variety of career opportunities to satisfy different employee needs. The study also recommends that the regulators of the SACCO societies should encourage and standardize the policies that promote employee rewards. The study further, recommends the standardization of the job designs and career opportunities since most businesses are operating on global village environment. One of the most effective techniques to induce motivation among junior employees is to provide them with the right information regarding their actions towards others. As such, the employees would experience a boost in their confidence in the course of their longstanding career path. Therefore, firms can enhance employee job satisfaction by designing jobs that incorporate motivational factors in their processes. The study also recommends that the HR department should to retain the most promising and dynamic employees since it helps other ordinary employees to be motivated. Therefore, the HR department of any firm should not only focus on hiring new people, but also retain the best employees in the organisation. By ensuring that all the company policies fulfil the overall goals of the organisation, the HR department also helps in bettering employees skills while satisfying their needs for the long-term stay in the firm.

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