

# Career Development for Retaining Local Talents in the Private Sector: Study from the Kingdom of Bahrain

La'aleh Al-Aali

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37178/ca-c.21.5.083>

---

*La'aleh Al-Aali, Arab Open University, Bahrain*  
[laaleh.alaali@aou.org.bh](mailto:laaleh.alaali@aou.org.bh)

---

## Abstract

The paper focuses on one GCC state, Kingdom of Bahrain to examine career development in private sector for retaining local talents. This research aims at examining career development function specifically as a retention tool. Career development as an integrated practice within human resource development is analyzed by examining career development practices within the human resource development function. It explores career development as a retention tool towards facing the challenge of low employee retention rate in private sector. The paper reveals the integrated practice of human resource development to achieve career development within private sector. It also surfaces the consideration of monetary rewards as part of the integrated practice of career development within human resource development function. The research methodology is mixed method. The quantitative data was analyzed from 467 returned questionnaires. Five to eight managerial level semi structured interviews were conducted in each of the seven private organizations where questionnaires were distributed, totaling 38 interviewees. Hence, the paper presents findings within career development from perspective of both employee and employer.

## Keywords

Human Resource Development, Career Development – Retention Strategies

## Introduction

Gulf Corporation Countries ( GCC ) face a challenge within their labor market in strengthening private sector national employees retention. The reasons for national employees' resistance to joining private sector organizations has been identified in the literature review as owing to their inability to see career prospects in the private sector [1, 2]. The paper focuses on one GCC state, Kingdom of Bahrain to examine career development in private sector for retaining local talents [3]. In a prior research by [1], it was strongly evident that human resource development activities are effectively implemented in private sector, yet the challenge of employing and retaining national employees persist. This research aims at examining career development function specifically as a retention tool [4-8]. Career development is a deserved area of exploration as it forms a decisive factor in forming retention tools as identified in the HRD literature

review [9-12]. The paper addresses career planning practices in the context of the Kingdom of Bahrain context by examining career development practices within the human resource development function. It explores career development as a retention tool towards the low employee retention rate in private sector. The paper reveals the integrated practice of human resource development to achieve career development within private sector. It also surfaces the consideration of monetary rewards as part of the integrated practice of career development within human resource development function [13-17].

### **Defining Career Development within Human Resource Development**

Analyzing career development as a function of human resource development indicates that it is strongly linked with other HRD practices [18, 19]. The HRD wheel by [10] grouped organization development, training and development, and career development as the primary components of HRD. McLagan defined HRD as a field that fosters long-term, work-related learning capacity at individual, group and organizational levels [20, 21]. HRD was further defined as “organized learning experiences provided by employers within a specific period of time to bring about the possibility of performance improvement and or personal growth” [22]. [10] looked at HRD at an organizational level, defining HRD as “the integrated use of training and development, organization development, and career development to improve individual, group, and organizational effectiveness”. The above definitions strongly indicate that career development is an essential component of HRD that facilitates organizational learning, performance, and change through organized interventions for performance capacity, capability, competitive readiness, and renewal [10].

According to [23] “career development focuses on the alignment of individual subjective career aspects and the more objective career aspects of the organization in order to achieve the best fit between individual and organizational needs as well as personal characteristics and career goals”. It is also noted that “career development helps individuals achieve their career objectives. It follows closely from career planning and includes organizational practices that help employees implement those plans. These may include skill training, performance feedback and coaching, planned job rotation, mentoring and continuing education” [24]. It is stated that career development is a mutual process between the employee and employer it is the “outcome of individual career planning and the organization’s provision of support and opportunities, ideally a collaborative process: [11]. Mutual responsiveness is based on employers adjusting towards the changing needs and expectations of employees [25].

Referring to the above references, it is well notable that career development is part of HRD practices within organizations. The link of career development with HRD activities emphasizes that career development is part of the full set of integrated HRD activities reflecting that career development cannot be practiced without training, development, on the job training and appraisals. However, it is noteworthy to refer to perspectives that reveal that no matter how well educated or trained individuals may be, that is of no value if they remain unemployed or unproductive in a job offering limited incentives or career development prospects. There is a “paucity of hard, detailed evidence of direct causal links” [26, 27] between training and career development. Hence, the paper shall examine career development within a framework of integrated practices. It explores the extent of career development as integrated practice within private sector in Bahrain. Drawing upon the literature review references below, it is noteworthy to discuss that role of career development as a retention strategy for retaining national employees within private sector.

### **Career Development as a retention strategy**

Several research studies strongly point towards career development as a tool to bind employees into “ psychological contract” keeping them well committed in the workplace leading to retention [26, 28], [29]. Retaining employees within organizations is considered important for the financial performance of the organization [23]. Career development retains employees within organization as it leads job satisfaction, enhanced organizational performance, create a positive attitude and culture towards work [26]. Research has established that human resource development activities with specific reference to career development leads to employee retention [22, 30].

Reviewing literature review within the Gulf Corporation Countries context, it is evident that career development requires exploration as it plays a crucial role in employee retention in private sector. [2] found higher labor turnover in the private sector owing to employers’ general lack of career development strategies due to the transient nature of the majority of the workforce. Bayt.com (2008) survey indicates that 51 per cent of all Gulf nationals cite ‘assured career development’ as a positive inclusion in their total compensation package in lieu of a proportion of salary. Career development is crucial for national employees by creating career paths. Al[1] argues that nationals do not see career development prospects in the private sector due to limited opportunities for training and promotion. This suggests the need to re-evaluate human resource strategies, recognizing the need for increased consideration career development programmes [2]. Exploring retention rates in private sector in Asian developing contexts [18, 19, 31-36], it is evident that retaining employees within organizations is a challenge faced in several developing contexts that requires exploration [37-41].

Exploring the context of Bahrain specifically. It is evident that retention rates in private sector Bahrain has no figures published. There is dearth of literature review in this aspect as searching through library search engines indicates no results. Running a search in google scholar, Arab Open University, University of Manchester library search engines ( accessed : 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021), the researcher was not able to access any percentages or figures from any entity. The aim of the paper is to explore the practice of retention through career development as a human resource development function within private sector in the Kingdom of Bahrain [42-47].

In a prior research “Effectiveness of HRD in private sector : A case from the Kingdom of Bahrain”, International Journal of Management and Applied Science, Vol. 4, Issue 8, [1] explored human resource development practices in private sector Bahrain indicating effectiveness of human resource development activities [19, 48] With reference to such findings, the researcher shall build upon the drawings with a particular focus on career development to examine career development in private sector Bahrain for retaining local talents. The literature review reveals a need to address change processes directed to overcoming the low retention rate of national employees in the private sector in the GCC countries. Hence, the research shall examine career development from an employee perspective and employer perspective to assess its effectiveness in retaining employees within one GCC state, Kingdom of Bahrain.

### **Methodology**

To examine the employee perspectives 700 questionnaires were distributed to seven private sector organizations in Bahrain. The data was analyzed from 467 returned questionnaires . Five to eight managerial level semi structured interviews were conducted in each of the seven private organizations where questionnaires were distributed, totaling 38 interviewees. The interviews were conducted with managerial level employees, and

together with the questionnaire analyses from employees in private sector the aim was to capture both the employee and employer side. Typically, several studies have attempted to investigate in the private sector in Bahrain [35], thus outlining its significance.

### ***Quantitative Results***

The highest agreement percentage of around **51%** related to the organizations engagement of a culture of promotion through development programs. Looking at the highest mean in the table below, which is 3.78, this relates to development through promotion. As highlighted below, over **30 per cent** of the Bahrainis strongly agree that managers develop and guide them to be promoted. Although **37 per cent** of Bahrainis see career prospects in their private sector organizations, nevertheless there were higher neutral responses in terms of viewing career prospects. As indicated below, **39 per cent** of the Bahrainis were neutral towards career limitations in their department, **50** were neutral towards career limitations in their organization, and **41 per cent** had neutral views regarding career progression retaining them within their private sector organization. Around **44 per cent** of the Bahrainis agree that career progression is discussed during their appraisals, **36 per cent** agree that they had their careers discussed when they first joined the organization, while **47 per cent** were neutral as to whether their career progression was discussed more than a year after they joined the private sector organization.

Table II presents the means for each organization, showing the highest means as those for Jawad Costa **3.90** and Jawad Fashion **3.85**. The lowest means were for Gulf Hotel **2.97** and Kanoo Travel **2.89**. The means reflect that training and development practices are aligned to career development and performance management processes. The career development and performance management theme is analyzed at depth within the organizations by studying the percentages of items within the theme as indicated in Table III.

Table 1

Career development and Performance Management

Question	FQY / PCT	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	STD DEV.
My manager develops me to be promoted	Frequency	158	139	117	31	28	3.78	1.153
	Percent	33.2	29.2	24.6	6.5	5.9		
My manager communicates to me openly regarding my next career position in the organization	Frequency	57	197	131	52	38	3.39	1.085
	Percent	12.0	41.4	27.5	10.9	8.0		
My manager guides me towards achieving a higher position in the organization	Frequency	148	135	110	54	28	3.68	1.194
	Percent	31.1	28.4	23.1	11.3	5.9		
I see career prospects in my organization	Frequency	90	177	138	47	22	3.56	1.051
	Percent	18.9	37.2	29.0	9.9	4.6		
Career progression is discussed during yearly appraisal	Frequency	35	208	120	82	30	3.29	1.038
	Percent	7.4	43.7	25.2	17.2	6.3		
Career paths are limited in my department	Frequency	54	144	186	65	23	3.30	1.004
	Percent	11.3	30.3	39.1	13.7	4.8		
Career paths are limited in my organization	Frequency	40	100	240	73	23	3.13	0.937
	Percent	8.4	21.0	50.4	15.3	4.8		
Career progression retains me at my organization	Frequency	47	147	197	58	26	3.28	0.986
	Percent	9.9	30.9	41.4	12.2	5.5		
Career progression was discussed when I first joined the organization	Frequency	82	171	117	72	33	3.41	1.145
	Percent	17.2	35.9	24.6	15.1	6.9		
Career progression was discussed after more than a year of joining the organization	Frequency	24	89	225	100	37	2.92	0.953
	Percent	5.0	18.7	47.3	21.0	7.8		
Besides, high performance my organization engages in a culture of promotion through development programs	Frequency	38	242	134	41	20	3.50	0.915
	Percent	8.0	50.8	28.2	8.6	4.2		

Table 2

Training and Development

Question	FQY / PCT	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	STD DEV.
I am trained at a regular basis	Frequency	199	136	73	51	16	3.95	1.143
	Percent	41.8	28.6	15.3	10.7	3.4		
I attend at least 2 training courses per year	Frequency	188	122	59	72	33	3.76	1.304
	Percent	39.5	25.6	12.4	15.1	6.9		
Am given the opportunity to choose my training programs	Frequency	138	123	119	62	34	3.57	1.232
	Percent	29.0	25.8	25.0	13.0	7.1		
My manager only nominates me for a training program	Frequency	150	175	88	45	16	3.84	1.078
	Percent	31.5	36.8	18.5	9.5	3.4		
Training programs are mutually agreed by myself and manager	Frequency	141	160	118	36	21	3.76	1.091
	Percent	29.6	33.6	24.8	7.6	4.4		
Training programs are aligned with my job requirements	Frequency	184	155	82	38	14	3.97	1.073
	Percent	38.7	32.6	17.2	8.0	2.9		
Am hesitant to request training from my organization	Frequency	33	107	162	84	86	2.82	1.177
	Percent	6.9	22.5	34.0	17.6	18.1		
Training programs in my organization meet development needs for promotion at work	Frequency	115	198	93	49	21	3.71	1.078
	Percent	24.2	41.6	19.5	10.3	4.4		
Training is well managed in my organization	Frequency	189	134	102	35	13	3.95	1.076
	Percent	39.7	28.2	21.4	7.4	2.7		
My manager encourages and supports my training	Frequency	217	132	81	30	16	4.06	1.086
	Percent	45.6	27.7	17.0	6.3	3.4		
My organization promotes a learning culture	Frequency	203	135	97	22	13	4.05	1.037
	Percent	42.6	28.4	20.4	4.6	2.7		

Table 3

Career development theme mean per organization

Company	My manager develops me to be promoted	My manager communicates to me openly regarding my next career position in the organization	My manager guides me towards achieving a higher position in the organization	I see career prospects in my organization	Career progression is discussed during yearly appraisal	Career paths are limited in my department	Career paths are limited in my organization	Career progression retains me at my organization	Career progression was discussed when I first joined the organization	Career progression was discussed after more than a year of joining the organization	Besides, high performance my organization engages in a culture of promotion through development programs	Average Mean
APG	3.79	3.03	3.31	3.06	2.86	3.74	3.58	3.48	3.02	2.64	3.14	3.24
GPIC	3.34	3.16	3.30	3.55	3.05	3.40	3.17	3.09	2.98	2.91	3.60	3.23
<b>GULF</b>	<b>3.09</b>	<b>3.02</b>	<b>3.07</b>	<b>3.14</b>	<b>3.02</b>	<b>2.88</b>	<b>2.79</b>	<b>2.81</b>	<b>3.05</b>	<b>2.95</b>	<b>2.88</b>	<b>2.97</b>
<b>JD FASH</b>	<b>4.64</b>	<b>3.98</b>	<b>4.61</b>	<b>4.20</b>	<b>3.81</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>3.12</b>	<b>3.52</b>	<b>4.23</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>3.92</b>	<b>3.85</b>
JD HO	3.20	2.98	3.22	3.11	2.82	3.09	3.07	3.25	3.00	3.09	3.42	3.11
<b>JD RC</b>	<b>4.71</b>	<b>4.57</b>	<b>4.57</b>	<b>4.29</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>2.43</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>4.29</b>	<b>3.86</b>	<b>4.14</b>	<b>3.90</b>
JD RP	3.38	3.50	3.38	3.63	4.00	2.75	2.50	3.13	3.38	2.38	3.63	3.24
KANOO C	3.93	3.86	3.79	3.86	3.86	3.71	3.71	3.50	3.64	3.86	3.71	3.77
<b>KANOO T</b>	<b>2.92</b>	<b>2.84</b>	<b>2.92</b>	<b>2.89</b>	<b>3.11</b>	<b>2.95</b>	<b>2.89</b>	<b>2.95</b>	<b>2.78</b>	<b>2.57</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>2.89</b>
MVP	3.83	3.33	3.25	3.42	3.08	3.38	3.00	2.75	3.38	2.54	3.08	3.19

Table 4

Career Development for nationals in Bahrain private sector per organization

Career Planning and Performance Management		Company									
		APG	GPIC	GULF	JD FASH	JD HO	JD RC	JD RP	KANOO C	KANOO T	MVP
My manager develops me to be promoted	Strongly Disagree	5%	9%	19%	0%	7%	0%	13%	0%	11%	0%
	Disagree	10%	10%	7%	0%	7%	0%	13%	0%	22%	0%
	Neutral	16%	30%	33%	9%	49%	14%	25%	36%	35%	42%
	Agree	41%	39%	30%	18%	31%	0%	25%	36%	30%	33%
	Strongly Agree	29%	11%	12%	73%	5%	86%	25%	29%	3%	25%
My manager communicates to me openly regarding my next career position in the organization	Strongly Disagree	9%	11%	16%	0%	15%	0%	0%	0%	19%	0%
	Disagree	22%	17%	9%	0%	9%	0%	13%	0%	24%	33%
	Neutral	38%	33%	42%	13%	40%	14%	38%	36%	19%	17%
	Agree	18%	24%	21%	76%	36%	14%	38%	43%	30%	33%
	Strongly Agree	12%	16%	12%	11%	0%	71%	13%	21%	8%	17%
My manager guides me towards achieving a higher position in the organization	Strongly Disagree	8%	11%	12%	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%	11%	0%
	Disagree	12%	13%	14%	0%	18%	0%	25%	7%	30%	33%
	Neutral	37%	25%	44%	7%	29%	14%	25%	29%	24%	25%
	Agree	28%	35%	16%	25%	36%	14%	38%	43%	27%	25%
	Strongly Agree	15%	16%	14%	68%	9%	71%	13%	21%	8%	17%

I see career prospects in my organization	Strongly Disagree	14%	3%	9%	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%
	Disagree	16%	10%	12%	1%	13%	0%	0%	7%	35%	0%
	Neutral	33%	34%	47%	11%	40%	29%	38%	21%	38%	58%
	Agree	25%	34%	21%	54%	35%	14%	63%	50%	19%	42%
Career progression is discussed during yearly appraisal	Strongly Agree	13%	19%	12%	34%	4%	57%	0%	21%	5%	0%
	Strongly Disagree	17%	10%	7%	0%	7%	0%	0%	7%	5%	0%
	Disagree	22%	22%	16%	5%	36%	0%	0%	0%	27%	38%
	Neutral	31%	31%	51%	12%	29%	29%	0%	21%	30%	15%
Career paths are limited in my department	Agree	20%	28%	19%	81%	22%	43%	100%	43%	27%	46%
	Strongly Agree	11%	9%	7%	3%	5%	29%	0%	29%	11%	0%
	Strongly Disagree	5%	3%	18%	0%	7%	29%	0%	7%	8%	0%
	Disagree	15%	17%	8%	8%	25%	29%	38%	0%	14%	15%
Career paths are limited in my organization	Neutral	14%	27%	55%	52%	33%	29%	50%	36%	57%	46%
	Agree	34%	41%	10%	39%	20%	0%	13%	29%	19%	23%
	Strongly Agree	32%	11%	10%	2%	15%	14%	0%	29%	3%	15%
	Strongly Disagree	8%	4%	12%	0%	4%	43%	13%	0%	8%	0%
Career progression retains me at my organization	Disagree	20%	24%	16%	2%	27%	29%	25%	7%	14%	31%
	Neutral	9%	31%	58%	85%	36%	14%	63%	29%	59%	46%
	Agree	32%	31%	9%	12%	24%	14%	0%	50%	19%	15%
	Strongly Agree	31%	9%	5%	1%	9%	0%	0%	14%	0%	8%
Career progression retains me at my organization	Strongly Disagree	12%	6%	14%	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%	11%	8%
	Disagree	11%	24%	12%	1%	18%	0%	13%	14%	19%	33%
	Neutral	18%	36%	58%	54%	36%	29%	63%	29%	41%	33%
	Agree	34%	26%	12%	38%	33%	43%	25%	50%	24%	25%
Career progression retains me at my organization	Strongly Agree	25%	9%	5%	8%	9%	29%	0%	7%	5%	0%

Career progression was discussed when I first joined the organization	Strongly Disagree	15%	11%	5%	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	11%	8%
	Disagree	22%	25%	14%	1%	25%	14%	13%	7%	30%	8%
	Neutral	22%	24%	60%	12%	27%	0%	38%	36%	30%	31%
	Agree	29%	34%	14%	50%	25%	29%	50%	43%	30%	46%
	Strongly Agree	12%	6%	7%	37%	11%	57%	0%	14%	0%	8%
Career progression was discussed after more than a year of joining the organization	Strongly Disagree	20%	11%	5%	0%	11%	0%	13%	0%	11%	8%
	Disagree	27%	24%	21%	13%	18%	0%	38%	0%	38%	54%
	Neutral	25%	33%	53%	77%	33%	29%	50%	36%	38%	15%
	Agree	25%	28%	16%	6%	27%	57%	0%	43%	11%	23%
	Strongly Agree	3%	4%	5%	3%	11%	14%	0%	21%	3%	0%
Besides, high performance my organization engages in a culture of promotion through development programs	Strongly Disagree	12%	1%	16%	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%	5%	0%
	Disagree	17%	6%	9%	1%	15%	14%	0%	0%	24%	17%
	Neutral	25%	36%	51%	10%	35%	0%	38%	36%	41%	58%
	Agree	37%	47%	16%	86%	31%	43%	63%	57%	24%	25%
	Strongly Agree	9%	10%	7%	3%	16%	43%	0%	7%	5%	0%

Referring to the data of employees from private sector Bahrain, it is evident that development is linked with promotion as 33% strongly agreed with this respect. Openness in communication about career moves is practiced in organizations as 41% agree that their managers communicate to them openly regarding their next career position. Thirty one percent strongly agree that their managers guide them towards achieving a higher position in their organization. In addition, 37% of the employees see career prospects in their organizations. Forty four percent of the employees agree that career progression is discussed during the yearly appraisal. The factor of career path limitation had a high percentage in terms of being 'neutral'. In addition, the response towards the question of whether career progression retains employees in the organizations was significantly neutral.

Neutral responses with regards to the career paths in the department and organization has been indicated. The majority of neutral responses raises the need to see within this question the second highest responses which fell under the agree percentages. Thirty percent agreed that career paths are limited in their department. Twenty one percent agreed that career paths are limited in their organization. About retention through career management 41% were neutral but equally 41% agreed that career retention retains them in their organizations. A high percentage of 51 % Bahrainis responded affirmatively towards appraisal discussions and career promotion through management support and organizational culture

### Qualitative Results

Career development practice in the private sector is evident through the views shared by the managers. It is given equal importance with Training and Development in private sector organizations in Bahrain. On the basis of the interview data, it can be seen that career management is managed and implemented in several ways. Some organizations like GPIC depend on expatriates to promote nationals or have their own training academies that form career paths in line with their training programmes. Organizations like Gulf Hotel and Kanoo practice promotion from within or utilize the career planning strategies by Tamkeen. Dnata, having a head office in Dubai, values developing national careers through its head office in Dubai to prepare employees for higher level roles.



Private sector managers described the government support towards forming career paths in several instances.

“We are an organization that strives for excellence. It is important for us to give a career path for retaining our employees as people in a certain stage need higher roles. Even though we are small in Bahrain, but we have a training infrastructure in Dubai and employees can see where they can be in the next couple of years through the trainings provided in our own academy in Dubai. Growing business with our people is extremely important to us.” **(General Manager)**

“Career paths along with development training are discussed with employees Tamkeen career path programs enabled us to form career development. For example, Tamkeen worked on certified IATA holders for Kanoo.” **(Regional Manager)**

“When a person resigns there is an opportunity for promotion from within and you are trained to get into that position. There are different sections that you can move into from, sometimes it can also match your ambition or hobby.” **(Health Club Manager)**

“I have been working for 17 years in fashion. I started as a storekeeper and worked towards developing myself through the company development programs. The company played a role in developing me and today an operations manager.” **(Fashion Operations Manager)**

“ I started in Jawad as summer job in BHS, I was given training and rotation in that place. Then I was given higher opportunities through training and rotation. Then I was given the opportunity to be an opening team supervisor in the branches. Then promoted to store manager and then was even given training in the UK to implement UK strategies in store. Today I am a brand manager in for multiple ladies fashion brands.” **(Fashion Divisional Manager)**

Career development has also been recognized in the private sector as a retention strategy. Hence this reflects the practice of HRD activities to integrate nationals in career paths through development. Interviews described how some organizations are career driven, believing that development can retain nationals. Career development is practised as a vital factor for retaining employees through training, career planning and succession planning as explained below.

“Our **retention** strategy is we are **career driven**. We have trainers from abroad providing training, and provide our staff familiarization trips and art of communication to develop their career paths. As we also get bigger our paths shall be more structured hence retaining nationals.” **(General Manager)**

“We use a **career growth** and grading that develops people, if they work and perform they grow. Showing **nationals the career paths retains** Bahrainis in the organization.” **(Chief Finance Controller)**

“To **retain** employees, we make it very clear about their **career growth**. When employees join succession planning is made clear for them indicating a sense of where their career will be heading with us.” **(Marketing Manager)**

“Retention strategies in GPIC are practiced through **career planning, development is for Bahrainis and expats equally, succession planning** is clear and expats have the opportunity of promotion when developing Bahrainis and transparency in management.” **(Superintendent)**

“Development is important and nationals need to be attached in a place that believes in development like our hotel. But to retain Bahrainis we need a coach or mentor to shape the candidate. The coach or mentor needs to be a serious person to instill working values. Having a national coach and mentor is important to set an example. Trainees should have a discussion with their managers about their development indicating to them a move towards their career path. Setting targets for managers as yearly targets to develop nationals through engagement is a way of enforcing the replacement of expatriates in organizations with all my respect.” **(Chief of Finance)**

To retain Bahrainis from managers’ point of view, several factors have to be considered together within retention strategies, and these include training, career development, compensation and reward.

“Believe in the FOUR Rs: Recruitment: recruit people with the right criteria (minimum requirement). Retrain: we have to retrain nationals to GPIC standards. In this respect, we have different training paths – engineer 42 months- non-engineers 18 months, non-technical graduate he has it for 24 months, and we have 4 or 5 different scenarios. Retraining is given to become competent by having the right knowledge, skills attitude and behavior. Reward- reward nationals by giving the right salary, benefits, medical insurance, saving scheme, housing, senior education. By doing the first three we end up by Retaining employees. A Retention strategy lies within training, development and reward.” **(HR Manager)**

“Bahrainis retention is through monetary factors, but this is one aspect. The training and development aspect plays a role in retaining employees. When employees have planned and clear career paths qualifying employees towards managers and superintendents retains them at our organization.” **(Internal Auditor)**

“Our retention strategies are strong because we have a good working environment as a family. But also pay is good. We have fairness and equality. The strategy of open door and transparency is in our culture.” **(Superintendent)**

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings indicate that retention strategies for employees in the private sector is crucial to increase national labour retention versus investments made towards their development and career progression. Investigating HRD practice at individual and organizational levels in Bahrain, the researcher finds a correlation in that if training and development is practised, career development and performance management practices appear in positive practice as well together with a strong organizational culture and management. Tables I, II, III reflect that when mean scores for training and development were high, career development, performance management and organizational culture had high means in parallel.

Analyzing employees responses , it is evident that the training and development mean responses are similarly reflected in relation to the career development and performance management means. The statistics indicate a relation between practices of training and development, and career development and performance management. If training and development is practiced, career development and performance management practices appear to be positively supported as well. Referring to employers views, it is evident that that career development is practiced part of other human resource development. Interviewees revealed that career development and organizational culture are HRD activities practised in organizations that can retain nationals.

In terms of retaining Bahrainis in the private sector, private sector managers state that it is important to embed development and organizational culture in retention strategies.

Private sector employers raised the need to consider salary standards in the private sector to retain national human resources and the investment made towards their development.

On the basis of the interview data with private sector managers, employees development through career development as an HRD activity is valued for growth and retention of nationals by managers in Bahrain. Career development is practised in several ways. Some depend on mentors to develop nationals by promoting nationals and expatriates through career programmes as reflected in the interviews. Other organizations in Bahrain have their own training academies that form career paths in line with their training programmes. Other organizations practise promotion from within or utilize the career planning strategies values developing national careers through its head office in Dubai to prepare employees for higher roles. However, managers emphasized the need for the practice of succession planning in organizations to enable nationals' growth in organizations. Even though career management is valued highly by managers in the private sector, the interview results have also raised the need to consider the monetary side within the career development to retain employees. The results of the analysis in Bahrain presented agrees with the views of [49], [31, 36] who identify the preference of GCC nationals towards government sector jobs for remuneration reasons. It is crucial that retention strategies consider compensation and benefits to retain local talents [50] within sectors with the aim of developing their economies.

### Conclusion

The research has limitations which needs to be considered. The sectors of the companies selected for the study vary from education, travel, hospitality, petrochemical industry which may not have a precise findings for every sector. This implies to further conduct a study per sector to be able to form more customized retention strategies that can add value towards the investments of employees' development within organizations.

The examination of career development in organizations for managing and retaining local talents within retention initiatives has revealed the importance of considering monetary rewards. Consideration of career development and compensation can increase retention in the private sector. .

### References

1. Al-Ali, J., *Emiratization: drawing UAE nationals into their surging economy*. International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy, , Vol.28, No. 9-10, pp. 365-379, 2008 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/01443330810900202>.
2. Freek, S., *Voices from the shop floor: The impact of the multicultural work environment on UAE*. TANMIA, Dubai, 2004.
3. Khalid, N., M.H. Pahi, and U. Ahmed, *Loosing your best talent: Can leadership retain employees? The dilemma of the banking sector of Hyderabad Sindh, Pakistan: A mediation investigation*. International Review of Management and Marketing, 2016. **6**(3): p. 608-616.
4. Dang, T.C., et al., *Factors affecting the profitability of listed commercial banks in Vietnam: Does agriculture finance matter?* AgBioForum, 2021. **23**(1): p. 32-41.
5. Bukkuri, A., *The impact of infected T lymphocyte burst rate and viral shedding rate on optimal treatment scheduling in a human immunodeficiency virus infection*. BIOMATH, 2020. **9**(2): p. 2008173 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11145/j.biomath.2020.02.137>.
6. Jampeisov, D., et al., *MANAGING ETHNIC REPATRIATION EXPERIENCE: CENTRAL ASIAN STATES AND RUSSIAN FEDERATION*. Central Asia & the Caucasus (14046091), 2020. **21**(1).

7. Bakota, I., "Diamond Stage" in Sino-Croatian Relations. Croatian International Relations Review, 2020. **26**(86): p. 156-176 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37173/cirr.26.86.6>.
8. Granada, Y.A. and J.F. Mejia, Does innovation generate or destroy employment? An application for manufacturing and service firms. Cuadernos de Economía, 2020. **43**(122): p. 191-212.
9. Lynham, S.A. and P.W. Cunningham, National human resource development in transitioning societies in the developing world: Concept and challenges. Advances in Developing Human Resources, 2006. **8**(1): p. 116-135 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1523422305283150>.
10. McLagan, P.A., Models for HRD practice. Training & development journal, 1989. **43**(9): p. 49-60.
11. Swanson, R.A., Human resource development: Performance is the key. Human resource development quarterly, 1995. **6**(2): p. 207-213 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrdq.3920060208>.
12. Garavan, T.N., A strategic perspective on human resource development. Advances in Developing Human Resources, 2007. **9**(1): p. 11-30 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1523422306294342>.
13. Abdi Zarrin, S. and E. Gracia, Prediction of Academic Procrastination by Fear of Failure and Self-Regulation. Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice, 2020. **20**(3): p. 34-43.
14. Hassan, A.-B., Exploring global citizenship as a cross-curricular theme in Moroccan ELT textbooks. Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 2020. **6**(2): p. 229-242.
15. Guner-Ozer, M. and S.D. Belet Boyac, Verba Volant, Scripta Manent: Writing Habits of Pre-Service Elementary Teachers. Eurasian Journal of Educational Research, 2020. **90**: p. 159-184 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2020.90.9>.
16. Gadekar, S.S., S.B. Sapkal, and B.R. Madje, HEPES BUFFER MEDIATED SYNTHESIS OF 3, 4-DIHYDRO-3, 3-DIMETHYL-9-ARYLACRIDIN-1-ONES. EUROPEAN CHEMICAL BULLETIN, 2020. **9**(1): p. 6-9 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17628/ecb.2020.9.6-9>.
17. Fisch, M., The Talmudist Enlightenment: Talmudic Judaism's Confrontational Rational Theology. European Journal for Philosophy of Religion, 2020. **12**(2) DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24204/ejpr.v12i2.3310>.
18. Ahmed, U., et al., The mediating role of meaningful work between career growth opportunities and work engagement. International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 2018. **8**(11): p. 1265-1282 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v8-i11/5168>.
19. AlMannai, M.A.W., A.M. Arbab, and S. Darwish, The Impact of talent management strategies on enhancement of competitive advantage in Bahrain post. Int. J. Core Eng. Manag, 2017. **4**: p. 1-17.
20. Ahmed, U., et al., Diving deep in employee training to understand employee engagement, 7(1), 1-4. 2015.
21. Watkins, K.E., Essay review: Many voices: Defining human resource development from different disciplines. Adult Education Quarterly, 1991. **41**(4): p. 241-255 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001848191041004004>.
22. Weinberger\*, L.A., Commonly held theories of human resource development. Human Resource Development International, 1998. **1**(1): p. 75-93 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13678869800000009>.
23. Litano, M.L. and D.A. Major, Facilitating a whole-life approach to career development: The role of organizational leadership. Journal of Career Development, 2016. **43**(1): p. 52-65 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845315569303>.
24. Graham, S., J.F. Wedman, and B. Garvin-Kester, Manager coaching skills: What makes a good coach? Performance Improvement Quarterly, 1994. **7**(2): p. 81-94 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1937-8327.1994.tb00626.x>.
25. Dawis, R.V., The theory of work adjustment and person-environment-correspondence counseling. Career choice and development, 1996. **3**: p. 75-120.
26. Khan, R.A., The Impact of Career Planning and Development on Job Satisfaction and Retention in Pakistani Banking Sector. Global Management Journal for Academic & Corporate Studies, 2014. **4**(2): p. 109.
27. Mathews, B.P., et al., Quality training: needs and evaluation-findings from a European survey. Total quality management, 2001. **12**(4): p. 483-490 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09544120123778>.
28. Ng, T.W.H., et al., Effects of management communication, opportunity for learning, and work schedule flexibility on organizational commitment. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 2006. **68**(3): p. 474-489 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2005.10.004>.
29. Eisenberger, R., P. Fasolo, and V. Davis-LaMastro, Perceived organizational support and employee diligence, commitment, and innovation. Journal of applied psychology, 1990. **75**(1): p. 51 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.75.1.51>.

30. Dokcel , A., *The effect of retention factors on organization commitment: An investigation of high technology employees.* University of Pretoria, Pretoria, 30, 213-219. 2003.
31. Abdalla, I.M., et al., *Labour policy and determinants of employment and wages in a developing economy with labour shortage.* Labour, 2010. **24**(2): p. 163-177 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9914.2010.00474.x>.
32. Alameddine, M., et al., *The retention of health human resources in primary healthcare centers in Lebanon: a national survey.* BMC health services research, 2012. **12**(1): p. 1-11 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1186/1472-6963-12-419>.
33. Anjum, A., *Empirical analysis on factors affecting the Employee Retention practices in the private organizations : A survey in Bangladesh, The Business Management Review, Vol 10, Iss 5.* 2019.
34. Hadi, N.U. and S. Ahmed, *Role of employer branding dimensions on employee retention: Evidence from educational sector.* Administrative Sciences, 2018. **8**(3): p. 44 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci8030044>.
35. Madrid, D., U. Ahmed, and R. Kumar, *Examining the Impact of Classroom Environment on Entrepreneurship Education: Case of a Private University in Bahrain.* Journal of Entrepreneurship Education, 2019. **22**(1): p. 1-8.
36. Suliman, A.M.T., *Human resource management in the United Arab Emirates. In Managing Human Resources in the Middle-East (pp. 77-96).* Routledge. 2006 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203485828-11>.
37. de Jongh, J., *ECONOMIC GLOBALISATION AND GOVERNMENT SIZE: TESTING THE COMPENSATION HYPOTHESIS IN SOUTH AFRICA'S PUBLIC SECTOR.* International Journal of Business and Management Studies, 2020. **12**(1): p. 66-83.
38. Bhat, M.A., *Politics of Preventive Detention: A Case Study of Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act, 1978.* International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences, 2020. **15**(1): p. 157-172.
39. Friend, C., et al., *Fighting Cybercrime: A Review of the Irish Experience.* International Journal of Cyber Criminology, 2020. **14**(2): p. 383-399.
40. Danielle, N.E.L. and L. Masilela, *Open Governance For Improved Service Delivery Innovation In South Africa.* International Journal of eBusiness and eGovernment Studies, 2020. **12**(1): p. 33-47 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34111/ijebeg.202012103>.
41. Mnisi, P. and T. Ramoroka, *Sustainable Community Development: A Review On The Socio-Economic Status Of Communities Practicing Ecotourism In South Africa.* International Journal Of Economics And Finance, 2020. **12**(2): p. 505-519.
42. Fatima Bennouna, D.A., Aicha Sekhari, *Investigating the Impact of QSE Integration on Process Performances: An Empirical Study in Moroccan Companies.* International journal of operations and quantitative management, 2020. **26**(3): p. 225-239 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.46970/2021.26.3.4>.
43. Kithatu-Kiwetekete, A. and S. Phillips, *THE EFFECT OF PUBLIC PROCUREMENT ON THE FUNCTIONING OF A NATIONAL EVALUATION SYSTEM: THE CASE OF SOUTH AFRICA.* International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanity Studies, 2020. **12**(1): p. 18-33.
44. Frederic, S. and S. Calandrón, *Gender Policies and Armed Forces in Latin America's Southern Cone.* Res militaris, 2015(1): p. 1-5.
45. Ruixia, G. and Z. Junbo, *Methods and Approaches of College Counselors to Deal with Students' Psychological Crisis.* Revista de Psicología del Deporte, 2020. **29**(4).
46. Khoma, N. and I. Vdovychyn, *Universal basic income as a form of social contract: assessment of the prospects of institutionalisation.* socialspacejournal. eu, 2021: p. 97.
47. Kyurkchiev, N., *A new class of activation functions. Some related problems and applications,* Biomath, 2020. **9** DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11145/j.biomath.2020.05.033>.
48. Darwish, S., *Education and Human Capital Development in Bahrain:" Future International Collaboration with Malaysia.* International Journal of Academic Research in Management (IJARM) Vol, 2014. **3**: p. 321-334.
49. Friedrich, R., et al., *The march of mobile marketing: New chances for consumer companies, new opportunities for mobile operators.* Journal of advertising research, 2009. **49**(1): p. 54-61 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2501/S0021849909090096>.
50. Samanta, I. and P. Eleni, *Talent Management to Improve Employee Competence: A Qualitative Study.* Annals of Contemporary Developments in Management & HR (ACDMHR), 2021. **3**(1): p. 1-10 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33166/ACDMHR.2021.01.001>.