



## Effects of Employees Turnover in Tanzanian Organizations: A case of Tanzania Fisheries Research Institute, Dar es Salaam

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### Abstract

*The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of staff turnover in Tanzanian Organisations. The study was conducted at Tanzania Fisheries Research Institute (TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam which is the research institute constituting Public Sector Organisations (PSOs) under the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries. The study employed a case study design for depth understanding of the phenomena. Questionnaire and interviews were used to collect data from 35 respondents out of which 30 were randomly selected from existing TAFIRI's employees while 5 were purposively selected from TAFIRI's heads of departments. Data from questionnaire were analysed descriptively through Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and presented through tables, frequencies and percentage. Data from interview were analysed through content analysis where by the emerged themes were taken from data provided. Human and social capital theories were used in this study due to their direct link to the organization productivity. The study revealed that staff turnover at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam led to increased workload for remaining staff, poor service delivery, loss of talented and experienced workers, replacement or recruitment costs, and training and development costs for newly recruited staff. In the light of these findings, it was recommended that TAFIRI should devise and implement different strategies like improving their incentive schemes that will promote staff retention.*

**Key Words:** Staff turnover, organisational productivity, staff retention

### 1. Introduction

Human resource is an important factor for operation of any organisation. The human resource function combines with other factors of production like money, equipment and raw material to help the organisation towards attainment of its objectives. Despite the presence of many factors of production, human resource comes out as the most important factor as without it, the organisation will not be able to operate effectively and efficiently (Hammond & Nyarko, 2019).

On the basis of its vitality, the goal of most of organisations is to attract, engage and retain human resource. Most of organisations have been successful because of their ability to attract and retain the right quantity and quality of employees. Managers of these organisations identify and put in place measures like rewards and other forms of motivation to encourage employees to work hard and stay in the organisation for longer period of time (Ambukege, 2020; Hammond & Nyarko, 2019).

Despite heavy organizations' investment of financial resources so as to retain their employees, still staff turnover remains a challenge to organisations at global, regional and local level. Most of organisations, regardless of their size, are affected by labour turnover. Workers have been either seeking for other places with green pasture or drop from doing the same job completely (Ambukege, 2020; Hammond & Nyarko, 2019).

At the global level, staff turnover affects both developed and developing states. For instance, statistics of World Health Organisations (2009) as cited by Ambukege (2020) shows that there were a shortage of 4 million workers in health sector across the globe, the situation that was partly attributed by staff turnover. Also, statistics provided by Statista (2020) as cited by Katembo & Masanja (2021) indicated that the developed and developing states from America and Asian continents are leading in labour turnover with turnover rate of 13.4%.

African continent is also affected by staff turnover. A global report by Statista (2020) informs that Africa has recorded labour turnover of 12% by the year 2019 whereby private sector is more affected compared to public sector. Most of African private companies face challenge in retaining their talented and experienced employees. For instance in South Africa, the turnover rate in private companies was between 12% and 14% by 2015 (Katembo & Masanja, 2021).

Similarly in Tanzania, labour turnover affects majority of organisations. A good example can be taken from tourism and hospitality industry which is an important economic sector, accounting for about 14% of the national GDP and employing about 10% workforce. The study by Mashauri (2015) as cited by Katembo & Masanja (2021) indicated labour turnover of 5% annually on five star hotels and tour destinations companies.

The effects of labour turnover are beyond the substantial costs of recruiting and integrating replacements. It affects organisations in many aspects such as loss of employees' morale, and decline in the quality of production. Moreover, it leads to low customer satisfaction and undermines organisation's competitive advantage. Generally, turnover tend to affect effectiveness and efficiency of teams, units, departments and organisation as whole (Ambukege, 2020; Hammond & Nyarko, 2019; Katembo & Masanja, 2021).

Most of existing studies in Tanzania like the studies by Surumbu & Kushoka (2021), Mongi (2020), and Muhoho (2018) have dwelt much in explaining the factors contributing to staff turnover and less is documented on the effects of labor turnover particularly in Tanzania public sector. Therefore, given this lacuna in literature, this study seeks to assess the effects of labour turnover to organizations with a specific case of TAFIRI – Dar es Salaam. More specifically, this study aims at:

- i. To determine whether employee' turnover has led to an increase in workload for remaining employees;
- ii. To determine whether employees' turnover has led to poor service delivery;
- iii. To determine whether employees turnover has led to loss of talented and experienced workers;
- iv. To determine whether employees turnover has led to an increase in replacement or recruitment cost; and
- v. To determine whether employees' turnover has increased training and development cost for new staff;

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## 2. Theoretical Literature Review

The area of employees' turnover and its effects to an organization has been thoroughly examined and theorized for decades. In terms of theoretical underpinning, the relationship between employees turnover and its effects to an organization can be viewed from three different views; the first view suggests that, employees turnover at any rate negatively affect the organization and its performance; the second view argues that, employee turnover affect organization and its productivity at low-to moderate levels but the disruptive effects are attenuated at high levels; and third view is that turnover rates as a source of positive organization productivity at low-to moderate levels but disrupt productivity at high levels (See Osterman, 1987; Price, 1977; Abelson & Baysinger, 1984 cited in Park et al 2013).

The existence of different views on employees' turnover and its effects to organization productivity has triggered several debates which will not be discussed in this paper. Therefore, based on the primary objective of this paper, the first view which takes turnover rates at any levels as a disruption to an organization productivity will be the focus. This view is supported by three theories namely costs based theory, human capital theory and social capital theory. In relation to this study, two theories: human capital theory and social capital theory are discussed. The two theories have been selected due to the fact that they have potential explanations on the existing relationship between turnover rates and organization productivity with particular reference to public sector

The human capital theory considers human resources as a source of organization survival and its competitive advantage. In this case, organization which invests in its people by building their skills and knowledge, eventually, will benefit from them. In this context, human capital theory takes employees turnover as a source of decreasing organization productivity because it results into the loss of rare human skills and knowledge which have been developed expensively through a series of different career development programs and activities like training (Dess & Shaw, 2001). On the other hand, social capital theory regards employee turnover as a detrimental to organization productivity as it reduces the long built social relationship among employees which cannot be easily replaced over short period of time. This has been affecting team work among employees and adversely retard the organization performance. The two theories have been used in this study as they provide an understanding of the role of employees in enhancing organization productivity. Therefore, the theories have provided the variables for the study.

### 2.1 Empirical Literature Review

In relation to these two theories, there are substantial empirical evidence which support the human and social capital theories arguments. Evidence have shown the existing negative relationship between employees turnover and organization in different areas including sales performance, costs effectiveness, productivity, decreases in customer service and the general wellbeing of the organization (Kacmar et al., 2006; Hausknecht, Trevor, & Howard, 2009; Koys, 2001; McElroy, Morrow, & Rude, 2001 cited in Allen, 2010). Hammond & Nyarko (2019) conducted a study to assess employees' turnover in higher education institutions a Case of the University of Mines and Technology, Ghana. The purpose of this study was to fill the knowledge gap associated with staff turnover at the University. The findings of this study revealed that staff turnover led to an increase in the teaching loads and responsibilities of lecturers; also, it impeded the progress of the university. Similar findings were found by Butali et al.(2014) who conducted the study on effects of staff turnover on employees' productivity of work at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST)' where the increase in workload for the remaining staff, customers' dissatisfaction and decrease in income were the adverse effects revealed

Moreover, Gebreyohannes (2020) conducted a study to assess rationales and impacts of employee turnover in commercial bank of Ethiopia. The purpose of such study was to determine the reasons and impacts of employees' turnover on Commercial Bank of Ethiopia. The study revealed that employees' turnover led to loss of highly specialized workforce, and high hiring and training costs at the bank. Aggrey (2016) conducted a study to assess staff retention in private universities in Ghana, a Case of the Perez University College, Winneba. The purpose of the study was to examine how employee

compensation package or system affects employee retention in private universities in Ghana. In such study, it was revealed that turnover at the university led to poor teaching quality, low research output and consequently high lecturer-student ratio.

Abebe (2019) conducted a study on factors influencing employees' turnover and its effect on organizational productivity a Case of Harar Beer Factory (HBF), Oromia Regional States. The study revealed that staff turnover led to reduction in effective service delivery to the customers and reflected poorly on the image of HBF.

Ogony (2018) conducted the study on the effects of employee turnover on performance, a Case of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Department of Arts and Culture (DAC). The study aimed to assess the effect of employees' turnover on productivity at KZN-DAC. The findings of the study revealed that employees turnover led to wastage of resources, disruption in service delivery, reduction in work productivity, spending of too much time in training staff, and increased workload for remaining staff in KZN-DAC.

Taye & Getnet (2020) conducted the study on the impact of employee turnover on organisational performance a Case of Mada Walabu University, Bale Robe, Ethiopia. The general purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of employees' turnover on organisational productivity specifically in Mada Walabu University. The findings of the study revealed that employees' turnover led to loss of some experienced and talented employees, too much wastage of resources when the new employees settle, reduction in productivity and quality of service rendered, and loss of public confidence over University's operations.

The review of literature has shown the existing effects of employee turnover to the organization. Literature have shown a detrimental effect of turnover to an organization. However, most of these studies have been conducted beyond Tanzania borders and that more understanding is needed particularly in Tanzanian organizations.

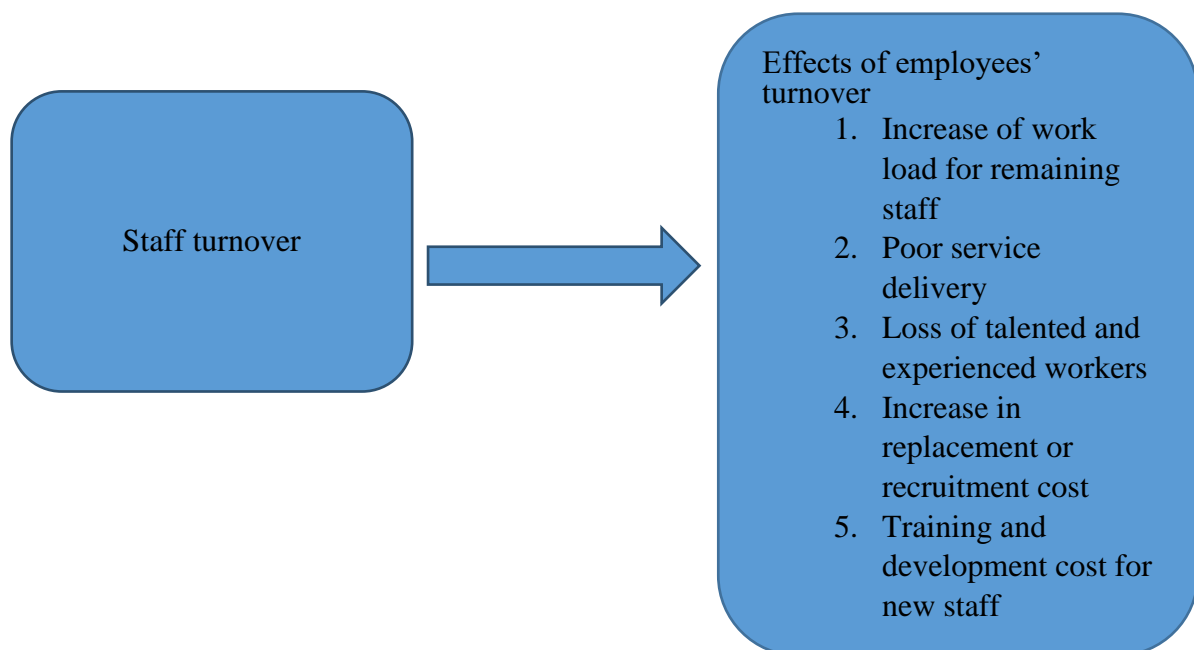
### 3. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 1.1 guided the study in terms of data collection, data analysis, interpretation and recommendations.

**Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework**

**Independent Variable**

**Dependent Variables**



**Source:** Researcher (2023)

The conceptual framework indicated in the Figure 1.1 above guided the researcher to link independent and dependent variables in relation to the effects of employee turnover to an organization at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam. In the following subsections, the description of variables is provided.

#### 3.1 Increase of work for remaining staff

This is one among the possible effects of staff turnover in an organisation as revealed by Butali et al. (2014) and Hammond & Nyarko (2019) The departing employees leave their workloads without individuals to perform them for a while. As the results the remaining staff have to perform their workload as well as the workload left.

### 3.2 Poor service delivery

This is another possible effect of employee turnover to an organisation as revealed by Aggrey (2016). The departing employees may include talented and experienced workforce. Also, the ratio of the remaining staff to the prevailing productivity duties becomes low as the results of staff turnover. These lead to poor service delivery.

### 3.3 Loss of talented and experienced workers

Staff turnover is likely to include employees who are highly skilled and experienced as revealed by Taye & Getnet (2020). As the results the organisation remains without or with few skilled and experienced workers.

### 3.4 Increase in replacement or recruitment cost

Staff turnover forces the organisation to embark into the process of filling the vacant posts left, the process which is always costly as revealed by Gebreyohannes (2020).

### 3.5 Training and development cost for new employees

When an employee leaves an organization, new employees have to be recruited and trained for the while to enhance their job performance. In this case, staff training is likely to make an organisation incur training and development costs as revealed by Gebreyohannes (2020). This is due to the fact that the new incoming employees are in most cases less skilled and less experienced compared to the departing ones.

## 4. Methodology

The study employed a case study design so as to enable the researcher to have an in-depth understanding of the phenomena. As it was stated by Yin (2003) and Crasewell (2008), a case study design is used mostly to have a clear and in depth understanding of a phenomena in its real setting. In this case, the study was conducted at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam as it is one of the public sector organisations facing high turnover rate. A total of 35 respondents were selected for the study whereby 30 respondents were randomly selected from among TAFIRI existing employees and the remaining 5 were purposively selected from among heads of departments at TAFIRI. Interview was conducted to five key respondents who were purposively selected. These heads of department were considered as key informants who can easily share their experiences regarding the effects of labor turnover at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam. Data from questionnaire were analysed descriptively through Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) whereby frequencies and percentages were created while data from interview were analysed through content analysis whereby the emerged themes were taken from interviewees' response.

## 5. Findings and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of staff turnover on the productivity of TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam. The findings resulting from the analysis of data collected is as shown in the following section.

### 5.1 The status of employees' turnover at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam for the past five years

The problem of employee's turnover at TAFIRI –Dar es Salaam has grown high in recent years. In this study, researcher wanted to establish the status of staff turnover at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam for the past five years: 2018 to 2022. Findings show that, for the past five years, almost 20 employees left TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam for other institutions. Table 1.1 below shows the number of staff left TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam each year together with its percentage calculated out of the total number of staff who were representing the respective year.

**Table 1.1 The turnover status of TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam for the past three years**

Year	No of people left	Percentage (%) of the total number of staff in respective year
2018	5	7.7
2019	4	6.2
2020	3	4.7
2021	5	7.7
2022	3	4.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>31</b>

Source: Field Data (2023)

### 5.2 The effects of employees turnover at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam

The study revealed several effects of employees turnover at TAFIRI - Dar es Saaam including but not limited to: increase of workload for the remaining staff, poor service delivery, loss of talented and experienced workers, replacement or recruitment cost, and training and development cost for new staff. These effects are explained in details in the following sub-sections

#### 5.2.1 To determine whether employees' turnover has led to an increase of workload for remaining employees

Respondents were asked to provide their opinions on whether employees' turnover leads to an increase of workload for remaining employees at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam. Table 2.1 shows that 50% of the respondents agreed and 36% of them strongly agreed that staff turnover leads to an increase of workload for remaining staff. This implies that staff turnover at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam makes the remaining employees toil to cover the gap left apart from their own working load. This threatens the efficiency in employees and organisation performance.

**Table 2.1 Increased workload for remaining staff**

Response	Number of respondents	Percentage of response
Strongly agree	11	36.7
Agree	15	50.0
Neutral	1	3.3
Strongly disagree	1	3.3
Disagree	2	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Data (2023)

These findings are supported with the findings which were gathered through interviews. During the interviews it was found that the increased rate of turnover has adversely affected the organization and has increased the workload to the existing employees. When responding to a question which asked on the extent to which turnover has led to increased employee's workload one of the respondents argued;

*"We have a lot of work to do. Labor turnover has led to more workload among our staff. The work which was to be done by two individuals is now done by one person. It is real hectic and more difficult to our employees"* (p2)

These findings concur with the study by Butali et al. (2014) and Hammond & Nyarko (2019) in which both of the studies revealed that one of the effects of staff turnover was an increase of workload for the remaining staff.

#### 5.2.1 To determine whether employees' turnover has led to poor service delivery

Respondents were asked to provide their opinions on whether employees' turnover leads to poor service delivery at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam. Table 2.2 shows that 60% of the respondents agreed while 13.3% strongly agreed that staff turnover leads to poor service delivery at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam. This implies that staff turnover leads to poor service delivery at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam. The remaining workforce becomes overloaded due to the fact that they have to perform their own workload as well as to cover the gap left. It is obvious that when employees are overloaded their efficiency is decreased as a result service delivery is severely affected. These findings conform to the study by Aggrey (2016) where apart from other things, it was revealed that staff retention led to poor quality of teaching and low research output.

**Table 2.2 Poor service delivery**

Response	Number of respondents	Percentage of response
Strongly agree	4	13.3
Agree	18	60.0
Neutral	4	13.3
Strongly disagree	2	6.7
Disagree	2	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Data (2023)**

Similar findings were also found during the interviews with one head of department who explained his dissatisfaction with the service rendered by employees at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam. This was revealed when the respondent was responding to a probing question which wanted to know how the increased turnover has affected service delivery at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam. In his comments he stated that;

*“Basically service delivery is affected under the context of reduced workforce. The existing number of employees in the organization together with other factors largely determine the quality of service which will be delivered. Given the current trends at TAFIRI, the ongoing labor turnover has affected our service delivery. Our quality of service has been affected and we are not delivering what we promised in our client service charter” (p4)*

The findings herein are in line with what was found by Aggrey (2016) and others who found that turnover of employees affect the delivery of services. This is because the number of service provider is reduced compared to the number of customers who need the services

**5.2.2 To determine whether staff turnover has led to loss of talented and experienced workers**

Respondents were asked to provide their opinions on whether employees’ turnover leads to loss of talented and experienced workers at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam. Table 2.3 shows that 50% of the respondents agreed and 36.7% of them strongly agreed that staff turnover leads to loss of talented and experienced workers. This implies that apart from others, staff turnover involves the employees who are talented and skilled. As the results, TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam loses employees with talent and experience to perform organisation activities effectively and efficiently.

**Table 2.3 Loss of talented and experienced workers**

Response	Number of respondents	Percentage of response
Strongly agree	11	36.7
Agree	15	50.0
Neutral	2	6.7
Strongly disagree	2	6.7
Disagree	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Data (2023)**

These findings concur with the study by Taye & Getnet (2020) where it was also found that employee turnover led to the loss of very experienced and skilled employees.

**5.2.3 To determine whether staff turnover leads to an increase in replacement or recruitment cost**

Respondents were asked to provide their opinions on whether employees’ turnover leads to an increase in replacement or recruitment cost at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam. Table 2.4 shows that majority of the respondents (46.7%) agreed and 30% of them strongly agreed that employees’ turnover at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam leads to an increase in replacement or recruitment cost. This implies that the process of replacing departed employees through different ways like transfer and recruitment of new staff makes TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam incur high cost. Such cost is incurred in activities like advertisement of the vacant posts, conducting of interviews, and payment of transport and subsistence allowance for the new staff and their dependents. The cost incurred makes TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam lose money that could be spent for other productive activities like training and development and payments of incentives to staff.

**Table 2.4 Replacement or recruitment cost**

Response	Number of respondents	Percentage of response
Strongly agree	9	30.0
Agree	14	46.7
Neutral	2	6.7
Strongly disagree	2	6.7
Disagree	3	10.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Data (2023)**

These findings concur with the study by Gebreyohannes (2020) as it also revealed that employees turnover led to high hiring cost.

#### 5.2.4 To determine whether employees' turnover has led to training and development cost for new staff

Respondents were asked to provide their opinions on whether employees' turnover leads to training and development cost for new staff at TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam. Table 2.5 shows that majority of respondents (53.3%) agreed and strongly agreed that staff turnover leads to training and development cost for new staff. This implies that the new employees who replace the departed ones in some cases are less skilled and less experienced to perform organisation's activities. Therefore, in order to ensure good productivity from them TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam incurs a large cost to train and develop them. The money lost in training and development of new staff could be utilized for other productivity activities.

**Table 2.5 Training and development cost for new staff**

Response	Number of respondents	Percentage of response
Strongly agree	3	10.0
Agree	16	53.3
Neutral	7	23.3
Strongly disagree	2	6.7
Disagree	2	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Data (2023)**

Similar findings were also found during interview session with one respondent regarding the effect of labor turnover. During the interview, respondent claimed that:

*"Labor turnover attract frequent recruitment of new staff in the organization. In most cases when recruiting new member in the organization, training costs also increase as such employee need to be trained to be conversant with organization practices, culture and policies. This does not only incur organization costs, it is also a thorn towards having a well-organized and effective team in the organization"(p1).*

These findings concur with the study by Gebreyohannes (2020) which also revealed that employees turnover led to high training cost for new staff.

## 6. Conclusion and recommendation

Staff turnover has detrimental effects to an organization including public sector organisations, TAFIRI-Dar es Salaam being a case study. These effects include but not limited to: increased workload for remaining staff, poor service delivery, loss of talented and experienced workers, replacement or recruitment costs, and training and development costs for newly recruited staff. Once turnover is controlled, these organisations could perform more than their current performance. Therefore, the management of organisations particularly public sector organisations like TAFIRI should device and implement strategies that will promote staff retention.

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