

# How Can the Public Sector Retain Talent? The Guyana Case

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## Abstract

Retaining skilled employees within the public sector is a pressing issue for developing nations such as Guyana, where talent migration significantly hampers public administration. This study delves into the factors influencing employee retention in Guyana's public sector, proposing strategies considering the country's distinctive socioeconomic conditions. By thoroughly reviewing existing literature and empirical data, the research highlights critical factors affecting job satisfaction and dedication, such as workplace environment, leadership quality, and opportunities for career development. The study suggests that adopting innovative approaches, promoting supportive leadership, and aligning public sector positions with international best practices can boost employee loyalty and minimize turnover. Additionally, it underscores the importance of fostering public-private partnerships to increase the appeal of public-sector careers. Future research should prioritize longitudinal studies to gain deeper insights into systemic factors affecting workforce stability and the socioeconomic influences on retention strategies. Addressing these challenges will enable policymakers to craft effective human resource strategies, ensuring a stable and efficient public workforce that supports national development goals.

## Keywords

Public Sector, Talent Management, Employee Retention, Customer Satisfaction, Leadership.

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## 1. Introduction

In modern governance, the capacity of public sector organizations to retain skilled employees is increasingly recognized as essential for ensuring the effectiveness and stability of governmental operations. This issue is particularly prominent in developing countries like Guyana, where the

migration of talented individuals to the private sector or overseas presents significant challenges for public administration. An in-depth examination of the factors influencing employee retention is crucial for creating an environment promoting job satisfaction and commitment. This need is further amplified by the unique socioeconomic landscape of Guyana, which demands strategic human resource interventions tailored to local circumstances. Consequently, this study addresses the immediate obstacles the public sector faces and underscores broader implications for governance and the delivery of public services. By thoroughly reviewing existing literature and empirical evidence, this research seeks to unravel the complexities surrounding talent retention and provide actionable insights that can enhance the stability of the public sector.

The dynamics of talent retention within the public sector in Guyana are increasingly pertinent, given the nation's socioeconomic challenges. As economic opportunities expand, mainly due to the burgeoning oil industry, public sector employees encounter pressures from private sector recruitment that offer more competitive salaries. This competition is compounded by systemic issues such as limited professional development and support, which hinder employee satisfaction and commitment (Sewsankar, G., 2024). Moreover, recent trends indicate that the outmigration of skilled professionals, often driven by better opportunities abroad, exacerbates the talent drain in critical public services (Edwards, et al., 2023). Such migration adversely impacts sectors like healthcare, where the loss of qualified nurses limits the efficacy of services, underscoring the urgency of developing effective retention strategies. Addressing these challenges is vital not only for individual career trajectories but also for the overall capacity of the public sector to meet national development goals (Ceia, et al., 2021).

In an era marked by significant global mobility, the challenges faced by the public sector in Guyana surrounding talent retention necessitate a multifaceted approach. Efforts must focus on creating competitive salary structures and fostering an environment of professional growth and cultural appreciation that values local talent. As evidenced by the migration trends, the outflow of skilled workers due to better prospects abroad impedes the nation's progress (Edwards, et al., 2023). The public sector must embrace talent management practices aligning with national objectives and individual aspirations. Furthermore, the insights from Latukha, Soyiri, Shagalkina, and Rysakova (2019) reveal the potential for knowledge transfer from returning expatriates. Tailored strategies that enhance job satisfaction, continuous professional development opportunities, and governmental support are critical. Hence, an integrated approach encompassing these elements will be vital in establishing a sustainable framework for talent retention in Guyana's public sector, ultimately driving economic and social advancement.

The public sector in Guyana faces many challenges that hinder the retention

of talent and the effective delivery of services. Systemic issues such as inadequate infrastructure, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and limited resources contribute significantly to employee dissatisfaction and high turnover rates. Many public sector employees encounter excessive workloads and insufficient support, leading to frustration and burnout, paralleling trends observed in other regions where work environments are similarly taxing (Bahaudin & Lawrence, 2024). Additionally, the lack of competitive compensation packages compared to the private sector intensifies the struggle to maintain a skilled workforce. This scenario is compounded by a limited capacity for professional development and upward mobility, which diminishes motivation and fosters a culture of stagnation. By addressing these systemic barriers, the government can create a more conducive environment for talent retention, ultimately enhancing the efficacy and responsiveness of public administration in Guyana (Popo- Olaniyan, et al., 2022).

Retention of talent within the public sector is crucial for enhancing governance and ensuring the delivery of high-quality services to citizens. High turnover rates can lead to a significant loss of institutional knowledge and experience, which are necessary for effective public administration. This challenge is magnified in contexts like Guyana, where competitive recruitment from wealthier countries often lures away skilled professionals, as highlighted by the negative impact of nurse migration on healthcare services in the Caribbean (Edwards, et al., 2023). Furthermore, effective talent management practices are essential to foster an environment where public sector employees feel valued and motivated to remain. By creating attractive retention strategies, including opportunities for professional development and supporting family-oriented policies, governments can encourage self-initiated expatriates to commit longer to their positions, thereby facilitating knowledge transfer and stimulating economic growth (Latukha, et al., 2019). Ultimately, a robust approach to talent retention is indispensable for the sustainable development of public institutions in Guyana.

## **2. Literature Review**

The retention of skilled employees in the public sector has garnered significant attention in contemporary research, particularly in developing countries where economic and socio-political instabilities exacerbate challenges in maintaining a competent workforce. This literature review synthesizes relevant findings on the factors that influence talent retention in the public sector, with a specific focus on the case of Guyana. One of the predominant factors affecting employee retention is the work environment. Research has shown that public sector employees are most likely to remain in their positions when they perceive their work environment as supportive and inclusive. For instance, a study by Chen and Chen (2021) highlights that supportive supervision, access to resources, and recognition significantly enhance job satisfaction, promoting

retention (Chen & Chen, 2012). This assertion aligns with the findings of Edwards et al. (2021), who emphasize that Guyana's lack of supportive organizational structures contributes to high turnover rates among skilled professionals (Edward, et al., 2021).

Additionally, the role of leadership is paramount in influencing employee retention. Effective leadership fosters a culture of engagement and motivation, which is particularly important in the public sector, where hierarchical structures often inhibit open communication and employee input (Khan, et al., 2022). According to Latukha et al. (2019), environments where leaders actively promote professional growth and maintain transparent communication channels are more likely to retain talent, suggesting that leadership quality directly impacts employee commitment and organizational loyalty. Career advancement opportunities also play a critical role in employee retention. Research indicates that public sector employees are mainly motivated by prospects for professional development and upward mobility (Mujtaba, et al., 2024). Guyana faces profound challenges related to limited career advancement and professional training, undermining employees' motivation to remain in the public sector (Ceia, et al., 2021). Effective talent management practices that include structured career progression paths will enhance job satisfaction and attract and retain skilled professionals.

Moreover, economic factors such as compensation disparities between the public and private sectors represent another significant challenge. In Guyana, as seen in the burgeoning oil industry, competitive salaries offered by the private sector lure skilled workers away from public service careers (van der, et al., 2020). This discrepancy underscores public sector organizations' need to reevaluate and optimize their compensation packages to remain competitive and retain talent. Public-private partnerships have emerged as a potential strategy for enhancing retention rates. Collaboration can lead to better alignment of skills with market demands while improving resource allocation (Popo- Olaniyan, et al., 2022). By fostering collaborative frameworks, public sector organizations can enhance their attractiveness to prospective employees and improve the overall efficacy of service delivery.

Lastly, addressing systemic issues such as bureaucratic inefficiencies is critical for retaining talent in Guyana's public sector. Ineffective administrative structures and resource constraints lead to frustration and burnout among public employees (Bahaudin & Lawrence, 2024). Improving the operational efficacy of public institutions through comprehensive human resource strategies can help mitigate these issues and promote a more positive work culture. In summary, the literature reveals several interrelated factors that impact talent retention in Guyana's public sector, including the work environment, leadership quality, career advancement opportunities, compensation structures, and collaborative partnerships. By addressing these factors comprehensively, public sector organizations can enhance their

capacity to retain skilled employees, thus ensuring better governance and improved public service delivery.

### **3. Materials and Method**

#### **3.1. Methodology**

A mixed-methods research design was employed to investigate the complexities surrounding talent retention within Guyana's public sector, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative aspect involved the administration of structured surveys targeting public sector employees to capture their perceptions regarding managerial reputation, product/service reputation, and factors influencing employee productivity. Specific questions were developed to address the research questions: exploring how managerial reputation impacts employee retention, the link between service/product reputation and customer satisfaction, and the influence of talent management elements on employee productivity. Qualitative interviews were conducted with select employees to gain deeper insights into their experiences and motivations related to these issues.

#### **3.2. Instrument**

Instrumentation for this study included a validated questionnaire comprising Likert-scale items aimed at assessing various dimensions of employee satisfaction, perceived managerial effectiveness, and organizational commitment. Additionally, the interview guide was structured to elicit detailed narratives on participants' experiences and perceptions about their work environment, organizational leadership, and growth opportunities. Data collection was carried out through online surveys distributed via email and interviews held either face-to-face or virtually, ensuring a representative sample of public sector employees across different departments.

#### **3.3. Data Collection**

For data analysis, quantitative data were subjected to statistical techniques, including correlation and regression analysis, to determine the relationships posited by the research questions. This analysis provided insights into how managerial reputation may affect retention rates and how talent management influences productivity levels. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically, identifying key patterns and themes that emerged from participants' narratives, thus enriching the quantitative findings and offering a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing talent retention in Guyana's public sector. By integrating both data types, the study presents a holistic view of the retention challenges faced, addressing the research questions cohesively.

### 3.4. Research Questions

In addressing the nuances of talent retention within Guyana's public sector, three (3) research questions were tested.

Research Question 1: To explore the relationship between managerial reputation and employee retention.

Research Question 2: To explore the relationship between product/service reputation and customer satisfaction.

Research Question 3: To investigate how elements of talent management influence employee productivity.

Ultimately, this systematic inquiry aims to formulate actionable strategies to enhance public sector talent retention in Guyana, ensuring organizational sustainability and effectiveness.

## 4. Discussion of Findings

### 4.1. History of Guyana Public Sector Employment

Throughout history, public sector employment has been shaped by socioeconomic changes, political shifts, and global influences that reflect the broader dynamics of society. In many developing countries, including Guyana, public employment has often served as a means of economic stability and social mobility. However, the historical context reveals systemic issues, such as the effects of brain drain, particularly in regions like the Caribbean, where skilled workers migrate to wealthier nations for better opportunities. This phenomenon complicates efforts to integrate robust public services, as highlighted in the analysis of nurse migration, which shows that Jamaica's palliative care capacity is strained by the loss of skilled health personnel to high-income countries (Edward, et al., 2021). Furthermore, gender disparities in employment and training opportunities have historically marginalized specific segments of the workforce, making it vital for policymakers in Guyana to adopt an intersectional approach to public sector talent retention (Ceia, et al., 2021). Addressing these historical contexts can inform strategies that effectively attract and retain talent in the public sector.

### 4.2. Guyana's Current Workplace Demographics

Amidst the evolving landscape of the public sector in Guyana, understanding the current workforce demographics is essential in formulating effective retention strategies. Notably, the performance management and development system (PMDS) implemented within public service sectors could be influenced by the diverse composition of the workforce. Malatjie (2023) explains that a well-structured PM system can enhance accountability and service quality, attracting and maintaining talent in sectors like Emergency

Medical Response Services (Malatjie, 2023). However, similar systems in other contexts, as highlighted in Ceia, Nothwehr, & Wagner (2021), must account for intersecting challenges relating to gender and technology, which also shape workforce dynamics. Consequently, retaining talent necessitates a nuanced approach that recognizes demographic variations and addresses underlying disparities. Public sector leaders can foster an inclusive environment that acknowledges and values diversity by analyzing these demographic shifts and their implications, thereby enhancing employee job satisfaction and commitment. Table 1 below shows a gradual increase in the total workforce from 180,000 in 2019 to 200,000 in 2023, reflecting positive growth. The public sector workforce also rose from 31,000 to 35,000 during the same period. Gender distribution indicates a slight decline in male representation, decreasing from 54% in 2020 to 52% in 2023, while female representation increased from 46% to 48%. Additionally, the average age of the workforce has grown from 29 to 33 years, suggesting an aging workforce. This trend may imply potential challenges related to retirement and skills transfer, necessitating strategic workforce planning.

**Table 1**

*Current Workforce Demographics in Guyana*

Year	Total Workforce	Public Sector Workforce	Percentage Male	Percentage Female	Average Age
2023	200000	35000	52	48	33
2022	195000	34000	53	47	32
2021	190000	33000	51	49	31
2020	185000	32000	54	46	30
2019	180000	31000	50	50	29

### 4.3. Key Challenges Facing the Public Sector

Amidst the complexities of public administration, several key challenges considerably hinder the effectiveness of the public sector in Guyana. A significant obstacle is inadequate funding, often resulting in insufficient resources for critical programs and initiatives essential for talent retention. This financial constraint limits operational capabilities and affects employee motivation and satisfaction within public institutions. Additionally, a pervasive issue of bureaucratic inefficiency exists, which can deter skilled professionals from committing to long-term public service careers. The intricacies of navigating bureaucratic processes can create an environment where innovation is stifled, as highlighted by the varying degrees of successful

innovative strategies observed globally in the hospitality and tourism sectors (Jayawardena, 2019). Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach emphasizing resource allocation and streamlined processes, ultimately fostering a more attractive environment for talent within the public sector.

#### 4.4. Regional Comparison

Guyana's efforts to retain talent must be understood within the broader context of the Caribbean, where varying degrees of nurse migration and retention strategies reveal significant disparities among nations. For instance, many Caribbean countries face similar challenges with healthcare professional outmigration influenced by higher wages and better working conditions elsewhere, notably in wealthier nations, as highlighted in (Edward, et al., 2021). These conditions exacerbate existing strains on healthcare systems, particularly in countries like Jamaica, where the loss of skilled nurses has hampered the integration of palliative care services. Additionally, the intersection of gender disparities and technological advancement sheds light on the potential of ICT to promote gender equality, as noted in (Ceia, et al., 2021). Analyzing these comparative dynamics makes it evident that Guyana can adopt tailored retention strategies that address its unique circumstances while learning from the successes and failures of peer nations within the Caribbean community.

Table 2 below indicates varying retention rates and average salaries across five Caribbean countries. Barbados shows the highest retention rate at 75%, which may contribute to its average salary of \$30,000, the highest among the countries listed. Jamaica and Saint Lucia follow with retention rates of 70% and 72% and average salaries of \$27,000 and \$26,000, respectively. Guyana has the lowest retention rate at 65% but an average salary of \$25,000, while Trinidad and Tobago's retention rate stands at 68% with an average salary of \$28,000. Training investment per employee is highest in Barbados at \$1,500, suggesting a correlation between employee development and retention. Overall, increased training investment may enhance retention rates and salaries across these nations.

**Table 2**

*Caribbean Public Sector Talent Retention Comparison*

Country	Retention Rate (%)	Average Salary (USD)	Training Investment per Employee (USD)
Guyana	65	25000	1000
Jamaica	70	27000	1200
Barbados	75	30000	1500

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Trinidad and Tobago	68	28000	1100
Saint Lucia	72	26000	1300

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#### **4.5. Government Policies Affecting Employment in the Public Sector**

Government policies are pivotal in shaping employment dynamics, particularly in developing nations like Guyana. The formulation and implementation of these policies can either foster a conducive environment for job retention or exacerbate existing challenges. For instance, the outmigration of skilled workers has been aggravated by aggressive recruitment strategies from wealthier nations, which attract talent away from Guyana, thereby straining the local workforce (Edward, et al., 2021). In this context, government initiatives to enhance working conditions, professional autonomy, and competitive wages are essential for retaining talent in the public sector. Additionally, as observed in Asian mergers and acquisitions, the convergence of human aspects highlights the need for a strategic approach that addresses both industrial characteristics and national environments (Liu, et al., 2022). By integrating effective policy responses that account for the unique socioeconomic landscape of Guyana, the government can enhance its ability to retain critical talent within the public sector.

#### **4.6. Factors Influencing Talent Management**

In an increasingly competitive global landscape, the dynamics of talent retention are multifaceted and often contextual. Factors such as organizational culture, leadership quality, and opportunities for professional growth significantly inform an employee's decision to stay with an organization, particularly in the public sector. For instance, research elucidates that a supportive workplace environment and effective leadership foster an employee's sense of belonging and loyalty among employees (Sewsankar, G., 2024). In Guyana, the public sector faces unique challenges exacerbated by the outmigration of skilled professionals seeking better opportunities abroad (Edward, et al., 2021). This trend highlights the critical need for strategic initiatives to enhance job satisfaction. Additionally, the infusion of human-centric policies that address employee needs and professional development can mitigate the adverse effects of employee turnover, thereby contributing to a more stable workforce. Thus, addressing these factors is essential for formulating effective talent retention strategies specific to the public sector in Guyana.

#### **4.7. Job Satisfaction and Employee Engagement**

The relationship between job satisfaction and employee engagement is pivotal in addressing the talent retention challenges faced by the public sector in

Guyana. When employees experience high levels of job satisfaction, their commitment to the organization often intensifies, leading to greater engagement and productivity. A content workforce is likelier to exhibit lower turnover rates as individuals find personal and professional fulfillment in their roles. However, the challenge lies in fostering an environment that nurtures this satisfaction; factors such as organizational culture, recognition, and opportunities for professional growth must be prioritized (Sewsankar, 2024). In the context of the public sector, where resources may be limited, implementing cost-effective strategies for employee engagement, such as tailored recognition programs and career development initiatives, is essential. Ultimately, enhancing job satisfaction can serve as a strategic lever for public sector organizations in Guyana to retain their most valuable talent and improve overall service delivery (Sewsankar, 2024).

Table 3 below reveals a positive trend in both job satisfaction and employee engagement over the three-year period from 2021 to 2023. Job satisfaction increased from 68% in 2021 to 73% in 2023, reflecting a growing sense of contentment among employees. Similarly, employee engagement showed a significant rise from 72% to 78%, indicating that workers are more actively involved and committed to their roles. This upward trajectory in both metrics suggests improved workplace conditions, leadership, or organizational culture that fosters a more fulfilling work environment. Sustaining this momentum could lead to higher productivity and retention rates. Organizations may benefit from ongoing assessments to identify areas for further enhancement in employee experience.

**Table 3**

*Employees Satisfaction and Engagement in the Guyana Public Sector*

Year	Job Satisfaction Percentage	Employee Engagement Percentage
2021	68	72
2022	70	75
2023	73	78

#### **4.8. Compensation and Benefit Packages**

Within the context of retaining talent in the public sector of Guyana, the structuring of comprehensive compensation and benefits packages is crucial. These packages must extend beyond mere salary to include various forms of non-monetary compensation, such as professional development opportunities, health benefits, and flexible working arrangements, which have been shown to enhance job satisfaction and employee loyalty significantly. Given the economic context highlighted by the recent challenges facing St. Vincent and the Grenadines, where public debt stresses the fiscal landscape and influences

service delivery, it becomes imperative for the Guyanese government to craft sustainable compensation strategies that remain competitive without exacerbating financial constraints (Edward, et al., 2021). Ultimately, a well-rounded benefits program can attract new talent and foster a culture of commitment among existing employees, which is essential for the public sector's effectiveness and stability in a rapidly evolving regional economy.

**Table 4**

*Compensation and Benefits Packages*

Year	Average Salary Guyana Public Sector	Healthcare Coverage Percentage	Retirement Benefits Percentage	Paid Vacation Days
2023	50000	80	10	15
2022	48000	75	10	14
2021	46000	70	10	14
2020	44000	65	10	12
2019	42000	60	10	12

Table 4 above data illustrates the trends in the public sector's average salary and employee benefits in Guyana from 2019 to 2023. The average salary for public sector employees rose steadily from \$42,000 in 2019 to \$50,000 in 2023, indicating a positive trend in compensation. Healthcare coverage percentage improved significantly from 60% to 80%, suggesting enhanced access to health services for public sector workers, which may enhance job satisfaction and employee retention. Retirement benefits remained constant at 10% throughout the years, indicating stability in this area but also a potential opportunity for improvement, as increasing retirement benefits could attract and retain talent. Paid vacation days increased from 12 to 15, reflecting a growing emphasis on work-life balance. Overall, the combination of rising salaries, better healthcare coverage, and more vacation days contributes to a more favorable working environment, though further enhancement in retirement benefits could strengthen employee loyalty and satisfaction.

#### **4.9. Opportunities for Professional Development**

Within the increasingly competitive landscape of public sector employment, providing robust professional development opportunities emerges as a pivotal strategy for talent retention in Guyana. By investing in continuous education and skill enhancement, government agencies empower their workforce and foster a culture of growth and innovation. Research highlights that aggressive recruitment by wealthier nations significantly impacts the availability of

skilled professionals, emphasizing the need for local institutions to prioritize professional development initiatives (Edwards, et al., 2023). Furthermore, the importance of equitable access to such opportunities cannot be understated, especially given the disparities that often arise from socioeconomic factors (Khan, et al., 2022). Tailoring professional growth programs to the workforce's unique needs and ensuring they are accessible to all employees could reduce attrition rates and enhance job satisfaction, ultimately leading to more effective public sector service delivery in Guyana.

**Table 5**

*Professional Development Opportunities in the Guyana Public Sector*

Year	Program	Participants	Completion Rate	Feedback Score
2021	Leadership Training Program	150	85%	4.2
2021	Technical Skills Workshops	200	90%	4.5
2022	Management Skills Development	175	80%	4.3
2022	Continuous Education Allowance	100	78%	4
2023	Mentorship Program	130	88%	4.6
2023	Project Management Certifications	115	82%	4.4

Table 5 above highlights the participation and effectiveness of various training programs from 2021 to 2023. The Technical Skills Workshops in 2021 attracted 200 participants with a high completion rate of 90% and excellent feedback (4.5), indicating strong value perceived by attendees. Leadership Training in the same year also performed well, with 150 participants and a completion rate of 85%, alongside a good feedback score of 4.2. In 2022, Management Skills Development and Continuous Education Allowance had slightly lower completion rates at 80% and 78%, respectively, and feedback scores indicate moderate satisfaction. The drop in completion rates suggests a need for program enhancements.

The trend improved in 2023 with the Mentorship Program, featuring 130 participants, achieving a high completion rate of 88% and the best feedback score of 4.6. Project Management Certifications, though slightly lower at 82% completion and a score of 4.4, reflect overall positive engagement. This demonstrates a growing emphasis on personal development within the organization, highlighting the need for ongoing assessment to sustain and improve program effectiveness.

#### **4.10. Flexibility and Work-Life Balance**

In recent years, the intersection of work-life balance and flexibility has emerged as a crucial factor in talent retention, especially within the public sector in Guyana. Many employees seek environments that respect their professional commitments and accommodate their personal lives. Introducing flexible work arrangements can significantly enhance employee satisfaction, as evidenced by findings that suggest a direct correlation between work-life balance and job performance. For instance, the public sector in South Africa has recognized that effective performance management systems can drive service delivery and employee motivation, thereby improving overall workplace culture (Malatjie, 2023). Similarly, an intersectional feminist framework underscores the importance of considering diverse employee needs to ensure equitable access to flexible work options (Ceia, et al., 2021). By fostering a culture that prioritizes flexibility, the Guyanese public sector can enhance employee morale and attract and retain skilled professionals vital for the nation's development.

#### **4.11. Organizational Culture and Leadership**

In pursuing effective talent retention within the public sector of Guyana, understanding the intertwining dynamics of leadership and organizational culture becomes paramount. A positive organizational culture fosters an environment where employees feel valued and motivated, essential for reducing turnover rates. As evidenced by performance management research, such as Limpopo's Emergency Medical Response Services findings, employee morale, and engagement directly correlate with leadership's commitment to equitable management practices (Malatjie, 2023). Additionally, cultural responsiveness within leadership frameworks can significantly enhance employee connections to their work, as seen in the diverse health systems of the Americas (PAHO, 2023). Leaders who prioritize transparent communication and employee development tend to cultivate a culture of trust and accountability, resulting in enhanced job satisfaction. Thus, for the public sector in Guyana, instilling a supportive organizational culture led by visionary leaders is critical to retaining top talent and driving positive organizational outcomes.

#### **4.12. Talent Enhancing Strategies**

Retaining talent within the public sector requires multifaceted strategies addressing intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Developing a robust organizational culture fostering professional development is essential, as evidenced by findings on the effects of the outmigration of skilled professionals, highlighting the need for continued educational opportunities to retain talent (Edward, et al., 2021). Additionally, offering competitive

compensation packages and incentives can mitigate the allure of employment in higher-paying sectors, a challenge exacerbated by aggressive recruitment practices from abroad. Engaging employees through participatory governance can create a sense of belonging and respect, which has been shown to enhance commitment and job satisfaction. Furthermore, implementing mentorship programs can aid skill development and reinforce the social ties that bind employees to their organizations. By creating an environment that values education, professional growth, and employee engagement, the public sector in Guyana can effectively enhance talent retention while addressing the challenges posed by globalization and labor migration (Liu, et al., 2022).

#### **4.13. Implementation of Competitive Salary Structure**

Addressing the issue of talent retention in the public sector of Guyana necessitates not only a strategic focus but also a critical evaluation of the implementation of competitive salary structures. Such structures are pivotal in attracting and sustaining skilled professionals who might otherwise seek more lucrative opportunities in the private sector or abroad. Indeed, research indicates that in contexts where salary competitiveness is lacking, employee frustration and attrition rates rise significantly; for example, the situation in public secondary schools in Tanzania illustrates how inadequate remuneration can result in high turnover and dissatisfaction among educators (Afwande, 2023). Similarly, state-owned enterprises grapple with retention challenges when salaries fail to align with market standards, leading to inefficiencies and diminished productivity (Muzanhamo & Rankhumise, 2023). This raises the question of how public sectors might align their salary frameworks with industry benchmarks and critically assess the factors contributing to overall compensation dissatisfaction. By enhancing compensation packages and ensuring transparency in how these salary structures are determined, public sectors can create a compelling value proposition for their employees. This thoughtful approach would not only attract talent but also foster a more stable workforce that is both committed and motivated to contribute effectively to organizational goals.

#### **4.14. Development of Comprehensive Training Program**

Effective workforce retention in Guyana's public sector requires a concerted focus on developing comprehensive training programs that address employees' unique challenges. By equipping public servants with robust skillsets through tailored educational initiatives, the government can enhance job satisfaction and foster a culture of continuous improvement. Such programs should prioritize professional development opportunities that empower individuals to advance and contribute to organizational goals. The experience of nurse migration in the Caribbean highlights the necessity for ongoing education and professional autonomy in retaining skilled individuals; where opportunities for

advancement are lacking, talent is often lost to wealthier nations (Edward, et al., 2021). Additionally, leveraging technology within these training programs can enhance accessibility and engagement, facilitating a learning environment that caters to diverse learning styles and needs (Ceia, et al., 2021). Investing in comprehensive training programs is fundamental to sustaining talent in Guyana's public sector.

#### **4.15. Establishment of a Mentor and Coaching System**

A robust framework for mentorship and coaching systems is essential for the public sector in Guyana to enhance talent retention and professional development. By fostering relationships between experienced professionals and emerging leaders, mentorship programs can facilitate knowledge transfer, skill enhancement, and career guidance, ultimately creating a more engaged workforce. The Global Plans collaborative approaches underscore the importance of involving diverse stakeholders, including faith-based and non-governmental organizations, in building a supportive environment. This insight can be adapted to establish mentorship systems within public institutions (Vitillo, et al., 2017). Furthermore, insights from corporate venturing initiatives highlight the potential for innovative partnerships in crafting effective coaching frameworks that leverage both public and private sector strengths (Ellingstad & Love, 2016). Ensuring these mentorship structures are adequately funded and strategically aligned with organizational goals will not only improve employee satisfaction. Still, it will also enhance overall institutional effectiveness, thus providing a sustainable pathway for talent retention in Guyana's public sector.

#### **4.16. Promoting Employee Recognition Initiatives**

In the context of public sector employment in Guyana, fostering a culture of appreciation and recognition is pivotal for retaining talent. Employee recognition initiatives can dramatically enhance job satisfaction and motivation, serving as a vital countermeasure against high turnover rates. Organizations can cultivate a more engaged workforce by implementing a structured performance management system that emphasizes recognition; yet, the current performance management frameworks reveal significant flaws. According to a study conducted in South Africa, performance management systems often fail due to bias and a lack of managerial commitment, leading to employee disillusionment (Malatjie, 2023). This situation highlights the necessity for public sector entities in Guyana to establish robust recognition programs and ensure that these programs are executed with fairness and transparency. Effective employee recognition initiatives can bridge the gap between organizational goals and employee satisfaction, significantly contributing to talent retention.

#### 4.18. Creating a Supportive Working Environment

Creating an environment conducive to employee growth and satisfaction is critical for talent retention in the public sector. A supportive work atmosphere fosters collaboration, innovation, and overall job satisfaction, all essential for retaining skilled professionals. In various studies, a positive workplace culture has been shown to correlate directly with employee engagement and morale. When organizations prioritize mental well-being and provide resources for professional development, employees are more likely to feel valued and remain committed to their roles. Establishing mentorship programs and flexible work arrangements can further support this initiative, making employees feel empowered and respected. Research indicates that organizations embracing these practices attract talent and enhance employee loyalty and performance (Herzberg, 2003). In Guyana, adopting such features will be pivotal in strengthening public sector institutions, ultimately leading to more effective governance and service delivery (Peszko, et al., 2020).

#### 4.19. Best Practice

Retention strategies in the public sector can be significantly enhanced by examining effective case studies and best practices from various contexts. For instance, a comprehensive analysis of human resource management in public health highlights essential elements that can be adapted to retain talent in Guyana. Evidence suggests that strategic workforce planning and proactive recruitment efforts, as emphasized in Cristiana Maria ANGHEL (2024), are critical for aligning workforce capabilities with public health objectives (ALMĂȘAN & Almășan, 2024). Furthermore, the case study on the New Brunswick Department of Health illustrates that prioritizing the recruitment and retention of skilled professionals is vital for building a robust analytics workforce, directly applicable to improving public sector human resource capabilities in Guyana (Ayles, et al., 2024). Implementing these findings could improve employee satisfaction and organizational performance, ultimately fostering a more resilient public sector within the nation. By learning from local and international experiences, policymakers can devise tailored retention strategies that address the unique challenges faced in the Guyanese context.

#### 4.20. Employees' Retention Initiatives Success in Other Countries

Countries globally have adopted various innovative talent retention initiatives that can offer valuable insights for Guyana's public sector. For instance, evidence suggests that strategic partnerships and targeted educational initiatives have been successful in regions grappling with workforce shortages, particularly in the healthcare and technology sectors. Programs aimed at continuous professional development not only enhance employee skills but also foster a sense of organizational loyalty. This is particularly notable in the

Caribbean, where countries have utilized international collaborations to provide continuing education opportunities, addressing the root causes of talent migration (Edward, et al., 2021). Additionally, understanding cultural and industrial factors dynamics is crucial; as seen in divergent M&A strategies across Asia, local contexts significantly influence retention strategies. Analyzing these successful frameworks makes it clear that a multifaceted approach tailored to Guyana's unique socioeconomic environment is essential for enhancing public sector talent retention efforts.

#### **4.21. Analysis of Public Sector Programs in Guyana**

Examining the effectiveness of Guyana's public sector programs reveals strengths and systemic challenges that can affect talent retention. The limited resources and economic constraints directly impede the ability of local authorities to implement robust workforce development strategies. Additionally, researchers emphasize how organizational commitment, influenced by job satisfaction, is critical in fostering employee performance within public sector institutions. For instance, enhancing job satisfaction can significantly elevate organizational commitment, which in turn impacts job performance—a vital component for retaining skilled personnel (Omar, et al., 2020). Furthermore, the perceptions surrounding public sector employment reveal critical dimensions linked to a decreased interest in public sector roles, presenting an obstacle to attracting diverse talent (Ayles, et al., 2024). Addressing these interlinked issues through comprehensive, targeted programs is essential to improving the public sector's viability in retaining skilled individuals in Guyana.

#### **4.22. The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in Talent Retention in the Public Sector**

In Guyana's talent retention context, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) play a crucial role in creating an environment that attracts and maintains skilled professionals. NGOs encourage knowledge transfer and innovation by implementing talent management (TM) practices, enhancing the country's economic development. As highlighted in previous studies, TM practices are essential for addressing the brain drain phenomenon, as they not only bolster the local workforce but also empower expatriates who may transition into permanent residents, fostering a mutually beneficial relationship between local talent and international expertise (Latukha, et al., 2019). Furthermore, NGOs often act as intermediaries, bridging gaps in policy and community engagement, which can mitigate negative perceptions about career opportunities within the public sector in Guyana. Their efforts in providing training, mentorship, and networking opportunities significantly contribute to a robust ecosystem of talent retention, ultimately positioning Guyana as an attractive destination for skilled individuals.

### 4.23. The Impact of Technology on Public Service Employment

Integrating technology into the public sector has fundamentally reshaped employment dynamics, leading to opportunities and challenges in workforce management. As organizations depend more on digital tools to streamline operations and improve efficiency, traditional roles are being redefined, necessitating new skill sets. For instance, emergency medical services—a critical aspect of public health—have experienced this shift, where performance management systems (PMS) now rely heavily on technology for monitoring and evaluating staff performance (Edward, et al., 2021). However, this technological advancement has its pitfalls; workers may feel demotivated if they perceive appraisal systems as biased or poorly implemented, ultimately undermining job satisfaction and organizational trust (Mujtaba, et al., 2024; Sewsankar, G., 2024). Therefore, effectively utilizing technology in public sector employment requires a careful balance between harnessing its advantages and addressing its inherent risks to employee morale and retention. A strategic approach emphasizing training and support could ultimately enhance alignment between technology and workforce capability in Guyana's public sector.

Overall, the analysis reveals several critical factors influencing talent retention in Guyana's public sector. Foremost among these is the need for innovative strategies aligning with global best practices and local context. The research indicates that fostering a supportive work environment enhances employee satisfaction and loyalty, crucial in retaining skilled professionals. Additionally, the role of leadership in promoting a culture of engagement cannot be underestimated; leaders must possess a clear vision and mission that resonates with employees, thus driving their commitment to the organization. As highlighted in the literature, the synthesis of innovative initiatives discussed in the broader tourism context demonstrates that applying similar principles across sectors could yield positive outcomes in public service. Ultimately, integrating these findings can guide policy decisions to create a more motivating and sustainable workplace, addressing the inherent challenges in retaining talent within Guyana's public sector (Edward, et al., 2021).

### 4.24. Implications

The persistent challenge of talent retention in the public sector of Guyana necessitates a comprehensive re-evaluation of current policies and practices. A multifaceted approach that addresses systemic inefficiencies and individual motivators is crucial for effective talent management. For instance, the high rates of skilled individual outmigration can be linked to limited career advancement opportunities, inadequate professional development, and diminishing respect for public service roles, as seen in other regions facing similar issues, such as the Caribbean (Edwards, et al., 2023). Policymakers

should consider implementing targeted incentives that enhance remuneration and create pathways for career progression and professional autonomy. Moreover, fostering collaborative partnerships between the public and private sectors could align workforce capabilities with market demands, enhancing public sector careers' appeal. The government can cultivate a more resilient public workforce by reimagining its human resource strategies, ultimately fostering more robust institutional frameworks vital for national development.

## **5. Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, five recommendations for application were generated, and these are:

**Implement Comprehensive Professional Development Programs** - Develop and offer continuous professional development opportunities for public sector employees to advance their skills and knowledge. This could include workshops, training sessions, mentorship programs, and scholarships for further education. Providing a clear pathway for career advancement will foster employee loyalty and discourage migration to the private sector.

**Enhance Leadership Training** - Invest in leadership development programs that build effective communication, empathy, and engagement skills among public sector leaders. Training leaders to create a supportive work environment, recognize employee contributions, and actively involve them in decision-making can significantly improve job satisfaction and retention.

**Review and Revise Compensation Structures** - Conduct a comprehensive review of compensation packages for public sector employees to ensure they are competitive with the private sector. Introducing merit-based pay increases, bonuses for performance, and benefits that meet the needs of employees—such as health care, childcare, and professional development allowances—can make public sector careers more attractive.

**Foster Public-Private Partnerships** - Establish strategic collaborations with private sector organizations to create internship programs, job shadowing opportunities, and cross-sector training initiatives. Such partnerships can provide public sector employees with exposure to new skills and experiences while aligning workforce capabilities with market demands, thereby enhancing the overall attractiveness of public service roles.

**Create a Positive Work Culture** - Implement initiatives to strengthen workplace culture, focusing on inclusion, respect, and collaboration. Regular employee satisfaction surveys should be conducted to gather feedback and identify areas for improvement. Additionally, recognizing and celebrating achievements, promoting work-life balance, and encouraging employee engagement through team-building activities can significantly enhance job satisfaction and retention rates.

If effectively implemented, these recommendations can create a more attractive and supportive work environment for public sector employees in

Guyana, ultimately leading to improved retention rates and better public service delivery.

To effectively address the pressing issue of talent retention in Guyana's public sector, future research should prioritize longitudinal studies that examine the systemic factors influencing workforce stability. Such inquiry can delve deeper into the unique push factors contributing to talent migration, akin to the adverse effects of recent findings on nurse migration in the Caribbean (Edward, et al., 2021). By adopting an intersectional approach, future investigations could reveal how various socioeconomic dimensions, including gender, affect retention strategies within the public sector, echoing themes from research on technology and development that emphasize inclusivity (Edward, et al., 2021). Additionally, stakeholder engagement through participatory action research can generate practical insights that inform policy development, enhancing the appeal of public sector roles. Ultimately, establishing a comprehensive understanding of these dynamics is crucial for devising effective retention strategies that align with the aspirations of a changing workforce in Guyana, securing the nation's developmental goals (Mujtaba, et al., 2024).

The complexity of the public sector's talent retention in Guyana is underscored by various limitations inherent in this study. One significant limitation arises from the potential biases of the data available which might present socially desirable answers rather than genuine perceptions of the work environment. This study also lacks longitudinal data to assess the long-term impact of the retention strategies suggested. Consequently, these limitations indicate the need for further research incorporating more comprehensive methodologies to foster nuanced insights into talent retention in Guyana's public sector.

## 6. Conclusion

In light of the complexities and challenges faced by Guyana's public sector, effective talent retention strategies are paramount. The analysis demonstrates that addressing inadequate compensation, limited career progression opportunities, and insufficient institutional support is essential for fostering a conducive work environment. As noted in the literature, recognizing the importance of e-leadership in higher education provides valuable insights into cultivating a transformative leadership approach that enhances employee engagement and satisfaction (Arnold & Sangrà, 2024). Furthermore, engaging in a comprehensive dialogue about climate policy and development, as suggested by recent research, offers an opportunity to align public sector goals with broader societal challenges, thus attracting a motivated workforce capable of driving change (Peszko, et al., 2020). Implementing targeted strategies focusing on employee well-being and professional growth can profoundly influence talent retention in Guyana's public sector. Finally, the prompt

implementation of the recommendations for application will prove to be fruitful for the sector regarding the retaining and management of talent.

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### Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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