

Human Resource Management Practices Influencing Employee Retention: Job Satisfaction as Mediator in Tanzania's Hotel Industry

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ABSTRACT

Employee retention remains a pressing concern in Tanzania's tourism and hotel industry, particularly in the Northern circuit where destinations such as Mount Kilimanjaro attract global visitors. High turnover disrupts service quality, increases recruitment costs, and weakens organizational performance. Drawing on Social Exchange Theory, this study examines the influence of Training and Development, Compensation and Reward, Performance Appraisal, Health and Safety, and Supervisor Support on Employee Retention, with Job Satisfaction as a mediating variable. The theory suggests that when employees perceive supportive HR practices, they reciprocate with stronger commitment and intention to stay. A quantitative approach was adopted, and data were collected from 365 non-managerial hotel employees in Northern Tanzania. The relationships among constructs were tested using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which is appropriate for examining complex mediation models. The findings indicate that performance appraisal and supervisor support had significant positive influence on Job Satisfaction, which in turn positively predicts Employee Retention. Supervisor Support and fair Performance Appraisal had strong positive effects, especially on Retention and Job Satisfaction. Interestingly, Training & Development and Health & Safety did not show the strong effects we often assume. The study contributes context-specific evidence from a developing tourism economy and clarifies the mediating role of Job Satisfaction in the HRM-retention relationship. The findings offer practical insights for hotel managers seeking sustainable workforce strategies.

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Contribution/Originality: This study offers an original contribution by examining the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between Human Resources

Management Practices and Employee retention within Tanzania's Hospitality industry. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, limited studies have empirically tested these relationships in the Tanzanian hospitality context particularly among non-managerial employees

1. Introduction

Tourism plays a central role in Tanzania's economic development, particularly in Northern regions known for attractions such as Mount Kilimanjaro and the national parks surrounding Arusha. Hotels in these destinations depend heavily on skilled and service-oriented employees to deliver high-quality guest experiences. However, retaining qualified staff remains difficult due to competitive labor markets, seasonal demand fluctuations, and limited structured HR systems (Masanja & Katembo, 2021).

Human Resource Management practices are widely recognized as key drivers of employee attitudes and organizational performance (Jarwan & Ibrahim, 2022). Training and Development enhance employee competence and signal organizational investment, strengthening satisfaction and loyalty (Minja, 2025; Pallangyo & Hanai, 2020). Compensation and Reward systems influence perceptions of fairness and financial security, which are closely linked to retention outcomes (Rubel et al., 2021). Performance Appraisal systems provide clarity, feedback, and perceived procedural justice, shaping trust and engagement (Basnyat & Lao, 2019). Additionally, Health and Safety practices protect employee well-being and reduce stress (ILO, 2025), while Supervisor Support fosters positive work relationships and emotional backing, enhancing job attitudes (Nguyen et al., 2023).

Together, these HR practices shape Job Satisfaction, a critical predictor of Employee Retention (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Sekar et al., 2021). Despite global evidence, contextual factors in developing economies may influence how these practices operate. In Northern Tanzania, non-managerial hotel employees often report limited career progression and work-related stress, highlighting the need for empirical examination of HRM practices and retention dynamics in this specific context. Although tourism significantly contributes to Tanzania's economy, employee retention in Northern Tanzania's hotel industry remains a persistent challenge. Studies indicate annual turnover rates of approximately 5 percent in some local hotels, while global hospitality turnover ranges between 30 and 73 percent (Masanja & Katembo, 2021; Bibi et al., 2018). High turnover disrupts service continuity, increases recruitment and training costs, and weakens organizational stability.

Many tourism organizations struggle with ineffective HR practices. Training programs are often inadequately structured, limiting skill development and career growth (Massae et al., 2022). Compensation packages may not reflect workload demands or living expenses, leading to dissatisfaction and reduced commitment (Miraji, 2024). Performance appraisal systems are sometimes perceived as unclear or unfair, which undermines trust and employee morale (Bayo-Moriones et al., 2020). Furthermore, insufficient Health and Safety measures contribute to stress and burnout (Kalia et al., 2023), while limited Supervisor Support reduces daily guidance and recognition (Nguyen et al., 2023). These challenges are intensified by seasonal tourism patterns and competitive labor markets. Non-managerial employees, who directly influence customer experience, are particularly vulnerable to dissatisfaction and turnover intentions. Addressing these structural HR

deficiencies is essential for improving retention outcomes and sustaining service excellence.

Existing studies predominantly examine direct relationships between HR practices and Employee Retention, with limited exploration of Job Satisfaction as a mediating mechanism, particularly within Tanzania's tourism sector (Sekar et al., 2021). Empirical research focusing specifically on non-managerial hotel employees in Northern Tanzania remains scarce. Moreover, variables such as Supervisor Support and Health and Safety are often underrepresented compared to Training or Compensation. Few studies apply advanced analytical techniques such as PLS-SEM to test comprehensive structural models in this context (Hair et al., 2022). This study addresses these gaps by integrating multiple HR practices (Training & Development, Compensation & Reward, Performance Appraisal, Health & Safety, Supervisor Support, Job Satisfaction and employee retention) into a unified framework and examining both direct and indirect effects. Hence, the study aims to examine the direct and indirect effects of selected HR practices (Training & Development, Compensation & Reward, Performance Appraisal, Health & Safety, and Supervisor Support) on employee retention and job satisfaction.

1.1. Objectives

- i. To examine the effect of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices (Training & Development, Compensation & Reward, Performance Appraisal, Health & Safety, and Supervisor Support) on Job Satisfaction.
- ii. To analyze the effect of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices (Training & Development, Compensation & Reward, Performance Appraisal, Health & Safety, and Supervisor Support) on Employee Retention.
- iii. To determine the effect of Job Satisfaction on Employee Retention.

2. Theoretical Foundation

This study is grounded in Social Exchange Theory (SET), originally proposed by Homans (1958) and later developed by Blau (1964). SET explains workplace behavior as a reciprocal exchange process in which individuals evaluate the costs and benefits of relationships before deciding how to respond. In employment settings, exchanges involve both tangible rewards such as salary and benefits, and intangible rewards such as recognition, fairness, support, and career development opportunities (Alsafadi & Altahat, 2021; Winarno et al., 2022). When employees perceive that the organization fulfills its obligations through supportive HRM practices, they feel a sense of obligation to reciprocate with positive attitudes and behaviors, including commitment and retention (Rubel et al., 2018). In the tourism sector, where service quality depends heavily on employee commitment, SET provides a strong explanatory foundation for understanding employee retention.

Although SET has been widely applied in HRM research, limited studies have examined its application within the accommodation sector in developing economies such as Tanzania. Most prior studies focus on single HRM dimensions or direct effects, with less attention to mediating and moderating mechanisms (Winarno et al., 2022). Furthermore, few studies integrate job satisfaction as a mediator and working environment as a moderator within a unified SET framework to explain employee retention in tourism contexts.

Within HRM research, SET explains how employees interpret HRM practices as signals of organizational support and fairness. When organizations implement effective recruitment, training, compensation, performance appraisal, and health and safety systems, employees perceive these practices as investments in their well-being (Bibi et al., 2018; Islam et al., 2023). In response, employees reciprocate through increased satisfaction, commitment, and intention to remain with the organization (Rubel et al., 2021).

In the tourism sector, where employees face high workloads and customer demands, perceived fairness and support are particularly important. For example, training enhances competence and confidence, while fair appraisal systems strengthen trust. According to SET, these positive exchanges strengthen the psychological contract between employer and employee. This study applies SET to examine how HRM practices influence employee retention directly and indirectly through job satisfaction, while the working environment strengthens or weakens this exchange relationship.

2.1. Conceptualization of the Key Variables

Human Resource Management Practices (HRMP) are structured organizational initiatives designed to attract, develop, motivate, and retain employees (Jarwan & Ibrahim, 2022). In this study, HRMP is conceptualized across five key dimensions. Recruitment and selection ensure alignment between individual competencies and organizational culture. By emphasizing competence-based hiring and value congruence, organizations reduce early turnover and enhance long-term commitment (Doghan, 2022). Effective selection minimizes mismatch, which is particularly critical in service-oriented sectors where interpersonal skills influence performance. Training and development focus on continuous skill enhancement and career growth. Providing professional development opportunities strengthens employee competence, confidence, and perceived organizational support, leading to stronger attachment (Pallangyo & Hanai, 2020; Intyassari et al., 2025). Compensation and rewards include financial incentives and non-financial recognition. Fair and competitive reward systems enhance satisfaction, motivation, and perceived equity (Rubel et al., 2021). Performance appraisal systems provide structured feedback, clarify expectations and promote fairness. Development-oriented appraisals build trust and strengthen commitment (Basnyat & Lao, 2019; Ramous Agyare et al., 2016). Health and safety practices ensure physical and psychological well-being, creating a secure work environment that supports sustained engagement (ILO, 2025; Laguerre & Barnes-Farrell, 2025). Under Social Exchange Theory, these practices represent organizational investments that shape reciprocal employee retention behavior.

Job satisfaction refers to employees' overall evaluation of their job experiences, including satisfaction with pay, supervision, growth opportunities, and work conditions (Meyer & Allen, 1991). SET suggests that when employees perceive supportive HRMP, satisfaction increases because they feel valued and fairly treated (Dechawatanapaisal, 2018). Job satisfaction functions as a psychological response reflecting positive exchange outcomes. The working environment includes physical, social, and psychological conditions of the workplace (Hee & Jing, 2018; Talukder & Galang, 2021). Physical conditions involve safety and resources; social conditions include teamwork and supervisor support; psychological conditions involve recognition and work-life balance. A supportive environment strengthens the positive exchange process and reinforces satisfaction and commitment (Islam et al., 2024). Employee retention refers to the organization's ability to maintain

employees for an extended period, often measured through intention to stay or reduced turnover intention (Tett & Meyer, 1993). In SET terms, retention represents employees' reciprocal response to favorable treatment. When benefits outweigh perceived costs, employees are more likely to remain with the organization.

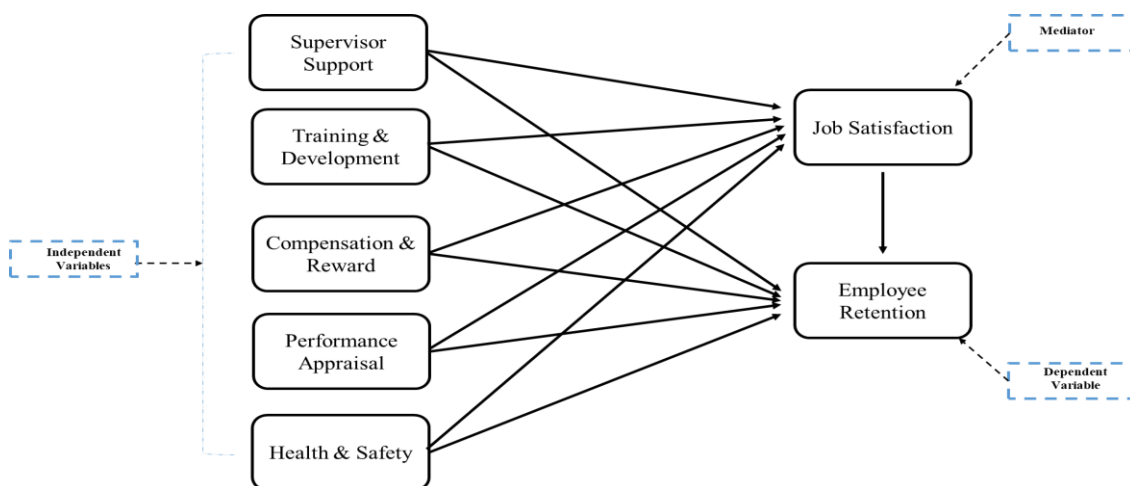
Existing research on HRMP and employee retention in tourism has largely focused on developed or resource-rich regions (Islam et al., 2024; Khuong & Linh, 2020). Few studies examine the accommodation sector in Northern Tanzania. Moreover, prior studies often test direct relationships without simultaneously examining mediation and moderation mechanisms. Limited empirical work integrates HRMP, job satisfaction, and working environment within a single SET-based framework. This study addresses these conceptual and geographical gaps by testing both direct and indirect relationships.

2.2. Development of the Model

The research model (as shown in Figure 1) is developed based on Social Exchange Theory, which posits that favorable organizational treatment leads to reciprocal employee behavior. HRMP are conceptualized as organizational investments, while employee retention represents the reciprocal outcome. The model proposes that HRMP positively influence employee retention both directly and indirectly through job satisfaction. First, effective recruitment, training, compensation, appraisal, and health and safety practices are expected to increase job satisfaction by enhancing perceptions of fairness and support. Second, satisfied employees are more likely to remain with the organization, reflecting reciprocal commitment. Thus, job satisfaction mediates the relationship between HRMP and retention.

The model further makes critical proposes in supportive physical and social conditions, the positive effects of HRMP on job satisfaction and retention are strengthened. Conversely, poor working conditions may weaken the exchange relationship. By integrating mediation effect within the SET framework, the model provides a comprehensive explanation of how and under what conditions HRMP influence employee retention in Northern Tanzania's accommodation sector.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model Structure



2.3. Empirical Studies & Hypotheses

Extensive empirical evidence confirms that supervisor support is a strong predictor of job satisfaction. Talukder and Galang (2021) found that supervisor support positively influences employee attitudes, including job satisfaction, through enhanced work–life balance. Similarly, Gok et al. (2015) demonstrated that perceived supervisor support significantly predicts job satisfaction among healthcare employees. Nguyen and Tuan (2022) further showed that supportive supervision reduces workload strain and increases satisfaction in the public sector. Altaş et al. (2024) confirmed this relationship among nurses, emphasizing emotional and professional support as critical job resources. These findings align with the Job Demands–Resources model, which identifies supervisor support as a key resource enhancing satisfaction. Thus, strong empirical support exists for H1a.

Training and development enhance employees' competence, confidence, and career progression, thereby increasing job satisfaction. Alrazehi et al. (2021) found that training significantly improves job satisfaction in Yemen's banking sector. Murtiningsih (2020) also reported that training programs positively affect satisfaction and retention. Similarly, Intyassari et al. (2025) showed that employee development initiatives enhance satisfaction through empowerment. Olaimat (2018) confirmed that HR practices, including training, significantly influence job satisfaction in Jordanian hotels. By signaling organizational investment in employees' growth, training strengthens psychological attachment and workplace fulfillment. Therefore, empirical literature strongly supports H1b.

Compensation and reward systems are consistently linked to higher job satisfaction. Alrazehi et al. (2021) demonstrated that reward systems significantly influence job satisfaction in the banking sector. Murtiningsih (2020) also confirmed that compensation directly enhances employee satisfaction. Setyagraha et al. (2025) found that rewards improve satisfaction, which subsequently strengthens retention. Deckop et al. (2006) showed that adequate wages significantly increase job retention, reflecting satisfaction with pay structures. These findings align with equity theory, suggesting that perceived fairness in compensation enhances satisfaction. Empirical evidence across industries therefore confirms H1c.

Fair and transparent appraisal systems positively influence job satisfaction by promoting organizational justice. Ramous Agyare et al. (2016) found that performance appraisal significantly impacts job satisfaction in Ghanaian microfinance institutions. Olaimat (2018) identified performance evaluation as a key predictor of job satisfaction in the hospitality sector. Fatmawati et al. (2025) further emphasized that effective performance management enhances satisfaction and retention outcomes. When employees perceive appraisal systems as developmental rather than punitive, satisfaction increases. Thus, the empirical literature provides confirmation to establish H1d.

A safe and healthy workplace enhances employee well-being and satisfaction. Altaş et al. (2024) highlighted the importance of supportive healthcare environments in improving satisfaction among nurses. Laguerre and Barnes-Farrell (2025) emphasized that HR practices promoting psychological safety enhance employee motivation and satisfaction. Research grounded in occupational health theory indicates that minimizing workplace hazards reduces stress and increases job satisfaction. Although fewer studies isolate

health and safety independently, existing evidence supports a positive relationship, validating H1e.

H2a: Supervisor Support has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction.

H2b: Training & Development has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction.

H2c: Compensation & Reward has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction.

H2d: Performance Appraisal has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction.

H2e: Health & Safety has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction.

Supervisor support significantly predicts employee retention by strengthening organizational commitment. Talukder and Galang (2021) found that supervisor support indirectly enhances retention through improved attitudes. Tj et al. (2021) reported that supervisor support positively affects retention, mediated by job satisfaction. Modaresnezhad et al. (2021) demonstrated that supervisor support reduces turnover intentions among nurses. These findings indicate that employees who feel valued and supported are more likely to remain with their organizations. Therefore, H2a is strongly supported. Training initiatives enhance retention by fostering growth opportunities and self-efficacy. Alrazehi et al. (2021) found that training significantly influences retention through job satisfaction. Kiran et al. (2024) confirmed that HRM practices, including training, positively affect retention. Xuecheng et al. (2022) also emphasized that development opportunities increase employees' intention to stay. By improving competence and career prospects, training reduces turnover intentions. Based on the empirical evidence, it is clear to state H2b (as shown in figure 2).

Compensation remains a primary determinant of retention decisions. Tj et al. (2021) found that compensation positively affects retention through job satisfaction. Setyagraha et al. (2025) confirmed that reward strategies significantly improve retention outcomes. Kiran et al. (2024) also reported a positive link between compensation and employee retention. Deckop et al. (2006) highlighted the direct effect of adequate wages on retention. Although contextual differences may exist, the overall empirical evidence supports H2c (as shown in figure 2). Effective appraisal systems reinforce clarity, fairness, and growth opportunities, which enhance retention. Lera and Weldemariam (2025) found that performance appraisal positively influences retention, mediated by job satisfaction. Fatmawati et al. (2025) showed that performance management strategies enhance retention outcomes. When employees perceive appraisal processes as fair and developmental, turnover intentions decline. Therefore, empirical findings support H2d. Health and safety practices foster a secure work environment, reducing stress and burnout. Altaş et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of supportive work conditions in healthcare retention. Laguerre and Barnes-Farrell (2025) noted that psychologically safe workplaces enhance employee commitment. Research on occupational well-being consistently links safe work environments to lower turnover intentions. Hence, empirical evidence supports H2e (as shown in figure 2).

H1a: Supervisor Support has a positive and significant effect on Employee Retention.

H1b: Training & Development has a positive and significant effect on Employee Retention.

H1c: Compensation & Reward has a positive and significant effect on Employee Retention.

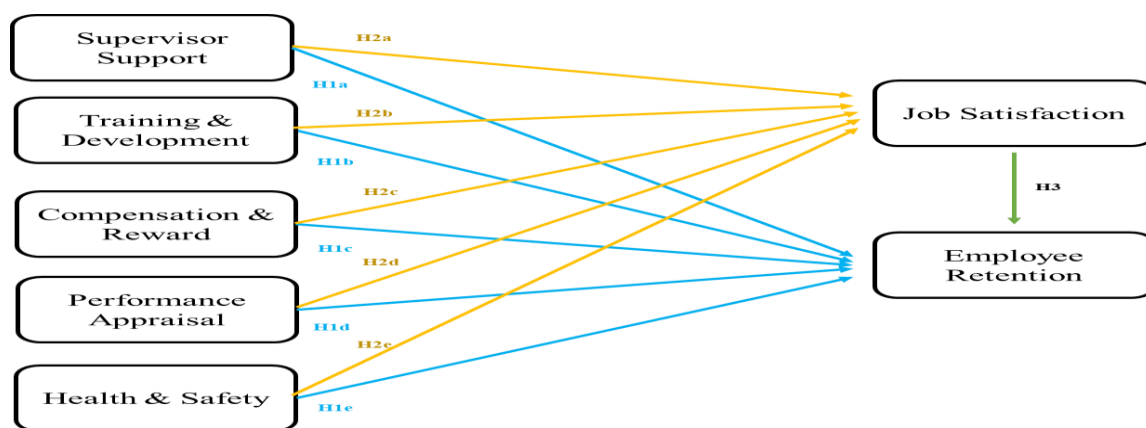
H1d: Performance Appraisal has a positive and significant effect on Employee Retention.

H1e: Health & Safety has a positive and significant effect on Employee Retention.

The relationship between job satisfaction and retention is one of the most established findings in HRM research. Alrazehi et al. (2021) demonstrated that job satisfaction significantly predicts retention in banking. Lera and Weldemariam (2025) confirmed its mediating role between HR practices and retention. Kiran et al. (2024) found that satisfied employees are less likely to leave. Tj et al. (2021) and Setyagraha et al. (2025) similarly reported strong positive effects. Across sectors, job satisfaction consistently reduces turnover intentions and strengthens organizational commitment. Thus, H3 is strongly supported by empirical evidence.

H3: Job Satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on Employee Retention.

Figure 2: Conceptual Model



3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design to investigate the relationship between Human Resource Management practices (HRMP), job satisfaction and employee retention among non-managerial employees in the accommodation sector of Northern Tanzania. A cross-sectional approach was adopted, whereby data were collected at a single point in time from employees working in selected hotels across the regions of Arusha, Kilimanjaro, and Manyara.

A structured questionnaire was used to measure employees' perceptions of recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation and rewards, performance appraisal, job satisfaction and employee retention. The quantitative design was appropriate for testing hypothesized direct and mediating relationships using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). This approach enabled systematic examination of the proposed conceptual framework and provided empirical evidence regarding the determinants of employee retention in the tourism industry. The use of standardized measurement items ensured consistency, reliability, and comparability of responses across participants.

3.2. Population and Sample Size

The target population comprised 5,250 non-managerial employees working in registered hotels across Arusha (3,000), Kilimanjaro (2,000), and Manyara (250) regions. These

employees share relatively similar job roles and work within the same industry context, making the population sufficiently homogeneous for statistical estimation.

The sample size was determined using Yamane's formula:

$$n = N/[1+N(e^2)] \quad (1)$$

where,

'n' denotes the sample size

'N' represents the population count

'e' represents the level of precision (error term)

$$n = 5,250/[1+5,250(0.05^2)] = 371.6$$

With a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, the calculated sample size was 371.6, which was rounded up to 372 respondents. This method ensures adequate statistical power and enhances the representativeness of the findings. Probability sampling was employed to provide each eligible employee with an equal chance of selection, thereby minimizing selection bias. The final sample of 372 respondents was proportionately distributed across the three regions according to their respective employee populations: 212 from Arusha, 141 from Kilimanjaro, and 19 from Manyara. This proportional allocation strengthens the generalizability of the results within the Northern Tanzania accommodation sector.

3.3. Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected from 25 selected hotels located in key tourism areas within the three regions. These locations were chosen due to their significance within Tanzania's tourism industry and their high concentration of accommodation facilities. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed using a drop-off and pick-up approach. Research assistants delivered the questionnaires to eligible respondents and later collected the completed forms. This method reduced interviewer bias and allowed participants to complete the survey at their convenience, thereby improving response accuracy. The questionnaire consisted primarily of closed-ended questions to facilitate quantitative analysis. Completed questionnaires were carefully screened for completeness and consistency before being coded and prepared for analysis using PLS-SEM.

3.4. Questionnaire Development

The study employed a structured questionnaire to collect primary data on the determinants of job satisfaction and employee retention. The instrument was developed based on established scales from prior human resource management and organizational behavior studies. The constructs measured included supervisor support, training and development, compensation and reward, performance appraisal, health and safety, job satisfaction, and employee retention. All items were measured using a Seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The five-point scale was selected for its clarity, respondent friendliness, and strong psychometric performance, while still providing adequate variability for statistical analysis (Revilla et al., 2014).

The questionnaire was self-administered using a drop-off and pick-up approach. This method minimized interviewer bias and allowed respondents to complete the survey at their convenience, thereby reducing social desirability bias and enhancing response accuracy (Krumpal & Voss, 2020). Trained research assistants facilitated the distribution

and collection process to improve response rates and ensure proper clarification where necessary. Measurement items were adapted to fit the study context while maintaining their original conceptual meaning. A pilot study was conducted with approximately 15% of the expected sample to assess clarity, wording, and contextual relevance. Feedback from the pilot test resulted in minor revisions to improve comprehension and eliminate ambiguity. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, and all constructs exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency.

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the relevant institutional review board. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research and their voluntary participation. Informed consent was obtained prior to data collection. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured, and no identifying information was included in the final dataset. Research assistants were briefed on ethical procedures to ensure respect, transparency, and the protection of participants throughout the study.

3.5. Analytical Procedure

After data collection, the study employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 4.0 to test the proposed model. PLS-SEM was considered appropriate because the study focuses on prediction and theory development, involves multiple latent constructs measured by several indicators, and includes mediation and moderating relationships. This approach is widely recommended for complex behavioural research models and is suitable when the objective is to explain variance in key endogenous constructs (Hair et al., 2020; Sarstedt et al., 2022).

The analysis followed a two-stage procedure: assessment of the measurement model and evaluation of the structural model. First, the measurement model was examined to establish reliability and validity. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR). Convergent validity was evaluated through indicator loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with acceptable thresholds applied as suggested in the literature. Discriminant validity was examined using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio to confirm that the constructs were empirically distinct.

Second, the structural model was assessed to test the hypothesized relationships among supervisor support, training and development, compensation and reward, performance appraisal, health and safety, job satisfaction, and employee retention. Collinearity diagnostics were first examined using VIF values. Path coefficients (β), t-values, and p-values were obtained through bootstrapping with resampling to determine the significance and strength of the relationships. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was used to assess the explanatory power of endogenous constructs, while effect sizes (f^2) and predictive relevance (Q^2) were examined to evaluate the contribution and predictive capability of the model (Hair et al., 2022). The application of PLS-SEM enabled rigorous testing of direct and indirect effects within the proposed framework and provided robust evidence regarding the determinants of job satisfaction and employee retention.

4. Results

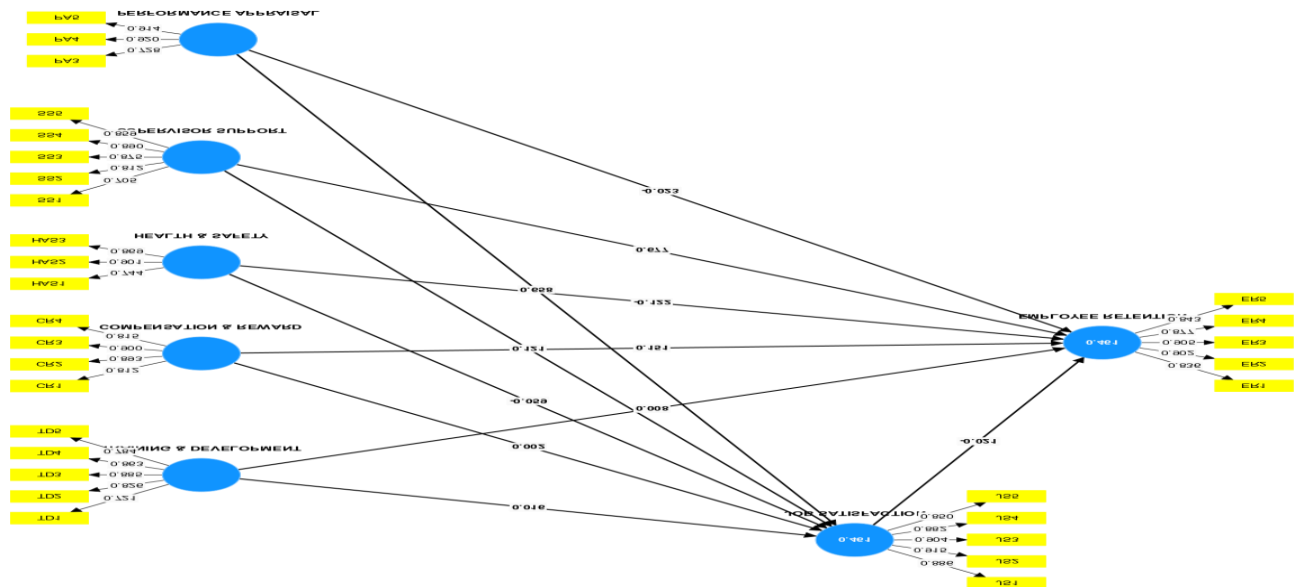
According to data analysis, this section presents the empirical findings derived from the PLS-SEM analysis. The results are organized in two stages: assessment of the measurement model and evaluation of the structural model. The measurement model

establishes the reliability and validity of the constructs, while the structural model examines the hypothesized or structural relationships among variables. Together, these findings provide evidence on the determinants of job satisfaction and employee retention within the study context.

4.1. Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model was evaluated before testing the structural relationships. The assessment focused on indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, multicollinearity, and discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2022). This step ensured that the constructs were measured accurately and consistently before examining the hypothesized relationships among variables. Figure 3 illustrates the reflective measurement model comprising seven latent constructs: Compensation & Reward, Health & Safety, Performance Appraisal, Supervisor Support, Training & Development, Job Satisfaction, and Employee Retention. All constructs are operationalized through multiple observed indicators linked to their respective latent variables.

Figure 3: Measurement Modeling Structure



4.1.1. Indicator Reliability, Internal Consistency & Convergent Validity

Table 1 presents the statistical assessment of the measurement model, including outer loadings, VIF, Cronbach’s alpha, composite reliability (CR), AVE, effect size (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2). Indicator reliability was examined through outer loadings, with all items exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2022; Sarstedt et al., 2022). The loadings ranged from 0.705 to 0.920, indicating that each observed variable strongly reflects its underlying construct. Constructs such as Job Satisfaction and Performance Appraisal demonstrated particularly high loadings, suggesting robust measurement strength. Multicollinearity was assessed using VIF values. All VIF scores were below the critical cut-off value of 5 (Hair et al., 2020: 2022), indicating that collinearity among indicators does not pose a threat to the stability of the model estimates. This confirms that each indicator contributes unique information to its respective construct.

Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability. Cronbach’s alpha ranged from 0.806 to 0.933, and composite reliability from 0.883 to 0.942. Both measures exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2020), confirming strong internal consistency across constructs. Overall, the results indicate that the measurement model meets reliability requirements and that the indicators consistently represent their latent variables. Convergent validity was assessed using the average variance extracted (AVE). All constructs reported AVE values between 0.669 and 0.788, exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.505 (Hair et al., 2022). This indicates that each construct explains more than half of the variance in its indicators. The relatively high AVE values for Job Satisfaction and Performance Appraisal further confirm that the items converge well in measuring their intended constructs, thereby establishing adequate convergent validity for the model.

Table 1: Statistical Assessment – PLS-SEM

Construct / Items	Loadings	VIF	Cronbach’s Alpha	CR	AVE	F ²	R ²	Q ²
Compensation & Reward			0.878	0.886	0.733	0.027		
CR1	0.812	2.085						
CR2	0.893	2.940						
CR3	0.900	3.070						
CR4	0.815	2.179						
Employee Retention			0.923	0.935	0.763	0.021	0.461	0.440
ER1	0.836	2.306						
ER2	0.902	3.694						
ER3	0.905	4.361						
ER4	0.877	4.216						
ER5	0.843	3.109						
Health & Safety			0.806	0.896	0.707	0.022		
HAS1	0.744	2.373						
HAS2	0.901	3.350						
HAS3	0.869	1.695						
Job Satisfaction			0.933	0.942	0.788	0.000	0.461	0.442
JS1	0.886	3.306						
JS2	0.915	4.596						
JS3	0.904	3.833						
JS4	0.882	4.271						
JS5	0.850	3.631						
Performance Appraisal			0.829	0.936	0.737	0.745		
PA3	0.728	1.709						
PA4	0.920	2.964						
PA5	0.914	2.218						
Supervisor Support			0.890	0.927	0.691	0.637		
SS1	0.705	2.206						
SS2	0.812	3.134						
SS3	0.875	3.074						
SS4	0.890	3.298						
SS5	0.859	2.689						
Training & Development			0.875	0.883	0.669			

TD1	0.721	1.947
TD2	0.826	2.894
TD3	0.885	3.263
TD4	0.863	3.116
TD5	0.784	2.137

Note: Compensation & Reward – CR, Performance Appraisal – PA, Employee Retention – ER, Supervisor Support – SS, Training & Development – TD, Job Satisfaction – JB, Health & Safety – HS.

Table 2: Discriminant validity Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) – Matrix

	CR	ER	HS	JB	PA	SS	TD
CR							
ER	0.326						
HS	0.200	0.210					
JB	0.211	0.117	0.092				
PA	0.285	0.100	0.172	0.698			
SS	0.266	0.666	0.530	0.199	0.154		
TD	0.650	0.242	0.200	0.188	0.248	0.257	

Note: Compensation & Reward – CR, Performance Appraisal – PA, Employee Retention – ER, Supervisor Support – SS, Training & Development – TD, Job Satisfaction – JB, Health & Safety – HS.

4.1.2. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was examined using two complementary approaches: the Heterotrait–Monotrait ratio (HTMT) and the Fornell–Larcker criterion. The HTMT results indicate that all inter-construct values fall below the conservative threshold of 0.855 (Hair et al., 2022). The highest HTMT value was 0.698 between Performance Appraisal and Job Satisfaction (as shown in Table 2). Although this suggests a relatively strong association between the two constructs, it remains within acceptable limits, confirming that they are empirically distinct. The remaining HTMT values are substantially lower, further supporting discriminant validity.

The Fornell–Larcker criterion was also satisfied. The square root of AVE for each construct exceeded its correlations with other constructs in Model 5 (Hair et al., 2022). For example, the square roots of AVE for Compensation & Reward (0.856), Employee Retention (0.873), Health & Safety (0.841), Job Satisfaction (0.888), Performance Appraisal (0.858), Supervisor Support (0.831), and Training & Development (0.818) are all greater than their respective inter-construct correlations (as shown in Table 3). This confirms that each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with other constructs. Significantly, both the HTMT and Fornell–Larcker results provide strong evidence of discriminant validity. The constructs are statistically distinct, and the measurement model demonstrates sound psychometric properties, justifying progression to structural model evaluation.

Table 3: Fornell-Larcker criterion

	CR	ER	HS	JJB	PA	SS	TD
CR	0.856						
ER	0.292	0.873					
HS	0.169	0.203	0.841				

JB	0.193	0.105	0.076	0.888			
PA	0.246	0.068	0.118	0.669	0.858		
SS	0.247	0.655	0.446	0.178	0.120	0.831	
TD	0.582	0.223	0.173	0.169	0.204	0.231	0.818

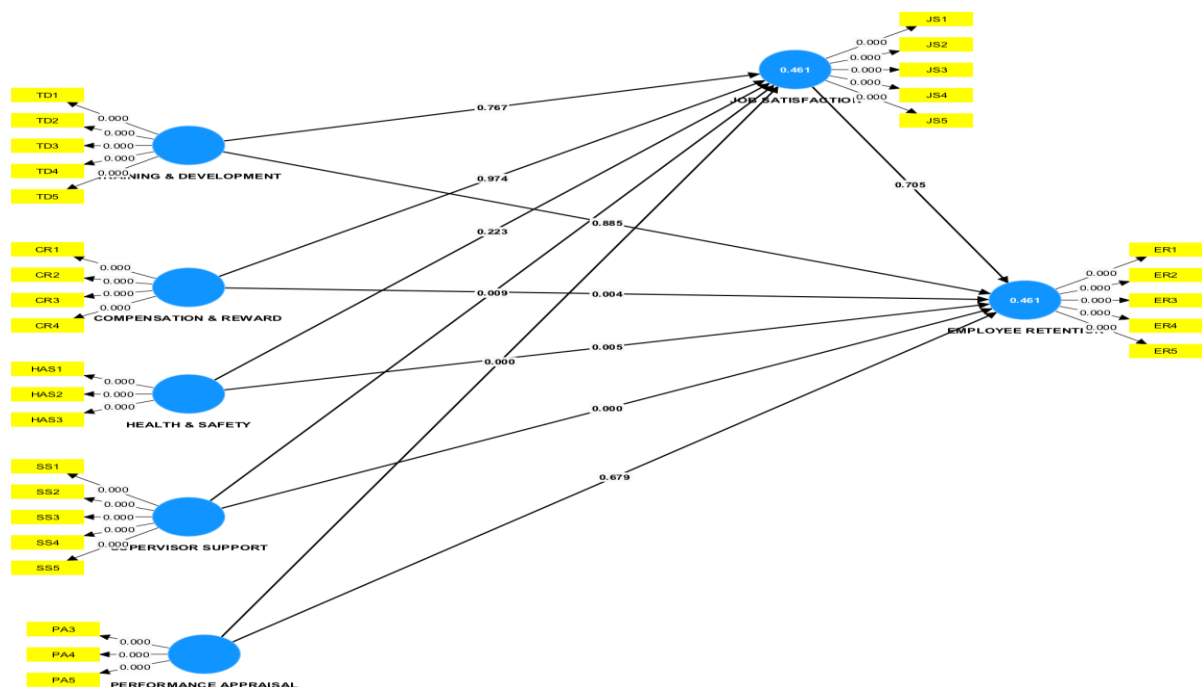
Note: Compensation & Reward – CR, Performance Appraisal – PA, Employee Retention – ER, Supervisor Support – SS, Training & Development – TD, Job Satisfaction – JB, Health & Safety – HS.

4.2. Structural Model Assessment

Following confirmation of measurement validity and reliability, the structural model was assessed to examine the hypothesized relationships among constructs. The evaluation considered path coefficients (β), t-values, p-values, coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2). Figure 4 presents the structural model and the directional relationships between exogenous and endogenous constructs.

The explanatory power of the model was assessed using the coefficient of determination (R^2). Employee Retention (ER) reported an R^2 value of 0.461, indicating that 46.1% of its variance is explained by Compensation & Reward, Health & Safety, Performance Appraisal, Supervisor Support, Training & Development, and Job Satisfaction. Similarly, Job Satisfaction (JB) recorded an R^2 value of 0.461, suggesting that its predictors account for 46.1% of its variance. These values indicate moderate explanatory power according to established guidelines. Additionally, Q^2 values for ER (0.440) and JB (0.442) are above zero, confirming satisfactory predictive relevance and supporting the model’s out-of-sample predictive capability.

Figure 4: Structural Model Effect



5. Discussions

The structural model results provide nuanced insights into how different human resource practices influence job satisfaction and employee retention. Each relationship is discussed below with practical workplace scenarios to contextualize the findings. The relationship

between Compensation & Reward (CR) and Employee Retention (ER) is positive and significant ($\beta = 0.151$, $p = 0.004$). Although the effect size is modest, it suggests that competitive pay and attractive reward systems contribute to employees' decisions to remain with an organization. For instance, in a manufacturing firm where annual bonuses and performance-based incentives are transparent and timely, employees may perceive fairness and financial security, reducing their intention to leave. However, the relatively small coefficient implies that compensation alone is not the primary driver of retention. supports H2c in the context of Tanzania tourism sector, and aligns with earlier studies (Deckop et al., 2006; Tj et al., 2021; Kiran et al., 2024). Put simply, fair pay still matters. When employees feel that their effort is properly rewarded, they are more inclined to stay. From a Social Exchange Theory perspective (Blau, 1964), compensation is a visible and tangible investment. And people tend to respond to that. Compensation may secure short-term commitment, perhaps even stabilize turnover temporarily. But deeper attachment? That seems to require more than a paycheck. This finding subtly reminds us that retention decisions are not purely economic calculations. Relational elements, especially supervisor support, may weigh more heavily. In that sense, compensation forms the base of the exchange relationship, but it does not fully anchor long-term loyalty on its own.

In contrast, Compensation & Reward does not significantly influence Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.002$, $p = 0.974$), and that is interesting in this context. This suggests that while financial incentives may encourage employees to stay, they do not necessarily enhance their emotional or psychological satisfaction with the job. For example, an employee may remain in a well-paying role despite feeling disengaged or uninspired, indicating that satisfaction is shaped more by intrinsic or relational factors than monetary rewards alone, this supported by discussions from (Terera & Ngirande, 2014; Martinr & Uribe, 2021). However, it diverges from earlier findings (Alrazehi et al., 2021; Murtiningsih, 2020), which often assume that fair pay naturally boosts satisfaction. Here, that link simply did not appear. Equity theory would suggest that fair compensation should enhance positive feelings (Al-Zawahreh & Al-Madi, 2012). But in this context, pay may be viewed as a basic entitlement, not a source of emotional fulfillment. Under Social Exchange Theory, satisfaction grows when employees perceive socio-emotional value, not just financial exchange (Rajâa & Mekkaoui, 2025). If compensation is seen as standard or routine, it may not generate excitement or gratitude. It just meets expectations. This distinction matters. Employees may stay because of pay, yet not necessarily feel more satisfied because of it. Intrinsic and relational factors such as recognition, support, and fairness in treatment may carry more emotional weight. So while compensation supports retention, it does not automatically create job contentment.

Health & Safety (HS) shows a significant negative relationship with Employee Retention ($\beta = -0.122$, $p = 0.005$) (as shown in Table 4). This is somewhat surprising and interesting in the Tanzanian context. It contradicts H2e and prior studies (Altaş et al., 2024; Laguerre & Barnes-Farrell, 2025), which emphasize a positive relationship. However, this counterintuitive result may reflect contextual dynamics. In highly regulated environments, stricter safety controls could be perceived as restrictive or indicative of hazardous working conditions. For example, employees in industrial settings may associate heavy safety enforcement with dangerous tasks, prompting them to seek safer employment alternatives. Theoretically, protective practices should signal care. Employees, in turn, should respond with loyalty. That is what Social Exchange Theory emphasizes. Yet in the Northern Tanzanian context, the story seems more complex. In environments where safety measures are highly visible or strictly enforced, employees might interpret them differently. Instead of seeing care, they may see risk. Strong safety

protocols could indirectly signal that the work environment is demanding or hazardous. Alternatively, safety compliance may feel like a legal obligation rather than a voluntary act of support. And when something feels mandatory, it does not always inspire reciprocity. This finding reminds us that HR practices are filtered through employee perception. The meaning employees attach to policies shapes outcomes. Safety initiatives, therefore, may need clearer communication as genuine employee-centered care rather than an institutional requirement. Meanwhile, Health & Safety does not significantly affect Job Satisfaction ($\beta = -0.059$, $p = 0.223$), suggesting that safety provisions may be viewed as basic compliance requirements rather than motivational factors. While occupational health research often links safe environments to positive attitudes, the connection was not evident here. From a Social Exchange perspective, satisfaction rises when employees perceive discretionary support. Safety measures, however, may be seen as minimum standards. Employees might think, "This is basic. It should be there." When something is expected, it rarely boosts emotional attachment. It simply prevents dissatisfaction. This aligns with the idea that baseline conditions reduce negative feelings but do not necessarily create positive ones. If safety standards are similar across hotels, employees may not attribute them to unique organizational care. In short, safety is essential. It prevents burnout and stress. But it may not function as a motivational driver of satisfaction on its own.

Job Satisfaction (JB) does not significantly influence Employee Retention ($\beta = -0.021$, $p = 0.705$) (as shown in Table 4). These finding challenges traditional assumptions that satisfied employees are more likely to stay. In practical terms, employees may report satisfaction with their tasks or colleagues yet still leave for better career prospects, higher salaries, or personal reasons (Irabor & Okolie, 2019). For example, a satisfied junior employee may resign to pursue postgraduate studies or international opportunities. This indicates that retention decisions may be driven by strategic or external considerations rather than satisfaction alone. The finding challenges much of the existing literature (Alrazehi et al., 2021; Tj et al., 2021; Setyagraha et al., 2025). Traditionally, satisfied employees are expected to stay. That is the common assumption. But here, satisfaction alone did not anchor retention. Employees may feel content in their roles yet still leave for better pay, relocation, or career growth. External labor market forces and personal ambitions may weigh more heavily than affective attachment. In other words, staying decisions might be pragmatic rather than emotional. This finding slightly reshapes the narrative. It suggests that structural and relational forces, especially supervisor support, may exert stronger influence than general job feelings. Satisfaction may enhance workplace experience, yes, but it does not automatically guarantee commitment.

Table 4: Constructs Statistical Correlation Assessment

Correlation Effect	Beta	Standard deviation	T statistics	P values	H-Decision
Direct Correlation Effect					
CR → ER	0.151	0.053	2.854	0.004	Supported
CR → JB	0.002	0.051	0.033	0.974	Not-Supported
HS → ER	-0.122	0.043	2.829	0.005	Supported
HS → JB	-0.059	0.048	1.217	0.223	Not-Supported
JB → ER	-0.021	0.056	0.378	0.705	Not-Supported
PA → ER	-0.023	0.057	0.413	0.679	Not-Supported
PA → JB	0.658	0.030	21.744	0.000	Supported
SS → ER	0.677	0.036	19.070	0.000	Supported
SS → JB	0.121	0.047	2.607	0.009	Supported

TD → ER	0.008	0.055	0.144	0.885	Not-Supported
TD → JB	0.016	0.053	0.297	0.767	Not-Supported

Note: Compensation & Reward – CR, Performance Appraisal – PA, Employee Retention – ER, Supervisor Support – SS, Training & Development – TD, Job Satisfaction – JB, Health & Safety – HS.

Performance Appraisal (PA) does not significantly affect Employee Retention ($\beta = -0.023$, $p = 0.679$) (as shown in Table 4), in this context, the H1d was not supported. In simple terms, appraisal alone does not make employees stay. Even if evaluations are conducted regularly, they may not be enough to anchor commitment. Perhaps employees see appraisal as a routine administrative exercise rather than a meaningful investment in their growth. If feedback is not tied to promotion, salary progression, or real career opportunities, it may not carry much weight. So, while appraisal can shape awareness and even attitudes, staying decisions seem to depend more on practical outcomes and relational factors than on evaluation processes alone. Although earlier research (Lera & Weldemariam, 2025; Fatmawati et al., 2025) often suggests otherwise, appraisal alone did not keep employees in place. Under Social Exchange Theory, fair evaluation should promote reciprocity (Ahmad et al., 2023). However, appraisal may also expose performance gaps or limited career paths. If feedback is not tied to promotion, salary growth, or tangible rewards, employees may interpret it as administrative formality. It becomes a process, not an investment. So appraisal might improve awareness and fairness perceptions, but without meaningful career progression, it may not influence long-term commitment. This highlights an important point: fairness must connect to opportunity. Otherwise, its impact remains limited. But in contrast, PA has a strong positive effect on Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.658$, $p < 0.001$). This confirm H2d and suggests that fair and constructive appraisal systems enhance employees' sense of recognition and professional growth, thereby increasing satisfaction, as in line with (Dasanayaka et al., 2021; Subekti, 2021). For instance, when employees receive clear feedback, developmental guidance, and objective evaluations, they are likely to feel valued. However, appraisal alone may not be sufficient to retain employees unless accompanied by broader career advancement opportunities. That is a substantial coefficient. It aligns with earlier findings (Ramous Agyare et al., 2016; Olaimat, 2018) and fits well within Social Exchange Theory. Fair and transparent appraisal signals respect. According to Uraon and Kumarasamy (2024), when employees receive constructive feedback and clear expectations, they feel recognized. That recognition matters. It communicates that the organization sees them as individuals, not just roles. Unlike compensation, which is transactional, appraisal operates at a relational level. It involves dialogue, trust, and clarity. The strength of this effect suggests that justice-based exchanges strongly shape job attitudes. Employees appear to value feedback and procedural fairness deeply when evaluating their work experience.

Supervisor Support (SS) exhibits the strongest positive effect on Employee Retention ($\beta = 0.677$, $p < 0.001$). This supported the H1a and directly highlights the central role of leadership and interpersonal relationships in influencing employees' decision to stay. In practice, supportive supervisors who provide mentoring, emotional backing, and problem-solving assistance create a sense of belonging and trust. Employees are less likely to leave environments where they feel respected and supported by their immediate managers. The finding is striking with a strong effect size, strongly supports prior research (Talukder & Galang, 2021; Modaresnezhad et al., 2021). Supervisors represent the organization in everyday interactions. Previous studies (Malik et al., 2020; Wanyama et al., 2025) further emphasize that when company provide guidance, empathy, and practical help, employees feel valued. And people tend to stay where they feel respected.

The magnitude of this effect suggests that socio-emotional exchange outweighs purely economic exchange in this context. Interestingly, employees may tolerate moderate pay or slower advancement if strong supervisory relationships exist. That says a lot about the human side of retention. Leadership behavior, it seems, anchors workforce stability more than policies alone. Supervisor Support also significantly influences Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.121$, $p = 0.009$) directly supporting the H2a, though the effect is smaller compared to its impact on retention. This indicates that managerial support not only fosters loyalty but also enhances daily work experiences. Such that, supervisors who acknowledge effort and encourage participation in decision-making can positively shape employees' attitudes toward their jobs. The finding is align with relevant studies including (Tj et al. 2021; Iqbal et al., 2020; Herawati et al., 2023) Supportive supervisors create positive daily experiences. Simple acts such as recognition, encouragement, or problem-solving assistance shape how employees feel about their jobs. Under Social Exchange Theory, such discretionary care invites positive emotional responses. In short, satisfaction is not formed in isolation. It grows from everyday interactions. And supervisors play a central role in shaping those moments.

The result (as shown in Table 4) indicates that Training & Development (TD) shows no significant effect on Employee Retention ($\beta = 0.008$, $p = 0.885$) directly contrasting the H1e. This may imply that training initiatives in the studied context are perceived as routine or insufficiently linked to career progression. For instance, generic workshops that do not translate into promotion or skill utilization may fail to motivate employees. In some cases, enhanced training may even increase employees' marketability, encouraging mobility rather than retention. This contrasts with earlier studies like (Alrazehi et al., 2021; Xuecheng et al., 2022) that often position development as a retention tool. Theoretically SET, investing in employee growth should trigger loyalty. But that loyalty may depend on how training is experienced. If programs are generic or disconnected from promotion pathways, employees may not view them as meaningful investment. A workshop without certification or salary adjustment might feel routine rather than transformative. There is also another side to this. Training can increase external market value. Employees who gain new skills may feel empowered to pursue better opportunities elsewhere, especially in competitive tourism markets (Al Saba et al., 2023; Butler, 2017). So development, ironically, can enhance mobility. This suggests that training must be clearly linked to internal career progression and tangible rewards. Without visible advancement outcomes, development may enhance employability more than commitment. On the other side, TD does not significantly influence Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.016$, $p = 0.767$), which directly contradicts H2e. In practical terms, simply offering training does not automatically make employees feel more satisfied with their jobs as discussed by (Sahinidis & Bouris, 2008; Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009). It could be that the training programs are seen as routine, repetitive, or not clearly connected to personal career goals. If employees do not see tangible benefits such as promotion, skill recognition, or improved daily work experience, the emotional impact may be minimal. So, development opportunities may exist, but without relevance and visible outcomes, they may not translate into stronger job satisfaction. While earlier studies found positive links (Intyassari et al., 2025; Olaimat, 2018), the effect did not materialize in this context. For Social Exchange to operate, employees must perceive value. If training feels repetitive, irrelevant, or mandatory without consultation, it may not inspire satisfaction. Sitting through a seminar that does not address daily challenges rarely sparks enthusiasm. Satisfaction tends to rise when development aligns with personal goals and strengthens competence (Vyas, 2025). So relevance, quality, and visible outcomes matter. Without

those elements, training becomes an obligation rather than an opportunity. And when that happens, emotional attachment remains unchanged.

6. Conclusion

This study set out to understand how different HR practices shape Job Satisfaction and Employee Retention in hotels across Northern Tanzania. And honestly, the results were quite revealing. What stood out most was the power of relational factors, especially Supervisor Support. Employees seem to stay not just because of policies on paper, but because of how they are treated day to day. Performance Appraisal also mattered, mainly because it boosted Job Satisfaction. Compensation helped too, though its impact was more modest than many might expect. Interestingly, Training & Development and Health & Safety did not show the strong effects we often assume. Even Job Satisfaction, which is usually seen as central to retention, did not directly predict whether employees stayed. That's important. Retention in developing tourism economies appears to depend less on formal systems alone and more on fairness, trust, and human connection. For hotel operators and policymakers, the message is simple: invest in leadership quality, make evaluation processes transparent, and ensure rewards feel meaningful. Relationships, more than routines, keep employees committed.

6.1. Theoretical Implications

This study makes a few important contributions to the HRM and retention literature, particularly through the lens of Social Exchange Theory. But it also complicates the story a little, in a useful way. First, the findings suggest that not all HR practices trigger reciprocity in the same way. Supervisor Support and fair Performance Appraisal had strong positive effects, especially on Retention and Job Satisfaction. That tells us something important. Exchanges rooted in trust, respect, and recognition seem to matter more than purely transactional arrangements. In other words, employees respond more strongly to how they are treated than to what is formally offered.

Second, the non-significant effects of Training & Development and Compensation on Job Satisfaction, and the weak link between Job Satisfaction and Retention, challenge what many studies take for granted. Job Satisfaction is often positioned as the key bridge between HR practices and staying decisions. Here, that pathway was not as clear. Retention appears to be shaped more by relational leadership dynamics than by general feelings about the job. That nuance extends Social Exchange Theory by showing that context and perception really shape how reciprocity unfolds.

Third, the unexpected negative link between Health & Safety and Retention suggests that when practices feel compliance-driven rather than genuinely caring, employees may not interpret them as supportive. Importantly, the study reinforces a simple but powerful idea: in developing tourism economies, relational HR practices tend to outweigh transactional mechanisms when it comes to sustaining workforce stability.

6.2. Practical Measures

6.2.1. For Managerial Hotel Employees

The findings offer practical direction, especially for hotels operating around Mount Kilimanjaro where service pressure can be intense and seasonal. To begin with,

Supervisor Support was the strongest predictor of Employee Retention. That's significant. For managers, it means leadership style is not just a soft issue, it's central. Open communication, mentorship, constructive feedback, and even small gestures of recognition can shape whether someone decides to stay. Leadership development programs should therefore focus less on authority and more on interpersonal skills, coaching ability, and conflict management. Daily interactions matter. A lot. Compensation & Reward did have a positive effect on retention, but the impact was modest. So pay should be treated as a foundation, not a magic solution. Transparent reward systems, timely incentives, and simple recognition programs can strengthen fairness perceptions. Linking bonuses or service charges to clear performance outcomes can help, but financial incentives alone will not solve turnover.

Performance Appraisal, on the other hand, strongly improved Job Satisfaction. This suggests hotels should invest in structured and transparent evaluation systems. Clear criteria, practical feedback, and guidance on career progression make employees feel seen and valued. When appraisals are developmental rather than punitive, satisfaction rises. And that can still indirectly support retention.

6.2.2. Non-Managerial Hotel Employees

For non-managerial employees, the message is slightly different. Engagement should be proactive. During appraisals, employees can ask direct questions about evaluation standards, promotion criteria, and improvement targets. For example, a front-desk receptionist might request feedback on guest complaint handling and ask what skills are needed to move into a supervisory role. A housekeeping staff member could seek clarity on how ratings influence training sponsorship or salary increments. These conversations build transparency and trust.

Since Training & Development showed limited effects, relevance is key. Training must connect clearly to career progression. A culinary employee who completes advanced food safety certification could qualify for senior kitchen roles. A tour coordinator trained in digital booking systems might transition into revenue coordination. When employees see a visible pathway, training becomes meaningful. Health & Safety should also be framed as genuine care, not just inspection compliance. Rotating shifts during peak safari seasons or offering stress management sessions after high-demand periods can signal real concern. When employees feel cared for, not monitored, loyalty tends to follow.

6.3. Policy Recommendations for the Industry

At the industry level, workforce stability should be treated as a strategic priority, especially in Northern Tanzania where destinations like Mount Kilimanjaro experience seasonal tourism flows. High turnover affects service quality, and ultimately, destination competitiveness. First, industry associations such as the Hotel Association of Tanzania could formalize leadership development initiatives. Regional workshops focused on coaching skills, conflict resolution, and employee recognition would strengthen supervisory capacity. A voluntary certification scheme in supportive hospitality leadership might even set new standards across the region.

Second, compensation benchmarking should reflect actual living costs in Arusha and Kilimanjaro. Recommended wage bands for frontline staff could reduce unhealthy wage competition between hotels. Transparent service charge distribution systems would also

minimize perceptions of unfairness and reduce staff movement driven purely by rumors of better tips elsewhere.

Third, standardized performance appraisal templates across the sector could promote fairness. A simple evaluation form linking performance metrics to promotion pathways or skill allowances would make career progression clearer. For instance, consistent high service ratings could qualify a front-desk employee for sponsored supervisory training. Partnerships between hotels and tourism training institutes should also be strengthened. Internship-to-employment pipelines can ensure training aligns with operational realities, not abstract curricula.

Finally, occupational health enforcement should go beyond inspections. Industry guidelines could encourage staff wellness programs, including rest rotations during peak seasons. When employee well-being becomes a visible industry value, not just a regulation, retention outcomes are likely to improve.

7. Limitations and Future Recommendations

This study has some limitations that should be noted. First, the cross-sectional design limits strong causal claims. While PLS-SEM helps examine structural relationships, it cannot fully capture how HR practices influence Job Satisfaction and Retention over time. A longitudinal design would offer deeper insight into how these dynamics evolve, especially across tourism seasons. Second, the sample focused on non-managerial hotel employees in Northern Tanzania. That means the findings may not automatically generalize to other regions or hospitality segments. Context matters. Third, the use of self-reported data introduces the possibility of common method bias and subjective interpretation. Employees may interpret HR practices differently depending on personal expectations or experiences. Future studies could adopt longitudinal or mixed-method approaches to track retention patterns across peak and low seasons. Comparative regional studies would strengthen external validity. Qualitative research, in particular, could help unpack unexpected results, such as the weak role of Job Satisfaction and Training.

Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate

Ethical approval was obtained from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) and the Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH). All participants were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses and the data collected were used solely for academic purposes.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare there are no conflicts of interest.

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