

Evidence-based talent retention: a systematic literature review

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EVIDENCE-BASED TALENT RETENTION: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

1 INTRODUCTION

In the pursuit of excellence and organizational success, talent retention emerges as a crucial and challenging element, standing out among fundamental practices to ensure optimal performance and continuous development of organizations (Akunda et al., 2018).

The term "talent retention" originated in the late 1990s with the publication of the book "The War for Talent" by a group of McKinsey consultants (Michaels; Handfield-Jones; Axelrod, 2001), and its process is part of a talent management cycle that includes 5 stages (planning, acquisition, development, allocation, retention, and evaluation of talents) (Pandita; Ray, 2018). These organizational efforts in HR architecture aim to maintain talent motivation, organizational commitment, and extra-role behavior, resulting in sustainable performance within the organization (Kim; McLean, 2012).

From 2001 to the publication date of our study, we have witnessed the fourth industrial revolution, which posed challenges at various levels for talent management approaches due to significant changes in demographics, technology, and globalization (Claus, 2019). In the context of our discussion, globalization is relevant due to the expansion of global trade, intensified competition among companies, the potential to reach a larger number of customers worldwide, and the diversity of individuals currently composing the global labor market (Schuler; Jackson; Tarique, 2011).

Intense competition challenges sustained competitive advantage over long periods (Carvalho; Dal'Bó; Sampaio, 2021), and new positions must contend with a constantly changing landscape that requires professionals capable of adapting and developing new skills (Schuler; Jackson; Tarique, 2011). Retaining these professionals is necessary to ensure continuity in achieving the company's objectives, as turnover results in high financial costs, loss of tacit knowledge, work disruption, and may encourage other valued employees to leave the organization (Rawshdeh et al., 2023).

With these new perspectives, retention assumes a strategic role within organizations. Financial capital, human capital, physical assets, intellectual property, combined with skills,

knowledge, processes, and organizational culture, can create value (Sparrow; Makram, 2015). Emphasizing the perspective of human capital as an internal resource that represents a relevant variable in value creation, organizations need to organize themselves to create, capture, leverage, and protect this value.

In this study, we aim to systematize the academic knowledge generated by research on talent retention, exploring the methods, contexts, and variables involved in generating evidence in this field. In addition to understanding the current state of research, our goal is to identify future opportunities to advance this crucial theme.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The study conducted by Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2015) offers a comprehensive perspective on seminal studies in the field of Talent Management, systematically analyzing studies on the subject and highlighting the most influential authors. Collings, Mellahi, Heckman, and Lewis are noted as particularly relevant, agreeing that both the market and the academic community have dedicated significant efforts to studying talent management, facing substantial challenges related to the lack of conceptual consensus within the academic community.

In addition to various approaches to talent management, the literature also debates the nature of "talent" itself, questioning whether it is innate or acquired through interactions and professional development strategies (Meyers; Woerkom; Dries, 2013). The way companies implement and invest in talent management actions can be classified as inclusive or exclusive: inclusive if the company considers all employees as potential talents and invests equally, or exclusive if it invests differently in selected employees based on their added value and strategic importance to the organization (Iles; Chuai; Preece, 2010).

Both Collings e Mellahi (2009) and Lewis e Heckman (2006) argue that an inclusive approach to talent, while well-intentioned, proves ineffective, especially due to the lack of clear guidelines on resource allocation for identifying talent in each employee (Lewis; Heckman, 2006). Moreover, implementing inclusive strategies often struggles to differentiate from traditional human resource management practices (Collings; Mellahi, 2009).

Collings e Mellahi (2009) further proposes that identifying key positions essential for gaining competitive advantage surpasses the approach of individually identifying talents. Cappelli e Keller (2014) historically analyzes the evolution in talent acquisition, initially

focusing on companies' direct search for talents for specific executive roles. However, he notes a growing trend towards strategies that internally develop a sustainable pool of talents prepared to fill these key positions.

Talent retention involves preserving highly talented, high-potential, and high-performing employees, aligning with the company's business goals such as performance enhancement and sustaining a lasting competitive advantage, while minimizing voluntary turnover of talents (Yildiz; Esmer, 2023). As a strategically organizational activity, the responsibility for talent retention extends across the entire leadership of the organization, aiming to foster an environment conducive to the growth and retention of essential talents (Ott; Tolentino; Michailova, 2018).

3 RESEARCH METHOD

This study presents a systematic literature review providing a comprehensive view of a research area. This technique involves identifying relevant articles based on selection criteria and keyword usage to facilitate the visualization of studies and approaches within the theme, as well as suggesting paths for academic research production (Pinto; Sobreiro, 2022).

For the development of this systematic review, five stages were utilized as proposed by Lage Junior and Godinho Filho (2010):

- Stage 1: Definition of selection criteria and identification of potential articles to be analyzed;
- Stage 2: Development of a classification and coding structure;
- Stage 3: Application of the classification structure to synthesize and present trends in studies on evidence of talent retention strategies;
- Stage 4: Development of a framework reflecting the literature review, its main findings, and their representation according to the pre-established coding;
- Stage 5: Analysis and discussion of the main results and, based on these, presenting suggestions for future research.

These stages ensure a methodical approach to gather, analyze, and synthesize existing research on talent retention strategies, providing insights into current trends and informing future academic inquiries in the field.

Considering the first stage of the method, we conducted a search using relevant keywords that should be included in the subject of potential articles to be selected and analyzed.

For this purpose, we used the databases of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) Periodicals Portal and Science Direct in this survey

The focus of the research is to analyze articles that present evidence and factors contributing to the analysis of strategies influencing talent retention. To narrow down the scope required for the systematic review proposal, we searched the databases using the criteria "subject contains"the terms "talent retention"or "retaining talent". Additionally, we used language filters, ensuring analysis of studies in English, which ensures the selection of articles with global reach and peer-reviewed status, ensuring higher quality of selected research.

Material type: articles

Language: English

Review: peer-reviewed

As a result of the searches, 78 articles were identified, of which 39 were discarded; 4 of these could not be reviewed due to lack of access, and finally, 35 articles were selected for the present study. The discards of the 39 articles were mainly motivated by not focusing on talent retention, but rather on talent management in a broader sense, or by using only conceptual methodologies in approaching the topic of talent retention.

Next, as guided by Jabbour (2013) and Lage Junior and Godinho Filho (2010), we proceeded to the second phase of the research method, in which the articles were organized into analysis categories based on distinct criteria

4 CLASSIFICATION AND CODING

The classification structure consists of 8 numbered categories from 1 to 8, which are associated with codes composed of letters (A, B, C, D, etc.) along with numbers. These codes represent subcategories of classification that allow for a deeper analysis of research trends in the context of talent retention strategy analyses. Table 1 outlines the proposed classification structure.

Table 1. – Classification and coding.

Classification	Meaning	Code
1	Geographic location of search	1A America 1B Europe 1C Asia

		1D Africa 1E Oceania 1F Not specified
2	Research method	2A Qualitative approach 2B Quantitative approach 2C Interviews 2D Questionnaire 2E Case study 2F Statistical analysis 2G Thematic analysis
3	Level of analysis	3A Country 3B Sector 3C Company 3D Employee
4	Target audience for the research	4A HR Representatives 4B Management 4C Employees
5	Source of data	5A Primary data 5B Secondary data
6	Surveyed population	6A HR Representatives 6B Management 6C Employees
7	Type of variable "talent retention"	7A Dependent 7B Independent 7C Not applicable
8	Nature of the organization	8A Private 8B Public 8C Not informed

Source: Own elaboration.

Classification 1 encompasses the Geographic Location where the studies were conducted. The coding covers the 5 continents using letters A-E, with F used for studies where the location was not specified.

Classifying studies in a systematic review according to the continent where they were published is crucial, as social, economic, and institutional differences between continents shape research directions and entrepreneurial activity (Hohberger; Wilden, 2022). This approach

allows access to distinct and innovative knowledge, preventing reviews from being limited to a single perspective and expanding the scope of analysis.

To encompass the methods used by authors, we developed Classification 2, composed of categories A-G. Generally, we expect research labeled as "Category 2A - qualitative approach" to be associated with strategies 2C, 2E, and 2F, while research labeled as "Category 2B - quantitative approach" to be linked to strategies 2D, 2E, and 2F.

Through Classification 3, we aim to understand the scope of the study, coded with letters A-D according to the perspective of talent retention strategy analysis (country, sector, company, or employee). Following this, Classification 4 indicates which audience(s) the research is of interest to and is targeted at.

We also analyzed the data format in the research with Classifications 5 and 6, related to data origin and extraction. In Classification 5, codes were created representing two possibilities: "5A - primary data," generated by the authors themselves during the research execution, or "5B - secondary data," where authors used pre-existing data to endorse the study. In Classification 6, we examined the researched population, coded as A-C, indicating the main profiles consulted for generating the analysis data in the research.

Classification 7 evaluates how talent retention is employed in the study to examine the impacts and consequences of retention strategies. In this context, talent retention acts as a "7A - dependent" variable when its performance and effectiveness are influenced by other variables in the process. Conversely, it can be classified as "7B - independent" when it is part of the set of variables influencing another variable, demonstrating its relationship and influence in the analyses. Additionally, it may be "7C - not applicable" in studies where the necessary data to analyze a specific variable may not be available, due to lack of access or unavailability of such data.

Finally, Classification 8 allows consideration of the structure and context of the organizations that were the subjects of analysis in the selected studies. Coded as A-C, "8A - Private" applies to privately owned and managed organizations, while "8B - Public" refers to organizations owned and operated by government or state. The third category, "8C - not specified," indicates that the nature of the organization is not specified or not available in the presented data.

5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Using the proposed classification structure, we examined and categorized the 35 selected articles according to their characteristics, as presented in Figure 1. This classification was developed to make the knowledge and techniques covered in the selected articles more understandable and accessible, as well as to identify research trends and potential areas for future study (Pinto; Sobreiro, 2022).

Selected articles	Classifications							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
(Abraham <i>et al.</i> , 2023)	1C	2A, 2C	3C	4B	5A	6B	7C	8A
(Ahmić; Čizmić, 2021)	1B	2B, 2F	3C	4B	5A	6C	7B	8A
(Ali; Ullah, 2023)	1C	2B, 2F	3B	4B	5A	6C	7B	8A
(Bartrop-Sackey <i>et al.</i> , 2022)	1D	2A, 2C, 2E, 2G	3C	4B	5A	6B, 6C	7C	8C
(Chopra; Sahoo; Patel, 2023)	1C	2B, 2D, 2F	3B, 3C	4B	5A	6C	7B	8C
(Gopalan; Huang; Maharjan, 2021)	1F	2B, 2F	3C	4A, 4B	5B	6B	7A	8C
(Mey; Poisat; Stindt, 2021)	1D	2B, 2D, 2F	3A	4B	5A	6C	7A	8A, 8B
(Mabaso; Dlamini, 2018)	1D	2B, 2D, 2F	3B, 3C	4B	5A	6C	7C	8A
(León; García-Saavedra, 2021)	1A	2B, 2D, 2E, 2F	3D	4A	5A	6C	7C	8A
(Guerra; Valle; Méndez-Suárez, 2023)	1B	2B, 2D, 2F	3C	4B	5A	6B	7A	8C
(Oludayo <i>et al.</i> , 2018)	1D	2B, 2D, 2F	3C	4B	5A	6C	7B	8C
(Satiani <i>et al.</i> , 2013)	1A	2B, 2E, 2F	3B, 3C	4B	5B	6C	7A	8C
(Heyns; McCallaghan; Wet, 2022)	1D	2B, 2D, 2F	3B	4B	5A	6C	7A	8A
(Holland; Scullion, 2021)	1B	2A, 2C, 2E, 2G	3C	4A	5A	6C	7C	8A
(Johnston; Heneghan; Daniels, 2020)	1B	2A, 2C, 2E	3C	4A	5A	6C	7C	8C
(Lesenyeho; Barkhuizen; Schutte, 2018)	1D	2B, 2D, 2F	3B, 3C	4A	5A	6C	7A	8B
(Mabaso <i>et al.</i> , 2021)	1D	2A, 2C, 2E, 2G	3C	4A	5A	6C	7C	8C
(Ferreira; Potgieter, 2021)	1D	2B, 2D, 2F	3A	4A	5A	6C	7C	8A
(Marmenout; Lirio, 2014)	1C	2A, 2C, 2G	3A	4A	5A	6C	7C	8C
(Matongolo; Kasekende; Mafabi, 2018)	1D	2B, 2D, 2F	3B, 3C	4B	5A	6C	7A	8B
(Mukherjee; Chandra; Singh, 2020)	1C	2B, 2D, 2F	3B, 3C	4A	5A	6C	7A	8B
(Oosthuizen; Coetzee; Munro, 2016)	1D	2B, 2D, 2F	3C	4A, 4B	5A	6C	7A	8A
(Premalatha, 2016)	1C	2A, 2C, 2E, 2G	3B, 3C	4A, 4B	5A	6A, 6B, 6C	7C	8A
(Rawshdeh <i>et al.</i> , 2023)	1C	2B, 2D, 2F	3A	4A, 4B	5A	6C	7A	8C
(Redondo; Sparrow; Hernández-Lechuga, 2021)	1A, 1B	2B, 2D, 2F	3B, 3C	4B	5A	6C	7B	8A
(Shabane; Schultz; Hoek, 2017)	1D	2B, 2D, 2F	3B, 3C	4B	5A	6C	7A	8B
(Shingenge; Saurombe, 2022)	1D	2A, 2C, 2G	3C	4A, 4B	5A	6A	7C	8B
(Tlaiss; Martin; Hofaidhllaoui, 2017)	1B	2A, 2C, 2E	3C	4A, 4B	5A	6B	7C	8A
(Wolfswinkel, 2019)	1D	2A, 2C, 2G	3C	4A	5A	6B	7C	8A
(Zaharee <i>et al.</i> , 2018)	1F	2B, 2D, 2G	3B, 3D	4A, 4B	5A	6C	7B	8C
(Zhang <i>et al.</i> , 2015)	1B	2A, 2C, 2E	3C	4A, 4B	5A	6B, 6C	7C	8A
(Zhang; Liang, 2023)	1C	2A, 2C	3B, 3C	4A	5A	6B, 6C	7C	8A
(Mangisa; Schultz; Hoek, 2020)	1D	2B, 2D, 2G	3B, 3D	4A, 4B	5A	6C	7B	8B
(Hanif; Qureshi, 2020)	1C	2B, 2D, 2G	3B, 3C	4A, 4B	5A	6C	7A	8C
(Lin; Wang, 2022)	1B	2A, 2B, 2D, 2F	3C	4A	5A	6B	7A	8C

Figure 1. Articles categorized based on classification and coding structure.

After categorizing the articles, the data was compiled using Google Sheets, and then graphs 19 were generated on the same platform to allow for visual tracking here in the Results and Discussion section.

5.1 GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF RESEARCH

This first classification was created to analyze the selected articles according to the continent where the research was conducted. The current talent management literature has a narrow emphasis on Western economies and companies, which is understandable given local

circumstances and their respective needs. However, in economies where organizations have marked differences in terms of indices and cultural traits, there is a lack of available research and evidence (Scullion; Collings, 2011).

Shifting the analysis to the focus on retention strategies, as illustrated in Figure 2, the data related to the geographic classification of talent retention research shows that 66.66% of the studies were conducted in the East. Additionally, "1A - Africa"(38.89%) emerged as the primary continent publishing research on the analyzed topic.

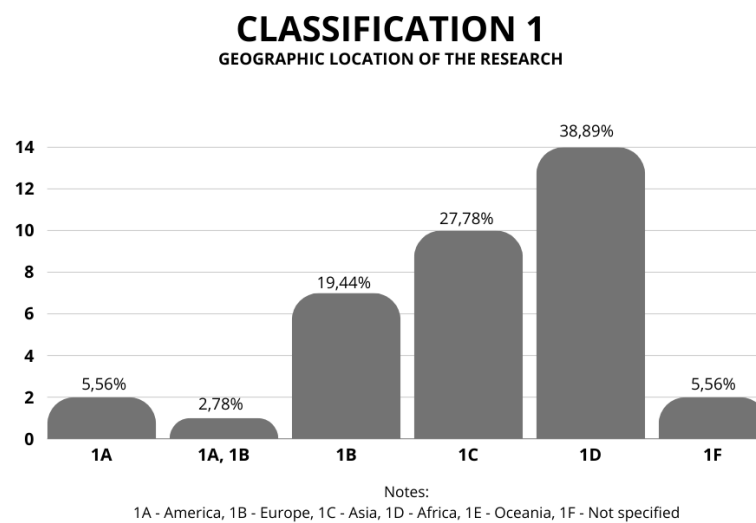


Figure 2. Results from geographic location of the research.

South Africa faces significant challenges in talent retention, as evidenced by research conducted by Deloitte’s Human Capital and published in the "South African Guide to Executive Compensation and Rewards". High employee turnover, especially in difficult economic periods, can impair organizational knowledge and expertise. Additionally, the increasing mobility in the global labor market, where employees have, on average, six employers throughout their careers, exacerbates the retention issue (Olckers; Plessis, 2012).

We also noted that no studies were conducted in "1E - Oceania", and only 2.78% of the studies analyzed contexts across more than one continent. Organizational behavior varies between countries, making it essential for managers to recognize and effectively handle cultural diversity. Cultural differences, exemplified by dimensions such as individualism-collectivism, directly impact management and require approaches tailored to each context (León; García-

Saavedra, 2021). Therefore, intercontinental research becomes crucial for understanding and addressing these cultural particularities, thereby enhancing organizational performance in international and globalized settings.

5.2 RESEARCH METHOD

In Figure 3, we observe the distribution of studies according to the research method employed. Considering the grouped codes, 63.88% of the studies employ a quantitative approach, 33.33% use a qualitative approach, and only one article (2.78%) combines both approaches. These results corroborate the findings of McDonnell et al. (2017), who noted that 1 in 6 articles in the field of Talent Management contained empirical components, of which 56% were quantitative research.

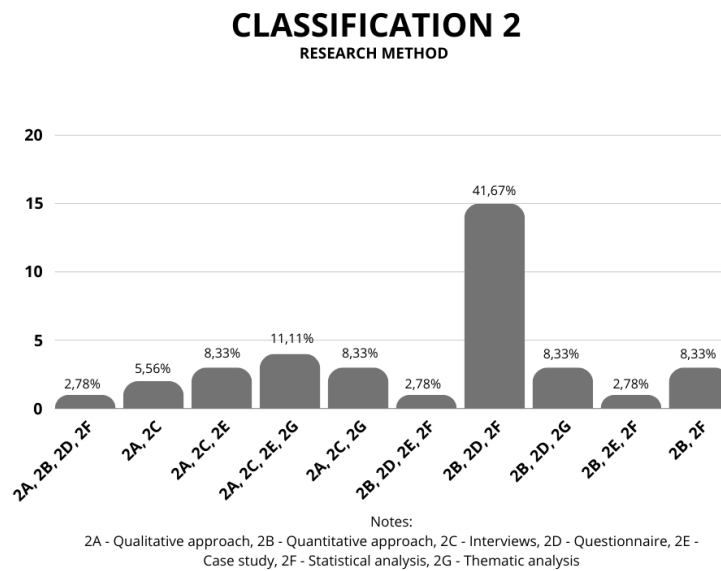


Figure 3. Results from research method of the articles.

A qualitative research framework provides a detailed outline for testing hypotheses, explained in a clear and defined manner. Quantitative research is predominantly focused on collecting numerical data and often relies on deductive reasoning to form a view on the likelihood of occurrence and its nature, subsequently testing whether this view is correct, partially correct, or incorrect (Shabane; Schultz; Hoek, 2017).

In our study, articles classified as "2B - quantitative" combine, in 41.67% of cases, the use of questionnaires with statistical analysis of the collected data. In contrast, "2A -

qualitative"research often combines interviews, case studies, and template analysis, representing 11.11% of articles in this category. We observe that quantitative research tends to follow a more consistent pattern in terms of selected methods.

Although these studies are grounded in empirical methods, as demonstrated in Figure 4, nearly 90% of the sample has a smaller scale, with up to 500 observations. This indicates that, despite using empirical methods for data collection and analysis, most studies are conducted with relatively small samples, which may limit the generalizability of the results.

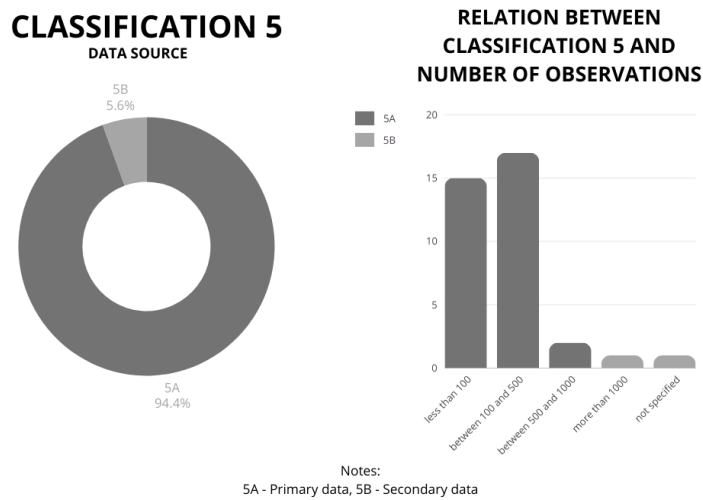


Figure 4. Results from data source and relation between data source and number of observations.

Moreover, only 5.6% of the articles used "5B - secondary data", where the number of observations significantly exceeded the standard of studies using "5A - primary data". The article by Gopalan, Huang e Maharjan (2021) utilized 25,906 observations, while Satiani et al. (2013), although not specifying the exact quantity, also used open databases from companies to extract study variables.

This finding underscores the need to adopt more comprehensive research designs, allowing for greater quantity and variation of data, covering a larger number of companies, analyzing longer periods, and considering already available variables. The inclusion of secondary data can provide a more robust basis for analysis, enhancing the external validity of studies.

5.3 LEVEL OF ANALYSIS

The level of analysis consists of categorizing the layers of perspective selected by the authors to address the topic of talent retention strategies. These can be understood in four main perspectives: country (macro level), sector (macro level), company (organizational level), and employee (individual level) (Gallardo-Gallardo; Thunnissen, 2016).

As shown in Figure 5, we aimed to capture the levels suggested by Gallardo-Gallardo and Thunnissen (2016) and coded the analysis possibilities into the following categories: "3A - country", "3B - sector", "3C - company", and "3D - employee".

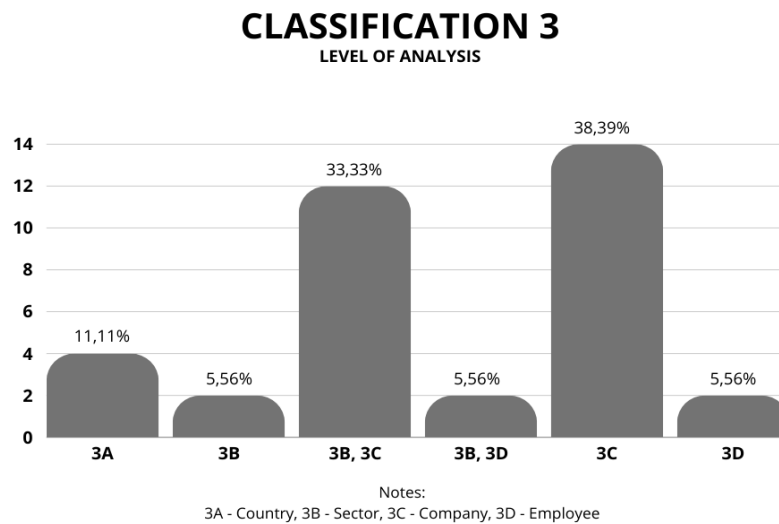


Figure 5. Results from level of analyses of the researchs.

The employee level "3D - employee" appeared in 5.56% of the articles. Although less frequent, this level of analysis is essential for understanding talent retention strategies as it directly focuses on the impact of TM practices on individuals. The employee perspective is crucial as their experiences and perceptions directly influence their decision to stay or leave the organization (NGUYEN, 2020).

Finally, the macro level represented by the categories "3A - country" and "3B - sector" appears less frequently (11.11% and 5.56% respectively), indicating less emphasis on analyses in regional or sectoral contexts.

5.4 RESEARCH TARGET AUDIENCE

The research target audience indicates which groups the research is aimed at and who can benefit from the results. Analysis of Figure 6 reveals a significant gap in the sample when

it comes to "4C - employees" as a target audience for research on talent retention. The absence of studies aimed at employees as a target audience may represent a missed opportunity to share best market practices. Such research could benefit employees who identify as talent, providing them with valuable information to make informed decisions when selecting a job, for example.

CLASSIFICATION 4 RESEARCH TARGET AUDIENCE

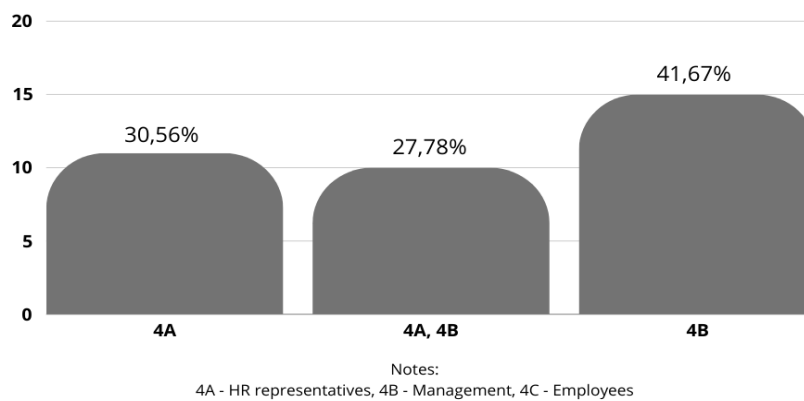


Figure 6. Results from research target audience.

This responsibility should be viewed as a corporate issue, where HR leaders are also considered essential talent who will play a key role in executing the (NGUYEN, 2020) retention strategy. Therefore, 27.78% of the articles seek to contribute to both "4B - management" and "4A - HR representatives".

Consequently, research aimed at "4A - HR representatives", 30.56% of the sample, addresses practical aspects of daily Human Resources, such as mentoring programs Johnston, Heneghan e Daniels (2020), employee satisfaction assessment León e García-Saavedra (2021) and generational profiles Lin e Wang (2022).

These results emphasize the need for close collaboration between management and HR representatives to develop and execute effective talent retention strategies. This collaboration plays a crucial role in achieving organizational objectives, reinforcing the importance of adopting a joint and integrated approach to talent retention.

5.5 SURVEYED POPULATION

Recognized as a crucial asset for the long-term success of organizations, human capital has become fundamental (Pandita; Ray, 2018). When exploring the main perspectives in

Classification 6, we observed in Figure 7 that in 80.55% of the studies, the "6C - employee" perspective was collected. This approach highlights the importance of understanding employees to effectively retain them.

A single study Premalatha (2016) stood out in covering all three perspectives simultaneously, contributing to the field with different perspectives through seven propositions that indicate the returns of talent retention strategies, including effective human resource management practices, retention of young and experienced, promoting gender inclusion and employee recognition.

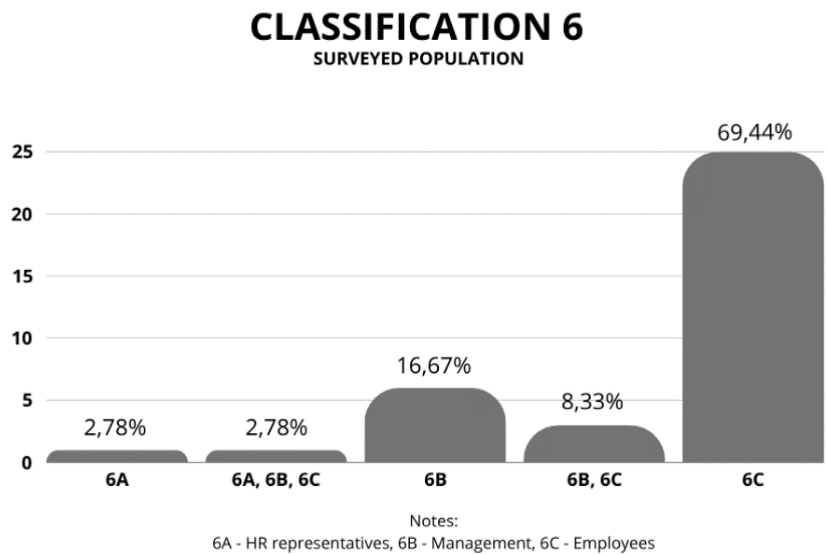
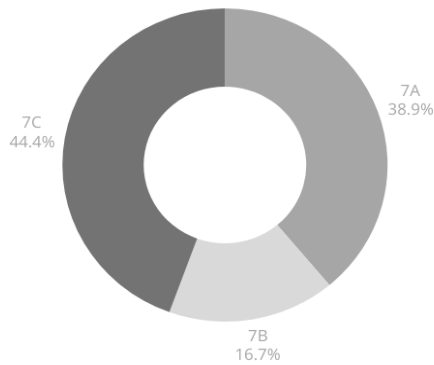


Figure 7. Results from surveyed population from the articles.

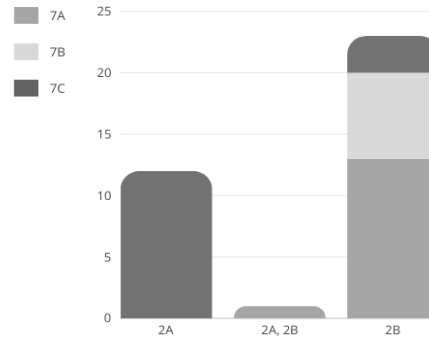
5.6 TYPE OF VARIABLE “TALENT RETENTION”

When classifying the “talent retention” variable in this study, our objective was to assess its centrality in the analyzes and identify which other variables support it to establish relevant correlations. Figure 8 illustrates the results revealing that 38.89% consider “talent retention” as a “7A - dependent” variable, 16.67% as “7B - independent”, and 44.44 % as “7C - not applicable.”

CLASSIFICATION 7 TYPE OF VARIABLE "TALENT RETENTION"



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CLASSIFICATION 2 AND 7



Notes:
7A - dependent, 7B - independent, 7C - not applicable
2A - qualitative approach, 2B - quantitative approach

Figure 8. Results from type pf variable “talent retention” and the relationship between classification 2 and 7.

The predominance of “7C - not applicable” occurs due to the fact that most studies in this category adopt a “2A - qualitative approach.” However, when focusing on research with “2B - quantitative approach,” we observed that 56.52% of them use “talent retention” as a variable “7A - dependent” and 30.43% use it as “7B - independent.”

In relation to studies in which the talent retention variable is treated as independent, its analysis stands out as an influence on laissez-faire (Ali; Ullah, 2023) leadership, impact on the construction of the employer brand (Chopra; Sahoo; Patel, 2023), influence on employees’ attitude towards work (Oludayo et al., 2018), and its relationship with transformational leadership (Mangisa; Schultz; Hoek, 2020)

This diversity of approaches reflects the complexity of the phenomenon of talent retention; the studies do not have standard analysis proposals, in order to compare similar variables in different organizational contexts, for example.

5.7 NATURE OF THE ORGANIZATION

When exploring the nature of the organization in Classification 8, which covers the ownership of the organizations surveyed (“8A - Private”, “8B - Public” or “8C - not reported”),

we observed that just over one third (36.11%) of the studies do not make this organizational context explicit, as shown in Figure 9. If information from these articles were found, Gallardo-Gallardo and Thunnissen (2016) believe, based on findings from other reviews in the field of Talent Management, a predominant focus on large private organizations operating on a global or international level, such as multinationals and international companies.

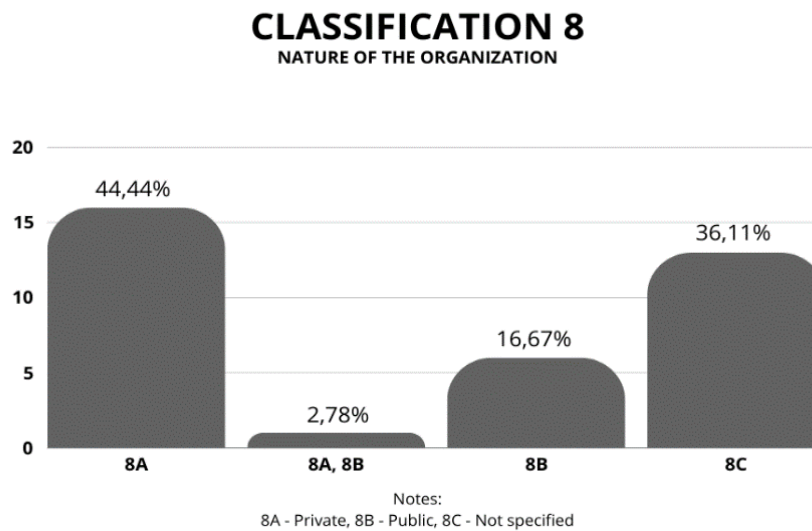


Figure 9. Results from nature of organization.

Privately owned organizations (“8A - Private”) appear in 44.44% of the sample studies and propose to study multinationals (Holland; Scullion, 2021; ??; Tlaiss; Martin; Hofaidhllaoui, 2017), specific industries such as pharmaceuticals (Ali; Ullah, 2023; León; García-Saavedra, 2021; Heyns; McCallaghan; Wet, 2022), information technology (IT) (Oosthuizen; Coetzee; Munro, 2016; Premalatha, 2016; Zhang; Liang, 2023), textile and hospitality (NGUYEN, 2020; Ferreira; Potgieter, 2021).

In the field of public organizations, the main segments studied were universities (Le senyeho; Barkhuizen; Schutte, 2018; Matongolo; Kasekende; Mafabi, 2018), government-controlled companies, both broadly as the study of retention in the context of state-owned companies in India (Mukherjee; Chandra; Singh, 2020), and in case study format, such as the African electricity supply company (Mangisa; Schultz; Hoek, 2020). In addition to these, they also observed contexts in a military unit (Shabane; Schultz; Hoek, 2017) and in an administrative council of a city in Namibia (Shingenge; Saurombe, 2022).

6 CONCLUSION

Given the current talent shortage, encouraging employees to stay and excel at a company becomes increasingly critical. This requires improving talent management systems, especially considering intense competition, unfavorable demographic changes and the growing demand for qualified talent (Ahmić; Čizmić, 2021).

In this study, we seek to systematize the academic knowledge generated by research on talent retention, exploring the methods, contexts and variables involved in generating evidence in this field. In addition to understanding the current state of research, our goal is to identify future opportunities to advance this crucial topic.

The results of our study indicate a predominant geographic concentration of talent retention research in the East, with limited intercontinental explorations. Furthermore, few studies adopt a detailed analysis by country, investigating different cultural and economic contexts. A research opportunity would be to expand this analysis to countries on different continents, allowing multinationals to understand retention strategy patterns more comprehensively. This approach would also be particularly relevant in mergers and acquisitions (M&A) contexts, offering companies academic insights into retention best practices tailored to these specific situations.

We also observed that, despite the predominance of quantitative methodologies, which indicate a preference for structured and standardized approaches to data analysis, the majority (94.4%) of research uses primary data, with a relatively low average of 188 observations. The use of secondary data offers an opportunity to work with a larger sample and increase the capacity for temporal and comparative analysis between different companies, contexts and variables.

Furthermore, the studies analyzed do not present a pattern of correlated variables to measure talent retention, and the determination of talent varies significantly between studies. The lack of standardization of these two issues makes it difficult to compare retention strategies. However, in general, talent retention is associated with talent management processes, especially in the areas of acquisition, leadership relations, work relations and turnover. The absence of a standardized assessment model makes a more integrated and adaptive approach essential to understanding and applying effective retention strategies.

The research opportunities presented here would provide significant benefits to the academic community, providing detailed answers to questions such as the types of data collected, the frequency of such collection, the effectiveness of the strategies implemented in comparison to others, the effort required and the results expected from health professionals. HR, what data is common between companies and whether a given strategy presented similar results in different periods. This more comprehensive approach would allow for a more complete and in-depth understanding of talent retention practices in the corporate environment.

We hope that this work will facilitate the meeting of researchers in the area of talent retention, providing references and opening new opportunities for the development of future research. However, our undergraduate work faced inherent limitations. The complexity of talent management, with a focus on retention strategies, could require a more extensive analysis. Time and resource constraints inevitably influenced the depth of the investigation, limiting the scope of the study. We recognize that findings may not be generalizable to all contexts or sectors, reflecting specific nuances that may not be universally applicable. A selective approach to retention strategies can result in a limited understanding of talent management as a whole, without fully exploring the diversity of existing practices and theories.

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