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Analysis of Reward and Career Development on Employee Retention with Job Satisfaction as an Intervening Variable at the PLTU Asam-Asam South Kalimantan

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze Rewards and Career Development on Employee Retention and Job Satisfaction of Employees at Asam-Asam PLTU, South Kalimantan. Rewards and career development are important factors in retaining employees and increasing job satisfaction, especially in the electric power industry that demands high skills and loyalty. Literature review shows that rewards, both financial and non-financial, have a positive impact on employee motivation and loyalty. Career development is also considered a key aspect in increasing employee engagement and reducing turnover. The method used in this study is a quantitative method with a survey approach and questionnaire distribution, then the data is processed using the help of smartpls software. The results of this study are rewards, career development, and job satisfaction have a significant influence on employee retention at Asam-Asam PLTU, South Kalimantan. This finding confirms that an effective employee retention strategy must include a combination of fair rewards, career development opportunities, and increased job satisfaction to create a more attractive and supportive work environment.

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, many companies are starting to worry about the increasingly tight labor market and this is a very significant challenge for every business owner to be able to find and retain employees who have the best reputation (Isnaini, 2024). According to the explanation, the most difficult challenge for every business owner is not managing their human resources but retaining their best employees to continue working and wanting to work in the company (Khristian et al., 2022). Regarding management, it is no longer one of the things to worry about, but the main concern is that the company will lose its best employees which will affect the company's performance. Although in the current conditions technology is one of the most important things and plays a role in business development, employee value is one of the important things because when there are no humans in a business, technology cannot operate either (Saputra et al., 2021). For this reason, competent employees who have extraordinary skills must be retained as much as possible by each company. If these conditions are not implemented, the impact is that the company will find it difficult to develop, including implementing technologies that the company has previously mastered (Kumara, 2020). In accordance with the explanation, the success of each company is long-term depending on the ability of employees to maintain their human resources so that they can continue to work in the company for a long period of time (Ishak & Pratama, 2021).

As one of the strategic components in the national energy sector, the PLTU Asam-Asam South Kalimantan plays an important role in providing electricity to meet domestic and industrial needs. In its capacity as a corporate entity, PLTU Asam-Asam South Kalimantan is faced with a major challenge to ensure a reliable energy supply while maintaining workforce stability. Challenging working conditions, high operational demands, and competition with other companies in the same industry, place employee retention as one of the company's top priorities. Losing the best employees not only impacts operational performance, but can also disrupt the continuity of technology implementation and innovation needed to increase company productivity (Ishak & Pratama, 2021).

H1: Reward has a positive and significant effect on employee retention, H2: Career development has a positive and significant effect on employee retention, H3: Job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employee retention. This is related to the retention of each employee. Conceptually, retention is part of the process of how each employee is continuously encouraged to continue working in the company and with the organization for the maximum period of time (Pratama, 2023). This is different from the explanation which states that the efforts made by each company to retain its potential employees are part of employee retention so that the goals of each company are achieved. (Lismana & Fadli, 2024). Employee retention is one of the important things because the company will be able to have potential employees for a longer period of time because when someone leaves the company it will backfire on each employee so that the company's confidential data can be leaked. So that employee retention actions are very safe to minimize other information obtained by certain companies from having these employees. (Disa & Djastuti, 2020). To reach an agreement, there needs to be rewards,

career development and job satisfaction in increasing employee retention or employee job satisfaction.

H4: Reward has a positive and significant effect on the job satisfaction. In accordance with the explanation in order to retain employees, companies must pay attention to factors related to job satisfaction (Yani & Saputra, 2023).. Conceptually, job satisfaction is part of the feelings and attitudes and reactions that arise from the work that employees do (Muchlisin, 2023). Employee satisfaction in working will be able to be the spirit to continue working in the company so as not to compare the work that employees do in the company with other companies (Kumara, 2020) . In accordance with the explanation, the higher the level of job satisfaction, the company can be assessed that the management of its employee needs is also running well (Isnaini, 2024). For this reason, the comfort that needs to be built is to achieve a level of job satisfaction, the higher the job satisfaction of each employee, basically the employees are comfortable working there and will be committed to continuing to work in the company. To be able to achieve job satisfaction, there needs to be an award (Adiawaty, 2019; Muchlisin, 2023). An award has a strong relationship to the language of each job (Nurmalitasari, 2021). Companies must pay attention to the award system because it will be able to encourage behavioral patterns and attitudes of each employee to continue to be happy and happy in every job that employees do. Conceptually, an award is part of the reward that will be received by each employee for what the employee has done or worked on in the form of compensation or outside of compensation. In addition to the form of compensation, pawning can also be done in the form of career development. It is different again (Saputra et al., 2021) with the explanation that awards can be in the form of awards in the form of money and awards in the form of non-money (Sukanto et al., 2024). If the award is in the form of money, it will have an impact on the salary that employees receive, including additional allowances or salary increases, in addition, in non-financial awards, it is related to the appreciation given by each company to the employee for their dedication to working at the agency (Kumara, 2021).

H5: Career development has a positive and significant effect on the job satisfaction. In addition to the awards that employees must receive, another factor that influences increased job satisfaction is career development. According to the explanation, job satisfaction can be created when employee contributions to work can be achieved properly according to the abilities of each employee (Tristiyanti, 2024). For this reason, providing a better opportunity for each employee to continue to advance and provide development opportunities with a positive career ladder provides a sense of enthusiasm for work and motivates employees to continue to develop themselves (Ilyasa & Darmastuti, 2022). Work development is part of the process carried out by each company intentionally with the aim of making each individual able to improve their career abilities and make a positive contribution to fulfilling their careers from the job level (Kurniawati, 2024; Lestari & Utami, 2024). For this reason, when the company provides career development opportunities, this will have a positive impact by fulfilling the company's needs and developing employees' desires to improve their performance and careers.

H6: Rewards have a positive and significant effect on employee retention through job satisfaction as a mediating variable, H7: Career development has a positive and significant effect on employee retention through job satisfaction as a mediating variable. Previous research on the topic of analyzing each employee's rewards and career development from the company towards the retention of each employee with job satisfaction (Rafsanzhani, 2023). In accordance with previous research, several studies have been conducted that are in accordance with this topic so that this will strengthen the direction of the research. In accordance with research conducted by Khuzaimah regarding compensation or rewards given to each employee with a sample of 300 people in the AP company, it shows that the results of the study show that the compensation or rewards given by the company to each employee have a positive effect on the retention of each employee (Mering et al., 2023). For this reason, rewards in the form of compensation given as much as possible by each employee have a direct impact on the willingness of each employee to stay in the company (Reiningsih Reke et al., 2023). This is in accordance with other studies which state that the retention of each employee is directly influenced by the rewards received at the (Ilyasa & Darmastuti, 2022; Ummah & Rakhmawati, 2024). However, this is different from the results of several other researchers who stated that the compensation or rewards given to each employee have a negative effect on the retention of each employee (Nurdiani & Megawati, 2024).

Furthermore, research related to career development in the form of training provided to the company. In accordance with research conducted by Milena and Moon related to compensation for training and development of each employee, it turns out that the results have a positive effect on employee retention (Reiningsih Reke et al., 2023). This conveys that employees will be interested in working at the company if employees are given training and career development so that the position of each employee will have a definite career level. However, this result is different from other studies which state that the retention of each employee is not directly influenced by training or career development (Cipto et al., 2024). Therefore, training or career development does not necessarily affect the retention of each employee.

In addition to rewards in the form of compensation or career development in the form of training, retention of each employee is also influenced by job satisfaction felt by each employee. According to the results of research conducted by Tab and Mayer, it shows that job satisfaction of each employee has a positive influence on the retention of each employee (Bella et al., 2024).. In addition, several studies have also explained that job satisfaction experienced by each employee has a direct and positive influence on the retention of each employee (Lismana & Fadli, 2024). However, these results differ from other studies which state that employee satisfaction at work actually has a negative influence on the retention of each employee (Apriliani et al., 2024).

According to the research results that have been obtained, the awards received by each employee have a positive effect on employee retention (Rafsanzhani, 2023). In addition, self-development in each employee will have a positive impact on employee retention in the long term (Cipto et al., 2024). Although many studies have discussed the effect of career development

awards and job satisfaction on employee retention, specific studies in the context of the energy sector in Indonesia, especially at the PLTU Asam-Asam South Kalimantan, are still limited. Unique working conditions, geographical challenges, and the need for highly skilled workers make this topic relevant for further research. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine the Effect of Rewards and Career Development on Employee Retention with Job Satisfaction in Asam-Asam PLTU employees, South Kalimantan. Theoretically, this study will enrich the literature on human resource management in the energy sector. Practically, the results of this study can be a guide for the management of PLTU Asam-Asam South Kalimantan and similar companies to design more effective employee strategies, thereby supporting the sustainability of company operations and performance.

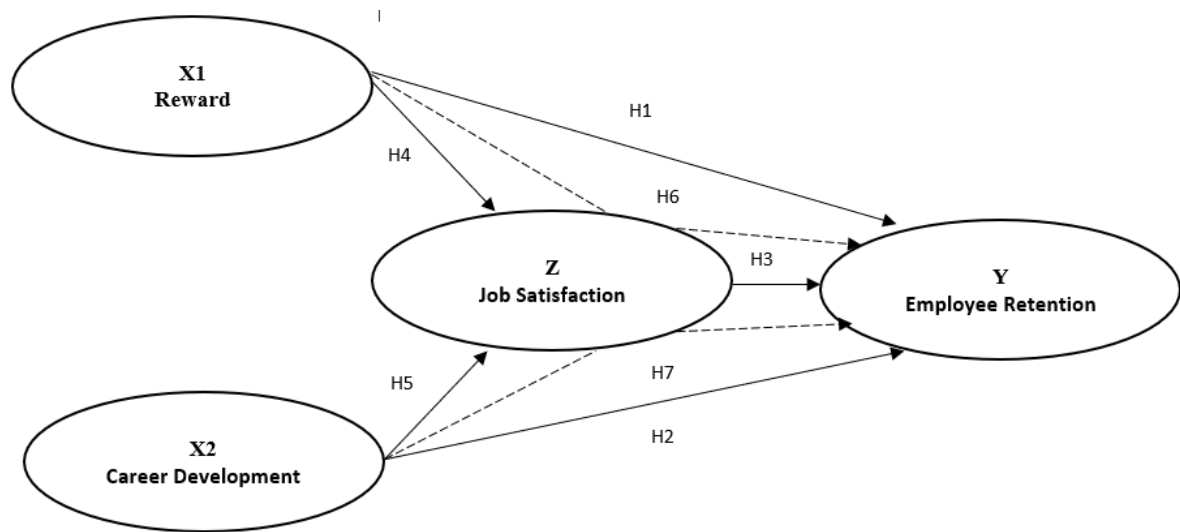


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Hypothesis. To facilitate the research process, the steps that need to be taken are to create a hypothesis or temporary conclusion from all research objectives.

H1: Reward has a positive and significant effect on the employees retention.

H2: Career development has a positive and significant effect on the employees retention.

H3: Job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on the employees retention.

H4: Reward has a positive and significant effect on the job satisfaction.

H5: Career development has a positive and significant effect on the job satisfaction

H6: Rewards have a positive and significant effect on employee retention through job satisfaction as a mediating variable.

H7: Career development has a positive and significant effect on employee retention through job

satisfaction as a mediating variable.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study utilizes quantitative research with a quantitative descriptive research design (Hermawan & Hariyanto, 2022). The research conducted will focus on the dependent variable and independent variables in the form of awards and career development then employee retention variables. Research needs to pay attention to the population level and sample level which will later be used to obtain research data. The population of this study were employees at the PLTU Asam-Asam South Kalimantan totaling 181 people. Then through certain stages of determining the sample using the Slovin formula, the sample of this study amounted to 124.6 or 125 respondents. The technique used to obtain the sample is Simple random sampling. In accordance with the explanation, this technique is carried out in order to obtain a random target sample of any respondent (Sugiyono, 2022). For this reason, from the 125 employees, a questionnaire test will be given to obtain research data. A study needs to have data sources that will be useful for research. These data sources are divided into two, namely primary sources and secondary sources with different types of data (Rachmawati & Faedlulloh, 2021). If this research uses primary sources, then the data comes from questionnaire data or interview data or observations conducted directly at the research company. While secondary data becomes supporting data and strengthens the arguments of the research conducted including the existence of previous research journals and other reports.

Research requires various kinds of information and data to be utilized in the processing process. For that, information and data that support the research will be obtained when researchers apply appropriate techniques. For that, the research techniques that will be carried out in this study are: 1) The questionnaire technique utilizes various kinds of questions and statements that are in accordance with the research to obtain data in the form of numbers or other statements. This action will be carried out based on a questionnaire instrument that has been previously determined and tested for validity and reliability. This questionnaire will be distributed to each employee at the PLTU Asam-Asam South Kalimantan with the aim of obtaining research data. 2) Observation techniques in obtaining research data can be done by conducting direct observations at the PLTU Asam-Asam South Kalimantan. This step is taken to obtain real data and directly at the related company.

Data processing in this study used smartPLS SEM (Partial Least Square – Structural Equation Modeling) Software. PLS is able to explain the relationship between variables and is able to perform analyzes in a single test. The purpose of PLS is to help researchers confirm theories and to explain whether or not there is a relationship between latent variables (Lismana & Fadli, 2024). According to the PLS method, it is able to describe latent variables (not directly measurable) and is measured using indicators. The author uses *Partial Least Square* because this study is a latent variable that can be measured based on its indicators so that the author can analyze it with clear and detailed calculations. The tests used in this study include the Construct Reliability Analysis test, the Loading Factor Values test, the Bootstrapping Analysis test, and

the Path Coefficients Estimation test.

2. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Respondents Profile. Respondent profiles in research are descriptions of the characteristics of respondents who participate in research, which aims to understand their background and ensure suitability with research objectives. The profile of respondents in this study can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Respondents Profile

Male	Female
125	0
125	0

Source : Data Processing Results (2025)

Based on Table 1, it shows that the respondents in this study were 125 employees.

Measurement model analysis or *outer model*) in study This using *construct reliability and validity* tests. The criteria used includes Cronbach's Alpha (> 0.7), Rho_A (> 0.7), Composite Reliability (> 0.6), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (> 0.5). These values indicate internal consistency and construct validity in the research model. Cronbach's Alpha and Rho_A measure reliability indicators, while Composite Reliability assesses model stability, and AVE shows proportion variance explained by the construct. Results of the analysis reliability and validity construct in study This displayed in Table 2 following:

Table 1 Results of Construct Reliability Analysis

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite Reliability (rho_c)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Reward	0.908	0.913	0.927	0.647
Career Development	0.883	0.884	0.909	0.589
Retention Employee	0.875	0.874	0.903	0.573
Job Satisfaction	0.857	0.858	0.891	0.540

Source : Data Processing Results (2025)

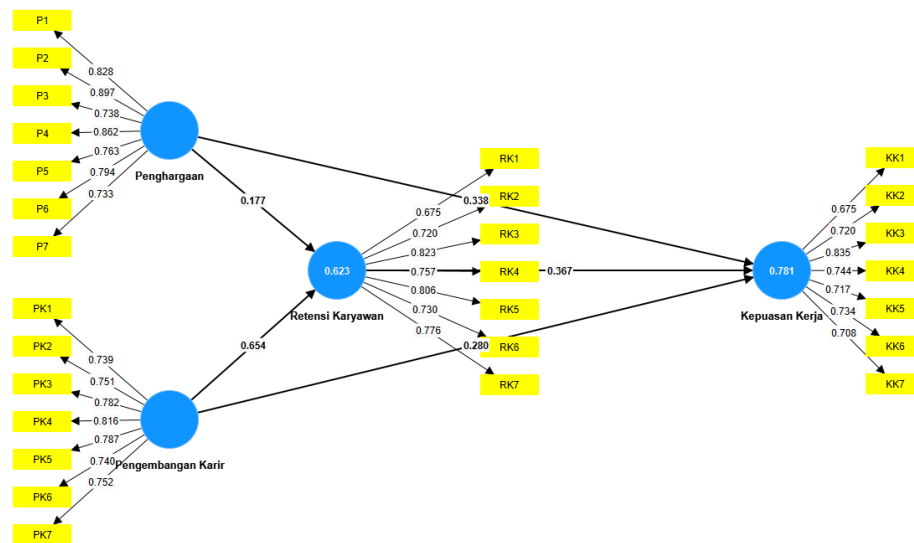
Cronbach's Alpha value of more than 0.7 indicates that the research instrument is consistent in measuring each variable. In addition, the *Composite Reliability value* (rho_A and rho_C) which is also above 0.7 indicates that the indicators in each variable are well related to each other. Meanwhile, the *Average Variance Extracted* (AVE) value which exceeds 0.5 indicates that each variable is able to explain the measured construct quite well. Thus, the instrument used in this study is reliable and worthy of further analysis with the *loading factor values* in Table 2 as follows.

Table 2 Average Loading Factor Values

	Job Satisfaction	Career Development	Reward	Retention Employee
Reward			0.801	
CD		0.766		
RE				0.768
JS	0.736			

Source : Data Processing Results (2025)

Based on the data in the Table 3, most of the statement items in the variables *Job Satisfaction*, *Career Development*, *Rewards*, and *Employee Retention* have values above 0.70, which indicates good validity in measuring each construct. Although there are several items with values close to the limit, all indicators can still be used in further analysis. Furthermore, hypothesis testing is carried out by assessing the *t-values* on each path of the relationship between variables. The *calculated t value* is obtained through the *bootstrap process* using SmartPLS software version 3.0, which produces *t-statistics* to test the significance of the structural model (*inner model*) and the measurement model (*outer model*).

**Figure 2 Bootstrapping Analysis Results**

Source : Data Processing Results (2025)

If the significance value of a variable is less than 0.05, then the variable is considered significant, while if the significance value is more than 0.05, then the variable is declared insignificant. Hypothesis testing in this study can be done by looking at the p-value. If the p-value ≤ 0.05 , then the relationship between variables is significant (has a positive influence). Path coefficient estimation is used to measure the strength of the influence between variables and explain the level of relationship between variables, which is presented in the following Table 4.

Table 3Path Coefficients Estimation Results

Hypothesis	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Development Career -> Job Satisfaction	0.280	0.278	0.105	2,654	0.008
Development Career -> Retention Employee	0.654	0.649	0.125	5,234	0,000
Rewards -> Satisfaction Work	0.338	0.332	0.069	4,923	0,000
Rewards -> Retention Employee	0.177	0.175	0.122	1,450	0.147
Retention Employee -> Job Satisfaction	0.367	0.377	0.106	3,459	0.001

Source: Data Processing Results (2025)

The *path coefficients* estimation show that career development has a significant influence on job satisfaction with a *path coefficient value* of 0.280 and a *p-value* of 0.008. The *t-statistics value* of 2.654 shows that the better the career development provided, the level of employee job satisfaction will increase significantly. In addition, career development career also has an effect significant to retention employee with *path coefficient* of 0.654 and a *p-value* of 0.000. The high *t-statistics value*, namely 5.234, indicates that the more good development program applied career, the more tall trend employee for stay in the company.

Rewards also have influence positive and significant to satisfaction Work with *path coefficient* of 0.338 and *p-value* of 0.000. The *t-statistics value* of 4,923 indicates that the more tall awards given to employees, then level satisfaction Work employee will increased. However, the award No influential significant to retention employee with *path coefficient* of 0.177 and *p-value* of 0.147. The *t-statistics value* of 1,450 indicates that connection between rewards and retention employee No Enough strong for it is said significant, so that award No in a way direct contribute to decision employee For still stay in the company.

Next, the results analysis show that retention employee influential significant to satisfaction Work with *path coefficient* of 0.367 and *p-value* of 0.001. The *t-statistics value* of 3,459 indicates strong relationship between second variable said. With thus, the more tall level retention employees, increasingly high level satisfaction Work employees. In overall, results analysis This show that development career and awards play a role important in increase satisfaction Work employees. In addition, the development career own influence strong to retention employees, while award No give impact significant to decision employee for stay in the company.

The Impact of Career Development on Job Satisfaction and Employee Retention. The results of the analysis show that career development has a significant effect on job satisfaction with a *path coefficient value* of 0.280 and a *p-value* of 0.008. This shows that the better the career development program provided by the company, the higher the level of employee job satisfaction. A well-structured career development program provides opportunities for

employees to improve their skills and achieve higher career levels, so that employees feel appreciated and motivated in their work (Rahmawati et al., 2024) . In addition, career development also has a significant effect on employee retention with a *path coefficient value* of 0.654 and a *p-value* of 0.000. The *t-statistics value* of 5.234 shows that the greater the career development opportunities provided, the greater the tendency of employees to stay in the company. The career development program provided to employees at the Asam-Asam PLTU, South Kalimantan, has improved their skills in operating and maintaining power plants, so that they feel more confident and satisfied with their jobs. In addition, promotion opportunities that are open to high-achieving employees make them more motivated to develop within the company. With clear Career Development, employees become more loyal and choose to continue working at the Asam-Asam PLTU in the long term, so that employee retention rates increase. This is in accordance with previous research which states that career development opportunities are one of the main factors in retaining employees (Syah et al., 2025) .

The Impact of Rewards on Job Satisfaction and Employee Retention. The results of the analysis show that awards have a significant effect on job satisfaction with a *path coefficient value* of 0.338 and a *p-value* of 0.000. The *t-statistics value* of 4.923 indicates that the higher the award given by the company, the greater the level of employee job satisfaction. Awards given in the form of incentives, bonuses, or recognition for work achievements can increase employee satisfaction and motivation in working (Karyaadi et al., 2024). However, awards No influential significant to retention employee with mark *path coefficient* of 0.177 and *p-value* of 0.147. The *t-statistics value* of 1,450 indicates that connection between rewards and retention employee No Enough strong for it is said significant. This means that although rewards can increase job satisfaction, this factor is not necessarily the main reason employees choose to stay in the company. However, the implementation of a fair reward system at the Asam-Asam PLTU, South Kalimantan, such as performance-based bonuses, salary increases, and employee recognition programs, has increased employee job satisfaction. Employees feel valued and appreciated for their contributions, which leads to higher motivation and engagement in their tasks. As a result, this positive work environment encourages employees to stay with the company in the long term, thereby increasing employee retention rates at Asam-Asam PLTU.

The Impact of Employee Retention on Job Satisfaction. Employee retention has a significant effect on job satisfaction with a *path coefficient value* of 0.367 and a *p-value* of 0.001. The *t-statistics value* of 3.459 indicates a fairly strong relationship between these two variables. The higher the level of employee retention, the higher the level of employee job satisfaction. High employee retention reflects a conducive work environment, job stability, and the existence of company policies that support employee welfare so that employees feel comfortable and motivated in working (Ilmiyah et al., 2025) . The high employee retention rate at the Asam-Asam PLTU, South Kalimantan, creates a stable and conducive work environment, where employees feel more comfortable and confident in carrying out their duties. The sustainability of this working relationship also strengthens teamwork, increases a sense of togetherness, and reduces stress due to high employee turnover. Thus, the stability of the workforce that is maintained has a positive impact on employee job satisfaction, because they can work more

calmly, productively, and are motivated to continue to develop in the company.

3. CONCLUSION & SUGGESTION

Conclusion. Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the factors of rewards, career development, and job satisfaction have a significant influence on employee retention at PLTU Asam-Asam South Kalimantan. Career development is proven to have the strongest influence in increasing employee retention, which indicates that the opportunity to develop within the organization is very important for the sustainability of the workforce in the company. In addition, rewards have a positive impact on employee job satisfaction, which in turn contributes to increased employee retention. However, rewards directly do not have a significant influence on employee decisions to stay in the company. This indicates that although rewards can increase job satisfaction, other factors such as career development are more dominant in determining employee retention. These findings confirm that an effective employee retention strategy must include a combination of fair rewards, career development opportunities, and increased job satisfaction to create a more attractive and supportive work environment.

Suggestion. Based on the results of direct surveys in the field and the distribution of questionnaires, the suggestions that can be conveyed in this study are as follows. PLTU Asam-Asam South Kalimantan needs to provide training, clear promotion opportunities, and mentoring to improve employee competence and motivation. In addition to financial compensation, companies can provide non-financial rewards such as recognition of achievements and better work facilities. Creating a comfortable work environment, good communication, and employee involvement in decision making can increase job satisfaction. Job satisfaction surveys and exit interviews can be used to assess and improve employee retention strategies.

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