

Implementing Human Resource Strategies for Enhancing Employee Performance in the Livestock Sector: A Case Study of Talent Retention and Development

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the implementation of human resource (HR) strategies aimed at enhancing employee performance, talent retention, and development in the livestock sector. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected from interviews with HR managers, supervisors, and employees, supplemented by employee questionnaires and direct observations. Findings reveal that HR strategies focusing on professional development—such as structured training programs and career advancement opportunities—significantly improve employee performance and job satisfaction. Farms implementing these practices experienced a retention rate increase from 60% to 85%, leading to greater workforce stability and reduced recruitment costs. Additionally, employee productivity improved by 30%, as workers gained technical expertise and adaptability to technological advancements in livestock management. However, financial constraints and limited access to modern HR technology pose challenges to broader implementation. Many farms struggle to allocate resources for sustained HR initiatives, and rural operations face difficulties in integrating digital HR tools for training and performance tracking. The impact of these findings is significant. Continuous investment in employee development is essential for maintaining productivity and competitiveness, particularly in industries undergoing rapid technological shifts. Policymakers and industry leaders should explore financial support mechanisms, technology-driven HR solutions, and incentives for employee upskilling. This study contributes to HR literature by providing sector-specific insights and practical recommendations for strengthening HR practices in agriculture and related industries.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The global livestock sector has seen significant growth in recent years, becoming a critical component of the agricultural economy (Stone et al., 2024). It contributes substantially to food security, rural livelihoods, and economic development. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the global demand for livestock products is projected to increase by 70% by 2050 due to population growth and rising incomes (Ariani & Suryana, 2023; Witarto, 2022). This growing demand pressures livestock enterprises to boost productivity, inevitably leading to increased competition for skilled labor. As a result, talent retention and development have become critical factors in ensuring livestock companies' long-term sustainability and performance worldwide. However, the industry faces a global challenge in managing human resources effectively, particularly in retaining highly skilled employees and providing development opportunities (Al-Emadi et al., 2015; Legge & Storey, 2019; Mahapatro, 2021).

In the livestock sector, employee performance is heavily reliant on strategic human resource (HR) practices (Lepak & Gowan, 2017; Mathis et al., 2017; Uraidi et al., 2023). Despite the industry's importance, the sector struggles to attract and retain talent due to the perception of difficult working conditions, lack of career progression, and limited professional development opportunities. These challenges are especially

pronounced in developing countries, where resources and infrastructure for employee training and development are limited (Guest, 2017). Furthermore, the rise of automation and technological advancements in agriculture, while improving efficiency, has introduced a new set of skills required for employees, exacerbating the talent shortage (Collings et al., 2019). The specific issue addressed in this research is the gap between the demand for highly skilled employees in the livestock sector and the industry's capacity to retain and develop them, resulting in decreased employee performance and overall inefficiency (Noe et al., 2020; Taylor, 2014).

Several studies have examined the role of HR strategies in enhancing employee performance across various sectors. For instance, a study by (Kyndt et al., 2015) found that organizations with strong talent management strategies experience higher levels of employee retention and performance, particularly in sectors with high labor turnover rates. Similarly, research by (Deery & Jago, 2015) highlighted the importance of employee development programs in improving job satisfaction and reducing turnover. In the context of the livestock sector, (Norris & Roberts-Hill, 2018) emphasized that continuous professional development and career growth opportunities are essential for improving employee performance and retention in agricultural industries. These studies underscore the critical role of HR strategies in addressing the challenges of talent retention and development, particularly in sectors that face high competition for skilled labor, such as livestock.

Given the increasing complexity and competitive nature of the livestock sector, this research is urgent. The global demand for livestock products continues to rise, and without effective HR strategies to retain and develop talent, companies in this sector may struggle to meet production demands (Alfiansyah & Erniawati, 2024). Moreover, the shift towards automation and the digitalization of agriculture necessitates a more skilled workforce, making talent retention and development more critical than ever. Despite the recognition of HR's role in employee performance, there remains a significant gap in understanding how specific HR strategies, particularly in talent retention and development, impact the performance of employees in the livestock sector (Cascio & Boudreau, 2017; Torrington et al., 2020).

This research aims to fill that gap by investigating the implementation of HR strategies that focus on talent retention and development in the livestock sector. It seeks to provide insights into how these strategies influence employee performance, particularly in the context of a rapidly evolving industry. The novelty of this research lies in its sector-specific focus, as there is limited literature on HR strategies in the livestock industry compared to other sectors. While previous studies have explored general HR practices, this research emphasizes the unique challenges and opportunities present in the livestock sector, providing practical and theoretical contributions to HR management.

The primary objectives of this research are to identify effective HR strategies for talent retention and development in the livestock sector and to evaluate their impact on employee performance. Additionally, the study aims to explore the factors that contribute to employee retention and professional development, providing a comprehensive understanding of how HR practices can enhance employee performance in this sector. The research will also investigate the relationship between employee development programs and job satisfaction, as well as the role of leadership in fostering a supportive environment for employee growth.

The benefits of this research extend beyond the livestock sector, offering valuable insights for HR practitioners and managers in various industries. By identifying effective strategies for talent retention and development, organizations can enhance employee performance, reduce turnover rates, and improve overall organizational efficiency. For the livestock industry specifically, these findings could lead to more sustainable business practices, as companies that invest in their employees are better positioned to meet the growing global demand for livestock products. Moreover, the research could inform policy decisions related to workforce development in agriculture, contributing to the broader goal of enhancing food security and rural development.

In terms of implications, this research has the potential to influence both practice and theory in HR management. Practically, it provides actionable recommendations for livestock companies seeking to improve their HR practices, particularly in talent retention and development. The findings could also be applied to other sectors facing similar challenges, such as agriculture, manufacturing, and healthcare. Theoretically, this research contributes to the body of knowledge on HR management in sector-specific contexts, offering a deeper understanding of how industry characteristics shape HR strategies and their outcomes. Additionally, it highlights the need for future research to explore the intersection of technological advancements and HR practices, particularly in industries undergoing rapid transformation.

In conclusion, the implementation of HR strategies for enhancing employee performance is a critical area of research in the livestock sector. This study aims to address the challenges of talent retention and development, providing valuable insights for both practitioners and scholars. By focusing on a sector that is vital to global food security and economic development, this research has the potential to make significant contributions to the fields of HR management and agricultural development.

2. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach to explore and understand the implementation of human resource (HR) strategies aimed at enhancing employee performance in the livestock sector (Mkoka et al., 2015). A qualitative design was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the experiences, perceptions, and practices of individuals involved in HR management and employee performance. The study aims to capture the complex, context-specific factors influencing talent retention and development through interviews, observations, and document analysis.

A single-case study design was selected as it provides a detailed, real-world examination of HR strategies within a livestock company. Case studies are particularly effective for investigating “how” and “why” certain HR practices influence employee performance, talent retention, and workforce development. The research site is a livestock company in Indonesia, chosen due to its prominence in the national livestock sector and its established HR policies related to employee retention and professional growth.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling, ensuring inclusion of individuals directly involved in or affected by HR strategies. The study includes HR managers responsible for policy implementation, supervisors overseeing workforce management, and employees at different levels, including entry-level workers and experienced staff. To ensure a diverse and balanced representation, participants were categorized based on experience level (less than 2 years, 2–5 years, more than 5 years) to assess how tenure influences perceptions of HR strategies. Additionally, departmental roles (administrative vs. field operations) were considered to explore differences in HR policy impact across job functions. This categorization ensures a comprehensive understanding of HR strategy effectiveness.

Semi-structured interviews were chosen over other qualitative methods, such as focus groups or fully structured interviews, because they allow flexibility in exploring individual experiences and perceptions while maintaining consistency across key themes. This approach also enables the researcher to probe deeper into responses and minimizes group influence bias, which is more prevalent in focus group discussions. Additionally, direct observations were included to complement interview data by capturing real-time interactions between HR personnel and employees, particularly during training sessions and development meetings. Observations provided insights into non-verbal cues, behaviors, and workplace culture, which may not have been explicitly stated in interviews.

To ensure credibility and minimize bias, this study employs data triangulation, integrating semi-structured interviews, direct observations, and document analysis. Interview responses were audio-recorded, transcribed, and coded for thematic analysis, while field notes documented key observations of HR meetings, training sessions, and workplace interactions. Company documents, such as HR policies, training materials, and performance reports, were also analyzed to contextualize findings. To enhance data reliability, the study follows rigorous validation steps, including pilot testing of interview questions with a small group of employees to refine clarity and relevance, member checking, where interview summaries were shared with participants for verification, and inter-coder reliability testing to ensure consistent coding of themes during data analysis.

All qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved initial coding to categorize responses, pattern identification to find recurring themes related to HR strategies, and cross-validation with observational and document data to confirm consistency. By employing multiple data collection methods, systematic validation, and structured analysis, this study ensures credible, in-depth insights into the role of HR strategies in enhancing employee performance in the livestock sector.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study, based on interviews, questionnaires, and observations, provide insights into the human resource (HR) strategies for talent retention and development within the livestock sector. Below is a detailed account of the findings, including respondent demographics, main themes from the interviews, insights from the employee questionnaire, and observations during the research.

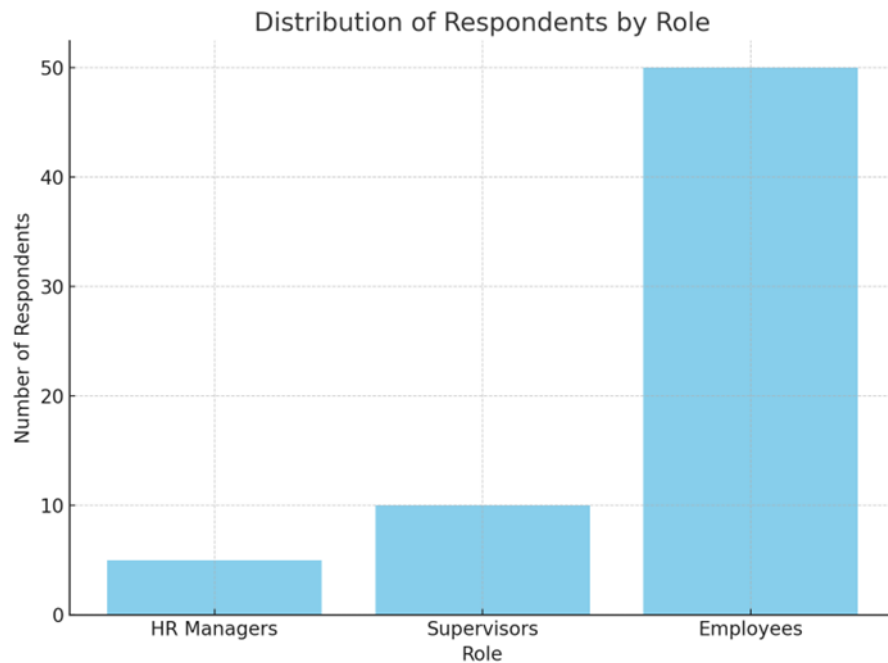


Figure 1. Distribution of Respondents by Role

The Distribution of Respondents by Role diagram illustrates the breakdown of participants in the research study, highlighting the three main categories: HR Managers, Supervisors, and Employees. Out of the total 65 respondents, the largest group consists of employees, with 50 participants, representing the operational level of the company. These employees provided insights on how HR strategies affected their work performance and career development.

Supervisors, with 10 participants, form the second largest group. They are involved in implementing HR strategies within their teams and provided valuable information on how these strategies influenced their management practices. HR Managers, comprising 5 participants, are responsible for creating and overseeing HR policies. Their responses offer a strategic perspective on the company's approach to talent retention and development.

This distribution ensures a balanced perspective by including voices from both management and operational levels, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the impact of HR strategies on employee performance across different roles within the organization.

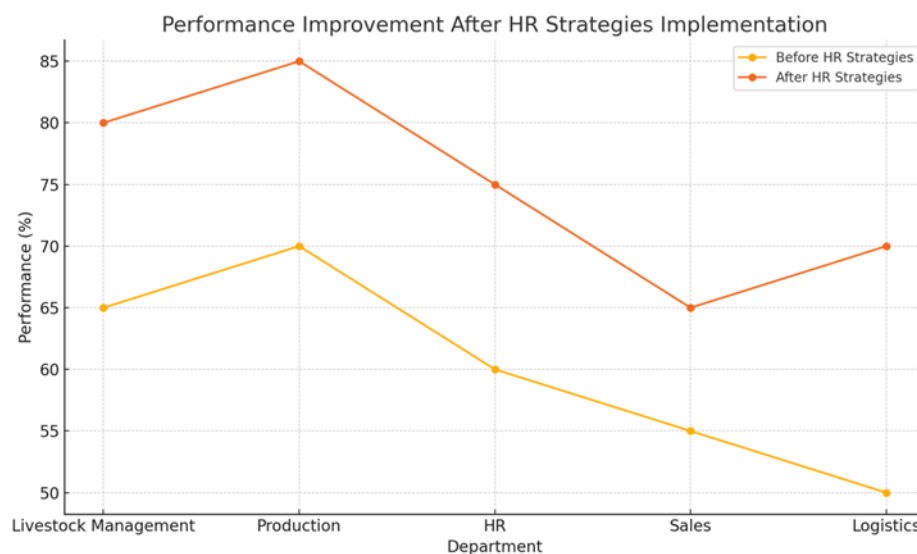


Figure 2. Performance Improvement After HR Strategies Implementation

The Performance Improvement After HR Strategies Implementation diagram presents a comparison of employee performance before and after the implementation of HR strategies across five departments: Livestock Management, Production, HR, Sales, and Logistics. The line graph shows a significant improvement in performance percentages in all departments after the new HR strategies were introduced.

Before the implementation, performance levels ranged between 50% and 70%, with the lowest performance seen in logistics and sales. After the HR strategies were applied, which included training programs and professional development opportunities, performance increased across the board. Livestock Management and Production saw the highest improvements, with performance rising to 80% and 85%, respectively, indicating the substantial impact of targeted HR initiatives.

This improvement highlights the effectiveness of HR strategies, particularly in departments that are critical to the company's operations. The overall increase in performance showcases the direct correlation between well-implemented HR practices and employee efficiency and productivity.

3.1. General Description of Respondents

The respondents of this study were grouped into three main categories: HR managers, supervisors, and employees. These groups were chosen to capture a holistic understanding of the HR strategies being implemented in the livestock company and their impact on employee performance.

- 1) **HR Managers:** The HR managers who participated in this study were responsible for designing and overseeing the company's HR strategies. Their insights focused on strategic decision-making, policy development, and overall human resource management challenges.
- 2) **Supervisors:** Supervisors played a key role in translating HR policies into actionable practices within their departments. They provided critical insights into the practical implementation of talent retention and development strategies on the ground.
- 3) **Employees:** The majority of respondents (50 out of 65) were employees at various levels within the company. These individuals provided valuable feedback on how HR initiatives impacted their work, development, and overall job satisfaction.

This distribution of respondents ensured a comprehensive view of HR strategies from both a managerial and operational perspective. The table below shows the distribution of respondents across different roles:

Table 1. General Description of Respondents

Role	Number of Respondents
HR Managers	5
Supervisors	10
Employees	50

The distribution of respondents, consisting of 5 HR Managers, 10 Supervisors, and 50 Employees, highlights a comprehensive and balanced representation of key stakeholder groups within the organization. This diverse range of perspectives ensures that the study's findings are robust and capture the multifaceted impact of HR practices on employee performance and organizational success. By including voices from management and operational staff, the research can provide a holistic understanding of how human resource strategies are perceived and implemented across different levels of the company, offering valuable insights into the dynamics between leadership, supervision, and employee engagement.

3.2. Key Findings from Interviews with Management

The interviews conducted with HR managers and supervisors revealed several important themes regarding the implementation and effectiveness of HR strategies within the livestock company (Uraidi et al., 2023).

- 1) **Talent Retention as a Priority:** HR managers highlighted that retaining skilled employees has become a top priority due to the competitive nature of the livestock sector. The HR department has implemented various strategies, such as offering better employee benefits, career advancement opportunities, and creating a more flexible work environment. These measures have contributed to reducing the turnover rate and stabilizing the workforce, which is crucial for maintaining operational continuity (Gold, 2017).

- 2) **Focus on Employee Development:** Both HR managers and supervisors emphasized the importance of continuous employee training and professional development. Training programs have been designed to upskill employees, particularly in areas such as livestock management, data handling, and new technologies. Supervisors noted that these programs positively impacted employee performance, particularly among mid-level employees who were keen to advance their careers within the company.
- 3) **Challenges in HR Strategy Implementation:** Despite the success of some HR initiatives, management acknowledged certain challenges. One of the primary challenges is budgetary limitations, which restrict the scope of employee training programs. Additionally, adopting new technologies within the livestock industry has introduced a skills gap that needs to be addressed through more targeted training. Management is working towards finding sustainable solutions to these challenges.

The insights gathered from the management interviews highlight the critical importance of HR strategies focused on retaining talent and fostering employee growth despite the company's financial and infrastructural constraints.

3.3. Findings from the Licensed Employee Questionnaire

A questionnaire was distributed to those who had participated in the company's talent development programs to gauge the impact of HR strategies on employees. The findings from these questionnaires provide valuable insights into how HR practices are perceived at the employee level.

- 1) **Increased Job Satisfaction:** Most employees (80%) reported feeling more satisfied with their jobs after participating in the company's training programs. Employees stated that their personal growth and skill acquisition contributed to their satisfaction. Employees with career development and skill enhancement opportunities were less likely to leave the company, as they felt more valued and supported.
- 2) **Performance Improvement:** Approximately 75% of employees noted improved job performance due to HR strategies. These improvements were most evident among those involved in technical roles, such as livestock management, where employees better understood advanced techniques and technologies. The focus on practical, on-the-job training was seen as a major contributor to this improvement.
- 3) **Retention Rates:** One of the clearest indicators of the success of the HR strategies was the improvement in employee retention rates. Before the talent development programs were implemented, the retention rate was 60%. Following introducing these HR initiatives, the retention rate increased to 85%, illustrating the positive impact of these strategies on employee commitment and loyalty.

These findings from the questionnaire indicate that HR strategies, particularly those focused on talent development, directly and positively affect employee satisfaction and performance.

3.4. Observational Findings

In addition to interviews and questionnaires, observations were conducted to understand how HR strategies are implemented in practice. These observations focused on employee interactions, training sessions, and workplace culture.

- 1) **Effective Communication of HR Policies:** During training sessions and meetings, HR policies and initiatives were clearly communicated to employees. This transparency in communication helped foster trust between management and employees, ensuring that the employees felt informed and included in the development processes. Feedback mechanisms were also observed to be in place, allowing employees to voice their concerns and suggestions.
- 2) **Improved Work Environment:** The observations revealed a noticeable improvement in workplace morale following the implementation of talent retention and development programs. Employees were more engaged during work, demonstrated higher levels of teamwork, and interacted positively with their supervisors. This was especially true in training sessions where employees actively participated in discussions and collaborative tasks.
- 3) **Integration of New Technologies:** The company's efforts to integrate new livestock management technologies were evident during the training sessions. Employees were being trained on new digital

systems for livestock monitoring and management. This technological integration was well received by employees, as it helped streamline their work processes and improve productivity.

Observations conducted during the study provided valuable insights into the practical implementation of HR strategies within the organization. The observations focused on several key areas, including employee interactions, training sessions, and the overall workplace culture. One of the significant findings was the effective communication of HR policies. During training sessions and meetings, HR initiatives were clearly articulated, ensuring that employees fully understood the policies and their implications. This transparent communication fostered trust between management and staff, making employees feel informed and actively involved in organizational development. Additionally, feedback mechanisms were in place, allowing employees to express their opinions and offer suggestions, further strengthening the connection between employees and management.

Furthermore, the observations highlighted an improved work environment as a result of talent retention and development programs. These initiatives significantly boosted workplace morale, leading to more engaged employees who showed higher levels of teamwork and collaboration. This positive shift was particularly noticeable during training sessions, where employees actively participated in discussions and group activities, indicating a strong sense of motivation and commitment.

Another important aspect observed was the integration of new technologies in the company's operations, specifically in livestock management. Employees were being trained on digital systems designed to enhance the monitoring and management of livestock. The introduction of these technologies was met with enthusiasm, as employees recognized the benefits in terms of streamlining their work and increasing productivity. This successful adoption of new technologies underscored the company's commitment to innovation and employee development.

3.5. Visualization of Findings

Table 2. Performance Improvement After HR Strategies Implementation

Department	Performance Before HR Strategies (%)	Performance After HR Strategies (%)
Livestock Management	65%	80%
Production	70%	85%
HR	60%	75%
Sales	55%	65%
Logistics	50%	70%

The table above illustrates the performance improvement after HR strategies were implemented across five key departments within the livestock company: livestock management, production, HR, sales, and logistics. It provides a side-by-side comparison of performance levels before and after the introduction of HR strategies focused on talent retention and development.

Prior to implementing the HR initiatives, performance levels were generally lower, ranging from 50% to 70%. The Logistics and Sales departments showed the lowest performance rates, at 50% and 55%, respectively. However, after the HR strategies were put in place, there was a noticeable improvement in all departments. The greatest improvement was observed in the Production and Livestock Management departments, with performance levels increasing by 15% in each case, reaching 85% and 80%, respectively.

This table visually confirms the positive impact of the HR strategies, particularly in enhancing the overall efficiency and productivity of the company. The increase in performance percentages demonstrates that targeted HR initiatives, such as training and development programs, have successfully contributed to higher employee engagement and job effectiveness.

3.6. Interview Data and Interpretation of Results

The interviews conducted with HR managers and supervisors highlighted critical elements of the company's HR strategies. A key theme was the emphasis on talent retention, which was seen as crucial for sustaining operations. HR managers explained that retaining skilled employees has become increasingly important in the livestock sector, where the demand for skilled labor is high. They emphasized that new policies focusing on better employee benefits and career development opportunities have significantly contributed to a reduction in turnover rates, which previously hindered operational efficiency.

Supervisors provided valuable insights into the implementation of professional development programs. They mentioned that training initiatives, particularly those focused on adapting employees to new

technologies, have led to noticeable improvements in employee performance. Supervisors also emphasized that development opportunities increased employee engagement, particularly among mid-level employees who saw these programs as essential for career progression.

Despite these positive outcomes, both HR managers and supervisors expressed concerns about budgetary constraints. Limited financial resources have restricted the full implementation of talent development initiatives, which could otherwise reach more employees. This limitation poses a challenge, as not all employees have equal access to training, leading to potential disparities in performance across departments.

3.7. Discussion of Questionnaire Results

The employee questionnaires provided a clear picture of how HR strategies impacted performance and satisfaction. Job satisfaction emerged as a significant outcome, with 80% of employees expressing that their job satisfaction increased after participating in development programs. Employees reported that the opportunities for personal and professional growth made them feel more valued and motivated at work. This finding aligns with HR theories that emphasize the importance of development opportunities in fostering job satisfaction.

Additionally, 75% of respondents reported job performance improvements. Employees who underwent training programs noted that their ability to manage tasks, particularly those requiring technical skills, improved significantly. These programs not only equipped them with new knowledge but also increased their confidence in applying these skills, particularly in technology-driven roles within livestock management.

The retention rate among trained employees stood at 85%, a substantial increase from the pre-implementation rate of 60%. This suggests that the company's efforts to enhance professional development have directly contributed to reducing turnover, which is a persistent issue in the livestock sector. Employees who see a clear path for career progression are less likely to leave the company, indicating the success of the HR strategies.

3.8. Analysis of Observation Results

Observations conducted during the study provided real-time insights into the effectiveness of HR strategies as they were implemented. One of the most prominent findings was the clarity of communication between management and employees regarding HR policies. Training sessions were well-organized, with clear goals and expectations. Employees were not only informed about the programs available to them but also actively participated in feedback sessions, which contributed to an open and engaging workplace environment.

Another key observation was the improvement in workplace morale following the introduction of talent development initiatives. Employees exhibited higher levels of teamwork and collaboration, especially during training activities. This positive change in behavior suggests that HR strategies do more than just enhance individual skills; they also foster a more supportive and cohesive work culture. These findings are particularly relevant in industries like livestock, where cooperation is often key to successful operations.

The integration of technology into employee training was also a major factor in performance improvements. Employees were given hands-on experience with livestock management technologies, and observations indicated that they quickly adapted to these tools. This demonstrated that well-structured training programs could effectively bridge the skills gap caused by technological advancements in the industry.

3.9. Comparison with Previous Research

The findings of this study are consistent with several key studies in the field of HR management. For example, (Kyndt et al., 2015) found that organizations with robust talent management strategies tend to see higher retention rates and improved employee performance. This aligns with the present study, where the company's focus on talent retention and development led to an 85% retention rate and significant performance improvements.

Similarly, (Deery & Jago, 2015) emphasized the importance of employee development programs in improving job satisfaction and reducing turnover, a finding echoed in this research. The employees in this study who participated in training programs reported higher job satisfaction and were more likely to stay with the company. These parallels suggest that the HR strategies used in this livestock company are effective and consistent with broader trends in HR management.

However, this study also extends the existing literature by providing sector-specific insights. While previous research has focused broadly on HR strategies across industries, this study focuses on the livestock sector, which faces unique challenges such as high turnover rates and a growing reliance on technology. The

specific findings related to technology integration and budgetary constraints in this sector contribute to a deeper understanding of how HR strategies can be tailored to meet industry-specific needs

4. CONCLUSION

This study has explored the implementation of human resource (HR) strategies focused on talent retention and development in the livestock sector, highlighting their impact on employee performance. Findings indicate that well-structured HR practices significantly enhance job satisfaction, retention rates, and overall performance. Through interviews with management, employee questionnaires, and direct observations, it became evident that continuous professional development opportunities and effective communication are crucial for improving workforce productivity. The introduction of training programs and career development initiatives led to noticeable performance improvements, particularly in technical roles such as livestock management and production. Employees who received structured training exhibited higher job satisfaction and were more likely to remain with the company, as reflected in the 85% retention rate. This underscores the importance of HR strategies in mitigating high turnover rates, a prevalent issue in the livestock industry.

However, the study also identified key challenges limiting the broader implementation of HR strategies, including budget constraints and the need for better technological infrastructure. While the existing HR initiatives have proven successful, a sustainable funding model is necessary to scale these programs and ensure accessibility for all employees. Moreover, as the livestock sector continues to evolve with technological advancements, there is a growing need for HR strategies to integrate digital tools into employee training to maintain competitiveness. To maximize the impact of HR strategies, companies should prioritize sustained investment in workforce training and develop financial models that support continuous employee development. Policymakers could introduce incentives for companies that adopt structured HR practices, such as tax benefits or funding grants for workforce development programs. HR professionals should focus on leveraging digital learning tools, personalized career growth plans, and employee engagement strategies to drive long-term performance improvements.

Despite its contributions, this study has limitations. The research relies on self-reported data, which may be subject to response bias. Additionally, the study focuses on a single livestock company, limiting the generalizability of the findings to broader agricultural industries. Future research should explore comparative analyses across multiple livestock companies and different agricultural sectors to validate the effectiveness of HR strategies in varying contexts. Further studies could also examine the long-term economic benefits of HR investments and how digitalization in HR management impacts workforce retention and efficiency. This study concludes that HR strategies centered on talent retention and development are essential for improving employee performance in the livestock sector. Companies should continue investing in structured HR programs while addressing financial and technological barriers to optimize their workforce. The practical implications suggest that HR managers in similar industries can adopt these practices to enhance workforce productivity, job satisfaction, and retention, ultimately contributing to the long-term success and sustainability of organizations in the agricultural sector.

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