

Managing the Human Capital: A Literature Review of Employee Well-Being and Retention in Light of Saudi Vision 2030

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ABSTRACT

This literature review investigates the association between employee welfare and retention in Saudi Arabia as part of the reforms of Vision 2030. It synthesizes the evidence of the literature published during the period between 2016 and 2025 on the effect of workplace practices on the decisions made by employees to remain. The structured narrative approach allowed the review to search Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar databases with peer-reviewed and policy sources and the following keywords: employee well-being, retention, and Vision 2030. CASP appraisal checklists and the interpretive lenses of the JD-R, POS, and COR theories were used to review the eligible studies and thematically analyze them, respectively. Results indicate that fair pay, training, and career development increase satisfaction levels and decrease turnover, and high workloads, ambiguity of tasks, and employee voice diminish retention. Positive and ethical leadership, work-life balance, and appreciation always enhance the well-being of employees. HR practices have been transformed by Vision 2030 reforms, including Saudization, public-sector restructuring, and digital transformation, which emphasize cultural sensitivity and pay attention to equity and inclusiveness. Nevertheless, poor longitudinal studies and a lack of representation of women and small-business workers are the main gaps. The review finds that Vision 2030 gives a rare chance to connect HR practices with the welfare of the employees; however, additional multi-sector and long-term research is required to establish these connections and offer sustainable workforce planning in Saudi Arabia.

Keywords: Human Capital, Employee well-being, Employee retention, Saudi Arabia, Vision 2030

INTRODUCTION

Saudi Arabia is going through major changes under Vision 2030, a national plan to diversify the economy and reduce reliance on oil (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2016; Vision 2030, 2024). This plan aims to grow the private sector, bring more people, especially women, into the workforce, and create new industries supported by technology and innovation. Recent data shows clear progress: women's participation in the workforce has already passed the original Vision 2030 target, reaching more than one-third of the labor market (World Bank, 2025; Reuters, 2024). These reforms put people at the center of economic success, which makes the topics of employee well-being and employee retention more important than ever.

Employee well-being refers to how workers feel about their physical and mental health, work environment, and overall quality of life. Retention means how an organization is able to retain employees. According to research, as the workers become supported, respected, and treated fairly, they are likely to become satisfied and remain with their organization. Conversely, they consider quitting when they experience stress, lack of clarity, or when they are treated unfairly (Griffeth et al., 2000; Harter et al., 2002; Rubenstein et al., 2018). The problems are not

only personal, but they have a direct impact on the performance and productivity of the organization, and the degree of attainment of the Vision 2030 objectives.

There are several theories that assist us in explaining how the factors of well-being and retention are shaped. The Job Demands Resources (JD-R) model holds that workers perform well as job resources (e.g., fair pay, autonomy, and supportive leaders) exceed job demands (e.g., workload and pressure) (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). The Perceived Organizational Support (POS) school of thought suggests that when a worker feels that his or her organization cares about him or her, and it appreciates him or her, he or she retaliates by becoming loyal and more committed (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory says people try to protect valuable resources like time, energy, and skills. If these resources are lost, employees feel stressed and disengaged; if they gain resources, their well-being and motivation increase (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001). These frameworks give us useful ways to read the Saudi research and to link everyday HR practices with long-term retention.

This paper aims to review what the literature says about employee well-being and retention in Saudi Arabia in the context of Vision 2030. This study uses a literature review approach. It looks at important studies published between 2016 and 2025 across both public and private sectors, such as healthcare, education, services, and energy. The review answers four guiding questions:

1. Which HR and leadership practices best support well-being and retention?
2. What challenges and stressors reduce well-being and retention?
3. How do Vision 2030 reforms and cultural factors shape these outcomes?
4. What gaps remain in the evidence, and what should be the next steps for research and policy?

By combining evidence from different studies and placing it within the Vision 2030 reforms, this review aims to provide a clear and practical picture for managers, policymakers, and researchers. It highlights what organizations can do to create supportive environments where employees feel well, engaged, and motivated to stay—helping Saudi Arabia reach its ambitious development goals.

METHODS

In the current study, the evidence on employee well-being and retention in Saudi Arabia was synthesized with the help of a structured narrative review within the framework of Vision 2030. This kind of research, such as paper review, systematic review, literature reviews, and research agenda papers, is essential in academic studies as it identifies gaps in the literature, synthesizes existing knowledge, and provides clear directions for future research (Al-Tahitah, A, et al. 2018)

Al-Tahitah, A, et al. 2026). This methodology was appropriate as its goal was not merely to generalize the empirical evidence, but also to explain the conceptual and policy-relevant evidence in the sector and work environments (Snyder, 2019; Grant and Booth, 2009). The review was not a protocol-based systematic review; however, the search, screening, appraisal, and reporting procedures were structured in a clear way and are reported in a PRISMA format flow diagram to enhance understandability and reproducibility (Page et al., 2021).

Searches were conducted in Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, and Google Scholar for studies published between January 2016 and September 2025, as this period aligns with the main Vision 2030 reform era. Search strings combined location terms such as “Saudi Arabia” and “KSA” with outcome terms including “employee well-being,” “job satisfaction,” “work engagement,” “burnout,” “retention,” and “turnover intention.” Reform-related terms such as “Vision 2030,” “Saudization,” and “labour reform” were added where appropriate. Backward and

forward citation tracking was also used to identify additional relevant studies that database searches may have missed (Greenhalgh & Peacock, 2005).

Clear inclusion criteria were used in the review. To be included in the study, the studies must have been published in English, via peer-reviewed journal articles or high-quality institutional reports, be about Saudi Arabia or Gulf evidence with direct implications on Saudi employment policy, and be about employee well-being, retention, turnover intention, or a construct closely related to it. Empirical studies as well as extensive conceptual papers were both acceptable on the occasion, as long as they contributed to the review questions. Duplication, dissertations, conference abstracts without complete data, non-English literature, and studies that had no significant relevance to the Saudi context were all excluded (Snyder, 2019).

Table 1: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Studies published between 2016 and 2025 reflect the Vision 2030 reform period.	Studies published before 2016 or outside the reform timeline
Peer-reviewed journal articles and high-quality institutional or policy reports	Opinion articles, blogs, dissertations, and conference abstracts without full data
Studies written in the English language	Studies published in languages other than English
Research focusing on Saudi Arabia, or Gulf studies, with clear relevance to Saudi employment policy.	Studies with no clear relevance to the Saudi context
Studies examining employee well-being, job satisfaction, engagement, burnout, retention, or turnover intention	Studies not addressing employee well-being or retention-related outcomes.
Empirical (qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods) or substantive conceptual studies relevant to the review aims.	Duplicate records or studies with insufficient methodological detail

The PRISMA-type screening process took place in a number of stages. There were 213 records obtained by searching the databases, and 17 more were obtained by reliance on backward and forward citation search, resulting in a total of 230 records. A total of 26 duplicate records had been eliminated before screening of title and abstract, 7 records were identified as ineligible by database automation or filtering systems, and 5 records were eliminated due to other reasons, including incomplete bibliographic information. Following these removals, there were 192 records to screen in terms of the titles and abstracts. At the screening phase, 141 records were filtered out due to the fact that they were not within the scope of the review, they were unrelated to employee well-being and retention, or they did not apply to the Saudi context. This led to 51 reports being requested to be in the full-text. Among them, 4 reports were not retrieved, and 47 full-text articles were eligible to assess the eligibility. In the eligibility phase, 18 reports were eliminated for three reasons. Seven articles lacked adequate focus on employee welfare or retention outcomes, six articles were too unrelated to Saudi Arabia or Vision 2030 reforms, and five articles lacked sufficient empirical test and substantial theoretical investigation of the concepts. After this procedure, 29 studies were finally included in the review.

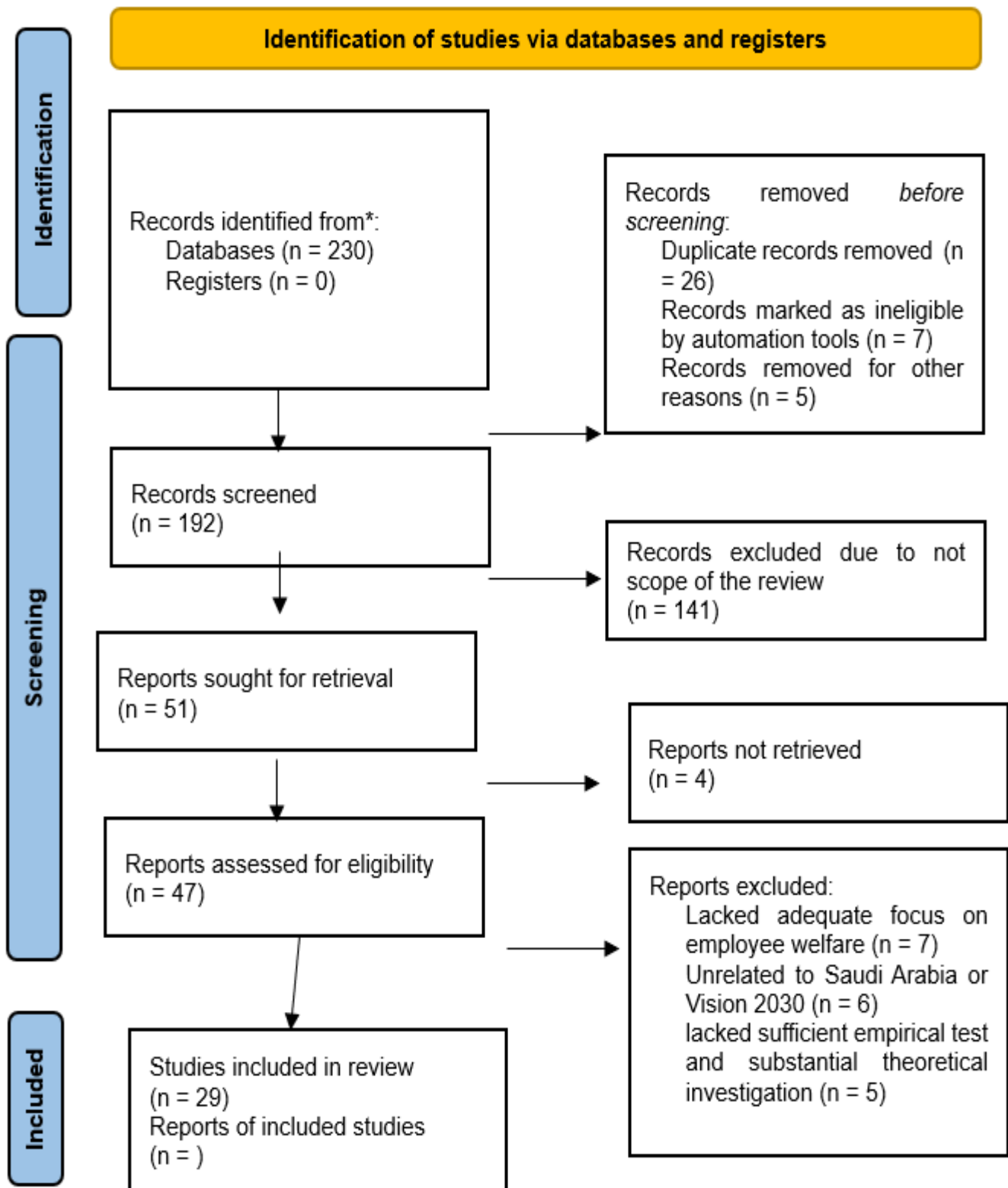


Figure 1: PRISMA flow diagram

The measurement of quality was carried out with CASP checklists; the notes of the appraisal were taken on the basis of study aims, design, sampling, analysis, credibility, and potential bias instead of providing numerical scores (CASP, 2018; Whittemore and Knafl, 2005). Information was copied into a structured sheet comprising the Citation details, sector, sample, design, measures, and results. Thematic synthesis was followed in three phases, which are line-by-line coding, grouping similar codes into descriptive categories, as well as creating more general analytical themes of fair pay, leadership support, work-life balance, and workload pressure (Thomas and Harden, 2008). The JD-R, POS, and COR frameworks were applied at the stage of interpretation only to assist in explaining the patterns, with no attempts to limit the inclusion of the studies.

HR Practices that Help

One of the strongest factors that keeps employees in their jobs is fair and competitive pay. In Saudi hospitals, for example, salary and benefits were found to be directly linked to turnover intentions. A recent study of nearly 400 nurses showed that those who earned lower salaries or reported unfair pay were more likely to think about leaving, while better compensation reduced the risk of serious turnover intentions (Saleh et al., 2025). This shows that fair pay is not just an economic issue but also a sign of respect and recognition for employees' work.

Development and training are also very significant in the welfare and loyalty of employees. In a report on government-sector employees in Saudi Arabia, it was found that the conduct of talent management, such as training, career growth, and promotion opportunities, produced a definite positive influence on retention (Almashyakhi, 2024). Workers who were able to envision their career route and even have access to new competencies were more active and had stronger chances of staying in their companies. Other studies have shown the same, with the Saudi technology industry and the professional development programs, such as mentoring, training, and clarity of career paths, having a significant relationship with the intentions of employees to remain (Al-Harthi, 2025). These findings point out the fact that individuals tend to be more committed to their organizations when they believe that they are developing and headway as opposed to remaining in the same location.

Another element of recognition and appreciation is seen repeatedly in Saudi evidence. Within the same nurse study, the employees who either felt unappreciated or had poor communication with their supervisors demonstrated increased turnover intentions (Saleh et al., 2025). This emphasises the role of daily acts of appreciation, whether it is the feedback, the praise, or the fair performance evaluation. Retention can be supported by performance systems that concentrate on increasing and rewarding performance instead of penalizing or restricting employees (Almashyakhi, 2024; Al-Harthi, 2025).

The scientific community in the health industry is also giving a bigger picture. An overview of the research on Saudi employees working in healthcare revealed that pay satisfaction, professional growth, and recognition could be considered among the most significant factors affecting turnover intentions (Alkhurayji et al., 2024). This confirms the perception that HR practices that offer resources, including fair rewards, professional growth, and recognition, contribute to employee well-being, which subsequently lessens the willingness to leave.

Saudi experience among government, small technological enterprises, and hospitals shows the same. Employees who are treated with just pay, competitive benefits, training that is meaningful, career opportunities, and are recognized will feel more satisfied, engaged, and will likely remain. Conversely, in case of weak or absent practices, employees feel undervalued, discouraged, and will seek opportunities elsewhere. The practices of HR are thus the basis of supporting employee welfare and retention under the vision 2030.

Social and Leadership Factors

Leadership and social support at work are some of the most important reasons why employees stay or leave. In Saudi Arabia, several studies clearly show this link.

A recent study of 279 nurses in Saudi public hospitals found that leadership style made a big difference in whether staff wanted to leave. Nurses who worked under transformational leaders—those who motivate, inspire, and guide—were less likely to think about leaving. In contrast, those working under laissez-faire leaders, who avoid decision-making and responsibility, had higher turnover intentions (Alasiry & Alkhaldi, 2024). This shows that active and inspiring leadership reduces turnover risk.

Supervisor support and fairness also matter. A study of employees in Saudi firms reported that perceived supervisor support was strongly and negatively related to turnover intention, meaning the more employees felt supported, the less likely they were to plan to leave. The same study also found that organizational justice, the belief that policies and processes are fair, was linked to lower turnover intention (Elamin et al., 2023). In practice, this means employees want leaders who listen, treat them fairly, and support their growth.

Ethical leadership is another factor. A 2025 study on Saudi employees showed that when leaders act with honesty, fairness, and responsibility, employees feel more empowered and satisfied with their jobs. This satisfaction then lowers their desire to leave the organization (Nassani & Khateeb, 2025). In other words, ethical leaders help build trust and loyalty, which are crucial for retention.

Leadership style also influences satisfaction in primary health care centers. Research in Al-Jouf found that leaders who listened to employees, treated them equally, and cared about staff well-being created higher job satisfaction among workers (Alrwili, 2022). Because job satisfaction is strongly linked with retention, this suggests that caring and respectful leadership is an important tool to keep employees.

Employee voice is equally important. A qualitative study in the Saudi private sector revealed that when employees had no chance to express concerns or give feedback, they felt disconnected and unmotivated, which led to higher absenteeism and turnover (Adham, 2022). By contrast, workplaces where managers encourage open discussion help employees feel valued and included.

Together, these studies make one clear point: in Saudi Arabia, strong leadership and supportive relationships are central to employee well-being and retention. Employees want leaders who inspire, act fairly, listen, and give them a safe space to share concerns. Organizations that create this kind of climate are more likely to keep their staff, which is especially important as Vision 2030 reforms increase competition for skilled workers.

Work Design & Work–Life Balance

The way work is organized each day, how much workload employees have, how clear their roles are, how flexible their schedules are, and whether they can balance work and personal life, affect both well-being and the decision to stay. In Saudi Arabia, this topic is closely linked to Vision 2030, which has created more private-sector jobs, encouraged women to join the workforce, and pushed organizations to modernize HR systems. Because of these changes, the ability to manage work–life balance is more important than ever.

Research on frontline health workers in Saudi Arabia showed how poor work design can increase turnover intention. A study found that job stress, role ambiguity, and work–life imbalance during the COVID-19 period were strongly linked to burnout, which then led to higher intentions to leave (Alblihed & Alzghaibi, 2022). This means that when jobs are unclear and workloads are heavy, employees' well-being suffers, and they think more about quitting.

Flexibility and organizational support can improve the situation. A study on Saudi teleworkers reported that organizational support and lighter workloads improved work–life balance, which in turn raised job and life satisfaction (Aloulou, 2023). This is important because Vision 2030 promotes digital transformation and remote work, and the study shows that supportive practices and autonomy are key to making these models sustainable.

Work–life balance is also connected to gender inclusion. One study of Saudi women employees found that HR support and fair policies for balance had a strong positive impact on job satisfaction (Asfahani et al., 2024). Since Vision 2030 places a big focus on increasing women's participation in the labor market, these findings suggest that organizations must create family-friendly policies such as flexible hours and supportive leave to attract and retain female employees.

The issue of job design also applies to the elderly employees. An examination of C-level executives of Saudi private companies indicated that the work-life balance is improved and resulted in increased job satisfaction, and the authors recommended some of the policies, including telecommuting and flexible working schedules, to ensure that the executives remain motivated (Qadri, 2024). Even when senior leadership cherishes the idea of balance, it shows that the junior employees are not the only ones who consider balance to be important, but it is an agenda at all levels.

Healthcare studies also uphold the thesis that it is crucial to balance the demands and resources. An investigation on the Saudi healthcare worker population revealed that burnout was worsened by workload and loneliness and

enhanced well-being due to organizational support and individual resilience (Yousef et al., 2024). This demonstrates that well-being interventions, including peer support, resilience training, and workload modifications, can be used to reduce stress and retain the staff.

Overall, Saudi evidence makes it clear that work design and work–life balance are essential to managing human capital under Vision 2030. Organizations that provide clear roles, realistic workloads, flexible arrangements, and supportive policies are better able to keep employees satisfied and loyal. As reforms increase workforce diversity and talent competition, creating healthy work designs will be a key part of delivering Vision 2030 goals.

Stressors that Harm

Not all workplaces support employee well-being. Some conditions make employees stressed and unhappy, which often leads them to think about leaving. In Saudi Arabia, research shows four main types of harmful stressors: too much workload, unclear roles, unfair treatment, and negative workplace climates.

The first big problem is excessive workload and job stress. A study of frontline health workers during COVID-19 in Saudi Arabia found that stress, unclear roles, and poor work–life balance led to burnout, and burnout made people more likely to want to leave (Alblihed & Alzghaibi, 2022; Al-Tahitah, A., et al., 2024). This means that when employees face heavy demands without enough support, they quickly lose energy and begin planning to quit. A review of healthcare studies in Saudi Arabia also found that job stress and poor work conditions were among the most common reasons for turnover intention (Alkhurayji et al., 2024).

The second stressor is role problems. When employees are unsure of their duties or face conflicting demands, it creates frustration. A study of Saudi faculty members found that role conflict increased turnover intention because it caused emotional exhaustion. The issue was exacerbated by the fact that there were also conflicts with colleagues at work (Asfahani, 2022). This kind of stress can be reduced with the help of clear responsibilities and good communication.

The third stressor is injustice at the work place. In one of the studies carried out among Saudi workers, it was found that when individuals believed that rules, remuneration or procedures were not fair, they tended to consider quitting. Conversely, they had lower turnover intentions when they had support of their supervisors (Elamin et al., 2023). This emphasizes the significance of equity in promotions, compensation as well as decision-making. Lack of recognition and unfair treatment was another significant reason why nurses leave the country, according to another review of nurses in Saudi Arabia (Alqahtani et al., 2024).

The fourth stressor is a harmful workplace environment, in particular, bullying. According to a study of nurses in Riyadh (2024), bullying was widespread and approximately a third of nurses who were bullied intended to leave the job. The research recommended more robust regulations and reporting frameworks to safeguard employees (Alharbi et al., 2024). This demonstrates that such vices as insults, exclusion, and harassment literally drive individuals out of their organizations.

In brief, there is a definite trend in Saudi evidence that employees are exhausted when they are overworked, when their work roles are ambiguous and when the rules are not fairly applied to them and when the climate at their workplace is hostile. This causes them to be far more likely to quit. Saudi Arabia is making attempts to create a competitive workforce and lure talented skills under Vision 2030. Unless the organizations correct such stressors, they may lose valuable employees. Increasing workload, role definition, equity, and bullying can be eliminated through practice steps that can safeguard health and retention.

Reform-Driven Shifts under Vision 2030

The Vision 2030 in Saudi Arabia is transforming the way organizations deal with people. These reforms are not merely about how to create new jobs but also about making the employees feel supported, skilled, and willing to remain. Some studies demonstrate the way that these reforms are transforming human capital management.

Among the most significant reforms is the Saudization (Nitaqat) that compels the private firms to increase the number of Saudi people in the workplace. An analysis conducted by Peck (2017) revealed that the program

indeed created employment opportunities among Saudis, but it also left its difficulties, like raising the expenses of companies and reducing employment rates in certain situations. In a more recent study, it was described that Nitaqat has four key objectives: to increase Saudi employment, enhance the efficiency of companies, build HR systems, and introduce more women to the workforce (Basahal et al., 2023). To the organizations, this implies that they have to invest more in training, attractive remuneration, and career progressions to retain the Saudi staff.

Another area that is a significant reform is healthcare. Research describes that the new healthcare system is shifting towards privatization, digital health, and value-based care (Al-Nozha, 2024; Chowdhury et al., 2021). Such changes imply that the employees (particularly doctors and nurses) require new competencies and additional training. To the HR, it is not just to get good staff but to retain them by treating them fairly, providing good working conditions, and growth opportunities.

Education and training are also central to Vision 2030. The Human Capability Development Program is designed to improve education, link universities to labor-market needs, and make graduates more employable. Mohiuddin (2023) shows that Saudi universities are updating curricula, working with industry, and focusing on future skills. For employers, this means more young Saudis will enter the market with better preparation, but HR policies must still support them with onboarding and career development so they remain motivated.

Another important focus is on sustainable human capital. A national survey in Saudi Arabia found that factors like training, institutional support, community involvement, and technology use improve the growth and stability of human capital (Abubakar et al., 2024). This evidence shows that employees are more likely to stay if organizations provide regular training, fair support, digital tools, and opportunities to participate in community initiatives.

In short, Vision 2030 is shaping HR in many ways. Saudization encourages firms to hire and retain more locals (Peck, 2017; Basahal et al., 2023). Healthcare reforms demand new skills and strong retention of clinical staff (Chowdhury et al., 2021; Al-Nozha, 2024). Education reforms increase the supply of job-ready graduates (Mohiuddin, 2023). And evidence on sustainable human capital shows that training and support programs improve both well-being and retention (Abubakar et al., 2024). For organizations, the message is simple: to succeed under Vision 2030, they must design fair and supportive workplaces where people see growth, stability, and value in staying.

Cultural Moderators

Culture shapes how employees experience their work in Saudi Arabia. Vision 2030 is changing many workplace rules, but cultural values like family ties, respect for authority, and gender roles still influence how people feel at work and whether they want to stay. Four main cultural issues stand out: relationships, hierarchy, gender inclusion, and value fit.

Relationships and collectivism. Saudi culture values strong personal relationships and loyalty. This can be positive when employees feel supported by supervisors or colleagues, but it can create problems when *wasta* (using personal connections) is used unfairly. A study on Saudi performance appraisal showed that *wasta* influenced decisions, sometimes reducing fairness, although some employees started to reject it in favor of more transparent systems (Harbi et al., 2017). Another recent study explained that *wasta* can encourage loyalty and cooperation but may reduce trust if it replaces merit (Al-Twal et al., 2024). Vision 2030's push for efficiency means organizations must keep the good side of collectivism (support, mentoring) but reduce favoritism.

Hierarchy and employee voice. Saudi workplaces often have high power distance, meaning managers are respected, and employees may avoid speaking up. Research shows this limits "voice" behaviors, where employees share ideas or concerns. A Saudi study of migrant nurses found that strict hierarchy and cultural barriers reduced their ability to speak out, which hurt well-being and raised turnover risk (Davies et al., 2024). A global review also found that in high power-distance cultures, employees often stay silent even when they see problems (Kwon & Farndale, 2020). For retention, leaders need to invite feedback and respond fairly, so culture does not silence valuable voices.

Gender inclusion. Vision 2030 strongly supports women joining the workforce, but social expectations and family responsibilities still affect women's experiences. A study on Saudi women's role in the knowledge economy found that education and Vision 2030 policies are helping women enter new jobs, but cultural barriers remain (Jawhar, 2022). When companies provide flexible hours, fair promotion policies, and safe environments, women are more likely to stay, which supports Vision 2030's goal of raising female participation.

Value fit. Saudi evidence also shows that employees stay longer when they feel their personal values match the organization's values. A study of hotel employees found that "person-organization fit" increased commitment and reduced turnover intentions, especially when performance reviews were fair (Alqahtani, 2024). This means that in Saudi culture, where values and community are important, organizations must clearly communicate their mission, fairness, and growth opportunities.

In short, Saudi cultural features can support retention through loyalty, shared values, and respect, but they can also create risks through favoritism, silence, and gender barriers. Vision 2030 will succeed when companies keep the strengths of local culture (community and respect) while building fair and open systems. Research shows that combining cultural sensitivity with transparent HR practices improves both employee well-being and retention.

DISCUSSION

The reviewed evidence suggests that isolated HR practices do not influence the organizational context of Saudi Arabia employee well-being and retention, but rather a complex of organizational resources, leadership processes, and reform pressures. In the reviewed articles, higher wage rates, appreciation, training, and well-defined career ladders were systematically associated with higher job satisfaction and reduced turnover intentions (Saleh et al., 2025; Almashyakhi, 2024; Al-Harthi, 2025; Alkhurayji et al., 2024). The bigger analytical issue, though, is that these factors are combined as a package of resources and not individual interventions. It implies that retention should not be perceived as a mere consequence of a single good policy, e.g., higher salary, but the consequence of how employees perceive the organization on the whole as a place supportive and fair and oriented towards development. The Saudi evidence in this regard leads to a more systematic account of the retention where commitment increases when there are credible, visible, and maintained workplace resources in the daily employment practices.

This trend can be explained easily using the Job Demands Resources (JD-R) model, which claims that the results of employees are determined by the equilibrium between pressures and resources at the workplace. Workload pressure, ambiguous duties, suppressed voice, and ineffective work-life balance were identified as demands in the examined studies that exhausted energy and promoted burnout or turnover intentions (Alblihed and Alzghaibi, 2022; Adham, 2022; Yousef et al., 2024). Alternatively, equitable pay, mentorship, supervisor support, and workable work arrangements served as resources that safeguarded motivation and minimized the withdrawal (Aloulou, 2023; Asfahani et al., 2024; Qadri, 2024). The significance of JD-R in this case is that the results could be viewed not as disjointed workplace issues, but as a way to assert that the retention decreases once the demands are systematically in excess of the resources. It is relevant to this, especially in fields like healthcare, where the quality of organizational support is especially defining due to the nature of the frontline work (Alblihed and Alzghaibi, 2022; Yousef et al., 2024).

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) theory is also highly supported by the findings, since the employees were more inclined to remain when they thought that the organization appreciated their input and was concerned about their well-being. This can be observed in the studies where the connections between supervisor support, fair procedures, ethical leadership, and talent-management systems and the stronger satisfaction and the lower turnover intention are observed (Elamin et al., 2023; Alrwili, 2022; Nassani and Khateeb, 2025; Almashyakhi, 2024). Analytically, it indicates that the importance of organizational practices is that they both ameliorate material conditions and that they convey a relational message to employees concerning their value, confidence, and inclusion. That is one of the reasons why formal reform agendas under the Vision 2030 might not necessarily lead to higher retention. Reforms can open the doors, and when the implementation is not perceived as equitable and supportive by the employees, the desired benefits will fail to translate to commitment.

Meanwhile, the usefulness of the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory can be used to understand that burnout, silencing, and work-life conflict are harmful. Employees are interested in conserving the resources that are important to them, including but not confined to energy, time, emotional stability, and status, and when work continually jeopardizes them, turnover intention is a rational adaptive strategy in its own right and not just dissatisfaction (Adham, 2022; Alblihed and Alzghaibi, 2022; Yousef et al., 2024). It is especially applicable to the Saudi reform. Saudization and Vision 2030 have both opened up more job opportunities and also put more strains on the organization and employees, particularly where onboarding, progression, and support systems are still in their early stages (Peck, 2017; Basahal et al., 2023; Chowdhury et al., 2021; Al-Nozha, 2024). On the whole, the evidence indicates the retention under the Vision 2030 will rely not only on the employment development, but on whether the reform will be translated into more beneficial, supportive, and sustainable employment relations.

CONCLUSION

This review makes one main point: employees are more likely to stay in their jobs when they feel valued, supported, and treated fairly. Fair pay, training, career opportunities, and recognition all help workers feel satisfied and committed. Good leaders who listen, guide, and treat people with respect also reduce the chances of employees wanting to leave. Work-life balance is very important too. When roles are clear, workloads are reasonable, and flexible policies are in place, employees feel healthier and more motivated to remain. On the other hand, unfair treatment, unclear roles, bullying, and heavy demands create stress and push people to quit. Vision 2030 reforms make these issues even more important. Saudization, digital changes, and sector reforms are creating new jobs and expectations, which means organizations must improve how they manage and support their staff. Culture also plays a role. Strong relationships, respect for leaders, and gender roles affect how employees see workplace practices. Companies that mix cultural values with fair and open systems will do better in keeping workers. Overall, the solution is simple: pay fairly, provide growth opportunities, support work-life balance, and build trust. More long-term research is still needed, but the direction for practice is already clear.

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