



Research Paper

Personal Factors as Determinants of Talent Expatriation among Selected ICT Firms in Nigeria

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Abstract: Nigeria's ICT sector has seen remarkable growth, contributing significantly to GDP and positioning the country as a digital hub in Africa. However, the persistent emigration of top tech talent undermines this growth. Companies are doing everything possible to retain their talents and maintain their competitive edge. But, understanding what is responsible for this exodus of talent in the ICT sector is key to applying the right strategy to stop this menace. Many studies have looked at the phenomenon from the macro viewpoint, but not so many have focused on the micro level. This study examines the factors responsible for talent expatriation at the micro level of personal factors. Three personal factors of access to quality education, career development prospects and employee loyalty are considered. The study adopts a quantitative method with a population of 350, a sample size of 187 and a 76% questionnaire response rate. The impact of these determinants is tested individually and as a group to establish their respective impact on talent expatriation using correlation and regression analysis. The study confirmed that all three factors have a strong individual positive relationship with talent expatriation among ICT firms in Nigeria; however, when combined with the personal factors of access to quality education & career prospects, employee loyalty is not a significant reason for talent expatriation among ICT professionals in Nigeria. The paper recommends that ICT firms create enabling environments and provide training programs, clear career paths, and innovation-driven cultures to motivate skilled workers to stay. Strong employee engagement and recognition systems, competitive career development opportunities, clear promotion pathways, a sense of purpose, and organisational citizenship are also required to change the status quo.

Keywords: Talent expatriation, emigration, brain drain, executive compensation, talent shortage

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I. Introduction

The mobility of skilled professionals, often described as talent expatriation or “brain drain”, has become a critical issue for many countries (Bhardwaj, & Sharma, 2023). High-demand sectors such as information and communications technology (ICT) are especially affected, as developed nations actively recruit foreign experts to fill workforce gaps (Kofler, Innerhofer, Marcher, Gruber, & Pechlaner, 2020). This has been a growing concern for HR scholars, labour economists, political scientists, and other researchers for several decades (Solimano, 2002; Skeldon, 2008; Krupka, 2009; Tynaliyev and McLean, 2011; Brettell and Hollifield, 2022).

This worldwide competition for talent means that many developing economies struggle to retain their best ICT workers, leading to an exodus of expertise in search of better opportunities abroad (Ullah, & Haque, 2020). Such talent outflows can have serious repercussions: when a country loses a significant share of its highly skilled workforce, it risks diminished innovation capacity and slower economic growth (Gordon, 2018). Global bodies like the United Nations have acknowledged its adverse effects on sending countries, especially in critical sectors like healthcare and technology (Mingst, Karns, & Lyon, 2022). The UN encourages its agencies to provide policy recommendations to member states (Chelotti, Dasandi, & Jankin Mikhaylov, 2022). At the same time, the African Union has developed the Migration Policy Framework for Africa (MPFA) to promote well-managed migration for development goals (Abebe, & Mudungwe, 2023). The phenomenon is not new, for instance, Nigeria's own experience in the late 20th century showed that large-scale emigration of tech professionals stifled the growth of nascent local tech firms (Ogbonna, 2024). This has significantly impacted the sector, as it loses talented professionals to other countries. This has hindered development in many parts of Africa by creating a shortage of local expertise.

Nigeria presents a vivid contemporary case of this challenge. The country's ICT sector has expanded rapidly. It now contributes roughly 17% to the national GDP (Telecoms sub-sector leads as ICT contributes 17.7% to GDP, reflecting its importance as an engine of economic growth and innovation (Adebisi, 2024). The sector is still contending with significant talent loss, known as talent expatriation (Agbai, & Okechukwu, 2024). This trend in the ICT field mirrors that seen in other critical sectors like health and academia: many of Nigeria's highly trained tech experts are leaving for destinations such as North America and Europe, drawn by promises of better work environments and quality of life (Adhikari, Clemens, Dempster, & Ekeator, 2021). According to (Oliinyk, Bilan, Mishchuk, Akimov, & Vasa, 2021), these movements of skilled labour can significantly impact economic development in emerging markets like Nigeria. This talent expatriation has already begun to impact businesses at home. For example, industry reports note that Nigeria's banking sector experienced technical service disruptions partly because experienced ICT personnel left and suitable replacements were not readily available (Amaobi, 2024). Such examples underscore the urgency of understanding why Nigerian ICT professionals are emigrating at high rates and what might be done to stem this brain drain.

It has been widely acknowledged that broad economic and political conditions create the push and pull forces behind migration, the decision to expatriate ultimately hinges on individual-level considerations (Amaobi, 2024). According to (Usmanova, Yang, Sumarlia, Khan, & Khan, 2021), personal factors are pivotal in whether an employee chooses to remain in their home country or relocate abroad. Studies have shown that the desire for a better life and self-advancement is often the decisive motivation for skilled workers contemplating emigration (Weda, 2012; Zeko-Underwood, 2019; Van der Wees, & Romijn, 2021).

These personal factors operate at the micro level of the employee's values, goals, and circumstances and encompass a range of considerations – from professional ambitions to family well-being (Athota, & Malik, 2019; Crowley-Henry, Almeida, Bertone, & Gunasekara, 2023). For instance, one professional might weigh the potential for career growth prospects as the top priority, while another might be most concerned with access to quality education (Khan, & Chaudhry, 2019). Ultimately, understanding these personal drivers is essential, as even in the same external environment, two individuals may arrive at different decisions based on their personal priorities. In the context of Nigeria's tech talent exodus, emphasising personal factors acknowledges that beyond poor infrastructure or low salaries, it is often the individual's perceived needs and goals that tip the balance toward leaving or staying.

Among the myriad personal factors that could influence an ICT employee's decision to expatriate, this study focuses on three critical areas: access to quality education, career development prospects, and employee loyalty (Mabkhot, & Al-Ameryeen, 2023). These three were chosen because they encapsulate fundamental personal considerations – educational aspirations, professional growth, and commitment – that are particularly relevant in the narrative of talent migration.

The availability of high-quality education and training opportunities is a major personal consideration for many professionals (Van, 2023). Nigeria's educational system has faced decades of underfunding and infrastructural challenges, resulting in a decline in educational quality (Amadi, & Nwogu, 2023). Consequently, ICT professionals often look abroad for advanced skills training or to secure better schooling for their children (Kozma, & Isaacs, 2011). The prospect of accessing world-class education, whether pursuing international degrees or raising one's family in countries with superior educational facilities, can strongly motivate emigration (Shkoler & Rabenu, 2023). In other words, when local educational opportunities are perceived as inadequate, talented individuals may expatriate to attain the knowledge and credentials to further their careers and fulfil personal aspirations (Tran, Amado, & Santos, 2025).

Professional growth and career trajectory are central to an employee's decision-making (Hassan, Hussain, Niazi, Hoshino, Azam, & Kazmi, 2022). The ICT sector is inherently dynamic, and many Nigerian tech workers seek exposure to cutting-edge technologies, mentorship, and clear promotion pathways (Omoniyi, 2024). If they perceive that domestic firms have limited room for advancement or that their career could plateau at home, they may be inclined to pursue opportunities in countries where the tech industry is more mature or rewarding. Most emigrating skilled workers often cite better career advancement opportunities and work environments abroad as key reasons for leaving (Bucher, Lazarova, & Deller, 2024). The chance to work on innovative projects, gain international experience, and achieve faster career progression is a powerful pull factor (Bhardwaj, & Sharma, 2023). Thus, disparities in career development prospects between Nigeria and more developed tech hubs can heavily influence the expatriation of talent.

An individual's loyalty or commitment to their employer (and, by extension, to their home organisation or country) can significantly affect their likelihood of leaving. Employee loyalty refers to the degree of attachment a worker feels towards their company or national industry, often built on factors like job satisfaction, organisational support, and personal values (Vuong, 2020). High loyalty can act as a retention force: employees who feel a strong sense of commitment are less likely to seek external opportunities, even in the face of enticing offers. On the other hand, if loyalty is weak, perhaps due to dissatisfaction with management, lack of recognition, or a broader disillusionment with the local tech ecosystem, an employee may feel little hesitation in moving abroad.

for a better deal (Brown, 2023). Understanding loyalty is crucial in Nigeria's tech context, where rapid turnover is common. Loyalty (or the lack thereof) might explain why some highly skilled individuals choose to stay and contribute to a growing local startup against the odds. In contrast, others quickly exit for multinational companies overseas. By examining loyalty, the study recognises that retaining talent isn't just about external incentives but also about the psychological and emotional ties that bind employees to their organisations and country.

The talent shortage crisis is affecting various sectors of the economy, leading to low productivity, a shortage of mentors and trainers, hindered innovation and expansion, increased reliance on foreign expertise, and a barrier to the country's digital transformation efforts (Mukul, Taneja, Özen, & Bansal, 2024). By addressing the personal factors that underlie an individual's choice to leave or stay, this research aims to contribute to solutions that will help secure Nigeria's place in the global digital future.

II. Overview Of The Nigerian Ict Industry

Nigeria's ICT industry is one of the largest in Africa and a significant contributor to the economy (around 10% of GDP) (David & Grobler, 2020), and it spans several key subsectors that drive the country's digital transformation. The sector comprises telecommunications, the core information technology of software & IT services, fintech, e-commerce, cybersecurity, digital media, and emerging technologies. Nigeria is widely regarded as Africa's largest ICT market, with a huge base of consumers and users (Soetan, Mogaji, & Nguyen, 2021). Over half of Nigeria's 220+ million people now have access to mobile phones, and internet usage has surged – Nigeria alone accounts for roughly 29% of all internet usage in Africa (Irielle, 2024). As of mid-2022, there were around 85 million broadband subscriptions (44% penetration) in the country, and total internet users (including mobile internet on any network) are well over 100 million and growing (Godlovitch, Martins, Gries, Knips, & Wernick, 2023). In the early 2000s, telecom and IT contributed under 1% to Nigeria's GDP. Still, by 2022, the ICT sector accounted for 18.44% of GDP in Q2 2022 – a dramatic increase that surpassed the contribution of oil in that quarter (Mandal & Brims, 2022). In terms of market value, the Nigerian ICT sector is a multi-billion-dollar industry (Ladagu, 2020), and estimates indicate the market size will reach about \$32.8 billion by 2025 and continue growing at double-digit rates (projected to more than double to \$76 billion by 2030).

Despite impressive progress and opportunities, Nigeria's ICT industry faces several challenges that constrain its full potential. One major issue is infrastructural: an unreliable power supply and inadequate supporting infrastructure increase operating costs (Lebepe, & Mathaba, 2024). Security challenges in rural areas, multiple taxation, policy shifts or government intervention are among the challenges of the industry. Another growing challenge is cybersecurity and fraud. With more Nigerians online and using digital services, cyber threats have increased – it's estimated that Nigerian businesses and financial institutions lose around \$500 million annually to cybercrime (Kalu, Chidi-Kalu, Okidi, & Usiedo, 2020). Lastly, the industry grapples with a skills gap and brain drain (Gains, 2024). While Nigeria produces many graduates, there is a shortage of highly skilled ICT professionals (many skilled tech workers emigrate or are hired abroad), which can limit local capacity (Adhikari, Clemens, Dempster, & Ekeator, 2021). This mother of all challenges must be addressed to sustain the sector's growth and take advantage of the potential. This, among others, is what necessitates this study.

III. The Rationale Of The Study

The need to address talent flight in the Nigerian tech space forms the core rationale for this study. By investigating the personal determinants of why employees leave – specifically, how access to quality education, career development prospects, and employee loyalty influence the decision to expatriate – the research seeks to fill a knowledge gap with practical implications.

Most existing studies of Nigeria's brain drain highlight macro-level issues such as economic instability and insecurity (Dauda, 2021). Unfortunately, those discussions do not fully capture the nuanced personal calculus that talented ICT professionals perform when deciding whether to build a career at home or abroad. By narrowing the focus to individual-level factors, this study will shed light on the human side of the talent exodus: what do ICT employees value most, and how do those values drive their choices? The findings are expected to provide evidence-based insights for both industry leaders and policymakers in Nigeria. If, for example, access to quality education is confirmed as a major determinant, it would underscore the importance of improving local educational and training opportunities as a retention strategy. If career development is paramount, it will highlight the need for organisations to create clear, merit-based advancement pathways and challenging projects to engage their top talent. And if loyalty (or lack thereof) emerges as critical, it will signal that companies and the broader tech community must cultivate better workplace cultures, recognition, and a sense of purpose to keep employees invested in staying.

Studies on talent emigration from a behavioural standpoint (Guillon & Cezanne, 2014; Martins & Meyer, 2012) confirm employee loyalty as a contributory factor. However, the extent to which employee loyalty contributes to the problem still needs to be established (Guillon & Cezanne, 2014; Martins & Meyer, 2012). Employees are more likely to stay if they see a clear path to career advancement (Usman, 2015). Organisations

that invest in their employees' career development and access to quality education by offering training programs and promotion opportunities will inevitably reduce talent emigration; nevertheless, the extent to which this factor contributes to talent expatriation still needs to be determined. Hence, a study of this nature that addresses the extent to which these personal factors of access to quality education, career development prospects and employee loyalty that underlie an individual's choice to leave or stay will contribute to solutions that will help stop this alarming trend of talent expatriation in the Nigerian ICT sector.

IV. Literature Review

In recent years, the migration patterns of ICT professionals from Nigeria have become increasingly prominent, driven by a complex interplay of push and pull factors. Existing literature highlights that factors such as economic opportunities, professional development, socio-political stability, and personal aspirations play crucial roles in influencing the migration decisions of skilled workers (Adepoju, 2018; Afolayan *et al.*, 2020).

This article is anchored in two pivotal migration theories. The first is the Human Capital Theory, which states that knowledge, skills, and competencies acquired by individuals are forms of capital that yield future returns through higher income, job mobility, and career advancement (Marginson, 2019). The second is the Organisational commitment theory, which helps explain why some employees choose to stay despite challenges and why others, even those in relatively stable jobs, decide to expatriate (Froese, Stoermer, Reiche, & Klar, 2021). By understanding the dimensions of organisational commitment theory, ICT firms and policymakers can develop better retention strategies (Yadav, Pandita, & Singh, 2022).

V. Human Capital Theory

The Human Capital Theory (HCT) suggests that individuals strategically invest in their education, skills, and health to enhance productivity and earnings (Abdou, 2023). The theory highlights the pursuit of better returns on personal investments in skills and education as a driver for migration (Adetayo, 2024). When considering migration, this theory implies that people relocate to maximise the benefits of their human capital investments, seeking better economic opportunities and an improved quality of life. Essentially, migration is seen as a strategy to improve one's economic prospects and overall quality of life by moving to locations where their skills and qualifications are more highly valued and rewarded (Esteves, & Rauhut, 2024).

Core Principles of this theory include Investing in human capital, including Education, training, and health, which are viewed as investments that enhance an individual's productivity and earning potential (Erlyn, Hidayat, Cahyo, & Saksono, 2022). Rational decision-making: Individuals make migration decisions based on a rational assessment of the potential costs and benefits, seeking to maximise their net returns (Czaika, Bijak, & Prike, 2021). Maximising returns: Migration is undertaken to move to places where the individual's human capital can yield higher returns, such as better job opportunities, higher wages, and improved living conditions (Roca Paz, & Uebelmesser, 2021).

Talent expatriation in the ICT sector can be understood as a rational outcome of an individual's desire to maximise returns on their human capital (Sousa, Ferreira, Jayantilal, & Dabic, 2024). From the human capital theory's perspective, Nigerian ICT professionals emigrate because they perceive better opportunities abroad to use their skills, grow their careers, and achieve personal fulfilment (Oreofe, & Eytayo, 2022).

Education is one of the core pillars of human capital development. In human capital theory, individuals pursue education to increase their productivity and earning potential (Awawdeh, Harb, & Zhang, 2024). However, in Nigeria, the quality of education, especially at tertiary and professional levels, is often perceived as inadequate due to outdated curricula, limited resources, and frequent disruptions like strikes (Uyagu, & Omoniwa, 2024). Consequently, many ICT professionals seek opportunities to enhance their education abroad, including advanced degrees, global certifications, or tech bootcamps (Sukovataia, Cherkasova, Dvinskikh, & Vitkovskaya, 2020). This educational expatriation is often the first step in permanent relocation. If local educational institutions do not meet the learning and developmental needs of ICT professionals, individuals will logically seek environments where they can better invest in and apply their human capital (Swanson, 2022). Thus, poor access to quality education becomes both a push factor and a barrier to retention in the Nigerian ICT workforce (Akaeze, 2024).

Career development is another key element of human capital return. Human Capital Theory suggests that individuals are motivated to seek jobs or environments where their skills can develop, be recognised, and yield higher returns (Abbas, Ekowati, Suhariadi, Anwar, 2024). In many Nigerian ICT firms, employees often encounter stagnant growth, lack of mentorship, and limited exposure to global trends or cutting-edge technology (Omoniyi, 2024). When individuals perceive that their career trajectory is constrained, they will likely expatriate to countries or firms offering progressive roles, global exposure, and merit-based promotion structures (Amis, Mair, & Munir, 2020). From the human capital theory perspective, this is a rational investment decision: the individual is reallocating their human capital to a market that promises better development and higher productivity rewards. Therefore, limited career development opportunities in Nigeria's ICT firms deter talent retention and highlight the need for firms to create robust talent management and career planning systems (Agbai, & Okechukwu, 2024).

While employee loyalty might seem like a behavioural or psychological construct, it is deeply influenced by perceived returns on human capital investment (Cachón-Rodríguez, Blanco-González, Prado-Román, & Del-Castillo-Feito, 2022). If ICT professionals feel that their efforts, skills, and time are undervalued or unrewarded in their current organisation, loyalty erodes. Human capital theory suggests that when the cost of staying outweighs the potential benefits, individuals will reallocate their skills to more rewarding environments (Seibert, Akkermanas, & Liu, 2024). In this context, loyalty is not just emotional but also rational and strategic. An ICT employee might be committed to their firm or country. Still, when faced with recurring issues like poor infrastructure, low compensation, and professional stagnation, the decision to leave becomes an economically sound move. This links back to the theory's central idea: individuals seek to maximise the utility of their human capital. Therefore, organisations that want to build and sustain employee loyalty must create environments that provide clear, measurable returns on employees' time, effort, and expertise.

Human Capital Theory provides a valuable framework for understanding the personal motivations behind talent expatriation. It emphasises that highly skilled individuals make calculated decisions to relocate based on where their skills, knowledge, and experience will be best rewarded (Roca Paz, & Uebelmesser, 2021). As this study explores personal factors such as education access, career growth, and employee loyalty, Human Capital theory reinforces that expatriation is not merely an emotional or cultural issue but an economic and rational response to perceived deficiencies in the local employment environment. For policymakers and business leaders, this theory underscores the need to invest in people, create enabling environments, and offer compelling tangible and intangible reasons for talent to stay and thrive within Nigeria.

VI. Organisational Commitment Theory

Organisational Commitment theory (OCT) posits that highly committed employees are less likely to leave their country, thus reducing brain drain or talent expatriation (Abdallah Yassine, & Jacobs, 2025). Unlike the human capital theory, the OCT blames commitment deficiency for higher rates of brain drain as employees seek better opportunities abroad (Do, 2019).

The theory emphasises employees' psychological attachment and loyalty toward their organisation. This theory provides valuable insight into why some employees remain with an organisation despite external opportunities abroad while others choose to leave (Al-Jabari, & Ghazzawi, 2019). Given that Nigerian skilled ICT talents have become increasingly mobile, understanding organisational commitment becomes critical for addressing the factors influencing talent expatriation (Agbai, & Okechukwu, 2024). The theory proposed a three-component model to explain employees' different commitment dimensions toward their organisation. Affective Commitment refers to the emotional attachment an employee has to their organisation. Employees with high affective commitment stay because they want to, driven by identification with the company's values, culture, and people. Continuance Commitment is based on the perceived cost of leaving the organisation. Employees with strong continuance commitment stay because they need to, often due to factors like job security, financial benefits, or lack of alternatives (Galanaki, 2020). Normative Commitment involves a sense of obligation to remain with the organisation. Employees with normative commitment stay because they feel they ought to, due to loyalty, moral responsibility, or a sense of gratitude toward the organisation (Al-Jabari, & Ghazzawi, 2019).

Contextualising this with talent expatriation, particularly in ICT firms in Nigeria, organisational commitment plays a critical role in shaping an employee's decision to either remain with their current employer or seek opportunities abroad (Agbai, & Okechukwu, 2024). When commitment is weak, especially affective and normative, it becomes easier for highly skilled individuals to consider expatriation, especially if personal factors such as career growth and access to quality education are unmet locally (Shaaban, 2022).

Affective commitment is closely tied to employee loyalty (Meschke, 2021), one of the key personal factors under investigation in this research. Employees who feel valued, emotionally connected to their work, and aligned with organisational goals are less likely to leave, even in the face of attractive expatriation opportunities (Kudo, McPhail, & Vuk Despotovic, 2024). However, in many Nigerian ICT firms, limited career advancement, poor management support, and weak organisational culture can diminish affective commitment, thereby increasing the risk of losing talent to foreign markets (Pelealu, 2022).

Continuance commitment is influenced by an individual's perception of the benefits and risks associated with leaving their current organisation (Galanaki, 2020). In a competitive global ICT market, Nigerian professionals may perceive greater career development opportunities abroad, such as exposure to cutting-edge technologies, better work environments, and faster promotions, making the cost of staying appear higher than the cost of leaving (Omoniyi, 2024). If local ICT firms do not provide structured career progression paths, mentoring, or continuous learning, employees may feel they have little to lose by emigrating (Bucher, Lazarova, & Deller, 2024).

Normative commitment reflects an employee's sense of duty or moral obligation to stay with their organisation or, in this case, in their country (Liu, Loi, & Ngo, 2020). This sense of duty in Nigeria may be weakened by institutional distrust, socio-economic challenges, and frustration with governance or public services

(such as poor infrastructure and education systems) (Duyile, 2023). When professionals feel that their loyalty is not reciprocated by organisational or national systems, their normative commitment can decline, leading them to pursue personal and professional fulfilment abroad (Greco, Porck, Walter, Scrimshire, & Zabinski, 2022).

Organisational Commitment Theory provides a robust lens to understand talent expatriation in the Nigerian ICT industry (Agbai, & Okechukwu, 2024). It reveals that personal factors such as career development, access to education, and employee loyalty are deeply interwoven with how employees perceive their relationship with their organisations (Jumawan, Ali, Sawitri, & Rony, 2024).

VII. Objectives And Hypothesis

The study strives to achieve the following objectives:

- i. Identify if access to quality education significantly defines talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria.
- ii. Establish if career development prospects determine talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria.
- iii. Establish how strongly employee loyalty determines talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria.
- iv. Determine how strongly personal factors determine talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria.

The study has examined various determinants which made an employee to depart from the organisation through empirical research. To achieve the above objectives, the following hypotheses were drawn:

Ho₁: Access to quality education does not significantly affect talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria.

Ho₂: Career development prospects does not significantly affect talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria.

Ho₃: Employee loyalty does not significantly affect talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria.

Ho₄: Personal Factors (access to quality education, career development prospects, employee loyalty) do not significantly affect talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria.

VIII. Methodology

The study uses a quantitative approach. A set of questionnaires was administered among the ICT experts in the selected ICT firms in Nigeria. The target population for this study comprises ICT professionals currently working in selected ICT firms in Nigeria. Five ICT firms with branches across Nigeria are used for the study. The sample includes individuals from the selected core ICT firms with a specialisation in system integration (hardware, software, network, security integration) based on NITDA classification and a total population of 350 staff.

Given the population structure, a stratified random sampling technique is employed to ensure representation from different sub-sectors and organisational sizes. This method enhances the generalizability of the findings by capturing the perspectives of a diverse group of ICT professionals (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2016).

The questionnaire was shared with the 350 staff members of the selected company, and 142 responses were obtained. Using the Taro Yamane formula, the ideal sample size is expected to be 187, as shown in the calculation below. The response of 142, therefore, amounts to a 76% response rate.

$n = N/(1+N(e)^2)$ where: n = sample size, N = Population size and e = margin of error.

Hence, for the study, below is our ideal sample size:

$N = 350, e = 0.05, \text{Sample size } (n) = 350/1+350(0.05)^2, n = 187$

Three standardised questionnaires were employed to measure the relationship between the organisational factors and talent expatriation. Data collection is through an online survey platform. Participants receive email invitations with a study overview, confidentiality assurances, and a survey link. The survey is open for ten days, with reminders to encourage participation. This method allows data collection from a widely dispersed population, improving reach and efficiency. (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014).

The gathered data is analysed using statistical software to summarise demographic characteristics and survey responses. Inferential statistics, including correlation and multiple regression analysis, are used to investigate connections between variables.

IX. Findings And Discussions

The questionnaire was analysed in two parts. The first is the demographic analysis of the respondents. The second is the analysis of the four (4) research hypotheses formulated for the study using correlation and regression analysis.

Table 1.1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Response Label	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	69	48.6
	Female	73	51.4
	Total	142	100
Age	Below 21 years	5	3.5
	21-29 years	29	20.4
	30-39 years	58	40.9
	40-49 years	42	29.6
	Above 50 years	8	5.6
	Total	142	100
Marital status	Single	57	40.1
	Married	64	45.1
	Divorced	21	14.8
	Total	142	100
Educational qualification	HND/Bsc/BA	48	33.8
	Msc/MBA	71	50.0
	OND/NCE	23	16.2
	Total	142	100
Length of service	1-5 years	27	19.0
	6-10 years	43	30.3
	11-15 years	52	36.6
	16 years and above	20	14.1
	Total	142	100
Staff level	Management	35	24.6
	Senior staff	68	47.9
	Junior staff	39	27.5
	Total	142	100
Work location	Lagos	68	47.9
	Abuja	39	27.5
	Port Harcourt	35	24.6
	Total	142	100
Specialization	Hardware	27	19.0
	Software	52	36.6
	Network	20	14.1
	Security	43	30.3
	Total	142	100
propensity to go abroad	Very high	49	34.5
	High	58	40.8
	Low	23	16.2
	Very low	12	8.5
	Total	142	100
ICT skill level	Beginner	23	16.2
	Intermediate	43	30.3
	Expert	51	35.9
	Expert & multi skilled	25	17.6
	Total	142	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The study used multiple linear regression analysis to test hypotheses at a 5% significance level to establish the relationship between organisational factors and talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria.

The study's decision rule states that if the probability value calculated is greater than the critical level of significance $e 0.00 > 0.05$, then the null hypothesis is accepted, and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. However, if the probability value is lesser than the critical value, then the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Ho₁: Access to quality education does not significantly affect talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria.

Table 2.1: Regression Analysis of Access to Quality Education and Talent Expatriation

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.409 ^a	.167	.165	.4375		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Access to quality Education						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	16.073	1	16.073	83.358	.000 ^b
	Residual	80.193	419	.191		
	Total	96.266	420			
a. Dependent Variable: Talent Expatriation						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Access to quality Education						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.810	.201		8.983	.000
	Access to quality Education	.480	.052	.409	9.164	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Talent Expatriation						

Source: field Survey 2024

The correlation coefficient equals 0.409 indicates a moderate positive effect between access to quality education and talent expatriation. The R-squared statistic indicates that the model as fitted explains 16.7% of the variability in talent expatriation. This simply implies that about 52.5% of the total variation in the measure of talent expatriation is explained by the variations in access to quality education. The regression coefficient ($\beta=0.409$) of the above equation for the model implies that a unit change in access to quality education will exert a positive effect on talent expatriation. Also the p-value of (0.000) which is less than the level of significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) indicate that the result is statistically significant; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and it can be concluded that access to quality education has significant positive effect on talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria.

Access to quality education and career development is a major reason for talent expatriation among Nigerian ICT firm professionals. The study showed a significant model summary: $F_{(1,2)} = 83.358$, $P < 0.05$, $R = 0.409$, $R^2 = 0.167$, confirming that access to quality education has a significant positive effect on talent expatriation among ICT professionals in Nigeria. This is in tandem with the findings of Sunalai and Beyerlein (2015).

Ho₂: Career development prospects does not significantly affect talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria.

Table 2.2: Regression Analysis of Career Development Prospects and Talent Expatriation

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.455 ^a	.207	.195	2.46382		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Management support						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	67.751	1	67.751	155.037	.000 ^b
	Residual	61.211	140	.437		
	Total	128.962	141			
a. Dependent Variable: Talent Expatriation						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Management support						
Coefficients ^a						

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.747	.169		4.410	.000
Management support	.757	.040	.455	18.731	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Talent Expatriation

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

To analyse the hypothesis, the linear regression was employed at 5% significance level. The analysis showed a significant model summary: $F_{(1,2)} = 155.037$, $P < 0.05$, $R = 0.455$, $R^2 = 0.207$. The analysis showed that career development has a significant positive effect on talent expatriation in selected ICT firms in Nigeria. With an R-squared of 0.207 and an adjusted R-squared of 0.195, the model in this regression analysis shows statistical significance ($p < 0.05$). The regression analysis model that is being presented fits the data well and accounts for approximately 52.5% of the variance in talent expatriation, and the remaining 86.6% is due to other factors that are not captured in the regression equation. Also, the p-value of (0.000), which is less than the level of significance at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), indicates that the result is statistically significant; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it can be concluded that career development prospects have a significant effect on talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria.

Career development prospects overseas is a major reason for talent expatriation among ICT professionals in Nigeria. The study showed a significant model summary: $F_{(1,2)} = 155.037$, $P < 0.05$, $R = 0.455$, $R^2 = 0.207$, confirming that career development prospects have a significant positive effect on talent expatriation among ICT professionals in Nigeria.

Ho₃: Employee loyalty does not significantly affect talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria.

Table 2.3: Regression Analysis of Employee Loyalty and Talent Expatriation

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.629 ^a	.395	.393	.56392	

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee loyalty

ANOVA ^a					
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Sig.
1	Regression	65.923	1	65.923	.000 ^b
	Residual	100.809	140	.720	
	Total	166.732	141		

a. Dependent Variable: Talent Expatriation
b. Predictors: (Constant), Employee loyalty

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	.799	.217		.000
	Employee loyalty	.747	.052	.629	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Talent Expatriation

Source: Field Survey 2024

To analyse the hypothesis, the linear regression was employed at 5% significance level. The analysis showed a significant model summary: $F_{(1,2)} = 91.560$, $P < 0.05$, $R = 0.629$, $R^2 = 0.395$. The correlation coefficient equals 0.629, indicating a strong relationship between employee loyalty and talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria. The model in this regression analysis also showed a statistical significance ($p < 0.05$). The regression analysis model that is being presented fits the data well and accounts for approximately 39.5% of the variance in talent expatriation, and the remaining 60.5% is due to other factors that are not captured in the multiple regression equation. Also, the p-value of (0.000), which is less than the level of significance at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), indicates that the result is statistically significant; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it can be concluded that employee loyalty has a significant effect on talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria.

Table 2.4: Personal Factors vs. Talent Expatriation

Model Summary						
Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1		.624 ^a	.389	.380	2.31115	
a. Predictors: (Constant), Access to Quality Education, Career Development, Employee Loyalty						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1108.906	3	369.635	29.294	.000 ^b
	Residual	1741.296	138	12.618		
	Total	2850.202	141			
a. Dependent Variable: Talent Expatriation						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Access to Quality Education, Career Development, Employee Loyalty						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.975	1.248		3.185	.002
	Access to quality education	.317	.074	.272	4.303	.000
	Career Development	.246	.088	.242	2.784	.006
	Employee loyalty	.089	.108	.077	.820	.413
a. Dependent Variable: Talent Expatriation						

The absence of employee loyalty is a major reason for talent expatriation among ICT professionals in Nigeria. The study showed a significant model summary: $F_{(1,2)} = 91.560$, $P < 0.05$, $R = 0.629$, $R^2 = 0.395$, confirming that employee loyalty has a significant positive effect on talent expatriation among ICT professionals in Nigeria when tested as a standalone factor, as corroborated by the findings of Mello, Suutari, and Dickmann, (2023). However, when combined with the two other personal factors of access to quality education and career development, employee loyalty has a negative impact on talent expatriation, as corroborated by the findings of Scullion (2012).

Ho₄: Personal Factors (access to quality education, career development prospects, employee loyalty) do not significantly affect talent expatriation among selected ICT firms in Nigeria.

To analyse the hypothesis, the multiple linear regression was employed at 5% significance level. The analysis showed a significant model summary: $F_{(1,2)} = 29.294$, $P < 0.05$, $R = 0.624$, $R^2 = 0.389$. The analysis showed that personal factors (Access to Quality Education, Career Development, Employee Loyalty) have a significant positive joint effect on talent expatriation. With an R-squared of 0.389 and an adjusted R-squared of 0.380, the model in this regression analysis shows statistical significance ($p < 0.05$). The multiple regression analysis model that is being presented fits the data well and accounts for approximately 38.9% of the variance in Talent Expatriation and the remaining 61.1% is due to other factors that are not captured in the multiple regression equation. The combined effect of the predictor variables on Talent Expatriation are significant, as shown by the overall F-statistic of 29.294 and the significant p-value (0.000). According to their corresponding coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values, Access to Quality Education and Career Development are significant predictors. However, Employee Loyalty does not demonstrate significant individual impacts in predicting Talent Expatriation.

When combined with the personal factors of access to quality education & career prospects, employee loyalty is not a major reason for talent expatriation among ICT professionals in Nigeria. The study showed a significant model summary: $F_{(1,2)} = 29.294$, $P < 0.05$, $R = 0.624$, $R^2 = 0.389$. The analysis showed that personal factors (Access to Quality education, career development, and employee loyalty) have a significant positive joint effect on talent expatriation. With an R-squared of 0.389 and an adjusted R-squared of 0.380, the model in this regression analysis shows statistical significance ($p < 0.05$). The combined effect of the predictor variables on Talent Expatriation is significant, as shown by the overall F-statistic of 29.294 and the significant p-value (0.000). According to their corresponding coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values, Access to Quality Education and Career Development are significant predictors. However, Employee Loyalty does not demonstrate significant individual impacts in predicting Talent Expatriation, as corroborated by the findings of Scullion (2012). It is, therefore, clear

from this study that when access to quality education & good career prospects are in place, employee loyalty will be enhanced, thereby encouraging talent retention. Employee loyalty alone, though, is a factor responsible for talent expatriation; its influence is whittled down when the duo of access to quality education & good career prospects are in place.

X. CONCLUSION

The alarming rate of talent expatriation among professionals in ICT firms in Nigeria in recent times is undoubtedly a major challenge bedeviling the ICT industry in Nigeria (Agbai, & Okechukwu, 2024). Although many authors have researched the subject of talent expatriation, not many have narrowed down their work to the ICT industry (Farndale *et al.*, 2021).

It is very clear from this study that at the micro-individual level, personal factors are responsible for this talent emigration crisis in the ICT sector in Nigeria. It is, therefore, pertinent for ICT organisations to promote an environment that develops ICT talent by encouraging mentorship and exposure to local and global training and investing in resources and tools that support employees' physical, emotional, mental, and financial health to discourage talent expatriation.

ICT companies must also consider the need to invest in people, create enabling environments, and offer compelling reasons for talent to stay and thrive in Nigeria. Organisations must provide training programs, clear career paths, and innovation-driven cultures if they hope to retain their skilled workforce. To motivate skilled workers to stay, it is recommended that ICT companies create strong employee engagement and recognition systems, offer competitive career development opportunities and clear promotion pathways, and foster a sense of purpose and organisational citizenship.

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