TALENT ACQUISITION & RETENTION ISSUES OF FACULTY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

SHIKHA
Assistant Professor, ABES IT Group of Institutions, VijayNagar, Ghaziabad, India

ABSTRACT

Presently, the biggest challenge faced by technical educational institutions in India is the acute shortage of qualified and competent faculties. This has resulted in a scenario where institutions are vying with each other to attract & retain for them the best available faculty talent. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that institutions should design and pursue policies/mechanisms so as to compete well in market place to attract and retain for them the best faculty talent. This paper offers some possible strategies that institutions can adopt to attract & retain for them the best available faculty talent.

The major factors contributing to faculty recruitment and retention are salaries, benefits, start-up and ongoing resources for research, supportive environments, and partner/spouse employment opportunities.

The research design used for the study is mainly descriptive. A number of management institutes have been used from Delhi/NCR and adjoining places to collect a sample of respondents randomly. The sample size was purposely kept small due to the constraint of time and resources. The purpose of this study was to find answers to questions through the application of scientific procedures. The main aim of study was to discover the truth that is hidden and that has not been discovered as yet.

The prime objectives were:

a) To understand the concept of talent management
b) To analyze the factors that lead to the high turnover rate of faculty
c) To suggest ways to reduce the turnover rate of faculty.

This paper seeks to understand and analyze the causes of the high attrition rate of employees in the management institutes of MTU. Moreover, the paper tries to diagnose the malady and prescribe the remedial solutions. The essential theme of this paper is talent management and the development of a proper talent pool.

Based on this research, the most common characteristic in Private Colleges with optimal retention appears to be a common purpose among the faculty. These Private Colleges attracted and retained faculty that resonated with the values. This clearness of purpose also seems to help faculty members that do not resonate with these values either seek another school or not seek a position in the
The results seem to indicate that Private Colleges can increase faculty retention, at times significantly, by clarifying institutional mission and values.

This paper also brought out an interesting characteristic common at Private Colleges with Optimal retention and absent at Private Colleges with very low faculty retention. Of the Private Colleges that were asked for a more in-depth interview following their initial survey response, all the private Colleges with optimal retention have a published and accessible salary scale; none of the private Colleges with poor retention do. More research needs to be done to determine whether this is a causal characteristic or merely ancillary.

**KEYWORDS:** Faculty Issues, Higher Education, Private Institutions, Talent, Talent Pool, Attrition, Potential and Skills

**INTRODUCTION**

A nation is built to a large extent in its educational institutions – in its classrooms, laboratories, libraries and playing fields. Educational institutes not only produce highly skilled and enlightened manpower needed for the political, economic and social transformation and development of our country but also shoulder the responsibility of lending dynamism, resourcefulness and intellectuality to it. The teacher is the backbone of the educational system, the maker of mankind and the architect of society. A nation grows with the teachers and with the education imparted to the people. It is in this respect that the role of the teachers acquires significance in shaping society and in bringing revolutionary changes in the development of the country. The retention of this community in educational system especially individual institutes is necessary for the effective and proper use of the resources for rendering maximum service to society through building up the future human-resource pool of the nation.

A number of findings and observations especially regarding management institutes are pointers to the fact that the education cosmos is sitting on a veritable landmine – that of talent crisis. Institutes at large are facing an acute dearth of academic talent; this is a malaise, which can snowball into a pandemic if remedial action is not taken instantly. Institutes are now taking the bull by the horns. The realization of the gravity of the situation is gradually dawning upon them. Slowly but steadily enough, they have started addressing this issue. They are acknowledging academic talent shortage as a burgeoning problem and are placing the academic talent development task high on their list of priorities.

United States market also recurred a shortage of teachers and that too in twentieth century and as there was the decrease in the number of admissions during early eighties and late seventies. There has been a shortage in humanities department in various management institutes in most of the pronounced areas and in growing areas like south and west of the country.

Glenn A. Daley (2006) stated that recruitment and retention of teachers is the important factor where there is a need to create a pipeline and also to develop a concept of succession planning as it becomes necessary if any faculty member leaves the institute in the mid-session. In most of the institutes the new teachers cannot keep up with the experienced and highly qualified old faculty members.
Western countries, where sufficient numbers of teachers are prepared, many newly prepared teachers either choose not to teach at all or leave teaching within a few years. Many of the researchers found that in United States around 60% of students that are interested for teaching actually choose to go into teaching after graduation. Approximately 40% of teachers leave the teaching profession in United States within the first three years. However, teacher retention rate is not a problem in other countries like France, Germany, Portugal and Hong Kong.

Lucrecia and Glenn A. Daley (2006) found that universities and higher education institutions are at the crossroads in terms of their future development. Moving ostensibly from institutions that enjoyed heavy government subsidy, outdated and protected work practices that functioned on the quaint concept of collegiality, they have suddenly found that the structures and processes that served them so well in the past are no longer relevant in the new world order of e-commerce, street smart and fickle students who demand high quality and progressive and flexible teaching and learning practices that will provide them with the edge upon graduation. There are attempts to identify the Human Resource initiatives that are required to effect change in a competitive and complex environment. However, before doing this it is necessary to identify the influences that are driving institutions to re-evaluate their HR practices (David Roth and Watson Scott Swail, 2001).

Congruence and commonality of effort are difficult to achieve in a decentralized system of education. Education system requires a proper understanding of how to implement teaching policies if there is a need to hire visiting faculty. If there is not a proper channel of implementing the policies, then there will be teaching policies on temporary basis with conflicts, gaps and inefficiencies that becomes unavoidable.

A coherent framework of policies should be developed as it becomes easier in those countries that follow national system of education because the education policies are controlled by central government.

There are various organisations in New York, working to improve the hiring of teachers and the studied made researcher Levin & Quinn (2003) stated that lengthy process of hiring made most of the candidates to back out from the hiring process. Some of the institutes there in New York received five to seven times more applications than the actual positions to be filled and most of the candidates withdrew from the positions applied for when the hiring process started in late summers.

Now the issue arises as to on what factors does the demand and supply of best quality teachers depend. These factors can be the number of enrolments of candidates, student-teacher ratio and the turnover rate. Though the student-teacher ratio has declined in most of the western countries in several years.

The number of teachers depends on number of students graduating from teacher preparation programmes, the ratio of such students who choose to enter teaching; this includes the number of teachers who are licensed through various other programmes, and the number of members returning from the reserve pool of teachers, including retired teachers. Some more factors influencing the supply of
teachers are compensations and benefits, difficulty of licensure standards, working conditions, presence or absence of incentives to attract teachers, and public perception of teaching as a profession.

The purpose of this study was to review the talent management process nurtured by the private institutes as well as to identify the factors that most significantly influenced faculty's decisions to remain employed at the institutes. Besides, this study has also developed a conceptual framework of talented employee retention and tested the framework of employee retention in the context of a private college in Delhi/NCR. Moreover, the study sought to describe the importance of retaining core employees and developing strategies to enhance human capital retention practices. Result from this study will assist in the development of an effective talent management and HR retention program for organizations.

DEFINING TALENT AND TALENT MANAGEMENT

At the outset, let us embark on an attempt to define ‘talent’. Talent may be defined as the inherent ability of an individual to do a particular task in a particular way. Talent has a connotation of distinction. It is something that sets one apart. The point to be underscored here is that talent is a commodity in short supply and comes at a price. Since it is a scarce resource, it needs to be optimally managed. Organizations across the world are now thinking of including talent management in the gamut of management processes and functions. But what is talent management? Talent management incorporates attracting, retaining and developing the talent pool available to an organization in association with the other functions of management, so that the organization is never rendered bereft of expertise.

Talent management is a systematic process of identifying, assessing, developing and retaining people with critical knowledge, skills and competencies. Competence, capability and talents are human assets of organizations. At the workplace, capability could mean member’s readiness to seek, undertake and carry out challenging work assignments. It is grounded in self-efficacy and other self-related phenomena (Mehta 1999). Talent management systems provide an organization with the vehicle of attracting and retaining the right skills at the right time in the right jobs.

The term ‘talent management’ means different things to different people. To some it is about the management of high-worth individuals or “the talented” while to others it is about how talent is managed generally, i.e., on the assumption that all people have talent, which should be identified and liberated. This term is usually associated with competency-based human resource management practices. Talent-management decisions are often driven by a set of organizational core competencies as well as position-specific competencies. The competency set may include knowledge, skills, experience and personal traits (demonstrated through defined behaviors).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study investigated the factors affecting talented faculty retention of the measured variables and the cause and effect relationship of among the variables. Chew (2005) and Ready at al. (2008) were followed to select the influencing variables for this study. Altogether four HR factors and four
organizational factors have been identified which affect the employee retention. The HR factors are comprised of compensation package, person organization fit, challenging opportunity and training and development. The organizational factors included in the framework are working environment, company culture and policy, leadership behavior and teamwork relationship.

Compensation package is the most important motivational, factors for the core employees in the context of private institutes. Thus, it can be said that the compensation package has a strong influence on employee retention. Person organization fit means whose values, norms and ethics are congruent with those of an organization is necessary to keep him or her for a long time in the organization. Evidence say that a high level of P-O fit is related to a number of positive outcomes. So, it can be said that person-organization fit is a better predictor of talented employee retention.

Challenging opportunity is considered to be one of the important reasons employees would choose to leave or stay in the organization. Challenging projects and their results are important for a high performance job market milieu in which talented employees can achieve their personal goals and career objectives. The fact that organisations don’t own their employees, as they do their capital assets, is why methods for valuing "human capital" on balance sheets are so tortuous (Barber and Strack, 2005). Training and development is another dimension that the employees care for considering to be dynamic and to be competent in the job market. Hence, more training and developmental tasks motivate the employees to stay for longer in the company.

![Figure 1: Conceptual model for talented faculty retention policy of an organization](image-url)
There are two types of variables, dependent and independent in nature. There can be various controllable variables which help in establishing a relationship between the satisfaction level of faculty, discipline and gender. Some of the studies that have explored the nature and importance of these variables to study job satisfaction level of faculty. These variables can be grouped into four broader categories, namely:

(1) Demographic, (2) Institutional, (3) Career, and (4) Productivity.

Demographic variables indicate that it can also impact faculty satisfaction. The results between married, married and having children’s to that of faculty job satisfaction level that have yielded mixed results. Married faculty members with their spouse working in the same institutes also have greater level of job satisfaction. Though it may not always have a positive impact, there can be some negative aspects as well that may be associated with job satisfaction level. Similarly, the presence of children and that too children’s studying in higher secondary or senior secondary levels has been found to impact job satisfaction.

Teaching and conducting research are usually supporting pillars in faculty member’s work life. Though, Institutional variables plays a crucial role in faculties career satisfaction level which in turn is the nature of the work itself, Olsen (1995) studied that faculty members who express higher satisfaction with teaching are less likely to gain support and recognition from their peers in their respective departments.

Various Other Factors affecting retention of faculty are the internal and external factors. Internal factors may include Competitive salary, Quality of colleagues, Quality of students, Affordable quality of housing, fair and equitable evaluation (merit increases, promotions), supportive department atmosphere, Reasonable teaching load, quality of facilities, lab space, etc. research support, recognition for work, contributions and ideas, effective policies. External factors may include Stress, spousal opportunities, career Growth, Status, Children’s Education.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A structured questionnaire was developed using the concept above was used in the survey. The respondents (faculty members) were asked to what degree the faculty retention policies practiced by the college corresponded to their expectations on variables (dependent and independent) related to the dimensions of employee retention model. The questionnaire was sent to 60 full time faculty members of a private colleges located in Delhi/NCR, of which 52 faculty members responded resulting into 86% participation rate. The study used seven point Likert Scale with closed ended questions ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". The researcher assigned numeric values to those options ranging from 7 to 1.

The purpose of this study was to find answers to questions through the application of scientific procedures. The main aim of study was to discover the truth that is hidden and that has not been discovered as yet. The prime objectives were:
a) To understand the concept of talent management

b) To analyze the factors that lead to the high turnover rate of faculty

c) To suggest ways to reduce the turnover rate of faculty

The statistical package for social science (SPSS, Version 14) was used to analyze the quantitative data. The reliability test has been conducted to verify the internal consistency of the variables obtained in the sample. The Cronbach's alpha value is found 0.8982, which is much higher than the minimum acceptable level suggested by Nunnally (1978). Several statistical analytical techniques such as Factor Analysis, Multiple Regression Analysis, and correlation analyses have been used to measure the level of incentives of the faculties rendered by the concerned private institutes.

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

The mean scores computed in Table 1 are based on weighted average method. In the 7-point scale these mean values represent somewhat positive level of talented faculty retention practices from the faculty's point of view. Among all the factors the leadership behavior has got highest mean value of 6.088 (c1=0.961). This means core faculty members are highly satisfied with that factor practices by the college and it is well accepted by all the faculty members. The notable point is that despite the higher mean value, leadership behavior has no significant correlation with faculty retention. This might be due to the lack of sufficiently large number of samples undertaken in the study. From the characteristics of the data, it is observed that the data of training and development (1.1=4.273, 6=1.118) and person-organization fit (1.1=4.746, 8=1.077) are highly deviated from the mean among all other factors. This statistical evidence implies that these two factors involved in the practice of the college are not adequately designed for all the faculty members. Thus, the college should revise their training and development practices and selection policy. On the other hand, the data of working environment (r=5.574, 0=.837) and teamwork relationship (p=5.618, 8=.845) have been found less deviated from the mean. This statistics indicates that the college has been successfully maintaining good working environment and encouraging teamwork relationship which are appreciated by all level of the faculty positions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>FR</th>
<th>CO</th>
<th>TR</th>
<th>POF</th>
<th>WE</th>
<th>TD</th>
<th>CCP</th>
<th>LB</th>
<th>CP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compensation Package (CP)</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>1.045</td>
<td>.452*</td>
<td>.472*</td>
<td>.510*</td>
<td>.478*</td>
<td>.451*</td>
<td>.473*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Behavior (LB)</td>
<td>6.08</td>
<td>0.961</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>0.249</td>
<td>0.151</td>
<td>.302*</td>
<td>0.209</td>
<td>265</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlation Coefficient

In the table, a significant positive and strong correlation was found for the talented faculty retention in relationship with college culture and policy ($r = .685, p < .05$), with challenging opportunity ($r = .629, p < .05$) with working environment ($r = .584, p < .05$), with person organization fit ($r = .520, p < .05$), and also with teamwork relationship ($r = .494, p < .05$). This significant correlation indicates that these factors have strong influence on faculty retention policy of the college. Moreover, a positive and strong correlation was found among college culture and policy, challenging opportunity, and person-organization fit which implies the college should develop and adopt a policy that has complete synchronization among those factors.

**PRINCIPAL FACTOR ANALYSIS**

Principal factor analysis, which have been tabulated separately with the respective loaded values of organizational and HR factors respectively. Nunnally (1978) suggested that the reliability range from

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4</th>
<th>1.05</th>
<th>.685</th>
<th>.646</th>
<th>.393</th>
<th>.623</th>
<th>.494</th>
<th>.475</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College Culture &amp; Policy (CCP)</td>
<td>5.19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; Development (TD)</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.359</td>
<td></td>
<td>.421</td>
<td>.232</td>
<td>.514</td>
<td>.0257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Environment (WE)</td>
<td>5.57</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.584</td>
<td>.565</td>
<td>.535</td>
<td>.549</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person-Organization Fit (POF)</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.520</td>
<td></td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>.418</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork Relationship (TR)</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.494</td>
<td>.535</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging Opportunity (CO)</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.629</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Retention (FR)</td>
<td>5.62</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<.01, *p<.05, N=54**

Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlation Coefficient
0.50 to 0.60 is acceptable. In this study, most of the variables except one exhibit the reliability value less than .70. This study show only independent factors whose eigenvalues are greater than one. These 8 factors account for 66.71% of the variance in the data on attitudes toward employee retention.

College culture and policies exhibit as the most important factor that contains more information than any of other factors loaded with the eigenvalue of 13.800. This factor alone explains 28.75% variance, which indicates that it provides the maximum insights of faculty retention practices of the college. Hence, the policy makers of this organization ought to enhance friendly culture and policies in order to retain their key faculties. The second most important factor here is working environment. Working environment itself explains 7.081% variance of the dependent variable talented faculty retention. So, the organization must promote homely working environment for their core faculty to take their valued service for the long time which is ultimate target for a dynamic organization. The two others organizational factors for the study were leadership behavior and teamwork relationship, which constitute eigenvalues of 2.859 and 2.255 respectively. The two factors altogether account for 10.65% of the variance in continuously search for duties and responsibilities, which are more appealing for their employees and assign it as per their respective positions (i.e. right people for the right job). The second most important HR factor is training & development and this factor accounts for 4.46% of variability in the data. Through training & development a core employee can develop his or her skills and knowledge; and hence can give more efficient output to the organization. So this HR factor also demands notable attention to make the organization more dynamic and efficient. The other two HR factors were person-organization fit and compensation package. These two factors together clarify 7.299% of variance in the data attitudes toward for faculty retention. These two factors also need to be addressed by the organization for retaining talented faculties in the organization. In Table 4, the HR factors are included. The most important factor here in this category is challenging opportunity that explains 8.45% of variance with the eigenvalue of 4.057.

**MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS**

In the analysis, step-wise regression technique was used. Talented faculty retention and 8 orthogonal component factors were taken as dependent and independent variables respectively. Only the significant variables are shown with their respective regression coefficients, standard errors, and computed student's statistics along with their respective significance level. Results of the regression analyses revealed that out of eight control variables, four variables such as university culture and policy, working environment, challenging opportunity and teamwork relationship had statistically significant effects on the rating of attitude towards job retention of the faculties of the concerned college of this study. These results are also consistent with the results found in the factor analyses.

**FINDINGS**

It can be noticed that most of the employees of management institutes are working with an experience of more than 4 years. In spite of this nearly 68% faculty members are not satisfied with their
salaries as they are not according to their expectations. 64% faculty members are satisfied with their institute’s infrastructure. They are generally pressed for time. 45% faculty members, of private institutes, reported that they are overworked. Complaints of excessive workload mainly came from female faculty members. Evaluation and administrative responsibilities are the mainly disliked job responsibilities. 43% respondents detest any kind of administrative responsibility. On insistent probing it was even revealed that administrative responsibilities take away a major portion of the valuable time, which could otherwise be devoted to research and consultancy work. Through our research we found that most of the employees leave their college because of organizational politics rather than salary package, inappropriate management, infrastructure, timings and so on. 35.27% respondents consider organizational politics as an important reason for leaving organization. While no respondent considers salary to be the cause of attrition, but when asked about the most important factor for his or her retention, the answer was salary.

Most of the management institutes are undergoing severe attrition and it has led to a major problem and has forced them to take immediate corrective measures. Some other major findings are:

1. 85% of institutes are experiencing recruitment difficulties
2. 77% of institutes are experiencing retention problems
3. 53% of employees leaving their employer reported greater promotion or development opportunities outside the institute
4. 60% of directors said they would not re-employ their ex-workforce
5. 80% of people leave their managers not their job
6. Based on the empirical analysis of data, following emerged as the important strategies for retaining employees in the management institutes:
7. Salary
8. Training and development opportunities
9. Work environment
10. Growth prospects

Despite all the talk about growth, challenge, self-fulfilment, meaningfulness and all other motivation factors (Herzberg’s two-factor theory), salary, that is monetary motivation, still remains the most important factor in retaining employees. Probably it can be attributed to a more or less similar kind of work environment prevailing in almost all management institutes. In the given scenario salary becomes the only differentiating factor.

CONCLUSIONS

This study focuses on the talent management and the retention of the talented faculty of a private university in Bangladesh. The finding of this study suggests that the scholarly or talented faculty
retention of a private university significantly depends upon four of the eight factors such as university culture and policies, working environment, challenging opportunity as well as teamwork relationship. The remaining four factors, which are compensation package, training and development, person-organization fit and leadership behavior do not have significant impact on the retention of the core or talented faculty members of the private university. Clearly, there is a need for greater analysis of the factors identified. Hence, a better understanding of the interrelationships among these variables would serve to illuminate and provide further insight for academic and practitioners. Further testing of the model in other industries, and over long period of time would be beneficial. This study only examined the private education sector. Future research will need to confirm to what degree the association between talent retention and the identified factors does exist for other industries. In conclusion, this study has gone a substantial way towards meeting its own objectives. Still it has a lot of scope for the improvement. The study was conducted with only 54 observations, but in order to get the best result out of this model the study must apply on larger observations.

REFERENCES


