

A STUDY ON ROLE OF HRD IN EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Employee engagement, a linchpin of organizational effectiveness, has garnered substantial research interest.

Aim - This study explores the influence of Human Resource Development (HRD) practices on fostering employee engagement and mitigating turnover intentions of teachers/faculties of Kanpur district. As per Social Exchange Theory, the researchers explored the potential mediating effect of engagement on the relationship between HRD practices and turnover propensity.

Data- Primary data will be collected from the teachers/faculty members using a self-administered questionnaire. Secondary data will be collected from Journals, Articles and Books of National and International Repute.

Method- A quantitative approach will be preferred to conduct the research whilst utilizing a simple random sample of 100 employees from 20 Colleges of higher education and Universities in Kanpur, India. These institutions are strategically chosen from various regions of Kanpur city. Further, T-Test will be employed for primary data analysis and Bibliometric analysis will be used on the secondary data that is being extracted from Journals and books.

Significance- The findings will raise the curtain from the main objective: How HRD practices, particularly those that emphasize employee growth and development, contribute to a more engaged and committed workforce. By examining the potential mediating role of employee engagement, this study seeks to generate valuable insights for HR professionals. The results will inform the development of effective strategies to bolster employee satisfaction and retention, ultimately contributing to a more productive and successful organization.

Results: The findings of the study may contribute to a more productive and successful academic environment, fostering a sense of community and purpose among employees, and leading to a more positive experience for students as well.

Keywords: HRD, HRM, Kanpur, Faculty, Teachers, Social Exchange theory

1. INTRODUCTION

HRD is a strategic and systematic function within organizations that cultivates a competent, engaged, and adaptable workforce. It emphasizes investing in processes that enhance employee capabilities to achieve organizational goals and objectives. The primary components of HRD are – (1) Training and Development, (2) Performance Management, (3) Career Development, (4) Motivation and Rewards and, (5) Employee Engagement. (Malik, et al., 2020) Employee retention is a critical challenge for many

organizations. When skilled employees are not valued, they are more likely to seek opportunities elsewhere. Fortunately, strategic Human Resource (HR) practices can play a significant role in keeping employees engaged and satisfied. A strong HR department can foster a positive work environment by implementing effective retention strategies. Supportive supervisors who champion their employees' growth further enhance employee morale and loyalty, contributing to a more successful organization.

The study focuses on how HRD practices influence employee engagement. This likely involves training and development programs that enhance teachers' skills and knowledge. HRD practices might encompass performance management systems that provide teachers with feedback and opportunities for growth. The study also suggests HRD practices that foster engagement. This could involve motivational strategies and reward systems that recognize and appreciate teachers' contributions. The research selects teachers/faculty as the target group for several reasons: Employee Engagement Crucial in Education: High teacher engagement is vital for a successful learning environment. Engaged teachers are more invested in their work, leading to better student outcomes. Teacher Turnover: The study aims to understand how HRD practices can reduce turnover intentions. High teacher turnover disrupts learning continuity and can negatively impact educational institutions. Social Exchange Theory: The research applies Social Exchange Theory, which emphasizes reciprocal relationships. By investing in teachers' growth through HRD practices, institutions can foster a sense of obligation and loyalty, reducing turnover.

2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

This study aims to elucidate the intricate interplay between Human Resource Development (HRD) practices, teacher/faculty engagement, and turnover intentions within the educational landscape of Kanpur district. The central inquiry focuses on how various HRD initiatives implemented by schools cultivate a more engaged teaching workforce, consequently mitigating their propensity to leave their positions.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Shuck et al. (2014) identified a gap in research on how employee perceptions of HRD support influence engagement and turnover intentions. Their findings suggest that providing opportunities for employee development fosters a sense of reciprocity, leading to higher engagement and lower turnover. Shuck and Karen (n.d.) emphasized the need for a clearer understanding of employee engagement. They

pointed out the lack of a consistent definition and called for a more rigorous research approach to develop effective engagement strategies. Balakrishnan and Ahmad Wani (2022) explored the link between effective HR practices and employee engagement. Their research, focusing on companies like Apple and Microsoft, emphasizes the importance of tailoring HR policies to meet the specific needs of employees. Rehman et al. (2020) investigated the impact of HRD practices on employee satisfaction and turnover intentions in Pakistani government departments. While their study confirmed the positive influence of HRD on employee retention, it also highlighted the moderating role of perceived organizational support (POP). They suggest that organizations need to not only offer development opportunities but also cultivate a supportive work environment to maximize the benefits of HRD practices.

Alajlani & Yesufu (2022) highlight the importance of effective HR practices for retaining employees in UAE universities. Their findings suggest that performance appraisals, empowerment, compensation & benefits are crucial for both Emirati and expatriate employees. However, a lack of focus on empowerment, training & development for expatriates necessitates targeted improvements in these areas. Singh (2015) critiques the dominance of Western models in HR research, calling for a more culturally-sensitive approach. He emphasizes the need for HR strategies tailored to different employee skillsets and backgrounds. Recognition through promotions and salary hikes remains important, but fostering a meritocratic culture, providing engaging work, and clear career paths are equally critical for retention. Pan et al. (2021) investigate the link between HR practices, performance, and retention. They find that training & development, competitive salary, performance appraisals, and fair compensation all contribute to higher job performance, which in turn strengthens employee retention. This suggests that effective HR practices can lead to a more engaged and productive workforce, ultimately reducing turnover. Anon. (2021) explores the connection between recruitment practices, employee commitment, and retention. This study suggests that effective recruitment has a more significant impact on employee commitment compared to retention efforts. Interestingly, the study identifies loyalty as a mediating factor between various HR practices (compensation, grievance handling) and both commitment and retention. This implies that fostering employee loyalty can be a powerful tool for both attracting and retaining talent.

These studies offer valuable insights for organizations seeking to improve employee retention. By implementing a combination of effective HR practices (performance appraisals, training & development, competitive compensation), fostering a culture of recognition and career growth, and tailoring strategies to specific employee demographics, organizations can create a more engaged and committed workforce, leading to a more stable and productive work environment.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The primary concern of this study is to explore the influence of Human Resource Development (HRD) practices on fostering employee engagement and mitigating turnover intentions of teachers/faculties of the Kanpur district.

Sampling of data: Two Hundred Assistants/Associates/Professors from select universities/colleges of Kanpur district using convenience-based quota sampling.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

A five-point rating-based Likert scale was employed to collect the data from the target sample. Cronbach's Alpha was further employed to check for the internal consistency of collected data. Finally, the T-test was used to test the hypothesis as the research theme aims to compare means between groups.

Table 1: Group Statistics

Items	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
My institution provides me with adequate opportunities for professional development (e.g., workshops, conferences).	Male	107	1.3271	0.528	0.05104
	Female	93	1.4301	0.53968	0.05596
I feel the training and development programs offered by my institution are relevant to my teaching needs.	Male	107	1.1682	0.37583	0.03633
	Female	93	1.2043	0.43136	0.04473
My performance is regularly evaluated through a fair and constructive feedback process.	Male	107	1.9252	0.68268	0.066
	Female	93	1.957	0.72102	0.07477
I feel motivated and enthusiastic about my work as a teacher.	Male	107	1.8972	0.82341	0.0796
	Female	93	1.8172	0.77944	0.08082
I feel a sense of belonging and value within my institution.	Male	107	1.271	0.52432	0.05069
	Female	93	1.4409	0.61613	0.06389
I am committed to contributing to the success of my students and the institution.	Male	107	1.5234	0.64932	0.06277
	Female	93	1.7527	0.61954	0.06424

Table 2: Independent Sample t-Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
My institution provides me with adequate opportunities for professional development (e.g., workshop	Equal variances assumed	2.536	0.113	-1.362	198	0.175	-0.103	0.07563
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.36	192.885	0.175	-0.103	0.07574

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I feel the training and development programs offered by my institution are relevant to my teaching needs.	Equal variances assumed	1.785	0.183	-0.632	198	0.528	-0.03608	0.05707
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.626	183.949	0.532	-0.03608	0.05763
My performance is regularly evaluated through a fair and constructive feedback process.	Equal variances assumed	0.254	0.615	-0.32	198	0.75	-0.03176	0.09935
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.318	190.725	0.751	-0.03176	0.09973
I feel motivated and enthusiastic about my work as a teacher.	Equal variances assumed	0.396	0.53	0.702	198	0.483	0.07999	0.11388
	Equal variances not assumed			0.705	196.541	0.482	0.07999	0.11344
I feel a sense of belonging and value within my institution.	Equal variances assumed	10.193	0.002	-2.106	198	0.036	-0.16983	0.08064
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.082	181.763	0.039	-0.16983	0.08155
I am committed to contributing to the success of my students and the institution.	Equal variances assumed	2.577	0.11	-2.545	198	0.012	-0.22932	0.09012
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.553	196.262	0.011	-0.22932	0.08982

6. DISCUSSION

Professional Development Opportunities: Mean Scores - Both males (1.3271) and females (1.4301) scored relatively low on the agreement scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree) regarding the adequacy of professional development opportunities. This suggests a potential area for improvement in HRD practices.

Standard Deviation - The standard deviations (around 0.5) indicate some variation in perceptions within both genders.

Training and Development Program Relevance: Mean Scores - The means for both genders (males: 1.9252, females: 1.9570) are closer to the neutral point (3), suggesting a mixed perception of fairness and constructiveness in the performance evaluation process.

Employee Engagement: Motivation and Enthusiasm - Scores for both genders (males: 1.8972, females: 1.8172) are slightly below the midpoint, indicating a need for improvement in fostering motivation and enthusiasm among teachers. **Sense of Belonging and Value -** Females (1.4409)

scored slightly higher than males (1.2710) on feeling valued within the institution. However, both scores remain below the neutral point, suggesting potential concerns.

Commitment to Student and Institutional Success - Interestingly, both genders scored relatively high (males: 1.5234, females: 1.7527) on commitment, indicating a strong dedication to student success despite potential shortcomings in HRD practices.

While teachers seem committed to their work, the data suggests areas for improvement in HRD practices to enhance employee engagement. The observations were made as -

- i. The current professional development opportunities and training programs might not be meeting teachers' needs.
- ii. The fairness and perceived value of the performance evaluation process could be explored further.
- iii. Strategies to boost teacher motivation and foster a stronger sense of belonging within the institution might be beneficial.

8. CONCLUSION

This study examined the influence of Human Resource Development (HRD) practices on employee engagement among teachers/faculty in Kanpur, India. The findings highlight the need for strategic improvements in HRD practices to cultivate a more engaged teaching workforce and potentially mitigate turnover intentions. The key findings are listed as follows -

- i. **Professional Development Opportunities:** Teacher responses (mean scores) indicated a perceived inadequacy in the current professional development offerings. This suggests a critical need to enhance the quality, relevance, and alignment of training programs with teachers' actual needs.
- ii. **Performance Evaluation:** The data revealed mixed perceptions regarding the fairness and perceived value of the performance evaluation process. Further investigation into this aspect is warranted to ensure a constructive and growth-oriented approach to performance management.
- iii. **Employee Engagement:** While teachers demonstrated a strong commitment to student success, scores for motivation and a sense of belonging within the institution fell below the midpoint. This suggests a need for strategies to boost teacher motivation and foster a stronger sense of community and institutional support.

8. FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

These findings inform several recommendations for strengthening HRD practices within educational institutions:

- i. **Needs-Based Development:** Shift the focus towards designing professional development programs that

are tailored to the specific needs and aspirations of teachers. This can be achieved through surveys, focus groups, or needs assessments.

- ii. Performance Management Optimization: Ensure that performance evaluations are conducted in a fair, transparent, and constructive manner. Provide valuable feedback for growth and development, fostering a culture of continuous improvement.
- iii. Motivation and Recognition Strategies: Implement strategies to enhance teacher motivation and recognize their contributions effectively. This could involve fostering a culture of appreciation, offering opportunities for professional growth, and creating a sense of belonging within the institution.

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