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Reformation in Higher Education and Faculty Attrition for the survival of education system

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ABSTRACT

Education is regarded as the holy place of worship where knowledge is imbibed and disseminated in society. This system is driven by factors like teachers, students and educational resources. The education system has undergone tremendous changes thus reaching to a milestone, what we see today. This system is driven by teachers and their knowledge which refuels the entire aura of students. However, now the system has taken bifurcations into government and private teaching niche. Few factors have evolved which have started creating uncomfortable environment for the teachers thus making them helpless and leaving and frequently changing the profession. This results in downfall of intellectuals' thus reaching to a diminishing point in educational growth.

KEYWORDS: Attrition, Faculty, Higher Education, Talent, Teachers

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INTRODUCTION

Human life is the best creation of God, has got two aspects: the biological and the socio-cultural. Biological aspect is found in plant and animal life. But the socio-cultural aspect is the rare distinction of human life alone. It is only man who is capable of being educated. Through education, he tries to seek new ideas and new ways of life. It is again through education that he promotes his intelligence and adds his knowledge with which he can move the world for good or for evil, according to his wishes. Thus, he attempts to understand himself in relation to the world about him and to transmit that knowledge succeeding generations. Our life in the complex world is governed not only by the biological process, but also by a social process. While the functioning of the organism is the biological heredity, education is his social heredity. With biological heredity alone, he would be nothing better than an animal. But he has social heredity that makes him a man who is now capable of governing this world.

Teachers are the most important and valuable resource of any educational organization. The competent and motivated teachers create healthy institutions that contribute to the holistic development of students as well as the institutions. There is a growing consensus among researchers and educators that the single most important factor in determining student performance is the quality of teachers. Institutions have a continuous pressure of sustaining with this mass of knowledge workers. Attrition of such intellects is a necessity of the institutions. Attrition can be defined as reduction in the number of employees through retirement or resignation. Some teachers do retire, others leave for personal reasons such as to care for family or children, and a relatively small number are dismissed from their jobs and encouraged to leave the profession.

In this fast pace economic world, for the academic institutions, teacher attrition has become an challenge because the ability to hold on to highly talented core Faculty members can be crucial to attract students and the institutions future survival. In line of attrition, many factors were identified which included structural and psychological factors. This exit of faculty is a costly affair for both i.e. students and the institutes.

Many factors contribute to teachers quitting their jobs and looking for another. The new job may not necessarily be better economically, but it could be better for the —dropout teacher. Personal, employment, economic and teacher preparation are the most popular factors that make teachers quit. It is critical that efforts be concentrated on developing and retaining high-quality teachers in every educational institute. Without a committed Faculty, no educational institute can be successful, nor can effective teaching and learning take place. Yet, despite the great presence of higher education in the technological world of the 21st century, the academic profession finds itself under increasing pressure.

The purpose of this research is to explore the factors and reasons that make teachers quit and look for greener pastures. At present India is striving to compete in a globalized economy in areas that require highly trained professionals, and thus the quality of higher education has become increasingly important. Experience which the students will derive from higher education is, to a large extent, dependent on the performance of Faculty, both as teachers and researchers. Extant literature underpins the importance of Faculty for quality in higher education^{1, 2, 3}. Research on academic quality in higher education is by and large focused on students as customers, their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with various programs for which have adapted Importance - Satisfaction model (I-S model) in higher education illustrating quality improvement in terms of satisfaction³. Adding to this, an author has also developed an early model of customer supplier for higher education^{4,5}. It has been argued that if the quality of the service is to be determined then the beneficiaries must be clearly defined in terms of their needs and expectations⁵.

An institution with talented faculties can develop a reputation for being great place to work, with great learning environment where quality in education is expected. An institution in higher education therefore needs to be able to develop and deploy Faculty who can articulate the passion and vision of institution and satisfaction of students. Faculty members as internal customers satisfy the working environment of universities³. This implies that in order to enhance Faculty performance certain aspects and functions of their job must be prioritized. The issues related to Faculty are sufficiently significant for an analysis to be appropriate, to understand the 'whole picture' and suggest possibilities and strategies to sustain quality and leadership in institution of higher education.

Education is vital process of social life. Without education we are not able to have a normal and prosperous life, and human race would be no better than animal race. Eating, drinking, sleeping and sexual life are common to both animals and men. It is only knowledge and education, where they different. Education not only comes from the books and the school teachers, but also from knowledge and experience by socialization. Education means both the acquisition of knowledge and experience as well as the development of skills, habits and attitudes, which help a person to lead a full and worthwhile life in this world. It is a process of training the individual through various experiences of life to draw out the best in him. Education is a continuous process. It has passed through many age and stages in the evolution process and at every stage it had a different meaning according to prevailing conditions. The concept of education is still in a process of evolution and this process will never come to an end it is therefore rightly said that last word of education will never be said. Education deals with ever-growing man in an ever-growing society. Its concept, therefore, can never be static. It must continuously grow and change.

In order to cope with the rapid changes in the contemporary world and meet the challenges of the future society, the education system has also changed in order to produce what the society needs. Nowadays, the career market has become extremely competitive. The large number of career options and mob of institutes offering them often puzzle candidates to choose the right one. It is important to choose a right career as your every step-in future depends on this decision. Getting a professional education is important for shaping your career to move towards a right direction. Especially in a developing country like India, professional education is of utmost importance. Dentistry, teaching, business management, accounting, librarianship, forestry and nursing are some of the professional careers and the list is by no means complete.

TIMELINE OF FACULTY ATTRITION

Since the 1970's and early 1980's, research shows teacher attrition to be a problem. It was also recorded that 25% of all people with teaching certificates never begin teaching or leave teaching within a few years⁶.

It is found that higher the teacher turnover lesser is the student learning. It increased the cost of recruiting and hiring teacher^{7,8}. The performance of the student falls when there is a lack of qualified teachers and those who are qualified enough are dissatisfied. The main reason for well qualified teachers leaving the organization is remuneration and perks^{9,10}. Teacher Follow-up Survey (1987 – 88), 4.5% of public school teachers and 9.1% of private school teachers pointed salary as a major cause behind leaving the profession. In the private schools it is stated in his study that salaries are positively related to decisions to continue teaching in the same district^{11,12}. It has been claimed that teacher attrition is a major problem in our schools and that between 20% and 50% of beginning teachers decide to leave the profession in the first three to five years^{13,14}.

High levels of teacher turnover create significant decreases in student performance¹⁵. Higher rates of teacher attrition also may indicate underlying problems and disrupt the effectiveness of schools¹⁶. It is also evidence that teachers who are academically talented leave in the greatest numbers¹⁷. As a case, in first few years of teaching, only determined survive, whereas, most of them find teaching "*frustrating, unrewarding, and intolerably difficult*"^{18,19}.

In another studies, it was also found that women had higher turnover rates than men^{20,21,22,23}. Studies have suggested that men are more likely to quit teaching or transfer schools than women^{24,22}. Additionally, some research has found no gender differences in teacher turnover rates²⁵. According few authors, organizational fit concept identifies confluent goals and recognized the employee and organization value as an important aspect of affective commitment^{26,27}. Another theory of reasoned action as the heart retention of both the employee and the customer links between satisfaction and

behavior²⁸. Employees who are satisfied have higher intentions of persisting with their organization, which results in decreased turnover rate²⁹. Studies have indicated that retention driven by several key factors, which ought to be managed congruently: organizational culture, strategy, pay and benefits philosophy, and career development systems³⁰. There exist several factors for employee's retention i.e. compensation & rewards, job security, training & developments, supervisor support culture, work environment and organization justice etc. Accordingly, organization utilizes extensive range of human resource management factors influence in employee commitment and retention^{31,32,33,34}. Researchers have also shown that organizations often look beyond the concept of satisfaction to developing trust and ensure long term relationships with their employees³⁵. Previous research shows that a good recruitment strategy is the key to employee retention. In some cases, service suppliers may be unable to retain even those employees who are satisfied^{36,37}. Thus, satisfaction itself may not be enough to ensure long-term workers commitment to an organization.

Organizational culture is also as one of the significant reasons than the job itself i.e. misfit with culture³⁸. It is also discussed that, for retention strategies to be effective, it is important to manage employee's expectations³⁹. Employee selection process should also consider improving congruent between employee values and corporate culture⁴⁰.

Teaching is usually considered a vocation, one involving a long-term career path. Teaching isn't usually a drop in, drop out or revolving door type profession⁴¹. The problem of faculty turnover has afflicted all disciplines, particularly in the last ten to twenty years. The market for Ph.D.s outside academia has grown along with the dispersion of knowledge-based activity throughout the economy⁴². Those with advanced degrees have proven their employability in a variety of fields. Considering that professors are paid roughly 25 to 30% less than similarly educated professionals, there is a cause to worry that an increasing number of faculty will leave for the private sector⁴³.

High turnover is associated with low job satisfaction, poor productivity, and high stress among employees⁴⁴. It is also discussed that faculty is recognized to be mobile, loyal to the discipline rather than the institution⁴⁵. Considering the indications of an upward swing in both components, it is safe to assume that faculty turnover is causing greater problems for many administrators. Faculty who leave voluntarily tend to be characterized by a high achievement orientation⁴⁶. Bowen and Schuster's *American Professors: A National Resource Imperiled*, combining several studies, reports a 4% annual rate of attrition in early 1980s. Their definition of attrition, distinct from turnover, indicates the number of faculty who leave academia each year for reasons other than retirement.

Bowen and Schuster predicted that attrition (not turnover) might average 4% per year into the late 1990s and might even reach 6% by 2000. They added that if faculty positions become less economically attractive compared to positions in private industry, the rate of attrition could rise

substantially. One study found that higher compensation levels increased the retention of assistant and associate professors but had no effect on retaining full professors⁴⁷.

One study found that 27% of universities had used unique and strategic tactics to recruit rising stars⁴⁷. In general, some research suggests that perceived equity of pay may be a more important determinant of commitment and satisfaction than basic level of pay. The promise of lifetime job security is certainly alluring and can compensate for lower pay. In addition, institutions can offer early promotion, research allowances, frequent leaves of absence, and reduced teaching loads for research faculty⁴⁸. Also, empirically, programs of communication intervention can improve job satisfaction, which directly supports the link between communication and job satisfaction. The crux of the teaching profession lies in communication, and communication is a significant and integral component of teacher job satisfaction, but one major gap is the paucity of research directly dealing with how communication variables affect teacher job satisfaction⁴⁸. Teacher job satisfaction is often cited and rendered important in both research on teacher attrition and teacher retention^{49,50,51}.

First, some researchers and scholars tried to understand the high teacher turnover rate among beginning teachers by investigating the reasons and causes behind both teacher retention and teacher attrition^{51,52,53,54,55}. Moreover, teacher job satisfaction is frequently associated with burnout, work quality and professionalism. Some scholars have focused exclusively on burnout in the teaching profession^{56,57}.

Some model tests and hypotheses are examined for communication, burnout, organizational stressors and outcomes, since such factors influence teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards their job satisfaction⁵⁸.

Other strategies that have met with success include spousal hire programs, formalized training programs for department chairs, formal mentoring programs for all probationary faculties, and explicitly written guidelines for tenure. High levels of stress characterize the early years of academic appointment, but through the efforts of colleagues and superiors, they can be reduced. Deans, chairs, and senior Faculty need to perceive support of new faculty as an investment in the success of the individual, the department, and the institution.

Scientists and academicians had also explored talent management and its importance (*employee recruitment, retention and engagement*), as well as to identify factors that are critical to its effective implementation of talent management⁵⁹.

Ernst & Young (May 2010) Talent management must be an integral part of the business strategy. The organizations must regularly analyze their diverse programs for effectiveness and ROI,

thus making sure that all appropriate employee data are captured and aligned. The nine best practices of talent management are suggested as follows⁶⁰: -

1. Start with the end in mind—talent strategy must be tightly aligned with business strategy.
2. Talent management professionals need to move from a seat at the table to setting the table.
3. You must know what you're looking for—the role of Success Profiles SM.
4. The talent pipeline is only as strong as its weakest link.
5. Talent Management is not a democracy.
6. Potential, performance and readiness are not the same thing.
7. Talent management is all about putting the right people in the right jobs.
8. Talent management is more about the “hows” than the “whats.”
9. Software does not equal talent management.

EMPLOYEE RETENTION

According to Employee Outlook – Recent research on layoff hiring activity, the labor market worker sentiments, employee engagement and pay increase projection. A survey of 1000 mid to seven level manager identified the following as key CEO's concerns improving morale, staff retention initiative, HR policy that improve the work balance , better communication from the CEO's and the other senior managers.

The most important methods are:

- I. Hiring high quality likeminded people.
- II. Teaching manager to create a better working environment for staff
- III. Good communication strategies and building a set of flexible work quality.

Employee flexibility has been found to influence employee retention:

- I. allow employee to schedule their vacations.
- II. permit time off to deal with personal issues.
- III. offer flexible work schedules.
- IV. go out for their way accommodated child care issues.

The steps for providing flexibility result in the following benefits:

- I. cite better relation with worker.
- II. report higher employee job satisfaction.
- III. report higher employee retention.

This literature review revealed significant outlook on retention of Colleges and universities are faced with a declining enrollment of high school students ⁶¹. Extreme attrition produces major problems for both students and colleges and universities ⁶².

Higher educational institutions need to think outside of the box regarding strategies which will drive students to enroll at schools: however, more importantly, retain these students once enrolled at these institutions ⁶¹. It is more costly for schools to recruit and enroll students rather than retain students in existing programs⁶³. The use of student satisfaction questionnaires or surveys to find information that can help institutions to measure how schools are performing, which indicates that students are customers. Therefore, universities must stress the importance of customer relationship management. They suggest that students must be listened to, and that schools need to discern what is important to these customers ⁶⁴.

The problem of attrition among high performing academics is a global phenomenon. According to the problem of academic staff retention is a global one which affects both developing and industrialised countries ⁶⁵. In United States, about 7.7 per cent of all full-time academic staff left their institutions for other places within one academic year (1997 – 98). Of these, only 29 per cent were retirees; the remaining 71 per cent left for a variety of reasons (National Centre for Educational Statistics 2001). A 2000 survey of full-time faculty members in the US showed that more than 40 per cent of them had contemplated changing careers ⁶⁶. In Canada, it has been argued that one of the challenges that universities will face over the next decade or so is academic recruitment and retention (Carleton University 2000; The Laurier Institution 2000). Similarly, “it has been suggested that early in the 21st century there will be a crisis in Australian higher education with an estimated academic labour shortage of 20,000 if this trend is not addressed” ⁶⁷.

Independent Review of Higher Education Pay and Conditions conducted a survey, in United Kingdom, which pointed a considerable increase in recruitment and retention difficulties for both academic and support staff since 1998 ⁶⁸. The area causing the most problems in recruitment included computing/ IT, business subjects (accountancy/ finance, business/ management, law and economics), engineering, science subjects (biological sciences, chemistry and physics), nursing/ midwifery and professions allied to medicine, and education. The percentage increase in retention difficulties was of a similar magnitude, with 7.6 percent re-*porting* retention difficulties ‘most of the time’ or more in 2001, compared to 2.2 per cent in 1998. The research contends that the issue of academic staff attrition and retention in developing countries has been less well documented in the literature. This is because the issue tends to be subsumed under the general category of ‘brain drain’, without attention being devoted to it ⁶⁵.

FACTORS AFFECTING RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF ORGANIZATIONAL STAFF

High performance organizations are consistently out performing their competitors on a number of human resource factors, including the level of teamwork and openness between co-workers, the training and development opportunities they offer to employees and the degree of pro-activity in HR planning. Developing this capability begins with the realization that effective human resource management underpins the competitiveness of organizations⁶⁹. The recruitment and retention is affected by the whole employment package (the rewards and disbenefits of the job) relative to other employment⁷⁰. These include pay and fringe benefits, intrinsic aspects of the job (for example, for academics, teaching and research), job security, work organisation, autonomy, progression, family-friendly practices, congeniality of colleagues and the working environment etc. The more attractive the overall package, the more likely it will attract applicants and retain employees. The relative importance of these factors differs for recruitment and retention, due to informational differences between those in a job and potential recruits. Applicants (particularly those entering the sector) have less knowledge and the factors influencing recruitment tend to be those on which information is more easily available. This means that pay tends to loom larger for recruitment than retention. Moreover, the expected and the actual package may differ, leading to turnover⁷⁰.

Inconsistent with Metcalf argument, several studies have shown that in most countries and industries, pay does not have a strong effect on employee attraction or retention. As long as, pay was not seen to be insultingly out of line, other things mattered much more. The two things that managers cited most often when discussing loyalty were corporate pride and trust in their chief executive's ability to take decisions. Pay, as a way of keeping talent, came third. Furthermore, using pay as a key method to attract and keep talent may be costly. As it is asserted that '*pay is the most fungible of all the resources at an employer's disposal; if it is an employer's sole source of loyalty, then he always runs the risk of being outbid*'⁷¹.

Considering the risks and problems associated with pay as a device to attract and keep talent, some experts argue that many firms will have to find other ways of attracting and keeping good people, including realistic job previews, good employer orientation, opportunities for career development, and challenging work assignments. This suggestion is consistent with the view that the ability to attract and retain talented people depends largely on non-monetary factors such as the quality of supervision and the extent organizations utilize the skills and knowledge of their employees⁶⁹. Consequently, Hilltop consider the following as crucial for attraction and retention practices in organizations - employment security, opportunities for training and skill development, recruitment and

promotion from within, career development and guidance, opportunities for skill development and specialization, autonomy and decentralization of decision-making, opportunities for teamwork and participation, equal benefits and access to perquisites for all, the employees, extra rewards and recognition for high performance, openness of information about corporate goals, outcomes and intentions, pro-active personnel planning and strategic human resources management.

As the retention of talent with critical skill sets is acknowledged by organizations as vital for achievement of business growth and the building of organizational competencies, some organizations strive to be the 'employer of choice' by creating a positive environment and offering challenging assignments that, foster continued personal growth. An 'employer of choice' (Eoc) is an Organisation that out-per-forms its competition in the attraction development and retention of people with business, required aptitude, often through innovative and compelling human resources programmes³³. High talent individuals want work that is interesting, challenging and that has an impact. They also expect work to be appropriately designed, with adequate resource available and with effective management, workflows and teams to create more exciting and challenging work^{72,31,32,33}.

Talent management is also defined as the process that deals with the identification and development of all talent especially high potential talent for future assignments, positions or projects^{73,74}. When talent management includes workforce planning, talent acquisition, professional development, performance management, retention strategies and succession planning, it is now referred to as integrated talent management³⁰.

CONCERNS AND SOLUTIONS IN EMPLOYEE RETENTION

The following points help to illuminate the concerns and solutions for higher education institutions especially private higher education institutions. it needs to engage in a paradigm shift in talent management strategies if they are to succeed in their operations and achieve competitive advantage⁷⁵.

Performance and reward programs in higher education are disconnected to be able to support effective and robust talent management due to the fact that only 48% of higher education institutions use systematic performance management processes to assess and improve staff performance.

- (i) **Maximizing productivity:** regular communication and meaningful feedback from performance management sessions are practices that can improve task execution by employees leading to an increase in productivity needed for growth. Performance management sessions have been observed to provide opportunities to discuss, measure and improve employee performance which is key for institutional growth;

- (ii) ***Keeping people aligned:*** By keeping all institutional members on the same level of understanding with regards to the goals and tasks of institutional growth through effective communication, as well as by assigning people into roles and positions their skills and knowledge best fit, institutions are able to motivate their employees and ensure productive performance for institutional growth^{76,77}.
- (iii) ***Incentivizing exceptional performance:*** Giving employee a stake in the success of the institution has been viewed as a sure way to unlock employee potential and commitment. To be able to achieve this, institutions need to have a clear and transparent compensation management strategy that makes it easier to monitor employee progress and reward top performers accordingly⁷⁶.
- (iv) Higher education institutions should always seek to hire talent which replicates their top performers who are able to fit into the institution's unique culture⁷⁶.
- (v) The primacy of resources when deploying employees to quickly meet the growth demands of the institution, e.g., coming up with a new curriculum, can never be over-emphasized
- (vi) Roles and responsibilities need to be clearly streamlined and a clear succession plan developed to help the institution in effectively mapping internal talent against future needs;
- (vii) The Human Resources Department must always keep the employee data base updated to ensure employees' skills and competencies are known and can be quickly deployed where and when needed⁷⁶.
- (viii) Centralizing the employee data base. The human resources department should develop an updated centralized employee data base to ensure employees' profiles can easily be accessed;
- (ix) Developing a recruitment strategy. As they grow, institutions need a recruitment strategy that clearly defines who to recruit, how and when;
- (x) Aligning employees with goals. To ensure all institutional members share institutional goals and work hard towards achieving them, communication should help existing employees to understand the vision and new recruits to understand where they fit in the skim of things;
- (xi) Use of performance management with clear coaching and meaningful feedback helps to keep all employee focused and engaged;
- (xii) Adjusting compensation based on market conditions. Incentive-based compensation that rewards employees for concrete results is an important driver of effective talent management in higher education institutions;
- (xiii) Retaining the best talent. Career development plans that help employees to grow in their profession, help to show employees what is in it for them hence assuring the same employees that change is good for everybody; and

- (xiv) Developing people from within. New ways of doing things require that employees also learn new skills hence in-house training complementing formal training is critical to successful execution of new tasks.
- (xv) Quality hiring the best talent in the beginning helps institutions to save on costs of replacing a mediocre employee and also affect productivity
- (xvi) Ensuring information on demand, where the institutions should ensure that all members are able to access critical operational information at the click of a button and that information sharing becomes the culture of the institutions. A case of a privileged few in the access to key operational information is a recipe for de motivation and frustration among the employee which has disastrous consequences on the retention of top talent.
- (xvii) Introducing ERP systems. This ensures that institutional data and processes are streamlined and efficient;
- (xviii) targeted hires. Institutions should target hiring the right people with the potential to challenge and change the way things are done;
- (xix) developing skills internally. A culture of continuous learning that provides challenging problems motivate employees to think outside the box and is a good strategy for retaining talent;
- (xx) rewarding innovation. Compensating people who come up with innovative ideas improves employee engagement, motivates performance and fosters retention of top talent; and
- (xxi) creating collaborative teams. Breaking the silo mentality by helping people to work together and share knowledge is an important talent management tactic.
- (xxii) Since the 1970's and early 1980's, research shows teacher attrition to be a problem. It was recorded that 25% of all people with teaching certificates never begin teaching or leave teaching within a few years ⁶.

CONCLUSION

Human resource management of any industry plays a vital role in operations. The performance and achievement of any industry is majorly dependent of this factor. Considering education, teachers, students and resources make this engine run. Though, in today's scenario, problem of faculty attrition is alarming, where a vital resource moves out of this efficient engine. Looking at the market scenario, and industrial demand, the academic environment must come to a remedial conclusion, where both are benefitted. The above review defines the significance of faculty in any organization and remedial measures to cope up with the situation. If advancement is enhanced through technology, there is a generous need to motivate and encourage faculty as well so that the holistic environment flourishes.

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