

Determinants of Employee Retention in Higher Education Institutions in Odisha: A Factor Analysis of HR Practices

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ABSTRACT

For growth, development, excellence and sustainability talent acquisition and its retention has become a strategic concern for higher education institutions. This study examines the Human Resource Practices in such organisations which directly or indirectly impact faculty retention. Through an exploratory and quantitative study data were gathered from 569 faculty members of different higher education institutions across Odisha, India. Data collection has been done using a standardized questionnaire keeping in mind the theoretical and empirical framework of the study. Descriptive as well as demographic nature of the Data has been studied thoroughly. Data has been analysed through Exploratory Factor Analysis using SPSS-26 to ascertain the key HR practices that play significant role in faculty retention. Five such significant factors have been identified. They are: Talent Management, Organisational Support, Employer Branding, Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment which substantially influence employee retention. The result also analyses the indicators of these factors and their significance in employee retention.

Keywords: *Employee retention, HR practices, higher education, factor analysis, SPSS, human resource management*



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INTRODUCTION

Retention of efficient employee has become a great problem across industries in global scenario. In academic institutions the competitive environment and high mobility of efficient faculty members have raised the concern. As it affects both academic excellence as

well as institutional development, retention of faculty members has become a strategic need for the institutions [1]. Different HR practices like training, remuneration, evaluation, career progression and stress management etc. [2] are being implemented in enhancing

organisational commitment through job satisfaction of employees which helps reducing turnover intentions among employees [3]. In Indian context also retention of talented faculty members is essential to maintain academic progression of students as well as sustainability of the institutions. Odisha, which is emerging as an educational hub in recent days it is very much essential to identify and analyse the factors that are critically responsible for faculty retention in private higher education institutions. Thus, to maintain the credibility of the institutions and academic excellence of the students, the HR practices leading to job employee retention are to be critically analysed.[4]

Academic organisations are facing acute turnover of faculty members even after implementing different types of HR policies to attract employee. It affects research activities, academic excellence, brand image of the institutions and above all it raises the recruitment cost manifold [5]. Thus, it is more significant to find out the HR practices that help increasing retention rate than implementing HR policies arbitrarily. Many institutions in Odisha implement HR methods without comprehending which factors significantly enhance retention. The present study tries to address this research gap by identifying and categorising the HR practices that significantly impact faculty retention in private higher education institutions in Odisha.

Based on this research problem the objective of research is to explore the human resource practices that affect faculty retention in private HEIs in Odisha. The study uses SPSS-based factor analysis to develop evidence-based human resource policy frameworks that improve job satisfaction and organizational commitment [6]. The findings are intended to help HR managers in developing specific strategies to reduce turnover.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study's conceptual framework is based on the following established theories:

Social Exchange Theory [7] asserts that in professional workplace there exists a reciprocal relationship between the employee and the employer. When employee centric Human Resource Policies like recognition, equitable evaluations, and developmental opportunities are implemented by the organisation, then employees also

respond with loyalty and organisational commitment through intention to stay with the organization for a longer period.

According to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory HR practices can broadly be divided into two categories. one is Motivators including policies like reward, recognition, growth etc. and another is Hygiene including supervision, work-life balance, organisational culture etc. Both the factors are essential for reducing dissatisfaction among employees and help in their retention.

Organizational Support Theory by Eisenberger suggests that Perceived support from the organisation makes employees feel valued. It increases their dedication and emotional attachment towards the organisation leading to high retention rate.

Maslow's Hierarchy of needs asserts that the demand and need of employees can be categorised into five levels. They start from fundamental physiological and safety demands to advanced needs like esteem and self-actualization. These demands can be fulfilled through proper implementation of HR policies. It enhances job satisfaction among employees. Job satisfaction is the main predictor of employee retention.

Psychological Contract Theory by Rousseau states that there exists implicit expectation between employees and employer. HR practices and organisational performance align with these expectations to build trust, confidence and commitment among employees as well as employer. It ultimately leads to talent retention.

A combination of these theories indicate that employee retention can be achieved through effective implementation of a group of HR policies in higher education institutions.

2.2. Empirical Framework

The turnover rate is a ratio of staff members who departed from a company within a specified timeframe to the average number of employees in that organization during the same period [8]. Turnover is a behaviour that specifies the process of departing from or substituting personnel inside an organization [9]. It is defined turnover as the departure of employees from a company at their own decision or desire [10]. The intention of employees to depart from the organization is influenced by various factors. They describe voluntary turnover as

the prompt decision of employees to exit the organization.

Human resource practices that include recruitment, selection, performance management, employee development, stress reduction in employees etc. are essential for the success of the organisation [11]. Human Resource Management practices denote organizational activities designed to manage human resources efficiently, assuring their connection with organizational objectives. These practices designed and implemented keeping in mind the internal as well as external influences affect attitude, effectiveness and overall organisational performance of staff members [12]. Some of the significant and effective HR strategies are acquiring talent, staff participation, training, inclusion and diversity in the workplace, and moral leadership. These strategies are crucial for inculcating trust, confidence, support and creativity among employees which also enhance the brand image of the employer. These parameters help the organisation to attain sustainable competitive advantage and growth [13]

Effective talent management strategies, particularly performance management and equitable compensation system are crucial for retention of talented academician in higher education sector [14]. Proper unbiased appraisal of performance and reward system based on such appraisal foster job satisfaction among employees. It helps in building a supportive and inclusive work environment that ultimately reduces attrition [15]. Implementation of an extensive performance evaluation system improves motivation among employees and also helps in academic excellence in higher education system which support sustainability and growth of the organisation [16].

In higher education institutions perceived career progression opportunity acts as a strong predictor of employee retention. Learning and development initiatives provided by the organisation improves faculty engagement and enhance staff retention [17]. Training and development program in higher education institutions also enhance job satisfaction among faculty members and it leads to organisational commitment of the employees. A customised and need based training program helps in cultivating a favourable workplace environment and it leads to sustainable involvement of them within the organisation [18]

Succession planning is another crucial predictor of employee retention in higher education institutions. Succession planning not only helps in identifying prospective leaders but also plans for their professional growth by enhancing their capabilities through structured career advancement program [19]. It also restricts the advancement of unworthy personnel from becoming the leader [20].

Flexible work arrangement substantially improves retention among faculty members in higher education institutions. Allowing employees to customise their schedule that align with the organisational objectives helps in enhancing job satisfaction among employees [21]. Flexi timing cultivates a friendly atmosphere due to the psychological wellness and improved health conditions of the employees. It increases the output of the organisation and also helps in improving the retention rate [17].

A balance between work and personal life has become a critical determinant of organisational commitment in current era. Supportive workplace environment with work life balance strategy is essential for employee retention [22]. Balanced workload, organisational assistance and care for employee well-being are essential parameters in cultivating a stable employee workforce [23]. In educational institutions elevated standard of work culture with prioritisation of employee well-being helps in improving their efficiency, morales and creativity. It motivates them to stay with the organization for a longer period [24].

Compensation and fringe benefits affect significantly the retention intention among employees. Fringe rewards exhibit a strong positive correlation with employees' intention to stay [25]. Effective incentive system and competitive compensation attract talented faculty members and motivate them for innovation and engagement in quality deliverance. It helps in enhancing job satisfaction and commitment in workplace thereby increasing retention intention [26].

Compromising with emotions and ethics result in emotional labour among employees. It is the root cause behind discontent and mental fatigue in workplace. The absence of acknowledgement and support system to reduce emotional labour leads to burnout [27]. Many a times to fulfil organisational requirements, faculty members get exploited. It generates worries regarding

their mental and physical health there by giving rise to turnover intentions [28].

Effective stress management strategies for employees promote employee participation and improve the retention intention among them [29]. In higher education institutions minimising occupational stress through teamwork, use of advanced technology and managerial support improve performance of employees. It results in job satisfaction and organisational commitment which in turn facilitate employee retention [30].

Job satisfaction is an essential mediator between effective HR practices like work-life balance, organisational support, talent management etc .and employee retention. When employees feel valued and satisfied, they gets committed towards the development of the organisation which is supported by their retention intention [31]. Engaged faculty members with elevated job satisfaction exhibit higher productivity and commitment thereby reducing turnover rates [32]. In higher education institutions job satisfaction is achieved through career advancement prospect, good communication and organisational support. A strategic combination of these results in high retention rate [33].

Organisational commitment is the most significant attitudinal aspect of employees which enhance productivity and increase retention rate. Robust commitment from employees towards organisation can be achieved through unique, inclusive and innovative work culture. Acceptable leadership style, perceived organisational support and job satisfaction leads to organisational commitment [34]. In higher education institutions commitment is a primary predictor of

employee retention as it connects employees emotionally with organisational goals and objectives [35].

2.3 Research Gap

Though some researchers have explored different HR practices impacting employee retention, there is a lack of studies that have statistically identified the fundamental HR practices affecting retention especially in higher educational institutions. Indicators like employer branding and emotional labour were not studied in depth. Further, empirical research for private higher education institutions in Odisha is not there for the best of knowledge of the researcher. This study tackles the methodological and contextual gap utilizing SPSS-based factor analysis to identify the HR practices influencing employee retention.

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Participants

The data has been collected from faculty members of private higher education institutions in Odisha using a stratified random sampling method. The population size is around 11,000, as indicated by secondary data sources such as AICTE, BPUT, and UGC. Out of 710 contacted faculty members 587 responded and 569 responses have been considered after data cleaning.

3.2. Demographic Analysis:

Demographic aspects like Gender, age, and tenure of employment within the same organization are considered in this study. These characteristics helps in understanding the sample's variance in perception regarding HR practices and employee retention.

Table 1: Demographic Profile

Demographic Factors		Analysis	
		N	Frequency (%)
Gender	Female	336	59.1
	Male	233	40.9
Age	Less than 30 years	191	33.6
	30-40 years	140	24.6
	40-50 years	135	23.7
	50 years and above	103	18.1

Experience	Less than 1 year	223	39.2
	1-6years	163	28.6
	6-11 years	105	18.5
	11 years and above	78	13.7

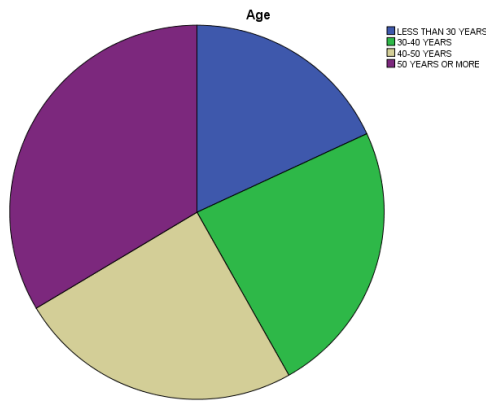


Fig 1: Age Analysis

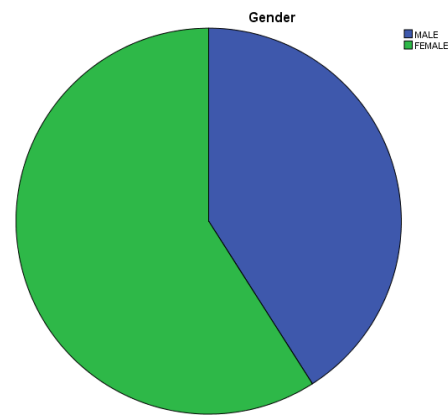


Fig 2: Gender Analysis

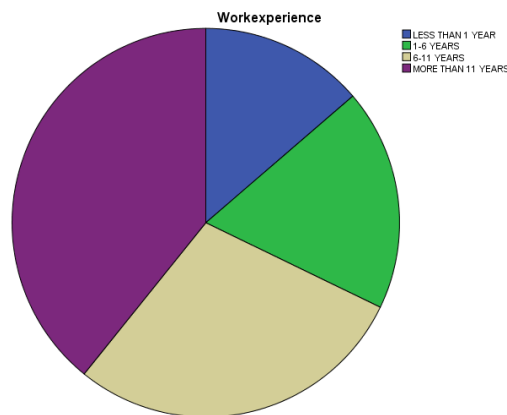


Fig 3: Experience Analysis

The demographic study reveals an increasing proportion of female employees in higher education institutions. The age distribution indicates a primarily young workforce. This indicates that institutions are aggressively involving younger professionals. Regarding experience, a largely young workforce with minimal long-term tenure. This pattern indicates increased recruitment activity and potential turnover tendencies among younger employees. The demographic composition reveals a youthful, gender-diverse, and fairly experienced workforce, highlighting the necessity for effective HR practices

centred on career advancement, mentoring, and retention methods inside higher educational institutions

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Test of Normality:

To decide which factor analysis method is to be adopted the normality test was conducted using SPSS 26. According to Hair et al. (2013) skewness coefficient outside the interval [-1, +1] and kurtosis value outside the interval [-3, +3] are considered to be

not normal. If observed variables do not follow a normal distribution then Principal axis factoring extraction method is used for exploratory factor

analysis as it is the robust method used for factor analysis as this method extracts factors based on common variance rather than error variance [36].

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
OV1	569	-.050	.102	.041	.204
OV2	569	-.039	.102	-.145	.204
OV3	569	.000	.102	-.072	.204
OV4	569	-.054	.102	.079	.204
OV5	569	-.046	.102	-.069	.204
OV6	569	-.046	.102	-.040	.204
OV7	569	-.055	.102	.257	.204
OV8	569	-.055	.102	.219	.204
OV9	569	-.055	.102	.259	.204
OV10	569	-.057	.102	.349	.204
OV11	569	-.059	.102	.365	.204
OV12	569	-.056	.102	.332	.204
OV13	569	-.094	.102	.075	.204
OV14	569	-.155	.102	.448	.204
OV15	569	-.051	.102	-.050	.204
OV16	569	-.103	.102	.267	.204
OV17	569	-.094	.102	.194	.204
OV18	569	-.088	.102	.052	.204
OV19	569	.090	.102	2.444	.204
OV20	569	.043	.102	2.610	.204
OV21	569	.070	.102	2.447	.204
OV22	569	.176	.102	2.760	.204
OV23	569	.086	.102	2.897	.204
OV24	569	.014	.102	3.292	.204
OV25	569	.072	.102	2.838	.204
OV26	569	-.024	.102	2.841	.204
Valid N (listwise)	569				

Since the observed variable shows high kurtosis values (as SPSS provides excess kurtosis not exact kurtosis value) the sample is not normally distributed. Principal axis factoring extraction method has been selected to perform factor analysis to avoid this bias.

4.2. Test Of Reliability

Prior to factor analysis reliability of observed variables is assessed to verify that the items have a strong internal consistency to be grouped into various factors. Cronbach's alpha is calculated to evaluate the internal consistency. A reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher signifies adequate item reliability [37], affirming measurement stability and consistency among items.

Table 3: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.909	26

A Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.909 for 26 items signifies exceptional internal consistency reliability.

4.3. KMO-Bartlett Test:

The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) checks if the sample is good enough for factor analysis. It measures if all

the variables share some common variance [37] . The KMO value lies between 0 and 1. Value above 0.6 indicate strong correlations to create separate and reliable latent variables [36] . KMO is the first step in checking how robust the exploratory factor analysis model is.

Table 4: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.940
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	17131.115
	df	325
	Sig.	0.000

A significant Bartlett's test ($p < 0.05$) signifies that the correlations among items are enough for factor analysis. Therefore, a significant Bartlett's test, coupled with a satisfactory KMO value, offers empirical validation for advancing with Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA).

With KMO value 0.940 and $p < 0.05$ this data is ideal for exploratory factor analysis.

4.4. Factor Analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) employing the Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) approach detects underlying latent variables by identifying factors derived from shared variation among observed variables. PAF is useful when data deviates normalcy norms, yielding stable and dependable factor solutions

Table 5: Total Variance Explained

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.700	33.460	33.460	5.334	20.514	20.514
2	5.511	21.198	54.658	5.281	20.310	40.824
3	5.011	19.274	73.933	5.001	19.233	60.057
4	1.677	6.449	80.382	2.794	10.747	70.804
5	1.243	4.782	85.164	2.770	10.655	81.459
6	.327	1.258	86.422			
7	.289	1.110	87.532			
8	.284	1.093	88.625			
9	.252	.969	89.594			

10	.243	.933	90.527			
11	.224	.862	91.389			
12	.209	.805	92.194			
13	.199	.766	92.961			
14	.187	.721	93.681			
15	.183	.702	94.383			
16	.172	.661	95.044			
17	.165	.634	95.678			
18	.157	.605	96.283			
19	.149	.571	96.854			
20	.142	.545	97.399			
21	.132	.509	97.907			
22	.125	.482	98.389			
23	.123	.473	98.862			
24	.107	.412	99.274			
25	.098	.378	99.651			
26	.091	.349	100.000			

The Total Variance Explained table reveals that five components possess eigenvalues exceeding 1, thereby fulfilling Kaiser’s requirement for factor retention.

Collectively, these five elements account for 85.16% of the overall variance, indicating robust data reduction and construct representation.

Table 6: Rotated Factor Matrix

	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
OV1	.885	-.039	-.015	.177	.110
OV2	.883	-.039	-.044	.160	.146
OV3	.910	-.024	-.033	.167	.123
OV4	.896	-.039	-.014	.149	.110
OV5	.910	-.029	-.015	.189	.123
OV6	.924	-.046	-.034	.176	.110
OV7	-.008	-.008	.893	.098	.151
OV8	-.025	.026	.893	.121	.101
OV9	-.022	-.010	.879	.081	.096
OV10	-.024	.002	.893	.100	.140
OV11	-.003	-.029	.902	.076	.080
OV12	-.047	-.010	.880	.152	.076
OV13	-.037	.878	.022	.127	.208
OV14	-.042	.883	.010	.122	.206
OV15	-.032	.894	-.003	.099	.204
OV16	-.014	.919	-.039	.133	.130
OV17	-.061	.903	-.028	.155	.132

OV18	-.036	.886	-.010	.148	.175
OV19	.282	.198	.183	.763	.146
OV20	.277	.190	.188	.774	.156
OV21	.281	.219	.147	.730	.164
OV22	.267	.210	.175	.794	.174
OV23	.172	.289	.182	.181	.773
OV24	.173	.276	.190	.152	.780
OV25	.212	.289	.150	.159	.731
OV26	.185	.254	.173	.137	.756

The Rotated factor Matrix displays the final loadings of 26 observed variables on five derived components derived from Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) with Varimax rotation. Each variable has a substantial

loading (≥ 0.730) on a singular factor with negligible cross-loadings on other factors, so affirming robust convergent and discriminant validity. Cross loading less than 0.3 indicates divergent validity [38].

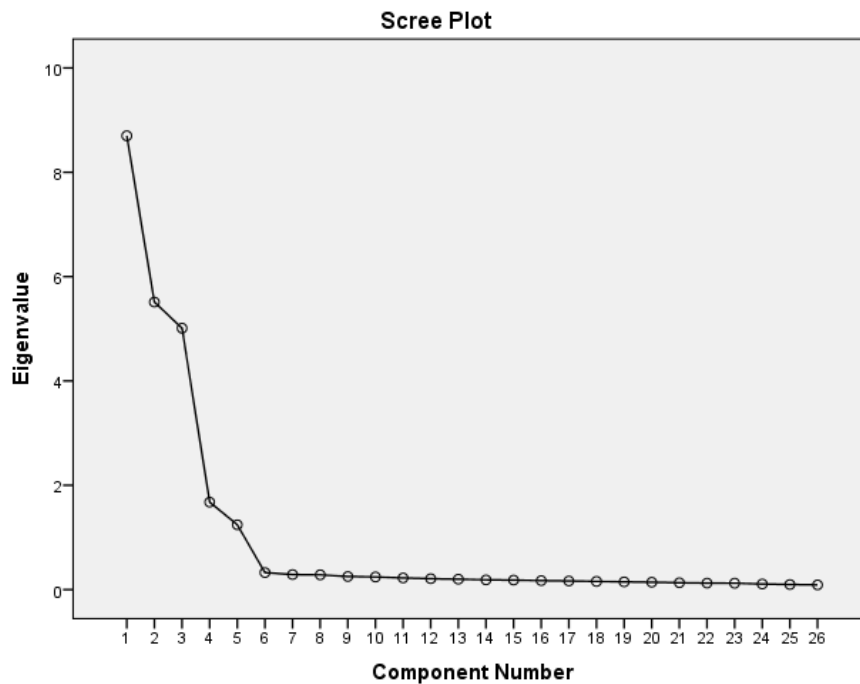


Fig.4 Scree plot

A clear "elbow" appears in the Scree plot after the fifth component, signifying that only the initial five components significantly impact the total variance.

Cattell's (1966) Scree Test dictates that factors above the inflection point are only to be preserved.

Table 7: Factor Distribution

ITEMS	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4	FACTOR 5	CONSTRUCTS
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The institution provides regular opportunities for professional development and training.	.885					TALENT MANAGEMENT (TM)
Talent identification and succession planning are effectively implemented in my institution.	.883					
My institution encourages innovation and creativity among faculty members.	.910					
Performance appraisals are fair and linked to professional growth opportunities.	.896					
The institution recognizes and rewards high-performing faculty members appropriately.	.910					
Career advancement opportunities are transparent and based on merit.	.924					
My institution values my contribution to its success.			.893			PERCEIVED ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT (POS)
The administration genuinely cares about my well-being.			.893			
I can count on the institution for help when I face problems at work.			.879			
The institution provides adequate resources to help me perform my duties effectively.			.893			
My institution recognizes my extra efforts beyond teaching and research.			.902			
I feel supported by the management in achieving a balance between work and personal life.			.880			
My institution has a positive image as an employer among academic professionals.		.878				EMPLOYER BRANDING (EB)
The institution communicates its values and mission clearly to faculty members.		.883				

I feel proud to be associated with this institution.		.894				
The institution offers a competitive pay structure compared to others in the sector.		.919				
My institution emphasizes faculty welfare and development in its policies.		.903				
The institution's brand reputation motivates me to stay longer.		.886				
I am satisfied with the teaching and research responsibilities assigned to me.					.763	
My working conditions and facilities meet my professional needs.					.774	
I am satisfied with the support received from colleagues and superiors.					.730	
I feel my work is appreciated and valued by the institution.					.794	
I feel a strong sense of belonging to my institution.						.773
I am willing to put in extra effort to help the institution succeed.						.780
I intend to continue working at this institution for the foreseeable future.						.731
I feel emotionally attached to this institution.						.756

The five obtained factors can be named as Talent Management (TM), Perceived Organizational Support (POS), Employer Branding (EB), Job Satisfaction (JS) and Organizational Commitment (OC) as depicted in the table.

CONCLUSION

The research recognized critical features of HR practices affecting employee retention in higher education institutions in Odisha. Five primary factors: Talent management, Perceived Organizational

Support, Employer Branding, Job Satisfaction and Organizational commitment have been identified as key determinants of retention behavior. The findings help policymakers and administrators to formulate successful HR policies for sustainability

Future researchers can use Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to validate the identified constructs and investigate their causal links. Comparative analyses across other states, institutional kinds, or cultural contexts can enhance generalizability.

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