
TALENT RETENTION IN PRIVATE ENGINEERING INSTITUTIONS IN RURAL PARTS OF ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA

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Abstract

It has been observed that, Talent Retention in Higher Educational Institutions is an ongoing problem in rural parts of India and Andhra Pradesh is no exception to this phenomenon. Many private higher educational institutions especially Engineering Educational Institutions in rural Andhra Pradesh are on the wedge of closure and are not in a position to sustain due to lack of revenue generation to meet even the operational expenses and with this, the existing huge and expensive infrastructure of these sick institutions are going to turn in to National Waste. This has been the burning problem for the last six to seven years due to little importance given to the most important aspect, “Talent Retention”. It is strongly believed that, institutions are made up of staff both Teaching and Non-Teaching: Teaching Staff creating value through proven teaching & Learning processes, innovation, mentorship and many other relevant activities and Non-Teaching staff providing administrative and logistic support to fulfill the needs of the deliverables of Teaching staff. As, an Educational institution strives to meet its organizational goals, it must make sure that it has a continuous and integrated process for Recruiting, Training, Managing, Supporting and Compensating these people to achieve high success rate of Talent Retention.

Key Words : Talent Retention, Staff, Recruitment, Organizational Goals.

Introduction

There are around 407 private engineering colleges in Andhra Pradesh and around 198 engineering colleges are situated in rural parts of Andhra Pradesh. These colleges though flourished in the beginning, but could not sustain in the long run due to various reasons such as Government policies, poor quality of students and high turnover rate (attrition) of faculty.

Human capital has been established as the most important asset for any organization. It is widely accepted that in the long run, the organization with the best people wins (Deepika Pandita, Sampurna Ray, (2018). Higher Educational Institutions must strive to understand the meaning of Talent Retention and its objectives, process, and critical success factors. The 21st century brings a unique and unprecedented set of challenges and potential opportunities for educational institutions. Today, even small or midsize Higher Educational Institutions are enrolling students from different countries and cultures and competing on a global scale. The students across African countries are looking at

institutions in India to pursue their higher education because of cost effectiveness. With the multi culture flowing in to our country, the responsibility of higher educational institutions has been increased and thereby the demand for dynamic and efficient faculty members and other non-teaching staff. This increased responsibility has made the higher educational institutions to consider “Talent Retention” as one of the important factors contributing towards organizational success.

Talent Retention focuses on retaining the most superior workforce so that individual employees can accomplish the institutional goals. The longer an employee stays in an institution, the more the productivity and these long standing employees can contribute effectively towards organizational development. Organizations have many opportunities for human resources or employee development, both within and outside of the workplace. Taking these factors into consideration, an integrated approach to Talent Retention offers a pathway towards sustaining outstanding business results.

Objectives and Research Methodology

Objectives of the study:

1. To analyze the Talent Retention Process followed in Private Higher Educational Institutions in Rural Andhra Pradesh.
2. To find out the critical success factors of Talent Retention and provide suitable suggestions.

Research Methodology

The information was collected from institutional libraries, available databases and the Internet. The literature on evaluating HR Policies was obtained from recent material. In order to get access to the latest developments in this area, articles published in academic journals were reviewed.

- **Primary Data** : Primary data was collected through a formal questionnaire administered to 120 respondents from 6 institutions of Higher Education to identify awareness, involvement, and evaluation of Talent Retention.
- **Secondary Data** Secondary data was obtained from published literature on the topic and from journals, books, web sites, magazines, case studies and other relevant sources.

Talent Retention in Higher Educational Institutions

Every educational institution has large infra-structure, laboratories and research facilities but, it is the faculty who can bring conducive environment suitable for growth and development of students while pursuing their studies in that institution. Any educational institution must be made up of engaged people and their professional goals should be aligned with the institution’s Mission and Vision in order to achieve success.

In the direction of retaining key talent, organizations must attempt to carefully match the organization’s needs and expectations with those of the employees (Deepika Pandita, Sampurna Ray, (2018)). Retaining key talent is the biggest challenge for the institutions running on break-even basis as the key talent cannot expect anything great from the institution.

In order to attain a clear cut information about the satisfactory levels on Various parameters, 120 faculty members from six institutions were given with questionnaire and asked to grade the parameters on five point scale and the results are shown in the below table :-

Parameters	Grade Points					Total Respondents
	1	2	3	4	5	
Able to match their professional goals with that of organization.	61	28	18	9	4	120
Satisfied with Extended working hours and work	40	37	26	12	5	120
Satisfied with the Organizational Culture	58	32	19	7	4	120
Salaries are paid on time and Promotion Policy is followed meticulously	37	32	23	22	6	120
Empowerment of faculty was done through Training and	36	30	29	18	7	120
Succession Planning is present in the organizational process	33	32	30	17	8	120
Could manage Work-Life	34	33	31	16	6	120
Job Security	34	31	33	17	5	120
Reward system and recognition	41	34	20	19	6	120
Funding for research work and in house projects	43	32	21	17	7	120
Total	417	321	250	154	58	1200
Percentage	34.8	26.8	20.8	12.8	4.8	100

From the above table it can be understood that, 35 % of faculty members are totally dissatisfied, 60% faculty members are partially dissatisfied and only five percent of faculty members are somewhat satisfied. More than 60 % faculty are desperate to change the organization as these are the totally dissatisfied lot. This is a clear indicator that, the concept of “Talent Retention” is not at all significant in these organizations. The outcome of this phenomenon is more turnover rate and the most effected stake holders are the students pursuing Engineering education in these institutions. It is also observed that, there is no HR department and HR policies in these institutions to take care of the above issues mentioned in the table in order to maintain low faculty turnover rate.

Root Causes of low retention rate

- a) **Career Growth:** Every human being expects to grow in terms of money, career and life style. These basic concepts cannot be overlooked at any cost and this aspect is completely ignored or not followed systematically in Educational institutions in Rural Areas of Andhra Pradesh. The

institutions do not have a concrete system of career growth for faculty members so as to enable them to plan their career though UGC clearly formulated CAS (Career Advancement Scheme).

- b) **Empowerment Strategies:** Institutions do not have proper empowerment strategies to faculty to make way for their career growth through adequate training programs and financial assistance for viable projects.
- c) **Research Facilities:** Research is the most neglected aspect in the Higher Educational Institutions situated in rural parts of Andhra Pradesh. Faculty are not facilitated with even minimum research facilities to carry out research study in their respective fields.
- d) **Succession Planning:** Another important aspect but neglected totally. The faculty who intended to spend longer period in an institution expects to know his next step of promotion which is possible when the concept of Succession Planning is visible in the organization.
- e) **Administrative Duties:** Management always wants to extract more and more output with least resources and this resulted in allocating administrative and promotional activities of the institution to faculty members and these faculty members carry out these activities with least interest as they do not possess required expertise and experience of these duties in order to obtain desired results.

Findings and Recommendations

It was observed during the exit interviews conducted for faculty and non-teaching staff that, many faculty members leave institutions for various reasons e.g lack of research facilities, poor quality of students, welfare measures of the institution and administrative duties assigned to faculty members. Many faculty members do not reveal the actual facts behind their exit due to inhibitions and in this context, it is strongly believed that, there is a huge gap between recruitment and retention and this gap can be filled by effective Talent Management System with a special emphasis on Talent Retention.

An educational institution's talent management strategy and investments must align with broader business goals and realities. A deep understanding of educational issues must include how faculty members and non-teaching staff can best be managed. Successful educational institutions have a deep understanding of their faculty members and their evolving needs.

An effective HRM strategy should balance the cost of replacing the employees who leave against the cost of retaining those who stay (Sheridan, J.E. (1992). In the present economic scenario, recruiting effective faculty in higher educational institutions is becoming more and more challenging due to outsourcing costs for the purpose of recruitment. Hence, the institutions need to concentrate much on the recruitment process in order to have a better pool of talent to meet the pre-determined goals of the institution. The higher educational institutions generally use their business plan to establish their process to measure and manage employees which is considered as a critical factor in the maintenance of effective work force. The main reason for faculty leaving a particular organization is lack of clearly defined organizational policies. A newly joined employee is not aware of the above aspects and

consumes nearly six months to understand the organizational culture and groom himself towards digesting it.

Although employers are fond of attributing retention concerns to the changes in the attitudes of workers, recent research has shown that retention problems are largely self-inflicted (Cappelli P. and Keller, J.R. (2014)). It has been observed that, many young faculties try to change organizations very frequently in order to gain higher salaries and this phenomenon might benefit a faculty temporarily but, it would be harmful for their career in the long run. To overcome this problem, organizations should concentrate to improve up on “Performance Management, Training and Performance Support, Succession Planning, Compensation and benefits and adequate Research Facilities.”

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