

## AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON ANTECEDENTS OF EMPLOYEE RETENTION AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS OF EMPLOYEES

YASMIN JANJHUA<sup>1</sup>, RASHMI CHAUDHARY<sup>2</sup> & RUMA SHARMA<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Business Management, College of Horticulture, Dr YS Parmar University of Horticulture & Forestry, Nauni Solan (H.P.) India

<sup>3</sup>MBA Student, Department of Business Management, College of Horticulture, Dr YS Parmar University of Horticulture & Forestry, Nauni Solan (H.P.) India

### ABSTRACT

Retention of key employees is critical to the long-term health and success of any organization and has emerged to be big challenge to human resource practitioners. The present study has tried to examine the employee turnover intentions in the organization and the role of important organization management factors in employee retention have also been assessed. The study has also investigated the relationship between the antecedents of employee retention and turnover intentions of employees. It has been observed that majority of the respondents have given higher mean values above average to all the components of employee retention but HR practices have been emerged to be the most important determinant. The results showed that the mean difference among various experience groups have been found to be significant for factor leadership, between married and unmarried respondents have been found to be significant for the components HR practices, leadership and organization culture, educational qualification for HR practices and leadership and income for factors HR practices, leadership and organizational culture. A negative relationship has been noted between majority of the antecedents of employee retention and turnover intentions.

**KEYWORDS:** Employee Retention, Employee Turnover Intention, Organization Culture, Job Satisfaction, Leadership

### INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The human resources of any organization give competitive advantage to the organization as they constitute the intellectual, social and psychological capital. Moreover, the unprecedented changes i.e. rapidly expanding globalization, accelerating technological advances, increased competition have necessitated the present day organizations to attract and retain high quality employees. The studies have reported that in the rapidly expanding global economy and to keep pace with technological advances a workforce with robust institutional knowledge is required (Benko and Weisberg, 2007; Becker, 2007; The Future of Work 2020, 2007). The analysis of the costs of employee turnover as well as labor shortages across the globe have drawn the attention of the organizations to primarily deal with problem of employee retention (Hinkin and Tracey, 2000). For the past few decades, employee retention and the turnover intentions of employees has emerged an important area of interest to academicians, practitioners, consultants and researchers. The matter of the fact is that retention matters because high turnover creates high replacement costs and is clearly associated with low levels of customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and lost revenues. Retention is particularly challenging today due to an ageing work force and a growing imbalance in the supply and demand of qualified personnel (Padron, 2004). A recent study by Raikes and Vernier (2004) associated employee retention a key to achieve financial success. High employee turnover of

competent, talented employees could have adverse effect on productivity and profitability (Samuel and Chipunza; 2009), organizational success (Buenger, 2006), productivity and sustainability of the organization, (Mathur and Aggarwal, 2013), thus strategies focusing on employee retention have become important.

Retention is defined as the ability to hold onto those employees which the organizations want to keep, for longer than their competitors (Johnson, 2000). Employee retention involves taking measures to encourage employees to remain in the organization for the maximum period of time (Griffeth and Hom, 2001). Retention is a voluntary move by an organization to create an environment which engages employees for a long term (Chiboiwa, *et. al.* 2010). Employee retention involves taking measures to encourage employees to remain in the organization for the maximum period of time.

The bottom line is that retention of key employees is critical to the long-term health and success of any organization. Cost of terminating employees has a significant impact on the budget, cost of hiring replacements is often high, cost of training new employees, cost of lower productivity for new employees, cost of client dissatisfaction with less or lower quality service from new employees, cost of lost ideas and suggestions because of less experience. Hence, failing to retain a key employee is a costly proposition for an organization.

It is the need of the hour that HR managers should identify the needs of the employee and then devise the retention strategies as in the present era of competition, continuous turbulence, chaos and job insecurity, the quality employees would be more concerned to know that why they should stay loyal to one particular organization. There are number of factors which promote the employees to stay or leave the organization. It may be external factors, internal factors and the combined effect of both. Moreover, employee turnover has important implications for the individual leaving the job in terms of more energy being expended in finding new jobs, adaptability to newer work place, loss of interpersonal connections and at times may prove to be very stressful for the individual (Boswell, Boudreau and Tichy, 2005). According to Dormio *et al* (2005) intention to leave refers to individual's perceived likelihood that they will be staying or leaving the employer organization. Turnover intent is defined as the reflection of "the (subjective) probability that an individual will change his or her job within a certain time period" (Mowaday *et al.*, 1982; Sousa-Poza & Henneberger, 2002). Johanson and Guchait (2009) considered turnover intention as a conscious and deliberate desire to leave an organization within the near future.

Employees leave for a variety of reasons, many of them beyond an employer's control. These can include personal issues such as health problems, major life changes, family demands, the relocation of a spouse or partner or the desire to pursue educational goals full-time. Surprisingly, personal reasons have accounted for only a small percentage of overall turnover (Mlinar, 2012). Moncarz, *et al.*, (2009) pointed out that promotions, training practices directly influence employee's retention where as compensations and recognitions positively decrease turnover rate of the employees. Min, (2007), found that job security and increasing level of experience will undermine employee's turnover rate. Working environment has considerable impact on absenteeism and employee turnover (Hillmer *et al.*, 2004). The findings of a survey reported that good employees leave primarily because of limited opportunities for advancement, unhappiness with management and lack of recognition (Mlinar, 2012). The motivational factors that are crucial in influencing employee retention are noted to be financial rewards, job characteristics, career development, recognition, management and work-life balance (Aguenza and Som, 2012). Hasan, *et al*, (2011) observed that mostly second line managers change their job's for high salaries offer, recognition, authority and also to seek for more knowledge and to get more competitive edge in terms

of processing. The result reveals the positive relationship of career development opportunities, supervisor support, working environment, rewards and work-life policies with employee retention (Shoab *et al*, 2009). Most of the employees stay with the workplace if they receive motivating tools such as bonuses but yet remuneration is not the only thing that can motivate employees to stay (Masaiti & Naluyele, 2011). Zwillig (2012) believes that non-cash motivators may be more effective in the longer term than financial incentives. Several factors that are considered important in a well-functioning of employee are considered to have a direct affect are career opportunities, work environment and work-life balance (Cappelli, 2000). The employees are more inclined towards their career growth, rewards and want to work in an environment where they get support from their colleagues (Narang, 2013). Cole (2000) suggested that people stay at such companies where there is a sense of pride and will work to their fullest potential.

Findings of study (Kyndt *et al*, 2009) highlighted the importance of considering both the personal (level of education, seniority, self-perceived leadership skills, and learning attitude) and the organisational factors (appreciation and stimulation, and pressure of work) when investigating employee retention. Empirical studies (Kinneer and Sutherland, 2001; Meudell and Rodham, 1998; Maertz and Griffeth, 2004) have, however revealed that extrinsic factors such as competitive salary, good interpersonal relationships, friendly working environment, and job security were cited by employees as key motivational variables that influenced their retention in the organisations. Samuel and Chipunza (2009) suggest that certain variables such training and development, recognition/reward for good performance, a competitive salary package and job security helps in employee retention. Yet, another interesting finding of a study concluded that when humor is used appropriately by the management, it can help increase employee retention and levels of employee satisfaction and overall productivity in the organization (Morse and Mujtaba, 2009). The factors that are found to most likely affect job satisfaction and in turn retention of employees are job security, job descriptions, reduced hierarchy in the workplace, empowerment and accountability in areas of workplace (Alnaqbi, 2011). Igbaria and Greenhaus (1992) suggested that excessive turnover can be fatal to organizations due to shortage of skilled technology professionals in the job market and the high cost of training new employees. To be effective in the current globally competitive economic environment, employee turnover management has become an important aspect for the companies. The present study has tried to address the above concern by understanding the factors that tend to reduce the turnover intentions of the employees.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The present study has assessed the response of employees on organization management factors that are important determinants of employee retention and the turnover intentions of employees in the organization

## **PARTICIPANTS AND INSTRUMENT**

For the present study the opinion on employee retention and turnover intention of 95 employees of Mahle Filters Limited, Parwanoo (H.P.) has been collected through questionnaire. The demographic profile of the respondents showed that the majority of the respondents were males (62.1%) and females were (37.9 %); 48.4 % were of (20-30 years) of age followed by 26.3 % who were (40 yrs and above) and 25.3 % belonged to age group of (30-40 years); majority of the respondents i.e. 72.6% have done matric/diploma, 15.8% and 11.6% were graduates and postgraduates respectively; 53.7 % were married while 46.3 % were unmarried. The monthly income of majority of the respondents i.e. 48.4% was between (Rs10,000-15000), followed by 27.4% respondents that belonged to income group (Rs15,000 and above) while the income

of 24.2% percent lie between (Rs5,000-10,000); 74.74 % of respondents were having job experience of (0-5 years), 16.84% had (10yrs and above) experience while 8.42% respondents have (5-10 years) of experience.

The instrument for measuring employee retention factors consisted of dimensions HR practices (Edgar and Yeare, 2005), leadership (Patten, 1995), job satisfaction (Weiss, *et al.*, 1967) and organisation culture (Cameron and Quinn, 2006) organization culture and work performance questionnaire. The turnover intentions of employees have been measured through the items developed by Mobley, Horner and Hollingsworth (1978).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings (see Table 1) revealed that employees have given highest mean value to HR practices (M=4.08) followed by leadership (M=3.98), organizational culture (M=3.90) and job satisfaction (M=3.84). It can be observed that employees have given higher mean value above average to all the components of the employee retention showing the higher degree of agreement with the items. Both males and females have emerged to be highest (see Table 2) for the factor HR practices with means values (M=4.08) and (M=4.07) respectively. The females appear to be more satisfied with their job as compared to males as inferred from the mean values. However, males have shown higher agreement than their counterparts with the statements of organization culture. It has been further noted that mean difference between males and females on antecedents of employee retention has been noted to be insignificant.

It is evident from the results (see Table 3) that married respondents have given higher mean values as compared to unmarried respondents to all the components of employee retention. The findings showed that married as well as unmarried respondents have given highest mean value to HR practices with mean values (M=4.24) and (M=3.89) respectively. The results showed that mean difference between married and unmarried respondents have been found to be significant for the components HR practices ( $t=3.60$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), leadership ( $t=4.124$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) and organization culture ( $t=2.410$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). It can be observed (see Table 4) that HR practices by the organization have emerged to be the most important determinant as all the age groups have obtained highest mean value on this aspect. It can also be seen that oldest group has given highest mean values above average to all factors as compared to others. The F values show that effect of age on mean difference pertaining to antecedents of employee retention has been insignificant.

It is inferred from the results (see Table 5) that respondents with experience of (5-10 yrs) have given highest mean values to all the components of employee retention as compared to other experience groups except leadership, while the least experienced have shown lowest degree of agreement with the antecedents of employee retention. The results further reveal that the mean difference among various experience groups have been found to be significant for factor leadership only ( $F=4.121$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). The findings (see Table 6) have revealed that HR practices have been considered to be the most important determinant of employee retention by all the differently qualified groups. It can also be noted that graduates have obtained higher mean values than other groups on majority of the components of employee retention. The effect of educational qualification has been found to be significant for mean difference HR practices ( $F=4.508$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) and leadership ( $F=4.969$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). The highest salaried employees have shown highest agreement with all the components of employee retention (see table 7) as compared to other groups. However, HR practices have emerged to be the most important factor as all the groups irrespective of the income have obtained highest mean value for the same. It can be noted that the mean difference among different income groups have been significant for the factors HR practices ( $F=5.923$ ;  $p<0.05$ ), leadership ( $F=6.315$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) and organizational culture ( $F=6.002$ ;  $p<0.05$ ).

The lower mean values exhibited in (Table 8) showing higher disagreement with the statements reflecting the turnover intentions of employees indicated that the employees do not intend to leave the current organization. A negative relationship (see table 9) has been noted between majority of the antecedents of employee retention and turnover intentions. However the significant relationship have been observed for the leadership ( $r=-.185^*$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Thus it can be said that higher the agreement with the components of employee retention lower is the turnover intentions of the employees.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The findings have revealed that majority of the respondents have given higher mean values above average to all the components of employee retention but HR practices have been emerged to be the most important determinant. Thus, it can concluded that employees feel that there is impartial recruitment and selection processes in the organization, all appointments are based on merit, the amount of pay and fringe benefits they receive are sufficient, their superiors have a high degree of trust and confidence in them, their working environment is friendly and cooperative, their organization is committed towards their training and development and their superior respects their opinion and encourages them to improve their performance.

It has been further noted that mean difference between males and females on antecedents of employee retention has been noted to be insignificant. Married respondents have given higher mean values as compared to unmarried respondents to all the components of employee retention. The results showed that mean difference between married and unmarried respondents have been found to be significant for the components HR practices, leadership and organization culture, effect of age on mean difference pertaining to antecedents of employee retention has been insignificant. The respondents with experience of (5-10 yrs) have given highest mean values to all the components of employee retention as compared to other experience groups except leadership, however the mean difference among various experience groups have been found to be significant for factor leadership. It can also be noted that graduates have obtained higher mean values than other groups on majority of the components of employee retention. The effect of educational qualification has been found to be significant for mean difference for factor HR practices and leadership. The highest salaried employees have shown highest agreement with all the components of employee retention. The effect of income on mean difference has been significant for the factors HR practices, leadership and organizational culture. The findings have shown very low mean values corresponding to the statements reflecting the turnover intention of employees. Thus it can be concluded that the employees are not willing to leave their organization. This may be attributed to the existence of the factors contributing towards employee retention and satisfaction of the employees with the same. A negative relationship has been noted between majority of the antecedents of employee retention and turnover intentions. Thus it can be said that higher the agreement with the components of employee retention lower is the turnover intentions of the employees.

It can be concluded from the present study that the organization has realized that their employees are their most important assets and their long term stability in the organization is very important for the organization. They have made and implemented such organization management practices which not only keep their employees satisfied but also ensure that their intellectual capital stays with them for longer period. Thus it is suggested that the organizations from time to time should keep on identifying the factors which have strong influence on employees and should try to implement the same as mere identifying the factors shall not be sufficient. A counseling system should be established for counseling employees

regarding their career development. This will enhance employee loyalty with the organization. Employees should have a feeling that they are in such an organization, where they are offered multi training and career development opportunities. Turnover rate should be monitored and closely considered important in policy formulation regarding HR factors and organization factors. It will help management in retaining their employees. Exit interview system should become an important part of the organization which will help the management in knowing reasons for employee turnover and then working on such area so that management work effectively to reduce turnover.

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**Table 1: Mean, S. D. Showing Response of Employees Pertaining to Antecedents of Employee Retention**

Organization Management Factors Determining Employee Retention	Mean	S. D.
HR practices	4.08	0.50
Job satisfaction	3.84	0.57
Leadership	3.98	0.57
Organizational culture	3.90	0.50



**Table 2: Comparison of Employee Retention Antecedents between Male and Female Employees**

Organization Management Factors Determining Employee Retention	Male		Female		T
	Mean	S. D.	Mean	S. D.	
HR practices	4.08	0.51	4.07	0.49	.111
Job satisfaction	3.79	0.60	3.93	0.51	-1.157
Leadership	3.98	0.55	3.98	0.62	000
Organizational culture	3.92	0.49	3.86	0.51	.547

\*p&lt;0.01; \*\*p&lt;0.05

**Table 3: Comparison of Employee Retention Antecedents between Married and Unmarried Employees**

Organization Management Factors Determining Employee Retention	Married		Unmarried		T
	Mean	S. D.	Mean	S.D	
HR practices	4.24	0.29	3.89	0.62	3.60*
Job satisfaction	3.90	0.44	3.77	0.69	1.120
Leadership	4.19	0.35	3.73	0.68	4.124*
Organizational culture	4.01	0.33	3.76	0.62	2.410**

\*p&lt;0.01;\*\*p&lt;0.05

**Table 4: Mean, S.D. and F Values Comparing the Employee Retention Antecedents among Age Groups**

Organization Management Factors Determining Employee Retention	20-30 Yrs		30-40 Yrs		Above 40 Yrs		F
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D	
HR practices	4.02	0.54	4.05	0.59	4.20	0.29	1.108
Job satisfaction	3.87	0.59	3.72	0.67	3.90	0.41	.732
Leadership	3.86	0.54	3.96	0.77	4.20	0.32	2.905
Organizational culture	3.88	0.52	3.83	0.62	3.99	0.28	.715

\*p&lt;0.01;\*\*p&lt;0.05

**Table 5: Mean, S.D. and F Values Comparing the Employee Retention Antecedents w.r.t. Job Experience**

Organization Management Factors Determining Employee Retention	0-5 Yrs		5-10 Yrs		Above 10 Yrs		F
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	
HR practices	4.03	0.55	4.38	0.34	4.11	0.25	1.793
Job satisfaction	3.82	0.61	3.95	0.38	3.85	0.46	.183
Leadership	3.88	0.61	4.20	0.41	4.29	0.28	4.121**
Organizational culture	3.87	.56	4.01	0.24	3.94	0.27	.366

\*p&lt;0.01;\*\*p&lt;0.05

**Table 6: Mean, S.D. and F Values Comparing the Employee Retention Antecedents w.r.t Education Qualification**

Organization Management Factors Determining Employee Retention	Matric/Diploma		Graduate		Post Graduate		F
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D.	
HR practices	3.99	0.55	4.39	0.20	4.19	0.23	4.508**
Job satisfaction	3.81	0.63	3.98	0.40	3.80	0.34	.567
Leadership	3.87	0.61	4.34	0.27	4.15	0.38	4.969*
Organizational culture	3.84	.55	4.02	0.29	4.07	0.23	1.558

\*p<0.01;\*\*p<0.05

**Table 7: Mean, S.D. and F Values Comparing the Employee Retention Antecedents w.r.t Income**

Organization Management Factors Determining Employee Retention	Rs 5000-10000		Rs 10000-15000		Rs 15000 and Above		F
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D.	
HR practices	3.83	0.63	4.07	0.49	4.31	0.23	5.923**
Job satisfaction	3.63	0.71	3.91	0.56	3.91	0.38	2.140
Leadership	3.70	0.73	3.95	0.53	4.26	0.33	6.315**
Organizational culture	3.60	.75	3.96	0.38	4.04	0.26	6.002**

\*p<0.01;\*\*p<0.05

**Table 8: Mean Values Showing the Employees' Turnover Intentions**

Employees' Turnover Intentions	Mean	S.D
If I had another job offer that paid the same as the one I have, I'd leave herein minutes	2.08	1.18
I think a lot about leaving organization	2.19	1.07
I'm actively searching for an alternative job	2.07	1.19

**Table 9: Correlations**

Organization Management Factors Determining Employee Retention	Employees' Turnover Intentions
HR practices	-.068
Job satisfaction	-.094
Leadership	-.185*
Organizational culture	.044

\* Correlation is significant at 0.05 level