Impact of Policies & Practices to Retain Faculty Talent

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ABSTRACT *An attempt has been made to identify the major influencing factors that can be proposed to the management of engineering institutions, to design an effective policies and practices to retain the faculty talent & to determine the extent to which the factors of the policies and practices are practicing at the engineering institutions. Results indicate that all the eight factors of policies and practices which are considered important for faculty retention are equally significant in the eyes of the faculty. No difference was observed among the various groups of demographic and institutional variables with regard to the view on the eight factors of policies & practices. Nearly three-fourth of the faculty stated that their institutions extremely practiced the factors like measuring faculty progress through performance, motivating the faculty, support for career advancement and allotting reasonable teaching load.*

INTRODUCTION

Retention has been an emerging issue in the field of academics, in recent years. Significant growth of technical education in several disciplines by 74% &engineering discipline by 154% in India (AICTE, 2013), GATS agreement to Indian educational sector, requisite of enhanced learning standards, increasing cross border educational opportunities etc(Business Line, 2005), all these creates a high demand for retaining the faculty talent at the institutions which needs to be effectively managed.

Developing the policies and practices, to address the diverse needs of employees, cannot be achieved by a single aspect; it involves a lot to emphasis. Kenneth, W. Thomas (2000) indicates that in today's environment, employees were assigned with wide range of responsibilities in their job; motivation to such employees is no longer extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation such as praise, recognition, power, sense of belongings etc makes their work fulfilling. Whatever may be the salary & other incentives, designing an appraisal model by assigning performance scores to various criteria like teaching, research/publication, service/behaviour etc., to measure faculty performance will make them feel that their contribution to the institute is being recognized (Anup Kumar Ghosh et al. 2010).

Over the past few decades, significant development in technical education in India has ultimately changed the role of faculty/teacher in academic to meet the new challenges. Kavita Bhatnagar et al., (2011) quoted that improvements in the role of teacher, includes skillset to develop & use of new teaching methodology, new perceptions towards students – teacher relationship and sensible use of the media technology in the teaching process etc., is possible only through systematic approach to faculty development. Therefore investment in the professional development activities of the employees is needed because majority of the talented people left the current job due to lack of development opportunities (Steel et al., 2002). Another most important aspect that institution should concentrate is the faculty workload. Majority of the academic faculty have workload between 40 to 50 hours per week at their jobs and it may be different on the basis of type of institution, professional rank (John F.Due, 1956; Clare & Dennis 2003). Exit interview also found its place in the academics in recent years, conducting exit interview with the

departing faculty will provide an opportunity to address the problems identified in the campus which ultimately enhance retention policy (Barbara et al., 2009).

Studies shown that, communicating information regarding strategies, mission, and performance through best possible way on a timely basis will increase the trust culture of the employees. The more the faculty is given; the relevant information through intranet will help in creating a healthy and trust climate in the institution (Gopinath and Becker, 2000). Ravindra Jain (2006)quoted that communication to the employees is dependent on the culture prevails in the institute, existence of such favourable institute climate will not only shapes personality and abilities but also affects the behaviours of the faculty institution. Clarity in the institutional culture that new faculty meet is important for effective retention (Mokwa, Michael P., 1998).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
- To prioritize the importance of various factors of policies and practices which influencing faculty retention at engineering institutions.
- To study the degree of importance of faculties' perception towards policies and practices among the various groups based on demographic and institutional variables.
- To find out the existing current scenario of policies and practices practicing at the engineering institutions.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out by getting responses from one hundred and thirty five faculties working at engineering institutions approved by Anna University, Chennai, through structured questionnaire. The questionnaire which was constructed consists of three major sections namely, measuring faculty demographic factors, information about the institute they work and a set of eight factors of policies and practices which influencing faculty retention were scaled on a 5 point likert scale ranging from "High Influence to stay" to "Weak Influence to stay and the reliability result Cronbach alpha value of 0.789 shows that all the eight items are highly reliable to predict the influence of policies & practices in retaining faculty talent at the institutions.

ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

Since, the overall score of policies & practices which influencing faculty retentionhave satisfied all the four conditions of parametric data (normal distribution, homogeneity of variance, interval scale and data should be independent), parametric tests with 95% confidence level were used to test the hypothesis.

Study Hypothesis 1:

Various factors considered to find out the importance of "Policies and Practices" influencing the faculty retention, are not significantly different.

Table -1 Faculties' perception towards the factors of Policies & Practices

Factor	F Statistic*	df	Mean Square	Sig.
Policies & Practices	6.506	1	8656.364	.000
	58.545	44	1.331	

* F statistics of one way ANOVA repeated measure

The F statistics (1, 44) = 6.506, p<0.05 indicates that the various factors considered to find out the importance of "Policies and Practices" influencing the faculty retention were not differently rated (Table 1). There is no difference of opinion with regard to policies and practices which are considered important for retention of faculty. This shows that all the eight indicators of the construct policies and practices selected for the study are equally important in the eyes of the faculty.

Study Hypothesis 2:

The degree of importance of faculties' perception towards policies and practices among the various groups based on demographic and institutional variables are not significantly different.

Table – 2 Perception towards Importance of Policies and Practices among Groups of Demographics and Institutional variables

Factors	T test (2 tail Significant Value)*	Null Hypothesis
Gender	0.441	Accepted
Educational Qualification	0.603	Accepted
Designation	0.123	Accepted
Marital Status	0.531	Accepted
Accredited by NAAC	0.233	Accepted
Status of the Institute	0.688	Accepted
Factors	**F statistic (sig.value)****	**Null Hypothesis**
Age	0.859	Accepted
Monthly Income	0.789	Accepted
Industrial Experience	0.987	Accepted
Teaching Experience	0.859	Accepted

*T Statistics of Independent Sample t Test
**F statistics of One Way Independent Measure ANOVA

The results of both independent sample t test (significant values of the t statistics) & one way ANOVA (significant values of the F statistics) (Table -2) indicates that the degree of importance of faculties' perception towards policies and practices among the various groups based on demographic and institutional variables are not significantly different. The respondents represents the gender equally, 3/4th of the respondents have post graduate qualification & nearly half of the sample size have more than 5 years of teaching experience. 25% of the respondents having previous industrial experience & 50% of the respondents draw a salary of Rs. 25000-50000. 70% of the respondents were working under the NAAC accredited institutions and 83% of the respondents were belongs to autonomous institutions. Inspite of diverse demographic features and Irrespective of the group of institution related factors; all of them uniformly feel that the indicators of policies and practices are equally important with regard to retention.

Existence of Policies & Practices in the Private Engineering Institutions

To identify the extent to which the engineering institutions practicing the eight factors scaled to measure the importance of Policies and Practice which influencing faculty retention, in their institutions is shown in Table 3

Table – 3 Existence of indicators of the construct "Policies and Practices" in the institutions

Policies and Practices	Existence of indicators (No.of Faculty)		
	Yes	No	Not Sure
Institution support for career advancement / development of the faculty	89	28	18
Institution values /recognizes faculty contribution	61	57	17
Institution has allotted reasonable teaching load to the faculty	74	51	-
Institution is really good at motivating the faculty	70	39	26
Trained the faculty to behave in consonance with institution culture	71	53	11
Institution communicates information to faculty through Intranet / Circulars	69	66	-
Institution has the practice of conducting exit interview	24	75	36
Institution measures the faculty members progress through performance / contribution	97	27	11

As regards the existence of the policies and practices in the private engineering institutions, (Table -3) 51% of the faculty accepted that their institutions practiced all the eight items of policies and practices. 36% of the faculty opted that there is no such practice regarding the items of policies & practices in their institutions. Nearly half of the faculty stated that their institutions extremely practiced the factors like measuring faculty progress through performance / contribution, support for career advancement, allotting reasonable teaching load and motivating the faculty.

However with regard to following items of policies and practices, the respondents were undecided about the practice of the institutions includes institution values /recog-

nizes faculty contribution, providing training to the faculty to behave in consonance with institution culture, institution communicates information to faculty through Intranet / Circulars. It is interesting to observe that the practice of conducting exit interview is not followed commonly. Only 17% of the faculty accepted that their institutions have started the practice of conducting exit interview with the departing faculty.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Management of the engineering institutions has to give equal weightage to all the indicators of the policies and practices which influencing faculty retention. Even though majority of the institutions highly practiced the indicators of policies and practices, continuous focus on practicing the items of policies and practices in the institution which will ensure retention. Management of the engineering institutions should take initiative to make the faculty to know about the practiced policies and practices in their institution. Continuous practice of conducting exit interview in the institution will help the management to address the problems identified.

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