



Teachers Retention in Higher Educational Institutes

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ABSTRACT

In this era of commercialization of higher education in India, one of the biggest challenges being faced by the Higher Educational Institutes (HEI's) is the "Teachers' Retention". These teachers are very good performers and proves to be an asset to any educational institute run by private organizations /self financed institute or run by the Educational Trusts/ Societies etc. The retention of teachers applies to all types of categories of teachers ie Asst. Prof., Associate Prof. and even to senior faculty members such as Prof, Deans and Head of Deptt. There are large numbers of teachers who are taking this noble profession as a pastime and are just not involved in it seriously. At the same time there are teachers though less in numbers but are performing very well and hence must be retained by any good educational organization. These teachers are generally committed to their job and work with full dedication. When these committed teachers do not get their due respect, recognition and rewards, they start looking outside the present organization and hence try to leave the organization. They seem to be employed as a "refined educated skilled labourers" who are paid daily wages at the end of month. If the teachers are performing well they must be retained at all costs. Though there are many reasons of their attrition yet these reasons can be tackled with care and respect. In this article the efforts are being made to discuss the problem of good teachers' retention, their perceived causes and suggested remedial measures to retain them for the benefits of all the stake holders such as students, parents and for the management of any educational organization.

KEYWORDS

Higher Educational Institutes, Retention, Attrition, Committed Teacher, Retention Interventions.

INTRODUCTION

Retention strategies have become a catch word for all types of business enterprises in these days. All out efforts are being made to retain good performers. The principle is very simple which is being followed in any business organisation in its letter and spirit ie "Perform or Perish". Nowadays education have been accepted as an Industry and commercialization of Education have taken place in the last one decade to the maximum limits wherein mushrooming of higher educational institutes have come up in all states of India.

According to McKinsey & Company's report, Closing the Talent Gap (Auguste, Kihn, & Miller, 2010), 14 percent of American teachers leave teaching after only one year, and 46 percent leave before their 5th year. While the statistic is alarming, the majority of teachers who leave cite the same issues we've heard about for years—burnout, lack of professional respect, and difficult working conditions.

National statistics shows very clearly that in the year 2020, India would require at least 1200 universities against the present number of approx. 650 only. The emphasis seems to be on the quantity instead of quality education. While increasing the quantity of institutes we should also be very careful about the quality maintenance of teachers as well. To maintain higher standards of education it is mandatory to have well qualified and experienced teachers in good numbers in each educational institute. Besides having good number of qualified and experienced teachers, it must be ensured that "core faculty" members who are generally the pillars of any organization, must be retained at all costs. However we generally find that no efforts or very less efforts are being put by any educational institute to retain these good performers. This is one of the main reasons for the deterioration of quality education in most of Indian states. The big chunk of educational institutes is not bothered about the retention strategies of their teachers and not even bothered about the benefits of having "Core Faculty" members. In this Article /Chapter, a humble effort is being made to project this problem and suggest some viable remedial intervention which would benefit in the long run all the stake holders.

WHAT IS RETENTION?

Retention is a multiple approach in making people stick to the

institution, it is not a one time affair, we do it for all the times.

IMPORTANCE OF RETENTION OF TEACHERS

The key employees' retention is very critical to the long term health & success of any Educational Institute. The retaining best teachers ensure student & teachers' satisfaction, parents' satisfaction, effective successive planning and deeply embedded organizational knowledge and learning. There are basically two reasons for teachers' retention. These are Firstly the organizational issues and secondly the societal reasons.

The organizational issues such as:

- Training time,
- Lost domain knowledge,
- Coworkers cooperation and
- Replacement costs.

Various estimates suggest that losing an Asst. /Associate Prof. costs an Institute up to 100% of his salary. The loss of Senior Professor could be even more.

Secondly:

It is important due to societal reason. Over the next few years while baby boomers born between 1946-1964 (76 Millions population) retire, the upcoming Generation-X (Xers) born between 1965-1980 with 44 Millions population is only available for work. It simply states that there is lot fewer people available to work and hence retain them for longer period if possible. Generation-Y (Millennial) born between 1981-2000 and Generation-Z (Nexters) born after 2000 has not been considered here.

COMMITTED TEACHER

A committed employee is the one who knows:

- What is expected out of him/her.
- Has materials and equipment to do the job.
- Ample opportunities are given at the work place.
- Supervisors give utmost care.
- Management encourages personal development /professional enhancement.
- Does his/her opinion is listened to and does it count in any forum?.

REASONS FOR ATTRITION

A. Basic Reasons:

Salary compensation & allied perks and privileges. In addition, the American Education Research Association (Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006) conducted a meta-analysis of 46 studies that showed the relationship of salary to teacher recruitment and retention and found:

- Higher salaries were associated with lower teacher attrition.
- Teachers were responsive to salaries outside of their profession.
- Dissatisfaction with salary was associated with higher attrition and decreased commitment to teaching

2. A report from the National Clearinghouse for Education and Families (Buckely, Schneider, & Shang, 2004) shows that a lack of resources can also contribute to teachers' job dissatisfaction. In interviews with New York City public school teachers, a large percentage of new teachers said they did not have basic supplies and had to use their own money to purchase them. Also, because they often do not have enough textbooks, photocopying often becomes an unwelcome part of their job.

3. Better opportunities available outside.
4. Recognition and Rewards for the work done.
5. Decrease commitment to teaching.

B. Perceived Reasons

1. Ease of working with the immediate supervisor or boss.
2. Lack of peer group cohesiveness.
3. Facilities and benefits offered by the Institute.
4. Nurturing supportive working ambience.
5. Medical reasons/Family reasons/ Personal reasons.
6. The RIGHT type of work not assigned and heavy volume of work load. Today's teachers have an increasing number of demands on their time. In addition to state, district, and parental demands, teachers must manage parent conferences; attend staff meetings; and monitor busses, hallways, bathrooms, and cafeterias, among other tasks (Fisher, 2011).

MODUS-OPERANDI :

How a person leaves the job?

1. Initially enthusiastic and takes lot of interest.
2. Starts asking questions slowly & slowly.
3. When questions are not answered then gets disillusioned/ Frustrated.
4. Considers quitting.
5. Search for the new options.
6. Receives offers and
7. Finally leaves.

EFFECTIVE TOOLS TO RETAIN TEACHERS

1. Exit interviews.
2. Employees' retention surveys.
3. Coaching and mentoring.
4. Establish benchmarks.
5. Motivating employees-improve morale.
6. Employees management-automate time and attendance, leave, payroll, recruitment and training.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

1. Salary compensation at par with the other related educational institutes of the region.
2. Motivation and Positive Morale booster activities.
3. Employee Recognition Kick employee recognition up a notch.
4. Quality of Supervision & Accountability.
5. Recruiting and Selection to ensure successful hiring.
6. Create vibrant environment full of creativity & innovative techniques.
7. Employee to speak his/her mind freely with the organiza-

tion.

8. Expectations from an employee & from the management.
9. Interact constantly with your employees.
10. Increasing involvement of teachers in social/ cultural activities.
11. Specific retention program for Women Employees.
12. Teacher Evaluation & reporting system.
13. Teaching & Non-Teaching Cohesiveness. The relationship between administration and teachers is also a strong indicator of teacher turnover. A report from the Center for Comprehensive School Reform (2007) cites a South Carolina study in which leadership was identified by more than one-quarter of teachers as the most crucial issue in making their decisions about whether to stay in a school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Job security is must for all core faculty members. Job must be converted into a career to enhance personal academic development such as Ph.D., M.Phil, NET, Project/ Consultancy services.
2. Involve teachers emotionally which can be achieved through family members' involvement by various group activities such as organising picnics on quarterly basis.
3. Recognition, Awards and Rewards must be given on time and not at the end of the year.
4. Review and Feedback of the performance of teachers may be done on semester basis. Identify fast track performers based on the report and goodwill earned.
5. Have group insurance policy for all employees/ loans of different category of employees on reduced rate of interest, encourage referral cases of admission, letter of appreciation and announcement of festival bonus and performance bonus.
6. Identify and rectify the attrition rate of teachers. Keeping an eye over those teachers who want to leave but cannot leave.
7. Retention of employees can also be best achieved by motivation, coaching, mentoring, training and development.

CONCLUSION

Whenever we talk about employee retention plans we hear a common question- "Where do we start form?". Remember that employee retention is a symptom and not a problem. It is a result of deeper issues that have not been addressed /or resolved. Some of them could be narrated as Low morale, no career path, lack of recognition, poor employee- management relationship, inadequate compensation, indifferent work culture or working atmosphere, lack of interactions between superiors and subordinates, lack of employee's participation and last but not the least willingly contributing more than what is expected out of an employee.

The crux of the problem lies in the lackadaisical attitude of the top management by not following monetary & non-monetary incentives to retain the good performers. On the other side, the teachers do look outside for better incentives, better working environment with less of administrative work. They are generally non-committed to the organizational needs and hence there is dire need to reduce the gap of the two extremes of this "Retention Continuum" by making good retention policy and following some of suggested strategies/ interventions and recommendation made in this paper for the benefits of all the stake holders of the educational domain..

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