

Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Employee Retention in Telecom Sector of Pakistan

Asma Zahoor Shagufta Ijaz Tabinda Muzammil
Army Public College of Management and Sciences (APCOMS), UET Taxila, Rawalpindi, Pakistan

Abstract

Purpose – For gaining competitive advantage in this highly volatile business environment, the organizations are facing many challenges and one of the most important challenge is to retain its most talented employees. Effective Human Resource Management Practices of an organization plays a significant role in gaining competitive advantage by retaining the valuable employees. For this reason the present research study was carried out to identify how and up to which extend the Human Resource Management Practices i.e. Training and Development and Career Development Opportunities helps in the Retaining the Employees in Telecom Sector of Pakistan, as from the past few years the telecom industry experience most threatening period regarding employee retention.

Design/methodology/approach – This research is quantitative in nature. Data has been collected through a survey from 41 employees of sales and service departments of telecom sector from Warid, Mobilink and Telenor, as these companies are holding 85-90 % market share of Pakistan Telecom Industry. The purposed research hypotheses were tested through various statistical analyses.

Findings – The research Findings suggested that HR practices i.e. Training and Development and Career Development Opportunities significant correlates with Employee Retention.

Research limitations/implications – The present research study focused only two dimensions of Human Resource practices, so for future research studies other dimensions of HR practices should also be considered. Moreover this research is limited in terms of simple size, therefore by increasing the sample size in terms of number of respondents, departments, industries and cities could also provide more accurate and generalize results.

Practical implications – Human Resource Management Practices helps the companies to retain its most critical and talented employees for a long term, make them more committed, and they perform well for the development of the organization that leads towards increase profitability and productivity.

Originality/value – The research paper addresses the Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Training on Employee Retention in Pakistan Telecom Industry particularly in twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

Keywords: Human Resource Practices, Training and Development, Career Development Opportunities, Employee Retention, Telecom Sector Pakistan.

Introduction

The term Global village is known to everyone. Business world has also become a village, of an era, where we are living. Business organizations are facing aggressive competition from all over the globe (Becker & Huselid, 1998). Practices of human resources management plays a vital role in the achievement of any organization's goals and it also helps to maintain the competitive advantage. For achieving organizational goals, the relationship of organizational HR practices with Organizational employee retention is very important. This cutthroat competition among organizations not only results in better production but also improves the work efficiency of human capital. Indifferent business organizations, competitors try to copy the different resources of successful organizations like technology, but human capital is an asset, which cannot be easily imitated. As the competition is increasing day by day employee retention becomes the top priority of organizations. Khatri (1999) cited in Tiwari (2012) and explain that personnel of any organization are the most important elements that provide adaptability and flexibility to their organizations. So having the efficient and productive employee is very essential for organizational performance. If the organization is not capable enough to retain their employees, then it could not get the most out of human assets of an organization. So it is imperative for management to keep organization's best workforce and sustain their loyalty to the organization, which will gives an organization, a competitive advantage.

Background

In the last decade, the Human Resource Management has move on from a micro focus on individual HR practices to a macro focus on how Human Resource Management approach can contribute to the competitive advantage of the organizations. For achieving competitive advantage the efficient workforce and HR practices are very important in organization, because it plays a fundamental role in achieving an inventive and high-class products/ services. Therefore employee retention in the organization is exceptionally important.

HR practices in organization gained bigger attention over the last years due to its effective impact on employee retention. It is understood that good HR practices helps to minimize employee turnover. HR practices are basically the organizational activities which are helping to manage the team of human resource and ensure that the workforce is engaged to fulfil the organization's goals. (Schuler & Jackson 1987)

It is more supported by different academic scholars (Arthur, 1994; Huselid, 1995) that HR practices has their direct impact on employee's behaviours and attitudes, which has a major effect on organizational outcomes. Basically HR practices and policies reflect the strength of relationship between employee's and management (Delery and Doty, 1996; Jackson and Schuler, 1995). Researchers (Arthur, 1994; Huselid, 1995; Koch and McGrath, 1996) indicated that HR practice and effective corporate strategies works side by side and can lead to high preservation of its most precious assets- the employees.

These days, to work for employee retention has become the most important element in many organizations. Employee retention can be defined as "Organizations any voluntarily action which can create such a convincing environment which can help to retain workforce for a long term." Chaminade (2007 cited in chibowa et al .2010). According to Eskildesn and Nussler (2000) the organizations fails, when they do not give prioritize importance's to their workforce retention .Most of the organizations do not pay more attention on staff retention because it cost more. This consists of both direct and indirect cost .First of all because of employee turnover, when the organization hire new staff, market rate salary should be given to them, which would be more than the previous staff, cost of hiring will also be another cost. These costs come under direct cost, and the indirect cost is less productivity, lack of customer satisfaction, loss of intellectual capital and above all negative impact on reputation of the organization. So the organizations should take it so serious that employee retention is very important for any organizations success and effective employee retention strategies would help to keep their valuable staff members, who are the asset. This asset will make any organization, a market leader by sustaining the business in marketplace.

So this study aims to observe the impact of Human resource practices on employee retention in the Telecom companies of Pakistan. Through literature survey we found that the different HR practices gives an impact on employee retention in an organization. After reviewing the several articles we have selected two dimensions of Human resource management practices, training and development and career development opportunities and examine their impact on employee retention. These two dimensions are taken as they are considered more important in reducing the employee turnover rate.

Problem Statement

In this era, the business environment of organizations is highly volatile and many challenges are faced by organizations in the form of acquisition and keeping human resource. Human resources are sustainable competitive advantage of any company because of their valuable and scarce capabilities. An organization depends upon many factors, but the most vital factor that affects the organization performance is its employee which plays an important part in their success. From previous researches it has been realized, that there is a need to study the impact of HR practices on employee's retention in Telecom Sector in Pakistan. As the Telecom sector of Pakistan has experienced tremendous growth in recent years and emerged as a key driver of economic and social development in Pakistan. In order to get benefit from growing market, telecom companies require right people for the right Job. To attract and retain the employees effective Human Resource Management practices are required to be implemented in Telecom Industry. So it is recommended to study the impact of HR practices on employee's retention in Pakistan's telecom sector. There are different dimensions of HR practices but in this present research study two dimensions of HR practices will be discussed i.e. Training and Development and Career Development Opportunities.

Rationale of the study

This research will be significantly helpful in diagnosing the success of HRM practices. The Study explains the importance of implementation of HRM practices and highlights their part towards the success of employee retention within the organization. The study also tells us that how employee commitment and employee performance can be increased by using the HR practices and this also helps in reducing the turnover. The result of this Study will also help in creating a better understanding on how to manage the HRM practices to get the best results. This research is the guiding tool for the telecom companies because it provides the knowledge to the organization that fair HRM practices has greater impact on the Employee retention Moreover, it is concluded that this study can contribute to the growing literature by examining the impact of HRM practices on employee's retention in Pakistan context.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is:

- To understand the relationship between the Human Resource Management Practices i.e. training and

- development and career development Opportunities and Employee's Retention
- Studying the impact of HR practices on Employee Retention in Telecom Sector of Pakistan.

Literature Review

Human Resource Management Practices:

According to the Jacken and scher in 1987 HR practices are like a formation/Structure that motivate attract, retain and develop employees to ensure the valuable implementations, The development of employees are the success /growth of organization. Arumugam and Mojtahedzadeh in 2011 said that HR practices consists of many polices and activities purpose is to accomplish the people and HR aspects of management position.

HRM is an approach which consists of employee's development, and working for the betterment of employees in a workplace. The five categories of HRM are employee retentions, learning and development and performance appraisal (Amstong2009). According to the author Gonsel & Erdil narrates that in order to achieve an organization objectives, the formation of the right person starts from the first stage the "Right person for the right job at the right time", according to their behaviours and skills that are required according to the company requirements.

In today's business era's so many changes occurring in the Human resource field. In an organization HR functions are interlinked with a number of activities that has influence all the areas of an organization. The achievement of an organization relies on the HRD climate such as autonomy, fair compensation, recognition, openness, integrity (Ramesh, 2005). Human Resource practices give opportunities related to career development, so that they help in employee engagement and employee development (Mone and London, 2009).

2.1 Employee Retention:

Employee Retention is considered to most challenging issues which are faced by the corporate leaders, because of insufficient skilled labour, employee turnover, economic growth." The capability to keep holds those employees whom the organization wants to keep are longer than your rival" (Johnson, 2000). Different organization used variety of approaches in order to retain their employees (American Management Association, 2001).

Retention is considered as an important component of an organization's HR strategies. It start from the very first that selection of the right employees and it should be continues by practicing those programs in order to keep those potential employees and make them committed and engaged towards the organization (Freyermuth, 2004).

Employee Retention technique is been used by the corporate leaders in order to maintain an effective workforce as well as meet the operational requirements. Related issues regarding people like benefits, Hiring, administration, organization development, safety, communication, Compensation, performance management, Wellness. From the research studies, it has been prove that now organizations realized that retentions is strategically concern and helpful in order to achieve the competitive advantage (Walker, 2001; Youndt et al., 1996).

Now a day the workers demands have been increased than ever before, it is not because of perks and salaries but in very term like cultural and work experience context. Providing a flexible, prolific and dynamic working environment in order to retain and attract the potential employees. In case if Retention plans/Strategies be not appropriately embedded in the corporate industry/business process then all the efforts are useless since from the selection. (Earle, 2003)

2.2 Human Resource Management Practices and Employee Retention:

The association between Employee Retention and Human Resource Management practices has been rapidly increasing approached in current researches. Different researcher argued that in those firms where organizational practices are managed and perceived as an investment then the turnover rate must be reduced (Allen et al., 2003). There is an association between HRM practices and employee retention within the firm (Huselid, 1995).

If Human Resource Practices are executed effectively in order to get the better outcome of retention employees, so that I would be very helpful and effective in order to reduced the turnover ratio and at the end result would be retention of employees for longer time period (Enterkin, 2001). Now the organization focuses on those strategies which will be helpful to retain the employees and to reduced the turnover rate (Steel, Griffeth, & Hom, 2002).

In order to retain the employees the organization now brings some modification in their training models, growth opportunities, balance between work and family life practices (Benest, 2008). Now the employers and the employees both are look forward the Human Resorce practices, because in order to get the competitive advantage, and for the recruitment and retention of employees as well (Wallace, 2001).

Management experts used retention management as a tactical tool (Davies, 2001). Proper execution of human resource practices different frameworks and models have been used by the organization, because these

are helpful for the organization in a way to increase the retention of employees (Clark, 2001).

2.3 Training and Development and Employee Retention:

T&D is an organized/systematic way of development of skills, attitudes and knowledge requisite by the employees that enable them to perform their task or job effectively and efficiently (Abiodun, 1999). It is considered as a common HR practices (Tzafirir, 2006). When the training is available to the employees all the time they feel committed and have emotional feelings towards the organization then the result is less chances of Turnover (Ashar, Ghafoor, Munir, and Hafeez, 2013). According to Huselid in 1995 training is considered as important elements of employee retention.

The objectives of arranging training programs for employees is to train the employees regarding company rules, mission and to provides technological information/knowledge to their tasks in order to complete their jobs tasks effectively and efficiently, and to remove all the imperfections on work (Sari,2009)

According to the author Juang *et al.*, in 2007 the concept of training of employees originated from the HRD. Employee's commitment and retention have been improved by providing the better T&D practices and on the training session as well (Deery 2008).

Some researchers have found that T&D have inverse relations with each other. When the turnover rate is high, it means low training is provided to the employees. This statement is based on the logic that the longer stay of employees in an organization the result is higher training is being proved to the employees (Rehman and Hussain 2013). According to the

Chew research findings in 2004, the turnover rate is low where the 59% spent on the training as compared to those organization that spend 18% time on their training session then there is high turnover rate.

2.4 Career Development Opportunities and Employee Retention:

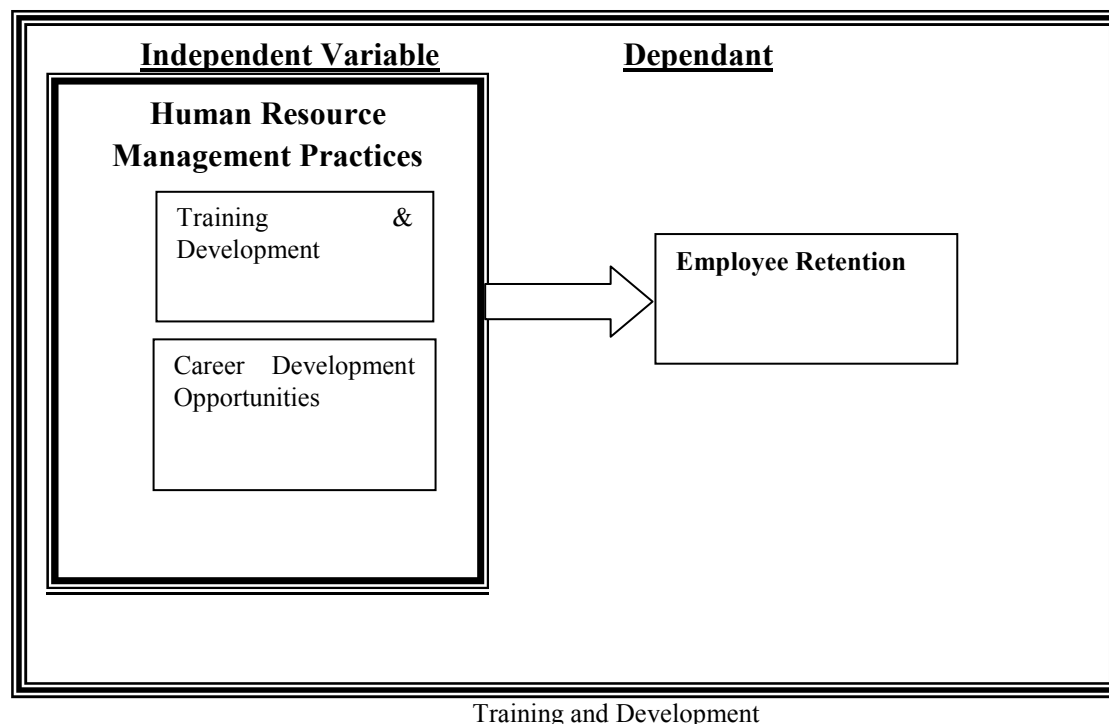
Career Development is structure, which is planned organized and formalized effort of attaining a balance between organization employee's needs and individual career requirements (Leibowitz et al, 1986). Today in this 21st century it is the people who make the competitive edge in the business place, In the era of the 21st century the HR professional has some challenges to fine out those developmental strategies, which can not only inspire their employees but also make them committed to the organizations values and mission as well. So that the employees become more motivated and achieve the organizational objectives. And to gain competitive advantage as well (Graddick, 1988)

For the employees development the company must invest in HR practices, in order to strengthen the bond with their employees (Hall & Moss, 1998; Hsu, Jiang, Klein & Tang, 2003; Steel et al., 2002; Woodruffe, 1999). The higher is the turnover intentions, when growth opportunities were less offered to the employers (Allen, Shore & Griffeth, 2003). Moreover due to the number of reasons turnover rate is high such as, employees were not happy with their assigned work, insufficient investment in T&D, Misleading and unfair performance appraisal, insufficient opportunities in career development etc (Hay 2001)

According to employees independence, work experience and career development etc, these are reasons for low turnover rate, so all these intentions of employees assist organization to line up there organization HR practices accordingly. So this would really help them in order to keep them retain (Kroon and Freese, 2013). The employees will only stay long when they see a career opportunities in the organization (Bagga 2013). Moreover Organization required capable and brilliant employees in order to maintain a competitive in the market and the individual wants career opportunities, where they excel and develop their competencies (Prince, 2005).

Theoretical Framework:

The purpose of this research study is to observe the impact of Human Resource Management practices on employee retention in the Telecom companies of Pakistan. Two dimensions of HR practices are taken i.e. Training and development and Career development. In this research study the employee retention dependents upon Human Resource Management practices, so the Human Resource Management practices is dependant variable and employee retention is independent variable.



Training and Development
Fig 1: The Proposed Model Showing the Relationship between HR Practices and Employee Retention

Figure 1 shows the relationship between HR practices with its dimensions (i.e. Training and Development and Career Development Opportunities) and Employee Retention. This model is developed theoretically to test the hypotheses of the relationship of independent and dependent variables.

Hypothesis

- H₁: Training and Development is significant positive related to employee retention in telecom sector in Pakistan.
H₂: Career Development Opportunities are significant positive related to employee retention in telecom sector in Pakistan.

Research Methodology

Research Design

In this present research study survey research method is used by considering the nature and all requirements of research. This research is basically conducted to test the hypotheses regarding human resource management practices leading to employee retention in telecom sector of Pakistan. This research study is quantitative in nature as quantitative research study is more reliable and easy to measure and give more genuine, reliable and accurate result as compared to qualitative research study.

Population

The data was collected by adopted standardized questionnaire based on survey from telecom sector of Pakistan from the following companies: Warid, Mobilink and Telenor.

Sampling Technique

The Data was collected by using convenient sampling technique on the bases of researchers convinces.

Sampling Size

Total 50 questionnaires were distributed in three telecom companies of Rawalpindi and Islamabad and got back the 41 questionnaires. The sampling frame consists of employees from sales and service departments.

Research Instrument:

In this research study a 16 item questionnaire was used. For Training and Development and Career Development Opportunities Dockel (2006) was used and for Employee Retention Mobley, Horner, & Hollingsworth (1978) was used to measure the impact of HR practices on employee retention. Training and Development consists of 6 items, Career Development Opportunities scale consists of 6 items and Employee Retention consists of 4 items.

For all measures, the participants were asked to respond to a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Beside these three scales, a demographic form was also given to the participants.

Data Collection

All the questionnaires were filled in the presence of the researcher so that the respondents do not feel any problem regarding the questions in the questionnaire. Data was gathered from twin cities of Pakistan: Rawalpindi, and Islamabad. Data had been analyzed using the software SPSS applying various tests.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data was collected from employees, and then coded into SPSS data file, and after that various statistical tests were run. Various Statistical methods which were used for data analysis purpose were descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, frequency tests and test of normality. Then correlation test was applied in order to find out the relationship between independent and dependent variables. And in the end in order to find out the impact of HR practices and its dimensions on Employee Retention linear regression has been used.

The demographic analysis included the frequency tests which were conducted to describe the sample in terms of demography. These tests included frequency and percent of the respondents. The responses were presented in table 1.

Table 1:

Demographic Profile:

	Options	Frequency	Percent	Mean	S.D
Gender	Male	28	68.3	1.3173	0.47141
	Female	13	31.8		
Age	20-30	16	39.0	1.0737	0.64202
	31-40	21	51.2		
	41-50	4	9.8		
Education	Graduation	16	39.0	1.7073	0.64202
	Master	21	51.2		
	Above	4	9.8		
Experience	Less than 2 years	14	34.1	2.2439	1.06725
	2-5 years	8	19.5		
	6-10 years	14	34.1		
	11>	5	12.2		

Sample N= 41

The demographic profile of the respondents indicates a critical sample composition; total 41 respondents participated in this research. Among all the respondents 28 were males and 13 were females, out of which majority of the respondents lie between age group 31-40, most of them have Master degree qualification.

Reliability Analysis:

Cronbach's Alpha measures the internal consistency. It is the coefficient of reliability. The sample size is 41. The reliability of data is shown in table 2.

Table 2:

Reliability Statistics and Survey Construct

	Variables	No of Items	Alpha(α)
1	Training and Development	6	0.842
2	Career Development Opportunities	6	0.744
3	Employee Retention	4	0.879
	Cumulative alpha α	16	0.754

Alpha reliability test is use to check how much your questionnaire is reliable. The results show that all the variables have Cronbach's Alpha greater than 0.65 which means they are reliable and have good statistics. Overall Cronbach's Alpha of 0.754 shows that the data collected to measure independent and dependent variable is reliable (Nunnally, 1978).

Correlation Analysis:

The correlation table is shown as follows:

**Table 3:
Correlation:**

		TD	CDO	ER
TD	PearsonCorrelation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	41		
CDO	PearsonCorrelation	.575	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	41	41	
ER	PearsonCorrelation	5.48	5.96	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.002	
	N	41	41	41

The values of correlation indicated that HR Practices (i.e. Training and Development and Career Development Opportunities) and Employee Retention were significant positive correlated variables and p value is also significant. It means that if a company performs HR practices, it will result in retaining the employee within the organization.

Regression Analysis:

Regression between TD and ER:

Table 4(a):

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig. F Change	Sig of Model (p)
1	0.548	0.301	0.283	0.000	0.000

In the table 4(a), R is representing the multiple correlation coefficients which are the correlation between the predicted values of the dependent variable ‘Employee Retention’. The value of R ranges from 0 to 1. Larger values of R show stronger relationship between variables. This result shows that there is a significant relationship between independent variable ‘Training and Development’ and dependent variable ‘Employee Retention’, because the value of R is 0.548.

In the above table, R square is the proportion of variation in dependent variable (Employee Retention) explained by independent variable (Training and Development). Like R, the value of R square also ranges from 0 to 1. It basically explains the model fit. The value of R² is 0.301. It measures that how much of the variability in the outcome or result is accounted for by the independent variables.

Adjusted R square is corrected value of R square for the number of variables in regression model. It reflects the goodness of model fit more closely. In the above table adjusted R square of 0.283 shows that 28.3% of the changes in Employee Retention are explained by Training and Development.

Table 4 (b):

Hypothesis Test

Model	B	T	Sig value (p)
1 (constant)	6.444	7.804	0.000
TD	0.867	4.094	0.000

In the above table, the ‘t’ statistics helps in determining the relative importance of each variable in the model. The value of t statistics is above +2 i.e. 4.094 and significance value is .000<0.05, this shows the relative importance of Training and Development and constant is meant to be statistically significant.

The positive beta value for Training and Development shows the positive relationship between Training and Development (independent variable) and Employee Retention (dependent variable). It indicates the strength of relationship between independent and dependent variables. As the p value is significant, so the first hypothesis is approved.

H₁: Training and Development is significant positive related on Employee Retention in Telecom Sector in Pakistan.

Regression between CDO and ER:

The regression test was conducted for CDO and ER also. The results of tests are as follows:

Table: 5(a)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig. F Change	Sig of Model (p)
1	0.596	0.355	0.338	0.000	0.000

The table 5(a) shows that the value of R is greater than 0.5. The values of R are the values of the

multiple correlation coefficients between the independent and dependent variables. This value of R which is 0.596 provides a measure of how well ER can be predicted from CDO scores. The value of R^2 is 0.355. It measures that how much of the variability in the outcome or result is accounted for by the independent variables. The value of Adjusted R Square tells the exact impact of IV upon DV. That is, the 1 unit change in CDO can produce 33.8% change in ER. The value of F is significant (smaller than 0.05), which shows that IV does a good job in explaining the variation in the ER. All the values confirm the significant good fit of model. The table indicates that the model is significant as the p value is 0.000. This is very important to be significant as otherwise the regression test can't be run.

Table: 5(b)

Hypothesis Test

Model	B	t	Sig (p)	value
1 (constant)	6.392	8.870	0.000	
CDO	1.007	5.96	0.000	

In the above table, the 't' statistics helps in determining the relative importance of each variable in the model. If the value of t statistics is below -2 or above +2 and significance value is less than 0.05, the relative importance of independent variable and constant is meant to be statistically significant.

In the above table the value of t statistics is above +2 i.e. 5.96 and significance value is .000<0.05, this shows the relative importance of Career Development Opportunities and constant is meant to be statistically significant.

The positive beta value for corporate social responsibility shows the positive relationship between Career Development Opportunities (independent variable) and Employee Retention (dependent variable).

So, the second purposed hypothesis is also approved.

H₂: Career Development Opportunities are significant positive related to Employee Retention in Telecom Sector in Pakistan.

Findings

This study focused on impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Employee's Retention in Pakistan telecom industry. Two dimensions of HR practices i.e. Training and Development (TD) and Career Development Opportunities (CDO) were taken in order to find out the impact and influence of HR Practices on Employee Retention. In this research study two hypotheses were supposed in order to find out the relationship between two dimensions of HR Practices and Employee Retention. Both hypotheses were accepted, which were also supported by previous research studies.

Both dimensions of Human Resource Management Practices (TD and CDO) had significant positive relationship with Employee Retention, which means employee retention is affected by HR practices. So Companies should focus on effective implementation of HR practices in order to reduce the employee turnover intention and make them more committed towards the organization.

Conclusion

In this competitive business environment the organization can achieve competitive advantage only by retaining its best, critical and most talented employees and make them committed towards the organization, as they are considered as a real asset for an organization. Human Resource Management Practices considered as an organizational backbone, plays a significant and vital role for retaining the employees within the organization. The effective implementation of HR practices within the organization is the symbol of employee retention.

In this research study, the results show that Training and development and Career Development Opportunities have a great and significant positive relationship between Employee Retention. So it is suggested that organizations must focus on HR practices for reducing the employee turnover intention.

From the past few years the Pakistan telecommunication industry has experienced tremendous growth and emerged as a key driver of economic and social development in Pakistan. In order to get benefit from growing market, the telecom companies must focus on attracting and retaining most talented employees by effective implementation of HR practices in Telecom Industry, As best employee retention result in high growth and productivity, high profitability, high market value and good reputation of company. So in order to retain the employee within the organization, organization must focus on implementing effective HR practices within the organization.

Limitations and Future Recommendations:

This research study identifies and analyzes the impact of HR Practices on Employee Retention. This research study focused only two dimensions of HR Practices i.e. Training and Development and Career Development Opportunities, therefore there is a need to study the impact of other dimensions of HR Practices on Employee Retention also.

This research was limited by time; as research study was conducted in a short time period that was available for research. Moreover the research study had a small sample size; therefore in order to get more generalize results the simple size could be increased for future research.

Moreover the research study has been carried out only in sale and service departments of Pakistan Telecom Industry in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, as these cellular companies are major market shares holders, hence the results cannot be generalized to all the departments of Pakistan cellular companies, therefore other cellular companies in other cities such as Ufone, Zong and other wireless companies of Pakistan should also be considered for more accurate and generalized result.

Moreover the research study was restricted to Rawalpindi and Islamabad, so for more accurate and generalized results there is a need to conduct this research to the other cities of Pakistan as well.

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