

EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVE ON ENGAGEMENT AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS IN PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Employee engagement and turnover intentions are critical aspects influencing the performance and sustainability of public sector organizations. This qualitative study delves into the perspectives of employees regarding these phenomena, aiming to uncover underlying factors and inform effective retention strategies. Through thematic analysis of in-depth interviews with employees from two public sector organizations, WASA and the Army, this study investigates the factors contributing to employee engagement and the reasons behind turnover intentions. Key themes emerged, including feelings of undervaluation, job dissatisfaction, organizational culture, transparent communication, fair treatment, and job-related stress. The objectives of this study are to explore employees' perspectives and experiences regarding engagement levels in the workplace and to understand the factors that contribute to employees' feelings of being engaged or disengaged at work. The findings suggest that strategies such as employee recognition, tailored engagement initiatives, and transparent communication are essential for enhancing engagement levels and reducing turnover intentions in public sector organizations. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of employee engagement and turnover within the public sector and provides valuable insights for organizational improvement and intervention strategies.

Keywords: Employee perspective, engagement, turnover intention, public sector organizations.

INTRODUCTION

For firms in a variety of industries, employee engagement and turnover have long been major challenges. Due to the difficulties that governments and public sector companies encounter, these problems assume greater importance in the public sector. Employee engagement is a term used to describe how engaged, devoted, and passionate individuals are about their jobs and the organizations they work for. The rate, at which employees leave a company, either freely or involuntarily, is referred to as employee turnover and may influence performance and productivity. It's unclear where the phrase "employee engagement" initially appeared, although it was probably coined by the Gallup organization in the 1990s (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999), the terms "work engagement" and "employee engagement" are frequently used interchangeably. Work engagement refers to the relationship of the

employee with his or her work, whereas employee engagement may also include the relationship with the organization. Halbesleben (2010) discovered that while work engagement is adversely correlated with intention to leave an organization, it is positively correlated with employees' organizational commitment, performance, and health and well-being. The goal of engagement is to give employees the chance to interact with one another, their managers, and the larger organization. Additionally, it involves fostering an atmosphere where workers are inspired to want to engage with their work and genuinely care about performing well. It's a concept that emphasizes adaptability, change, and continual development as the core principles of what it means to be an employer and an employee in the workplace of the twenty-first century. (Truss et al 2006)

David Guest (2009) asserted that engagement may be attained "through effective leadership of a strong, positive culture that ensures the enactment of organizational values; via strong management that supports employees' work and well-being; through careful planning and implementation of organizational change; and through Systems and jobs should be designed so that workers can contribute fully by utilizing their knowledge and abilities, exercising effective employee voice, and receiving the right resources, tools, and information to do their jobs well. There are two approaches of definition that is widely discussed in employee engagement context. The term "engagement" can be used in a specific work-related context to describe what occurs when people are enthusiastic and engaged in their work, display discretionary behavior, and are driven to perform at a high level. The opposite of job burnout, work engagement is a gratifying, affective-motivational state of wellbeing associated to one's employment. Employees that are actively engaged in their work exhibit high levels of energy. (Bakker et al, 2008) An engaged employee was defined by Bevan et al (1997) is one who is aware of the business context and collaborates closely with coworkers to increase performance on the job for the benefit of the organization. Towers Perrin (2008) followed a similar strategy when it described employee engagement as the degree to which workers expend discretionary effort on their work, above and beyond what is necessary to complete the task, in the form of more time, brainpower, or energy. Organizational citizenship behavior, as described by Katz and Kahn (1966) as "innovative and spontaneous activity directed toward achievement of organizational objectives, but which goes beyond role requirements," is linked to organizational engagement. Robinson et al. (2004) defined employee engagement as "a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its values," they stressed the organizational component of engagement. Mowday et al. (1982) highlighted three criteria of commitment in the context of organizational commitment. (i) A strong desire to stay a member of the organization. (ii) A strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's values and aims. (iii) A readiness to put up a significant amount of work on behalf of the organization. In today's globalized and interconnected world, organizations operate in complex environments where ethical decision-making is paramount.

Pakistan, as a developing country, presents a distinctive context for examining organizational ethical practices. It is a nation rich in cultural diversity, with a history shaped by various influences, including religion, tradition, and colonial legacies. Moreover, Pakistan faces economic challenges, such as poverty, income disparities, and corruption, which can significantly impact ethical considerations within organizations. Understanding the ethical dimensions of organizational practices in Pakistan is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, ethical practices are vital for maintaining stakeholder trust and ensuring sustainable relationships with customers, employees, investors, and the wider community. In a society like Pakistan, where relationships and social networks hold great significance, the ethical behavior of organizations can have a profound impact on their reputation and success.

Secondly, Pakistan's unique cultural landscape adds complexity to ethical decision-making within organizations. Cultural norms, values, and expectations shape the ethical frameworks through which organizations operate. For instance, religious principles, such as honesty, fairness, and social responsibility, play a crucial role in influencing ethical practices. Exploring how cultural factors intersect with organizational ethics provides insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by organizations in aligning their practices with societal expectations. Thirdly, as Pakistan continues to integrate into the global economy, organizations face the challenges and opportunities associated with globalization. The pressure to comply with international standards and norms in areas such as labor rights, environmental sustainability, and anti-corruption measures poses ethical dilemmas for organizations operating in Pakistan. Examining how organizations navigate these challenges and seize the opportunities presented by globalization is essential for understanding the ethical dimensions of their practices. Unethical organizational behavior is prevalent and continues to have a negative impact on organizations and stakeholders, resulting in potential legal liability and the loss of revenue alongside the loss of public goodwill (Deconinck et.al, 2015). Treviño et.al, (2003) conducted a qualitative investigation into perceived executive ethical leadership. Previous research has highlighted the importance of organizational context in shaping ethical outcomes. The findings of this study hold

significant implications for organizations operating in Pakistan. By gaining a comprehensive understanding of the ethical landscape, organizations can develop tailored strategies to enhance their ethical decision-making processes, align their practices with societal expectations, and mitigate ethical challenges. Policymakers can also benefit from the insights gained to develop regulations and guidelines that foster an ethical business environment, ensuring responsible conduct and sustainable economic growth. According to Mobley (1982), turnover refers to the voluntary act of an individual leaving an organization, and this quitting is typically associated with receiving compensation or payment for their involvement in that particular organization. In crux, turnover occurs when employees willingly choose to end their membership with the company and discontinue their services in exchange for the remuneration they received during their tenure. It is essential for organizations to monitor and understand turnover rates to identify potential issues and implement strategies for retaining valuable talent and maintaining a stable work force.

Branham, L. (2012) explained why employees leave their jobs or organizations for a variety of reasons. Major findings are below. They believe their jobs or workplaces fall short of their expectations and that there is a mismatch between the person doing the job and the position. There are extremely few possibilities for growth and improvement, as well as very little training and feedback. Employees also complain about being undervalued and unappreciated, they feel overworked and unbalanced between work and life. They lose faith in their leaders.

The effectiveness and well-being of employees in a company are impacted by trust. Because of this, employees are less likely to share their expertise and experiences with other team members, which has a negative impact on the organization's effectiveness. (Alaarj, et al, 2016)

Tian-Foreman (2009) described employee turnover as a complex phenomenon influenced by various factors, which can be broadly categorized into three main groups. Firstly, work-related factors play a crucial role, encompassing aspects like job satisfaction, compensation and benefits, performance recognition, and the level of organizational commitment. Employees who feel undervalued, dissatisfied with their job roles, or inadequately

compensated are more likely to seek alternative opportunities elsewhere.

Secondly, individual factors, including age, education, gender, and tenure, also contribute to turnover. For instance, younger employees might be more inclined to explore different career paths, while longer-tenured employees may seek fresh challenges.

Finally, external factors such as the prevailing unemployment rate, perceptions of employment opportunities, and the presence of labor unions can exert considerable influence on turnover rates. Economic conditions and the attractiveness of the job market can sway employees' decisions to leave or remain with an organization. Understanding and addressing these multifaceted factors are essential for organizations seeking to mitigate turnover and retain their valuable talent.

Becker, (1962) suggested that investing in human capital is the key to increasing employee profitability and productivity as well as employee well-being since these factors will promote great performance in the firm. As a consequence, it may be advantageous for both businesses and employees. Organizations are convinced that efforts should be made to retain, develop, and advance the personnel in light of the significant cost of employee turnover. Therefore, it becomes increasingly crucial that staff members develop mutual understanding and collaborate successfully and amicably. In the context of employee turnover, human capital theory can provide valuable insights into understanding the factors that influence employees' decisions to stay with or leave an organization. The theory emphasizes the importance of education, skills, and experiences as valuable assets that contribute to an individual's economic productivity and potential earnings. When applied to employee turnover, human capital theory suggests that employees' perceptions of their own value and the opportunities available to them in the job market play a significant role in their decision to stay or quit their current job.

High turnover rates can be detrimental to public sector organizations, resulting in increased recruitment and training costs, loss of institutional knowledge, and potential disruptions in service delivery. Employees may choose to leave due to factors such as limited career growth opportunities, inadequate compensation, and a lack of work-life balance. To address these issues, public sector organizations should focus on fostering a positive

work environment, offering competitive compensation packages, and providing opportunities for professional development and advancement. Additionally, seeking feedback from employees and actively involving them in decision-making processes can boost engagement.

Literature Review

Employee engagement has emerged as a critical driver of organizational success, with its impact on productivity, job satisfaction, and performance well-documented in the literature (Kahn, 1990). Researchers define employee engagement as a multidimensional construct involving an employee's emotional, cognitive, and behavioral connection to their work (Saks, 2006). Engaged employees are enthusiastic about their tasks, exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction, and demonstrate loyalty and retention (Kahn, 1990). The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and the Social Exchange Theory are commonly used theoretical frameworks to study employee engagement. The JD-R model suggests that job demands, such as workload, can lead to burnout, while job resources, such as autonomy, foster engagement (Demerouti et al., 2001). The Social Exchange Theory emphasizes the reciprocal relationship between employees and their organizations, where engaged employees feel a sense of obligation and invest discretionary effort (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

Various factors influence employee engagement, including organizational culture, leadership style, work-life balance, rewards, and career development opportunities. Positive organizational culture and supportive leadership foster a sense of belonging and alignment with organizational values (Schein, 2004; Avolio et al., 2009). Providing opportunities for growth and work-life balance are also critical in promoting engagement (Clark, 2000; Macey & Schneider, 2008). Measurement methods for employee engagement include engagement surveys, psychometric scales, and qualitative approaches. Surveys like the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) measure employees' levels of vigor, dedication, and absorption at work (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Psychometric scales like the Gallup Q12 survey assess specific engagement drivers (Harter et al., 2002). Qualitative approaches, such as interviews, offer deeper insights into employees' engagement experiences (Richman et al., 2003).

Numerous studies have shown a positive correlation between employee engagement and organizational performance. Engaged employees tend to be more productive, provide better customer service, and contribute to higher profitability (Harter et al., 2002). Organizations with higher engagement levels experience lower absenteeism and turnover rates, leading to cost savings (Saks, 2006). To enhance employee engagement, organizations can implement strategies such as creating a supportive work environment, recognizing and rewarding efforts, and providing opportunities for career growth. Supportive cultures and effective recognition systems reinforce positive behaviors (Schein, 2004; Eisenberger et al., 1997). Offering career development opportunities demonstrates investment in employees' futures (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Leaders play a vital role in shaping employee engagement. Supportive and transformational leadership styles, characterized by empowerment and inspirational communication, are associated with higher engagement (Avolio et al., 2009). Leaders who foster trust and involve employees in decision-making can positively influence engagement levels (Saks, 2006).

Despite its importance, employee engagement faces challenges in organizations. Poor communication and lack of transparency can lead to disengagement (Schein, 2004). Insufficient recognition and unclear career paths may result in reduced motivation (Eisenberger et al., 1997; Macey & Schneider, 2008). Additionally, excessive workload can lead to burnout and reduced engagement (Demerouti et al., 2001). In conclusion, employee engagement significantly impacts organizational success. Understanding the influencing factors, employing effective measurement methods, implementing targeted strategies, and addressing potential barriers can create an engaging work environment that fosters employee commitment, productivity, and overall performance. Employee turnover, the rate at which employees leave an organization and need to be replaced, is a critical challenge faced by organizations worldwide. High turnover can result in increased costs, reduced productivity, and loss of valuable knowledge. In recent years, researchers have extensively studied the factors contributing to employee turnover and the strategies organizations can adopt to address this issue.

Research has identified several factors that contribute to employee turnover. Job dissatisfaction,

lack of career growth opportunities, low job engagement, inadequate work-life balance, and poor relationships with supervisors and colleagues are some of the common reasons (Lee et al., 2017; Griffeth et al., 2019). Moreover, organizational culture, lack of recognition, and inadequate compensation have been found to be significant contributors to turnover (Griffeth et al., 2015; Allen et al., 2016). Employee turnover has considerable implications for organizations. High turnover rates can lead to disruptions in productivity and decreased team cohesion (Hom et al., 2017). Moreover, the loss of experienced employees can result in decreased organizational knowledge and skills, leading to increased training costs for new hires (Huselid & Becker, 2015). Additionally, employee turnover can affect an organization's reputation and its ability to attract top talent (Abassi et al., 2015).

Employee engagement is inversely related to turnover. Engaged employees tend to be more committed to their organizations and are less likely to leave (Kahn, 1990). Research shows that organizations with higher levels of employee engagement experience lower turnover rates (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Hence, efforts to improve employee engagement can have a positive impact on reducing turnover. Organizations can implement several strategies to reduce employee turnover. Improving the work environment, providing opportunities for skill development and career advancement, offering competitive compensation and benefits, and recognizing and rewarding employee efforts are effective approaches (Allen et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2017). Moreover, fostering a positive organizational culture that values employees and promotes work-life balance can contribute to reducing turnover (Griffeth et al., 2019).

Leadership plays a crucial role in managing employee turnover. Effective leaders who promote open communication, provide support, and demonstrate care for their employees are more likely to retain talent (Huselid & Becker, 2015). Leaders who invest in their teams' development and create a positive work culture contribute to higher employee engagement and reduced turnover (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). In conclusion, employee turnover remains a significant challenge for organizations, impacting productivity, costs, and organizational success. The causes of turnover are multifaceted, but research suggests that improving employee engagement and addressing key factors like job

satisfaction, work-life balance, and organizational culture can help mitigate turnover. Strategic efforts by organizations to retain talent and foster a positive work environment can lead to improved retention rates and overall organizational performance. Employee engagement and turnover are closely related in organizations. Engaged employees, who feel connected to their work and are committed to their organization, are less likely to leave. When employees are engaged, they experience higher job satisfaction, a sense of purpose, and alignment with the organization's goals and values.

This emotional and cognitive connection fosters loyalty and a desire to contribute positively to the organization's success. On the other hand, disengaged employees, who lack enthusiasm and motivation, are more likely to seek opportunities elsewhere, leading to increased turnover rates. High turnover can disrupt team dynamics, result in loss of valuable knowledge, and incur significant costs for recruitment and training of new employees. Therefore, fostering employee engagement through supportive leadership, a positive work culture, opportunities for growth, and recognition of employees' contributions can play a crucial role in reducing turnover and creating a more stable and productive workforce.

Objectives

- I. To explore employees' perspective and experiences regarding engagement levels in the workplace.
- II. To understand the factors that contribute to employees' feelings of being engaged or disengaged at work.

Methodology

The study utilized a qualitative research design to explore employee perspectives on engagement and turnover intentions within public sector organizations. Thematic analysis, a widely used qualitative research method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns or themes within data, was chosen as the primary analytical approach. Participants were purposively sampled from two public sector organizations, specifically WASA and the Army, resulting in a total of four participants. This sampling approach allowed for a focused investigation into the experiences and viewpoints of employees from different organizational contexts within the public sector. Separate interview protocols

were developed for the engagement and turnover domains to ensure comprehensive coverage of the research objectives. These protocols were crafted based on existing theory and refined iteratively throughout the study, incorporating probing questions to elicit rich and nuanced responses from participants. Prior to conducting interviews, efforts were made to establish rapport and build trust with the participants. This involved initiating contact with potential participants, explaining the purpose and objectives of the study, and obtaining their informed consent to participate. Participants were also provided with a demographic form to gather relevant background information. Interviews were conducted in the preferred language of the participants, with bilingual facilitation if necessary, to ensure clear communication and understanding. The interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' consent to capture their responses accurately and facilitate subsequent transcription and analysis. Each interview session lasted approximately 20-30 minutes, allowing sufficient time for participants to express their perspectives and experiences regarding employee engagement and turnover intentions. Following data collection, thematic analysis was employed to analyze the transcribed interviews and identify recurring patterns, themes, and insights within the data. Thematic analysis involves a systematic process of coding, categorizing, and interpreting qualitative data to derive meaningful conclusions and implications. The first step in thematic analysis involved becoming familiar with

the data by reading and re-reading the transcripts to gain a comprehensive understanding of the content. This process enabled the researcher to identify initial codes representing specific concepts, ideas, or experiences expressed by participants. Next, these initial codes were organized into broader themes based on similarities and connections between them. Themes were developed through an iterative process of data reduction, grouping related codes together, and refining the thematic structure to capture the essence of participants' perspectives. Once the themes were established, they were reviewed and refined to ensure coherence and consistency across the data. Each theme was defined and named to encapsulate the key insights and findings derived from the analysis. The interpretation of the themes involved synthesizing the qualitative data to generate meaningful interpretations and implications for understanding employee engagement and turnover intentions within public sector organizations. This process required careful consideration of the context, content, and implications of each theme, as well as alignment with the research objectives and existing literature in the field.

Results

This research was conducted on the sample of (N=12) in which two organizations were selected. Two, two employees from each organization were selected. One from Army Background and the second from Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA).

Table 1
Summary of the key participant's characteristics

Participants	Age (in years)	Sex(M/F)	Education	Job Experience	Marital Status	Organization
A	21	F	Intermediate	3	Unmarried	Defense
B	26	M	Graduate	6	Married	Defense
C	32	M	Graduate	8	Married	WASA
D	31	M	Graduate	7	Married	WASA

Note. N=5; M=Male; F= Female

Table 2
Sub-Ordinate, Super-Ordinate and Master Themes for Turnover Intention

<i>Sub-Ordinate Themes</i>	<i>Super-Ordinate Themes</i>	<i>Master Themes</i>
<i>Feeling undervalued and unappreciated</i>	<i>Employee Recognition and Engagement</i>	<i>Employee Recognition and Engagement</i>
<i>No appreciation for diligent work</i>		
<i>Feeling unappreciated affecting motivation and interest in work</i>		
<i>Dissatisfaction with job and organization</i>	<i>Job Dissatisfaction and Turnover</i>	<i>Job Dissatisfaction and Turnover</i>
<i>Considering leaving the organization</i>		
<i>High turnover rate due to various issues</i>		
<i>Inequality in treatment between officers and officials</i>	<i>Organizational Culture and Employee Well-being</i>	<i>Organizational Culture and Employee Well-being</i>
<i>Lower staff not benefiting from salary increases</i>		
<i>Misuse and overburdening of employees leading to dissatisfaction</i>		
<i>Effective communication and its impact</i>	<i>Communication and Decision-Making</i>	<i>Communication and Decision-Making</i>
<i>Decisions limited to officer levels</i>		
<i>Miscommunication leading to issues and conflicts</i>		
<i>Stress and health issues</i>	<i>Job Stress and Compensation Disparities</i>	<i>Job Stress and Compensation Disparities</i>
<i>Fear of suspension and inquiry in emergencies</i>		
<i>Mental torture</i>		
<i>Pay disparities and lack of incentives for overtime</i>		
<i>Inequality in incentives based on connections</i>		
<i>Need for revised salaries and fair incentives</i>		
<i>Substandard ranks without opportunities for growth</i>	<i>Employee Dissatisfaction and Turnover Drivers</i>	<i>Employee Dissatisfaction and Turnover Drivers</i>
<i>Feeling demotivated due to lack of recognition of advancement prospects</i>		
<i>High turnover</i>		
<i>Limited chances for career progression</i>		
<i>Politics and strict rules affecting employee morale</i>		

<i>Sub-Ordinate Themes</i>	<i>Super-Ordinate Themes</i>	<i>Master Themes</i>
<i>Barriers hindering personal and professional growth</i>		
<i>Work-related stress and exhaustion leading to turnover intentions</i>	<i>Employee Dissatisfaction and Turnover Drivers</i>	<i>Employee Dissatisfaction and Turnover Drivers</i>
<i>Inadequate pay and benefits</i>	<i>Organizational Constraints and Stressors</i>	<i>Organizational Constraints and Stressors</i>
<i>Flexible duty hours and lack of work-life balance</i>		
<i>Desire for better facilities</i>		
<i>Improved food options</i>		
<i>Lack of career development</i>		
<i>Improving communication and morale-boosting</i>	<i>Improving Employee Retention and Satisfaction</i>	<i>Improving Employee Retention and Satisfaction</i>
<i>Increased incentives</i>		
<i>Positive reinforcement</i>		
		<i>Empowerment and Motivation</i>
		<i>Impact on Employee Loyalty and Morale</i>

Discussion

Qualitative study, we conducted in-depth interviews to explore employees' perspectives on engagement levels and turnover intentions within public sector organizations. Thematic analysis revealed several master themes that shed light on the complexities of employee engagement and turnover within these organizations.

- 1. Enhancing Employee Engagement and Retention:** The findings underscore the importance of organizations investing in strategies to boost employee engagement and retention. Employees expressed feelings of being undervalued and unappreciated, as evidenced by statements such as "No appreciation even for diligent work" and "Feeling unappreciated affects motivation and interest in work." These sentiments align with research by Saks (2006), which emphasizes the pivotal role of employee recognition and career development in fostering engagement and retention.

2. Employee Well-Being and Organizational Effectiveness:

Our study revealed that organizational culture and employee well-being significantly impact organizational effectiveness. Participants highlighted issues such as strict rules and work-related stress, as evidenced by statements like "Women politics and unnecessarily strict rules which sometimes don't even make much sense" and "Stress and health issues due to the operational nature of work." These findings resonate with research by Judge and Ilies (2004), who emphasize the influence of organizational culture on employee well-being and performance.

- 3. Driving Performance through Employee Alignment:** Effective communication and employee alignment with organizational goals emerged as crucial factors in driving performance. Participants emphasized the importance of transparent communication and equitable treatment, as reflected in statements like

"Effective communication and its impact on employee performance" and "Decisions limited to officer levels without considering lower-level employees." These findings align with research by Eisenberger et al. (2001), which suggests that perceived organizational support positively impacts employee engagement and performance.

- 4. Building a Productive and Engaging Workplace:** Our study highlighted the importance of creating a productive and engaging workplace environment. Participants expressed the need for better pay, incentives, and growth opportunities, as indicated by statements such as "Increase pay and other benefits as they are very much deserving" and "Empowerment and motivation can affect employees and convince them to be happy staying here." These findings are consistent with research by Harter et al. (2002), which demonstrates the positive correlation between employee engagement and organizational productivity.

Master Themes of Turnover Intention:

- 1. Employee Recognition and Engagement:** The findings suggest that employee recognition and engagement play a crucial role in mitigating turnover intention. Participants expressed feelings of being undervalued and unappreciated, contributing to their desire to leave the organization. Verbatim statements such as "High turnover rate due to various issues" and "Misuse and overburdening of employees leading to dissatisfaction" underscore the significance of recognizing and valuing employees' contributions. This aligns with research by Meyer and Allen (1991), which emphasizes the importance of perceived organizational support in reducing turnover intention.
- 2. Organizational Culture and Employee Well-being:** Negative organizational culture and inadequate support for employee well-being emerged as key drivers of turnover intention. Participants cited issues such as stress and mental torture, as evidenced by statements like "Mental torture and its

impact on employees" and "Work and personal life balance is very difficult in this organization." These findings are consistent with research by Schneider et al. (2017), which highlights the detrimental effects of negative work environments on employee well-being and turnover.

- 3. Employee Dissatisfaction and Turnover Drivers:** Our study revealed that job dissatisfaction is a primary driver of turnover intention. Participants expressed dissatisfaction with limited growth opportunities and inadequate compensation, as indicated by statements such as "Feeling undervalued and considering themselves substandard ranks" and "The job demands more and gives less... sacrifices not well-compensated." These findings align with research by Griffeth et al. (2000), which identifies job dissatisfaction as a significant predictor of turnover.

- 4. Improving Employee Retention and Satisfaction:** Strategies aimed at improving employee retention and satisfaction are crucial for reducing turnover intention. Participants emphasized the need for competitive compensation packages and opportunities for career development, as reflected in statements like "Increase pay and other benefits as they are very much deserving" and "Pay and other incentives are too less for what we do here, and it should be increased." These findings are supported by research by Rynes et al. (2004), which suggests that targeted retention strategies can effectively reduce turnover rates.

In conclusion, our study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing employee engagement and turnover intention within public sector organizations. By addressing the identified master themes and implementing evidence-based strategies, organizations can foster a positive work environment, enhance employee satisfaction, and mitigate turnover intention.

Limitations:

This study faces several limitations that should be acknowledged when interpreting the findings. Firstly, the small sample size of N=12 may restrict

the generalizability of the results. The use of purposive sampling, while intentional, introduces the potential for sampling bias, as it may not fully capture the diverse perspectives of public sector employees. Moreover, relying solely on in-depth interviews as the primary data collection method might limit the breadth of insights obtained, potentially overlooking nuances in employee experiences. Additionally, the absence of longitudinal data prevents a longitudinal analysis of employee engagement and turnover intentions, hindering the ability to discern temporal trends and causality. Lastly, the possibility of social desirability bias cannot be discounted, as participants may have provided responses deemed socially acceptable rather than expressing their true sentiments.

Suggestions:

To address these limitations and advance knowledge in this area, future research endeavors should consider several strategies. Firstly, expanding the sample size and diversifying participant demographics can enhance the representativeness and robustness of the findings. Employing a mixed-methods approach, incorporating surveys and focus groups alongside interviews, can provide complementary perspectives and enrich the data collected. Longitudinal studies tracking changes in employee engagement and turnover intentions over time would offer valuable insights into the dynamic nature of these phenomena. Furthermore, conducting comparative analyses between public and private sector organizations can illuminate sector-specific factors influencing employee engagement and turnover. Finally, exploring the efficacy of organizational interventions, such as leadership development programs or flexible work arrangements, may offer actionable insights for improving workplace satisfaction and retention in the public sector.

Implications: The findings of this study have several implications for both research and practice. Firstly, understanding the factors influencing employee engagement and turnover intentions in public sector organizations is crucial for developing targeted interventions aimed at improving workplace satisfaction and retention. By identifying key themes such as the need for recognition, the impact of organizational culture on well-being, and the importance of effective communication, organizations can tailor strategies to address these

specific areas. Additionally, the insights gained from this study can inform the design of future research endeavors, guiding researchers in exploring additional dimensions of employee engagement and turnover within the public sector context.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, this qualitative analysis sheds light on the nuanced experiences and perspectives of public sector employees regarding engagement levels and turnover intentions. Through thematic analysis of in-depth interviews, several key themes emerged, highlighting the importance of recognition, organizational culture, communication, and well-being in shaping employee attitudes and behaviors. While this study offers valuable insights into the challenges faced by public sector organizations, further research is warranted to deepen our understanding of these phenomena and develop evidence-based strategies for enhancing workplace satisfaction and retention. Ultimately, by addressing the factors identified in this study, organizations can cultivate a positive work environment conducive to employee engagement, productivity, and organizational effectiveness.

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