

Challenges Faced by Human Resource Departments in Retaining Creative and Innovative Talent: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

One of the challenges of contemporary organisations is the retention of creative and innovative talent. In the modern era, knowledge, innovation and creativity are gaining ground as the keys for the competitive advantage of businesses, so Human Resource (HR) departments are facing a new priority: keeping highly skilled employees. The present study discusses the problems being faced by HR in retaining creative and innovative talent. A descriptive research design was used, and data were collected using a structured questionnaire from 135 HR professionals and managers. The study found that the main issues that create problems in retaining staff are professional development opportunities, meeting employee expectations, workforce diversity, virtual learning and upskilling programmes, competition from other employers and organizational culture. Descriptive statistics were used to rank the challenges, and independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA were used to analyse the differences between demographics in perceptions of retention challenges. The results showed that the most pressing issues facing HR departments are professional development and meeting employees' expectations. Gender was a significant difference for employee expectations, workforce diversity, competition from employers, and professional development opportunities, but organisational position was significant for organisational culture and workforce diversity. The findings of the study emphasise the importance of further strengthening employee development programs, creating an inclusive work culture and implementing successful retention strategies to ensure creative and innovative talent. The findings provide valuable insights for HR practitioners seeking to enhance employee retention and organisational competitiveness.

Keywords: Human Resource Management, Talent Retention, Creative Talent, Innovative Employees, Workforce Diversity, Professional Development.

1. Introduction

Creativity and innovation are the key factors in the growth, competitiveness and sustainability of organizations in the current business context. Organizations are increasingly dependent on staff who have creative thinking skills, problem-solving skills, technology knowledge, and innovative thinking skills to create new products, enhance processes, and create strategic value. These workers play a crucial role in driving innovation, improving productivity, and facilitating ongoing improvement efforts within the organisation. As a result, organisations in all sectors have come to prioritise attracting and retaining creative and innovative talent. In fact, the mobility of skilled workers, evolving expectations of the workforce, the speed of technological innovation and the heightened

competition among employers to obtain the best talent is making the retention of these skilled workers more difficult than ever. Creative and innovative employees are often looking for opportunities that offer development opportunities, autonomy, purposeful work, recognition, flexibility, and learning opportunities. In the absence of these expectations, workers can get disenchanted and look elsewhere, leading to higher turnover rates, knowledge loss, and training and recruiting expenses. Human Resource departments are pivotal in solving the problems related to employee retention by developing and executing effective employee retention strategies. HR professionals work to make the environment comfortable, provide opportunities for career growth, establish well-compensated reward systems, foster culture, and keep employees engaged. But, a number of organizational and workforce-related issues can affect the success of such programs. It is crucial to recognize these challenges to craft practices that are in line with employee expectations and organizational goals for employee retention. Employee development, organizational culture, leadership support, diversity management, and learning opportunities have been found to be important factors that impact employee retention in several studies. The changing work environment still presents new challenges for HR, though. The tide of different workforce characteristics, including virtual learning demands, changing career goals and fierce competition for talent, has made it imperative that business organizations continually refine their retention strategies. Ignoring these issues can have a negative impact on organization performance and innovative capacity. Although talent retention has become a critical issue in recent years, there are still not a lot of empirical studies that take a specific look at HR problems in relation to retaining creative and innovative employees. Existing research tends to focus on retention rather than real-world difficulties faced by HR practitioners. However, the need is to identify and evaluate the biggest challenges faced by HR practitioners relating to talent retention. The present study aims to fill this gap by analysing the main challenges of Human Resource departments in retaining creative and innovative talent. The results will help add to the body of knowledge about talent management and offer practical information for organisations aiming to improve their retention efforts and maintain a competitive workforce.

2. Literature review

In a systematic review of research on employee retention, Aman-Ullah et al. (2020) identified that organisational support, career advancement opportunities, leadership quality and employee engagement are all factors that affect employee retention. The study highlighted the challenges that are growing more difficult for organisations to retain talented workers in competitive industries, with the changing expectations of the workforce and an increased mobility of the labour market. The authors found that retention strategies should concentrate on the growth of employees over time and on commitment to the company to minimise intentions to leave the company.

Ohunakin et al. (2020) explored the strategies implemented for talent retention and the employees' behavioural responses in the hospitality sector. The research found that employee retention can be positively affected by effective talent management practices, such as employee recognition, career development and work-life balance programs. The results showed that employees are more likely to stay in an organization where management is supportive and they have growth opportunities.

Influence of leadership behaviours on talent retention was explored by Mey, Poisat and Stindt (2021), who concluded that transformational leadership has a significant impact on employees' commitment and organizational loyalty. The study identified the growing importance of leaders' actions in trust, communication, empowerment, and support to ensure staff retention. The authors found that the effectiveness of leadership is very important in the retention of high-quality and innovative employees.

Haegele (2022) studied the issue of talent hoarding in organizations and discovered internal talent management issues that can impact employee retention. The research revealed that managers tend to keep their employees within the organisation to maintain the team's performance without providing opportunities for them to grow their careers. These activities have a detrimental impact on staff satisfaction and can drive high-calibre staff members to seek job opportunities elsewhere.

Xuecheng et al. (2022) explored the factors that determine employees' retention and found that training and development are significantly related to employee retention. The study highlighted the need for ongoing learning

opportunities to boost employee motivation, develop skills, and foster commitment within the organization. The results indicate that professional development continues to be one of the most significant factors in keeping creative, innovative workers.

Ghani et al. (2022) conducted a study on retention problems in service organizations and concluded that employees' dissatisfaction with organization support, career growth and working environment is a significant reason for turning down their intentions to leave an organization. The study found that developmental opportunities and improving relationships at work are two areas where organisations can invest to keep talented staff.

Mazlan and Jambulingam (2023) carried out a detailed survey of the issues relating to talent retention and found that the main issues that impact on employee retention are: growth, workplace well-being, globalization, industry competition and changing employment. The study highlighted that the challenges faced by organizations are constantly changing and it is important to understand these trends to put in place retention strategies that can effectively keep talented staff in the competitive market.

De Winne et al. (2023) noted that employee engagement, development support and meaningful work experiences are essential factors to consider when predicting employee turnover. The research revealed that supportive organizational cultures, with clear career development opportunities, are positively associated with employee commitment and negative with their turnover plans. The results reveal the significance of developmental practices for retaining creative talent.

A systematic review by Kaliannan et al. (2023) on inclusive talent development found that implementing inclusive talent management practices leads to better employee engagement and retention scores. It was noted that diversity management, fairness, and equal opportunities for development are crucial to keeping high-potential employees.

Crafted by Costa et al. (2024), a framework for talent retention in information technology organizations, this study revealed that psychological safety, flexible work options, work-life balance, challenging projects, and positive work environments are all strong indicators of talent retention. The study claimed that money cannot be the sole incentive to keep highly qualified people in their positions, especially in the knowledge sector.

Almashyakhi (2024) studied talent management practices and employee retention and found that coaching, mentoring, career development and employee support programmes have a significant effect on employee retention. The study found that for the company to reduce its employee turnover and increase employee commitment, talent management must be incorporated in the company's strategy.

Bhargava and Johri (2024) studied the innovations and challenges in the field of Talent Acquisition and Retention, and they observed that organizations are plagued by various challenges such as technological change, workforce diversity, employer branding, global talent mobility and employee expectations. Overall, the study highlighted the need for HR departments to continually evolve their talent retention strategies to reflect the evolving nature of the workforce.

According to Alshaikh and Hanif (2024), HR departments are facing more difficult challenges to manage workforce diversity and meet evolving employee expectations. They concluded that having an inclusive workplace and employee-friendly policies are critical factors in retaining employees. According to the study, workforce diversity is one of the key HR challenges in today's organizations.

Singh et al. (2024) studied the effect of virtual learning and skill development programmes on employee retention. The research revealed that training and development opportunities are important to staff. Companies that invest in digital learning infrastructure and employee development programmes, have higher skilled workforce retention rates.

Madanchian (2024) discussed how AI can be used in HRM and the opportunities and challenges of technology-based talent management. It highlighted the need for HR to constantly invest in employee skills and adapt to digital to attract and retain talent in evolving technology and emphasized on the need to keep employees updated.

Alissai et al. (2025) performed a systematic review of talent attraction, retention and management strategies, which revealed that employee retention factors involve career development, employee engagement, organizational culture, rewards and leadership support. The authors came to the conclusion that there is a need for integrated talent management strategies instead of the stand-alone retention practices.

Seidu et al. (2025) examined talent management and employee retention in knowledge-intensive businesses and concluded that career advancement opportunities, diversity in talent development, leadership support and employee engagement are important factors that affect employee retention. The study highlighted that the organisations that rely on intellectual capital need to make a strong focus on retaining talent to keep the competitive advantage.

Kim and Park (2025) investigated the connection between leadership effectiveness and employee retention and found that supportive leadership, recognition programs, and career growth opportunities are the major factors in increasing employee commitment. Leadership support has been found to be an important factor in the retention of creative and innovative employees, the study found.

Rahman et al. (2025) studied HR initiatives and employee retention in multinational organizations and found that good management support, employee satisfaction and employee-oriented HR policies have a significant influence on improving employee retention. A key takeaway from the study was the need to take proactive steps to manage employee concerns and offer valuable development experiences to keep the workforce stable. Existing studies have extensively examined employee retention, talent management, leadership support, organizational culture, employee engagement, career development, and workforce diversity. However, most studies focus on the determinants and outcomes of employee retention rather than the specific challenges faced by Human Resource departments in retaining creative and innovative talent. Limited empirical research has simultaneously examined challenges such as employee expectations, workforce diversity, professional development opportunities, virtual learning requirements, organizational culture, and competition from employers from the perspective of HR professionals. Therefore, the present study addresses this gap by identifying and evaluating the major challenges encountered by Human Resource departments in retaining creative and innovative talent and providing practical insights for improving talent retention strategies.

2.1. Objectives of the Study

- a. To identify the major challenges faced by HR departments in retaining creative and innovative talent.
- b. To examine gender differences in perceived retention challenges.
- c. To examine position-wise differences in perceived retention challenges.

2.2. Hypothesis

Based on the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1: There is a significant difference between male and female respondents regarding the challenges faced by Human Resource departments in retaining creative and innovative talent.

H2: There is a significant difference among organisational positions regarding the challenges faced by Human Resource departments in retaining creative and innovative talent.

3. Research Methodology

To explore the problems faced by Human Resource Department in retaining creative and innovative talents, the present study used descriptive research design. The study was carried out in organisations located in Bangalore – a hub of technology, manufacturing and service organisations who heavily rely on skilled and innovative workforce. Primary data were gathered using a structured questionnaire, which was distributed to the HR professionals and managers involved in all aspects of talent acquisition, development and retention activities. The respondents were selected using the convenience sampling technique, and 135 valid responses were received for analysis. The questionnaire was based on current literature on talent management and employee retention and had questions on several relevant retention issues, including meeting employee expectations, company culture, employee diversity, virtual learning and upskilling programs, competitor employers and career growth opportunities. The responses were taken on a 5 point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Collected data were coded and analysed by SPSS. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage analysis were used to describe the demographic profile of the respondents while mean and standard deviation were used to identify and rank the major retention challenges. In addition, independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA were used to compare perceptions between gender and organizational positions. This study also gives insights into key problems that HR departments are dealing with and presents implications for the implementation of better talent retention strategies in modern workplaces.

4. Result and Analysis

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 135)

Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	78	57.8
	Female	57	42.2
	Total	135	100.0
Position	Top Level	37	27.4
	Middle Level	71	52.6
	Lower Level	27	20.0
	Total	135	100.0
Age	Below 30 years	32	23.7
	31–40 years	46	34.1
	41–50 years	35	25.9
	Above 50 years	22	16.3
	Total	135	100.0
Experience	Less than 5 years	29	21.5
	5–10 years	48	35.6
	11–15 years	34	25.2
	Above 15 years	24	17.7
	Total	135	100.0

The demographic profile reveals that 57.8 percent of the respondents are male, while 42.2 percent are female, indicating a reasonably balanced representation of HR professionals. With regard to organizational position, a majority of respondents (52.6%) belong to middle-level management, followed by top-level management (27.4%) and lower-level management (20.0%). The age distribution shows that the largest proportion of respondents (34.1%) falls within the 31–40 years age group, followed by 41–50 years (25.9%). In terms of work experience, 35.6 percent possess 5–10 years of experience, indicating that most respondents have adequate professional exposure to provide informed opinions regarding talent retention challenges.

Table 2 Challenges:

Challenges		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Fulfilling the expectations of an employee	Freq	8	1	17	66	43
	%	5.9	.7	12.6	48.9	31.9
Providing a successful organisational culture	Freq	3	11	22	62	37
	%	2.2	8.1	16.3	45.9	27.4
Workforce diversity	Freq	3	15	7	67	43
	%	2.2	11.1	5.2	49.6	31.9
Virtual Learning and Upskilling Programmes	Freq	3	13	9	77	33
	%	2.2	9.6	6.7	57.0	24.4
Competition from other employers	Freq	4	9	19	65	38
	%	3.0	6.7	14.1	48.1	28.1
The availability of professional development opportunities	Freq	-	3	19	79	34
	%	-	2.2	14.1	58.5	25.2

The results indicate that respondents perceive all six factors as important challenges in retaining creative and innovative talent. A majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that fulfilling employee expectations, workforce diversity, virtual learning and upskilling programmes, competition from other employers, organizational culture, and professional development opportunities significantly influence talent retention. Among these, professional development opportunities received the highest level of agreement, followed by workforce diversity and virtual learning initiatives. The findings suggest that employees increasingly value career growth, continuous learning, and supportive workplace practices. Therefore, HR departments must focus on employee development, expectation management, diversity and inclusion, and learning opportunities to effectively retain creative and innovative employees.

Table 3. Mean Scores of HR Retention Challenges

Challenge	Mean	SD
Fulfilling employee expectations	4.01	1.11
Organizational culture	3.88	1.00

Workforce diversity	3.98	1.07
Virtual learning and upskilling	3.92	0.94
Competition from employers	3.91	1.00
Professional development opportunities	4.07	0.70

The ranking of challenges indicates that professional development opportunities emerged as the most significant challenge faced by HR departments, with the highest mean score of 4.07. This was followed by fulfilling employee expectations (Mean = 4.01) and workforce diversity (Mean = 3.98). The findings suggest that employees increasingly expect career growth opportunities, skill enhancement programmes, and continuous learning support from their organizations. Virtual learning and upskilling programmes, competition from other employers, and organizational culture also received relatively high mean scores, demonstrating that HR departments encounter multiple interconnected challenges in retaining creative and innovative talent.

Hypothesis:

Null hypothesis: There is no difference in challenges faced by male and female respondents of HR department in retaining creative and innovative talents.

Independent T-test:

Table 4. Gender-wise Mean Differences in HR Retention Challenges

Challenges	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Fulfilling expectations of an employee	Female	3.89	1.423	.188
	Male	3.21	1.166	.132
Providing a successful organizational culture	Female	4.40	.678	.090
	Male	4.26	.780	.088
Workforce diversity	Female	3.81	1.342	.178
	Male	3.28	1.127	.128
Virtual Learning and Upskilling Programs	Female	3.98	1.094	.145
	Male	3.86	.963	.109
Competition from other employers	Female	4.30	.706	.094
	Male	3.81	.994	.113
The availability of professional development opportunities	Female	3.95	.971	.129
	Male	3.32	1.179	.133

Table 4 presents the gender-wise differences in perceptions regarding the challenges faced by HR departments in retaining creative and innovative talent. Female respondents reported higher mean scores than male respondents across all challenge dimensions. The highest mean score among female respondents was observed for providing a successful organizational culture (Mean = 4.40), followed by competition from other employers (Mean = 4.30) and virtual learning and upskilling programmes (Mean = 3.98). Male respondents also perceived organizational culture as an important challenge (Mean = 4.26), followed by virtual learning and upskilling programmes (Mean = 3.86) and competition from other employers (Mean = 3.81). The findings suggest that female HR professionals perceive retention challenges more strongly than their male counterparts, particularly regarding employee expectations, workforce diversity, professional development opportunities, and external employment competition.

Table 5: Gender t-test

	t-test for Equality of Means						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Fulfilling expectations of an employee	3.091	133	.002	.690	.223	.248	1.131
Providing a successful organizational culture	1.143	133	.255	.147	.129	-.108	.402
Workforce diversity	2.465	133	.015	.525	.213	.104	.946
Virtual Learning and Upskilling Programs	.695	133	.489	.123	.178	-.228	.475
Competition from other employers	3.183	133	.002	.491	.154	.186	.795
The availability of professional development opportunities	3.282	133	.001	.627	.191	.249	1.005

The independent sample t-test was conducted to examine whether significant gender differences exist in perceptions regarding HR retention challenges. The results indicate significant differences for fulfilling employee expectations ($t = 3.091$, $p = .002$), workforce diversity ($t = 2.465$, $p = .015$), competition from other employers ($t = 3.183$, $p = .002$), and the availability of professional development opportunities ($t = 3.282$, $p = .001$). Since the p-values are less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected for these variables. However, no significant differences were found for providing a successful organizational culture ($p = .255$) and virtual learning and upskilling programmes ($p = .489$). These findings suggest that gender significantly influences perceptions regarding several talent retention challenges, while perceptions of organizational culture and learning initiatives remain similar across male and female respondents.

Difference in position in the organization and challenges

Null hypothesis: There is no significant difference in position in the organization and challenges faced in retaining creative and innovative talents.

Table 6 Position Descriptives

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Fulfilling expectations of an employee	Top	37	3.59	1.013	.166	3.26	3.93
	Middle	71	3.79	1.264	.150	3.49	4.09
	Lower	27	4.19	.786	.151	3.87	4.50
	Total	135	3.81	1.128	.097	3.62	4.01
Providing a successful organizational culture	Top	37	3.86	1.004	.165	3.53	4.20
	Middle	71	3.77	.974	.116	3.54	4.01
	Lower	27	4.37	.839	.161	4.04	4.70
	Total	135	3.92	.978	.084	3.75	4.08
Workforce diversity	Top	37	4.11	.809	.133	3.84	4.38
	Middle	71	3.58	1.037	.123	3.33	3.82
	Lower	27	4.37	.742	.143	4.08	4.66
	Total	135	3.88	.978	.084	3.72	4.05
Competition from other employers	Top	37	3.86	1.134	.186	3.49	4.24
	Middle	71	3.76	1.101	.131	3.50	4.02
	Lower	27	4.00	1.177	.226	3.53	4.47
	Total	135	3.84	1.121	.096	3.65	4.03
The availability of professional development opportunities	Top	37	4.19	.776	.128	3.93	4.45
	Middle	71	3.92	1.143	.136	3.64	4.19
	Lower	27	4.22	1.086	.209	3.79	4.65
	Total	135	4.05	1.046	.090	3.87	4.23

Table 6 presents the mean scores of retention challenges across different organizational positions. For fulfilling employee expectations, lower-level respondents reported the highest mean score (Mean = 4.19), followed by middle-level (Mean = 3.79) and top-level respondents (Mean = 3.59). A similar pattern was observed for organizational culture, where lower-level respondents reported the highest mean score (Mean = 4.37). Workforce diversity was also perceived most strongly by lower-level respondents (Mean = 4.37), compared to top-level

(Mean = 4.11) and middle-level respondents (Mean = 3.58). Regarding professional development opportunities, lower-level respondents again reported the highest perception (Mean = 4.22), followed by top-level respondents (Mean = 4.19). These findings indicate that lower-level employees perceive retention-related challenges more strongly than employees occupying higher organizational positions.

Table 7. Position and challenges ANOVA

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Fulfilling expectations of an employee	Between Groups	5.546	2	2.773	2.221	.113
	Within Groups	164.824	132	1.249		
	Total	170.370	134			
Providing successful organizational culture ^a	Between Groups	7.089	2	3.544	3.866	.023
	Within Groups	121.015	132	.917		
	Total	128.104	134			
Workforce diversity	Between Groups	14.916	2	7.458	8.697	.000
	Within Groups	113.188	132	.857		
	Total	128.104	134			
Competition from other employers	Between Groups	1.161	2	.580	.458	.633
	Within Groups	167.254	132	1.267		
	Total	168.415	134			
The availability of professional development opportunities	Between Groups	2.802	2	1.401	1.286	.280
	Within Groups	143.835	132	1.090		
	Total	146.637	134			

Source: Primary data

The one-way ANOVA results reveal significant differences among organizational positions regarding providing a successful organizational culture ($F = 3.866$, $p = .023$) and workforce diversity ($F = 8.697$, $p < .001$). Since the p -values are less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected for these variables. This indicates that respondents occupying different organizational positions perceive organizational culture and workforce diversity challenges differently. However, no significant differences were observed for fulfilling employee expectations ($p = .113$), competition from other employers ($p = .633$), and professional development opportunities ($p = .280$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted for these variables. The findings suggest that perceptions regarding organizational culture and diversity management vary across hierarchical levels, whereas other retention challenges are viewed similarly regardless of position.

Table 8. Summary of Key Challenges

Rank	Challenge	Mean Score	Importance Level
1	Professional Development Opportunities	4.07	Very High
2	Fulfilling Employee Expectations	4.01	Very High
3	Workforce Diversity	3.98	High
4	Virtual Learning & Upskilling	3.92	High
5	Competition from Other Employers	3.91	High
6	Organizational Culture	3.88	High

Table 8 summarizes the major challenges faced by HR departments in retaining creative and innovative talent. Professional development opportunities emerged as the most significant challenge with a mean score of 4.07 and were categorized as having a very high level of importance. Fulfilling employee expectations ranked second with a mean score of 4.01. Workforce diversity ranked third, followed by virtual learning and upskilling programmes, competition from other employers, and organizational culture. Although all challenges were rated highly, the results indicate that employee development and expectation management represent the most critical concerns for HR departments. These findings highlight the increasing importance of career growth, continuous learning, and employee-centred HR practices in retaining talented employees within contemporary organisations.

5. Discussion

The results of the study show that Human Resource departments still have a challenge with retaining creative and innovative talent. Employee education and skill development, and job advancement were identified as the most significant challenges, suggesting that the workforce is more willing to seek out learning, advancement and skill building opportunities. This result aligns with other research, which has long known that employee development is an important factor in retaining knowledge workers and talented professionals.

The second most important challenge was to meet employee expectations. Today's workers want purposeful work, appreciation, advancement, flexibility and company assistance. When these expectations aren't met, it can lead to lower levels of job satisfaction and intentions to quit. Diversity in the workforce also came up frequently as a challenge, indicating that organizations need to be able to effectively manage the workforce with different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives and create an inclusive workplace.

The results also show that the upskilling and virtual learning programs have become more relevant in the digital age. With the evolution of new technology and work arrangements, workers are looking for regular chances to build their skills. It is also difficult to compete with other employers as highly skilled and innovative employees often get offers of employment from rival employers.

The gender based analysis uncovered that several retention issues were seen as having a greater impact on the retention of female respondents compared to male respondents including employee expectation, diversity, professional development and competition from employers. There were significant differences between position levels on organizational culture and workforce diversity, suggesting that employees at different levels within the organization may have different levels of experience with these challenges. Overall, the results highlight the need for a holistic and flexible HR approach that is responsive to changing employee expectations and organizational dynamics to ensure talent retention.

6. Managerial implications

There are some practical implications for HR managers and organizational leaders in the study. Employee development is essential, and this can be achieved through structured training programmes, mentoring programmes, leadership development programmes, and career progression opportunities. Clearly outlining career progression can positively affect employee engagement and turnover intentions. Second, companies should always be looking at and responding to evolving employee expectations, using effective communication and employee engagement strategies and the use of supportive workplace policies. Third, HR teams should reinforce diversity and inclusion initiatives to ensure they have a workplace that is inclusive and respects various personal backgrounds. Fourth, virtual learning platforms and digital skill development programs can enhance the adaptability and satisfaction of workers in rapidly evolving workplaces. Lastly, companies should look at their compensation systems, recognition programs, and career growth opportunities regularly to stay competitive in attracting and keeping talented staff members. A comprehensive retention program that incorporates employee development, organizational support, diversity management, and employment practices that are competitive can have a dramatic impact on retention of creative and innovative talent.

7. Main findings

1. Professional development opportunities emerged as the most significant challenge faced by HR departments in retaining creative and innovative talent.
2. Fulfilling employee expectations ranked as the second most important retention challenge.
3. Workforce diversity represents a major challenge requiring effective management and inclusive workplace practices.
4. Virtual learning and upskilling programmes have become increasingly important in supporting employee retention.
5. Competition from other employers continues to create difficulties in retaining talented employees.
6. Significant gender differences were observed regarding employee expectations, workforce diversity, competition from employers, and professional development opportunities.
7. Employee development, diversity management, and expectation management represent the most critical areas requiring HR intervention.

8. Conclusion

In today's knowledge-based and competitive business landscape, keeping creative and innovative talent is a top priority. Further, the study explored the top challenges human resources departments face regarding employee retention, and the professional development opportunities, employee expectations, diversity in the workforce, virtual learning programs, employer competition, and organizational culture were identified as the biggest challenges impacting retention. The results suggest that the one-size-fits-all approach in terms of retention should be abandoned by organisations and replaced with specific interventions that cater to the needs and expectations of various groups of staff. Creating an environment that encourages employee development, inclusive culture, ongoing learning and offers purposeful career paths are all important components of retaining creative and innovative talent. HR departments can overcome these challenges proactively and potentially improve employee commitment, decrease employee turnover, build the strength of the organization, and maintain the competitive advantage over the long term. The results add to the body of research on talent retention and offer important suggestions for organizations looking to foster a highly skilled and innovative staff.

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