

PERCEPTION OF JOB SATISFACTION AND RETENTION IN COLLEGES

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Abstract

Job satisfaction among college faculty members is a critical determinant of institutional effectiveness, academic continuity, and teacher retention. In higher education institutions, particularly in metropolitan regions such as Mumbai, lecturers' and professors' perceptions regarding salary, workload, career advancement, job security, leadership support, and organizational climate strongly influence their willingness to remain in their institutions. This paper examines the relationship between faculty job satisfaction and retention in colleges, focusing on Mumbai-region higher education institutions. Based on secondary data, review of literature, and analytical interpretation, the study reveals that dissatisfaction arising from contractual insecurity, delayed promotions, inadequate recognition, and excessive administrative burden adversely affects faculty retention. The paper concludes that sustainable retention requires holistic institutional reforms aimed at improving both professional satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Faculty Retention, Higher Education, College Teachers, Mumbai Region, Teacher Attrition.

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1.0 Introduction

Higher education institutions function effectively only when they are supported by a stable, committed, and professionally satisfied teaching workforce. Lecturers and professors are the backbone of colleges, contributing not only to teaching and curriculum development but also to mentoring, research, and academic governance. In recent years, however, faculty attrition has emerged as a growing challenge in Indian higher education, particularly in metropolitan educational hubs like Mumbai.

Job satisfaction refers to the extent to which faculty members feel positively about their professional roles and institutional environment. It encompasses salary, recognition, autonomy, workload, infrastructure, leadership quality, and opportunities for advancement. Faculty dissatisfaction often leads to absenteeism, reduced engagement, low morale, and eventual turnover. In colleges where retention is weak, academic continuity suffers, student learning is disrupted, and institutional credibility declines.

This study examines how faculty perceptions of job satisfaction shape retention in colleges, with special reference to Mumbai-region institutions.

2.0 Objectives of the Study

The study is guided by the following objectives:

1. To identify the major factors influencing job satisfaction among lecturers and professors in colleges.
2. To analyze the relationship between faculty job satisfaction and teacher retention.
3. To examine secondary data relating to faculty vacancies and retention trends in Mumbai-region colleges.

3.0 Conceptual Understanding of Job Satisfaction and Retention

Job satisfaction is a psychological and emotional response of employees toward their professional environment. In academic institutions, it reflects how teachers evaluate their roles in relation to expectations, rewards, and institutional culture.

Faculty retention refers to the ability of colleges to retain experienced and qualified teaching staff over a sustained period. Retention is directly affected by teachers' perceptions regarding:

- Salary fairness
- Promotion opportunities
- Academic freedom
- Institutional support
- Leadership quality
- Work-life balance
- Recognition and respect

When faculty perceives positive alignment between expectations and institutional realities, retention improves. Conversely, dissatisfaction leads to attrition.

4.0 Review of Literature

4.1 Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory (1959)

Herzberg classified salary, working conditions, and job security as hygiene factors, while recognition, achievement, and growth are motivators. In academic institutions, even if salary is adequate, lack of recognition or career progression reduces satisfaction.

4.2 Locke (1976): Theory of Job Satisfaction

Locke defined job satisfaction as a pleasurable emotional state resulting from appraisal of one's work experience. Faculty satisfaction depends on whether institutional experiences match personal professional aspirations.

4.3 Hagedorn (2000): Faculty Satisfaction Framework

Hagedorn emphasized that faculty satisfaction is shaped by institutional climate, administration, collegiality, and advancement systems. Supportive leadership contributes significantly to faculty retention.

4.4 Sharma and Jyoti (2009): Indian Higher Education Context

Their study found that Indian college teachers prioritize autonomy, professional respect, and promotion transparency over salary alone. Lack of institutional fairness often causes dissatisfaction.

4.5 Bhatia and Williams (2023): Employee Satisfaction in Higher Educational Institutions

This study found that promotion opportunities, collegial relationships, and managerial support are among the strongest predictors of employee satisfaction in higher education institutions.

5.0 Research Methodology

This study is descriptive and analytical in nature and relies on secondary data sources.

Sources of Data:

- Published research journals
- Government higher education reports
- Maharashtra state education statistics
- University and college vacancy reports
- Newspaper-based education data reports from Mumbai region

Method:

Secondary data were analyzed to interpret faculty perceptions and identify trends linking job satisfaction with retention.

6.0 Secondary Data Analysis: Mumbai Region Colleges

Mumbai, as one of India’s largest higher education hubs, faces serious faculty retention challenges due to vacancies, delayed recruitment, and overdependence on temporary staff.

6.1 Faculty Vacancy Statistics

As per Maharashtra higher education data, approximately **11,918 teaching posts in government and aided colleges remained vacant in 2024**, representing nearly 38% vacancy statewide. In colleges affiliated with the University of Mumbai, approximately **2,127 teaching vacancies** were reported.

Table 1: Faculty Vacancy Position in Maharashtra and Mumbai Region

Region	Vacant Posts	Approximate Vacancy %
Maharashtra State	11,918	38%
Mumbai Region Colleges	2,127	41%

6.2 Dependence on Clock-Hour Basis (CHB) Faculty

Mumbai colleges increasingly rely on CHB and ad hoc faculty due to delays in regular appointments. Reports indicate several colleges operate with **30–45% staffing shortages**, forcing institutions to employ temporary faculty lacking long-term stability.

Implications:

- Weak institutional attachment
- High turnover rates
- Reduced continuity in teaching quality
- Low morale among temporary staff

7.0 Factors Affecting Faculty Job Satisfaction in Colleges

7.1 Salary and Compensation

Though salary is important, disparities between permanent and contractual faculty generate dissatisfaction.

7.2 Career Advancement Opportunities

Delayed promotions and lack of transparent appraisal systems weaken morale.

7.3 Workload Pressure

Faculty are burdened with teaching, examinations, accreditation work, admissions, and administrative documentation.

7.4 Job Security

Contractual appointments create uncertainty and discourage long-term commitment.

7.5 Institutional Leadership

Supportive and participatory leadership enhances faculty engagement and loyalty.

7.6 Academic Autonomy

Teachers value freedom in curriculum delivery, innovation, and pedagogical decision-making.

8.0 Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Retention

There is a strong positive relationship between job satisfaction and retention in colleges.

Table 2: Job Satisfaction Dimensions and Their Effect on Retention

Satisfaction Factor	Retention Outcome
Recognition	Higher loyalty
Promotion Opportunity	Long-term commitment
Secure Employment	Lower attrition
Positive Work Climate	Strong attachment
Excessive Workload	Increased turnover

Satisfied teachers are more likely to:

- Stay longer in institutions
- Build strong student relationships
- Contribute to research and innovation
- Participate actively in governance

Dissatisfied teachers tend to:

- Seek employment elsewhere
- Reduce engagement levels
- Experience burnout

9.0 Findings and Observations

The study reveals the following major findings:

1. Faculty retention in Mumbai colleges is closely linked to perceptions of fairness, recognition, and job security.
2. Contractual insecurity is one of the strongest causes of faculty attrition.
3. Permanent faculty shortages increase workload and create burnout among retained teachers.
4. Administrative overload significantly reduces teaching satisfaction.
5. Salary alone does not determine retention; institutional culture is equally important.
6. Colleges with participatory leadership retain teachers more effectively.
7. Increasing dependence on temporary faculty weakens academic continuity.

10.0 Suggestions and Recommendations

To improve faculty satisfaction and retention, colleges should adopt the following measures:

10.1 Accelerate Permanent Recruitment

Vacant posts should be filled promptly to reduce staffing gaps.

10.2 Reduce Dependence on CHB Faculty

Long-term vacancies should be converted into permanent sanctioned posts.

10.3 Improve Promotion Transparency

Career advancement systems should be fair, timely, and clearly communicated.

10.4 Strengthen Faculty Welfare Measures

Counseling support, wellness initiatives, and mentoring programs should be introduced.

10.5 Encourage Participative Governance

Faculty should be involved in academic and administrative decision-making.

10.6 Provide Professional Development

Regular training, research grants, and conference support improve satisfaction.

11.0 Conclusion

Job satisfaction is central to faculty retention in colleges. In Mumbai-region institutions, delayed recruitment, contractual insecurity, inadequate promotion systems, and excessive workload are reducing faculty morale and increasing attrition. Retention cannot be ensured solely through salary enhancement; it requires comprehensive reforms addressing institutional culture, leadership, recognition, and professional growth. Colleges that invest in faculty satisfaction create stable academic environments, improve teaching quality, and strengthen long-term institutional excellence.

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