

An Empirical Investigation Of Employee Retention In Public And Private Hospitals: The Influence Of Participative Climate And Role Performance

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Abstract:

Employee retention remains an important yet often overlooked issue in the healthcare sector, particularly in hospital environments. Increasing concerns regarding the ability of hospitals to retain skilled employees have generated significant interest in understanding the factors that influence retention and its associated outcomes. In this context, the present study investigates the perceptions of employees working in public and private hospitals and examines the relationship between employee retention, Participative Climate (PC), and Role Performance (RP). The research was conducted among 1,010 employees from both public and private healthcare institutions. Following the identification of key underlying constructs, theory-based factors were assessed using correlation analysis. The results provide valuable insights into the dynamics of employee retention and reveal several influencing factors and outcomes associated with it. The study offers important implications for hospital administrators and policymakers and presents recommendations for future research aimed at enhancing understanding of employee retention in public and private hospital settings.

Keywords: Factor Structure, Healthcare Organizations, Employee Retention, Job Performance, Participative Work Climate, Hospital Management, Workforce Retention, Employee Engagement, Organizational Climate, Healthcare Human Resource Management.

Introduction

The behaviour of hospital employees plays a crucial role in accomplishing the mission and objectives of healthcare institutions. It contributes to a positive work experience and fosters stronger relationships between employees and patients by promoting a supportive and healthy work environment. As hospitals function as complex social systems that require seamless coordination and interaction, emphasizing Participative Climate (PC), Role Performance (RP), and employee retention becomes essential for organizational effectiveness and sustainability. Although numerous theoretical perspectives have highlighted the significance of these factors, limited empirical research has examined their interrelationships and collective impact. Therefore, the present study seeks to address this research gap by exploring employee retention and its key antecedents, namely Participative Climate (PC) and Role Performance (RP), within hospital settings.

Theoretical Background

Employee retention is a multidimensional construct that cannot be examined independently of the organizational contexts in which it occurs, particularly Participative Climate (PC) and Role Performance (RP). Integrating these theoretical dimensions is inherently complex and involves a range of conceptual and practical challenges, thereby increasing the overall complexity of understanding retention within hospital settings.

Role Performance refers to the expected behaviours employees exhibit in relation to their formal job responsibilities. However, many aspects of effective performance cannot be completely predetermined or prescribed in advance. Consequently, any form of assistance or support provided to employees can enhance their ability to carry out critical, often life-saving, tasks and underscore the importance of interprofessional collaboration. Employee behaviour is shaped by social, cultural, and job-related factors (Gibson et al., 2000). Accordingly, numerous studies have focused on understanding both organizationally required and extra-role behaviours of employees, including the work of Muchinsky and Morrow (1980), which emphasized the significance of formal and non-required work roles in organizational settings.

Several studies have highlighted the importance of tacit knowledge, which encompasses informal technical skills and expertise acquired through experience. Researchers have also emphasized the significance of teamwork within performance frameworks (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997) and recognized employees as innovators who contribute to

organizational growth and effectiveness (Gomez-Mejia & Balkin, 1992). Furthermore, a strong association between job satisfaction and job performance has been widely documented (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Borman & Motowidlo, 1993, 1997). Supporting this view, Ugboro and Obeng (2000) found that employees who develop an emotional attachment to their organization tend to demonstrate greater loyalty, thereby increasing the likelihood of retention. Collectively, these studies suggest both direct and indirect links between role performance, job satisfaction, and employee retention.

Participative Climate (PC) is another critical organizational factor that influences employee satisfaction and retention. Organizations characterized by rigid structures, excessive control, and autocratic management practices often experience lower employee satisfaction despite offering attractive incentives and benefits (Dalton & Todor, 1979). In contemporary healthcare settings, medical professionals are increasingly involved in collaborative decision-making processes concerning clinical and operational matters whenever appropriate (Pillemer, n.d.). Research indicates that greater involvement in decision-making is associated with reduced psychosomatic and physical health complaints. For instance, Hunter and Hunter (1984) reported that nurses who actively participate in decisions related to nursing practices, patient care, and unit management experience higher levels of engagement. This enhanced involvement subsequently contributes to greater job satisfaction and lower turnover intentions (Relf, 1995).

Similarly, Kanter (1977) argued that empowering work environments foster a stronger sense of organizational support and personal accomplishment, which are important determinants of employee retention, particularly among middle-level managers and nursing professionals. Seibert, Silver, and Randolph (2004) further clarified the connection between structural empowerment and psychological empowerment, reinforcing the importance of participative work environments. Therefore, the influence of participative climate on job satisfaction and employee retention cannot be overlooked.

Employee retention refers to the organizational efforts aimed at encouraging employees to remain with the organization for an extended period (Griffeth & Hom, 2001) or until the completion of specific assignments or projects (Hom, 1995). Traditional retention strategies have largely focused on providing fringe benefits such as stock options, healthcare coverage, and other financial incentives. However, studies by Wickens (1995) and Cappelli (2000) suggested that such approaches are often insufficient for retaining highly talented employees. In contrast, Armstrong and Murlis (1998) emphasized that employees increasingly seek meaningful and challenging work, along with adequate autonomy and resources to perform their responsibilities effectively. Meeting these expectations can significantly enhance employee retention, although inappropriate recruitment and selection decisions may undermine such efforts.

Poor hiring and selection decisions made by employers can account for a substantial proportion of employee turnover, with studies suggesting that such decisions may contribute to nearly 60% of turnover cases (Jackofsky, 1984). Furthermore, when employees feel dissatisfied, undervalued, or inadequately recognized, they are more likely to leave the organization. This departure often results in increased workloads and heightened stress levels for the remaining staff, which can subsequently reduce job satisfaction among employees and negatively affect the quality of patient care (Fukuyama, 1995). These findings demonstrate that employee retention is a multifaceted phenomenon influenced by a wide range of organizational and individual factors.

Addressing both the direct and indirect challenges associated with employee retention requires organizations to identify, engage, and retain committed employees while simultaneously enhancing their understanding of the factors that influence retention. Such efforts can be successful only when they create mutual benefits for both employees and employers. Previous research has consistently indicated that higher levels of job satisfaction contribute positively to employee retention. However, several important determinants remain either insufficiently explored or largely overlooked in the existing literature. Consequently, the present study seeks to examine selected theoretical constructs that have received limited research attention but are believed to significantly influence retention outcomes. Specifically, the study focuses on investigating the relationship between Participative Climate, Role Performance, and Employee Retention in hospital settings.

Hypotheses

The study seeks to identify the underlying factorial structure of the Participative Climate (PC) and Role Performance (RP) scales. Based on existing theoretical foundations and empirical evidence obtained through Exploratory Factor

Analysis (EFA), a conceptual framework was developed to examine the relationships among the identified factors (Figure 1).

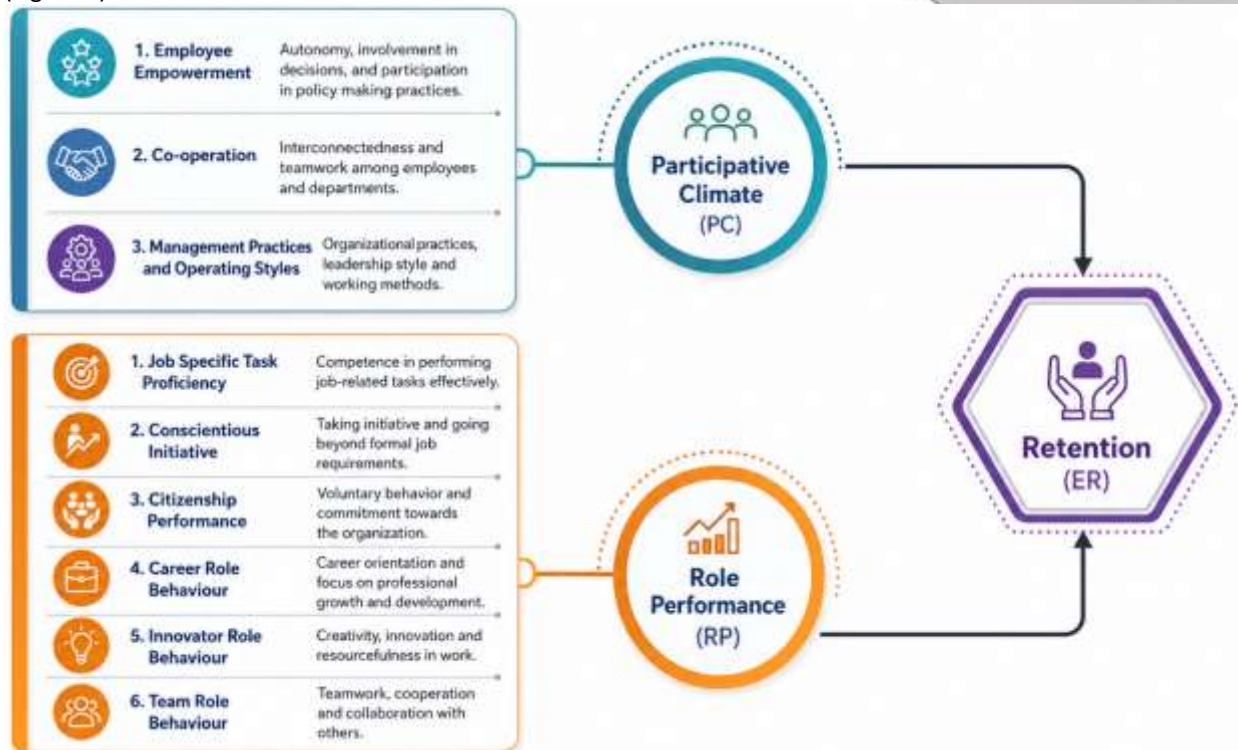


Figure:1 conceptual framework was developed to examine the relationships among the identified factors
The proposed hypotheses are as follows:

1. **Employee Empowerment (EE), Cooperation (CoP), and Management Practices and Operating Styles (MPOS)** significantly influence the Participative Climate experienced by employees in both public and private hospitals.
2. **Job-Specific Task Proficiency (JSTP), Conscientious Initiative (CI), Citizenship Performance (CP), Career Role Behaviour (CRB), Innovator Role Behaviour (IRB), and Team Role Behaviour (TRB)** significantly contribute to employees' Role Performance in public and private healthcare institutions.
3. **Employee Shortage and Workload (ESW), along with Policies and Resources (PR)**, significantly influence Employee Retention among hospital employees in both public and private healthcare settings.

Null Hypothesis (H_{01})

There is no statistically significant relationship between Participative Climate, Role Performance, and Employee Retention within the healthcare sector.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_{11})

There is a statistically significant relationship between Participative Climate, Role Performance, and Employee Retention among employees working in public and private hospitals.

Methodology

Sample

The study was conducted among 1,010 respondents employed at different hierarchical levels in various public and private healthcare institutions across Madhya Pradesh. The participants comprised both medical professionals, including doctors, and paramedical staff such as nurses and laboratory technicians.

Tools and Techniques

To achieve the objectives of the study, measurement instruments related to Participative Climate (PC) and Employee Retention (ER) were adapted and developed, consisting of 11 and 6 items, respectively. Similarly, the Role

Performance (RP) scale was developed through an extensive review of the literature and was adapted from the In-Role Performance Scale proposed by Welbourne, Johnson, and Erez (1998).

Considering the diverse background of the respondents, the questionnaire was prepared in both English and Hindi to facilitate better comprehension and ensure accurate responses. Data were collected using a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Very Dissatisfied/Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Very Satisfied/Strongly Agree). A four-point response format was selected based on insights gained from the pilot study, which indicated that eliminating the midpoint would reduce respondents' tendency to choose neutral responses and thereby improve the accuracy of the findings. This approach was consistent with the recommendations of Garland (1991).

The final instrument consisted of 37 items, including 11 items measuring Participative Climate, 20 items assessing Role Performance, and 6 items evaluating Employee Retention, in addition to demographic and background information. A survey research design was employed for data collection.

Reliability of the scales was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, and the results indicated satisfactory levels of internal consistency. Furthermore, no significant cross-loadings were observed among the items. The validity of the scales was examined and found to be adequate. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using Maximum Likelihood (ML) extraction and Promax rotation was performed to identify the underlying factor structure. Subsequently, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to validate the latent constructs and confirm the factorial structure of the scales.

Procedure

The questionnaire was developed following an extensive review of relevant literature. Initially, potential items were generated based on theoretical and empirical studies related to Participative Climate, Role Performance, and Employee Retention. A pilot study was then carried out to evaluate the clarity, relevance, and usability of the questionnaire items. Feedback obtained from respondents during the pilot phase was used to refine and finalize the instrument.

After finalization, the questionnaire was administered to medical and paramedical personnel working in public and private hospitals. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents before data collection. The overall response rate exceeded 90 percent, indicating strong participation from the target population.

Findings and Discussion

One of the primary objectives of the study was to identify the factorial structure and validate the adapted scales for Participative Climate, Role Performance, and Employee Retention. Additionally, the study aimed to examine the relationships among the identified variables.

Preliminary Analysis: Development of Participative Climate, Role Performance, and Employee Retention Scales

The development and validation process for the Participative Climate (PC), Role Performance (RP), and Employee Retention (ER) scales began with a comprehensive review of the literature to identify relevant measurement items. Following the pilot survey, modifications were made to improve item wording, clarity, and relevance.

The refined instrument was subsequently administered to medical and paramedical employees, and their responses were analyzed. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was employed to identify the underlying latent dimensions, while model fit indices were evaluated according to established guidelines (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Bollen, 1990). Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was then performed to validate the resulting factor structure.

EFA is widely recognized for its ability to uncover latent relationships among observed variables (Norris & Lecavalier, 2009) and to identify underlying constructs represented by groups of measured variables (Finch & West, 1997). Factors were retained based on eigenvalues greater than or equal to 1 (Kaiser, 1960), supplemented by scree plot examination and parallel analysis (Stevens, 1986).

The Maximum Likelihood (ML) extraction method was selected because of its statistical efficiency, consistency, and unbiased estimation properties. Moreover, ML allows for the assessment of factor loading significance, estimation of factor correlations, and calculation of confidence intervals, making it particularly suitable for large sample studies (Cudeck & O'Dell, 1994). Its compatibility with the AMOS Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) software further supported its application in the present study.

Participative Climate Scale

Participative Climate reflects a collaborative organizational environment in which employees are empowered to participate in decision-making and work collectively toward organizational goals. Existing literature identifies participative climate as a critical determinant of both employee performance and organizational effectiveness.

Item analysis was conducted using item reliability and inter-item correlation measures to assess convergent validity. The Participative Climate scale comprised 11 items. The factor structure that emerged through EFA was subsequently validated using CFA, resulting in the identification of several underlying dimensions of Participative Climate.

Participative Climate Scale

The Participative Climate (PC) scale was developed to assess employees' perceptions of the degree to which their organization promotes participation, collaboration, and supportive management practices. The scale comprises three key dimensions:

Employee Empowerment (EE):

This dimension evaluates the extent to which employees are granted autonomy, authority, and opportunities to participate in organizational decision-making and policy formulation. It reflects the organization's willingness to involve employees in matters that influence their work and professional responsibilities.

Cooperation (CoP):

This factor measures the level of collaboration and mutual support among employees and departments within the organization. It reflects the degree of interdependence, teamwork, and coordination that facilitate efficient functioning and harmonious workplace relationships.

Management Practices and Operating Styles (MPOS):

This dimension assesses employees' perceptions of managerial approaches, administrative procedures, leadership styles, and operational practices adopted by the organization. It reflects the effectiveness and adaptability of management in creating a supportive work environment.

Role Performance Scale

The Role Performance (RP) instrument employed in this study was adapted from the In-Role Performance Scale developed by Welbourne, Johnson, and Erez (1998). The original scale was modified and reworded to suit the healthcare context and to enhance comprehension among hospital employees. The instrument aims to evaluate employees' understanding of their organizational roles and their effectiveness in performing assigned responsibilities. Effective role performance contributes to organizational efficiency and productivity while also influencing employees' intentions to remain with or leave the organization.

The scale consists of 20 items and encompasses six dimensions:

Job-Specific Task Proficiency (JSTP):

This dimension measures employees' competence and effectiveness in carrying out tasks directly related to their job responsibilities. It helps identify both current capabilities and potential future contributions to organizational success.

Conscientious Initiative (CI):

This factor evaluates employees' willingness to go beyond minimum job requirements by demonstrating responsibility, diligence, and commitment to maintaining both the quality and quantity of work. It represents characteristics commonly associated with high-performing employees.

Citizenship Performance (CP):

This dimension reflects employees' voluntary behaviours that support organizational functioning beyond formal job requirements. It also indicates the strength of employees' psychological attachment and commitment to the organization, thereby influencing their intention to remain employed.

Career Role Behaviour (CRB):

This factor assesses employees' career-oriented attitudes and behaviours, highlighting the importance of career development opportunities, advancement prospects, and structured career planning within the organization.

Innovator Role Behaviour (IRB):

This dimension measures employees' creativity, adaptability, and willingness to introduce innovative ideas and solutions. Innovative employees often contribute significantly to organizational effectiveness; however, limited autonomy and insufficient opportunities for creative expression may increase their likelihood of leaving the organization.

Team Role Behaviour (TRB):

Given the collaborative nature of healthcare services, this factor evaluates employees' ability and willingness to work effectively as part of a team. It reflects cooperation, coordination, and collective responsibility in achieving organizational objectives and delivering quality patient care.

Employee Retention Scale

Employee Retention (ER) refers to an organization's ability to retain its workforce by encouraging employees to remain with the organization and minimizing employee turnover. The convergent validity of the retention scale was assessed through item analysis, including item reliability and inter-item correlation measures. The results demonstrated satisfactory psychometric properties of the scale.

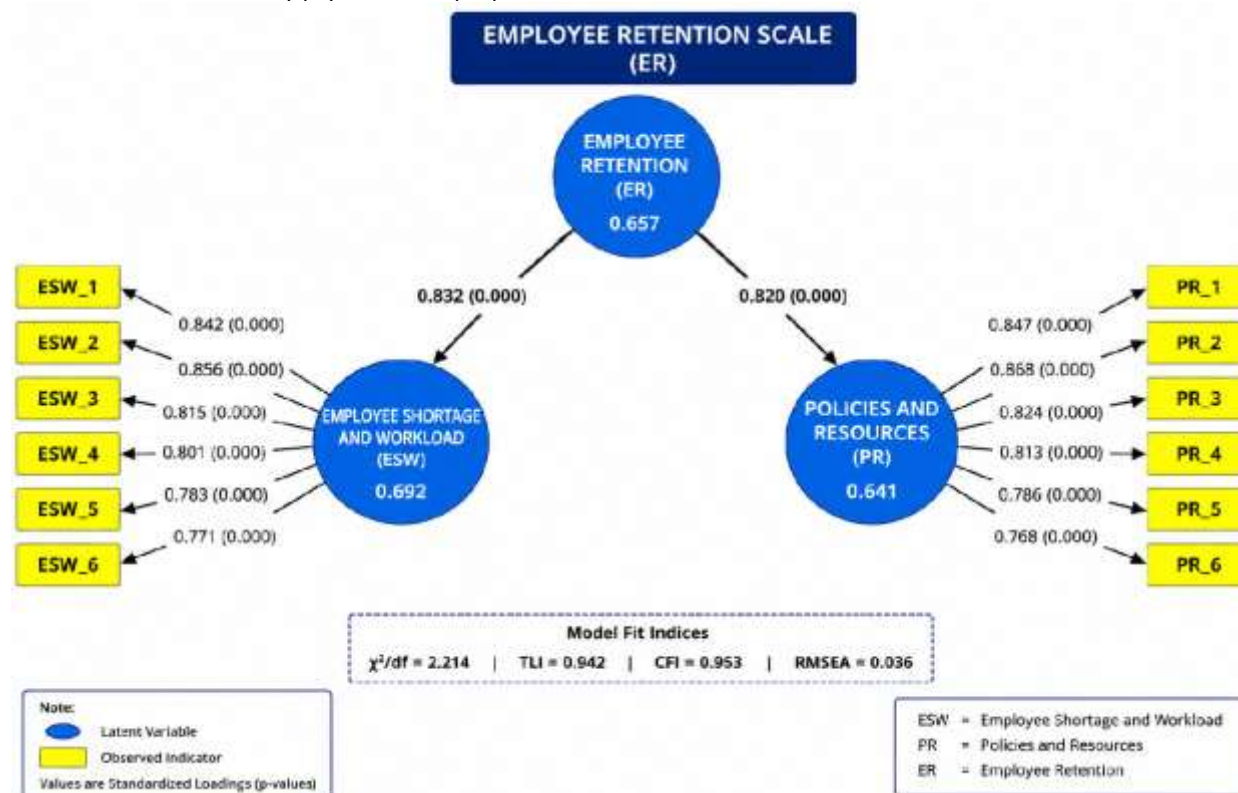


Figure:2 Employee retention scale model

The Employee Retention scale comprised six items and yielded two underlying dimensions:

Employee Shortage and Workload (ESW):

This dimension evaluates the adequacy of staffing levels within the organization and examines how shortages of personnel influence employees' workload. Insufficient staffing often results in increased job demands, work pressure, and stress, which may negatively affect employees' willingness to remain in the organization.

Policies and Resources (PR):

This factor assesses employees' perceptions of organizational policies, availability of resources, and support mechanisms that facilitate effective job performance. Adequate resources and employee-friendly policies are considered essential for enhancing job satisfaction and long-term retention.

To validate the factorial structure of the retention construct, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed. The model fit was evaluated using standard goodness-of-fit indices, including the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), following the recommendations of MacCallum, Browne, and Sugawara (1996) and Bentler and Bonett (1980). The graphical representations of the validated constructs are presented in Figure 2 for Participative Climate, Figure 3 for Role Performance, and Figure 4 and Figure 5 for Employee Retention.

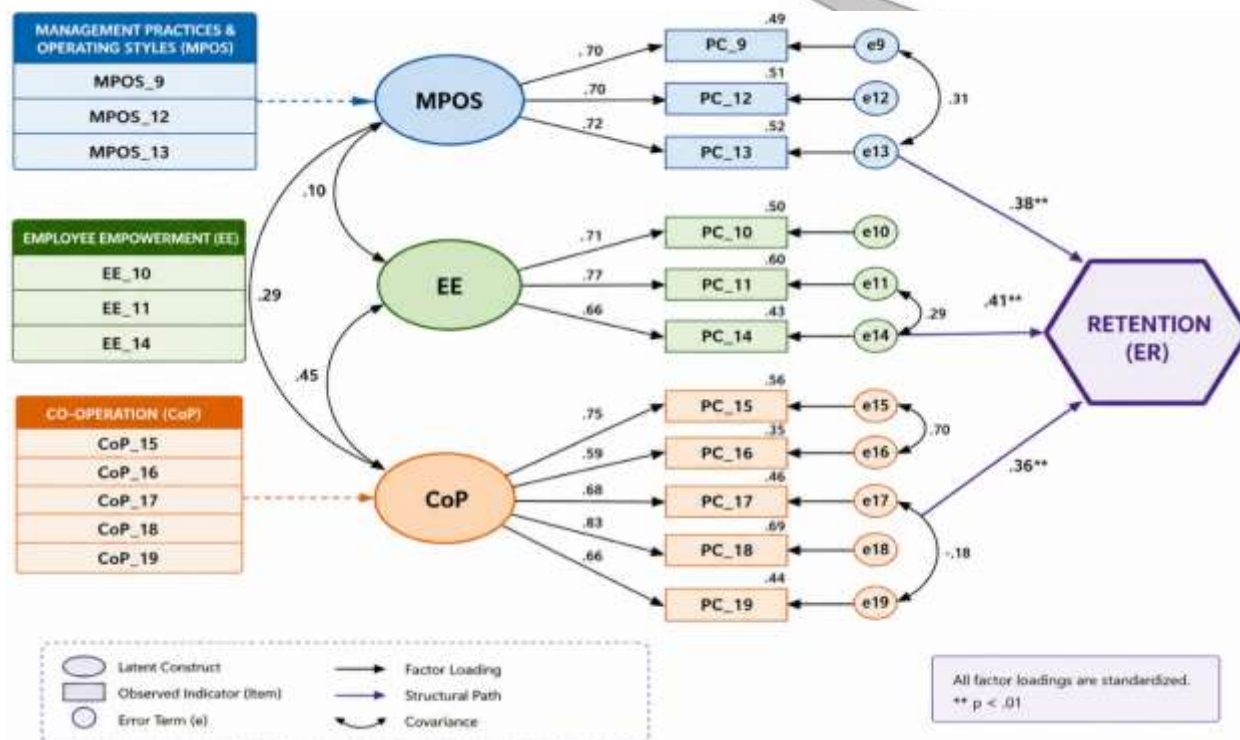


Figure:3 Retention model with latent constructs

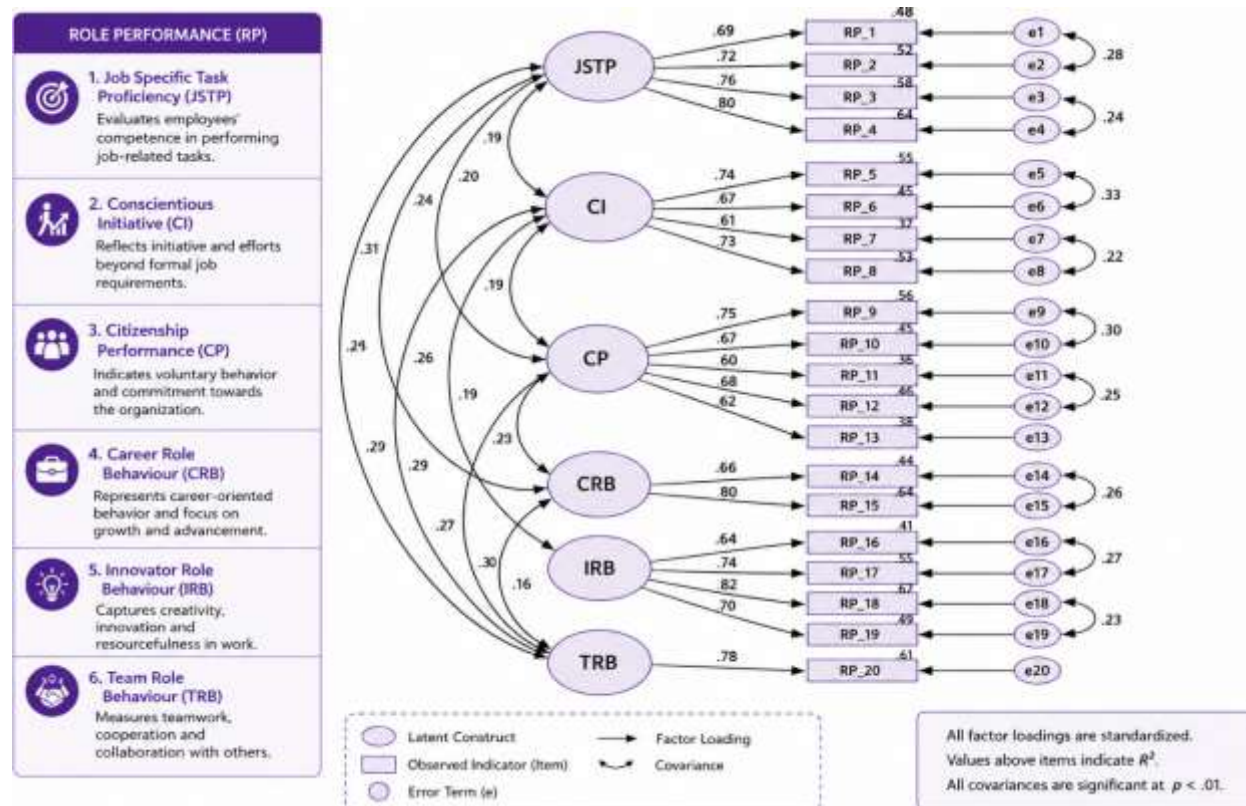


Figure:4 Role performance model with latent constructs

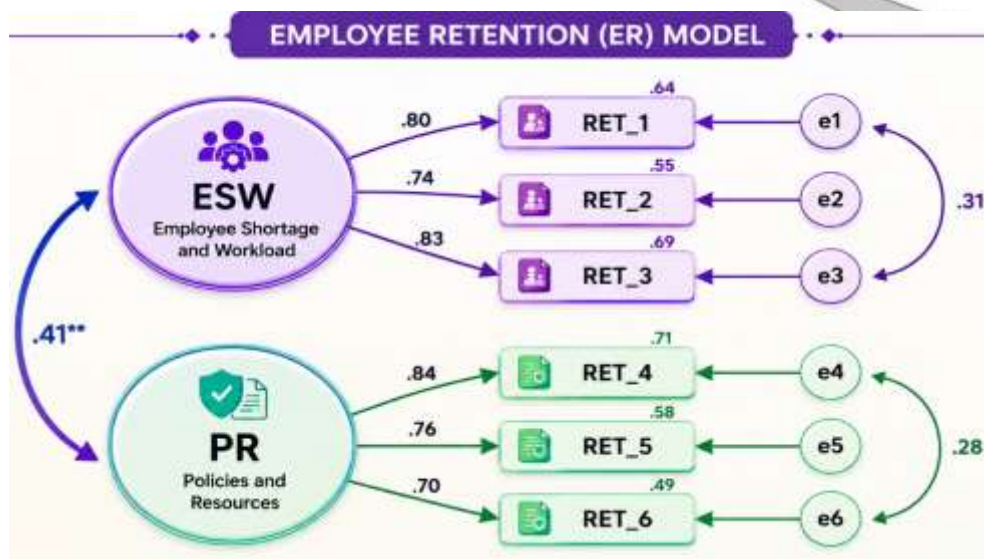


Figure:5 Employee retention model infographic

Relationship among Participative Climate, Role Performance, and Employee Retention

A major objective of the study was to examine the relationships among Participative Climate (PC), Role Performance (RP), and Employee Retention (ER) within public and private healthcare organizations. Pearson's correlation analysis was employed to test the proposed relationships and evaluate the null hypothesis.

The findings revealed significant associations among the study variables. In public healthcare institutions, employee retention exhibited a positive relationship with participative climate ($r = 0.119$). Additionally, participative climate demonstrated a positive association with role performance ($r = 0.192$), suggesting that greater employee involvement in organizational processes contributes to improved role-related outcomes.

In private healthcare settings, employee retention was also influenced by participative climate, although the relationship was negative in magnitude ($r = -0.145$). Furthermore, participative climate and role performance showed a positive but relatively weak association ($r = 0.094$).

Overall, the correlation analysis indicates that participative climate and employee retention are significantly related across both public and private hospital settings, although the strength and direction of the relationships vary. The findings further suggest that participative climate is positively associated with role performance, particularly within government healthcare organizations. The hypothesis testing results confirm that employee retention is significantly linked to participative climate and that participative climate and role performance are interconnected in both public and private healthcare environments. These findings highlight the importance of fostering participative work environments to enhance employee performance and retention in the healthcare sector.

Conclusion

The findings of the study confirm the acceptance of the proposed a priori assumptions regarding Participative Climate (PC), Role Performance (RP), and Employee Retention (ER). The results of hypothesis testing revealed significant relationships among the key constructs under investigation. Specifically, Participative Climate was found to be significantly associated with Employee Retention, while a meaningful relationship was also observed between Participative Climate and Role Performance across both public and private healthcare institutions.

The study provides valuable insights into the interrelationships among Participative Climate, Role Performance, and Employee Retention within the healthcare sector. By identifying and validating these associations, the research contributes to the existing body of knowledge on human resource management and organizational behavior in hospital settings. Furthermore, the findings highlight the importance of fostering a participative work environment and enhancing employee role performance as effective strategies for improving workforce retention.

The practical implications of this study extend to policymakers, hospital administrators, and healthcare managers in both public and private sectors. The results may assist organizations in developing employee-centered policies and

management practices that encourage engagement, performance, and long-term organizational commitment. Additionally, strengthening participative climate and role performance may indirectly help reduce employee turnover intentions, migration of healthcare professionals, and workforce instability while simultaneously promoting job satisfaction and retention.

Overall, the study underscores the critical role of organizational climate and employee performance in retaining skilled healthcare professionals and enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of healthcare organizations.

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Summary of Table:

Table 1: Summary of EFA for Participative Climate (PC) Scale

Total Items in the Instrument	Component Loadings*	Eigen Value	Inter-Item Average Correlation	Reliability Statistics (Cronbach's α)
Employee Empowerment (EE)		0.861	0.457	0.718
PC10	0.91			
PC11	0.67			
PC14	0.50			
Co-Operation (CoP)		2.957	0.359	0.737
PC15	0.61			
PC16	0.63			
PC17	0.67			
PC18	0.52			
PC19	0.65			
Management Practices and Operating Styles (MPOS)		1.020	0.458	0.717
PC12	0.87			
PC13	0.67			
PC9	0.44			

Table 2 Summary of EFA for Role Performance (RP) Scale

Total Items in the Instrument	Component Loadings*	Eigen Value	Inter-Item Average Correlation	Reliability Statistics (Cronbach's α)
Job-Specific Task Proficiency (JSTP)		1.300	0.393	0.720
RP1	0.54			
RP2	0.79			
RP3	0.75			
RP4	0.44			
Conscientious Initiative (CI)		2.671	0.566	0.838
RP5	0.80			

Cont. Summary of EFA for Role Performance (RP) Scale

Factor / Dimension	Items	Component Loadings*	Eigen Value	Inter-Item Average Correlation	Reliability Statistics (Cronbach's α)
Job-Specific Task Proficiency (JSTP)	RP1	0.54	1.300	0.393	0.720
	RP2	0.79			
	RP3	0.75			
	RP4	0.44			
Conscientious Initiative (CI)	RP5	0.80	2.671	0.566	0.838
	RP6	0.82			
	RP7	0.69			
	RP8	0.73			
Citizenship Performance (CP)	RP9	0.70	1.931	0.471	0.779
	RP10	0.70			
	RP13	0.71			
	RP18	0.67			
Career Role Behaviour (CRB)	RP11	0.60	1.206	0.574	0.729
	RP12	0.95			
Innovator Role Behaviour (IRB)	RP14	0.62	1.984	0.578	0.802
	RP15	0.85			
	RP16	0.81			
Team Role Behaviour (TRB)	RP17	0.66	1.669	0.576	0.801
	RP19	0.86			
	RP20	0.77			

Table 3 Summary of EFA for Employee Retention Scale

Factor / Dimension	Items	Component Loadings*	Eigen Value	Inter-Item Average Correlation	Reliability Statistics (Cronbach's α)
Employee Shortage and Workload (ESW)	Ret1	0.87	1.382	0.497	0.749
	Ret2	0.75			
	Ret5	0.51			
Policies and Resources (PR)	Ret3	0.84	2.105	0.623	0.832
	Ret4	0.80			
	Ret6	0.75			

Table 4 Summary of CFA for Participative Climate, Role Performance, and Retention Scales

Dimension / Variable	Number of Items	Loading Range	Cmin/df	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	Cronbach's α
Participative Climate (PC)			3.959	0.938	0.958	0.054	
Employee Empowerment (EE)	3	0.65 – 0.77					0.718
Co-Operation (CoP)	5	0.50 – 0.68					0.737
Management Practices and Operating Styles (MPOS)	3	0.70 – 0.73					0.717
Role Performance (RP)			2.795	0.947	0.957	0.042	
Job-Specific Task Proficiency (JSTP)	4	0.50 – 0.78					0.720
Conscientious Initiative (CI)	4	0.61 – 0.87					0.838
Citizenship Performance (CP)	4	0.67 – 0.69					0.779

Construct	Cmin/df	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	Interpretation
Participative Climate (PC)	3.959	0.938	0.958	0.054	Good Fit
Role Performance (RP)	2.795	0.947	0.957	0.042	Excellent Fit
Employee Retention (ER)	5.515	0.966	0.982	0.067	Acceptable Fit

Table 5 Summary of Correlations for Participative Climate, Role Performance, and Employee Retention Scale

Hospital Type	Variable	RP	RET	PC
Government Hospitals	RP	1	.015	.192**
	RET	.015	1	.119*
	PC	.192**	.119*	1
Private Hospitals	RP	1	-.001	.094*
	RET	-.001	1	-.145**
	PC	.094*	-.145**	1