

"Human Resource Analytics as a Strategic Tool: Evaluating Its Influence on Employee Retention Determinants"

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Abstract

Employee retention is critical concern for the organization worldwide, including India. It is crucial to comprehend the factors that influence employee retention for organization success, given the diverse workforce and rapidly evolving business landscape. The research aims to investigate the impact of HR Analytics (HRA) on factors affecting employee retention. The study mainly focus on five independent variable: Recruitment & Selection, Training & Development, Rewards and Recognition, Employee performance and Employee engagement. The scope for application of the potential of analytics in this function by integrating it with core function of Human Resource leaders to utilize Human Resource analyst skills in decision making. The impact of Human Resource Analytics on the factors affecting employee retention has been tested by confirmatory factor analysis and Baron and Kenny model.

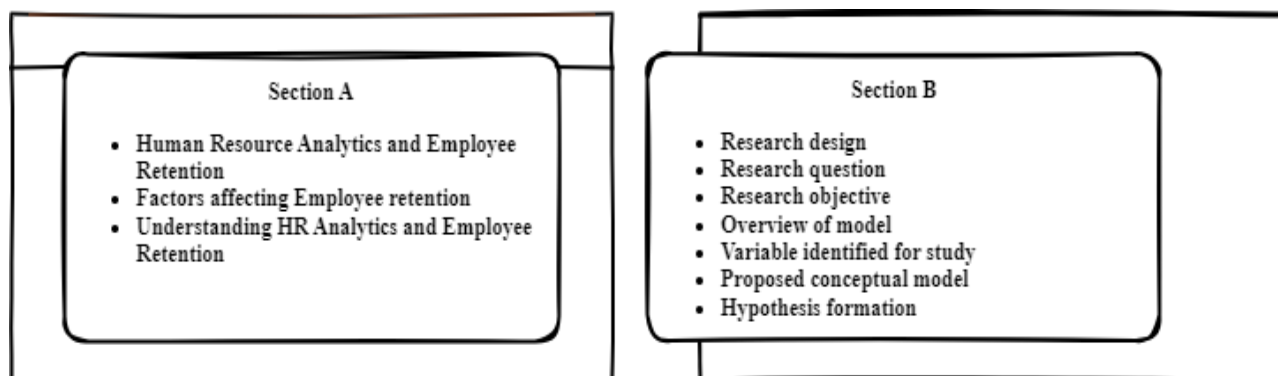
Keywords : Human Resource Analytics (HRA)/People Analytics, Employee Retention, Training & Development, Recruitment & Selection, Rewards & Recognition, Career Development..

Introduction

Employee retention is a critical concern for organizations worldwide, including India. It is crucial to comprehend the factors that influence employee retention for organization success, given the diverse workforce and rapidly evolving business landscape (Ramchandram, Murugesan, & Babu, 2023). However, traditional approaches to managing retention often rely on reactive strategies, leading to higher turnover rates and associated costs. With the advent of Human Resource Analytics (HRA), organizations now have a data-driven approach of understanding and addressing workforce challenges. The use of HRA is transforming the HR landscape. The HR practices shift from intuition-based to evidence-based decision making when HR Analytics uses data analysis to extract insights from employee information (Rashmeet Kaur Johar, 2024).

Recent studies highlight the transformative impact of HRA on employee retention. HR analytics enables organizations to track employee sentiment, identify key retention drivers, and implement proactive measures such as personalized career development plans and targeted incentives (Kaufman, 2019). Moreover, predictive analytics helps HR managers anticipate job-hopping tendencies and design interventions to retain top talent (Minbaeva, 2018). Despite its growing significance, the mediating role of HR analytics in addressing retention challenges remains an underexplored area of research, necessitating further empirical investigation.

The objective of the research is to understand Employee Retention, investigate the impact of Human Resource Analytics (HRA) on the factors affecting towards employee retention. The major challenge faced by most of the organization is not only managing their workforce but also retaining them. Ultimately the paper focus on is there relation between HR Analytics and Employee retention? Can HR Analytics provide an insight for Employee retention? So, the article is divided into two section, the first section focus on conceptual framework and review of employee retention, factors influencing employee retention and HR Analytics and Employee retention.



Conceptual Development and Review Employee Retention

Employee retention refers to an organization's ability to keep its employees and reduce turnover by creating a positive and engaging work environment (Allen et al., 2010). It involves implementing strategies that encourage employees to remain committed to the organization for a longer duration (Hom et al., 2012). Employee retention is crucial for organizational stability, productivity, and profitability. High employee turnover results in increased recruitment costs, loss of organizational knowledge, and decreased morale among remaining employees (Hancock et al., 2013).

Employee retention refers to an organization's ability to maintain a stable workforce by preventing voluntary turnover. Theories that provide insight into employee retention include:

- **Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory** (Herzberg, 1959): This theory differentiates between motivators (intrinsic factors like recognition and career growth) that enhance job satisfaction and hygiene factors (extrinsic factors like salary and work conditions) that prevent dissatisfaction. Employees are more likely to stay when motivators are present and hygiene factors are adequately met.
- **Social Exchange Theory** (Blau, 1964): This theory suggests that employee retention is influenced by reciprocal relationships between employees and organizations. When organizations invest in employees through fair treatment, support, and career development, employees respond with loyalty and commitment, reducing turnover.
- **Job Embeddedness Theory** (Mitchell et al., 2001): This theory explains retention through three components—fit (alignment with organizational values and career goals), links (connections with co-workers and the community), and sacrifice (the perceived cost of leaving the organization).

Concepts and definitions of Employee Retention		
Concepts/definition	Context/Type	Reference
Employee retention is the effort by an employer to keep desirable workers in order to meet business objectives.	Efforts for desirable workers to meet business objectives	Hancock, Allen, Bosco, McDaniel, & Pierce, 2013
Employee retention refers to the various policies and practices used	Policies and practices for employee retention	Hom, Mitchell, Lee, & Griffeth, 2012

to make employees stay for a longer duration in an organization.		
Employee retention is an organization's ability to maintain a stable workforce by minimizing voluntary turnover and ensuring employee satisfaction. Employee retention involves organizational efforts to maintain a workforce that is committed and engaged over time.	Ability to maintain stable workforce Efforts to maintain workforce	Allen et al.,2010 Hausknecht et al.,2009
Employee retention strategies focus on enhancing job satisfaction, career development, and work engagement to reduce voluntary turnover.	Focus on enhancing job satisfaction, career development and work engagement	Ramlall,2004
Employee retention is the ability of an organization to prevent unwanted employee turnover by creating a satisfying work environment.	Prevent unwanted turnover	Abbasi & Hollman,2000

Human Resource Analytics and Employee Retention

The rapid advancements in data analytics have extended their reach into the domain of human resource management, giving rise to the concept of HR analytics (Bandi et al., 2021) (Kapoor & Kabra, 2014) (Mohammed, 2019) (Fink & Sturman, 2017) Human Resource (HR) Analytics, also referred to as People Analytics or Workforce Analytics, encompasses the systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of HR-related data to enhance decision-making and organizational performance (Marler & Boudreau, 2017). Traditionally, HR functions were primarily focused on administrative tasks, such as managing employee records and processing payroll. However, the increasing availability of vast amounts of HR-related data, coupled with the advancements in data analytics tools and techniques, has opened up new possibilities for HR professionals to play a more strategic role in the organization. (Mohammed, 2019) (Simbeck, 2019).

The conceptual evolution of HR Analytics has progressed from basic reporting of HR metrics to more sophisticated predictive and prescriptive analytics. This progression can be categorized into three primary stages:

1. **Descriptive Analytics:** Focusing on reporting historical data, such as turnover rates or employee satisfaction scores.
2. **Predictive Analytics:** Utilizing historical data to forecast future trends and outcomes, such as predicting employee attrition or performance.
3. **Prescriptive Analytics:** Providing evidence-based recommendations for action, such as suggesting interventions to improve employee engagement or productivity.

HR analytics plays a crucial role in employee retention by providing data-driven insights into the factors that influence employee turnover. Instead of relying on guesswork, organizations can use HR analytics to understand *why* employees leave and develop targeted retention strategies.

<u>Concepts and definitions of HR Analytics</u>		
Concepts/definition	Context/Type	Reference
HR analytics Involves complex multistage projects requiring question formulation, research design, data organization and statistical and econometric modeling of different levels of complexity and rigor that acts as a guide to future management action.	Complex multistage project	Steven et al.,2021
HR analytics is a proactive and systematic process for ethically gathering, analyzing, communicating and using evidence-based HR research and analytical insights to help organizations achieve their strategic objectives.	Proactive and systematic process to achieve strategic objective	Falletta et al.,2020
Human Resource Analytics (HRA), also known as Talent/ People/ Workforce Analytics, is an area in the field of analytics that refers to applying analytic processes to the Human Resource Department of a business in the assurance of refining employee performance and therefore getting a well return on asset. HR analytics does not just deal with collecting data on employee competence but also purposes to deliver vision into each course by collecting data and then using it to create pertinent choices for an establishment. In simpler words, HRA are a set of tools that quantify, describe and establish urbane employee statistics to support in general organization.	Tool to qualify, describe and establish employee statistics	Priyanka,2020
HR Analytics from HR metrics states that it represents statistical and experimental techniques that are used to demonstrate the effect of HR activities on the performance of a company.	statistical and experimental practice	Kristian,2018
HR analytics, also known as people analytics, is the use of people data in analytical processes to solve business problems. HR analytics uses both people data, collected by HR systems and business information. At its core, HR	Use of data in analytical process	CIPD, 2018

analytics enables HR practitioners and employers to gain insights into their workforce, HR policies and practices, with a focus on the human capital element of the workforce, and can ultimately inform more evidence-based decision-making		
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The integration of HR analytics into retention strategies enhances decision-making and reduces turnover. Organizations must leverage data-driven insights to optimize employee engagement, job satisfaction, and long-term workforce stability

● **Human Resource Analytics and Factors affecting employee retention**

HR analytics helps pinpoint the specific reasons behind employee attrition. This might include factors like compensation, work-life balance, management styles, career development opportunities, or company culture. (3 Ways Employee Retention Analytics Ends the Guesswork, 2024) mentions how data science improves the accuracy of identifying these factors. By analyzing historical data, HR analytics can build predictive models to identify employees who are at high risk of leaving. This allows for proactive intervention and targeted retention efforts. (DiClaudio, 2019) discusses the predictive capabilities of workforce analytics.

Factors affecting employee retention	Key findings
Compensation & Benefits	Compensation plays a fundamental role in retaining employees by ensuring financial security and job satisfaction (Gerhart & Rynes, 2003). Organizations that offer competitive salaries, performance-based rewards, and benefits (such as healthcare and retirement plans) experience lower turnover rates (Nyberg, Pieper, & Trevor, 2016). Employees often weigh their compensation against industry standards and internal equity, influencing their decision to stay or leave. By leveraging HR analytics, organizations can develop data-driven compensation strategies that attract and retain top talent, ensure fair and equitable pay practices, and optimize their compensation budgets.
Career Growth and Development	Employees are more likely to stay in organizations that provide clear career progression opportunities, training programs, and professional development initiatives (Tymon, Stumpf, & Doh, 2010). The absence of career advancement prospects is a leading cause of employee turnover, as employees seek external opportunities that align with their long-term career goals (De Vos & Meganck, 2009). HR analytics can play a significant role in enhancing career development programs and helping employees

	achieve their career aspirations. By leveraging HR analytics, organizations can create more effective career development programs that help employees achieve their career goals, improve employee engagement, and support the long-term success of the organization.
Work Life Balance	<p>Maintaining a balance between professional responsibilities and personal life is crucial for employee satisfaction. Excessive work demands, lack of flexibility, and job-related stress contribute to burnout and increase turnover intentions (Greenhaus, Collins, & Shaw, 2003). Companies that offer flexible work arrangements, remote work opportunities, and mental health support programs tend to have higher retention rates.</p> <p>HR analytics can play a significant role in enhancing career development programs and helping employees achieve their career aspirations. By leveraging HR analytics, organizations can create more effective career development programs that help employees achieve their career goals, improve employee engagement, and support the long-term success of the organization.</p>
Employee engagement & Recognition	<p>Engaged employees are more productive, committed, and less likely to leave the organization (Saks, 2006). Organizations that recognize employee contributions through performance feedback, rewards, and career development programs create a positive work environment, leading to higher retention (Shuck, Twyford, Reio, & Shuck, 2014).</p> <p>HR analytics helps identify factors that contribute to employee satisfaction and engagement, allowing organizations to develop targeted retention strategies and reduce turnover costs. (Bandi et al., 2021) highlights the use of HR analytics for increasing employee retention and examining employee engagement.</p>

Employee retention is a strategic priority for organizations seeking to sustain a competitive advantage. The ability to retain employees is influenced by factors, including compensation, career development opportunities, organizational culture, work-life balance and employee engagement. These factors directly impact an employee's commitment, job satisfaction, and likelihood to remain with the organization.

Research Design

This section presents the research design including research questions, research objectives, assumptions, research variables, proposed research model and hypothesis. The study engages confirmatory factor analysis and Baron and Kenny, 1986 model for data analysis to study the determinants having impact on employee retention with the mediation effect of predictive analytics.

Research Questions

- RQ 1: What is the concept of employee retention?
RQ2: What is employee retention through Human Resource Analytics (HRA)?
RQ3: What are the variables that impacts employee retention?
RQ4: Can a model be developed for retaining employees through Human Resource Analytics (HRA)?

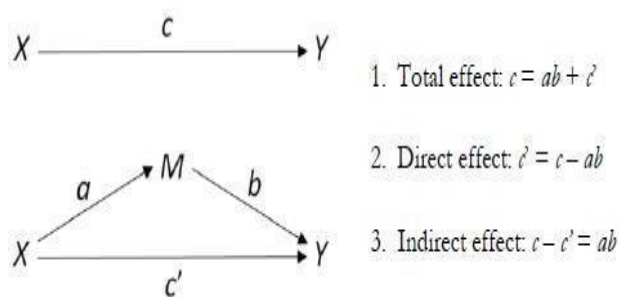
Research Objectives:

- RO1: To understand the concept of employee retention.
RO2: To understand employee retention after the advent of Human Analytics (HRA).
RO3: To understand employee retention through Human Resource Analytics (HRA).
RO4: To identify variables leading to employee retention.
RO5: To develop a model for retaining employees through Human Resource Analytics (HRA).

Overview of Baron and Kenny 1986 model

The hypotheses are tested using mediation effect of employee job satisfaction and analyzed using regression analysis procedure suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986).

Path used to analyze Mediating Regression Analysis



Where, X is Independent Variable; Y is Dependent Variable; and M is Mediating Variable

Figure 5 represents path followed by mediating regression analysis. The variable is dependent if it has one or more unidirectional arrows pointing towards it (such as Y), using all variables that have unidirectional arrows that point toward Y as predictors/ independent variables. The first regression predicts Y from X (path c). The second regression predicts M from X (path a). The third regression predicts Y from both X and M (path c'). Thus, to estimate the strength of association that corresponds to each path in Figure 5, a series of three ordinary least squares (OLS) linear regression analyses can be run. Thus, the top panel of Figure 5 estimates the **total effect of X on Y and is denoted by path c** . The bottom panel of Figure 5 estimates the product of path a and b coefficients and the strength of the **mediated or indirect effect of X on Y** , that is, how much is the increase in Y that occurs as X due to M . The path c' coefficient estimates the strength of the **direct (also called partial) effect of X on Y** , any effect of X on Y that is not mediated by M .

There are two typical questions to be answered in mediation analysis. The first question is whether there is a statistically significant mediated path from X to Y via M and if yes, then the second question is whether mediation is partial or complete. The unstandardized regression coefficient is used for this significance test. If this mediated path is judged to be non-significant, the mediation hypothesis is not supported, and the researcher would need to consider other explanations. If there is a significant mediated path, then there is also a significant direct path from X to Y which is denoted c' in Figure 5. If c' is not statistically significant (or too small to be of any practical importance), a possible inference

is that the effect of X on Y is completely mediated by M . If c' is statistically significant and large enough to be of practical importance, a possible inference is that the influence of X on Y is only partially mediated by M and that X has some additional effect on Y that is not mediated by M .

To check the mediation existence, a sequential verification of four conditions is conducted as a four step model suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) as follows:

Condition 1: The variables X and Y must be significantly related i.e. the unstandardized β coefficient c presented in Figure 5 must be different to zero.

Condition 2: The variables X and M must be significantly related i.e. the unstandardized β coefficient a presented in Figure 5 must be different to zero.

Condition 3: The variables M and Y must be significantly related once the effect of X is controlled i.e. the unstandardized β coefficient of b presented in Figure 5 must be different to zero.

Condition 4: The relationship between X and Y must be significantly reduced when controlling the effect of M i.e. the unstandardized β coefficient of c' presented in Figure 5 must be smaller than c indicating partial mediation of M between X and Y . The strongest mediation is when c' presented in Figure 5 is zero indicating complete mediation of variable M between X and Y .

After exploring the mediation analysis, next step is to evaluate the statistical significance of mediated model. This is done as a part of Baron and Kenny (1986) causal-step approach to calculate Sobel p values.

$$SE_{ab} \approx \sqrt{b^2 s_a^2 + a^2 s_b^2},$$

The Sobel test can be performed by hand; or Preacher and Hayes (2008) provided an online calculator at <http://people.ku.edu/~preacher/sobel/sobel.htm> to compute the z -test, standard errors or t -ratios for the coefficient of path a and b . For the purpose of present study, the Sobel test results are drawn by online calculator. Sobel provides the following approximate estimate:

Where, SE_{ab} is the standard error, a and b are the raw (unstandardized) regression coefficients that represents the effect of X on M and the effect of M on Y , respectively; s_a is standard error of the a regression coefficient; s_b is standard error of the b regression coefficient.

Using the standard error from the above equation as the divisor, the following z ratio for the Sobel (1982) test can be set up as follows:

$$z = ab/SE_{ab}$$

The ab product is judged to be statistically significant if z is greater than +1.96 or less than -1.96. Note that the z tests for the significance of ab assume that the values of this ab product are normally distributed across samples from the same population.

The subsequent section is testing the hypotheses drawn for the study on the basis of the above mentioned four conditions suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). The analysis is based on R statistics, R square statistics, adjusted R square statistics, Durbin-Watson, collinearity statistics, unstandardized β coefficient, t statistics, significance level, analysis of variance, z - statistics, and Sobel test results.

The **value of R** indicates the degree of association between the dependant variable and that predicted by the model. The **values of R square** indicates that the model explains how much of the total variance which should be above the minimum acceptable limit of 5 percent according to the number of variables and sample size of the present study (Hair et al., 2011). The **value of adjusted R square** indicates that numbers of respondents (n) should be high in comparison to the numbers of explanatory variables (m). The adjusted R square = $1 - \{(1 - R^2) (n - 1) / (n - m - 1)\}$. The values of adjusted R square should approach close to R square i.e. $(n - m - 1)$ should approach close to $(n - 1)$, in such case ' n ' is greater than ' m '. This reflects strength of the model. The **values of Durbin-Watson** indicates that

the error deviations are uncorrelated and thus it should be within the limits of 1 and 3 (Field, 2009) which shows that auto-correlation effect does not exist.

The **values of β – coefficient, t – statistics, significance** are used to interpret the direct and mediated effect of predictors on teacher's retention confirmed by **z – statistics, and Sobel p – values**. These values are used to check the hypotheses as duly presented in the subsequent section below.

The acceptable values of various tests are as follows: the value of R square is required to be between 0 and 1 where 0 indicates 0 percent and 1 indicates 100 percent variance explained by model. The minimum acceptable limit of R square is 5 percent for the present study keeping in view the number of variables under study and number of respondents for study (Hair et al. 2011).

The value of Durbin-Watson is required to be between 1-3 (Durbin Watson, 1951), β coefficient to be positive, t statistics to be positive, significance level to be less than 0.05, tolerance to be less than or equals to 1 (Hair et. al. 2011), VIF to be less than 4 (Hair et. al. 2011; Hair et al., 1998), z – statistics to be greater than +1.96 or less than -1.96, and Sobel p value to be less than 0.05 (Sobel, 1982). With these acceptable limits, the following interpretations are drawn for the study.

Identification of Research Variables

The present study observes three types of variables namely independent variable, dependent variable, and mediating variable that are duly presented below:

- **Recruitment & Selection (X1):** By analyzing data from recruitment channels and candidate profiles, HR analytics can improve the effectiveness of recruitment processes, identify the best sources of talent, and reduce time-to-hire.
- **Employee performance (X2):** HR analytics can identify factors that contribute to high performance, enabling organizations to develop targeted training programs and performance management strategies. (Bandi et al., 2021) mentions using analytics to measure employee performance.
- **Employee engagement (X3):** HR analytics helps identify factors that contribute to employee satisfaction and engagement, allowing organizations to develop targeted retention strategies and reduce turnover costs. (Bandi et al., 2021) highlights the use of HR analytics for increasing employee retention and examining employee engagement.
- **Training & Development (X4):** HR analytics plays a vital role in optimizing training and development programs by providing data-driven insights into employee skills, training needs, and the effectiveness of training initiatives. By leveraging HR analytics, organizations can ensure that their training and development programs are aligned with business objectives, effectively address employee needs, and deliver a positive return on investment.
- **Rewards and Recognition (X5):** By leveraging HR analytics, organizations can develop data-driven compensation strategies that attract and retain top talent, ensure fair and equitable pay practices, and optimize their compensation budgets.

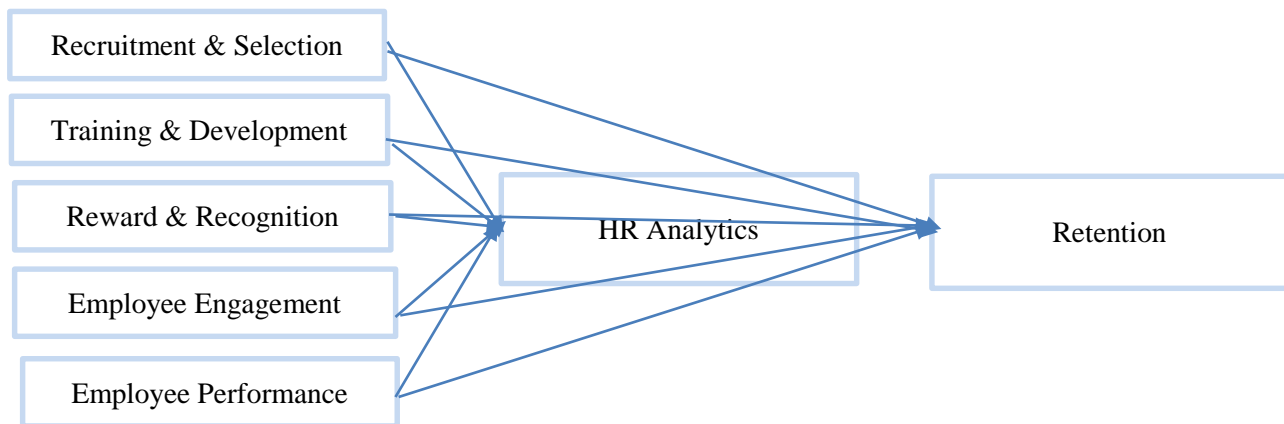
Dependent Variable

- **Employee retention (Y):** As theoretical description says employee retention depends on several factors so here the model that has been proposed will be presenting employee retention depended on various variables.

Mediating Variable

HR Analytics (M): Scholars have acknowledged that Human Resource analytics is an organizational

capability that organizations may exploit to gain competitive advantage so after the advent of this concept we are testing the impact on employee retention by taking predictive analytics as mediating.



Research Hypothesis

Following are the hypothesis of present study that are formulated on the basis of Baron and Kenny 1986 model in the sets of independent variable (X), mediating variable (M), and dependent variable (Y).

Recruitment & Selection (X1), HR Analytics (M), and employee retention (Y):

- **H_{1a}**: Recruitment & Selection (X1) leads to employee retention.
- **H_{1b}**: Recruitment & Selection (X1) leads to HR Analytics.
- **H_{1c}**: Recruitment & Selection (X1) leads to employee retention controlling the effect of HR Analytics.

Rewards and Recognition (X2), HR Analytics (M), and employee retention (Y):

- **H_{2a}**: Rewards and Recognition leads to employee retention.
- **H_{2b}**: Rewards and Recognition leads to HR Analytics
- **H_{2c}**: Rewards and Recognition leads to employee retention controlling the effect of HR Analytics.

Employee Performance (X3), HR Analytics (M), and employee retention (Y):

- **H_{3a}**: Employee performance leads to employee retention.
- **H_{3b}**: Employee performance leads to HR Analytics.
- **H_{3c}**: Employee performance leads to employee retention controlling the effect of HR Analytics.

Training & Development (X4), HR Analytics (M), and employee retention (Y):

- **H_{4a}**: Training & Development leads to employee retention.
- **H_{4b}**: Training & Development leads to HR Analytics.
- **H_{4c}**: Training & Development leads to employee retention controlling the effect of HR Analytics.

Employee engagement (X5), HR Analytics (M), and employee retention (Y):

- **H_{5a}**: Employee engagement leads to employee retention.

- **H_{5b}**: Employee engagement leads to HR Analytics.
- **H_{5c}**: Employee engagement leads to employee retention controlling the effect of HR Analytics.

HR Analytics (M), and employee retention (Y):

- **H_{6a}**: HR Analytics leads to employee retention

Conclusion

The literature review has identified that human resource management in general and employee retention in particular has not been addressed in scholarly articles of Human Resource analytics however the academicians have been talking about the relevance of human resource in grey literature. Moreover, it is required to check the preference of HR people what they think about HR Analytics as an organizational capability to retain talent in their organization.

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