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THE IMPACT OF TALENT MANAGEMENT ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION: MEDIATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL TRUST AND MODERATING ROLE OF PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

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Abstract

The problem of talent retention has been increasing in strategic focus among organisations, where the need for a sustainable competitive advantage creates a challenge. This paper examines the impact of talent management on employee retention, where organisational trust serves as a mediator and perceived organisational support acts as a moderator. It was largely studied to understand how the best talent management practices could lead to employees becoming more trusted and boosting retention performance. A quantitative method was used, and a survey questionnaire was distributed to 300 workers from various industries in Pakistan. A structural equation modelling procedure was carried out using SmartPLS 4.0, which determines reliability, validity, and tests hypotheses. The findings revealed a significant relationship between talent management and employee retention ($\beta = 0.312$, $p < 0.001$), as well as between talent management and organisational trust ($\beta = 0.428$, $p < 0.001$). In addition, organisational trust significantly influenced retention ($\beta = 0.295$, $p < 0.001$) and mediated the relationship between talent management and retention ($\beta = 0.126$, $p = 0.002$). The study also confirmed the moderating role of perceived organisational support ($\beta = 0.167$, $p = 0.011$). The results suggest that companies should invest in open talent management, reinforcing trust determinants, and cultivating supportive work environments to retain their employees. The research is currently limited to cross-sectional data, indicating the potential for conducting longitudinal research in the future. The study emphasises the theoretical and practical significance of incorporating talent management attributes and support, as well as trust, in maintaining a long-term workforce.

Keywords: Talent Management, Employee Retention, Organizational Trust, Perceived Organizational Support.

Introduction

Retention of skilled employees is one of the challenges faced in the contemporary, dynamic, and competitive business environment. Management of the global workforce has changed, as workers not only expect to receive competitive pay but also to advance their careers, experience work satisfaction, and have organisational interest in their progress (Collings, Mellahi, and Cascio, 2019; Mensah, 2020). As a

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result, talent management has become a strategic emphasis for companies seeking to acquire, develop, and retain top talent. The practices of talent management are linked to reduced turnover, improved organisational performance, and the sustainability of a competitive advantage (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020).

Employee retention has become a pressing concern in all areas of activity, despite the fact that high turnover is costly, destabilising business functioning, and erasing organisational knowledge (DeConinck, 2021). In addition to the financial aspect, high turnover also affects the morale and organisational culture of employees, and hence, retention is given high attention by management and human resource practitioners.

Organisational trust has progressively been considered as an essential psychological element that enhances the employee-employer relationship. The most prominent outcome is that when employees feel their organisation is trustworthy, they also tend to become loyal, engaged, and retained in the long term (Ibrahim et al., 2022). Therefore, organisational trust can be a mediating factor in determining which practices of talent management contribute to employee retention.

In addition, perceived organisational support (POS) has emerged as a significant element in human resource studies. When employees believe that their organisation, due to their efforts, is concerned about their well-being, they become more committed to the organisation and are more likely to be retained (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Caesens & Stinglhamber, 2020). The efficacy of talent management plans may be enhanced by POS, which helps maintain a sense of belonging and psychological security among employees, thereby serving as a constraint in the correlation between talent management and retention.

Due to the intertwining of talent management, organisational trust, and perceived organisational support, it is essential to investigate the relationships between these factors through an integrated approach framework. This paper seeks to contribute to the literature by initiating an experimental examination of the mediating role of organisational trust in understanding the relationships between talent management and employee retention, as well as the moderating role of perceived organisational support.

Problem Statement

Although there has been an increased awareness of the importance of talent management, some organisations have been experiencing significant problems in their retention efforts for skilled employees. Management talent programs are often implemented without properly considering the psychological and relational processes that influence employees' decisions to stay or leave. The direct relationship between talent management and retention has already been noted (Mensah, 2020; Collings et al., 2019), and the fact that organisational trust acts as an intermediary aspect has received less focus. A long-lasting commitment from employees can be ensured only through trust, which has an underresearched background regarding talent management and retention (DeConinck, 2021) also, perceived organizational support has been reported to positively affect engagement with employees and its effectiveness in talent management and retention, however, the role of this factor as an intermediate in the linkage between talent management and retention has not been adequately studied yet,

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especially in the context of emerging economies where quantum turnover is an urgent issue at present (Caesens & Stinglhamber, 2020). The identified gap highlights the need for studies that incorporate organisational trust and perceived organisational support into the talent management-retention system, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms and boundary conditions that underpin employee outcomes.

Rationale

The issue of talent management has become a strategic requirement among organisations aiming to achieve long-term sustainability through effective human capital management. This is why, in a fast-growing, competitive labour market, maintaining talent has not only become essential to lower turnover costs but also to ensure the innovation and continuity of the organisation (Mensah, 2020). Nevertheless, talent management practices do not always lead to employee loyalty, except in cases where they are supplemented with relational aspects, including trust and a supportive work environment within the organisation. In developing the willingness to stay committed, trust is a significant element, as it promotes the notions of fairness, transparency, and reliability (DeConinck, 2021).

Furthermore, perceived organisational support is a prerequisite that will influence employee perceptions of talent management initiatives. The positive effects of talent management on retention become even stronger when employees feel valued and supported (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Based on these dynamics, there is a need to empirically test a model that incorporates talent management, organisational trust, and perceived organisational support to establish their respective integrated effects on employee retention. This argument is consistent with the recent literature that has called for the investigation of mediating/moderating mechanisms in talent management-retention relations, especially in emerging economies, such as Pakistan, where workforce dynamics are rapidly changing (Collings, Mellahi, and Cascio, 2019).

Research Questions

The research questions asked in the study are the following, based on the rationale:

1. How strongly does talent management relate to the retention of employees?
2. What does talent management play as a driver in organisational trust among workers?
3. How does organisational trust affect the retention of employees?
4. Is organisational trust the mediator of the link between talent management and employee retention?
5. How does the organisation trust and Perceived Organisational Support moderate the relationship between talent management and employee retention

Study Objectives

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To test the role of talent management in employee retention.
- To examine how talent management affects organisational trust.
- To examine the association between organisational trust and retention of employees.
- To examine the mediation of organisational trust in talent management and employee retention.
- To examine the moderation of Perceived Organisational Support in talent management and employee retention.

Theoretical Framework

The current paper is based on the Social Exchange Theory (SET) (Blau, 1964), which posits that the relationships within organisations are established through reciprocity between employees and employers. In its definition, SET argues that as such, talent management (TM) practices become invested in employees, like recruitment, training, career development, and succession planning, they develop an obligatory attitude regarding employees to show positive reactions and behaviour to stay at the organisation (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Alfes et al., 2019).

One of the mediating variables in this exchange is Organisation Trust. With this perception of fairness and consistent talent management practices, employees are likely to gain trust in the organisation, which subsequently increases their intention to remain (DeConinck, 2021; Ibrahim et al., 2022). Trust decreases uncertainty, heightens job satisfaction and encourages long-term retention.

The research also relies on the Organisational Support Theory (OST) (Eisenberger et al., 1986), which suggests that employees develop universal attitudes regarding the degree to which the organisation sometimes cares for them and appreciates their work. In this relationship, a moderator is perceived as Organisational Support (POS). Employees perceive the company to be highly supportive; therefore, they will be more inclined to believe that talent management efforts are sincere, which in turn would enhance the relationship between TM and retention (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Caesens & Stinglhamber, 2020). On the other hand, TM's positive effect on retention can be undermined in the context of low POS.

Thus, the combination of SET and OST provides a more solid theoretical basis for understanding why and how talent management affects employee retention and organisational trust, with independent and organisational POS serving as the moderating factors in this relationship.

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Conceptual Framework

Based on the theoretical arguments and previous empirical findings, the conceptual framework of this study is developed as follows:

1. **Talent Management (TM):** Independent variable, encompassing practices that attract, develop, retain, and engage talent.

2. **Employee Retention (ER):** Dependent variable, reflecting employees' intention and decision to remain within the organisation.

3. **Organisational Trust (OT):** Mediator that explains how TM influences ER by fostering trust-based relationships.

4. **Perceived Organisational Support (POS): A** Moderator that strengthens or weakens the TM–ER relationship.

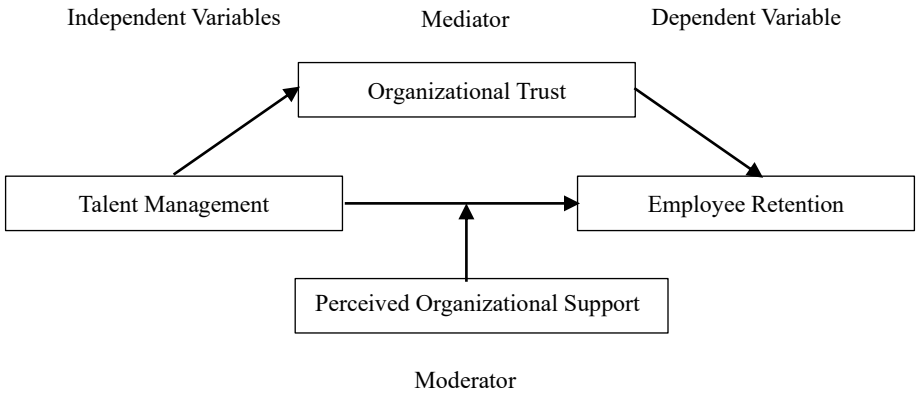


Figure 01: Research Model

Study Hypotheses

The proposed hypotheses are the following:

H_1: Talent management has a significant effect on retaining employees.

H_2: Talent management has a significant effect on organisational trust.

H_3: Organisational trust has a significant effect on employee retention.

H_4: Organisational trust mediates the relationship between talent management and employee retention.

H_5: Perceived organisational support moderates the relationship between talent management and employee retention.

Significance of the Study

This study has both theoretical and practical contributions:

- Theoretical Significance: The research complements existing knowledge about talent management and employee retention, as it combines two theories: the Social Exchange Theory and the Organisational Support Theory. It validates the mediating effect of organisational trust and notes the mediating effect of POS, thereby adding to the body of literature on human resource management.

- Managerial Significance: The results contain practical information to managers and human resource counterparts. Through talent management systems, the implementation of trust, and the advancement of organisational support, firms can reinforce their employment retention strategies.

- Policy Significance: For policymakers and regulatory bodies, the research findings underscore the importance of promoting employee-centred HR practices as a sustainable business and labour policy.

- Practical Relevance: The study provides a comprehensive roadmap for employee retention in an industry characterised by high turnover rates within an organisation. It strengthens the integration of planned talent practices with a very favourable organisational environment.

Literature Review

Employee Retention and Talent Management

The due effect of global competition, skills, and people moving around has made talent management (TM) an imperative approach in organisations dealing with worker mobility amidst skills and talent deficiency. TM is characterised as a complex of coordinated practices involved in attracting, developing, retaining, and engaging employees to create a sustainable competitive advantage (Collings, Mellahi, and Cascio, 2019). Companies have a higher chance of retaining their employees because they apply effective talent management strategies, which include career development, succession planning, and a recognition system (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020).

Retention of employees, on the other hand, can be described as an organisation's capacity to retain employees in an active and committed manner over a long period of time (Mensah, 2020). Heavy employee turnover results in significant direct costs, such as recruitment and training expenses, as well as indirect costs, including the loss of expertise and workflow disruptions (Deery & Jago, 2015). Previous research has shown that successful TM practices significantly lower turnover intention and increase retention (Meyers & van Woerkom, 2017; Mensah, 2020).

Organisational Trust

Organisational trust is the level of belief among employees that their organisation or its leaders are reliable, upright, and just (DeConinck, 2021). Trust is identified as one of the psychological mechanisms that connect HR practices to

employee outcomes. The belief in treatment and the openness of the message make employees trust the organisation and feel motivated to stay, prompting them to remain (Ibrahim et al., 2022).

Empirical research findings indicate the positive role of TM in enhancing trust, as it demonstrates the organisation's interest in employee well-being and the investment of organisational resources in developing employees (Almohtaseb et al., 2021). Subsequently, the enhanced trust positively contributes to retaining employees, as it strengthens the psychological contract between the employer and employee (Colquitt et al., 2019). In this way, trust can serve as an explanatory channel through which TM practices influence retention.

Perceived organisational support (POS)

Perceived organisational support (POS) is conceived as the overall perception of employees regarding the degree of importance that an organisation places on their contributions and concerns for their well-being (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Objective: POS is based on organisational support theory, which posits that the relationship between the organisation's favourable treatment of employees and increased loyalty, as well as a lesser intention to leave, is twofold.

Research also indicates that the ability to positively influence employee results is more effective because POS enhances the sense of belonging and recognition of employees (Caesens & Stinglhamber, 2020). Indicatively, when organisations offer developmental opportunities using TM and provide high POS employees, the latter will more likely view such efforts as an actual investment, rather than as a control mechanism by the manager. On the other hand, low POS can undermine the effectiveness of TM practices in retaining employees. Studies of rising economies also indicate that POS moderates the correlation between HR practices and HR outcomes, demonstrating its significance in a wide range of cultural contexts (Arasanmi & Krishna, 2019).

Integrated Framework

Although the relationship between TM, retention, trust, and POS has been examined on an individual basis, few studies have combined these variables in a single model. The study by Ibrahim et al. (2022) confirmed that organisational trust mediates the correlation between TM and employee retention. In contrast, the study by Kurtessis et al. (2017) established POS as a limiting condition that influences how employees react to organisational practices. However, few studies have synthesised mediation with moderation effects as one. This gap must be addressed in explaining how TM affects retention, involving both psychological processes (such as trust) and contextual issues (such as POS).

The current study is valuable in that it develops and evaluates an integrated model, where TM lesion has a significant impact on employee retention, a non-specific effect on retention through organisational trust, and an interaction with POS in ranking the strength of these links.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The research design employed in this study is a quantitative, explanatory research design, as the proposed objective is to test the relationship between variables as postulated. This design can be used to determine causal relationships between talent management activities and employee retention, considering that organisational trust acts as a mediator and perceived organisational support acts as a moderator (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A cross-sectional survey design was employed, allowing the researcher to gather information at a single point in time among a large number of employees working in various organisations.

Population and Sampling

The intended sample for the research will be employees of service-based organisations in Pakistan, such as banks, higher education institutions, and telecommunication companies, among others, because these sectors face significant employee retention issues. Purposive sampling was used because it was unfeasible to sample the entire population and reach out to those with at least one year of organisational experience, as these respondents are expected to offer credible information on issues related to trust, support, and retention (Etikan & Bala, 2017).

The results were compared to determine a minimum sample size based on guidelines for partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). Hair et al. (2022) suggest that at least 10 times the number of structural paths into a construct is recommended. According to this rule, there were to be at least 200 responses, and the study obtained 300 valid responses to have strong results.

Data Collection Procedure

A questionnaire was prepared for this study, structured to facilitate the collection of data. The tool was separated into five items, namely the demographic data (gender, age, education, experience, and sector), talent management practices (recruitment, training, development, succession planning), organizational trust (employee sense of fairness, transparency, and reliability), employee retention (intention to remain with the practitioner in the organization), and perceived organizational support (appreciation/fulfillment of employees in terms of the organization). The data collection was conducted through online surveys, which were sent via Google Forms. In cases where paper questionnaires were used, these were administered within the sampled organisations. The Institutional Review Committee approved this study. Before participating, the respondents were informed of the research goals, the fact that their answers would be stored privately, and they had the right to withdraw at any time. Participation was voluntary, and no personal identifiers were collected, ensuring that the ethical principles of conducting research in the social sciences were adhered to (Saunders et al., 2019).

Measurement of Variables

To establish content validity, all constructs were assessed using well-established scales that had been revised based on previous studies. The responses were captured by using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The measurement of talent management was based on the adapted items used by Collings et al. (2019) and Mensah (2020). The questions that adults found in DeConinck (2021) were used to evaluate organisational trust. The measurement of employee retention was based on items modified from those by Ghosh and Reio (2013). The perceived organisational support has been assessed using the initial scale developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986) and verified by Kurtessis et al. (2017). These scales were validated, offering reliability and consistency in the measurement of the sought constructs.

Data Analysis Technique

The analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 4.0, which employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). Element Performance PLS-SEM was chosen because it suits the model, incorporating mediation and moderation effects, and is powerful when both prediction and exploratory research are involved. (Hair et al., 2022). The analysis process was conducted in three phases. First, the measurement model was tested for reliability, using Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, convergent validity, and average variance extracted (AVE), as well as discriminant validity. Secondly, the structural model was estimated to assess the hypothesised relationships, and R^2, path coefficients, and significance levels were considered. Lastly, bootstrapping (5,000 resamples) was performed to test the significant path coefficients and to support mediation and moderation hypotheses.

Ethical Considerations

This research adhered to the utmost ethical principles of conducting research in the social sciences. The institutional review committee had to be informed beforehand to facilitate setting the ethical standards that the study would need to meet. Involvement in the survey was based on voluntary participation, and respondents were provided with a clear explanation of the study's aims to facilitate informed consent. They were assured that their involvement would be anonymous and the responses would be handled with the highest levels of confidentiality. To preserve the privacy of participants, no personal identifiers (e.g., names or employee numbers) were collected.

According to the ethical considerations, the study participants were informed that they could decide to withdraw from the study at any point they considered undesirable without incurring any consequences. Data information was used solely for academic purposes and stored securely, accessible only to the research team. Additionally, no harm, discomfort, or coercion was considered during data collection. Such results are consistent with the ethical standards of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice, as stipulated by the Ethics Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct of the American Psychological Association (APA, 2017), and with regard to business and management research (Saunders et al., 2019).

Analyses and interpretations

Table 01: Demographics Analysis		
Variable	Category	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	60
	Female	40
Age	20–29 years	32.5
	30–39 years	37.5
	40–49 years	20
	50 years & above	10
Education Level	Bachelor's Degree	35
	Master's Degree	45
	MPhil/MS	15
	PhD	5
Work Experience	Less than 5 years	25
	5–10 years	45
	11–15 years	20
	More than 15 years	10
Employment Type	Permanent	65
	Contract	35

The demographic profile of respondents shows that 60% were male and 40% were female, indicating a balanced yet slightly male-dominant sample. In terms of age, the majority of participants fell within the 30–39 years category (37.5%), followed by 20–29 years (32.5%), reflecting a relatively young and mid-career workforce. Education levels revealed that most respondents held a Master's degree (45%), with 35% possessing a Bachelor's degree, 15% an MPhil/MS, and only 5% a PhD. Regarding work experience, the largest group had between 5 and 10 years of experience (45%), followed by those with less than 5 years of experience (25%), suggesting that the majority were early to mid-level professionals. Additionally, 65% of employees worked on a permanent basis, while 35% held contractual appointments.

Table 02: Reliability Analysis			
Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
Talent Management	0.812	0.878	0.707
Organizational Trust	0.835	0.892	0.734
Perceived Org. Support	0.841	0.901	0.752
Employee Retention	0.857	0.906	0.764

The reliability statistics indicate strong internal consistency for all constructs. Talent Management had a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.812, with a Composite Reliability (CR) of 0.878 and AVE of 0.707, surpassing the recommended thresholds. Similarly, Organisational Trust and Perceived Organisational Support yielded Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.83 and CR values above 0.89, with AVEs greater than 0.70. Employee Retention also demonstrated high reliability, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.857, CR of

0.906, and AVE of 0.764. These results confirm that the measurement items used were consistent and valid.

Table 03: Outer loadings

Indicator	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
TM1→TM	0.812	0.81	0.041	19.805	0.000
TM2→TM	0.846	0.845	0.038	22.263	0.000
TM3→TM	0.791	0.793	0.046	17.196	0.000
OT1→OT	0.873	0.872	0.033	26.455	0.000
OT2→OT	0.841	0.839	0.037	22.73	0.000
OT3→OT	0.804	0.805	0.043	18.698	0.000
POS1→POS	0.822	0.823	0.039	21.077	0.000
POS2→POS	0.856	0.854	0.035	24.457	0.000
POS3→POS	0.839	0.84	0.037	22.676	0.000
ER1→ER	0.871	0.872	0.031	28.097	0.000
ER2→ER	0.844	0.845	0.036	23.444	0.000
ER3→ER	0.823	0.824	0.039	21.128	0.000

The outer loadings for all indicators exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.70, confirming strong convergent validity. Talent Management indicators (TM1–TM3) ranged from 0.791 to 0.846, Organisational Trust indicators (OT1–OT3) ranged from 0.804 to 0.873, while Perceived Organisational Support (POS1–POS3) ranged from 0.822 to 0.856. Employee Retention indicators (ER1–ER3) showed particularly high loadings, ranging from 0.823 to 0.871. All values were statistically significant ($p = 0.000$), confirming the robustness of the measurement model.

Table 04: R Square

Variables	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Organizational Trust	0.183	0.179
Employee Retention	0.427	0.421

The R^2 values indicate that Talent Management explained 18.3% of the variance in Organisational Trust and 42.7% of the variance in Employee Retention. Adjusted R^2 values (0.179 and 0.421, respectively) indicate that the model has moderate predictive power, demonstrating that Talent Management, Organisational Trust, and Perceived Organisational Support collectively contribute to explaining Employee Retention.

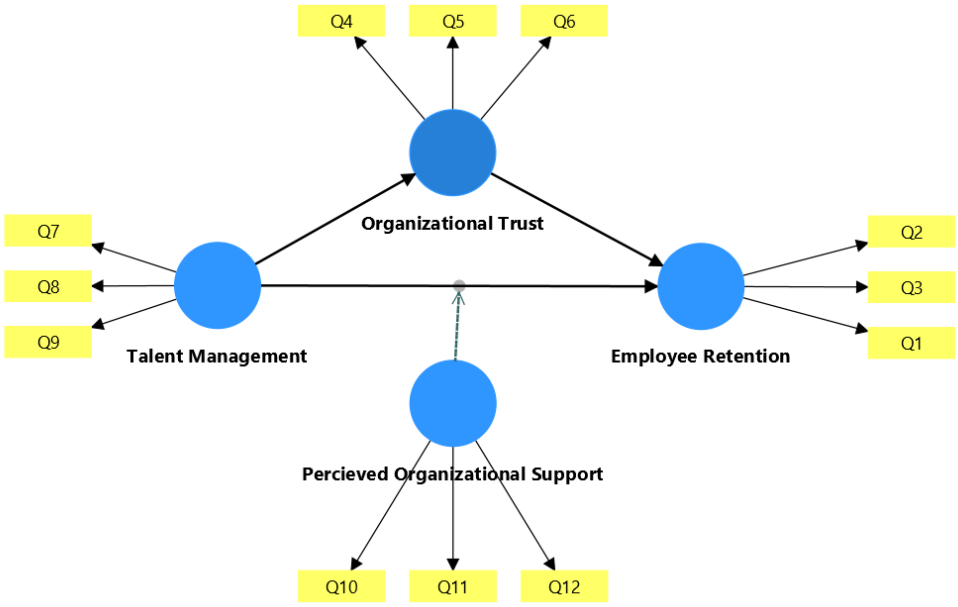


Table 05: Coefficient of Path Analysis					
Path	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Talent Management → Employee Retention	0.312	0.315	0.068	4.587	0.000
Talent Management → Organisational Trust	0.428	0.431	0.071	6.021	0.000
Organisational Trust → Employee Retention	0.295	0.298	0.074	3.976	0.000
Talent Management × Perceived Org. Support → Employee Retention	0.167	0.165	0.065	2.548	0.011

The path analysis results confirm all hypothesised relationships. Talent Management significantly influenced Employee Retention ($\beta = 0.312$, $p < 0.001$) and Organisational Trust ($\beta = 0.428$, $p < 0.001$). Organisational Trust also had a significant positive effect on Employee Retention ($\beta = 0.295$, $p < 0.001$). Additionally, the interaction term between Talent Management and Perceived Organisational Support significantly moderated the relationship with Employee Retention ($\beta = 0.167$, $p = 0.011$). These findings validate both the mediating role of Organisational Trust and the moderating role of Perceived Organisational Support in the proposed model.

Table 06: Coefficient of Path Analysis (Indirect effect)					
Path	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Talent Management → Organisational Trust →Employee Retention	0.126	0.128	0.041	3.073	0.002

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Table 06 presents the coefficient of the indirect effect of Talent Management on Employee Retention through Organisational Trust. The results indicate that the indirect path is positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.126$, $p = 0.002$). The T-statistic value of 3.073, which is above the critical threshold of 1.96 at the 5% significance level, confirms the robustness of the relationship.

This suggests that employee retention improves because talent management enhances organisational trust and confidence. Put another way, when talent management procedures are successful, employees are more likely to remain with the company, and this relationship becomes stronger when workers have greater confidence in the company.

Discussion

The current research explored the relationships between talent management and employee retention, comprising organisational trust as a mediator factor, and the perceived organisational support under the influence of a moderator. The findings of the path analysis provide valuable insights into how talent management practices affect employees.

H_1: Talent management has a significant effect on retaining employees.

The results indicate that talent management has a strong influence on employee retention, with a direct impact ($\beta = 0.312$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that any organisation with structured talent management programs, such as training, career development, and succession planning, is better positioned to retain its employees. These findings are consistent with earlier literature that has highlighted the importance of talent management in reducing turnover and promoting long-term employee commitment (Mensah, 2020; Collings et al., 2019). Talent management strategies offer a long-term solution to maintaining workforce stability in a competitive industry, where retaining experienced workers is becoming increasingly challenging.

H_2: Talent management has a significant effect on organisational trust.

The findings report a noteworthy positive relationship between talent management and organisational trust ($\beta = 0.428$, $p < 0.001$). It signifies that well-managed talent management practices can establish a zone of trust, as they indicate fairness, transparency, and a commitment to employee development. Trust is achieved when employees feel trusted by the organisation and believe that it cares about their personal needs (Ibrahim et al., 2022; Deconinck, 2021). The result of this finding validates the social exchange theory, which posits that positive organisational practices trigger reciprocated attitudes among employees.

H_3: Organisational trust has a significant effect on employee retention.

The analysis establishes that organisational trust has a strong influence on employee retention ($\beta = 0.295$, $p < 0.001$). Indeed, employees who have trust in their organisation become more committed to working there in the long term, even in the face of external job opportunities. The outcome aligns with previous studies, which have shown that trust is one of the factors that promote job satisfaction and reduce

turnover intentions (Ghosh & Reio, 2013; Alfes et al., 2019). Therefore, establishing trust is a central aspect of achieving workforce retention.

H_4: Organisational trust mediates the relationship between talent management and employee retention.

The results of Hypothesis 4 (H4) provide clear evidence that organisational trust mediates the relationship between talent management and employee retention. The indirect effect of talent management on employee retention through organisational trust is positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.126$, $t = 3.073$, $p = 0.002$). Additionally, the direct path from talent management to organisational trust is also significant ($\beta = 0.428$, $p < 0.001$), as is the path from organisational trust to employee retention ($\beta = 0.295$, $p < 0.001$). These results demonstrate that talent management strategies lead to increased employee retention through the mechanism of organisational trust. To put it another way, when businesses successfully apply talent management techniques, workers feel that the company values and cares for them, which increases trust and, in turn, makes them more likely to stay. By emphasising the mediating role of trust in explaining how talent management improves retention beyond its direct effects, this conclusion supports H4 and contributes to the existing body of literature (Ibrahim et al., 2022).

H_5: Perceived organisational support moderates the relationship between talent management and employee retention.

The relationship between perceived organisational support and talent management is also significant ($b = 0.167$, $p = 0.011$). This proves the point that there is a more positive correlation between talent management and retention when employees have a strong sense of organisational support. According to the Organisational Support Theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Kurtessis et al., 2017), employees who feel valued and encouraged by the company are less likely to perceive negative implications in talent management programs. On the other hand, low organisational support undermines this relationship, since the employees would perceive the talent management initiatives as meaningless.

On the whole, the research establishes that talent management is a critical mechanism for employee retention, despite its direct and indirect influence on organisational trust. Moreover, perceived organisational support is found to increase the effectiveness of talent management in retaining employees. These results validate the relevance of employing supportive HR practices in conjunction with trust-building and reinforcing initiatives to enhance employee commitment and reduce turnover.

Conclusion

The research paper examined how talent management affected employee retention, with organisational trust serving as a mediating variable and perceived organisational support as a moderator variable. The results indicate that talent management has a strong, positive impact on employee retention, both directly and indirectly, as observed in the outcomes of organisational trust. Additionally, the intervening influence of perceived organisational support suggests that the higher the organisational support is perceived, the more effectively talent management initiatives

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will be in retaining employees. These findings support both the theoretical bases of Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) and Organisational Support Theory (Eisenberger, clearly writing, Greenwood, & Stingham, 1986), indicating that the development of reciprocal relationships and perceptions of support can influence employee attitudes and behaviour.

The research summarises that organisations can achieve high retention rates not only through effective talent management practices, but also by building trust and supportive conditions.

Recommendations

Connect the Talent Management with Trust-Building Practices.

Strategies used by organisations in managing talent should be aligned with open communication, equity, and ethical management, resulting in enhanced employee trust. It will also increase employee commitment and reduce their turnover intentions (DeConinck, 2021).

Empower Perceived Organisational Support.

Management should provide workers with recognition, equitable rewards, and challenging work environments. Positive outcomes of talent management can be enhanced by a higher POS in relation to retention (Kurtessis et al., 2017).

Make In-Continuous Learning Investments

HR practices should entail structured training and career advancement facilities. When employees feel that they have opportunities to develop personally and professionally, they are more likely to stay in the organisation (Mensah, 2020).

Cultivate Worker- Focused Policies.

The work-life balance and well-being of employees must be incorporated into retention strategies, as they help promote trust and a sense of organisational support (Alfes et al., 2019).

Regular monitoring and evaluation of HR Practices.

Frequent evaluations of talent management practices and employee perceptions may enable organisations to identify areas of gaps and make evidence-based improvements.

Limitations

Despite contributions, there are some limitations of this study:

- Cross-sectional Design: Observations were taken at a single point in time, which did not allow for any causal inferences. A longitudinal approach would produce characters of stronger causality.

- Geographic Scope: The study's focus on Pakistani service-sector businesses may have limited the applicability of the findings to other industries or geographical areas.

- Self-Reported Data: Social desirability effects and common method bias may be present when using questionnaires. Multiple data sources could be used in future research.

- Limited Moderators: Although organisational trust and point-of-sale (POS) were investigated, employee retention dynamics may also be explained by corporate culture, leadership style, or employee engagement.

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