

## Enhancing Teacher Satisfaction and Retention through HRM Practices in Secondary Schools

Dr. Saman Sidqi Hamad Ameen  
Erbil Technical Administrative College/  
Erbil Polytechnic University, Lecturer,  
[saman.hamadameen@epu.edu.iq](mailto:saman.hamadameen@epu.edu.iq)  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3397-9182>

Pieroz Khidir Abdullah  
Erbil Polytechnic University  
Erbil Technical Administrative institute  
[Pieroz.abdullah@gmail.com](mailto:Pieroz.abdullah@gmail.com)  
<https://orcid.org/0000-1234-5678-9101>

Sadraddin Zrar Salih  
Supervisor and Follow-up Manager at  
the General Directorate of Education,  
Erbil  
[sadraddin26@gmail.com](mailto:sadraddin26@gmail.com)  
<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-5289-0979>

### Abstract:

This paper investigates the relationship between Human Resource Management (HRM) practices, teacher satisfaction, and retention in secondary schools connected with General Education in Erbil City, Iraq. Using a statistical cross-sectional approach, the study investigates the present condition of HRM practices and their influence on teacher satisfaction and retention. A varied sample of 204 teachers took part, offering insights via structured surveys evaluating HRM practices, teacher satisfaction, and elements affecting retention. Results show statistically significant favorable correlations stressing the fundamental importance of good HRM practices in forming a good work environment. Although many teachers voiced happiness, some issues in job security, communication, workload, and fairness of disciplinary processes need for focused effort. The report advises a complete strategy, including refining HRM methods, enhancing communication, and providing targeted interventions to address specific challenges. For constant improvements, continuous feedback systems are suggested, hence providing Erbil City's educational institutions a strategic road map to raise teacher retention and satisfaction. This study offers insightful analysis to create a good and encouraging school atmosphere by recognizing and satisfying the various demands of the teachers.

**Keywords: Human Resource Management, Teacher Satisfaction, Teacher Retention, HRM Practices, and Secondary Schools**

## **Introduction**

Educational institutions depend on the happiness and retention of teachers, which greatly influence the standard of instruction and the general learning environment. This paper addresses the link between Human Resource Management (HRM) practices, teacher satisfaction, and retention in secondary schools linked to General Education in Erbil City, Iraq. The study underlines the need of knowing and enhancing these elements because of their great consequences for the sector of education. The importance of teachers is first when educational institutions seek to deliver high-quality education. The performance of teachers is intimately related to their professional commitment and happiness. This study intends to investigate the present HRM practices in secondary schools of Erbil City and how they influence teacher retention and satisfaction. Teacher retention and satisfaction are vital for educational institutions to prosper and remain stable, particularly secondary schools. Too much teacher turnover could disrupt the classroom and hinder student development. Finding and using effective human resource management (HRM) strategies is absolutely essential if teacher retention and happiness are to be enhanced (Ingersoll & Strong 2011). HRM policies include a variety of strategies and rules used to attract, develop, and retain qualified teachers. Some of these are favorable work environments, salary and benefits, performance evaluations, professional development, and recruitment and selection. By putting into practice efficient HRM techniques, schools may create a successful workplace that minimizes turnover and raises teacher satisfaction (Ingersoll, 2001; İzci et al., 2021). Teacher happiness is influenced by many factors including job stability, workload, chance for professional growth, leadership support, and school environment. When teachers

feel valued and supported, they are more likely to be engaged in their work and committed to their institution.

Higher retention rates and greater teacher satisfaction can result from HRM approaches that take these elements into account (Ramada, 2020). Keeping skilled and productive instructors on staff is essential to preserving the continuity and quality of instruction. Regular staff turnover can negatively impact student achievement and disrupt the learning process. Teacher retention can be aided by HRM strategies that emphasize rewarding and recognizing teachers' success, offering chances for professional growth, and cultivating a cooperative and encouraging atmosphere (Ingersoll & Strong 2011). Effective HRM methods have advantages that go beyond teacher retention and personal happiness. An environment that is favorable and supportive for both instructors and students is produced by schools that place a high priority on HRM practices. Collaboration, creativity, and general academic achievement are all higher in these schools (Leithwood, K., Harris & Strauss 2010). In secondary schools, it is crucial to improve teacher retention and satisfaction through efficient HRM procedures. Schools can guarantee the continuation of high-quality education and have a beneficial influence on student outcomes by providing teachers with a supportive and fulfilling work environment. By identifying HRM practices that improve teacher retention and satisfaction, this study aims to advance the present body of research and raise the standard of education as a whole. In the parts that follow, this study will examine pertinent research on teacher retention and satisfaction, assess knowledge gaps, and outline the research questions that will direct the inquiry. By thoroughly examining HRM practices in secondary schools, the study aims to provide insightful information that can guide evidence-based tactics for raising teacher retention and satisfaction, which will improve secondary education quality.

## **The Importance of Teacher Satisfaction and Retention in Secondary Schools**

The attrition of teachers in secondary schools is detrimental to the quality of education. A lack of teacher commitment may lead to student disengagement and, ultimately, poor performance. School cultures that are effectively managed and cohesive result from teachers whose job satisfaction is high and attrition is low (Doherty, 2020; İzci and Hamad Ameen, 2023). Teachers are more motivated and stay with the school system longer if the support systems of the school, and their principals, are good. Principals play a crucial role in determining the level of job satisfaction among teachers (Dicke et al.2020). The fact that a significant percentage of teachers leave their schools within the first five years, coupled with the increase in job opportunities, means that attracting and retaining highly trained teachers who have the requisite subject knowledge has become a key recruitment issue (DeMatthews et al.2022).

There is a considerable amount of evidence showing that schools with high teacher turnover rates tend to show lower student academic achievement test scores (Jensen, 2021). Turnover affects the continuity of teaching, consistency, and the learning process in schools. Teacher attrition and turnover can have an immediate impact on the social cohesion and organizational knowledge of the community and the school in which such mobility occurs (Henry & Redding, 2020; Ameen and Othman, 2021). Although solutions to teacher turnover vary from community to community because of different staffing movements in various schools and school settings, any successful means of reducing teacher turnover is a long-term strategy process, requiring considerable effort over several years, both in terms of selection and support through a school context (Alshurideh et al.2023).

## **Key HRM Practices for Enhancing Teacher Satisfaction and Retention**

Given the paramount significance of cultivating a strong connection between business and education and ensuring complete coherence between the

objectives of both the organization and teachers, it becomes crucial to acknowledge that the successful execution of numerous HRM practices in secondary schools largely relies on the ability to adapt the HR systems within organizations to encompass the preferences, values, and motivations of teachers (Kutieshat & Farmanesh, 2022). A thorough analysis of the existing literature undoubtedly showcases the substantial and intricate nature of such an endeavor, demanding school leaders, who are often bound by challenging market constraints, to acquire a deeper comprehension of the factors that drive employee retention and boost morale within their educational institutions (Heffernan, 2021). Fortunately, there exist several pioneering schools and/or school districts that serve as exemplars, illustrating the immense potential for learning from their current practices (Gerber et al., 2024).

### **Recruitment and Selection Strategies**

Once nearly half of teachers leave within the first five years, it's crucial to recruit and retain the best. Key to securing an educator corps are recruitment methods that draw professionals to the field and systematized hiring processes that attract quality candidates (Schaack et al.2022).

Without a system, hiring is left to individual administrative interpretation. This can result in judgments in teacher hiring that lead to bias among colleagues in education (O'Meara et al.2020). Successful administrators know that the job description must be clear—what responsibilities are covered and what do we do as a school that is unique? What does the person who decides to come and work with us need to believe? How can we measure those beliefs or show evidence that a candidate has these beliefs? Hiring that is hosted is crucial (Toropova et al., 2021). Many schools have used job fairs, lunch, and other activities to attract current student teachers on campus, and other educational venues to recruitment efforts (Smith et al.2023). Some policies should be closely reviewed to ensure that student teaching programs result in teacher hires and don't hinder efforts to

retain teachers. It can be challenging, but it pays off considerably (See et al., 2020). It pays off with every teacher who wants to align with your school's values and who values a supportive and inclusive staff fighting for academic progress. The backward hire principles are grounded more heavily on the concept that talent fits culture; qualifications are definitely both necessary and important (Tran & Smith, 2020).

### **Professional Development Opportunities**

Continuous learning is essential for educators as it allows them to stay connected to best practices, pedagogical advances, and to model the truth behind being a 'life-long learner.' Professional development opportunities are an essential HRM practice (Shmeleva2020). Educational institutions that provide teachers with these opportunities signal that they are aware of individual teacher needs and support teachers as they grow. There are many kinds of professional development opportunities. Workshops and meetings bring teachers together with a speaker or presenter to discuss some aspect of the educational process (Fairman et al.2022). Many institutions use mentorship opportunities to support newer teachers. Mentorship programs partner a new teacher with a veteran teacher who provides understanding and support as the new teacher transitions into the new place of employment. Many schools support teachers to complete advanced training and degrees in the educational areas in which they work (Dahlke et al.2021; Ewing, 2021).

When designing professional growth activities, there are several principles educators should consider. It is valuable when all staff in an educational institution have a chance to access support services or learning opportunities (Donitsa-Schmidt & Ramot, 2020). It is more valuable when the experience is 'job-embedded' (ones in which teachers deal with the real students and curriculum experienced daily). Support for growth also seems more effective when it focuses on the issues that are directly related to an institution's vision, mission, and goals

(Haug & Mork, 2021). Furthermore, support services need to be based on the individual needs of teachers. This means that the experiences a person has should help support development in a manner that has personal meaning, supports their capacities, and has the potential to provide a bank of strategies that they can use and adapt in their own settings (Alam and Mohanty2022). Studies find that when schools provide professional development opportunities, and teachers take part in them, teacher retention rates increase (Räsänen et al.2020). Collaborative environments can contribute to the retention of teachers in an institution. When teachers have the opportunity to discuss student achievement data and work with other staff to develop strategies that support students, the job is more rewarding, and staff are less likely to leave (Ortan et al.2021). Teachers who have access to good professional or career development strategies are also more committed to an institution. When an institution invests not just in hiring and retaining people, but also in those employees, the institution sends a message that a person is a very important and valued member of the educational community. A setting of continuous improvement is essential for all. Teachers and other staff pay attention to this notion and appreciate leaders who have committed to this ideal (Sancar et al., 2021).

### **Performance Evaluation and Feedback Mechanisms**

Aside from recruitment and selection, training and induction, who gets promoted, feedback is also important in terms of staff retention. Performance evaluation enables employees to understand the quality of their performance and how their salary rises and promotions are accounted for. It also helps employees in terms of determining strengths, weaknesses, and areas for development (Ghani et al.2022; Ameen and Bektaş, 2023). This feedback could provide important signals to those who are not satisfied with their working conditions. Furthermore, performance evaluation also provides a supportive environment that acknowledges an employee's achievements in contributing to the success of the



organization. It may also be expected that feedback regarding contributions to the students effectively, participation in extracurricular activities, cooperation with colleagues, professionals, as well as the parents, rewards, and the workload level can be useful in building a positive working environment conducive to managing teacher retention in the schools (DeMatthews et al.2022).

If improved teaching and learning is the primary goal for the evaluation, then the process should be mainly formative. An effective formative evaluation system holds the attention of the teachers and can act as a force for change in the classroom. Constructive evaluation has to be coupled with supportive supervision and sensibly implemented to have the desired effect (Ford & Hewitt, 2020). A sound evaluation system determines what is important, requires well-defined standards or criteria, provides a clear idea of the judged performance, ensures a fair evaluation result, is specific, immediate, and regular due to the rapid pace of decay of every teaching improvement after an evaluation, depends on multiple sources, and provides suggestions in an appropriate style taking into consideration individual needs (Chukwuka and Dibia2024; Atmaca and Ameen, 2022). In schools, performance evaluation should be seen as not only an evaluation system that implicates accountability, rewards, or for “flushing out” the stragglers, but also to create the kind of environment where growth and learning is a normal and expected fact of life. Integration of feedback from multiple sources and settings will help to make the observation more accurate, and the overall judgment should be based on reflective teaching as the most effective professional development (Russ-Eft et al., 2024). The reflective judgment should be gained through collaborating with colleagues, administering self-reflections, parents, coaches, students, and the outcomes of student performance. Evaluation should enable teachers to become accountable for their expertise and practices. In practice, evaluation has also been linked to a range of models and management processes. A hierarchical evaluation criteria and rewards



system could potentially have long-term retention implications on teacher morale, not only in regard to perceived management hierarchy but also in terms of diminished teaching spirit. We can expect a basic shifting of teachers' loyalties as they form their own departments or subject areas as teams (Alhmoud & Rjoub, 2020).

## **Organizational Culture and Climate in Secondary Schools**

### **Organizational Culture**

Organizational culture is perhaps one of the most significant factors that contribute to teacher satisfaction and retention. Organizational culture consists of shared values, beliefs, assumptions, and behaviors that give the school a unique atmosphere (Smith and Holloway2020). Corporate culture is shown by values that guide decision-making and behavior, and it addresses its external and internal environment. Over time, this culture becomes an entrenched system of values and beliefs, practices, and rituals, as well as artifacts, such as language and history. A positive school culture will provide guidance for staff to make sound decisions, as well as policies and procedures that assist with their professional life (Nabella et al.2022; Atmaca and Ameen, 2022).

### **Organizational Climate**

Organizational climate is a persona of the school that can be inferred from the way we experience climate. Climate and culture are interrelated. Culture is the essence of a set of core values that makes schools alike. Climate is the customs and traditions, certainly drawn from the core values, making one school different from another (MARTÍNEZ-ARROYO and VALENZO-JIMÉNEZ2020). In brief, climate is what comprises the organization's personality at a specific moment. The climate influences people's psychological state and behavior at work, the school's effectiveness, and ultimately, students' learning. The climates of most interest are those that affect teacher job satisfaction and morale, commitment and

motivation, effectiveness as a professional, improvement in performance, retention, and attrition (Toropova et al., 2021; İzci, 2021).

## Hypothesis

### 1. Relationship between HRM Practices and Teacher Satisfaction:

- $H_0$ : There is no significant relationship between HRM practices in secondary schools and teacher satisfaction.
- $H_1$ : There is a significant positive relationship between HRM practices in secondary schools and teacher satisfaction.

### 2. Mediating Effect of Teacher Satisfaction on the Relationship between HRM Practices and Teacher Retention:

- $H_0$ : Teacher satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between HRM practices in secondary schools and teacher retention.
- $H_1$ : Teacher satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between HRM practices in secondary schools and teacher retention.

### 3. Direct Relationship between HRM Practices and Teacher Retention:

- $H_0$ : There is no direct relationship between HRM practices in secondary schools and teacher retention.
- $H_1$ : There is a direct positive relationship between HRM practices in secondary schools and teacher retention.

## Methodology

This study used a quantitative, cross-sectional design to examine the relationship between human resource management (HRM) practices and teacher satisfaction and retention in secondary schools in Erbil, Iraq Using a cross-sectional approach to collect information orally at the same time, provided a snapshot of current HRM practices. and its effect on emotions. The survey was conducted in a majority of the secondary schools under the Department of Education in Erbil, where the city was selected to receive different schools During a period of three and a half months, from 1 September to 15 December 2024,

sample of 204 teachers to ensure diversity and representativeness Data were collected through a systematic survey, based on established HR policies, accepted teacher satisfaction measures, and provided electronically for efficiency and timely data collection. Key study variables included HRM practices (independent variable), teacher retention (dependent variable), and teacher satisfaction factors (mediator variable). HRM practices were assessed through questionnaires on recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and employee development. Descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analyses were used to examine the relationship between HRM practices, teacher satisfaction, and retention, SPSS was used for analysis The study followed ethical guidelines to ensure the participants' confidentiality, anonymity, and informed consent were protected, and participants were informed.

## Results

The socio-demographic traits of the examined population show a range of concerns. Of the sample, 60.8%, the 36-45 age group exhibits notable representation among the participants. This suggests that a significant percentage of instructors are mid-career, which could affect their job happiness and professional growth. Most of the participants were male; they made up 71.6% of the sample; 28.4% was female. Understanding the experiences and perspectives of male and female teachers in the secondary school setting may be affected by this gender imbalance educational level shows that most have a BSc degree (77.5%), which may affect educational attainment and requirements for effective teaching. Furthermore, the distribution of years of experience shows a large percentage (67.6%) of teachers with 11-20 years of experience, indicating an important group at times where factors affecting job satisfaction are job retention may be particularly relevant for foundations, providing valuable context for the main objectives of the study.

**Table 1:** Distribution of Teachers' Responses to HRM Practices Questions in Secondary Schools

Levels	Frequency	Percent
Excellent	43	21.1
Good	44	21.6
Average	46	22.5
Bad	32	15.7
Poor	39	19.1

Table 1 shows teachers' perceived satisfaction behaviors towards human resource management (HRM) in secondary schools in Erbil. The results were as follows: Good (21.1%): A significant proportion of the respondents considered the HR system as outstanding. This indicates that a large number of teachers feel that HR programs better support their professional development, meet their personal needs, promote work-life balance, contribute to greater satisfaction and retention, and manage workload and stress handle it properly. Good (21.6%): Another large proportion of respondents rated the HR system as good. This suggests that a significant number of teachers perceive HR policies as positive and effective, although there may be some improvement. Average (22.5%): A slightly higher percentage of respondents perceived HR policies as average. This suggests that there is a proportion of teachers who perceive the HR system as exceptionally poor or not bad, indicating that they are neutral or have room for improvement. Bad (15.7%): A small percentage of respondents viewed HR policies as bad. This suggests that there are some teachers who have negative perceptions of HR policies, and that some areas may need improvement. Poor (19.1%): Another significant portion of the respondents considered the HR system weak. This indicates that a number of teachers have strong negative attitudes towards HR policies and may need immediate attention to address their concerns and improve satisfaction Overall, the distribution of responses at different levels indicates

different perspectives among teachers. Further analysis of responses and specificity would be useful.

**Table 2:** Teacher Retention Levels of Agreement with HRM Practices in Secondary Schools

Levels	Frequency	Percent
Excellent	44	21.6
Good	43	21.1
Average	36	17.6
Bad	44	21.6
Poor	37	18.1

Table 2 states that these results provide valuable insights into the factors affecting teacher satisfaction and retention in higher education. The results were as follows: Good (21.6%): A significant percentage of the respondents revealed that the principals valued and appreciated the teachers' support , which gave a good indication of the interest of all the teachers. This indicates that a large proportion of teachers feel recognized and valued in their role, which is important for fostering a positive working environment. Good (21.1%): Similarly, a larger percentage of respondents rated a variety of factors positively, such as professional development opportunities, competitive compensation plans, and a supportive work environment. This suggests that a substantial proportion of teachers view the school's efforts in these areas as commendable, contributing to a positive overall practice experience. Agreement (17.6%) : The average level indicates the middle ground, where the participation of teachers either strongly disagreed or strongly disagreed with the information provided. This may indicate areas where improvement can increase teacher satisfaction. Schools can explore targeted interventions to address the concerns of this group and improve their overall experience. Bad (21.6%): A concerning percentage of respondents expressed dissatisfaction in certain areas, such as job security, communication

systems and expected workload. This identifies areas in which school policies, communication channels, and workload management can be improved to address the concerns raised by teachers in this section. Poor (18.1%) : The poverty level indicates that a large proportion of the respondents feel a noticeable lack of interest in diversity.

**Table 3:** Teacher Satisfaction Levels of Agreement with HRM Practices in Secondary Schools

Levels	Frequency	Percent
Excellent	45	22.1
Good	56	27.5
Average	23	11.3
Bad	41	20.1
Poor	39	19.1

Table 3 showed that teacher satisfaction in secondary schools offers insightful analysis of teachers' views on many facets of their workplace. With a proportion of 22.1%, the highest level, called "Excellent," suggests that a significant number of teachers believe the school administration values and appreciates them highly. This implies a good corporate culture in which teachers feel real appreciation for their efforts. Teacher happiness and, finally, retention can be greatly influenced by a helpful and thankful administrative attitude. Comprising 27.5% of replies, the "Good" rating indicates a significant number of teachers who feel they have a good work-life balance at the school. Retaining teachers depends on this as a balanced work and personal life can improve general job happiness and well-being. The recognition of a good work-life balance indicates that the school is aware of the expectations on its teaching staff and has taken steps to create a favorable work environment. The "Average" level, which makes up 11.3%, can indicate areas where changes could be taken into account. Teachers who say an average degree of contentment with the tools and support offered for instruction

would suggest that this area should be improved. This result encourages school officials to evaluate and fix any deficiencies in the support systems and resources accessible to teachers, so hoping to improve satisfaction levels and, therefore, teacher retention. Conversely, the "Bad" and "Poor" ratings, which total 20.1% and 19.1% respectively, draw attention to troubling regions. A significant percentage of instructors appear to be unhappy with the perceived fairness and supportiveness of the school's disciplinary rules and procedures as well as the feeling of belonging and community inside the institution. This calls for thoughtful analysis and focused actions to handle any problems connected to discipline rules and promote a more robust feeling of community among teachers. At last, the different degrees of satisfaction expressed by teachers in the poll highlight the intricacy of elements affecting teacher retention in secondary schools. Although there are clear positive elements like feeling appreciated and keeping a good work-life balance, improving general teacher happiness and eventually strengthening retention in the educational institution will depend on addressing issues, especially in disciplinary policies and community development.

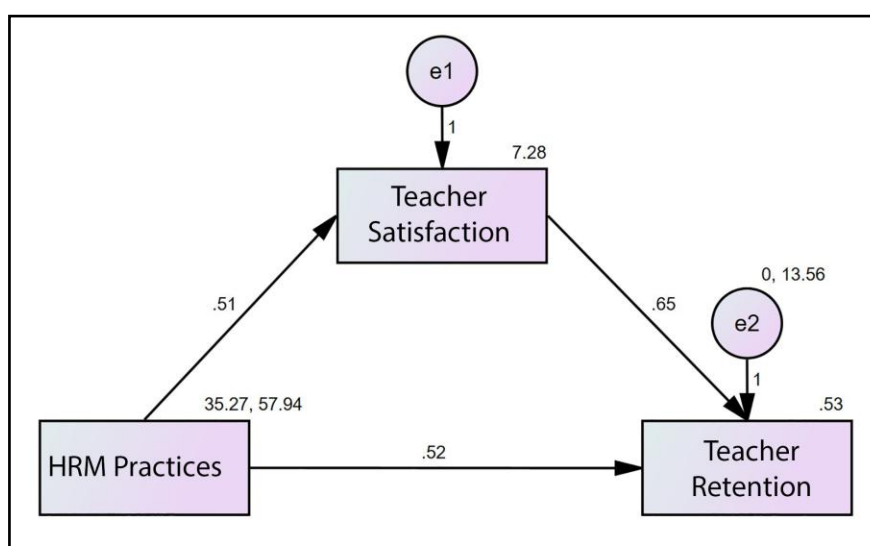
**Table 1:** Structural Equation Model Results for the Relationship Between HRM Practices, Teacher Satisfaction, and Teacher Retention in Secondary Schools

Variables			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Teacher Satisfaction	<---	HRM Practices	.510	.029	17.315	***
Teacher Retention	<---	Teacher Satisfaction	.651	.081	8.051	***
Teacher Retention	<---	HRM Practices	.518	.053	9.689	***

Table 4 illustrates that there may be a large superb courting among HR practices and teacher pride. The extra HRM practices there are, the better the teacher's satisfaction. The method is statistically giant. Furthermore, there's a extensive fantastic dating between instructor pleasure and teacher retention. Higher teacher satisfaction is associated with better teacher retention. The technique is



statistically sizable. In addition, there is a tremendous fine courting among HR practices and college perceptions. Increased HRM practices are related to better teacher retention charges. The method is statistically large. The consequences show that HR practices have a direct effective effect on faculty delight, and college pride in turn has a tremendous effect on college retention. In addition, human resource management has an immediate tremendous impact on faculty retention. The version shows that human resource management practices positively have an impact on teacher satisfaction and teacher retention in secondary education. A unique description is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1:** An Examination of the Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Teacher Satisfaction and Retention in Secondary Educational Institutions

**Table 5:** Chi-Square Test Results for the Association Between Socio-Demographic Characteristics with HRM Practices, Teacher Satisfaction, and Teacher Retention in Secondary Schools

HRM Practices				
Variables		Value	df	P-Value
Age Group	Pearson	214.049 <sup>a</sup>	140	0.000
Gender	Chi-Square	40.428 <sup>a</sup>	35	0.243

Education Level		108.225 <sup>a</sup>	105	0.395
Years of Service		109.521 <sup>a</sup>	105	0.362
Teacher Satisfaction				
Age Group	Pearson  Chi-Square	212.860 <sup>a</sup>	92	0.000
Gender		18.290 <sup>a</sup>	23	0.742
Education Level		83.215 <sup>a</sup>	69	0.117
Years of Service		96.946 <sup>a</sup>	69	0.015
Teacher Retention				
Age Group	Pearson  Chi-Square	167.282 <sup>a</sup>	132	0.020
Gender		39.193 <sup>a</sup>	33	0.212
Education Level		90.980 <sup>a</sup>	99	0.705
Years of Service		123.121 <sup>a</sup>	99	0.051

Table 5 shows that chi-square tests were used to explore the relationship between HR practices in secondary schools and sociodemographic variables. Of the factors studied, age showed a significant link to HR policies ( $p = 0.000$ ), implying that instructors' age groups were not randomly spread in relation to HR policies. Still, gender ( $p = 0.243$ ), education level ( $p = 0.395$ ), and years of service ( $p = 0.362$ ). The HRM practice showed no statistically significant link. This implies that among secondary school teachers, HR policy factors show no notable correlation with gender, educational level, and years of experience. These findings underline the need of include age into the design and implementation of human resource management plans meant to improve secondary education teacher retention and satisfaction. Furthermore, the age of instructors showed a very strong link with degrees of teacher satisfaction ( $p < 0.001$ ), implying that satisfaction among teachers varies greatly across different age groups. Moreover, years of service showed a clear link with satisfaction ( $p = 0.015$ ), implying that teacher satisfaction levels are affected by the length of employment. On the other hand, gender ( $p = 0.742$ ) and educational level ( $p = 0.117$ ) showed no statistically significant relationship with teacher satisfaction; differences imply that the

gender and education level of qualified secondary school teachers may have been important determinants of satisfaction levels. These results offer insightful analysis of the elements influencing teacher satisfaction and should guide human resource management strategies meant to boost secondary education teacher retention. Among the examined factors, age also produced statistically relevant findings ( $p = 0.02$ ), suggesting a clear link between age and teachers between retainers. But, gender ( $p = 0.212$ ), education level ( $p = 0.705$ ), years of service ( $p = 0.051$ ). Could not get mathematically important. The results showed that age was a major influence on teacher retention; gender, degree of education and years of service did not reveal notable relationships.

## Discussion

Particularly in promoting teacher happiness and retention, the results of this study add notably to the expanding body of research stressing the need of efficient Human Resource Management (HRM) practices in educational environments. The positive correlations between HRM practices, teacher satisfaction, and retention found in this study correspond with those of earlier research, such Rajeswaran et al. (2023), which discovered comparable notable links between HRM features—such as training, development, promotion, and health and safety—and teacher satisfaction. These similarities underline the importance of HRM practices in creating a structured and encouraging workplace that improves job satisfaction and supports teacher well-being. Likewise, Pagán-Castaño et al. (2021) found that efficient HRM practices have a major influence on teacher well-being as well as educational performance, hence stressing the larger organizational advantages when HRM methods are employed strategically. This body of research confirms that HRM approaches meant to meet teachers' needs directly affect their happiness, hence supporting better retention rates and fostering a good cycle of teacher involvement and institutional stability. Further comparison with works like Kamau et al. (2020) and Andal and Jovellano

(2023) offers more depth to this conversation. Andal and Jovellano underline the need of management practices focused on communication and administrative support in improving teacher happiness and commitment. They argue that HRM's influence goes beyond procedural practices to include interpersonal dynamics that promote teacher loyalty and commitment. Kamau et al.'s results on community embeddedness as a moderating influence between HRM practices and turnover intentions also provide an intriguing viewpoint, suggesting that teacher retention is affected not only by internal HRM practices but also by the degree to which teachers feel linked to their larger school communities. This relationship implies that HRM's influence on teacher retention is multidimensional and includes both institutionalized assistance and community inclusion. These results taken together make a strong argument for HRM as a key factor in teacher satisfaction and retention. They also encourage school leaders to use thorough HRM policies combining organizational and community support to maintain a dedicated and happy teaching staff.

## Conclusion

The findings of this study offer understanding of the intricate relationships between Human Resource Management (HRM) practices, teacher satisfaction, and teacher retention in secondary schools. The statistically substantial positive correlations found in the data highlight the vital part that efficient HRM procedures play in creating a good work environment, hence influencing both teacher satisfaction and retention. The detailed study of teachers' attitudes disclosed a varied terrain of views on HRM policies in secondary schools in Erbil City.

The findings supported  $H_1$  by the empirical research, which shows a strong positive correlation between teacher retention and HRM practices. Consequently, the study offers proof that greater HRM practice levels are linked to higher teacher retention rates in secondary schools. Additionally, the study demonstrates

a strong positive correlation between teacher satisfaction and HRM practices, supporting  $H_1$  in Sub-Hypotheses. According to this research, secondary school teachers are more satisfied when HRM practices are higher. The mediation study further confirms  $H_1$  by indicating that teacher satisfaction strongly mediates the relationship between HRM practices and teacher retention. This implies that teacher satisfaction partially mediates the association between HRM practices and teacher retention. The findings also show a clear favorable link between HRM practices and teacher retention, hence supporting  $H_1$ . This implies that secondary school teacher retention is directly influenced by HRM policies. The results confirm the main hypothesis—that HRM practices are positively related to teacher retention—as well as the sub-hypotheses stressing the significance of HRM practices in influencing teacher satisfaction and, therefore, teacher retention in secondary schools.

### **Recommendation**

The stated particular issues with job security, communication systems, expected workload, and perceived accuracy of disciplinary process underscore the necessity for detained interventions eyes have been underlined. Creating a more encouraging and fulfilling work environment depends on addressing these issues first since it will help to raise general teacher retention and happiness. The study suggests a several-pronged strategy to handle noted problem areas. This could involve changing HRM policies, enhancing communication channels, carrying out focused interventions to strengthen elements such job security, disciplinary policies, etc. Moreover, building community and belonging in schools might help to much more handle unhappiness in these places. Research also indicates that ongoing feedback techniques like follow-up interviews or surveys might help to better understand instructors' needs and wants. Continuous feedback helps to guide HR process iterative changes, so

guaranteeing their alignment with the changing demands and expectations of the teaching staff.

Specifically, this study offers a technique for educational institutions in Erbil to proactively boost teacher satisfaction and retention as well as insightful analysis. Schools can build a good and encouraging environment that not only acknowledges teachers' achievements but also keeps them involved in the higher education profession by means of knowledge and addressing their points of view.

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