

HRM PRACTICES AND TEACHER RETENTION IN PAKISTANI UNIVERSITIES: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF TRANSPARENCY

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Abstract

This study examines the mediating role of transparency in the relationship between human resource management (HRM) practices and teacher retention in public and private universities in Punjab, Pakistan. Adopting a positivist paradigm, the study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design. Data were collected from 400 university teachers selected through stratified random sampling from a target population of 23,626 teachers. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data, which were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, regression, and bootstrapped mediation analysis. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between HRM practices and teacher retention. Mediation analysis further demonstrated that transparency partially mediated this relationship, with a significant indirect effect ($B = 0.036$, 95% CI [0.005, 0.073]). The direct effect of HRM practices on teacher retention remained significant after transparency was included in the model, indicating that transparency represents one pathway through which HRM practices are associated with teachers' intention to remain in their institutions. These findings highlight the importance of transparent institutional processes and clear communication in supporting teacher retention. Universities should therefore strengthen transparency in the implementation and communication of HR policies alongside broader efforts to improve academic working conditions.

Keywords: *Human resource management practices, teacher retention, transparency, higher education, Pakistan, mediation.*

1. Introduction

Teacher retention is an organizational and educational concern because continuity in the academic workforce supports stable teaching, institutional knowledge, collegial relationships, and sustained delivery of educational programs. Research on teacher turnover indicates that retention is shaped by interacting organizational and individual conditions rather than a single factor (Gundlach et al., 2024; See et al., 2020). Research on young academics also points to job embeddedness and creative work performance as relevant to turnover (Shah et al., 2020). Working conditions, professional growth, leadership, and the experience of being supported can influence teachers' willingness to remain (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017; Toropova et al., 2021; Tran & Smith, 2020).

Human resource management (HRM) practices provide formal mechanisms for supporting academic staff. In the thesis, the HRM domain includes self-development, job security, organizational culture, work-life balance, and technology-enabled HRM. Prior studies have associated HRM practices with retention-related outcomes in educational and organizational settings (Chishti et al., 2023; Kamau et al., 2021; Jawaad et al., 2019). Yet the same policy may be experienced differently depending on how it is communicated, implemented, and justified. A professional-development policy may be less useful if eligibility criteria are unclear; a promotion system may generate uncertainty when staff cannot understand how decisions are reached.

Transparency is the focal mediator in this article. Organizational transparency concerns the availability and clarity of relevant information, openness about decisions, and the ability of employees to understand the processes that affect them. Rawlins (2008) examined organizational transparency in relation to employee trust, while organizational-justice research emphasizes the importance of fair and understandable procedures in shaping employee reactions (Colquitt et al., 2001). Transparency may therefore help explain how HRM practices become meaningful to teachers and how those experiences relate to their intention to remain.

This article extracts the transparency pathway from a broader thesis that also examines recognition as a mediator. Separating the pathways allows a focused discussion while preserving the original sample, measures, and reported statistical estimates. The purpose is not to imply that transparency is the only mechanism connecting HRM and retention, but to estimate the indirect association supported by the thesis.

Research Gap

Although previous studies have examined the relationship between human resource management (HRM) practices and teacher retention, limited attention has been given to the mechanisms through which these practices influence teachers' intentions to remain in their institutions. Existing research has highlighted the importance of compensation, career development, job security, and work-life balance in employee retention (Qasim et al., 2022; Kamau et al., 2021). However, much of this research emphasizes the direct relationships between HRM practices and retention, leaving the mediating role of transparency insufficiently examined (Sajid & Nauman, 2019; Sharif et al., 2024). Transparency in HRM policies, including clear communication, understandable promotion criteria, and openness in performance evaluation, may help explain how institutional practices are associated with teacher retention. Although previous studies have considered HRM practices such as compensation and training (Nawaz et al., 2019; Chishti et al., 2023), further empirical investigation is needed to establish whether transparency serves as an intervening mechanism in the HRM practices-teacher retention relationship, particularly in higher education.

This gap is particularly relevant in the context of public and private universities in Punjab, Pakistan, where teachers' perceptions of institutional procedures may influence how they experience HRM practices. Accordingly, the present study examines the mediating role of transparency in the relationship between HRM practices and teacher retention. By investigating this indirect relationship, the study seeks to extend understanding of how transparent HRM processes may contribute to teachers' intentions to remain in their institutions.

1.3 Problem Statement

Teacher retention is a growing concern because high turnover can undermine institutional stability, teaching continuity, and academic quality. Globally, teacher turnover has been associated with dissatisfaction, workload pressures, and limited professional growth (UNESCO, 2023; Ingersoll & Tran, 2023). In Pakistan, particularly Punjab, teacher mobility, inadequate compensation, working conditions, and recruitment challenges highlight the need for effective human resource management (HRM) practices (Siddiqui & Shaukat, 2021; Alif Ailaan, 2020).

HRM practices, including self-development, job security, organizational culture, work-life balance, and technology integration, may influence teachers' intentions to remain in their institutions. However, their effectiveness varies across contexts, and the mechanisms underlying their relationship with retention remain insufficiently understood (Easa & Orra, 2020; Khan et al., 2023). Although previous studies have examined individual HRM practices and retention (Wilcoxon et al., 2019; Richter et al., 2015), limited attention has been given to transparency as a mediating mechanism.

Transparent HR policies, clear communication, and understandable promotion and evaluation criteria may strengthen teachers' confidence in institutional decision-making. Nevertheless, existing research has largely focused on direct relationships, leaving the mediating role of transparency insufficiently explored (Sajid & Nauman, 2019; Sharif et al., 2024). Therefore, this study examines whether transparency mediates the relationship between HRM practices and teacher retention in public and private universities in Punjab, Pakistan, aiming to inform more transparent and effective HR policies in higher education.

3. Research Gap

The thesis identifies three connected gaps. First, studies of HRM and retention commonly investigate direct associations or examine mediators such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and perceived organizational support (Jawaad et al., 2019; Kamau et al., 2021). Second, although transparency and procedural fairness are relevant to trust and employee responses, transparency as a mediator in the HRM–teacher-retention relationship is less directly tested in the higher-education context represented by Punjab, Pakistan (Colquitt et al., 2001; Rawlins, 2008). Third, the thesis combines conventional HRM dimensions with technology-enabled HRM while treating transparency as a distinct perceptual mechanism.

The contribution is contextual and explanatory: the article estimates the indirect effect through transparency using survey data from 400 university teachers and reports the remaining direct effect. The study does not establish that the mechanism is unique to Pakistan, nor does it prove that transparency temporally precedes retention intention. It provides a context-specific test that future studies can compare with longitudinal designs or simultaneous multiple-mediator models.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant for university administrators, HR professionals, and policymakers seeking to improve teacher retention through effective human resource management (HRM) practices. By examining self-development, job security, organizational culture, work–life balance, and technology-enabled HRM, the study provides insights into factors associated with teachers' intentions to remain in their institutions. Its primary contribution is investigating the mediating role of transparency, particularly how clear communication and transparent HR policies may strengthen the relationship between HRM practices and teacher retention. Focusing on public and private universities in Punjab, Pakistan, the study contributes context-specific evidence to the HRM literature and may inform policies aimed at improving institutional transparency, supporting faculty retention, and reducing turnover-related costs.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Teacher Retention: Conceptual and Contextual Perspectives

Teacher retention refers to an educational institution's ability to retain qualified and competent teachers over time. It is influenced by individual, organizational, and contextual factors, including professional development, leadership, organizational culture, job security, and work–life balance (Zamir, 2018; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). Teacher retention is essential for maintaining instructional continuity, institutional knowledge, educational quality, and organizational stability. Conversely, high turnover increases recruitment and training costs and may disrupt teaching and institutional development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Toropova et al., 2021).

HRM practices play an important role in shaping teachers' experiences and intentions to remain in their institutions. Professional development opportunities, supportive leadership, favorable working conditions, and effective organizational policies can strengthen teachers' commitment and retention (Shuls & Flores, 2020; Podolsky et al., 2019). However, retention is also influenced by how

institutional policies are communicated and implemented. Unclear administrative procedures, perceived unfairness, and limited access to information may undermine teachers' confidence in organizational decision-making, particularly in contexts where employment conditions and institutional practices differ (OECD, 2024; Toropova et al., 2021).

Transparency is therefore a relevant organizational factor in understanding the relationship between HRM practices and teacher retention. When institutional procedures and decisions are communicated clearly and applied consistently, teachers may develop greater confidence in management and perceive HRM practices more positively. Research emphasizes the importance of open decision-making, organizational justice, and supportive institutional environments in shaping teachers' organizational commitment and retention (Zhou et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2024). Accordingly, examining transparency as a mediating variable may help explain how HRM practices are associated with teachers' intentions to remain in their institutions, particularly in public and private universities in Punjab, Pakistan.

2.2. Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices and Teacher Retention

Human resource management (HRM) practices encompass the policies and procedures through which educational institutions recruit, develop, evaluate, support, and retain their teaching staff. Modern HRM extends beyond administrative functions to a strategic approach that aligns employee development and institutional objectives (Permatasari & Tandiyuk, 2023; Breaz & Valahia, 2024). In higher education, effective HRM practices must consider teachers' professional autonomy, academic responsibilities, and career expectations (Kenny & Fluck, 2022).

HRM practices, including professional development, performance appraisal, compensation, job security, and supportive working conditions, can influence teachers' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and retention intentions (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Tran & Smith, 2020). However, their effectiveness depends not only on the availability of these practices but also on how they are implemented and perceived by teachers. Unclear promotion criteria, inconsistent performance evaluations, and limited communication may undermine trust and weaken the positive effects of HRM practices (Jerrim & Sims, 2022; Nazaruddin et al., 2024).

Transparency is particularly relevant because it concerns the openness, clarity, and consistency of organizational policies and decision-making. When teachers understand the criteria governing performance evaluation, professional development, promotions, and workload allocation, they may perceive HRM practices as more equitable and supportive. Conversely, opaque procedures can generate uncertainty and dissatisfaction, potentially weakening teachers' willingness to remain in their institutions (Cotes & Ugarte, 2021; Rimban, 2024).

Although existing research supports an association between HRM practices and employee retention, much of the literature emphasizes direct relationships rather than the organizational mechanisms underlying them. Research has highlighted the importance of professional development, equitable appraisal, and supportive institutional environments in teacher retention (Hancock et al., 2017; Podolsky et al., 2019). Nevertheless, the mediating role of transparency requires further investigation in higher education, particularly in the Pakistani context (El Mountasser & Sahraoui, 2025). Therefore, examining transparency as a mediator can provide a clearer understanding of how HRM practices are associated with teacher retention in public and private universities in Punjab, Pakistan.

5.2 Transparency and procedural justice

Transparency in HRM can involve clarity of eligibility rules, access to relevant information, explanation of decisions, and consistency in communicating institutional expectations. Rawlins (2008) links organizational transparency with employee trust, while Colquitt et al. (2001) synthesize evidence on organizational justice and employee outcomes. These concepts overlap but are not

identical: transparency concerns openness and understandability, whereas procedural justice concerns the perceived fairness of the process. A procedure can be transparent but still be perceived as unfair if its criteria are inequitable.

In higher education, transparency may be relevant to performance appraisal, promotion, access to professional development, workload allocation, and institutional communication. Digital HR systems can make policies and records easier to access, but technology alone does not guarantee clear communication or fair implementation (Bondarouk & Ruël, 2009; Marler & Parry, 2016; Parry & Tyson, 2011; Stone et al., 2015). Systems need to be usable, current, accessible, and supported by managers who explain decisions.

5.3 Theoretical rationale

The study's rationale is compatible with social-exchange and organizational-support perspectives: research integrating social exchange and retention likewise emphasizes the role of the employment relationship and institutional treatment (Xuecheng & Iqbal, 2022). When employees perceive an organization as dependable and understandable, they may be more willing to maintain the employment relationship. Perceived organizational support concerns employees' beliefs about whether the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Transparency may support this perception by reducing uncertainty and making institutional decisions more interpretable. This theoretical account is explanatory rather than directly tested; the thesis did not separately measure every proposed psychological process.

3. Methodology

This study adopted a positivist research philosophy and a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationship between human resource management (HRM) practices and teacher retention, with particular emphasis on the mediating role of transparency. The target population comprised 23,626 teachers employed in public and private universities in Punjab, Pakistan, according to the Higher Education Commission (HEC, 2023). A sample of 400 teachers was selected using stratified random sampling, ensuring representation across university sectors, gender, and divisions. The sample included 200 teachers from public universities and 200 from private universities.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire comprising closed-ended items measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The instrument incorporated established and adapted measures of HRM practices, transparency, and teacher retention. Transparency was measured using 13 items adapted from Rawlins (2008), while teacher retention was assessed using a scale adapted from Singh (2022). Content validity was evaluated by eight management-science experts, and a pilot study involving 40 respondents was conducted to identify ambiguities and improve the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha coefficients indicated acceptable internal consistency for transparency ($\alpha = .766$) and teacher retention ($\alpha = .731$).

Data were analyzed using SPSS and R, employing descriptive statistics, normality testing, Pearson correlation, regression analysis, and bootstrapped mediation analysis. The mediation analysis examined the relationship between HRM practices and teacher retention through transparency. The indirect effect was evaluated using a 95% bootstrap confidence interval, with mediation considered statistically significant when the interval excluded zero. This analytical approach enabled the study to assess whether transparency statistically mediates the association between HRM practices and teachers' intentions to remain in their institutions.

4. Results

Regression Analysis

Impact of self-development of teacher retention

Table 0.1: Model Summary for the Impact of Self-Development on Teacher Retention

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. EE
1	.242 ^a	.058	.056	.42122

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-D

Table 4.1 shows the Model Summary of the simple linear regression that was performed for testing Research Objective 1 that deals with the effect of self-development on teacher retention. The correlation coefficient for the model is $R = .242$ and the coefficient of determination is $.058$, which represents about 5.8% of the total variance that is accounted for independently in the model. τ Std Error of the Estimate = $.42122$). This value of “accounted for variance”, though modest in absolute terms - if we may expect it given the multiple determinants mentioned above of teacher attrition that go beyond self-development - represents the first indication that self-development has a real non-trivial and independently measurable impact on the teachers' attrition outcomes' and is also confirmed in the ANOVA and coefficients described below, also reported in tables.

Table 0.2: ANOVA for the Impact of Self-Development on Teacher Retention

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	4.387	1	4.387	24.727	.000 ^b
Residual	70.615	398	.177		
Total	75.002	399			

a. Dependent Variable: Teac-R

b. Predictors: (Constant), Self-D

Table 4.2 shows the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) table for the regression model predicting teacher retention based on self-development. The F-statistic tests the null hypothesis that a regression model is a bad fit for predicting the dependent variable as compared to just using the mean of the dependent variable. The results indicate that the significance level of $p = .000$ is well below the conventional $.05$. This large F value shows that the regression model is statistically significant in predicting teacher retention overall, thus giving formal statistical basis to the use of the individual regression coefficient in the following table.

Table 0.3: Regression Coefficients for the Impact of Self-Development on Teacher Retention

Model		Un C	SC		t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.689	.161		16.687	.000
	Self-D	.232	.047	.242	4.973	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Teac-R

Table 4.3 shows the unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients for the model predicting teacher retention from self-development. The unstandardized coefficient for self-development is $B = .232$ ($SE = .047$), with a standardized coefficient of $Beta = .242$, $t = 4.973$, $p = .000$, and a constant of 2.689. Based on the significance value being less than $.05$, the null hypothesis that self-development does not have an effect on teacher retention is rejected and it is concluded that self-development does have a positive, statistically significant effect on teacher retention. From a substantive standpoint, the unstandardized coefficient suggests that for every one unit increase in self-development, there is an upward increase of $.232$ units in the teachers' retention scores. A standardized Beta of $.242$ has statistical significance, meaning that it is substantively strong in a relative sense to the other variables in the model. This result corroborates the objective of the study that was aimed at

studying teachers' decisions to stay within their institutions, which answers to the importance and significance of institutional efforts to sustain self-development as a retention strategy, and the practical relevance of the study, respectively.

Impact of Organization cultural on teacher retention

Table 0.4: Model Summary for the Impact of Organizational Culture on Teacher Retention

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. EE
1	.276 ^a	.076	.074	.41724

a. Predictors: (Constant), Orga-C

Table 4.4 below presents the results of the simple linear regression model which was used as a test for the problem, Research Objective 3: Effect of organizational culture on teacher retention. However, the model has a “goodness of fit” of .276 for the correlation coefficient and .076 for the coefficient of determination, which suggests that organizational culture only explains about 7.6% of the overall variance in teacher retention scores (Adjusted R Square = .074, Std. Error = .289). Error of the Estimate = .41724). Although this percentage of explained variance is not especially high in absolute terms (as might be expected, since there are a wide range of factors influencing teacher retention apart from the influence of organizational culture itself), it does offer a first glimpse of support for Research Objective 3 of the study, that organizational culture has its own non-trivial, independently measurable impact on teachers' retention outcomes. These results are backed up to some extent by the ANOVA and coefficient percentages presented in tables that follow.

Table 0.5: ANOVA for the Impact of Organizational Culture on Teacher Retention

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	5.715	1	5.715	32.830	.000 ^b
Residual	69.287	398	.174		
Total	75.002	399			

a. Dependent Variable: Teac-R

b. Predictors: (Constant), Orga-C

Table 4.5 shows the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for the regression model to predict teacher retention from organization culture. The F-statistic evaluates whether the regression model is able to predict the dependent variable better than the simple mean of the dependent variable. These results highlight that $F(1, 398) = 32.830$ ($p = .000$), far below the conventional level of significance set at .05. The overall regression model was statistically significant (see Table 11, which is not shown here but can be found in Appendix 3). This formal statistical support for and justification of the interpretation of the individual regression coefficient for this research objective (organizational culture is a statistically significant predictor of teacher retention) is satisfied by this significant F-value.

Table 0.6: Regression Coefficients for the Impact of Organizational Culture on Teacher Retention

Model		Un. C	S.C		t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.770	.126		21.949	.000
	Orga-C	.202	.035	.276	5.730	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Teac-R

The unstandardized and standardized regression coefficient estimates for the model predicting teacher retention from organizational culture are presented in Table 4.69. The unstandardized coefficient is $B = .202$ ($SE = .035$), with a standardized coefficient of $Beta = .276$, $t = 5.730$, $p = .000$, and a constant of 2.770. Since the significance value is less than .05, a rejection of the null hypothesis results and

the organizational culture was concluded to have a statistically significant effect on teacher retention, a positive effect. If we want to translate this into a practical effect, the unstandardized coefficient suggests that for each one-unit increase in organizational culture, teachers' retention scores increase .202. The positive standardized Beta value (+.276) provides an indication of the direction of the relationship, as well as suggesting how strong the organizational culture relationship is relative to other factors in the model. The results supported the related research goal of this study and the study hypothesis that organizational culture is a salient and significant influencing factor for teachers' intention to stay with their school, organizations should prioritize culture development as a retention strategy because this new finding shows that the culture the teachers experience at their schools directly affects their decision to stay with the school.

Impact of work life balance on teacher retention

Table 0.7: Model Summary for the Impact of Work-Life Balance on Teacher Retention

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. EE
1	.175 ^a	.031	.028	.42739

a. Predictors: (Constant), Work-L

The Model Summary for the simple linear regression used to test Research objective Relationship between teacher retention and the work-life balance is shown in Table 4.70. The model is significantly different from the null model since its R Square = .031 is less than the Std. R Square = .029 of the model compared to a R squared for the null model of .000. The model is also significantly different from the null model, as its R = .175 and R Square = .031 are below the Std. R = .163 and Std. R square = .029 of the model, compared with the R = .000 and R square = .000 for the null model. Error of the Estimate = .42739). Though a relatively modest amount of explained variance on its own terms, as might be expected because teacher retention is a multiply-determined phenomenon with many determinants that all but cannot be reduced to work-life balance, this amount of explained variance nonetheless provides a first indication of support for Research Objective 4 of the study (the extent to which teachers' work-life balance contributes independently and measurably to teacher retention outcomes), which is echoed more formally in the ANOVA and coefficient results reported in the tables that follow.

Table 0.8: ANOVA for the Impact of Work-Life Balance on Teacher Retention

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	2.304	1	2.304	12.612	.000 ^b
Residual	72.698	398	.183		
Total	75.002	399			

a. Dependent Variable: Teac-R

b. Predictors: (Constant), Work-L

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) table for the regression model predicting work-life balance effects on teacher retention is shown in Table 4.71. The F counts test will test the null hypothesis that there is no difference between the fit of the regression model and the mean of the dependent variable. But with results reading $F(1, 398) = 12.612$, $p = .000$ (far from the usual .05 level of significance). The F statistic for this is very high, suggesting that the regression model is statistically significant and giving formal statistical evidence for the research objective, 'work-life balance is a statistically significant predictor for teacher retention' and supporting the interpretation of the individual regression coefficient as report in the table below.

Table 0.91: Regression Coefficients for the Impact of Work-Life Balance on Teacher Retention

Model		Un. C	S. C		t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.002	.137		21.918	.000
	Work-L	.151	.043	.175	3.551	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Teac-R

Unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients for the model predicting teacher retention from work-life balance are shown in Table 4.9. The unstandardized coefficient for work-life balance is $B = .151$ ($SE = .043$), with a standardized coefficient of $Beta = .175$, $t = 3.551$, $p = .000$, and a constant of 3.002. The significance value is less than .05 which means that the null hypothesis can be rejected, where work-life balance has no effect on teacher retention, instead, it is concluded that work-life balance has a statistically significant positive effect on teacher retention. In relation to teachers' retention scores, an increase of one unit in work-life balance is accompanied by an increase of .151 units (substantively), with .175 (standardized Beta) indicating the direction and relative strength of the relationship. This discovery thus supports the related research goal of the study, namely, that work-life balance is an important and significant factor in teachers' retention, and it highlights the policy implications of institutional support for teachers' work-life balance as a strategy for retention.

Mediation Analysis of Transparency, HRM Practices and Teacher Retention

Table 0.10: Regression Analysis of HRM Practices Predicting Transparency (Path a)

Variables	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.655	0.349	7.608	.000	1.969	3.341
HRM Practices	0.227	0.104	2.183	.030	0.023	0.432

Table 4.10 presents the results of the first step in the mediation analysis (Path a) that tested Research Objective of the study Will HRM Practices have a direct and indirect effect on the teacher's retention via the mediation pathway of transparency. In this path-question, it was tested whether the independent variable HRM Practices could significantly predict the proposed mediator Transparency. The results show that HRM Practices significantly predict Transparency ($B = 0.227$, $SE = 0.104$, $t = 2.183$, $p = .030$, 95% CI [0.023, 0.432]). Due to the lack of meaningful overlap between the 95% bootstrap confidence interval and the null value and the accordingly small p-value, the relationship between context and evaluation outcomes through path a is established. From a substantive perspective, a strengthening of HRM practices in educational institutions or enhancements in the implementation of it brings teachers' sense of transparency along with it, thus creating the first condition for Transparency to play a mediating role in the model.

Table 0.11 Model Summary for HRM Practices Predicting Transparency (Path a)

R	R ²	F	p
0.109	0.012	4.764	.030

The overall Model Summary statistics for the previous regression, which can be found in Table 4.10, are included in Table 4.11. The model has an R of 0.109 and an R² of 0.012; $F = 4.764$, $p = .030$ indicating that the regression model is statistically significant as a whole. Overall, the R² value shows that HRM Practices explain about 1.2% variance in the teachers' perceptions of transparency. The overall model such as this is statistically significant, and while this is not a large share of the total variance explained, the results suggest a genuine and reliable impact of HRM practices on teachers' perceptions of transparency, a prerequisite of the mediation effect.

Table 0.12: Regression Analysis of HRM Practices and Transparency Predicting Teacher Retention (Path b and c')

Variables	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	0.795	0.296	2.686	.008	0.213	1.378
HRM Practices	0.644	0.083	7.756	.000	0.481	0.808
Transparency	0.156	0.040	3.935	.000	0.078	0.235

As a result of entering HRM Practices and Transparency into the second stage of the mediation model simultaneously, the direct path estimate of Transparency on teacher retention (Path b) and the direct path estimate of HRM Practices on teacher retention (Path c') were determined as shown below in Table 4.87. The results indicate that HRM Practices still significantly predict teacher retention when Transparency is included in the model, that is, HRM Practices affect teacher retention directly ($B = 0.644$, $SE = 0.083$, $t = 7.756$, $p = .000$; 95% CI [0.481, 0.808]). Simultaneously, Transparency also emerges as a significant predictor of teacher retention ($B = 0.156$, $SE = 0.040$, $t = 3.935$, $p = .000$, 95% CI [0.078, 0.235]), representing Path b. Both these paths are significant (path d and path c'), meaning the confidence interval doesn't contain zero, so this lends strong evidence that HRM Practices actually mediate part of the effect of teacher retention as well as having an independent, non-mediated effect on the teacher retention (path c').

Table 0.13: Model Summary for HRM Practices and Transparency Predicting Teacher Retention

R	R ²	F	p
0.416	0.173	41.630	.000

Table 4.13 displays the Model Summary statistics for the combined regression model, which models the results from the preceding table. All of the above indicate that the overall model is statistically significant, with $R = 0.416$ and $R^2 = 0.173$. $F = 41.630$, and $p = .000$. However, together HRM Practices and Transparency explain around 17.3% of the variance in scores for teacher retention, a substantial increase from the percent of variance explained by HRM Practices alone in the total-effect analysis, and demonstrates the added, independent contribution to the predictive model of teacher retention made by Transparency when it is added to the model.

Table 0.14: Total Effect of HRM Practices on Teacher Retention (Path c)

Variables	B	SE	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.211	0.282	4.297	.000	0.657	1.764
HRM Practices	0.680	0.084	8.087	.000	0.515	0.845

The estimated total effect of HRM Practices on teacher retention (Path c) was presented in Table 4.14 before Transparency was entered into the model. This is a total effect, which is the overall effect of the HRM Practices on teacher retention, both direct effect and possible indirect effect via the mediating mechanism of Transparency (or others which are not measured). The results show that HRM Practices significantly predict teacher retention ($B = 0.680$, $SE = 0.084$, $t = 8.087$, $p = .000$, 95% CI [0.515, 0.845]), confirming that Path c is statistically significant. This large overall effect interprets the overall empirical relationship between HRM Practices and teacher retention to be the direct component (Path c') and the indirect component (Path a $\times$ Path b) mediated by Transparency in the current mediation model.

Table 0.15: Model Summary for the Total Effect of HRM Practices on Teacher Retention

R	R ²	F	P
0.376	0.141	65.401	.000

The Model Summary statistics for the total-effect model discussed in the previous table are displayed in the following table: Table 4.15 Model Summary table for the total-effect model of Table 4.14. The

model has $R = 0.376$ and $R^2 = 0.141$, $F = 65.401$ and $p = .000$, which indicates that HRM Practices, all in its own and before the addition of Transparency explain around 14.1% of the overall variation in teacher retention when it is seen alone. As a baseline model, this helps to compare the increase in explained variance with the inclusion of Transparency in the combined model above.

Table 0.16: Direct, Indirect and Total Effects of HRM Practices on Teacher Retention through Transparency

Effect	B	Boot SE	95% LLCI	Boot	95% ULCI	Boot	Decision
Total Effect	0.680	0.084	0.515		0.845		Significant
Direct Effect	0.644	0.083	0.481		0.808		Significant
Indirect (Transparency)	Effect 0.036	0.018	0.005		0.073		Significant

Table 4.16 shows the consolidated summary of the total, direct and indirect effects of the HRM Practices on teacher retention to test the mediation hypothesis of the current study for research objective. Medalla's bootstrapped 95% confidence intervals for total and direct effects are in u Pob02 and u M02, and the indirect effect is from u m01 to u m02. The overall effect of HRM Practices on teacher retention is $B = 0.680$ (95% Boot CI [0.515, 0.845]); the direct effect of HRM Practices on teacher retention, i.e., the part of the relationship that is independent of Transparency, is $B = 0.644$ (95% Boot CI [0.481, 0.808]); and the indirect effect of HRM Practices on teacher retention, i.e., the part of the relationship mediated specifically by Transparency, is $B = 0.036$ (95% Boot CI [0.005, 0.073]). Due to the bootstrap confidence interval not covering zero, the indirect effect is deemed to be statistically significant, thus offering strong empirical evidence to reinforce this result that Transparency significantly mediates the relationship between HRM Practices and teacher retention. These are the indirect effect amounting to about 5.3% of the total effect of HRM Practices on teacher retention. In addition, the direct effect (Path c') is also statistically significant with and without Transparency so there is a pattern of results that are more consistent with partial mediation than full mediation: Transparency mediates a meaningful part of the relation between HRM Practices and teacher retention but HRM Practices still have a direct effect on retention that is independent of transparency.

Table 0.17: Summary of Mediation Analysis (Transparency)

Path	Relationship	Effect (B)	p-value	Result
a	HRM Practices → Transparency	0.227	.030	Significant
b	Transparency → Teacher Retention	0.156	.000	Significant
c	HRM Practices → Teacher Retention (Total Effect)	0.680	.000	Significant
c'	HRM Practices → Teacher Retention (Direct Effect)	0.644	.000	Significant
a × b	Indirect Effect	0.036	Boot CI does not include zero	Significant

To address the Research Objective of Mediation in the study, results yielded from the previous tables were now consolidated and summarized, path-by-path, with the complete mediation model in show as provided in Table 4.17. The summary confirms that each of the paths achieved statistical significance (i.e., Path a, HRM practices was statistically significant from transparency; Path b, transparency was statistically significant from teacher retention; Path c, total effect of HRM practices on teacher retention was statistically significant; and Path c', direct path of HRM practices on teacher

retention after accounting for the path from HRM practices to transparency and transparency to teacher retention was statistically significant); furthermore, the bootstrap confidence interval for the indirect effect (i.e., the product of all the significant paths found) did not contain zero. Overall, these findings support the conclusion that among sampled teachers in this study, Transparency has a significant Mediating effect on the HRM Practices- teacher retention relationship and as such adds confidence to the theoretical proposition that the HRM Practices influence teacher retention directly and indirectly through its impact on employees' perception of transparency in the institution, and thus contribute to the achievement of Research Objective regarding mediation.

5. Findings, Discussions, Implications & Recommendations

5.1 Findings

The central finding is that transparency partially mediates the association between HRM practices and teacher retention intention among the sampled university teachers. The HRM-practices-to-transparency path, the transparency-to-retention path controlling for HRM practices, and the indirect effect were all statistically significant in the reported model. The remaining direct association indicates that transparency is one plausible explanatory pathway, not a complete explanation of the HRM-retention association.

The indirect effect is comparatively small in absolute terms ($B = .036$). Statistical significance should not be conflated with a large practical effect. The model's R^2 for transparency (1.2%) also suggests that other factors may influence whether teachers perceive HR processes as transparent.

5.2 Discussion

The findings indicate that transparency partially mediates the relationship between human resource management (HRM) practices and teacher retention in public and private universities in Punjab, Pakistan. The significant indirect effect ($B = .036$, 95% CI [.005, .073]) suggests that transparency represents one pathway through which HRM practices are associated with teachers' intentions to remain in their institutions. The direct effect remained significant after transparency was included in the model ($B = .644$, $p < .001$), indicating that transparency explains only part of this relationship.

The positive association between HRM practices and transparency suggests that teachers' perceptions of HRM practices are linked to their perceptions of institutional openness and clarity. When universities communicate HR policies clearly and apply procedures consistently, teachers may better understand decisions concerning performance appraisal, promotion, professional development, and workload allocation. This interpretation is consistent with research emphasizing the importance of transparent HR systems and accessible organizational information (Marler & Parry, 2016; Permatasari & Tandiyuk, 2023).

Furthermore, the positive relationship between transparency and teacher retention, controlling for HRM practices ($B = .156$, $p < .001$), highlights the relevance of clear and understandable institutional procedures. Transparency may help reduce uncertainty surrounding organizational decisions and strengthen teachers' confidence in management. This interpretation is consistent with the argument that open communication and transparent decision-making can support trust and positive employee-organization relationships (Nguyen et al., 2024; Perveen et al., 2023). In university settings, communicating the criteria and procedures governing employment-related decisions may therefore complement broader HRM efforts to support faculty retention.

The partial mediation finding also indicates that transparency is not the only pathway connecting HRM practices with teacher retention. Although transparent procedures may improve teachers' understanding of institutional decisions, retention intentions may also be associated with other employment conditions and organizational experiences not examined in this mediation model. The

remaining significant direct effect supports the importance of considering HRM practices alongside transparency rather than treating transparency as a complete explanation of retention.

Overall, the findings contribute to understanding the relationship between HRM practices and teacher retention by demonstrating the statistical mediating role of transparency in the Pakistani higher-education context. They suggest that universities should not only establish effective HRM policies but also communicate and implement them transparently. Clear promotion criteria, consistent performance evaluations, accessible HR information, and understandable workload-allocation procedures may help strengthen teachers' confidence in institutional processes. However, because the study used a cross-sectional survey, the results establish statistical associations rather than definitive causal relationships.

5.3 Theoretical and Practical Implications

5.3.1 Theoretical implications

The article contributes a context-specific mediation estimate connecting HRM practices, transparency, and retention intention. It adds to direct-effect studies by testing a process-oriented explanation. The results are compatible with organizational-justice reasoning, but they do not prove that justice or trust caused retention intention because neither was independently tested as the mediator.

5.3.2 Practical implications

Universities can make promotion, appraisal, contract renewal, workload distribution, leave, and professional-development procedures easier to understand by publishing criteria, deadlines, required evidence, responsible decision-makers, and appeal or clarification routes. Managers should explain significant decisions and communicate policy changes early. Digital HR platforms should contain current, accessible policy information and clear status updates; technology should be evaluated for usability and equitable access rather than assumed to create transparency automatically (Marler & Parry, 2016; Parry & Tyson, 2011). Institutions should periodically ask faculty whether procedures are understandable and consistently applied.

5.4 Recommendations

1. Publish clear, current HR criteria for appraisal, promotion, contract renewal, training, leave, and workload allocation.
2. Explain decisions affecting faculty careers and provide a practical channel for clarification or appeal.
3. Review whether staff across sectors, divisions, departments, ranks, and contract types receive timely and equivalent access to information.
4. Make digital HR systems usable, accessible, secure, and consistent with actual institutional procedures.
5. Assess transparency and retention intention separately in staff surveys and use the findings to improve policy implementation.
6. Do not treat transparency as a substitute for secure employment, adequate resources, reasonable workload, supportive culture, or professional development.
7. In future studies, estimate transparency and recognition together in a multiple-mediator model, use longitudinal data where possible, and test whether indirect effects differ statistically.

5.5 Limitations

The study is cross-sectional and relies on self-reported perceptions, so causal inference and temporal ordering cannot be established. The sample is limited to university teachers in Punjab and may not generalize to other provinces, school-level teachers, or other national contexts. The aggregate HRM score masks potential differences among its component dimensions. The mediation results are

reported as provided in the thesis and have not been recalculated from raw data. The thesis also contains an item-count discrepancy between the questionnaire description and reliability table; this should be resolved before publication.

5.6 Conclusion

Using a sample of 400 university teachers in Punjab, Pakistan, this study found a statistically significant indirect association between HRM practices and teacher retention intention through transparency. The indirect effect was positive but modest, and the direct HRM–retention association remained significant, supporting partial mediation. The findings indicate that transparent communication and understandable HR procedures may be useful complements to substantive HRM practices. Further longitudinal and multiple-mediator research is needed to establish temporal pathways and estimate the unique contributions of transparency and recognition.

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