

## Role of Emotional Intelligence on Retaining Faculty Members at Higher Educational Institutions: A Phenomenological Analysis of Selected Business Schools

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Competent faculty retention in any academic institution requires its leaders to have adequate competencies of emotional intelligence. The purpose of this study, hence, has been to examine the importance of emotional intelligence in faculty retention in higher educational institutions in Nepal. A qualitative, phenomenological approach was used to achieve the purpose of this study. In this context, eleven faculty members shared their experiences highlighting the value of emotional intelligence in their work environment. Transcription of interviews and focus group discussions were used as primary sources of data collection. Five themes and sixteen sub-themes revealed that competency factors of emotional intelligence such as empathy, self-control, and inspirational leadership, conflict management, delivering services, effective communication, teamwork, and collaboration have profound roles in retaining faculty at the academic institution. According to the description of the participants, organizational policies, leadership behavior, and motivational factors also play important roles in retaining the faculty. Furthermore, it was revealed that sports, pairing protocol, spacing effect, and environmental enrichment initiatives would also enhance faculty retention from a brain science perspective. As a result, leaders who want to retain their employees for a longer period need to portray emotional intelligence at their workplace. This research, therefore, serves as a guideline for

leaders at selected business schools to connect towards all ongoing debates that contribute to the body of literature as a new area of emotional intelligence in faculty retention.

**Keywords:** Emotional intelligence, higher educational institution, faculty, retention

## **Introduction**

This study has included the issues such as the general perception of emotional intelligence (EI) and faculty retention at higher educational institutions, the various dimension of EI, the role of EI on retention, the effects of EI of leaders on subordinates at Academic Institutions, and leadership competencies on organizational commitment at Academic Institutions.

The theoretical concepts of emotional intelligence grounded in this study is primarily based on the Goleman model. In addition to this, the Salovey-Mayor model, and the Bar-On model are also explored to find the link from participants' perception. Goleman's model set out a framework of Emotional Intelligence (EI) that describes how people arrange themselves through personal competence and how they handle relationships through social competence (Goleman, 1998). Salovey and Mayer (1990) in their model argued that "intelligence is the capacity to bring about abstract reasoning to understand meanings, grapple the similarities and differences between two concepts, formulate powerful generalization and understand once generalization may be inappropriate due to circumstances" (Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 2016, p.1). The Bar-On model is operationalized by the Emotional Quotient Inventory (The EQ-i). This model, according to Bar-On (2006), set out five scales: i. Intrapersonal (self-regard, emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, independence, and self-actualization), ii. Interpersonal (empathy, social responsibility, and interpersonal relationship), iii. Stress

management (stress tolerance, impulse control) iv. Adaptabilities (reality testing, flexibility, problem-solving), and v. General mood (optimism, happiness).

Similarly, to examine the link between satisfaction and retention, Herzberg's theory of motivation has also been grounded. Previous studies (Homburg, Carthy & Tabvuma, 2015; Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2015; Hom, Shaw & Hausknecht, 2017) suggest that employee motivation plays significant roles to enhance job satisfaction. Oladapo (2014) believes that encouraged and motivated employees by the management are more likely to stay. This shows that retention is linked to motivated and incentivized personnel (Dresner, DeRivera, Fuccillo & Heejun, 2014). Singh (2018) argues that appreciated employees are more than likely to stay with the organization because of the motivation which eventually will reduce the turnover rate. Further, the views of the participants in this study determine whether the relationship between EI and Job Satisfaction has been examined and found any links with scholar's views.

### **Problem Statement**

Goleman (2013) states that due to the changes in the rule of work, people are being evaluated by their competencies of handling work with each other along with training, expertise and smartness. This will eventually assist to identify and determine who will be recruited and who will not, who will let go and who will be retained, who passed over and who will be promoted (Goleman, 2013). "Initiatives, empathy, adaptability and persuasiveness in personal characteristics are important for employees in addition to intellectual capability and technical know-how to do the job" (Goleman, 2013, p.3). This demands the value of the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and employee engagement.

Retaining a talented workforce is a challenging job in organizations (Sivakumar & Chitra, 2018). Employees who are

satisfied with their job tend to stay. In contrast, those dissatisfied employees often look for a new position (Jacobs, 2011). Previous studies (Carmeli, 2003; Kafetsios & Loumakou, 2007; Al-Bahrani, 2017) examined the relationship between EI and job satisfaction. Experienced managers with EI skills reported an increased level of motivation, job satisfaction and performance, whereas managers with lack of EI skills reported a decreased level of motivation, job satisfaction and performance (Al-Bahrani, 2017).

The leader's EI has a significantly moderate and positive impact on the retention intention of their direct reports (Fernando & Gomage, 2019). Furthermore, EI of the employee can be used as a way to retain them, meaning there is the relationship between EI and the employee retention (Judeh, 2013; Sivakumar & Chitra, 2018; Fernando & Gomage, 2019).

Giao et al. (2020) revealed that perceived organizational support could decrease the turnover intention of employees and it could moderate the relationship between emotional intelligence and work-family conflict. Owing to the value of EI on employee retention, a study is needed that explores the perception of academic professionals working in business schools in Nepal regarding the value of EI on employee retention. This research tried to provide the answers to the link between emotional intelligence and employee's retention at an academic institution.

### **Purpose of Research**

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to identify the effect of emotional intelligence of leaders at Academic Institutions on faculty members' retention through their lived experiences. Specifically, the purpose presented here is to understand how social competencies help to manage faculty retention in Academic Institutions in Nepal.

According to previous studies, emotional intelligence is an

important component of employee performance (Laxmi & Rao, 2018) and organizational commitment (Masrek, Osman, Ibrahim & Mansor, 2014). There are a few previous studies (Fernando & Gamage, 2019; Sivakumar & Chitra, 2018) on EI and employee retention. This study relies on personal experience of participants to understand the role of EI and how the effects of EI on Business faculty influence retention of employees within business schools in Nepal.

### **Significance of the Study**

Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been a widely researched topic for twenty-five years after its introduction and is still an evolving issue (Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 2016) despite numerous research articles having been authored. In this regard, this study has aimed to explore the perception of participants on emotional intelligence and the roles it plays in employee retention. . Goleman (2013) states that when organizations lose many employees, the real cost can be substantial. He further states, “The cost for a company to replace a derailed executive with someone from outside can run into hundreds of thousands, even millions, of dollars” (Goleman, 2013, p. 39). This signifies that there is a clear value-added from emotional competence, which deficit carries an expensive price- in turnover (Goleman, 2013). At a global consumer beverage firm, which ignored emotional intelligence, used to hire top-notch leaders, 50 percent left within two years at a total search cost of close to USD 4 million (Goleman, 2013). When the firm started to evaluate the emotional competencies, Goleman (2013) confirms that the retention rate was much greater, with only six per cent of new division Presidents leaving within two years.

There are about ten Universities running management/business degrees for various levels in Nepal with 4500 to 5000

faculty members engaged in teaching in these business schools at various levels in Nepal as claimed by Nobel Management Research and Consulting Services (NMRCs). In this context, the researcher believes that this study could support the academic institution in Nepal for the need to evaluate the emotional competencies of the employee for retention. From Nepali perspective, the study on the role of EI on employee retention seemed to be a new one in terms of both quantitative and qualitative approach.

Besides, the contribution of this research will help the academic leaders to retain employees by understanding how emotional intelligence could be perceived to link with their views. The result of this study will serve as a valuable contribution to contemporary knowledge in emotional intelligence and employee retention. The researcher believes this is going to serve as a pioneering academic contribution in Nepal.

### **Research Design**

This is a qualitative study with a phenomenological approach. Phenomenology is a strategy of inquiry where the researcher identifies the essence of human experience about certain phenomena as described by participants (Creswell, 2007). There are several methods of data collection in a phenomenological study. However, the most practiced technique used interviews and focus groups discussion (Gill & Baillie, 2018). Creswell (2007) suggests five to twenty-five respondents for phenomenological studies. Morse (1994) suggests at least six in a phenomenological study. For this study, the researcher has used one on one virtual interview followed by a focus group discussion. The total sample comprises 11 face to face in-depth interviews.

The researcher has used a purposeful sampling method to determine the participants. The participants have been targeted for an in-depth interview with one session of 30-45 minutes. Similarly,

the focus group discussion (FGD) was scheduled to hold once for an hour and a half. They are the same participants in the interview and FGD. The researcher believes that individual experiences obtained from the interview are common issues as well as variations on the views derived from FGD. The in-depth interviews scheduled to use the semi-structured type of interviewing and employed an open-ended questionnaire. The flexibility that has been achieved by probing responses to questions posed by the researcher so other important information could be collected. Through these two methods (Interview and FGD), a coherence justification for themes has been built.

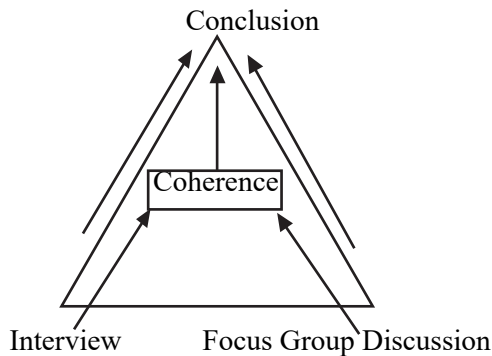


Figure 1: Methodological Triangulation (Poudel, 2020)

Triangulation was used for cross-checking to confirm data consistency by using more than one research method. Moreover, in line with the experts' view, triangulation or multiple methods of data collection and analysis were used, which strengthened reliability as well as internal validity (Merriam, 1988; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

## Review of Literature

First, all literature reviews of major theories of EI have been discussed. There are three major models of EI. They are; Goleman's model, Ability model and Bar-on model (Krishnan & Awang, 2020).

Second, the literature related to the role of EI in employee retention have also been reviewed. This review of literature has further explained the role of EI on employee retention in Nepali Business Schools.

### **Theoretical Orientation**

Three major theories of Emotional Intelligence namely, Goleman's model, Ability model and the Bar-On model have been discussed in this section. In addition to this, a relevant literature on employee retention in Chinese Context in general but Nepali perspective in particular has also been reviewed. Finally, some important literature on emotional intelligence and employee retention have been stated in theoretical orientation.

### **Major Theories of Emotional Intelligence**

Krishnan and Awang (2020) state that emotional intelligence originated from social intelligence which was introduced by Edward L Thorndike in 1920. Prior to this, Darwin's early work on emotional expression for survival and adaptation, according to Bar-On (2006) can be taken as the theoretical foundation of emotional intelligence. Further, Wechsler's intelligent behavior advocated on non-intellective abilities more than intellectual ability (Krishnan & Awang, 2020). In the year 1983, Howard Gardner came up with the idea of multiple intelligence (Moran & Gardner, 2018). In a memoir, entitled 'A Synthesizing Mind: A Memoir from the Creator of Multiple Intelligence Theory, Gardner (2020) asserts that Multiple Intelligence (MI) theory is based on empirical findings. MI consists of linguistic intelligence, musical intelligence, logical mathematical intelligence, spatial intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence and personal intelligence. The model of emotional intelligence which is known as the ability model was developed by John Mayer and Peter Salovey in 1990 (Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 2016). With this model,



the authors claimed that some people might be more intelligent about emotions than others based on the findings in the area of emotion, intelligence, psychotherapy and cognition (Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 2016). The Goleman's (1995) model which euphemistically is known as the mixed model of EI consists of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management in its framework (Lewis, Neville & Ashkanasy, 2017). Last but not the least, the Bar-On's (1997) mixed model of EI assimilates ability and trait disposition. It has five scales: intra-personal, interpersonal, stress management, adaptability and general mood (Bar-On, 2006; Kanesan & Fauzan, 2019). The three models (Goleman, Ability and Bar-On) may offer some variances on measuring, recognizing and defining the EI components. Nevertheless, "the shared relationship among them is the capacity to identify and understand emotions and develop the necessary competencies to respond to those emotions in oneself and others" (Ramirez, Gudi, Griffin & Sherbert, 2016, p.61). Goleman's model of emotional intelligence

Goleman (1998) set out a framework of emotional intelligence in his book entitled "Working with emotional intelligence" that describes how we arrange ourselves through personal competence and how we handle relationships through social competence. Personal competence, as Goleman (1998) describes in three competences: self-awareness, self-regulation and motivation. There are twelve competencies under personal competence. They are: emotional awareness, accurate self-assessment, self-confidence, self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability, innovation, achievement drive, commitment, initiative and optimism. Precisely, the EI model of Goleman (1998) includes three competences: (1) Self-Awareness-knowing one's internal states, preferences, resources and intuitions; (2) Self-Regulation- managing one's internal states, impulses, and resources; (3) Motivation-Emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals.

## **Ability model of emotional intelligence**

Ability model of emotional intelligence was introduced by Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer in 1990. Salovey and Mayer (1990) define EI as “the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions” (p. 189). Mayer, DiPaolo and Salovey (1990), defined EI and developed a theory and demonstration measure of it. The authors identified and compared several models claiming that they introduced a regulatory model that they argued may be both intelligent and adaptive (Mayer & Salovey, 1995). Series of studies have been conducted by the scholars on ability model (Mayer & Salovey, 1993; Caruso, Mayer & Salovey, 2002; Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2005; Salovey, Bracket, & Mayer, 2007), principles and updates (Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 2016) and the nature of emotional and personal intelligence (Mayer, 2018; Caruso, Mayer, Bryan, Phillips, & Salovey, 2019).

The Salovey-Mayer model defines EI as the ability to perceive, understand, manage and use emotions to assist thinking, assessed by an ability-based measure (Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 2016). This model suggested that some people might be more intelligent about emotions than others based on the findings in the areas of emotion, intelligence, psychotherapy and cognition (Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 2016). Further, Ability model has seven principles of EI; they are: (1) EI is a mental ability; (2) EI is best measured as an ability; (3) Intelligent problem solving does not correspond neatly to intelligent behavior; (4) A test’s content- the problem solving area involved- must be clearly specified as a precondition for the measurement of human mental abilities; (5) Valid tests have well-defined subject matter that draws out relevant human mental abilities; (6) EI is a broad intelligence; and (7) EI is a member of the class of broad intelligences focused on hot information processing.

## **The Bar-On model of emotional intelligence**

Reuven Bar-On of University of Texas Medical Branch came up with the idea of emotional social intelligence (ESI). Bar-On (2006) asserts that “emotional social intelligence (ESI) is composed of various interpersonal and intrapersonal competencies, skills and facilitators that combine to determine effective human behavior” (p.2). On the basis of this belief, Reuven Bar-On outlined the model of emotional social intelligence (ESI) since 1982. Bar-On (2006) referred to the construct as ESI rather than Emotional Intelligence (EI) or Social Intelligence (SI). However, the conceptualization of ESI has appeared since the works of Thorndike in 1920 (Bar-On, 2006). The author states that “the Bar-On model describes a cross-section of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills and facilitators that impact intelligent behavior, measured by self-report within an expandable multi-model approach including interview and multi-rather assessment (p. 2).

The theoretical foundation of the Bar-On model has been taken from Darwin’s early work on emotional expression for survival and adaptation, Thorndike Social Intelligence (1920), Wechsler’s intelligent behavior (1940, 1943), Sifneos’ description of a alexithymia (1967) on the pathological end of the ESI continuum and Appelbaun’s conceptualization of Psychological mindedness (1973) according to Bar-On (2006). The conceptual model of Bar-On’s ESI comprises five components: They are; 1. Intrapersonal intelligence, 2. Interpersonal intelligence, 3. Stress management, 4. Adaptability, and 5. General mood. These five components are composed of fifteen competencies (Avarzamani, Hosein, Shahmiri, Mohsen & Ebrahimi, 2021). According to Bar-on (2006) Intrapersonal intelligence comprises self-regard, emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, independence and self-actualization. Interpersonal intelligence is composed of empathy, social responsibility and interpersonal relationships. Further, stress management consisted of

stress tolerance and impulse control. Adaptability includes reality testing, flexibility and problem solving. And, general mood includes optimism and happiness.

## **Employee Retention**

The Human Resource Department plays an active role in keeping its employees in proper places. Lockwood (2006) stated, “attracting, developing, retaining and utilizing people with the required skills and aptitude with implementation of integrated strategies is important to increase workplace productivity to meet current and future business needs” (p. 2). In the words of Das and Baruah (2013), employee retention is encouraging employees to remain in the organization for a longer period of time. Retention is the ability to hold on to employees (Poudel, 2016). Retaining the existing personnel in an organization is very challenging as the job switch would create a meaningful gap of knowledge and experience (Poudel, 2016). So, for the organizations to be competent, they must have adopted an appropriate strategy to retain their valuable employees for the long run. Previous studies attempted to find out different dimensions of retention. Howard, Liu, Wellins and Williams (2007) used 32 factors of employee retention in the Chinese context. Howard et al (2007) investigated China’s retention problem with 215 HR professionals and 862 employees. Howard et al (2007) revealed 18 main reasons why employees leaves.

When we look at the above mentioned 18 reasons of employee turnover, most of the factors are related with the personal and social competencies of Goleman’s emotional intelligence model. More specifically, they are inclined to empathy which is under social competence. Some of the factors fall into self- management categories of Goleman’s personal competencies. Howard et al. (2007) propose thirty two values and use of retention methods.

## **Analysis and Presentation of Results**

This study examines the area of emotional intelligence and faculty retention in Academic Institutions in Nepal. The aim of this phenomenological study was to understand the role of emotional intelligence of leaders on retaining faculty members at Academic Institutions based on their lived experiences. Creswell and Creswell (2017) asserted that phenomenology is a study of inquiry where researchers identify the essence of human experience about certain phenomena as described by the participants.

### **Demographic Statistics**

The 11 participants who took part in this dissertation research were Nepalese as well as the Indian citizens working in an Academic Institutions. Among them 9 were Nepali and 2 were Indian. As far as the gender is concerned there were 9 male participants and 2 female participants. With regards to the work experience, all of them have more than 5-year work experience in one place. In addition to their work experience in Nepal, over 81 per cent participants also have international work experience. Among these 11 participants, three of them are Senior Professors having more than 15-year work experience in one place, be it the B-School or the University. One of the participants has theorized the Transformative Learning using auto-ethnographic research methodology. His recent book in this area has been published from one of the reputed publishers of the Netherlands. One participant has also participated at the prestigious TEDx Talk in Nepal. Among 11 participants, two of them are currently working as Associate Dean at Business Schools. Ten participants were associated with B-School/University whereas one participant was selected as a resource person of Neuro-Science. All the participants have masters or above academic qualification. Specifically, four of them have Doctorate degrees whereas seven of them have passed Masters or above degree. In addition to these

participants, the researcher also had consulted one prominent American Professor and a leading Book Author to review focus group discussions' questions.

To ensure the privacy of all the participants, they remained anonymous as promised in the signed consent letter. Instead of their real name code names (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J and K) are used in reference to their transcripts of interviews and focus group discussions.

Table 1 provides participant's characteristics relating to their education whereas Table 2 provides participants' demographic characteristics relating to gender, age, nationality, position, experience and their exposure. Table 3 provides participant's characteristics relating to the country of work.

Table 1  
Participants' Education

Masters or Above Degree	Doctorate or Above Degree
7 (A, B, E, G, H, I, J)	4 (C, D, F, K)

Table 2  
Demographic Characteristics: Personal data

Name(Cod ed)	Gender	Approx . Age	National ity	Position	Experien ce	Countries of Work
A	M	30 Years	Nepali	Fulltime Faculty	5 years	Nepal
B	F	35 Years	Indian	Fulltime Faculty	6 years	India, Nepal
C	M	50 Years	Nepali	Professor	15 Years	US, Australia, Nepal
D	M	60 Years	Nepali	Professor/Act. Dean	25 Years	Germany, Nepal

<b>E</b>	M	35 Years	Nepali	Vice Principal	5 years	UK, India, Nepal
<b>F</b>	F	50 Years	Indian	Professor/Act. Dean	15 Years	India, Nepal
<b>G</b>	M	40 Years	Nepali	Asst Professor	12 Years	Nepal
<b>H</b>	M	35 Years	Nepali	Management Practitioner/Visi ting Faculty	10 Years	India, Japan, Nepal
<b>I</b>	M	30 Years	Nepali	Faculty	15 Years	Japan, Nepal
<b>J</b>	M	35 Years	Nepali	Fulltime Faculty	5 years	India, Nepal
<b>K</b>	M	35 Years	Nepali	Neuro-Scientist	8 years	US, Japan, Nepal

**Table 3**  
**Country of work**

<b>Work in Nepal</b>	<b>Work only in Nepal</b>	<b>Work in two more countries including Nepal</b>
<b>11</b>	2 (A, G)	9 ( B, C, D, E, F, H, I, J, K)

Participant's individual experience as Faculty member or Professor at Academic Institutions /University in emotional intelligence and retention was unique. Nevertheless, common themes that were related to emotional intelligence and retention emerged. Nevertheless, common themes that were related to emotional intelligence and retention emerged within the group. There were five themes and sixteen sub-themes revealed on the basis of in-depth interview and focus group discussion.

Previous studies have shown that emotionally aware leaders know their emotions, realizing their strengths and weaknesses (Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017). Some participants described what it means to realize their own emotions and find out the impact. Their description related the role of EI in retaining faculty members in business school. Participants described that “emotions play a vital role” and it reflects the leader’s behavior. They asserted that “behavior of leaders has a high impact on retention of colleagues everywhere”.

Self-management is one of the important components of emotional intelligence. Emotional self-control, adaptability, achievement and positive outlook can be experienced by self-management (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2013). In participants’ views “self- management is self- reflection”. They described that “self-management is the ability to manage one-self by controlling emotions and desires”. Self-controlled leaders keep disruptive emotions and impulses under control (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2013). Participants’ asserted that “self–control means control oneself”, “it is a kind of reflection and realization of our work”, and “a level to which we stop ourselves being tempted, impacted or affected by an event or series of events”.

People with initiative are able to seize opportunity and pursue goals beyond what is required of them (Goleman, 2013). Participants described that they take initiative in conducting “Training”, “Faculty Development Program”, “Research”, “Seminar” and “Workshop” for developing the abilities of their colleagues.

Multi-tasking is a regular phenomenon in business schools. Participants described multi-tasking in two ways. Some of them described that it is quite common in their workplace while others say working many jobs at the same time is very confusing. Some participants described that as a faculty, “You need to teach, do research, and conduct seminar and workshop as a part of multiple-task.” This researcher consulted one of the leading neuro-scientists of Juntendo



University Tokyo Japan whether multitasking is good to offer to employees from a brain science perspective. The scientist suggested not offering multiple tasks to employees as “our brain does not support it”. He described that “Employees will forget the old information if you assign them multiple tasks because it is how our brain works”.

The component that supports the leader through driving resonance is social awareness (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2013). According to them, social awareness consists of empathy, organizational awareness and services. Empathy senses other’s emotions, understands their perspective and takes active interest in their concern. Participants described that “leaders’ empathetic behavior helps in retaining faculties in business school”. Most of the participants described how they understood their colleagues’ emotions. Some participants described that they listened to their colleagues attentively and helped them by initiating pathways to ease the difficult task and bringing faculty members in joint research.

Emotional maturity is a kind of controlling emotions and behaving rationally (Rai & Khanal, 2017). Participants believed that the emotional maturity was enhanced by admitting mistakes and honoring promises and meeting commitments. Participants described that they “committed mistakes” and believed that “once you accept or apologize you correct the thing and get eased”. Most of the participants described that they showed their emotional maturity by honoring promises and meeting commitments.

People having “developing others” competency acknowledge and reward people’s strengths and accomplishments. They also offer useful feedback for fostering people’s skills (Goleman, 2013). Participants described that they assisted their colleagues either “involving them in writing workshop” or “creating congenial environment and platform to organize training”.

The art of handling relationships starts with legitimacy which is regarded as the acting from one’s genuine feelings (Goleman,

Boyatzis & McKee, 2013). In this context, participants' described how they experienced teamwork and collaboration, inspiring leadership, leadership competencies, organizational commitment, conflict resolution and effective communication.

Leaders with collaboration and teamwork competencies draw others into active, enthusiastic commitment and generate friendly and helpful environments (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2013). Participants described that "Business school or University cannot function well without teamwork of faculty and their collaboration". Working with a common goal enhances teamwork and collaboration according to the description of the participants.

Inspirational leadership guides and motivates people with a compelling vision and they get people excited about a common mission (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2013). Participants described that "Inspiring and guiding individuals and groups toward common goals is essential for team success". They experienced that "firm's culture and leadership should indoctrinate the colleagues about the goal of the firm".

Star leaders adopted various sets of leadership competencies. One leader might excel through self-confidence, flexibility, initiation, the drive to achieve, empathy, developing others whereas another leader might be good in self-awareness, integrity, staying calm, organizational awareness, influence and collaboration (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2013). Each participant's description on leadership competencies was unique. Leaders with these competencies, according to participants' description, "foster team culture and encourage fellow members to achieve the common goal of an organization". They described that "leadership competencies need to be dynamic due to rapid change in the global economy".

Emotions can become messy due to the rise of conflict. However, conflict has to be productive rather than destructive (Ryback, 1998). Participants described that "Conflict is inevitable"

and leaders should be “aware of this regular phenomenon”. They described the “origination of conflict rooted due to the coordination problem”. So, in their experiences, participants described that “leadership should act as a moderator to resolve the conflict in the business school/University. It is also important to note “what approach individual or collective will take matters in handling conflict”, according to the experiences of the participants.

Communication is one of the most important competencies in relationship management (Goleman, 2013). In order to retain employees, participants described that “communication provides a vital role”. Minor issues turnout to be major ones “due to lack of proper communication” and if leaders listen properly “two thirds of the problems get solved” according to the experience of the participants. Since the employee turnover intention will go down due to proper communication, participants are encouraged to “listen more to the colleagues concern” in the business school.

Retention is the ability to hold employees in an organization. Retaining the existing employees in an organization is very challenging because the job switch would create an important gap of knowledge and experience (Poudel, 2016). Researchers believe that emotional intelligence is negatively related to employee turnover intention which will enhance retention (Goleman, 2013; Koorella & Perumal, 2019). Participants described that “work culture”, “personality alignment”, “fairness,” “pay and perks”, “work-life balance”, “career development”, “faculty development program”, “team spirit”, “continuous improvement”, “fringe benefit” are major determinants of employee retention in the organization. These factors are in line with Herzberg’s two factor theory as examined by Poudel (2018).

Leadership and relationship’s play a key role in organizational success (Nowack, 2008). As such relationships between employees and leaders play an influencing role on employees’ career decisions (Covella, McCarthy, Kaifi & Cocoran, 2017). During the focus group

discussion, the majority of participants described that leadership behavior is one of the most influencing determinants of employee retention. For this. “Leader should be flexible” and “he/she should be receptive to the openness of new ideas”.

Similarly, organizational policies also equally important which serve several purposes such as smooth communication on employment conditions, treating fairness and equality in organization and developing employee handbooks or policy books can be offered by organizational policies (McConnell, 2005). Participants described that “policies guide the leader” and “it encourages any kind of initiative.” Participants experienced that “the consistency in payment and facilities are ensured” through policies as well.

It is necessary to lower the stress of the employee at the workplace. When a person is stressed the adrenal glands release the hormone called Cortisol (Cadman, 2020). In a conversation with Dr Parajuli at Juntendo University Tokyo, the Neuro-scientists suggest business schools give attention to their faculty in sports, food, pairing protocol, and environmental enrichment initiatives for retention from brain science perspectives.

Sports play a vital role to release stress and make us feel happy according to Dr. Parajuli. According to him, sports activity helps in maintaining a balanced level of cortisol. So, one way of making your faculty happy at work is involving them in sport activities by assigning them to club activity.

Food is another important thing for keeping our brain healthy. Selhub (2015) stated that the production of neurotransmitters like serotonin is highly influenced by the billions of “good” bacteria that make up your intestinal micro-biome. Dr Parajuli agreed this and asserted that “In order to make your emotional brain intact you need to have food that produces friendly bacteria which have positive effect on your brain.”

Dr Parajuli suggests the experiment to be conducted for 12 weeks for the faculty to provide the food or drink with music every weekend and observe the result. Food with music is a pairing protocol. He stated that food should be specific. Once you get them used to it, after sometime even if you provide only food they automatically remember their favourite music there. This is another way of keeping your faculty happy at the workplace according to this neuro-scientist.

Dr Parajuli described that environmental enrichment program also helps faculty in a natural way to become happy. He suggested that “the natural way or Environmental Enrichment (EE) initiatives should be taken by the organization by assigning clubs for those employees in green areas”. In his view, their “brain will be recharged and employees’ brain will be happy having the exposure of greenery.”

### **Summary of Results**

This qualitative phenomenological study explored individual experiences of eleven participants involved in Academic Institutions and University. This study revealed what they experienced and how they experienced the role of emotional intelligence in retaining faculty at the Academic Institutions in Nepal.

The results showed that each participant’s experience on EI and retention was unique. However common themes that were related to EI and retention emerged within a group. Five themes and sixteen sub-themes revealed themselves: 1) Self-awareness- it included a sub-theme of emotional self-awareness. 2) Self-management- this theme reflected the experience of the participants on self- management. It includes the sub-themes of self-control, initiative and multiple tasks. 3) Social awareness- participant’s descriptions on how they experience social awareness included in this theme. This theme included the sub-themes empathy, emotional maturity and developing others. 4) Relationship-this theme describes how participants managed relationships. The sub-

themes included inspiring leadership, teamwork and collaboration and communication, conflict management, leadership commitment and organizational commitment, and effective communications. 5) Retention- this theme reflected participants' views on retention, the major determinants of retention in Academic Institutions. The sub-themes included employee satisfaction: factors of motivation, organization policy, leader's behaviour and neuro-science perspective on better faculty retention. With this, sports, food, pairing protocol and environmental enrichment (EE) initiatives were revealed from a brain-science perspective by the neuro-scientist who was involved in this research as a resource person.

The results generally confirm the importance of EI in employee retention. Results showed that the leader who wants to retain his competent employees has to have emotional intelligence. There are specific EI competencies that have a greater impact on retention of faculty in Academic Institutions. The competencies of empathy, self-control, inspirational leadership, conflict management, delivering services, effective communication, teamwork and collaboration have a greater role in retaining faculty at the Academic Institutions. Furthermore, organization policies, leadership behaviour and motivating factors too are equally given priority in retaining faculty. Last but not the least, an important finding of this study was to understand the neuro-science perspective and its relation on employee satisfaction which opened a new avenue in the research study.

Table 1

Research questions/Sub-questions and their relations to the themes

Research questions/Sub-questions & Factors	Themes
R1a	One: Self-awareness
R1b	Two: Self-management
R1c, R1d, R1e	Three: Social-awareness

R2a, R2b, R2c, R2d, R2e	Four: Relationship management
1. Factors of motivation	Five: Employee retention
2. Organization policy or leadership competencies?	
3. Others: Brain-Science perspectives	

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Previous studies (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Goleman, 1998; Bar-On, 2006; Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2013; Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 2016; Rashid, Bajwa & Batool, 2016; Ramirez, Gudi, Griffin & Sherbert, 2016; Ul-Hassaan, 2016; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Laxmi & Rao, 2018; Riaz, Naem, Khanzada & Butt, 2018; Alzyoud, Ahmed, Alzgoool & Pahi, 2019; Ferando & Gamage, 2019; Giao, Vuog, Huan, Tushar & Quan, 2020; & Krishnan & A, 2020) revealed the strong evidence on EI. Similarly, retention of employees has been largely discussed by many authors (Howard, Liu, Wellins & Williams, 2007; Poudel, 2016; Singh, 2018). However, acknowledging the role of emotional intelligence in retaining faculty in Academic Institutions /University remains a problem.

This study aimed to address two primary research questions: 1) What is the impact of leaders' emotional intelligence on employee retention? and 2) How can social competencies aid in managing employee retention in academic institutions? The study also explored sub-questions related to these main inquiries, such as the influence of self-awareness of one's mood on understanding others' emotions in the workplace, the role of self-regulation in maintaining relationships with subordinates, the importance of empathy in understanding others' perspectives, the impact of emotional maturity on coordinating with subordinates, and the significance of being mindful of one's image in developing overall interpersonal

skills. Additionally, the study investigated the role of collaboration and teamwork competencies, visionary leadership competencies, leadership competencies, and communication competencies in managing employee retention.

The results of the study revealed several findings that support the significant role of emotional intelligence in employee retention. These findings align with previous studies on emotional intelligence, confirming its influence on employee retention. The study also demonstrated that emotional intelligence is crucial for leaders seeking to retain business faculty. The research highlighted the importance of various emotional intelligence competencies proposed by Goleman (2013) in the context of retaining faculty members in academic institutions. These competencies include empathy, emotional self-awareness, self-control, initiative, developing others, teamwork and collaboration, conflict management, and effective communication, among others. Additionally, the study emphasized the relevance of considering brain science perspectives, such as sports, pairing protocols, the spacing effect, and environmental enrichment initiatives, to promote employee happiness and productivity and retain faculty members.

This study provides significant contributions to both theory and practice in the field of emotional intelligence, deepening the understanding of its role in faculty retention. It not only contributes to ongoing debates in emotional intelligence research but also introduces a new area of study in the literature.

The researcher believes that the following practical recommendation needs to be taken into consideration by the top level management of the Academic Institutions so as to retain their competent faculty members.

- a) There is the need to understand the emotions of the faculty by the Academic Institutions' management.
- b) Leaders must acknowledge the effort and contribution of the faculty members showing their positive behaviour.



- c) Leaders should build and develop the habit of self-reflection, self-realization and frequent critical thinking on their work, whether they performed it correctly.
- d) Leaders need to take initiatives of conducting periodic research seminars, workshop and faculty development programs (FDP) and other capacity building training for their faculties.
- e) Though multi-tasking is a regular job in many organizations, it is not a wise thing to assign multi-tasks to the employees according to neuro-scientists. So, B-Schools should consult with Neuro-Scientists or Psychologists for the effectiveness of enhancing employees' productivity from brain science perspectives.
- f) Leaders need to show their empathetic behaviour to their subordinate which is largely missing in this part of the world.
- g) Admitting mistakes and honouring promises and meeting commitments will be value added for leaders' emotional maturity. So, leaders should admit their mistakes, honour the promises and meet their commitments.
- h) Leaders should not ignore their faculties' concern, they should rather engage in the pertinent issues of their employees by listening to them properly. Effective communication channels between the faculty and the management must be set up so that message will not be misinterpreted. Organization's vision, mission and objectives should properly be communicated and understood by all the employees.
- i) Organizational and employee goals should be aligned in such a way that firm's culture and leadership always indoctrinate the colleagues about the goal of the firm where employees' career growth would be ensured.
- j) The major determinant factors of faculty retention such as work-life balance, career-development, fairness of rule implementation, team spirit, continuous improvement

of faculty, adequate pay and perks, work culture, faculty development program(FDP) should be given priority in Academic Institutions.

- k) B-Schools need to carry out and promote research on EI, employee behaviour, job satisfaction, faculty retention etc., on a periodic basis. They better deploy at least one psychologist if not neuro-scientist who can suggest them from evidence based findings for better faculty retention.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

Employee retention is a challenging job in any organization. Retaining a competent faculty is essential for any organization including Academic Institutions. The results of this study showed that the role of EI is really important in employee retention. Findings from this study suggest that leaders with EI competencies have value addition in retaining faculty in Academic Institutions.

The main limitation of this research is the limited generalizability of its findings as it may not be necessarily applicable in other countries due to unique tradition and cultural orientation of the participants. However, the scope of the research can be enlarged to include wider scope of academia of Nepal.

The result of this study can be used as a foundation to conduct more extensive studies in the field of EI and employee retention. This research was performed on a small number of participants. So, future research should examine the issue with a larger sample involving a diversity of participants from a wider area engaged in the educational sectors. Since this study was limited to qualitative phenomenological approaches, future study would benefit more from using other research methodologies.

For future research opportunities, this researcher would recommend researchers conduct different further research in different areas and different geographical locations with relatively

larger sample sizes using different research methodologies. So, in this context, understanding the lived experience of different participants in Nepal; it is suggested for future research to understand the experience on role of EI on faculty retention in South Asian perspective using mixed research method.

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