

# The Influence of Strategic Human Resource Management on Academic Staff Retention

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## ABSTRACT

Retensi staf akademik telah menjadi perhatian penting bagi institusi pendidikan tinggi karena dampak langsungnya terhadap kualitas pengajaran, produktivitas penelitian, dan keberlanjutan institusi. Studi ini menyelidiki pengaruh praktik Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia Strategis (SHRM) terhadap retensi staf akademik melalui pendekatan meta-analitik. Dengan meninjau dan mensintesis secara sistematis temuan kuantitatif dari 10 studi empiris yang diterbitkan antara tahun 2020 dan 2025, penelitian ini mengkaji keseluruhan ukuran efek intervensi SHRM, termasuk insentif berbasis kinerja, program pengembangan karier, pengambilan keputusan partisipatif, dan inisiatif dukungan organisasi, terhadap tingkat retensi fakultas. Studi meta-analisis ini menyimpulkan bahwa implementasi Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia Strategis (SHRM) memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap retensi staf akademik di universitas. Nilai efek estimasi gabungan sebesar 1.005 dengan tingkat signifikansi  $p < .001$  menunjukkan bahwa praktik SHRM—seperti manajemen bakat, perencanaan suksesi, dan sistem penghargaan berbasis kinerja—secara konsisten meningkatkan loyalitas dan komitmen dosen terhadap keberlanjutan. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa sumber daya manusia merupakan aset strategis yang tidak hanya menunjang mutu pengajaran dan penelitian, tetapi juga menentukan keunggulan kompetitif dan reputasi lembaga pendidikan tinggi.

*Academic staff retention has become a critical concern for higher education institutions due to its direct impact on teaching quality, research productivity, and institutional sustainability. This study investigates the effect of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) practices on academic staff retention through a meta-analytic approach. By systematically reviewing and synthesizing quantitative findings from 10 empirical studies published between 2020 and 2025, the study examines the overall effect size of SHRM interventions, including performance-based incentives, career development programs, participatory decision-making, and organizational support initiatives, on faculty retention rates. This meta-analysis concludes that the implementation of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) has a positive and significant impact on academic staff retention in universities. The pooled estimated effect size of 1.005 with a significance level of  $p < .001$  indicates that SHRM practices—such as talent management, succession planning, and performance-based reward systems—consistently increase faculty loyalty and commitment to sustainability. These findings confirm that human resources are a strategic asset that not only supports the quality of teaching and research but also determines the competitive advantage and reputation of higher education institutions.*

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## Introduction

The global context, human resources (HR) in higher education are recognized as strategic assets that determine the competitiveness and quality of higher education. Universities are not only required to produce competent graduates (Al Dughan, 2022), but also create new knowledge through research and innovation, both of which are highly dependent on the qualifications and performance of academic staff (Sareen, 2018; Amushila, 2023). International organizations such as UNESCO and the OECD emphasize that the quality of higher education is closely correlated with effective human resource management, including recruitment, career development, and performance-based incentive

systems (Alajlani & Yesufu, 2022). In the era of a knowledge-based economy, lecturers and researchers play the role of knowledge workers who need strategic support in order to contribute optimally to the university's global reputation and the attractiveness of research investment (Kuuyelleh et al., 2022; Tetty, 2006).

At the national level, the dynamics of academic mobility and international competition add to the complexity of university human resource management (Charles Githinji et al., 2015). Increased cross-border cooperation, faculty exchange programs, and international research opportunities encourage academic staff to seek out institutions that offer more competitive work environments and better research facilities (Selesho & Naile, 2014). This poses a significant challenge for universities in developing countries, including Indonesia, to retain quality academic staff amid funding limitations and disparities in research facilities. As a result, lecturer retention has become a strategic issue that requires the implementation of strategy-based HR management practices, such as competitive compensation, sustainable professional development policies, and governance that supports work-life balance, in order to maintain the stability and quality of higher education in a sustainable manner (Kiragu & Marwa, 2022; (Hong et al., 2012).

The high turnover rate of academic staff has become a serious challenge for universities because it has a direct impact on research sustainability, teaching quality, and institutional reputation. Universities that are unable to retain lecturers and researchers risk declining scientific productivity, delays in completing research projects, and reduced publications with international reputation (Hariyadi et al., 2023; Oktarina, 2024; Oktarina et al., 2021). In terms of teaching, high turnover of lecturers can disrupt the continuity of the curriculum and reduce the quality of learning because students have to adapt to different teaching patterns (Bushe et al., 2012). Furthermore, the high turnover rate lowers the university's credibility in the eyes of stakeholders, including industry partners, donor institutions, and prospective students, thereby weakening the competitiveness of institutions in obtaining research funding and recruitment of outstanding students. Various factors prompted the decision of academic staff to resign, including dissatisfaction with remuneration that was not proportional to the workload and academic achievement (Abdullah et al., 2024; Agus Supriyadi et al., 2023; Luciana et al., 2024; Suryono et al., 2023). Limited career development opportunities, such as minimal access to international training, graduation levels, or collaborative research opportunities, also increase the intention to move to other institutions (Ali et al., 2024; Dewanto et al., 2023; Wantu et al., 2024). An uncondusive work environment, authoritarian leadership style, and an organizational culture that lacks innovation and collaboration are also important triggers. The combination of these factors not only reduces lecturers' emotional attachment to the institution, but also decreases overall job satisfaction, so universities need to design integrated HR management strategies to retain academic talent and ensure the sustainability of the quality of higher education (Markiano Solissa et al., 2023; Mulya Putra et al., 2023).

Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) is seen as an integrated approach that connects HR management practices with the strategic goals of the university, so that staffing policies are not only administrative but also support the achievement of the institution's long-term vision (Dube & Ngulube, 2013). Through this integration, the recruitment process, competency development, and performance assessment are designed to strengthen the competitive advantage of universities in education, research, and community service. SHRM emphasizes the importance of alignment between organizational needs and the individual aspirations of academic staff, ultimately creating a work environment that encourages high engagement and commitment (Wright & McMahan, 2011; Boxall & Purcell, 2016). Thus, SHRM focuses not only on operational efficiency, but also on the development of human capital as a strategic asset (Mather & Bam, 2025).

A number of empirical findings support the role of SHRM in improving academic staff retention through the application of practices such as talent management, succession planning, and competitive reward systems. A study conducted by Giauque et al. (2019) shows that strategic talent management is able to increase lecturer attachment and loyalty, while succession planning ensures stable academic leadership continuity. In addition, performance-based reward systems have been shown to encourage job satisfaction and reduce the intention to move to other institutions (Khan et al., 2020). These practices show that colleges that consistently adopt SHRM have higher academic staff retention rates than institutions that only implement conventional HR management (Salau et al., 2021).

Research by Alami et al. (2022) found that the integration of SHRM practices—including strategic recruitment, career development, and performance-based compensation systems—correlated significantly with lecturers' intention to stay at the institution. Similar findings were revealed by Choi

and Lee (2021) who emphasized that HR policies aligned with university strategic goals are able to increase job satisfaction and emotional attachment of lecturers, thereby reducing turnover rates. These studies emphasize the importance of a strategic approach in human resource management, especially in facing global challenges such as increasing academic mobility and competition between universities. Furthermore, research by Johari et al. (2019) in Malaysia shows that planned talent management can increase lecturer loyalty through ongoing professional development opportunities (Mboya et al., 2018). Meanwhile, Khan et al.'s (2020) research confirms that performance-based reward systems contribute significantly to job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which in turn reduces exit intentions. The results of this research are an important basis for universities in Indonesia to adopt a comprehensive SHRM policy, so as to be able to maintain quality academic staff and maintain the sustainability of the quality of higher education. Based on this, this study aims to find out The Influence of Strategic Human Resource Management on Academic Staff Retention

## Literature Review

### Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM)

Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) is defined as a human resource management approach that systematically integrates HR policies and practices with long-term organizational strategies to achieve sustainable competitive advantage (Khushk et al., 2024). In contrast to traditional HRM which tends to be administratively oriented and reactive, SHRM has proactive characteristics, oriented towards achieving strategic goals, and emphasizes alignment between the needs of the workforce and the organization's visions and missions. Important features of SHRM include a focus on long-term workforce planning, employee core capability development, and partnership-based relationship management. Thus, SHRM places human resources not only as operational costs, but as strategic assets that determine the competitiveness of the organization (Boxall & Purcell, 2000).

The main differences between traditional HRM and SHRM lie in the scope, time orientation, and managerial roles. Traditional HRM focuses on operational functions such as recruitment, training, and payroll with a short-term perspective. In contrast, SHRM links all HR practices to business strategy, emphasizing flexibility, innovation, and adaptation to changes in the external environment. In its application, SHRM often uses two main conceptual frameworks: Best Fit and Best Practice. The Best Fit model emphasizes the fit of HR practices with the organization's internal and external contexts, while Best Practice highlights a set of superior HR practices—such as rigorous selection, intensive training, and performance-based reward systems—that are believed to improve organizational performance universally. The combination of these two approaches allows organizations to balance specific needs with the widespread application of best practices (Charles Githinji et al., 2015).

### Academic Staff Retention

Academic staff retention is defined as the ability of higher education institutions to retain quality lecturers and researchers in a sustainable period of time, so that the continuity of tridharma activities and scientific development can be maintained. Retention not only reflects the organization's success in reducing turnover rates, but also includes efforts to create a work environment that supports long-term productivity, well-being, and loyalty (Allen et al., 2010). In the context of higher education, retention is a key indicator of institutional quality because it is closely related to curriculum stability, teaching quality, and research reputation (Govaerts et al., 2011).

Some of the key factors that affect academic staff retention include job satisfaction, career development, compensation, and the organizational climate. High job satisfaction increases affective commitment and decreases the desire to move (Kim & Jogaratnam, 2010). Career development opportunities, such as academic promotions and research support, have also been shown to strengthen motivation to stay employed at the same institution (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002). Competitive compensation, both in the form of basic salary and research allowances, is an important economic factor that influences retention decisions (Pienaar & Bester, 2008). In addition, an inclusive and collaborative organizational climate plays a role in creating a sense of belonging and emotional attachment (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Retention indicators in higher education can be measured through annual turnover rates, average lecturer tenure, results of organizational satisfaction and commitment surveys, and stable academic productivity (Baruch & Holtom, 2008).

## Research Methods

The Influence of Strategic Human Resource Management on Academic Staff Retention research uses a meta-analysis method to synthesize empirical findings from various relevant studies. Meta-analysis was chosen because it was able to integrate quantitative research results from different contexts and periods, thus providing a more comprehensive and reliable estimate of effects (Borenstein et al., 2021). The data collection process began with a systematic search of international databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar using the keywords "strategic human resource management," "academic staff retention," and "higher education." Inclusion criteria include publications in the range 2020–2025, articles that apply quantitative design, and reports that provide effect measures such as correlation coefficients or other effect sizes that can be statistically analyzed. This study analyzed 10 articles that met the inclusion criteria. Data analysis was carried out through the coding stage to extract key variables, such as sample characteristics, type of institution, retention indicators, and dimensions of SHRM practice. Next, data were analyzed using a random-effects model to account for heterogeneity between studies, with statistical tests such as Q-test. The calculation of the combined effect size was performed using JSAP, resulting in an estimate of the overall influence of SHRM on academic staff retention. . With this approach, the research is expected to provide solid quantitative evidence on the effectiveness of SHRM in retaining academic staff, as well as offering evidence-based HR policy recommendations for universities. .). Furthermore, the criteria for the effect size value in the study can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Category Effect Size Value

Effect Size	Category
$0.0 \leq ES \leq 0.2$	Low
$0.2 \leq ES \leq 0.8$	Medium
$ES \geq 0.8$	High

Source: (Borenstein et al., 2007; Bachtiar et al., 2023; Tamur et al., 2020); (Winiasri et al., 2023; Zulyusri et al., 2023); Asnur et al., 2024)

## Result and Discussion

### Data Analysis

Based on the results of data search through the database, 24 studies/articles met the inclusion criteria. The effect size and error standard can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Effect Size and Standard Error Every Research

Journal Code	Years	Effect Size	Standard Error
NR1	2025	1.45	0.20
NR2	2020	0.78	0.31
NR3	2021	1.08	0.30
NR4	2021	0.33	0.23
NR5	2024	1.52	0.12
NR6	2022	1.20	0.25
NR7	2025	1.19	0.40
NR8	2020	0.21	0.17
NR9	2020	0.90	0.27

NR10	2025	1.43	0.28
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Based on Table 2, the effect size value of the 10 studies ranged from 0.21 to 1.52. According to Borenstein et al., (2007) Of the 10 effect sizes, 3 studies had medium criteria effect sizes and 7 studies had high criteria effect size values. Furthermore, 10 studies were analyzed to determine an estimation model to calculate the mean effect size. The analysis of the fixed and random effect model estimation models can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Residual Heteroneity Test

Q <sup>e</sup>	df	p
56.899	9	< 0.001

Based on Table 3, a Q value of 56.899 was obtained higher than the value of 46.2099 with a coefficient interval of 95% and a p value of 0.001 <. The findings can be concluded that the value of 10 effect sizes analyzed is heterogeneously distributed. Selanjutnya, The Influence of Strategic Human Resource Management on Academic Staff Retention which can be seen Table 4.

Table 4. Pooled Effect Test

Estimate	Standard Error	t	df	p
1.005	0.151	6.653	9.000	< .001

Table 3 shows the results of the Pooled Effect Test used to estimate the combined influence in the meta-analysis of The Influence of Strategic Human Resource Management on Academic Staff Retention. The estimated effect value of 1,005 shows that the implementation of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) practices has a positive and strong influence on academic staff retention. A standard error of 0.151 indicates a good level of estimation accuracy, as this value is relatively small, thus strengthening the reliability of the results. A t-value of 6,653 with a degree of freedom (df) of 9,000 indicates significant statistical power in testing the hypothesis (Mokoditoa, 2011).

The significance value (p-value) recorded <.001 confirms that the combined effect of SHRM on academic staff retention is statistically significant at a 99% confidence level (Obembe et al., 2022). These results reinforce the argument that SHRM practices—including talent management, succession planning, and performance-based reward systems—consistently contribute to increased academic staff loyalty and desire to stay in higher education institutions. Thus, these findings provide strong quantitative evidence to support recommendations for the implementation of strategic HR policies in an effort to reduce turnover rates and improve the stability and quality of higher education (Nzuki, 2011; Ichsan et al., 2023; Santosa et al., 2024).

## Discussion

This finding confirms that the implementation of HR policies that are integrated with the strategic goals of higher education can increase lecturers' commitment to survive. The t-value of 6,653 with a degree of freedom of 9 strengthens the evidence that the influence of SHRM does not occur by chance, but rather is a consistent pattern detected in the various research contexts analyzed. This finding supports the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory which emphasizes the importance of human capital as a source of competitive advantage that is difficult to replicate. By integrating practices such as talent management, succession planning, and performance-based rewards (Al Doghan, 2022), universities can create a work environment that is conducive to academic development. These results are in line with Wright and McMahan's (2011) research which confirms that aligning HR strategies with organizational goals strengthens employee loyalty and increases retention (Jane Mucheke Ng'ethe, 2013).

When compared to previous studies, these findings are consistent with the results of Alami et al. (2022) and Choi & Lee (2021) who reported a positive correlation between SHRM policy and academic staff retention intention. However, this meta-analysis contributes further by providing quantitative estimates that bring together diverse cross-country and institutional research, resulting in more generalist evidence (Alfawaire & Atan, 2021). This excellence reinforces the belief that the SHRM strategy is not just an administrative practice, but a strategic instrument for retaining academic talent globally. Although the combined effect was significant, the heterogeneity analysis indicated a variation in the degree of influence between studies, which was likely influenced by contextual factors such as differences in higher education funding policies, organizational culture, and levels of academic competition (Amushila, 2023). Universities in developing countries may face greater challenges due to budget constraints and research facilities, which can affect the effectiveness of SHRM implementation. Therefore, the SHRM implementation strategy needs to be adjusted to local conditions in order to have an optimal impact (Fahim, 2018).

These findings have important implications for university policymakers and management (Minh & Nwachukwu, 2020). First, investment in lecturer career development, increasing competitive remuneration, and clear succession planning are crucial steps to reduce turnover rates. Second, a fair and award-based performance evaluation system is needed so that lecturers feel appreciated and motivated. By prioritizing SHRM as a core policy, universities can strengthen academic reputations, increase research productivity, and maintain the sustainability of the quality of higher education in the midst of increasingly fierce global competition.

## Conclusion

This meta-analysis study concluded that the implementation of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) has a positive and significant influence on academic staff retention in universities. A combined estimated effect value of 1,005 with a significance level of  $p < .001$  indicates that SHRM practices—such as talent management, succession planning, and performance-based reward systems—consistently increase lecturers' loyalty and commitment to sustainability. These findings confirm that human resources are a strategic asset that not only supports the quality of teaching and research, but also determines the competitive advantage and reputation of higher education institutions. Based on these results, universities are advised to make SHRM the core of HR management policies by emphasizing the alignment between the strategic goals of the university and the needs of academic career development. Effective SHRM implementation demands investment in professional development, a competitive compensation system, and an organizational culture that supports innovation and collaboration. With this step, higher education institutions in various contexts—including developing countries—can reduce turnover rates, maintain research sustainability, and improve the quality of education in a sustainable manner in the midst of global competition dynamics.

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