

Factors Affecting Turnover of the Non-State University Lecturers: A Literature Review

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Abstract

Attraction and retention of a competent workforce can be identified as one of the prime objectives of any organization. Organizations are thriving to retain their top talent within the organization as it facilitates the firms to obtain a competitive advantage over their rivals. Employees may leave their workplaces due to a variety of circumstances. Getting an understanding of these factors will be an advantage for them to take necessary actions to retain the top talent. Higher education can be identified as one of the major sectors where the overall performance of the organization highly depends on the quality of the academic staff. Hence; the main objective of this study is to identify the key factors affecting the turnover of the lecturers working for non-state universities. This study was conducted as a descriptive study as it was a review of the existing research outcomes in the field. It was found that salary, modes of recruitment and promotion, availability of office space, availability of resources, availability of washroom facilities, distributive justice, internal support, clear contracts of employment, the safety of the workplace, support from the administrative staff, staff development opportunities, perceived organizational support, recognition and respect, academic freedom and research, leadership style, performance management practices, workload, welfare facilities, training and development, and promotion opportunities are the most frequently mentioned factors affecting turnover of the lecturers.

Keywords: *HR policies and practices, Lecturers, Turnover*

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Introduction

As defined by Marell et al., (2001), employee turnover is the voluntary cessation of membership of an organization and it can result from organizational and psychological factors interacting with effect each other to affect employee attitudes in and towards the organization. Joarder et al. (2011) explain the difference between turnover and turnover intention as ‘turnover’ denotes the actual turnover behavior, the movement of the employees’ to other organizations while the terms ‘turnover intention’ denotes the employees’ perceived probability of leaving the current organization (Cotton and Tuttle, 1986). Joarder et al. (2011) further mention that employee turnover means employees’ permanent leaving or discontinuation of the employment relationship of an employee with the organization and it may be a rotation of employees around the market; between the firms, jobs, and occupations; and between the states of employment and unemployment. As per a model of Human Resource Management, attracting and retaining appropriate and contended employees within an organization is the generic purpose of HRM (Opatha, 2009). Hence, employee retention is paramount for any organization due to several reasons. As emphasized by OLogunder et al., (n.d.), organizational growth and productivity will be directly affected by employee turnover. Additionally, organizations have to put additional effort and cost into recruitment, selection, and training. Yew (2011) further suggests that organizations are always trying to build and maintain a committed and loyal workforce to reduce absenteeism while improving employees’ performance and job-related attitudes. Hence; it is of utmost importance to identify the key factors affecting turnover of non-state university lecturers as it will save the cost of future recruitment, selection, hiring, induction, and training, etc.

Research Question

The question of this descriptive study is,
What are the factors affecting the turnover of lecturers in non-state universities?

The objective of the study

The main objective of this study is to identify the key factors affecting the turnover of lecturers in non-state universities.

Method

This study was conducted as a descriptive study reviewing the existing literature in the field.

Employee Turnover

Employee turnover has a number of negative consequences for businesses, including increased recruitment and selection costs, interruption of academic programs, and worse morale among current employees (Al-Omari et al., n.d.). According to Morrell et al. (2001), turnover can be classified into two types: voluntary and involuntary turnover. Voluntary turnover was characterized by Price and Mueller (as stated in Huang et al., 2003) as voluntarily terminating membership in one organization and moving to another, altering employment positions within the same organization, or fully switching from one area of work to another. Involuntary turnover, on the other hand, is described as an employee who refuses to quit the company (Huang et al., 2003). Cost cutting and organizational reorganization are the most common causes of involuntary turnover. Many research have shown, however, that turnover is a psychological response as well as an individual chosen behavioural pattern. According to Huang et al., (2003), academic staff turnover in universities has a number of negative consequences, including increased prices and decreased service quality (Mahmoodi, 2007). Furthermore, turnover might result in a waste of management resources as well as demoralization of other personnel.

Significance of academic staff

As posited by Khalid et al. (2012), an education system in any country, especially university education plays a major role in helping a country to stand on its own feet and high-quality academic staff becomes a cornerstone of a successful education system. Yew (2011) further validates this argument by highlighting the critical role played by academics in ensuring the overall performance of an educational institution. Mwadiani (2002) has emphasized the role played by the academic staff in terms of quantity, quality, and effectiveness in the university context (Jain, 2002). He further emphasizes that no academic institution can ensure sustainability and quality (Ng'ethe, Iravo, & Namusonge, 2012) in the long run without a well-qualified and committed staff. Furthermore, university performance highly depends on the intellectual and creative abilities and commitment of the academic staff. Ng'ethe et al. (2013) have

aligned with the same argument as they identify the academic profession as fundamental to the functioning of any university (Choong et al., 2013). Also, it makes important for the universities to ensure the academic staff performance as they perform as a repository of the most specialized and skilled intellectuals (Yimer et al., 2017).

Factors affecting turnover of university lecturers

Based on empirical studies undertaken in the field of study, several factors affecting the turnover of academic staff at universities can be recognized. Employee turnover can be raised for a variety of reasons, according to Too et al. (2014), including inadequate pay (O Wence et al., 2014), a poor benefit system, and poor working conditions. In addition to these considerations, forms of recruitment and promotion, office space availability, internal support, clear contracts, workplace safety, support from employees, supervisors, and managers, and possibilities for staff development and career advancement can all play a role (Bigirman et al., 2016). They also stress the importance of employee retention when it comes to perceived organizational support. Employees' perceptions of their employer's interest for their well-being and value for their contribution to the organization are defined as perceived organizational support. In order to perceive organizational support, Yew (2011) stressed the social exchange link between employees and employers. According to this theory, perceived organizational support has a direct impact on affective organizational commitment and an indirect impact on employee obligation to the organization (Yew, 2011). In a social exchange relationship, both parties expect mutual benefits other than monetary values, such as social and emotional resources (approval, recognition, support, etc.). As a result, the lack of rewards and recognition, particularly among academic personnel, will result in increasing job stress and turnover. As a result, academic freedom and research activities are recognized to be extremely important in retaining academic employees. Academic freedom refers to the ability of academic personnel to teach freely, conduct research on topics of their choosing, and openly communicate discoveries and ideas without fear of retaliation (Nwadiani and Akpotu, 2002). It is also stated that, due to the increased workload, most private universities do not give enough time for academic personnel to do research. Another issue raised by Bigirman et al. (2016) is not allowing academic staff to participate in academic decision-making,

as non-academic staff tends to play supervisory roles over academic staff due to their control over budgets and administrative decisions, while their role is primarily supportive. Bigriman et al. (2016) discovered that leadership style, participation in decision-making, career path and staff development, perceived organizational support and psychological contract, organizational policies and procedures, distributive justice, performance management practices, academic freedom and collegiality, workload and pressure, and research and outreach activities are all factors that encourage academic staff to stay with the organization. Work satisfaction, corporate culture, job features, unrealistic expectations, the nature of the individual, and greater income elsewhere are all variables that might contribute to employee turnover (O Wence et al., 2014). Apart from that, being away from home for an extended period of time, an unpleasant working environment, poor management (Yimer et al., 2017), a lack of up-to-date journals and books, functional laboratories, useful seminars, and research grants (Ologunde et al., n.d.) are all factors that can contribute to academic staff turnover.

According to the findings, good welfare facilities, adequate health and medical insurance, training and development, fair pay systems, recognition for deserving lecturers, quality of supervisors, due respect, and promotions should be provided to ensure the retention of academic staff at private universities, according to Ologunde et al. (n.d.). Job happiness is linked to retention, and according to Khalid et al. (2012), both intrinsic and extrinsic factors influence job satisfaction, with intrinsic aspects being more significant to academic personnel. Structure characteristics like degree of autonomy, communication openness, distributive fairness, role conflict, and workload have a major impact on the intention to stay, according to Lee and Mowday (1987). In addition to these factors, Human Resource Management techniques have been discovered to play a significant impact in guaranteeing staff retention (Stewart and Brown, 2009).

Strong leadership, distributive justice, work environment, remuneration, promotional possibilities, training and development, recognition, and autonomy are some of the factors of employee retention, according to Ng'ethe et al. (2012). Beardwell (as cited in Ng'ethe, 2012) claims that the role of a supervisor and leadership is critical in employee retention,

and that employees quit managers, not firms. Employees are more likely to stay with an organization if they believe their managers care about them, if they understand what is expected of them, if they are assigned a role that matches their strengths, and if they receive regular positive feedback and recognition. Employee retention in an organization is influenced by the quality of the relationship that employee has with his or her immediate managers.

According to Price (as stated in Ng'ethe et al., 2012), distributive justice refers to how closely rewards and penalties are linked to work performance. Perceptions of injustice, according to Ng'ethe et al. (2012), lead to disappointments and resentment, which can lead to a loss of productivity, loyalty, and commitment to the company, or a desire to seek alternative employment elsewhere. Distributive justice is also a favorable predictor of organizational loyalty and work satisfaction, but a negative predictor of turnover intentions, according to the researchers. Another key driver of employee retention is the workplace environment. Few institutions, according to Rosser (as described in Ng'ethe, 2012), give appropriate assistance for faculty members to integrate technology into their work, and the academic staff's will to stay will be determined by the amount of facilities supplied. Because they satisfy financial and material aspirations, attractive remuneration packages are one of the most important elements in employee retention (Ng'ethe et al., 2012).

Ng'ethe et al. (2012) define promotional opportunities as an employee's perception of his or her prospects to advance and be promoted within the firm. Employees expect to work in jobs that will allow them to advance to new and more demanding roles. People should not only be rewarded financially, but also given opportunity to advance within the firm, according to Dockel (as mentioned in Ng'ethe et al., 2012). Employees that are dissatisfied with their jobs are often unmotivated and will not stay in an unfulfilling role for long. Ng'ethe et al. (2012) define training as an investment in human capital, regardless of whether it is made by an individual or a company. Another driver of employee retention is autonomy, which is defined as the extent to which a person uses power in relation to his or her job. Employees' ability to develop organizational goals and build the organization to maximize professional concerns is outlined. It relates to heightened sentiments of personal responsibility and

the degree to which the job provides extensive freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling work and determining the procedures utilized to carry it out, according to Ng'ethe et al., (2012).

Employee recognition is defined as “the timely, informal, or formal acknowledgment of a person’s or a team’s behavior, effort, or business result that supports the organization’s aims and values, and that has gone above and beyond customary expectations” (Ng’ethe et al., 2012). Employees respond to appreciation conveyed through acknowledgement of their good work because it shows that their effort is valued, which is a basic human need. Employees are more likely to stay with a company if they believe their abilities, efforts, and contributions to performance are recognized and valued by others. According to these data, Maertz and Griffeth (2004) highlighted competitive pay, good supervision and interpersonal relationships, job autonomy, a better working environment, training and development, and job security as the most important factors influencing employee turnover decisions. Furthermore, according to Gaiduk et al. (2009), employee retention is influenced by three primary factors: the employee’s personal traits, the nature of the employee’s current employment, and an appropriate work arrangement. Furthermore, according to Chew (2004), younger employees were more concerned with salary, training, and development, career promotion, difficult work, growth possibilities, and recognition than older employees. Autonomy, mentoring possibilities, and job difficulties were all important factors for older employees. Job satisfaction and organizational commitment had a considerable favorable effect on academic staff retention, according to a study of 139 academics from Jordanian University (Al- Omari et al, 2009). Aside from that, structural characteristics such faculty work environment, autonomy, communication, distributive justice, and workload were linked to intent to stay, according to Daly et al (2006). In addition, (Khalid, Irshad, & Mahmood, Job Satisfaction among Academic Staff: A Comparative Analysis, 2012)(2010) discovered that salary and tenure had an impact on academic staff retention. Role conflict, promoting prospects, and age were shown to be some of the characteristics that influenced employee intention to leave the university. These results are the result of a combination of internal and external causes. In line with these findings, Maertz et al. (2003) discovered that salary, job autonomy, working conditions, training and development

opportunities, and supervisory support are the most important drivers of university academic staff turnover intentions.

Conclusion

Based on the reviewed research studies, the following factors can be identified as the most frequently mentioned factor affecting the turnover of the university academic staff.

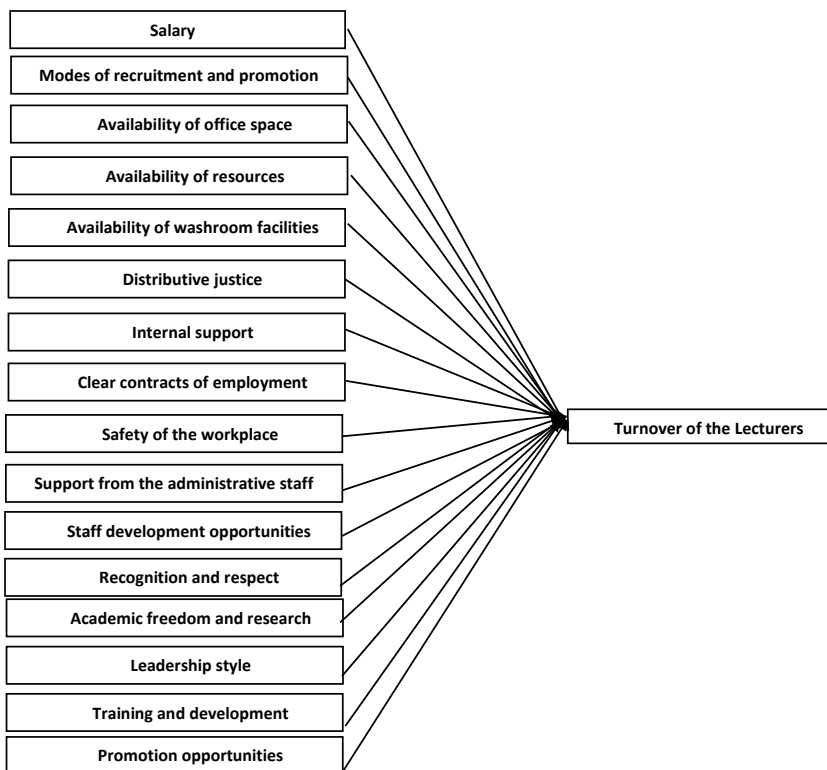


Figure 01: Frequent Factoring Model affecting the turnover of the university academic staff

Source: Developed by the Researchers (Deduced from Literature), 2021

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