

The Mediating Effect of Job Satisfaction on Career Development Opportunities and Turnover Intention in Academic Context

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Employee turnover in academics as consequences that is quite different from other organizations, as these organisations are knowledge intensive and student centric. This research takes into consideration impact of career development opportunities and job satisfaction on employee turnover in academic industry. Since, turnover intention has been found to be a complex behaviour across industries, and researchers have been testing different models to predict turnover intention. This study aims at examining the mediating role of job satisfaction on career development opportunities and turnover intention in an Indian academic sector. In total 375 responses were recorded through standard scale questionnaires. After outlier elimination, 339 responses were used for scale validation and data analysis. Data were analyzed with the help of SPSS 24.0 and AMOS 24.0. Path analysis of the variables showed that career development opportunities enhanced the job satisfaction level of the employees and job satisfaction in turn reduced their intention to quit the organisation. Findings were discussed with reference to previous studies and findings.

Keywords: Career development opportunities, Job satisfaction, Turnover Intention, Education Sector, India

“People don’t notice whether it’s winter or summer when they’re happy.” – Anton Chekhov

This new millennium is more about retaining your potential employees and keeping them happy and satisfied rather than only focusing on the profit maximization or compensation. Retention of the employees now a day is not that easy, it needs a lot of effort. Lingham (2000) said that an organizations’ need cannot be fulfilled without fulfilling its employees’ needs. Employees are generally found to be happy when they are satisfied in their respective jobs. And maybe this is one the reasons why Job satisfaction is one of the most researched topics in the realm of Human Resource Management practices. Barney & Griffin (1992) said that Job Satisfaction is a set of an individual’s belief about the perception of good or bad working situation in the organization and the completed job.

Career development opportunities are also among the most researched topics. Ashar (2013) said that training and development initiatives from the organization are a way of showing that

they care for the employees’ needs, giving an opportunity to its employees to develop and reach their career goals. Dugan (2011) too opined that an ongoing career development program is very important for the success of the organization and its employees.

Faculty Turnover is a very important issue in the realm of Academic environment. Turnover as discussed in the extant literature, leads to depletion of an organizations intellectual capital. The core competency of any academic institute is seen through the type of faculties it has and obviously it becomes difficult for the organization to retain them if they are good performers. But it is equally challenging to find out the factors affecting the faculty Turnover decisions, after the actual turnover. So the Intention to leave has been widely researched and not surprisingly found to be a proxy to the actual Turnover (Bluedorn, 1982; Steers & Mowday, 1981). Bluedorn (1982) hypothesized a number of antecedents like- salary, communication, integration, size, centralization and opportunity that affect the Job Satisfaction, Morale and

commitment of the individuals and thereafter these variables are projected to affect the actual and intended turnover.

Smart (1990) said that there are at least three sets of determinants that explain the turnover intentions among the faculties i.e., individual characteristics, contextual and multiple dimensions of organizational and career satisfaction. Much work has been done in the context of academics and Turnover Intention. But still it leaves a lot of room for further research on turnover in academic context, seeing the changing nature of the education sector, with time. Now the academic sector has also become highly competitive, proactive (rather than reactive) and proliferated. Therefore, this study finds its relevance in this situation. In this backdrop, it is equally important to note that this study is done on the faculties teaching business education discipline, which is even more proliferated and dynamic because of the strong link up with the corporate sector.

Turnover stands out as a particularly important issue for the management, seeing the tight labour markets, at the turn of this century (Valcour and Batt, 2003). There are various reasons for development of turnover intentions among the employees (Ongori, 2007), which are found to be a strong determinant of the actual turnover behaviour of the employees (Bluedorn, 1982; Johnsrud and Rosser, 2002; Rosser, 2004; Xu, 2008; Zhou and Volkwein, 2004). This section discusses some of the literatures on the studied variables pertaining to the turnover intention literature and develops hypotheses of the study.

Career development opportunities influencing Job satisfaction and turnover intention

Many studies from different geographical locations and in different contextual set-up has been conducted to understand and explore the relationship between employees' Job Satisfaction and the career development opportunities (Ashar, 2013; Shelton, 2001; Matalia, 2012; Walia & Bajaj, 2012; Umar & Akram, 2011; Umer & Naseem, 2011).

Teacher job satisfaction is an important issue in both; teacher attrition and retention studies (Stockard & Lehman, 2004; Voke, 2002). Times News Network (2006) quoted that the biggest issue faced by the technical education sector in India is the severe shortage of competent faculties. Today those with advanced degrees have got the options of being employed in variety of fields. Similarly, the market for Ph.D.s outside academia has increased many folds (Bowen and Schuster, 1986).

The sudden and voluntary turnover decisions by the faculties disrupts the total research, teaching and learning process, whereby the students are kept in a state of lurch and ambiguity in the absence of an advisor familiar with their work and with them (Ehrenberg et al., 1991). In this backdrop, it is clear that the impact of faculty turnover is drastic and highly detrimental for the organizations, and thus this topic is vastly researched as well.

Faculty turnover is discussed with lower job satisfaction, poor productivity, and higher stress (Olsen, 1993). Barnhart and Bechhofer (1995) hypothesized that the faculties who tend to leave their organization are characterized by high achievement orientation. It is evident that the education sector is quite different from the other sectors as the needs and aspirations of the faculties in different designations also differ. Pay is significantly studied in regard to retention and lower turnover rates. Gill et al. (1992) in their study found that the compensation levels decreased the turnover of the Assistant Professors and Associate Professors, but surprisingly had no effect on the retention of the Professors. While Mowday et al. (1982) found that perceived equity of pay is a better determinant of faculty satisfaction and commitment than the basic level of pay. Career development has been found to be directly linked to the employee satisfaction because a sense of value creeps in the employees when they get an opportunity to achieve their personal and professional goals with the help of the organization, which they serve.

Walia & Bajaj (2012) in their research on the three leading private sector banks (AXIS bank, HDFC bank and ICICI bank) in the state

of Haryana (India) too found that training and development initiatives by the organization lead to higher Job Satisfaction and retention rates. Growth and development of human resources is an important indicator for the overall growth of the country. And one of the basic indicator of growth can be the factors of career growth or the prospects of the career development, be it any sector. Tomorrow's talent can be only shaped, evolved, satisfied and retained based on a robust career development strategy. Therefore, based on this logic and previous studies, it can be hypothesized that:

H1: Career development opportunities would positively influence Job satisfaction of employees

Career Development opportunities and Turnover Intentions

Career management is an exercise in the organizations that provides with career building workshops, training, mentoring, and career counselling for the career development and impartial performance management system to their employees (Schnake et al., 2007; Harrington & Lee, 2015). However, certain researchers have raised the concern that career development practice is not been given ample attention, which it warrants and is comparatively less researched (Nawaz & Pangil, 2016). Specifically studies that link the Turnover Intention and Career management/development practices are few (Schnake et al., 2007; Guan et al., 2015). According to Liyanage et al. (2014) the conditions of employment like salary and career development opportunities are important reasons of development of the employee Turnover Intentions. Stalcup & Pearson (2001) too voiced that the decision to stay in an organization is highly correlated with the career advancement opportunities. Based on the above studies we can hypothesize that

H2: Career Development opportunities would negatively influence Turnover decisions.

Career Development opportunities, Job Satisfaction and Turnover intentions

Job satisfaction is found to be the negative or positive feeling that an individual has towards his/her job. Job Satisfaction is predominantly

linked with the low Turnover of the employees (Boyer, Altbach, & Whitlaw, 1994; Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Olsen, Maple & Stage, 1995; Tack & Patitu, 1992; Rosser, 2004).

Umer & Akram (2011) in his study found that the retention of the employees is significantly linked to the career development programs of the organizations. Shelton (2001) conducted research and analyzed the impact of employee development programs on job satisfaction and employee turnover with regard to business success. Walia & Bajaj (2012) in their study found that career development and working environment show the highest relationship with the Job Satisfaction, implying employees want to work in the organization where they get support from the peers and opportunities for their career development, and thus lowering the employee turnover. Therefore, based on the above studies, we may hypothesize that;

H3: Job satisfaction would negatively impact turnover intention.

H4: Job Satisfaction would mediate the relationship between career development opportunities and Turnover Intention.

The Study context

In the turn of this millennium the academic Industry has taken a new shape. After globalization the job market has expanded for the higher education sector in India. Growing demand for highly talented, trained and skilled employees coupled with the limited supply and increasing alternate job availability makes the retention of talented employees a main concern for today's organizations (Fegley, 2006).

Under such assumptions, especially when we talk of the employees, who are knowledge workers and regarded as the core asset of the organization - the faculty members, their retention becomes a major issue for the organization. This study focuses on the business management teaching faculties in the eastern part of India, from the states of Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. These states have been selected keeping in mind the high density and diversity of management teaching institute here, in terms of accreditation, stature, infrastructure, industry-academia interface and proliferation.

Method

Sample

This survey was conducted during March to November in the year 2017. The Business teaching faculties from the institutes/schools located in the eastern part of India were the target population. Purposively, institutes/schools from five states (Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal) were chosen. As there is a high proliferation of business management teaching institutes/schools in this part of the country, in eastern region. Further selection of respondents from the institutes of selected states was done through convenience sampling method. The total number of responses collected was 375 out of 500 respondents at a response return rate of 75.00%. After removing the outliers through the box plot, 339 responses were used for the analysis of the research. The table below describes the demographic distribution of the respondents used in the final analysis.

Table – 1 summarizes the key demographic variables of the research

Demographic Variables	Measures	Freq- uency	Per- centage
Gender	Female	154	41.1%
	Male	221	58.9%
Age	20-30	24	6.4%
	31-40	198	52.8%
	41-50	109	29.1%
	51-60	41	10.9%
	More than 61	3	0.8%
Experience	0-5 years	107	28.5%
	6-10 years	153	40.8%
	11-15 years	81	21.6%
	16-20 years	34	9.1%
Qualification	Post graduation	137	36.5%
	Post graduation with NET/SET qualification	114	30.4%
	Ph. D. Without NET/SET qualification	106	28.3%
	Ph. D. With NET/ SET qualification	18	4.8%
Designation	Faculty Associate	8	2.1%
	Lecturer	47	12.5%

Senior lecturer	24	6.4%
Assistant Professor	135	36.0%
Associate Professor	60	16.0%
Professor	88	23.5%
Senior Professor	9	2.4%
Dean/Director	4	1.1%

Data Collection

About 500 questionnaires were sent to the faculties, teaching Business management courses in BBA and MBA through e-mail. Electronic mode of data collection was chosen for the ease of data collection as the respondents were the faculties teaching in management institutes and they were least interested during the working hours in giving time for filling up the research questions. So, the questionnaire was mailed to them and they were requested to fill it up in their free time. The questionnaire was created in Google doc. Form and the responses were auto- collected in Google drive.

Measures

Turnover intention (TI) scale: For measuring the Turnover Intentions (TI) the questionnaire developed by Roodt (2004b) was adopted. The questionnaire consisted of 14 items that were measured on a seven-point intensity response scale anchored at extremes (e.g. “never” marked as 1 – Low Intensity, to “always” marked as 7 – High Intensity). A Cronbach alpha value of 0.91 of Turnover Intention (TI) scale was obtained in this study indicating an acceptable reliability of the items. The reason for using this questionnaire was that most of the earlier instruments in the literature measure turnover intentions on only a relatively small number of items (Guimaraes, 1997; Lambert et al., 2001).

Career Development (CD) scale: A five item likert scale developed by Greenhaus, Parasuraman, and Wormley (1990) was used to measure career development opportunities in the organisations. The item responses were coded as 1 for ‘not at all’ to 5 for ‘very much’. The questions were asked on four dimensions of career satisfaction i.e., Skill Development opportunities, Career goals achievements, goals of income and goals for advancement. A

Table 2. Cronbach's alpha and Factor Loadings of Job Satisfaction

Sl. No.	Items	F-1	F-2	F-3	F-4
JOB SECURITY					
JS13	My job security is good	0.513			
JS14	My supervisor is concerned about the welfare of those under him/her	0.691			
JS15	My supervisor is successful in getting people to work together.	0.735			
JS16	People I work with are competent in doing their jobs.	0.714			
JS17	People I work with take a personal interest in me.	0.578			
JS18	People I work with are friendly	0.669			
JS19	People I work with are helpful in getting the job done.	0.764			
JS20	I am appropriately respected and rewarded by my company for my work.	0.591			
SCOPE FOR CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION					
JS1	My job requires that I learn new things.		0.693		
JS3	My job requires me to be creative.		0.846		
JS4	My job allows me to make a lot of decisions on my own.		0.638		
JS5	My job requires a high level of skill.		0.817		
JS9	I have an opportunity to develop my own special abilities.		0.716		
JS12	I have enough time to get the job done.		0.529		
FREEDOM AND AUTONOMY					
JS7	I get to do a variety of different things on my job			0.805	
JS8	I have a lot of say about what happens on my job.			0.807	
JS11	I am not asked to do an excessive amount of work.			0.545	
BOREDOM					
JS2	My job involves a lot of repetitive work.				0.65
JS6	On my job, I have very little freedom to decide how I do my work				0.763
JS10	My job requires working very hard.				0.699
Eigen Values		6.94	2.47	1.52	1.31
Cumulative Percentage (%)		20.49	39.63	51.51	61.19
KMO		0.888			
BARTLETT'S test of sphericity		3175.87*** (df =190)			
Cronbach Alpha		0.87	0.86	0.72	0.62
Total Scale Reliability			0.88		

Table 3 Descriptive statistics and correlation among studied variables

	Career Devet.	Turnover Intention	Job satisfaction F1	Job satisfaction F2	Job satisfaction F3	Job satisfaction F3	Job Satisfaction Total
Career Devet.	1	-.41**	.59**	.55**	.39**	-.03	.60**
Turnover Intention		1	-.38**	-.30**	-.19**	.26**	-.29**
Job satisfaction F1			1	.55**	.55**	.06	.85**
Job satisfaction F2				1	.41**	.27**	.84**
Job satisfaction F3					1	-.03	.65**
Job satisfaction F3						1	.38**
Job Satisfaction Total							1
Mean	17.81	46.14	28.59	22.93	10.10	10.06	71.68
SD	3.24	9.71	4.24	3.61	1.90	2.08	8.66

Table 4. Estimates, standardised estimates and model summary of the studied model

			Estimate	Standardized Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
JS	<---	CD	.78	.76	.06	13.59	***
TI	<---	CD	-.47	-.16	.29	-1.61	.108
TI	<---	JS	-.98	-.33	.33	-2.99	.003
JSF1	<---	JS	1.00	.78			
JSF2	<---	JS	.78	.72	.07	11.26	***
JSF3	<---	JS	.30	.53	.03	9.75	***
Model fit Summary							
X ²	Df	CMIN/df	NFI	GFI	CFI	RMSEA	
4.233	3	1.41	.99	.99	.99	.04	

Cronbach alpha value of 0.91 was obtained in this study indicating an acceptable reliability of the scale.

Job Satisfaction (JS) scale: For the survey 20 item short version Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) was used. The responses were coded on a 5 point Likert scale, where 1 denoted 'strongly agree' to 5 denoting 'strongly disagree'. The long version of this tool was developed by Weiss et al. (1967), which had 100 items. But the shorter version is preferred

for this research as it is less time consuming and provides the ease of answering to the respondents/faculties. Some of the items were re-framed a bit for the ease of understanding and to make them more contexts specific. The questions were asked on four dimensions of job satisfaction. An acceptable Cronbach alpha value of 0.88 was obtained for the scale. Factor analysis of Job satisfaction was done to extract the four dimensions of the job satisfaction (Table 2). The factors were named as Job Security,

scope for creativity and innovation, freedom and autonomy and boredom in the job. The Cronbach alpha value of each of the factors was found 0.87, 0.86, 0.72 and 0.62 respectively, showing that the factors are significant and reliable.

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlation among studied variables (table 3) reveal that career development (mean=17.81; SD=3.24) was significantly positively correlated ($r=.60$; $p<.001$) with Job Satisfaction (mean= 71.68; SD= 8.66) and negatively correlated ($r=-.41$; $p<.001$) with turnover intention (mean=46.14; SD=9.71). Further, Job satisfaction was found to be negatively related to turnover intention ($r= -.29$; $p<.001$). These results support our H1, H2 ad H3. With this result, we also found the basic conditions to test job satisfaction as a mediator between career development and turnover intention (Baron and Kenny, 1986) that there exists significant correlation among IV, DV and mediator. Hence, we have tested the mediation model (fig. 1) using AMOS 23.0.

Model fit summary of the path analysis of studied mediation model reveals that all the fit indices were in the acceptable range to confirm the model as a fit model (table 4). According to Hair et al., (1998), in order to demonstrate adequate model fit, the values for CFI, GFI and AGFI should all be greater than 0.9 while the value of the RMSR should be less than 0.1.

It is observed from the estimates, standardized estimates and critical ration (CR) of the specified paths of the model that career development positively influenced ($CR=13.59$; $p<.001$) job satisfaction and Job satisfaction in turn had negatively influenced turnover intention ($CR=-2.99$; $p<.001$). And the path between career development and turnover intention was found to be insignificant. This confirms the third assumption of Baron and Kenny (1986) on mediation test that when the mediator is introduced, the relationship between IV and DV becomes weaker (partial mediator) or insignificant (full mediator).

To test the mediation effect size, we used the formula $(a \times b) / (a \times b) + c \times 100$. Where a denotes the standardized estimate of the path between IV and mediator, b denotes the standardized

estimate of the path between mediator and DV and c denotes the standardized estimate of the path between IV and DV. With this formula, the effect size of mediator was found to be 60.97%. According to Kenny (2016) the mediation effect of more than 80% are considered to be full mediator and the size between 20% to 40% are considered as partial mediator. Hence, we can conclude that here job satisfaction had considerable mediation effect on career development and turnover intention (Fig. 1).

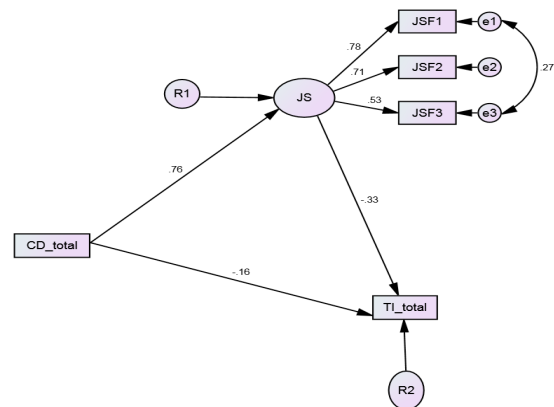


Figure .1

Discussion

The study first investigated the role of career development on Job Satisfaction of the faculties and in turn on their decision to leave or stay in the organization. Education sector is knowledge intensive. And it's the basic requirement of the faculties to regularly work on the development, enhancement and updating of their research, teaching and administrative capabilities. For this purpose they regularly need the Career development initiatives from their side as well as from the organizations side.

The findings reflected that career development was significantly and positively correlated with job satisfaction i.e., it helped to increase the job satisfaction of the faculties and further negatively related to the turnover intention of the faculties. This finding is consistent with few of the earlier findings where the researchers found that there is a positive relationship between Job Satisfaction and Career development opportunities (McCracken, 2002; Rutherford, 2005; Sujaat et al, 2013)

and also supported the work of many other researchers (Boyer, Altbach, & Whitlaw, 1994; Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Olsen, Maple & Stage, 1995; Tack & Patitu, 1992; Rosser, 2004), who found a negative relationship between the Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention.

The test results in the study prompted to look at the variable job satisfaction as a mediator between career development and turnover intention. Kaya and Ceylan (2014) in their study found that career development opportunities partially affect the job satisfaction. Various researchers found that Job Satisfaction has a positive relationship with the Career development opportunities (McCracken, 2002; Rutherford, 2005; Sujaat et al, 2013) in line with this study, where it was found that Job Satisfaction positively affects Career development and negatively affects Turnover intentions.

Further the result showed that the path between career development and turnover intention was found to be insignificant, justifying the fact that their existed a full mediation effect of the job satisfaction on career development and turnover intention, as hypothesized in the study.

Future/ Managerial Implications

The research findings enrich the understanding of the construct Job satisfaction, career development and turnover intention specifically and human resource management literature broadly. Management can formulate better career development strategies for providing better career development opportunities to the faculties, thus improving their Job Satisfaction. Looking at the turnover rates in academic institutions, the findings of the study can be taken to handle turnover intentions in academic institutions. Since career development opportunities enhances job satisfaction and reduces intention to quit the organization, management should focus more on career development opportunities. Although the model tested here is not a completely novel model, its fit in academics institutions is certainly a new addition to the literature. The research also throws some unanswered questions for the future research such as: what are the career aspirations of employees of different generations in the academic institutions? Looking at three

dimensional performance aspect of academic staffs (teaching, research and administration) what could be the best career development framework adopted by academic institutions?

Finally, we acknowledge certain limitations of the study. First, the study was conducted in a particular geographical location and cultural context. Hence, the generalisability of the findings is low. Secondly it contains all the inherent limitations of snowball sampling and online method of data collection. Notwithstanding the above limitations, the study provides significant findings that can be used in similar context.

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