TURNOVER INTENTIONS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: THE ROLE OF OCCUPATIONAL IMAGE, WORKPLACE VARIABLES AND CAREER COMMITMENT

By

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Niat untuk Meninggalkan Profesion di kalangan Guru-Guru Sekolah Menengah: Peranan

Imej Profesion, Faktor Tempat Kerja, dan Komitmen Kerjaya

ABSTRAK

Kajian terkini menunjukkan bahawa ketidakpuasan utama guru bukannya terletak dalam

lingkungan sekolah tetapi lebih tertumpu kepada konteks kemasyarakatan yang lebih luas.

Cendiakawan berhujah bahawa adalah tidak memadai untuk hanya mengambil kira faktor

persekitaran sekolah atau peluang pekerjaan lain sebagai faktor yang dapat mempengaruhi

pengekalan pekerja. Justeru, kajian ini mengkaji perhubungan di antara imej profesion dan

variabel tempat kerja dengan niat guru untuk meninggalkan profesion. Kajian ini juga

menyiasat peranan komitmen kerjaya sebagai variabel pengantara, dan kesan interaksi di

kalangan dimensi imej profesion dan variabel tempat kerja ke atas komitmen kerjaya dan

niat untuk meninggalkan profesion. Seramai 386 guru sekolah menengah di Semenanjung

Malaysia, kadar respons efektif sebanyak 78.8%, telah menyertai kajian ini dengan mengisi

borang soal selidik secara sukarela. Keputusan kajian menunjukkan bahawa: (1) kedua-

dua imej profesion dan variabel tempat kerja mempunyai perhubungan yang signifikan

dengan niat guru untuk meninggalkan profesion, (2) komitmen kerjaya adalah variabel

pengantara di antara perhubungan imej profesion dengan niat untuk meninggalkan

profesion, (3) komitmen kerjaya juga menjadi variabel pengantara di antara variabel tempat

kerja dengan niat untuk meninggalkan profesion, dan (4) interaksi di kalangan imej

profesion dan variabel tempat kerja mempunyai pengaruh yang signifikan ke atas

komitmen kerjaya dan niat untuk meninggalkan profesion. Implikasi ke atas teori dan

praktis serta cadangan kajian di masa hadapan dibincangkan.

ABSTRACT

Recent studies indicated that the major dissatisfiers for teachers are located not within the school but within the broader societal context. Scholars argued that it is not enough to look to the immediate school environment or the current job market for the correlates of teacher retention. Hence, this study examined the relationship between occupational image and workplace variables with turnover intentions. This study also investigated the mediating role of career commitment, and the impact of interactions among the dimensions of occupational image and workplace variables on career commitment and turnover intentions. A total of 386 secondary school teachers in Peninsular Malaysia, response rate of 78.8%, participated in the study by voluntarily completing the survey questionnaire. The study results indicated that: (1) both occupational image and workplace variables were significantly related to turnover intentions. (2) Career commitment was found to mediate the relationship between occupational image and turnover intentions, (3) Career commitment also mediates the relationship between workplace variables and turnover intentions. and (4) interactions among occupational image and workplace variables have significant influence on both career commitment and turnover intentions. Theoretical and practical implications of the study as well as suggestions for future studies were discussed.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the background, and presents the problem of the study. Specifically, it includes the background of the study, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, significance and scope of the study, and definitions of key terms. It ends with a description of the organization of the remaining chapters in this thesis.

1.1 Background of the Study

Despite warnings of teacher shortage from educational researchers for the last thirty years, Malaysia is still facing serious teacher shortage. Numerous newspaper articles reported acute shortages of qualified teachers in rural areas and some subjects especially Mathematics, Science and English (The Star, 23 May 2001; The Star, 16 July 2001; Utusan Malaysia, 6 Sept. 2000). The perennial shortage of teachers has also been identified as one of the deep-rooted problems in the Malaysian education system by an independent panel set up to investigate racial segregation in schools (The Star, 21 Mar. 2002). The data obtained from the *Malaysian Educational Statistics 2000* gave similar evidence: there were 6,568 untrained or unqualified teachers teaching in Government or Government aided schools in Malaysia.

The shortage of teachers would result in large class sizes with high student-teacher ratios (Baker & Smith, 1997; Mont & Rees, 1996), low teacher quality (Baker & Smith, 1997; Mont & Rees, 1996), teachers engaged in out-of-field teaching (Baker & Smith, 1997; Ingersoll, 1997; Lam, Yoke & Swee, 1995; Masland & Williams, 1983; Mont &

Rees, 1996), the use of unqualified teachers (Ingersoll, 1997) and teachers with excessive teaching load (Mont & Rees, 1996). Baker and Smith (1997) argued that teacher quality is the underlying issue in discussions of teacher supply and demand, as imbalances in supply and demand are often resolved through adjustments in teacher qualifications.

The consequences of teacher shortage have been argued and shown to have negative impact not only on the teachers but the students as well. Past studies have found that lowering student-teacher ratios have a positive impact on students' achievement (Anonymous, 2001) and teachers in these schools reported less stress (French, 1993). Teaching subjects that the teachers are not specialized was argued to be directly related to the quality of educational resources available to students (Baker & Smith, 1997), it was also considered a poor working condition for teachers (Mont & Rees, 1996). Studies conducted by the Educational Planning and Research Division (EPRD) of the Malaysian Ministry of Education have indicated that on the average secondary school teachers spend between 5.4 to 8.6 hours per day teaching continuously and that primary school teachers faced teaching overload, the average working time is 69.57 hours per week for urban schools and 61.36 hours per week for rural schools (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 1992, 1994). Considering the International Labor Organization's definition of teaching overload to be teaching more than 48 hours per week (The Status of Teachers, 1984), it is clear that this problem is a common occurrence among Malaysian schoolteachers. Therefore, it is argued that all these could jointly be significant factors undermining the quality of education in Malaysia.

The demand for teachers has steadily increased due to increase in student enrollment, early teacher retirements, teacher attrition and teachers leaving classroom teaching to become university lecturers. Despite careful planning in the demand and supply of

teachers, the problem of teacher shortage persists. Hence, the argument that the demand for new teachers is primarily due to teachers leaving their jobs argued by Baker and Smith (1997) and Ingersoll (1997) seems strongly supported.

A survey reported by Lumsden (1998) indicated that over 40 percent of the teacher respondents would not again select teaching as a profession whereas 57 percent were definitely planning to leave, and would leave if something better comes along. Likewise, Borg and Riding (1991) found that 61% of Maltese schoolteachers indicated very high intentions to quit. Although both studies were not done in Malaysia, it appears that similar levels of withdrawal persist here. It was reported that 1,782 teachers left through early retirement between 1991 and 1993 while another 7,000 applied for optional retirement in 1994 (Baskaran, 1998). The high levels of intentions to quit from Malaysian school teachers were further indicated when Perak National Union of the Teaching Profession (NUTP) secretary claimed that NUTP received between 15 to 20 letters every month from teachers requesting NUTP to help them appeal to the ministry after their applications for optional retirement were rejected (The Star, 7 Oct. 2001). Surprisingly, even when the country faced economic turmoil and the optional retirement avenue was frozen, sources from the Education Ministry revealed that 1,535 teachers still left the profession voluntarily between 1998 and 2000. This does not include teachers who switch their careers to become lecturers. In a recent article, CUEPACS's president pointed out that it was a difficult task to retain people in the medical and teaching sectors (The Star, 6 May 2001).

In view of the concern about teacher quality, evidence of teacher shortage, indications of high turnover intentions and the serious consequences of these turnover intentions, it is imperative to identify factors that could predict turnover intentions among Malaysian

schoolteachers. By identifying the key factors that predict teachers' turnover intentions, effective strategies and interventions could be implemented or new policies could be formulated to reduce these intentions.

1.2 Problem Statement

A review of the literature on teacher retention revealed that the predictor variables frequently studied were grouped as demographic (example age, tenure, education, gender, marital status), organizational (example pay and promotion, organizational size), immediate work environment (example supervision, coworkers, working conditions), and attitudinal variables (such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction) (see Adams, 1996; Baskaran, 1998; Borg & Riding, 1991; Hall, Pearson & Carroll, 1992; Ingersoll, 1997; Lam, Yoke & Swee, 1995; Litt & Turk, 1985; Mont & Rees, 1996; Murnane, Singer, & Willett, 1989; Porter & Steers, 1973; Schlechty & Vance, 1981; Weisberg, 1994). However, recent studies have shown that the major dissatisfiers for teachers are located not within the school but within the broader societal context (Dinham & Scott, 2000; Xin & MacMillan, 1999). The results of Dinham and Scott (2000) and Scott and Dinham (1999) studies on teachers in three different nations (England, New Zealand, and Australia) indicated that societal level factors, which include the status and image of teaching, were the least satisfying for teachers. Their results were consistent with the results of Chapman and Green's study in 1986, which suggested that it is not enough to look to the immediate school environment or the current job market for the correlates of teacher retention. The societal factors found increasingly to be the major cause for dissatisfaction among teachers were the image, and status of the teaching profession (Dinham & Scott, 2000; Hock, 1988; Lam, Yoke, & Swee, 1995; Scott &

Dinham, 1999; Quaglia & Marion, 1991). Although these variables have been frequently cited as problems and sources of teachers' dissatisfaction and stress, their relationship with turnover intentions have not been systematically studied.

Therefore, in line with the gap in the literature, this study attempted to investigate whether perceptions of occupational image as well as workplace variables (students quality, workload, relationship with supervisors, and relationship with peers) have a bearing on teachers' turnover intentions.

Studies have shown that both career commitment and turnover intentions shared similar antecedents (demographic, work-related variables), and there are also evidence that career commitment is negatively and significantly related to turnover intentions (Aryee, Chay, & Chew, 1994; Blau, Tatum, & Cook, 2003; Borg & Riding, 1991; Chang, 1999; Cohen, 2000; Lachman & Noy, 1997; Lam, Yoke, & Swee, 1995). Therefore, it is hypothesized that career commitment plays an important mediating role between the dependent and the independent variables in this study. The basis for the mediating role is also supported from the theoretical work of Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) that proposed attitudes as a mediator between beliefs and intentions.

Barak, Nissly, and Levin (2001) point out some of the existing gaps in the body of literature examining retention and turnover of employees in the human services field, one of which is the interaction among various predictor variables. Therefore, this study also investigated the effect of interactions among occupational image and workplace variables on career commitment and turnover intentions.

Gender, level of academic qualification, and career mobility (age, tenure and probability of finding an acceptable alternative), which have been frequently linked to turnover/ turnover intentions in the literature, were included as control variables. Age and

tenure have been shown to have consistent effects not only on turnover intentions but also on career commitment (Adams, 1996; Adams & Beehr, 1998; Balfour & Neff, 1993; Colarelli & Bishop, 1990; Farber, 1984; Lachman & Noy, 1997; Miller, Katerberg & Hulin, 1979; Mobley, Horner & Hollingsworth, 1978; Rasch & Harrell, 1990). But, since age and tenure are highly correlated, only age were included as a control variable. Thus, age, gender, level of academic qualification, and perceived alternative employment opportunities were statistically controlled in this study.

1.3 Research Objectives

The main purpose of this study is to examine the determinants of teachers' turnover intentions. A secondary purpose is to investigate whether career commitment mediates the relationship between the dependent and the independent variables. Specifically, the objectives of the study are:

1. To investigate the relationship between perceptions of occupational image and workplace variables with turnover intentions.

2. To investigate whether career commitment mediates the relationship between perceptions of occupational image and workplace variables with turnover intentions.

3. To investigate whether the interactions among occupational image and workplace variables would influence career commitment and turnover intentions.

1.4 Research Questions

In attempting to fill the gaps identified in previous studies, this study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the relationships between perceptions of occupational image and workplace variables (students quality, workload, relationship with supervisors and relationship with peers) with turnover intentions?

2. Does career commitment mediates the relationships between perceptions of occupational image and workplace variables with turnover intentions?

3. Do the interactions among occupational image and workplace variables influence career commitment and turnover intentions?

1.5 Significance of the study

This study bears significant implications to the generation of new knowledge on the antecedents of turnover intentions and career commitment to research and researchers, to practitioners, educationists and policy makers.

The findings of the study may also generate new ideas or provide important insights that may contribute to the clarification of the role of occupational image, workplace variables, and career commitment in predicting teachers' turnover intentions.

This study is expected to be of benefit to education policy makers, administrators and others who are concerned with problems posed by teacher quality, teacher shortage and teacher attrition. The results may also lead to the implementation of effective interventions to attract and retain good teachers.

Another significant contribution of this study is that it may indicate future research directions in the generation of new frameworks or hypotheses.

1.6 Scope of the Study

In this study, the term teacher only encompassed those teaching in regular government secondary schools (fully residential, religious, vocational or technical school teachers were excluded). This is to control the type of students, workload and working environment that could differ from each category of these schools.

This study was conducted on teachers in secondary schools in Peninsular Malaysia only. The reason is that there might be cultural, political and social differences between East and West Malaysia that might be reflected in the perceptions of occupational image and workplace variables of the teachers. Therefore, generalizations of the results would be applicable to government or government aided regular secondary school teachers in Peninsular Malaysia only.

1.7 Definitions of Key Terms

The definitions of some of the important terms used in the study are presented below:

Occupational image refers to the ideology or shared beliefs on the societal level about the meaning of occupational membership with respect to the social status, capability and behavior patterns of individual members (Birnbaum and Somers, 1986; Birnbaum and Somers, 1989; Lim, Teo, & See, 2000).

Career Commitment is defined as one's attitude towards one's vocation, including a profession (Blau, 1999; Chang, 1999). Colarelli and Bishop (1990) defined career commitment as the development of personal career goals, the attachment to, identification with, and involvement in those goals.

Turnover Intentions is defined as teacher's intention to leave the profession (Borg & Riding, 1991).

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1.8 Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is arranged into five chapters including this chapter. Chapter two presents a review of studies on employee turnover intentions and behavior. This is followed by a discussion of some of the main factors that have been investigated as antecedents of turnover intentions and behavior. Then, the variables chosen as the dependent and independent variables for this study are discussed.

The research design and methodology of this study are discussed in chapter three. This includes the research framework and statement of hypotheses, the type of study, subject and population of study, the sampling procedure used, the data collection procedure employed. description of the research instrument utilized, pilot study and the statistical tools used to analyze the data and test the hypotheses of the study.

Chapter four primarily tests the goodness of the data, and the hypotheses of the study. Specifically, this chapter first presents an overview of the data collected. This includes discussion on the response rate, test of nonresponse bias and the profiles of the respondents. The measures in this study are then tested for their factorial validity and internal consistency using factor and reliability analysis. Finally, the results of hypotheses testing are presented.

The final chapter, chapter five, presents the discussion and conclusion for the study. This includes discussion of the findings, theoretical and practical implications, and discussion on the limitations of the study. The chapter ends with suggestions and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a review of studies on employee turnover intentions and behavior. This is followed by a discussion of some of the more important factors that had been investigated as antecedents of turnover intentions and behavior. Then, in the remaining sections, the variables chosen as the independent variables for this study were discussed. Finally, the research framework and hypotheses were proposed.

2.1 Turnover Intentions

The role of turnover intentions as the precursor of turnover has been established (Jaros, Jermier, Koehler and Sincich, 1993; Mobley et al., 1978; Mobley, 1982; Miller, Katerberg, & Hulin, 1979; Sheridan, 1985; Tett & Meyer, 1993; Vandenberg & Nelson, 1999). Conversely, high turnover intentions has been argued to not automatically result in actual turnover behavior (Gardner, 1986; Rosin & Korabik, 1991; Vandenberg & Nelson, 1999). Vandenberg and Nelson (1999) argued that individuals possess different motives for stating a high intention to quit and that these high intentions can be lowered if the source of disaffection is dealt with. Turnover is just one of the negative consequences of turnover intentions. There are other consequences of high turnover intentions such as absenteeism (Borg & Riding, 1991; Griffeth, Gaetner, Robinson and Sager 1999; Mobley, 1982; Russo, 1998; Sheridan, 1985; Zhen & Francesco, 2000), lateness (Griffeth et al., 1999), low performance (Russo, 1998; Sheridan, 1985), apathy (Mobley, 1982) and reduction of effort (Russo, 1998). As suggested and shown by Sheridan (1985), at some levels of withdrawal, the employee, although staying on the job, may show a change in

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behavior from declining job performance to frequent absenteeism. The results of his study further suggested that performance, absenteeism and turnover all reflect discontinuous responses to sociopsychological withdrawal.

Hock (1988) suggested that when teachers would like to quit their jobs but were unable to do so due to lack of alternatives, they may feel trapped in the profession, and this would have negative effects not only on the teachers but also their students. The importance of teachers' turnover intentions is underscored when studies found that the more academically able teachers are the most likely to leave teaching early and in the greatest numbers (Chapman, 1983; Chapman & Green, 1986; Murnane, Singer & Willett, 1989; Schlechty & Vance, 1981). Likewise, Kremer and Hoffman (1981) as cited from Hall, Pearson, and Carroll (1992) pointed out that teachers who are merely thinking of leaving the field are no less of a concern than those who actually carry out their intentions because the presence of disgruntled elements in a school system may infect others and start a chain reaction.

Turnover intentions, which has been identified as an important employee attitude in maintaining a productive workforce (Zhen & Francesco, 2000), is an important construct to study not merely due to its effect on turnover but also because of its other undesirable behavioral outcomes. It is hoped that by understanding and identifying the predictors of turnover intentions meaningful efforts to reduce these intentions can be taken.

2.2 Studies on Turnover

Voluntary turnover attracted considerable attention. This is evident from the extensive studies devoted to develop predictive models from various perspectives, approaches, and theories or a combination of these. Conventional studies on turnover usually investigate

the relationship between employee turnover with job satisfaction and job opportunities. One such model that has been tested and used thoroughly is the Mobley, Horner and Hollingsworth's (1978) simplified version of the Mobley Intermediate Linkages Model (Mobley, 1977). The model hypothesized that job satisfaction would directly affect thinking of quitting. Thinking of quitting would lead to intention to search, and this would then lead to intention to quit. The model also suggested that only intention to quit would affect turnover directly. The probability of finding an alternative was hypothesized to affect only intention to search and to quit. The effect of age/tenure on turnover was argued to be through satisfaction and probability of finding an alternative. Another equally well-known model is The Expanded Mobley et al.'s Model developed by Mobley, Griffeth, Hand and Meglino (1979). This model was more concerned with the complex relationships between job-related and non-job factors that can influence the initiation of the decision process (Mowday, Koberg, & McArthur, 1984). This model has received the most attention in the psychology literature (Lum, Kervin, Clark, Reid, & Sirola, 1998) and is the most comprehensive (Mowday et al., 1984) that attempt to capture the overall complexity of the turnover process. After the introduction of organizational commitment into the turnover model, the research investigating the role of job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intentions as the precursors of turnover has been extensive (Tett & Meyer, 1993).

A teacher specific model of retention, grounded in Social Learning theory, was proposed by Chapman in 1983. The theory posits that psychological functioning can be explained in terms of the interaction of personal characteristics, previous behavior, and mental determinants. The model suggests that to understand a teacher's decision to persist in or leave teaching, it is necessary to take into account:

(a) the personal characteristics of the teacher,

(b) the nature of teacher training and early teaching experience,

(c) the degree to which the teacher is socially and professionally integrated into the teaching profession,

(d) the satisfaction teachers derive from their career, and

(e) the external environmental influences impinging on the teacher's career.

However, recent studies seems to indicate that factors commonly thought to predict intention to quit have little or no effect on turnover intentions. Lachman and Noy (1997) found that job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job alternatives are not important predictors of turnover intentions. Similar to their findings, Khatri, Chong and Budhwar (2001) found that factors popularly believed to be important determinants of turnover only explained 11.7% of the variance in turnover intentions. The factors that they assessed are age, education, perceived alternative employment opportunities, job-hopping, and satisfaction with pay. Although the conventional turnover study is hardly obsolete (Somers, 1996), new ideas, constructs, perspectives, approaches, and directions are needed not only to advance our knowledge on turnover but also to better understand the predictors of withdrawal for today's ever changing workforce.

As noted by Somers (1996), new approaches to studying turnover have begun to appear in the literature. Recently, there are studies that attempted to introduce alternative theoretical perspectives, used different methodologies, introduced new constructs or combined different aspects and perspectives in the development of conceptual frameworks and models of turnover (see Aquino, Griffeth, Allen and Hom, 1997; Khatri, Chong, & Budhwar, 2001; Lee, Mitchell, Wise & Fireman, 1996; Mitchell, Holtom, Lee,

Sablynski and Erez. 2001; Sims & Kroeck, 1994; Tang, Kim, Tang, 2000; Trevor, 2001; Valentine. 2001).

Sims and Kroeck (1994) suggested and utilized ethical theory in their development of a conceptual framework of turnover intentions. They argued that ethical work climate is an important variable in person-organization fit and that individuals who have achieved a good 'ethical match' will have lower turnover intentions than individuals who have not experienced an ethical match with the organization. Another contemporary model of employee turnover was put forward by Lee and Mitchell (Lee, Mitchell, Wise & Fireman, 1996). The model uses image theory as its conceptual underpinning. The major components of this 'Unfolding model' include "shocks to the system" and the amount of psychological analysis that precedes a decision to quit and the act of quitting (Lee et al., 1996). They concluded that people use different and distinct psychological processes when leaving an organization and that some of these processes may not be consistent with existing turnover theories.

Aquino, Griffeth, Allen, and Hom (1997) developed and tested a model clarifying the psychological processes by which felt deprivation instigated quitting. Their model draws upon Referent Cognitions theory to provide a comprehensive theoretical account of how justice perceptions prompt employee withdrawal. Their findings suggest that poor management of employee perceptions of interactional justice at the supervisory level may inspire employees to quit. In an attempt to complement existing turnover models, Griffeth. Gaertner. Robinson. and Sager (1999) proposed a model that predicts and explains employee turnover within the context of other withdrawal behaviors. They developed a theoretical model that combined several streams of theoretical and empirical research in industrial and organizational psychology, The Adaptive Response Model,

ARM. The model suggests how employees adapt to the organization following changes in organizational policies that are perceived as dissatisfying. They found that different employees react differently to the same type of events. Some employees might quit, others might complain, some may engage in alternative withdrawal behaviors, while others just simply accept the situation.

Trevor (2001) proposed a model that combined aspects of signaling and human capital perspectives with approaches emphasizing job satisfaction and general job availability. He found that the negative effect of unemployment rate on voluntary turnover was of greater magnitude only when education, cognitive ability and occupation specific training were low.

Various new constructs were introduced into models of turnover. Some of the constructs included money ethic endorsement (Tang, Kim & Tang, 2000), job complexity (Valentine. 2001). job embeddedness (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablynski, & Erez, 2001), career stage (Flaherty & Pappas, 2002), human resource management practices (Arthur, 1994; Huselid. 1995), and occupational image (Lim et al., 2000). Mitchell et al. (2001) characterized job embeddedness as (1) the extent to which people have links to other people or activities, (2) the extent to which their jobs and communities are similar to or fit with the other aspects in their life spaces, and (3) the ease with which links can be broken. They found that employees that are embedded in an organization and a community are less likely to leave. Flaherty and Pappas (2002) found that career stage, a construct that captures both personal characteristics and attitudes in one, is a better predictor of turnover intentions than age or tenure. On the other hand, Huselid (1995), found that the use of High Performance Work Practices were associated with lower

employee turnover. In short, these new constructs have been found, to a certain degree, associated with turnover intentions or behavior.

Different methodologies and statistical techniques used to study turnover have also been documented. For example statistical models based on survival analysis were used by several researchers to study the turnover process (see Lambert, Hogan & Barton, 2001; Mont & Rees. 1996; Murnane, Singer & Willett, 1989; Somers, 1996; Trevor, 2001). Another example is the use of statistical technique of Structural Equation Modeling (see DeConinck and Bachmann, 1994; Lambert, Hogan, & Barton, 2001; Williams, Konrad, Scheckler, & Pathman, 2001).

A review on previous studies of turnover/turnover intentions shows that the determinants are classified in various yet similar ways. Porter and Steers (1973) categorized the factors related to turnover into four categories:

(1) Organization-wide (pay, promotion, policies, and organization size),

(2) Immediate work environment,

(3) Job related, and

(4) personal factors.

Rosin and Korabik (1991) grouped the reasons why women might wish to leave organizations into two clusters: workplace variables and affective responses. The determinants of intention to leave were grouped into biodemographic, organizational, job characteristics. and labor market factors by Weisberg (1994). Lum, Kervin, Clark, Reid, and Sirola (1998) categorized the determinants into three major classes: individual factors. economic opportunity, and work-related factors. Khatri, Chong, and Budhwar (2001) summarized the determinants into three sets: demographic (age and education), controllable (job satisfaction and organizational commitment), and uncontrollable

(perceived job alternatives and job-hopping). In a meta-analytic study on nurses in Taiwan, Yin and Yang (2002) grouped the factors related to intention to quit or stay into individual, organizational, and environmental factors. In summary, the following discussion of the major determinants of turnover intentions were grouped into demographic, workplace variables, attitudinal, and job opportunities.

2.3 Determinants of Turnover

The following discussion grouped the determinants of turnover intentions/behavior into four categories: demographic, workplace, attitudinal, and job opportunities.

2.3.1 Demographic Variables

Individual variables that have been frequently included in most turnover studies are age, tenure, gender, education level, marital status, and ethnicity. Although some of these variables have been found to have significant effects on turnover intentions and behavior, the variance explained is trivial. For example, Adams (1996) carried out a longitudinal research on 2,327 elementary school teachers to investigate the relationship between gender, age, ethnicity, education, and certification route. He found that the five variables only explained approximately 10 % of the variance in teacher survival. His findings seem to concur with the findings of Khatri et al. (2001) study. Khatri and associates found that age and education together with three other variables only explained 11.7 % of the variance in turnover intentions. In addition, Flaherty and Pappas (2002) reported that many of the personal characteristic variables (age, job tenure, education) in their study were not significant predictors of turnover intentions. Demographic characteristics such

as race and marital status have been found to be either poor or inconsistent predictors of turnover (Balfour & Neff, 1993; Lambert, Hogan, & Barton, 2001).

2.3.1.1 Age/Tenure

Age and tenure are highly correlated and it is not surprising that many studies grouped them together (see Borg & Riding, 1991; Lachman & Noy, 1997; Mobley. Horner, & Hollingsworth. 1978; Miller, Katerberg & Hulin, 1979; Rasch & Harrell, 1990; Schwab, 1991; Weisberg. 1994). Age has been consistently found to be negatively related to turnover/turnover intention (Adams & Beehr, 1998; Lachman & Noy, 1997; Lambert, Hogan. Barton. 2001; Miller et al., 1979; Mobley et al., 1978; Mobley, Hand, Baker, & Meglino, 1979; Porter & Steers, 1973; Somers, 1996). Generally, age had only a weak, negative but significant effect on intention to quit. Mobley, Horner, and Hollingsworth (1978) suggested that the effect of age on turnover/turnover intention is probably indirect through job satisfaction or the probability of finding an acceptable alternative. Although age has generally been accepted to have a consistent negative effect on turnover, there are also dissonant findings. Borg and Riding (1991) study on Maltese secondary school teachers found that teachers in the 'under 31 years' and the '46-50 years' subgroups showed greater intention to leave as compared to their other colleagues. On the other hand. Baskaran (1998) in a study on teachers in Penang found that teachers in the 36 to 40 age groups indicated the highest levels of withdrawal cognitions as opposed to other age groups. A few studies even indicated that age was not a significant predictor of turnover intentions (Flaherty & Pappas, 2002; Khatri, Chong, & Budhwar, 2001).

Similar to age, tenure was also found to be significantly and negatively related to turnover/turnover intentions (Balfour & Neff, 1993; Flaherty & Pappas, 2002; Hartmann,

2000; Mont & Rees, 1996; Lambert, Hogan, Barton, 2001; Lachman & Noy, 1997; Rasch & Harrell, 1990; Somers, 1996; Weisberg, 1994). However, Khatri and his colleagues (2001) found that tenure was positively associated with turnover intentions. Other studies that were not in harmony with the majority of the studies were the study by DeConinck and Bachmann (1994) and Flaherty and Pappas (2002). Their findings indicated that job tenure was not significantly related to intention to leave. Although there were a few contradictory findings, the influence of age and tenure on turnover intentions received sufficient empirical support. One probable reason why age is a factor that influences withdrawal is that it constrained the options available to the worker. Older workers stay on their jobs due to lack of equivalent opportunities (Adams & Beehr, 1998). Another probable reason that has been put forth by Lambert et al. (2001), as theorized by Becker's side bet theory, is that an employee's investments in an organization increase with age and tenure and, therefore, this reduces the likelihood that the employee will quit.

2.3.1.2 Gender

The impact of gender on turnover intent or behavior remains inconsistent. Camp (1994) noted that not only are the theoretical perspectives for the effects of gender on turnover intent not fully developed but the empirical findings are lacking as well. Whilst there are quite a few studies that found gender to be not significantly related to turnover/turnover intent (Adams & Beehr, 1998; Baskaran, 1998; Lambert et al., 2001; Mont & Rees, 1996; Valentine, 2001), Rasch and Harrell (1990) found that female accounting professionals indicated greater turnover intentions. The results of Adams (1996) study on teachers concurred with the results of Rasch and Harrell (1990). Adams (1996) found that women were more likely to leave teaching than men. However, Khatri

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et al. (2001) in a study on employees in the food and beverage, retail, and shipping industries in Singapore found that males have greater intention to leave than females. One suggestion proposed for the lack of relationship or inconsistent relationship between gender and turnover is that gender probably interacts with other demographic variables (Adams & Beehr, 1998; Chapman, 1983; Mobley, 1982) or probably the relationship is contingent on the type of organization (Lambert et al., 2001), occupation, industry, culture or country.

2.3.1.3 Education Level

The relationship between education level and turnover intent or behavior seems inconclusive. Studies have found that the more academically able teachers are the most likely to leave teaching early (Chapman, 1983; Chapman & Green, 1986; Murnane, Singer & Willett, 1989; Schlechty & Vance, 1981). Similarly, Balfour and Neff (1993) found that employees with more education were most likely to leave an organization. On the other hand, Adams (1996) found that teachers with higher academic degrees remain in teaching longer. Furthermore, the findings of Baskaran (1998), Flaherty and Pappas (2002), Khatri, Chong, and Budhwar (2001), and Lambert, Hogan, and Barton (2001) indicated that education level does not have any significant association with turnover intentions. In trying to explain the results of their findings, Balfour and Neff (1993) reasoned that higher education level makes an individual more marketable while Adams (1996) reasoned that teachers with higher academic degrees have greater investment that they may lose if they switch jobs. Similar to gender, education probably interacts with other variables or its relationship with turnover could differ across occupations or countries.

2.3.2 Workplace variables

Porter and Steers (1973) initially associated immediate work environment with (a)supervisory style, (b) work-unit size and (c) the nature of peer group interaction. Since then, various workplace variables have been investigated in turnover studies. Rosin and Korabik (1991) included items such as lack of opportunity, long hours and boredom with routine, relationship with supervisors and job demands in their study on women manager's turnover intentions. Their results implied that only unsatisfactory workplace variables make important contributions towards women's turnover intentions. Lum, Kervin, Clark, Reid and Sirola (1998) study on nurses, operationalized work-related variables as autonomy, task requirements, organizational policies, professional interactions and job status. They found that work-related variables have both direct and indirect influence on turnover intent. The measures of work environment in Lambert, Hogan, and Barton's (2001) study include role conflict, task variety, financial rewards, relations to coworkers, and autonomy.

The influence of teacher specific workplace variables has also been investigated in previous turnover studies. Mont and Rees (1996), using a discrete time hazard model to simulate the effects of changing classroom characteristics on high school teacher turnover, assessed a number of variables relating to current working conditions including class size, number of classes taught and the proportion of classes taught in the teacher's certified area. They found that working conditions were important correlates of teacher turnover. Class size or student-teacher ratio has been identified as one of the workplace variable that caused teacher burnout in Israel (Pines, 2002). Pines (2002) argued that in large classes, teachers spend more time restraining and disciplining their students and less time educating and encouraging them. Litt and Turk (1985) found that the ability of

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teachers to cope effectively with their worst problems, the degree to which teachers feel overloaded with work, and teachers perceptions of the quality of personal relations among the faculty all bear significantly on their intention to leave teaching. Consistent with the literature, Hall, Pearson, and Carroll's (1992) study on teachers' long-range teaching plans found that the perceptions that teachers held about their work environment are important in predicting teacher retention. They found that teachers who were contemplating quitting the profession and those who planned to continue teaching could be distinguished in terms of their satisfaction with their current working conditions. Subair and Mojaphoko (1999), in a study on agriculture teachers in Botswana found that working conditions such as large class sizes, heavy teaching loads and insufficient resources to be among the main reasons for attrition. Models of employee turnover suggested that workplace variables contribute to affective responses to the job (such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment), which in turn influence the development of thoughts and intentions of leaving (Rosin & Korabik, 1991).

By factor analyzing items covering various aspects of the teachers' work environment, Borg and Riding (1991) found that teachers work environment consisted of four factors:

1. Pupil misbehavior,

2. Time/ resource difficulties,

3. Professional recognition needs, and

4. Poor relationships.

They reported that having a large class, pupils' poor attitudes towards school work, and difficult class to be the top three sources of stress whereas administrative work and attitudes and behavior of other teachers were the least stressful. Similarly, Quaglia and Marion (1991) reported that the most common source of dissatisfaction for teachers were

preparation time. the number of hours spent on non-teaching duties and students discipline.

Norton (1999) reported the work conditions that contribute to teacher turnover includes:

1. Problems and frustration with the variety of routines and accompanying paperwork,

2. Problems relating to student behavior and handling of student discipline,

3. Problems relating to teacher load and expectations for assuming extra-curricular assignments. and

4. Concerns about relationships with peers and administrative personnel, including supervisory relationships.

Likewise. in an article on teacher turnover and teacher quality, Ingersoll (1997) reported that multivariate analyses have shown that low salaries, rampant student discipline problems and little faculty input into the school's decision making all contribute to high rates of teacher turnover.

Workplace variables are considered as an important aspect of an individual's work life because. as suggested by Lum. Kervin. Clark, Reid, and Sirola (1998), individuals enter an organization with certain needs, desires, and skills, and as such, they expect to find a work environment in which they can utilize their abilities and satisfy many of their basic needs.

2.3.3 Attitudinal Variables

Among the most widely studied attitudinal variables in turnover research are job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

2.3.3.1 Job Satisfaction

While Dessler (1985) defined job satisfaction as the degree to which one's important needs for health, security, nourishment, affiliation, esteem and so on are fulfilled on the job as a result of the job. Mobley (1982) conceptualized job satisfaction as a present-oriented evaluation of the job involving a comparison of an employee's multiple values and what the employee perceives the job as providing. Job satisfaction has been viewed as a multi-faceted construct (Dessler, 1985; Mobley, 1982; Shann, 1998), and an affective or emotional response (Dessler, 1985; Lum, Kervin, Clark, Reid and Sirola, 1998). In a more recent interest in moods and emotions in the workplace, Brief and Weiss (2002) conceptualized job satisfaction as having two dimensions: affective and cognitive. They argued that there are two ways to view job satisfaction: 1. as an evaluative judgement, or 2. as an affective component.

The relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention and behavior has been examined extensively (Valentine, 2001) and is well established conceptually and empirically (Adams & Beehr, 1998; Clugston, 2000; DeConinck & Bachmann, 1994; Lam, Yoke, & Swee, 1995; Lum, Kervin, Clark, Reid, & Sirola, 1998; Mobley, 1982; Rosin & Korabik, 1991; Sims & Kroeck, 1994; Somers, 1996; Tett & Meyer, 1993; Trevor, 2001; Vandenberg & Nelson, 1999; Williams, Konrad, Scheckler, Pathman et al., 2001). Porter and Steers (1973) concluded that overall job satisfaction, conceptualized as the sum total of an individual's met expectations on the job, represents an important force in the individual's participation decision. However, they argued that knowing an employee is dissatisfied and about to leave does not help in understanding why he is dissatisfied or what needs to be changed in an effort to retain him. Therefore, Porter and Steers (1973) broke down the global concept of job satisfaction into categories of factors: