

THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG JOB SATISFACTION, ORGANIZATIONAL
COMMITMENT AND EMPLOYEES TURNOVER INTENTIONS AT
UNILEVER CORPORATION

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TO ALMIGHTY GOD:

Who has been with me and my family throughout my study, I really want to thank you so much for your faithfulness, goodness and mercy to always complete every project you start in my life and that of my family.

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ABSTRACT

Employee turnover has become a key performance indicator for many organizations as they struggle to retain talented employees. The negative impact of turnover on organizational performance has continually forced organizational leaders seek better ways to retain valuable employees. The purpose of this study is to examine relationship among job satisfaction, organizational commitment and employee's turnover intentions at Unilever Corporation in Nigeria. The data for this study were collected from 117 employees currently working at Unilever Nigeria PLC using the survey method via the questionnaire. Pearson Correlation and the linear regression analyses techniques using the SPSS version 22.0 was used for the data analysis. The findings of the study revealed that both job satisfaction and organizational commitment have significant negative relationship with employee turnover intentions. In addition, organizational commitment was revealed to have a more dominant influence on employee turnover intentions than job satisfaction. Based on these findings, the implications and recommendations to practice and theory were discussed.

ABSTRAK

Pengantian pekerja telah menjadi satu petunjuk prestasi utama bagi kebanyakan organisasi kerana organisasi berusaha untuk mengekalkan pekerja yang berbakat. Kesan negatif terhadap pengantian pekerja di organisasi memaksa pemimpin organisasi mencari jalan yang terbaik untuk mengekalkan pekerja yang berbakat. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji hubungan antara kepuasan kerja, komitmen organisasi dan perancangan pengantian pekerja di syarikat Unilever di Nigeria. Data bagi kajian ini telah dikumpulkan daripada 117 pekerja yang kini bekerja di Unilever Nigeria PLC dengan menggunakan kaedah tinjauan melalui soal selidik. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan kaedah Korelasi Pearson dan regresi pelbagai teknik menggunakan SPSS versi 22.0. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa kedua-dua kepuasan kerja dan komitmen organisasi mempunyai hubungan negatif yang signifikan dengan perancangan pengantian pekerja. Di samping itu, komitmen organisasi menunjukkan terdapatnya pengaruh yang lebih dorminant kepada niat pengantian pekerja daripada kepuasan kerja. Berdasarkan penemuan ini, implikasi dan teori serta cadangan amalan telah dibincangkan.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	TITLE	PAGE
	DECLARATION	ii
	DEDICATION	iii
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
	ABSTRACT	v
	ABSTRAK	vi
	TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
	LIST OF TABLES	x
	LIST OF FIGURES	xi
	LIST OF ABBREVIATION	xii
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Introduction	1
	1.2 Background of the Study	1
	1.3 Problem Statement	4
	1.4 Purpose of the Study	7
	1.5 Research Questions	7
	1.6 Research Objectives	7
	1.7 Scope of the Study	7
	1.8 Significance of the Study	8
	1.9 Definition of Key Terms	9
	1.9.1 Job Satisfaction	9
	1.9.2 Organizational Commitment	10
	1.9.3 Turnover Intention	11
	1.10 Conclusion	11

2	LITERATURE REVIEW	12
2.1	Introduction	12
2.2	The Theoretical Background for this Study.	12
2.2.1	Maslow's Theory	13
2.2.2	Equity Theories	15
2.2.3	Value Theories	15
2.2.4	Locke's Value Theory	15
2.2.5	Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET)	16
2.2.6	Self-Determination Theory	17
2.3	Job Satisfaction	17
2.3.1	Dimensions of Job Satisfaction	18
2.4	Organizational Commitment	22
2.4.1	Dimensions of Organizational Commitment	22
2.5	Turnover Intention	24
2.6	The Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intentions	26
2.7	The Relationship between Organizational Commitment and Employee Turnover Intentions	32
2.8	Conceptual Framework	37
2.9	Conclusion	38
3	METHODOLOGY	39
3.1	Introduction	39
3.2	Research Design	39
3.3	Sample Frame	40
3.3.1	Population and Sampling Technique	40
3.4	Data Collection Procedures	42
3.4.1	Research Instrument	43
3.5	Measurement of the Constructs	43
3.6	Measurement Scale	44
3.7	Reliability and Validity	45
3.8	Data Analysis	45
3.9	Conclusion	47

4	ANALYSES AND FINDINGS	48
4.1	Introduction	48
4.2	Response Rate	48
4.3	Normality Test	49
4.4	Validity Test	50
4.5	Reliability Test	53
4.6	Descriptive Demographic Analysis	53
4.7	Inferential Data Analysis	58
4.8	Conclusion	60
5	DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION	61
5.1	Introduction	61
5.2	Discussion of the Findings	61
5.2.1	Objective 1: The Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Employee Turnover Intentions	62
5.2.2	Objective 2: The Relationship between Organizational Commitment and Employee Turnover Intentions	63
5.3	Summary of the Findings	65
5.4	Contributions and Implications	65
5.4.1	Implications to Practice	66
5.4.2	Contributions to Theory	67
5.5	Recommendations	67
5.5.1	Recommendations to Unilever Corporation	68
5.5.2	Recommendations for Future Research	69
5.6	Limitations	69
5.7	Conclusion	70
	REFERENCES	71
	APPENDIX A-B	79-83

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	Summary of the findings of previous literature on Job Satisfaction and Employee Turnover Intentions	29
2.2	Summary of the findings of previous literature on Organizational Commitment and Employee Turnover Intentions	35
3.1	Population of Unilever Staffs	41
3.2	Sample Size Table	42
3.3	Measurement of Items of the Study	44
3.4	Proposed Likert five-point Scale	44
3.5	Type of Analysis used to answer the Research Questions.	46
4.1	Response Rate	49
4.2	Results of Normality Test using Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk	50
4.3	Factor Analysis Results	50
4.4	KMO and Barlett's Test Results	52
4.5	Reliability Test using Cronbach's Alpha	53
4.6	Demography of the Respondents	54
4.7	Correlation Results for Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intentions	58
4.8	Correlation Results for Commitment and Turnover Intentions	59
4.9	Regression Coefficients	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.10	Summary of the Findings	60
5.1	Summary of the Hypotheses Testing	65

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	Maslow Hierarchy of Needs	14
2.2	The Conceptual Model for this Study.	38
4.1	Histogram Showing Respondents Gender	55
4.2	Histogram Showing Respondents Age	56
4.3	Histogram Showing Respondents Work Experience	56
4.4	Histogram Showing Respondents Level of Education	57
4.5	Histogram Showing Respondents Position	57

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study examines the relationship among job satisfaction, organizational commitment and employee turnover intentions at Unilever corporation in Nigeria. This study would be presented in five chapters. Chapter one presents the introductory part mainly comprising of the problem statement, research questions, research objectives, scope and significance of the study. Chapter two focused on the review of literature of the main constructs of the study, the relationships to be examined, conceptual framework and the theoretical support. Chapter three focused on the methodology (i.e., the sampling, instruments, data collection procedure and method of data analysis. Chapter four was utilised to present the findings of the study while Chapter five, which is the final chapter was devoted to the conclusion and recommendations of this study.

1.2 Background of the Study

Employee retention rate has become a key performance indicator for many companies across all sectors of business (Moussa, 2013). Many organizations struggle to retain talented employees for more than five years (Bagga, 2013). According to Ballinger *et al*, (2011) nearly 50% of employees leave their organizations within the first five years of their employment contract. This high turnover rate has a high financial costs to organizations (Maertz and Boyar, 2012). Job satisfaction and organizational commitment has been an important topic over the years (Akfopure,

2006). The relationship between man and work has always attracted the attention of researchers. A major part of men's life is spent at work. Work is social reality and social expectation to which men seem to conform. It not only provides status to the individual but also binds him to the society. An employee who is satisfied with his job would perform his duties well and be committed to his job, and subsequently to his organization. According to Mullins (2002) argued that job satisfaction is a complex and multi-dimensional notion, which can mean different things to different people. The study of job satisfaction and organizational commitment should be seen as one of the essential knowledge required by Nigerian industries. Reseachers have expressed that the biggest challenge in the organization today is the ability of manager or organization itself to support their employees to be satisfied with their job and be committed to the organization. When organization are committed to the affairs of the employee, the employee will be job satisfied then develop the organization.

Job satisfaction is a variable that concerns how people feel about their work (Spector, 2000). Job satisfaction can also be portrayed as a feeling of pleasure that stems from an employee's impression of his or her job. According to Gibson *et al.* (2000) job satisfaction is an individual expression of personal wellbeing associated with doing the job required. According to Yanchus *et al* (2015) job satisfaction is closely related to their feeling and attitude to work, the researcher also stated that it is will reflect the extent of the individual's needs and desires met and how the other employees perceived. In addition, Mullins (2002) agrees that job satisfaction is an attitude and an internal state that can be associated with personal feelings of achievement, either quantitative or qualitative. According to Baron and Greenberg (2003) concurs that job satisfaction is an attitude towards ones job and its cognitive, affective and evaluative reactions towards his or her job. For some people they may feel consistently satisfied with their jobs whilst others may be feeling quite dissatisfied. The definitions of job satisfaction can therefore be summed as a collection of attitudes, feelings, beliefs and behaviour one has towards his or her job. Job satisfaction may be view as attitudes and behaviours adopted not because of shared beliefs but simply to gain specific rewards.

The concept of organizational commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. It is generally considered as three dimensional construct comprising of affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment Boehman *et al* (2006) suggested that affectively committed employees continue working with great devotion, continuance commitment ensures that employees retain their organizational membership, however those who are normally committed usually feel obligation on their part to stay in the organization. According to Miller (2003), high organisational commitment means identifying highly with one's organization.

Organisational commitment is regarded to be the best predictor of employee's turnover, than the far more frequently used job satisfaction predictor (Miller, 2003). Given the fact that employees who operate in a continuance commitment dimension are calculative of their stay, one would deduce that such employees may continuously stay away from work when they feel like, doing so. Organisational commitment members contribute positively to the organization which is not the case with less committed members. Cohen (2003) suggested that organizations whose members have higher levels of commitment show higher performance and productivity and lower levels of absenteeism and tardiness.

In this study, the relationship among job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intentions is examined in the context of employees working in a multinational company in Nigeria (Unilever Nigeria PLC). It is important these days to pay close attention to issues that could make employees to pay less attention to their organization productivity and intending to leave their organizations. Job satisfaction and organization commitment are considered because more than before, the literature shows that satisfied and committed employees are more willing to remain with their organizations.

1.3 Problem Statement

It is undoubtedly that in the advent of globalization, organizations all over the world including in Nigeria strives to compete and stay relevant in their business. The multinational companies in Nigeria are faced with challenges that affect much the human aspect and production level. This challenges relates to the employees in the organization such as: turnover rate, the absenteeism and the negatives attitude of the employee due to lack of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. In turn, these challenges affect overall organizational structure. Cohen (2003) suggested that “organizations whose members have higher levels of commitment show higher performance and productivity and lower levels of absenteeism and tardiness.

The negative impact of turnover on organizational performance has continually forced organizational leaders seek better ways to retain valuable employees (Dong *et al.* 2012). Employee retention rate has become a key performance indicator for many organizations (Moussa, 2013). Organizations scuffle to retain employees for more than five years (Bagga, 2013). Approximately 50% of employees leave their organizations within the first five years of employment (Ballinger *et al.*, 2011). The manufacturing sector in Nigeria depended heavily on contract workforce. These contract workforce does not stay long in the organization. They could abandon the work immediately they are hired in another organization that offer them permanent staff positions. This negative effect on the organization in terms of replacement cost and disrupted work, affects the organizational vision to build a knowledgeable employee needed to sustain the company growth and competitiveness. This issue closely related to the implication of organizational commitment. March and Simon’s (1958) theory of organizational equilibrium suggests that individual decisions to stay working in an organization are a function of the balance between the expected utilities of the inducements offered by the organization and the contributions expected from the individual.

Government is putting more and more pressure to reduce the dependency of contract workforce in the countries. However, the multinational company (Unilever Nigeria PLC) looks for a way to balance the strategies of organizational commitment and job satisfaction looking into the employee benefits on how to satisfy and keep the

permanent staff and lay off the contract workforce. Although much of the subsequent research has focused on attitudinal (e.g., satisfaction) and tangible (e.g., pay) inducements to stay, a growing body of work recognizes that relational inducements such as support from the organization and from a supervisor can also play an important role in such decisions (Allen *et al.*, 2003). Like most other countries, multinational industry in Nigeria are also faced with retention problems which could be arguably traced to the basement of employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment. According to the findings of HR Council's (2008) survey of nonprofit sector employees, nearly 40% of the employee have a second thought on how to resign once they secured another job. This findings therefore suggest some connections between job satisfaction and employee retention.

Turnover has been identified as a serious issue in organizational behaviour literature. The major reason why much attention has been paid to the construct of turnover is because of the significant effects turnover has on organizations (Babajide, 2010; Mba and Ikemefuna, 2012). These authors argued that high turnover rates might have negative effects on the profitability of organizations. Employee turnover from a business perspective is costly to the organization. An employee leaving an organization suddenly would have an effect on the organization and the co-employees including the replacement cost. These costs of replacement include but not limited to recruitment and selection for possible new substitutes or competing substitutes, induction of the selected substitutes, formal and informal training of the substitutes until the performance levels equivalent to that of the employee who quitted is attained (Babajide, 2010).

In addition to these costs of replacement, organizational output may be affected during this cycle of employee turnover. Gustafson (2002) argued that turnover affects the organization in several ways including lost productivity, low sales and low profit. With respect to profit, Gustafson (2002) estimates the turnover costs of an employee could cost an organization \$3,000 to \$10,000 per hour. This clearly demonstrates that turnover has negative effect on the profitability of the organization and thus should be properly managed. The estimated cost of recruiting and training a replacement employee would cost 50% of the employee's annual salary (Mba and Ikemefuna,

2012). Additionally, each time an employee quits an organization, productivity may drop due to the learning curve involved in understanding the job and the organization by the new intake. Also, the loss of intellectual capital of the departing employee is an additional cost (Meaghan, 2002). According to Babajide (2010), numerous studies have been conducted on predictors of employee turnover (which include marital status, length of service, relocation and life cycle). However, to the knowledge of the researcher, only few studies have been conducted on job satisfaction, work-family life, personal commitment to organizations as factors that influence employee turnover in Nigeria (especially in the industrial sector). This existing gap serves as motivation for this study.

In Nigeria, employee turnover varies across different industrial sectors. In the oil sector for example, Oluwafemi (2013) expressed that turnover intention among employees is low because employees will be more willing to stay and be committed to their organization due to the perceived rewards and other benefits they receive from their organization. As compared to the manufacturing firms in Nigeria, the oil sector pays higher. So, Oluwafemi (2013) findings may not necessarily be applicable to the manufacturing sector which pays considerable lower as compared to the oil sector or the banking sector. The oil and gas sector, multinationals and financial sector (especially banking) offer the best opportunities for employment in the private sector in Nigeria (Ekong *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, people jostle to get jobs in the banking sector and oil sector (Ekong *et al.*, 2013) which makes the turnover rate to be lower. Hence, this study would focus mainly on manufacturing sector because this sector arguably have higher turnover rate in the country.

Therefore, this study would attempt to investigate the relationship between the job satisfaction, organization commitment and turnover intentions of the employees working with Uniliver corporation in Nigeria. This study reveals ways to reduce turnover intentions, help the employees to stay with the job roles and remain committed to their organization. Also, this study would be beneficial to other Nigerian multinational company to maintain employees' retention, productivity, motivation, organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine relationship between job satisfaction, organization commitment and employee turnover intention of employees working with Unilever corporation in Nigeria with the aim of providing detailed understanding highlight on the degree of job satisfaction and organizational commitment would explain the intentions of the employees to leave the organization.

1.5 Research Questions

1. Is there a relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover intention in the organization?
2. Is there a relationship between organizational commitment and employee turnover intention in the organization?

1.6 Research Objectives

1. To examine the relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover intention
2. To investigate the relationship between organisational commitment and employee turnover intention

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study is limited to focusing on the relationship among organisational commitment, job satisfaction and turnover intention among employees working with Unilever Corporation in Nigeria. The scope of this study focused mainly the on the individual levels of Unilever employees' job satisfaction and organisational

commitment on their turnover intentions. Thus, the study was conducted in a single organization with emphasis only on its employees.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between the job satisfaction, organisational commitment and employee turnover intentions among employees working with Unilever Corporation in Nigeria. The researcher suggests that when employees are committed to their organization and satisfied with their jobs, turnover intention would decrease then organizational performance and productivity would increase. To this regard, this study contributes to a better understanding the influence of job satisfaction and organisational commitment in the following ways:

First, many studies have been conducted in the field of organisational commitment and job satisfaction but studies investigating the relationship between the job satisfaction and organizational commitment with turnover intentions in manufacturing firms is very few. Therefore, the finding of this study would provide some contribution to the literature on the empirical validation on the relationship between the job satisfaction and organizational commitment with turnover intentions in the context of manufacturing firms in Nigeria where this study is conducted.

Secondly, this study contributes to the existing literature in the field of turnover intention, organisational commitment and job satisfaction as it aims provides findings on the relationship in the context employees in a manufacturing setting. This would be useful to Unilever Corporation and would serve as a guide to help the organization re-examine the level of their employees' organization and commitment. Therefore, the findings of this study would enable the organization apply the appropriate human resource strategies to rectify the situation. Finding and adopting appropriate strategies may contribute significantly to the well-being of the organization in terms of employees' turnover, productivity, quality, employees disciplinary, absenteeism and others.

Thirdly, the findings of this study would have practical implication for managers in terms of the reduction of the cost of employee replacement due to turnover. In other words, the cost of replacement such as recruitment and selection for possible new employees or competing employees, induction of the selected new employees, formal and informal training of the new employees and so on, would be avoided if employee turnover intentions is managed properly. For example, the estimated cost of recruiting and training a replacement employee that cost 50% of the employee's annual salary (according to Mba and Ikemefuna, 2012) would be avoided if the managers ensure that their employees are satisfied and committed.

Lastly, the findings of this study would be useful to individual employees working at Unilever Corporation in knowing their level of organization commitment and job satisfaction in order to enhanced and maintain the organizational commitment and job satisfaction which in turn reduction their turnover intentions. Arguably, a happier workforce with more committed and satisfied employees would not nurture the intentions to leave their organizations but help to improve the overall organizational effectiveness.

1.9 Definition of Key Terms

This section provides the definition of the constructs used this study. The conceptual and operational definitions of job satisfaction, organization commitement and employee turnover intentions are presented in this section.

1.9.1 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is conceptualized as an employee's overall evaluation of his or her job as favourable or unfavourable (Locke, 2002). It involves the person's feeling about their job whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied. According to Spector (2000), job satisfaction is an attitudinal variable that reflects how people feel about their jobs.

In this study, job satisfaction is defined as the degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction that employees at Unilever corporation has with the job roles.

1.9.2 Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is conceptualized as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in an organization (Allen and Meyer, 1990). Organizational commitment reflects the employee's relationship with the organization and that it has implications for his or her decision to continue membership in the organization (Meyer *et al.*, 2002). In this study, the three dimensions of organizational commitment namely affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment are considered. The conceptual definitions of these three dimensions of organizational commitment are presented as follows:

- I. **Affective Commitment is conceptualized as the** effective emotional attachment to identification with, and involvement in the organization (Allen and Meyer, 1990).
- II. **Continuance Commitment** is conceptualized as the cost associated with leaving the organization (Allen and Meyer, 1990).
- III. **Normative Commitment** is conceptualized as the feeling of obligation to continue with the organization (Allen and Meyer, 1990).

In this study, organizational commitment is operationalised as the degree of employees' at Unilever Corporation's identification with their organization and involvement in their organization activities.

1.9.3 Turnover Intention

Turnover intention is conceptualized as the intense decision that employees take to give up their present positions and jobs, leave voluntarily to other organization. Turnover intention has been described as the last in a sequence of withdrawal cognitions, a set of cognitions include thinking of quitting and the intent to search for alternative employment. Turnover intention refers to an employee's intention to voluntarily leave an organization (Jehanzeb *et al.*, 2013). In this study, turnover intention is operationalised as employee's intention to voluntarily leave the Unilever Corporation.

1.10 Conclusion

This is the first chapter of this study. This chapter has been used to present an introduction and the background of the study, problem statements, purpose of the study, research questions and research objectives, the scope of the study, significance of the study and the definitions of the key terms mentioned in the study. The next chapter, which is Chapter two, focused on the literature review. The discussion and analysis of previous literatures and existing studies related to this study was presented.

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