



Conceptual Paper

Does Gender Moderate The Relationship Between Job Satisfaction and Employee - Turnover Intention? A Proposed Model

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Abstract

Previous research has consistently shown that job satisfaction is negatively associated with lower levels of employee-turnover intention. However, little research has been conducted on the potential moderating effects of one or more socio-demographic variables on this relationship. The present study proposed to replicate and extend the findings of the previous research by exploring the moderating effect of gender on the relationship between job satisfaction and employee-turnover intention.

Key Terms: *employee-turnover intention, job satisfaction, gender, socio-demographic variables*

1. Introduction

Employee-turnover intention (ETI) has been extensively studied by many researchers and is still a fruitful area of research in the field of industrial-organizational psychology (Collini, Guidroz, & Perez, 2013; Collins, 2010; Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000; Lee, 1988; Nadiri & Tanova, 2010; Simons & Hinkin, 2001). ETI has been defined by Tett and Meyer (1993) "a conscious and deliberate willfulness to leave the organization" (p. 262). Anecdotal and empirical evidence suggests that ETI represents one of the major problems for many organizations (Barak, Nissly, & Levin, 2001; Lawson Williams Consulting Group Limited, 2014; Romero & Cruthirds, 2009). For example, research suggests that employee turnover may lead to the increase in the costs of recruiting and training new of employees (Chen, Lin, & Lien, 2010; Lucy, David, Kathleen, & Claude, 2004). Similarly, Dube, Freeman, and Michael (2010) in their survey of California businesses between 2003 and 2008 reported that the overall costs of replacing a worker can be as high as \$4,000; \$2,000 for blue collar and manual labour workers, and as much as \$7,000 for professional and managerial employees. Furthermore, a recent anecdotal evidence has shown that in 2012, as much as 20,000 professionals, such as medical doctors and teachers from various universities and colleges have jet out of African continent for a better

paid job in Western countries, including United Kingdom, United States, and Canada, among others (Agency Reporter, 2012).

Various factors are associated with ETI. Theory and empirical studies have consistently shown that job satisfaction relates negatively with ETI (e.g., Blau, 1964; Carol & Richard, 2001; Khanin, Turel, & Mahto, 2012; Nadiri & Tanova, 2010; Tett & Meyer, 1993; Tschopp, Grote, & Gerber, 2014). However, little research has been conducted on the potential moderating effects of one or more socio-demographic variables on the relationship between job satisfaction and ETI (see Russ & McNeilly, 1995 for a notable exception). However, the study conducted by (Russ & McNeilly, 1995) is significantly different from the present study as the former mainly tested the moderating role of gender on the relationships between dimensions of satisfaction (e.g., supervisor, co-workers) and organisational commitment, while the focus of our study was to test the effect of the said moderator on the link between job satisfaction and ETI. Accordingly, the present study was designed to replicate and extend the findings of the previous research by exploring the moderating effect of gender on the relationship between job satisfaction and ETI. The remainder of this paper is organized in the following sections. In section 2 we reviewed the theory and literature linking job satisfaction and ETI, as well as the moderating role of gender on this relationship. In section 3, we described the proposed research methodology to be employed in the present study and finally conclusion was drawn in section 4.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Job satisfaction and employee-turnover intention

Job satisfaction has been defined as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (Locke, 1976, p. 1300). As noted earlier, prior studies have consistently demonstrated that when the characteristics of working environment satisfy the needs of employees, they are more likely to feel a greater sense of obligation to remain in their organizations (Blau, 1964; Bouckennooghe, Raja, & Butt, 2013; Carol & Richard, 2001; Hagedoorn, Van Yperen, Van De Vliert, & Buunk, 1999; Khanin et al., 2012; Nadiri & Tanova, 2010; Tett & Meyer, 1993). Specifically, Carol and Richard (2001) in a study conducted among 111 family employees from 70 family firms in the United States found that job satisfaction was negatively related to ETI. In the same vein, a study conducted by Bouckennooghe et al. (2013) among 321 employees in Lahore, Pakistan suggested that when employees perceive their jobs to be satisfying as expected, they may be more likely to remain in their jobs. Recently, Tschopp et al. (2014) reported in their longitudinal study that an increase in job satisfaction was more strongly related to a decrease in turnover intention among 255 employees in the German- and French-speaking parts of Switzerland. Thus, we advanced the following proposition:

P1: Job satisfaction relates negatively to employee-turnover intention.

2.2 Potential role of gender as a moderator variable

Although ETI may be engaged by both men and women, prior research demonstrates gender differences in employee-turnover intention (e.g., Lyness & Judiesch, 2001; Russ & McNeilly, 1995). Social role theory (Eagly, 1987) has been applied in previous studies to examine gender differences in ETI. Social role theory postulates that men and women tend to behave differently in exhibiting turnover intention (Eagly, 1987). Consistent with this theory, research suggests that women were more likely to leave their job than their men counterparts (Johnsrud & Heck, 1994; Zhou & Volkwein, 2004). Furthermore, prior research has examined gender as a moderator in studies regarding the antecedents and consequences of employee-

turnover intention (e.g., Hochwarter et al., 2001; Jiang, Liu, McKay, Lee, & Mitchell, 2012; Khalid et al., 2009; Van Hooft, Born, Taris, & van der Flier, 2005).

Specifically, in their meta-analytic investigation of 65 independent samples (N = 42,907), Jiang et al. (2012) found that the negative relationships between on-the-job embeddedness and turnover criteria were stronger in female-dominated samples than in male dominated samples. In another study, Khalid et al. (2009) found that the relationship between helping behavior and turnover intention is moderated by gender and this relationship was stronger for females than males. Theoretically, gender might moderate the relationship between job satisfaction and ETI for two possible reasons. Firstly, women are more likely to leave their job because they have weak attachments to the labour market (Chaudhury & Ng, 1992; Khalid et al., 2009) and “are paid less, promoted slowly and are less likely to reach the top ranks that are accorded power and authority” (Miki & Yuval, 2011, p. 412). Secondly, women are more likely to turnover because the level of family interference with work was found to be significantly higher in women compared to their men counterparts (Watai, Nishikido, & Murashima, 2008). Therefore, the following proposition is advanced:

P2: Gender will moderate the positive relationship between job satisfaction and employee-turnover intention, such that the relationship is stronger for women than for men.

On the basis of theories and extant empirical studies (Blau, 1964; Carol & Richard, 2001; Eagly, 1987; Jiang et al., 2012; Khalid et al., 2009; Khanin, Turel, & Mahto, 2012; Nadiri & Tanova, 2010; Tett & Meyer, 1993; Tschopp, Grote, & Gerber, 2014), we proposed a conceptual framework as depicted in Figure 1. The proposed conceptual framework depicts the relationship between job satisfaction and employee-turnover intention, as well as the potential moderating role of gender on this relationship.

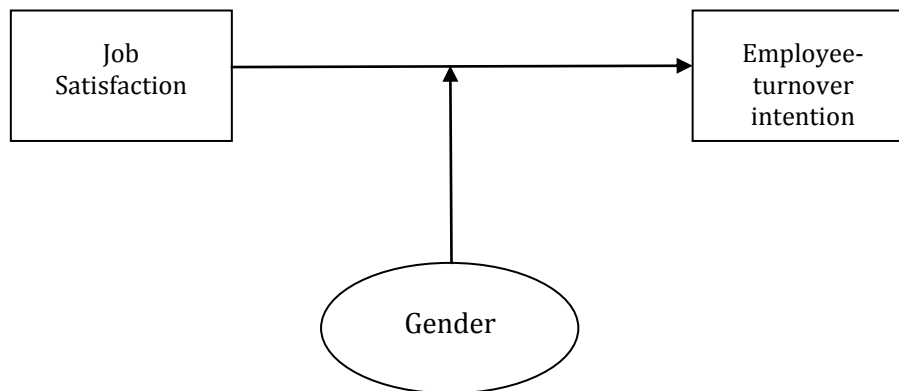


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

3. Proposed Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Research design and Analytical strategy

Given the costs associated with longitudinal research design, the present study will employ a cross-sectional research design in which the data were analysed and interpreted statistically, while drawing conclusions about the study's population at one point in time (Punch, 2005; Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Partial Least Squares path modeling in conjunction with SmartPLS software will be used to test the hypotheses is considered most appropriate in this study because of its estimation accuracy and high statistical power.

3.2 Proposed measures

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction will be assessed using a five-item from Overall Job Satisfaction Scale developed by Judge, Locke, Durham, and Kluger (1998). Sample items will be: "How well are you satisfied with your present job?" Ratings will be completed on 7-point Likert scale (1 = *completely dissatisfied* to 7 = *completely satisfied*).

Employee-turnover intention

ETI will be measured using a 6-item subscale of the exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect (EVLN) developed by Hagedoorn et al. (1999). Sample items will be: "Consider possibilities to change my present jobs". Responses to the scale will be completed on a 7-point Likert scale (1=*definitely not* to 7=*definitely yes*).

Socio-demographic variables

Age will be measured as ordinal variables, coded using 4-point Likert scale (1= 25 - 29 years to 4 = 40 years and above). Gender will be measured as a categorical variable (1 = *male*; 2 = *female*) and ethnicity is proposed to be treated as an ordinal variable, coded using 4-point Likert scale (1 = *Hausas* to 4 = *Others*).

4. Conclusion

Prior empirical and anecdotal evidence has argued that the employee-turnover intention represents one of the major problems for many organizations. In an attempt to understand the underlying causes of employee-turnover intention, researchers in the field of industrial-organizational psychology have suggested several factors. Prior research has consistently demonstrated that job satisfaction relates negatively with employee-turnover intention across different research context. The present study proposed to replicate and extend the findings of the prior research by exploring the moderating effect of gender on the relationship between job satisfaction and employee-turnover intention. The next stage is to collect empirical data from the field in order to validate the proposed conceptual framework, so that a valid conclusion would be empirically drawn.

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