

Employees' Turnover Intention: A Survey of Academic Staff of Selected Private Universities in Ondo State, Nigeria

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DOI: 10.29322/IJSRP.10.02.2020.p9837

<http://dx.doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.10.02.2020.p9837>

Abstract- Employees' retention has become a veritable weapon of competition among organisations globally. Thus, organisations that have an effective employees' retention policy would, no doubt, be able to minimise employees' turnover. It is not in doubt that private universities sub-sector of the educational sector, especially those in Ondo State, Nigeria, are no exemption. This study examined employees' turnover, causes, effects and remedies among academic staff of selected private universities in Ondo State, Nigeria. The study employed a survey research design. Primary data were obtained from the respondents from two selected private universities in Ondo state Nigeria: Elizade University, Ilara-mokin and Achievers University, Owo, through the administration of a well structured questionnaire. A total of 120 copies of questionnaire were administered on the respondents from the two selected private universities in Ondo State, Nigeria, in equal proportion. The logistic regression model was used to test the hypotheses set for the study. Findings from the study revealed that job dissatisfaction, selection policies, job security and career development have statistical significant effect on the turnover intentions of academic staff in Nigeria private universities, especially, in Ondo State. The study concluded that turnover could tarnish the university's reputation, lead to loss of morale of the remaining staff who may think that one of their valuable staff has left, high cost of valuable and precious time and money. It recommended that proprietors of private universities in Nigeria should discourage dissatisfaction as much as possible by investing in their employees through adequate rewards and attractive remuneration packages.

Index Terms- Turnover, turnover intention, job satisfaction, employees performance, employees turnover, private universities

I. INTRODUCTION

The strife by private universities to maintain and achieve competitive advantage over others (federal and state) has become a global phenomenon, especially, in Nigeria. It is no doubt that private university in Nigeria are in daunting competition not only with their fellow private colleagues but also with their public-owned (federal and state) counterparts. Employees' retention, like customers' retention among private universities has become a veritable competitive tail in Nigeria.

Among the first set of private universities approved by the federal government in 1999 were Igbinedion University, Okada, Babcock University, Ilisan Remo and Madonna University, Okija. However, Igbinedion University, Okada was the first licensed private university in Nigeria (Adeniyi, 2009). Achievers University, Owo, was licensed to commence operation in 2007 while Elizade University was established in 2013.

The process of admission of students into the private universities is not as tedious as it is obtainable in the state and federal universities in Nigeria. Consequently, admission seekers whose parents can afford to pay, have a better alternative to public schools. Private Universities in Nigeria are distinctly more expensive to attend, compared to public schools and there are quite some private schools that have fees going as much as four times the fee of some public schools.

Nigerian private universities are blessed with talented and highly dedicated workforces who are committed to the processes of the institutions where they find themselves. The workforce in any private university refers to the employees or staff of that university. In the actual sense, it is expected of any employee in the university to be productive, committed and loyal to the university until retirement. The reverse has always been the case in real life situation among academic staff of private universities. Most of these universities are characterised with employees' turnover, which poses a recruitment challenge to most of them.

Employee turnover is the rate at which employees leave an organization (Hedwiga, 2011). It is the rate at which employees leave a business enterprise (Hedwiga, 2011). It refers to the relative rate at which an organization gains or losses its employees (Marisoosay, 2009). Employees' turnover, in relation to private universities, is a measure of the length of time a private university's employees remain in the workforce of the university and how frequent the university has to replace its employees. When an employee leaves a university with or without a reason and such an employee is replaced, the process is known as employees' turnover. Although, every university experiences labour turnover, it is more pronounced among private universities.

Many of the owners of the private universities in Nigeria failed to realize the severe effect of turnover on the productivity and profitability of their universities. They believe that once an academic staff leaves their universities, they have a host of applicants whose curriculum vitae are piled up in their archive from

which fresh recruitment could be made. Some of them even believe that they have done them a favour employing them; as if they have no alternative job elsewhere. They quickly forgot that high turnover rate poses a strong and undesirable danger on the university, in terms of lost in profit, disruption of academic programs, disruption of students mentoring, cost of recruitment and selection, to mention but a few.

In literature, the issue of employee turnover has been given a great deal of attention. This is not surprising because of its implications on productivity, cost of production, employees' performance as well as organisational profitability (Edwin, Micah and John, 2015). However, despite these many studies, and the severe effect that employees' turnover pose on productivity, efficiency and job performance of a business organisation, very little or no study has been directed towards examining the causes, implications and possible remedies among the academic staff of Nigeria private universities. The present study found it imperative to bridge this gap in literature.

High turnover rate has always strong undesirable consequences including lost return on previous investment, disruption of research and teaching program, discontinuity of student mentoring, the monetary costs of recruiting a replacement, and the time of other faculty diverted in the hiring process High turnover rate has always strong undesirable consequences including lost return on previous investment, disruption of research and teaching program, discontinuity of student mentoring, the monetary costs of recruiting a replacement, and the time of other faculty diverted in the hiring process test of time in a highly competitive environment, the issue of employees' turnover must be addressed. Although, it may not be feasible for any organization to totally eliminate employees' turnover due to several reasons,

Research Questions

The following questions were addressed in order to establish the causes, effects and remedies of employees' turnover among academic staff of selected private universities in Ondo State, Nigeria:

- (i) What is the effect of job dissatisfaction on employees' turnover among academic staff in Ondo State private universities?
- (ii) Is there any effect of selection policies on the turnover intentions of academic staff in the selected private universities?
- (i) To what extent does the issues of job security and career progression affect turnover rate among academic staff in Ondo State private universities?

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad objective of the study is to examine employees' turnover, causes, effects and remedies among academic staff of selected private universities in Ondo State, Nigeria.

The study specifically sought to:

- (ii) Examine the effect of job dissatisfaction on employees' turnover in selected private universities in Ondo State, Nigeria

- (iii) Determine effect of selection policies on the turnover intentions of academic staff in the selected private universities.
- (iv) Investigate the extent to which the issues of job security and career progression affect turnover rate among academic staff in Ondo State private universities

Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant effect of job dissatisfaction on employees' turnover in the selected private universities in Ondo State, Nigeria.

Ho₂: Selection policies have no significant effect on the turnover intentions of academic staff in the selected private universities.

Ho₃: There is no significant effect of job security and career progression on turnover rate among academic staff in Ondo State private universities

III. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual Clarification

Employee's Turnover

Armstrong (2012) defined employee's turnover as the proportion of employees that leave an organization during a given time period. It is the voluntary and involuntary withdrawal of employees from the employment of an organization. It is the rotation of workers around the labour market and between firms, jobs and occupations (Abassi and Hollman, 2000). According to Chew (2004), it is the discontinuance of membership in an organization by the person who received monetary compensation from the organization. It can also be seen as the measure of the extent to which old employees leave an organization and new ones enter the service.

Types of Employee's Turnover

Armstrong (2012) classified employee turnover into two: voluntary turnover which occurs when an employee decides to end his/her relationship with the employer for personal or professional reasons (Kazi and Zedah, 2011), and involuntary turnover which is a movement across the membership boundary of an organization, which is not initiated by the employee (Bula, 2012). In most cases, the decision to leave an organization is associated with being dissatisfied with current job and also having attractive offers from other organizations.

Involuntary turnover is initiated by the organization and it occurs when the organization or employer requires employees to leave, when in the actual sense, the employees would prefer to stay. It also occurs when the employer decides to terminate the employment of a worker due to economic reasons or a poor fit between the employee and the organization (Edwin, Micah and John, 2015). The cost of employee turnover has become an issue in recent times because of its drain of operating profit of organizations (Paluku, 2016).

Effects of Employee's Turnover among Private Universities in Nigeria

Employee's turnover may lead result to the disruption of job performance by the existing members of the university because they may be demoralized as a result of the loss of valued

coworkers (Armstrong (2012). Employees' turnover can also mar academic programs in the sense that teaching and research may be disrupted until suitable replacements are made. Employee's turnover can also put the reputation of the university at stake in the face of the community. The costs of recruitment, hiring and selection associated with turnover are also enormous. Employee's turnover can also have a negative impact on the employees who leave the university, those who are left in the university and the university itself. It causes instability of service of the employees and also instability of employment of workforce. Employees who leave are deprived of the existing employment, high pay, bonus, leave and other facilities. No wonder, Paluku (2016) identifies employee turnover as a silent but effective profit killer.

Job Satisfaction

Satisfaction refers to the contentment experienced when a want or need is satisfied or a goal is achieved. It is the overall positive feelings people have about a university, whether as an employee, customer, parents or regulator. Job satisfaction is a pleasant feeling resulting from the perception that one's job fulfils or allows for the fulfillment of one's important job values (Edwin, Micah and John, 2015).

In the actual sense, employees exhibit this attitude when their work matches their needs and interests, when working conditions and rewards such as pay are satisfactory, when they like their co-workers, and when they have positive relationship with their supervisors (Ally, 2011). Every private university must strive to have satisfied and committed academic staff in order to be productive and profitable.

Employee Performance

Employee performance relates to the outcome of education; the extent to which a student and lecturer or institution has achieved their educational goals (Ally, 2011). Performance in relation to university education is the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved his short or long-term educational goals. It is the knowledge and skills that students have mastered in a subject or a course. It is basically a measure of how well students have performed in the various assessment items set for them based on some educational criteria determined by professional educators.

Causes of Employees' Turnover in Nigeria Private Universities

Studies have shown that factors such as salary, promotion and work environment, management style, nepotism, among others, are the likely causes of employees' turnover among academic staff in Nigeria private universities (Firth, David, Kathleen and Claude, 2015). Nwinyokpugi (2015) classified the factors that influence turnover intentions in universities into three: (i) external environmental (ii) individual factors and (iii) organisational factors. Nwinyokpugi (2015) opined that work environment could also influence employee turnover intentions. Hence, university management should take these factors into consideration in order to curb, if not eradicate, the menace of turnover among academic staff in their universities.

IV. THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study was pivoted on Herzberg Two Factor Theory which asserts that there are certain factors in the work place that can cause job satisfaction and a separate set of factors that can cause dissatisfaction all of which act independently of each other. The theory was developed by [psychologist Frederick Herzberg](#) in 1959. According to Herzberg (1959), individuals are not content with the satisfaction of lower-order needs at work; for example, those needs associated with minimum salary levels or safe and pleasant working conditions. Rather, individuals look for the gratification of higher-level psychological needs having to do with achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, and the nature of the work itself.

Herzberg added a new dimension to this theory by proposing a two-factor model of motivation, based on the notion that the presence of one set of job characteristics or incentives leads to worker satisfaction at work, while another and separate set of job characteristics leads to dissatisfaction at work. Thus, satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not on a continuum with one increasing as the other diminishes, but are independent phenomena. This theory is important to the present study because it suggests that to improve [job attitudes](#) and [productivity](#) among academic staff in Nigeria private universities, management must recognize and attend to both sets of characteristics and not assume that an increase in satisfaction leads to decrease in dissatisfaction.

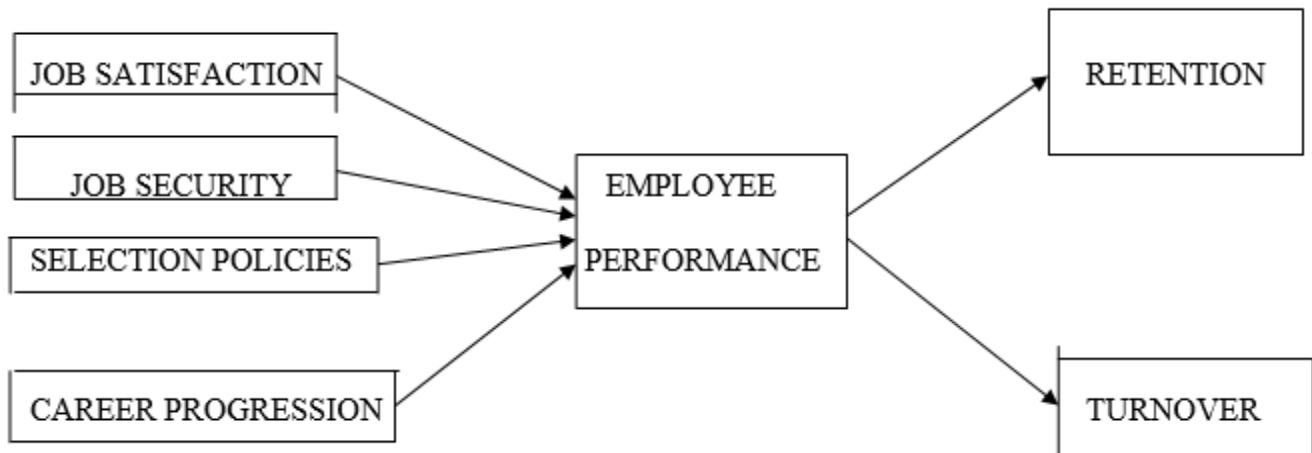
V. EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Previous studies on turnover intentions of employees have found a significant relationship between job satisfaction and employees' intention to leave an organization. The study by Bula (2012) found that job satisfaction is often associated with employee turnover, especially, voluntary turnover. However, for employees to voluntarily leave their present job, it is obvious that they would have had an intention to leave in their minds. Shaw, Duffy, Johnson and Lockhart (2005) state that job satisfaction may cause employees to make decisions to leave or terminate their present job.

Beam (2009) found a negative relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover intentions. This implies that high job satisfaction leads to low turnover. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs are less likely to quit than those who are dissatisfied with their jobs (Abassi and Hollman, 2000). However, as job satisfaction increases, intention to leave employment decreases (Bula, 2012). Abassi and Hollman (2000) posit that high job satisfaction will not of itself keep turnover intentions low, but it does seem to help reduce employee intentions to leave and turnover rate.

The study conducted by Beam (2009) reported no evidence of a significant relationship between job dissatisfaction and employee turnover intention. The findings from the study posited that dissatisfied employees sometimes never leave the organization. The reason is that some employees cannot see themselves working elsewhere, so they remain where they are regardless of how dissatisfied they feel.

FIGURE 1: FACTORS CAUSING EMPLOYEES' RETENTION OR TURNOVER



Source: Researcher’s Conceptualization, 2020.

VI. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a survey research design. Survey research design seeks to find answers to questions through the analysis of variable relationship (Best and Kahn, 1998). Primary data were obtained from the respondents from two selected private universities in Ondo state Nigeria: Elizade University, Ilara-mokin and Acievers University, Owo, through the administration of a well structured questionnaire. A total of 120 copies of questionnaire were administered on the respondents from the two selected private universities in Ondo State, Nigeria, in equal proportion. The logistic regression model was used to test the hypotheses set for the study.

Statistically, the logistic regression model was represented by the following equations:

$$\ln \left\{ \frac{\text{prob}(\text{turnover})}{1-\text{prob}(\text{turnover})} \right\} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Job Dissatisfaction} + \beta_2 \text{selection policies} + \beta_3 \text{job security} + \beta_4 \text{carrer progression}$$

Where; $\ln \left\{ \frac{\text{prob}(\text{turnover})}{1-\text{prob}(\text{turnover})} \right\}$ is called a logit and defined as the log of the odds that academic staff will leave a particular private university to the other.

$\beta_0, \beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ and β_4 , denote the coefficients of the logistic regression model. They measure how much the logit changes based on the values of the predictor variables associated to these coefficients.

Therefore, the hypotheses stated in the study were equivalently stated mathematically below

$$H_{01}: \beta_1 = 0 \text{ vs } \beta_1 \neq 0; H_{02}: \beta_2 = 0 \text{ vs } \beta_2 \neq 0.$$

VII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table1: The Logistic Regression to Test the Hypotheses

| Predictor Variable | Parameter Estimate | Standard Error | P-value |
|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------|
| Intercept | 1.426 | 0.210 | 0.0001 |
| Job Dissatisfaction (JD) | -0.174 | 0.056 | 0.0020 |
| Selection Policies (SP) | -0.234 | 0.061 | 0.0001 |
| Job Security (JS) | -0.110 | 0.063 | 0.0082 |
| Career Progression (CP) | 0.009 | 0.055 | 0.0086 |

Source: Computer Printout, 2020.

Significant at 0.05 levels

The logistic regression model is:

$$\ln = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Job Dissatisfaction} + \beta_2 \text{selection policies} + \beta_3 \text{job security} + \beta_4 \text{Career progression}$$

$$\ln = \beta_0 + \beta_1 JD + \beta_2 SP + \beta_3 JS + \beta_4 CP$$

$$\ln = 0.0001 + 0.002\beta_1 + 0.0001\beta_2 + 0.0086\beta_3 + 0.0082\beta_4$$

The p-value of the logistic regression model for the relationship between job dissatisfaction and employees’ turnover gave 0.002. This was less than the significance value (0.05). Hence, it was concluded that job dissatisfaction has statistical significant effect on the turnover intentions of academic staff in Ondo State private universities. The finding was supported by Abassi and Hollman, 2000 that if there is considerable job dissatisfaction, there is likely to be high employee intentions to leave the employment of such organization. However, the study

failed to agree with the assertion by Beam (2009) that there is no significant relationship between job dissatisfaction and employee turnover intention and that dissatisfied employees sometimes never leave the organization.

The logit regression for the relationship between selection policies and employees' turnover was 0.0001. This was less than the significance level (0.05). It was concluded therefore, that selection policies significantly affect the turnover intentions of academic staff in the selected private universities.

The result of the logistic regression for the effect of job security on the turnover intentions of academic staff showed that the p-value for job security (0.0086) was less than the significance level (0.05). Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis that job security has significantly impacted academic staff to leave their jobs for another was sustained.

The p-value of the logistic regression model for the relationship between career progression and turnover intentions of staff was 0.0082. This was less than the significance value (0.05). The null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between career progression and employees' turnover was rejected. It was concluded that career progression has statistical significant effect on the turnover intentions of academic staff in Ondo State private universities.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that a strong relationship exists between job dissatisfaction, selection policies, job security, career progression and turnover intentions of academic staff in the selected private universities. Frequent turnover rate could tarnish the university's reputation and lower the morale of the remaining staff who may think that one of their valuable staff has left. The study concluded therefore that management of private universities in Nigeria need to put in place mechanisms that will go a long way in reducing if not eliminating employees' turnover so as to increase productivity and profitability of their ventures.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the study recommends that proprietors of private universities in Nigeria should discourage dissatisfaction as much as possible by investing in their employees through adequate rewards and attractive remuneration packages. It also recommends that employers should perfect their selection process by adopting a proper method of selection of staff. It is also recommended that there should be career development opportunities for growth and promotion within the university. Employees are ready to stay longer with an employer who can make available to them opportunities to be promoted to higher and more challenging positions. The study recommends further that training and development which provide staff with specific skills to perform better should also be encouraged among the academic staff of these private universities.

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