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**Correlates and Predictors of Employee Turnover Intentions in the Postal
Industry: A Case Study of the Omaha Hub of United Parcel Service**

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Sociology/Anthropology

And the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

University of Nebraska at Omaha

By

Carla Y. Garay

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Correlates and Predictors of Employee Turnover Intentions in the Postal Industry:
A Case Study of the Omaha Hub of United Parcel Service

Carla Y. Garay, MA

University of Nebraska, 2002

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The purpose of this study was to identify the correlates and predictors of turnover intentions among manual laborers. The study was exploratory and used a modification of the Rusbult and Farrell (1983) investment model as its theoretical framework. Simple correlation analysis uncovered no significant relationships between the fifteen independent variables and turnover intention, with one exception; there was a significant correlation between intent to retire and turnover intention. Therefore, further analysis was conducted by testing each independent variable against each item of turnover intentions. The independent variables that were found to be significantly correlated with the items of turnover intentions were then entered into a regression analysis to test for predictive potential. Of the independent variables that were included in the regression analysis, three emerged as predictors of various items of turnover intentions at the .05 level of significance: Alternatives,

distributive justice, and active pursuit of degree. Of those, *alternatives* is the only one that showed a pattern of predictability.

The Rusbult and Farrell model posits that job costs and job rewards lead to satisfaction which, along with alternatives and investments, predict commitment, of which turnover is a function. However, the present study found, to the contrary, that among manual laborers, job costs, job rewards, job satisfaction, and investment had no effect on turnover intent. Instead, the variable *perception of alternatives* was the only one that predicted turnover intentions.

One reason these findings differ from those of previous research may be the fact that turnover literature has largely overlooked the category of manual laborers, which is structurally dissimilar from the traditionally studied categories of workers.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The notion that turnover always has negative consequences for organizations has come under fire (Dalton et al. 1981). Indeed researchers point out that turnover can have positive consequences, such as the “infusion of new knowledge and technology” through new employees, the replacement of “entrenched but maladaptive company policies,” and the adoption of novel strategies (Hom and Griffeth 1995:28). Furthermore, turnover

can have a cleansing effect for it makes room for new employees whose abilities and temperaments better fit the organization’s needs. Other employees may have reached a plateau of substandard performance, or developed such negative attitudes toward the organization that their continued presence is likely to have harmful effects on the motivation and productivity of their co-workers (Cascio 1987:21).

Particularly applicable in the question of turnover, is the saying “Where one sits determines where one stands.” For how one regards the incidence of turnover is determined by the quality of the employee in question. For example, to the receiving organization, the arrival of an employee who shows promise of bringing new knowledge and ideas to the company reflects the positive consequences of employee turnover. But from the perspective of the employee’s former employer, the

departure of an innovative, skilled, knowledgeable employee could represent a costly and extremely disappointing loss. Therefore, the benefits of turnover derived by one organization may represent a commensurate disadvantage to another.

Thus the perceived benefits of turnover should be cautiously regarded as positive outcomes. To illustrate, the departure of employees who have developed negative attitudes might be viewed as a positive outcome, when, in fact, it should alert the organization to a larger problem. It may well be that the organization has lost a valuable employee for avoidable reasons and that the interventions which might have resolved the employee's concerns would also prevent the development of other similar occurrences which have not yet materialized. Therefore, while it can be generally agreed upon that turnover can be beneficial, even its benefits point to the need for continued examinations into the negative consequences of turnover.

Continued examinations into the causes and correlates of turnover are especially warranted in the light of current economic trends such as low employee tenure, downsizing, and downward mobility. Regarding employee tenure, for instance, in February 2000, wage and salary workers had been with their current employer an average of 3.5 years. Furthermore, more than a quarter "of all workers had been with their current employer for 12 months or less" (US Bureau of Labor Statistics 2000). Also significant is the fact that in February 2000, "4.5 percent of employed wage and salary workers had actively looked for a job in the prior three months..." (Meisenheimer 2000:3). These figures depict a largely mobile labor force. And they represent high costs for both organizations and individuals.

Many of the effects of turnover are detrimental to organizations' attempts to maximize efficiency, profits and productivity. In fact, Peskin (1973) observes that "from a purely economic standpoint, it usually costs more to terminate an employee than to hire one" (P. 69). The expenses involved in hiring a new worker include separation costs such as exit interviews and the administrative functions associated with terminating the employee (Cascio 1987). Also among the termination expenses are the costs of lost production between the time of the leaver's departure and the hiring of the replacement, missed production schedules, the dissolution of cohesive work teams, increased overtime for which organizations must pay a premium (Peskin 1973), and replacement costs such as advertising, job fairs, interviews, and administrative functions (Cascio 1987).

Having found a replacement, employers face additional expenditure for training in the form of orientation, tours, formal instruction programs, and on-the-job training, which results in decreased productivity for the organization (Peskin 1973). Other "breaking-in" costs include the substandard work performed by inexperienced replacements (Peskin 1973), which can further exacerbate the costs of turnover if customers become dissatisfied with the organization's impaired quality of service and become less inclined to do business with the company (Hom and Griffeth 1995). The costs of turnover then expand to include the loss of customers and opportunities for profit. Even among companies that are in the process of downsizing, turnover poses a potential threat. Employers who are trimming their workforces down to a

minimum may run the risk that unexpected levels of voluntary turnover will diminish their ability to maintain productivity at the desired level.

While turnover has serious implications for organizations, its potential effect on individuals may be equally devastating. Even voluntary job changers who leave a company for a “better” position may find it necessary to sacrifice some of their accumulated investments, such as seniority. In the current downsizing, “last-hired-first-fired” economy, even the voluntary job changer may inadvertently risk his or her economic security. The risk is intensified by the fact that in the last two decades particularly, “downward mobility [has] emerged as a high-profile, savage social trend” (Perrucci and Wysong 1999: 49) and economic reality for all but those in the upper 20% income percentile (Braun 1997; Perrucci and Wysong 1999). This means that the job changer may face the “possibility of disillusionment and career regression” (Gardner 1986:3) with potentially devastating effects on his or her economic security and stability, his or her income capital, and, by extension, even his or her social status. Even when turnover is advantageous to the worker, he or she may still bear some costs, such as disruptions of a well-established support system, family relationships, and the career plans and progress of a spouse (Gardner 1986).

Thus the current economic trends of low employee tenure, downsizing, and downward mobility coupled with the heavy costs of turnover, suggest that despite the proliferation of studies on turnover, further investigation into its causes and correlates is warranted.

The present research is an exploratory study that focuses on manual laborers. It is regarded as exploratory on the basis of two observations. First, manual laborers are overlooked in turnover literature. In turnover literature such as Agho et al. (1993), Mobley et al. (1978), Miller et al. (1979), Somers (1996), Michaels and Spector (1982), Mueller and Price (1990), and Lawler and Hall (1970), the traditional categories of people studied are hospital and mental health center employees, National Guardsmen, and occasionally scientists. The comparatively sparse literature that focuses on manual laborers (such as Novek 1992, Hensel 2000, and Knowles and Moore 1997) predominantly addresses health and safety issues or the impact of technology on industries that employ them.

It may be that the lack of interest in manual labor stems from the evolution of the American economy to a service economy. However, with the shift to a *high-tech* service economy has come new demands for services that require manual labor. For instance, the advent of online shopping for an increasing range of consumer items, including groceries, books, clothing, jewelry, and household items, has produced a “booming business for express shippers and transportation companies” (King 1999:24). To make the most of electronic commerce, package delivery companies have expanded their services to include warehousing, inventory management, packing, shipping, and tracking an array of products from Web-based retailers (King 1999, Frontline Solutions 2001, Murphy 2000). The changing nature of American consumer habits thus warrants further investigation into the variables

that influence the billion-dollar postal industry and the manual laborers who are its backbone.

This study may also be regarded as exploratory because of the unique turnover challenges that distinguish organizations that are dependent on manual laborers from those that are not. To illustrate, in February 2000, wage and salary workers, in general, had been with their current employer an average of 3.5 years (US Bureau of Labor Statistics 2000). However, in the present study, the Human Resources Manager at United Parcel Service reports the highest level of turnover among manual laborers at that organization occurs between 15 days and one month. That is, turnover for them occurs after the majority of the recruitment and “breaking in” expenses have already been incurred but before the benefits of a fully trained employee can be realized. Bills (1999) reports a similar turnover pattern among fast food workers. Thus, it is conceptually justifiable to explore the possibility that manual laborers exhibit patterns of turnover that differ from those of the traditional categories studied in turnover literature and to conclude that exploratory analysis of turnover among manual laborers is warranted.

This study will employ a modified traditional turnover model as an initial exploration of its applicability to incidences of turnover among manual laborers. However, to avoid one of the shortcomings of traditional models, it is necessary to address the issue of low associations between voluntary turnover and its suspected antecedents and determinants (Dalton 1981). One reason for the low associations, according to Dalton et al. may be the fact that researchers have traditionally studied

turnover using a voluntary/involuntary dichotomy. They suggest that *voluntary turnover* may not be a homogenous category.

Dalton et al. (1981) recommend a further expanded taxonomy that distinguishes between functional and dysfunctional turnover. The following table illustrates their taxonomy:

Table 1: *Dysfunctional/Functional Classification of Turnover by Quality of Employee*

Individual's Evaluation of Organization	High-Quality Employee	Low-Quality Employee
No initiation of voluntary turnover	Employee remains	Employee fired
Initiation of voluntary turnover	Employee quits— <i>Dysfunctional turnover</i>	Employee quits— <i>Functional turnover</i>

(Dalton 1981)

According to this taxonomy, then, dysfunctional turnover is a category of voluntary turnover in which "the individual wants to leave the organization, but the organization prefers to retain the individual... and functional turnover is the category in which the individual wants to leave the organization" and the organization regards his/her leaving as beneficial to the organization (Dalton 1981).

In their taxonomy, Hom and Griffeth (1995) underscore the necessity of distinguishing incidences of turnover that are avoidable from those that are unavoidable. Research has found little attitudinal difference between employees who

stay with their organizations and those who exit for unavoidable reasons such as following a spouse who must relocate. However, there is a significant attitudinal difference between those categories and people who leave for avoidable reasons (Abelson 1987). Therefore, failure to distinguish between the two types of leavers may understate the validity of traditional turnover models and lead to improper turnover intervention efforts (Hom and Griffeth 1995).

Hom and Griffeth (1995) consequently classify turnover using four categories: (1) Voluntary Unavoidable: cases in which an employee who would otherwise stay, follows a relocating spouse, for example; (2) Voluntary Avoidable: cases in which employees leave because of problems with supervisors, etc. This category refers to cases in which an employee leaves *willingly* for reasons which might have been resolved through intervention; (3) Involuntary Avoidable as in the case of firing. These are cases in which an employee leaves *unwillingly* for reasons that might have been resolved and (4) Involuntary Unavoidable, as in the case of death.

While Dalton et al. agree that the avoidable/unavoidable dichotomy is meaningful, they suggest viewing it cautiously. They explain that

there is no particular reason to believe that employees accurately report their reason for leaving. Certainly in some cases it would be easier for employees to say that they were leaving to return to school, for example, when in fact they simply do not like the job. Employees also may not wish to "burn their

bridges behind them. Obviously, reasons for leaving stated without care may result in a recommendation not to rehire (1981:170).

That is, the alleged reason for leaving may be classified as unavoidable when, in fact, the actual reason *was* controllable. Therefore, Dalton's caution, among other supports, buttresses the value of focusing on employee turnover *intentions* rather than focusing on turnover itself. It suggests that interventions implemented at some point prior to actual turnover might prevent a valued employee from leaving and thus becoming a false instance of unavoidable, dysfunctional turnover. Given the heavy costs associated with turnover, it is more advantageous to prevent it than to minimize its damage. This is because once turnover has occurred, its costs are inevitable. It is, therefore, in the best interest of an organization to focus on turnover *intentions* so that interventional processes can be employed to avert potential dysfunctional turnover and its consequences.

Mobley (1982) and Gardner (1986) accentuate the virtues of focusing on turnover intentions rather than on turnover itself by claiming that, both conceptually and empirically, intention to quit is one of the best predictors of turnover at the individual level (Mobley 1982, Gardner 1986). Based on the contentions of previous studies such as Abelson (1987), Dalton et al. (1981), Mobley (1982) and Gardner (1986) that highlighted the significance of understanding turnover intentions, this study focuses on employee intentions toward dysfunctional turnover that may arise from avoidable causes. This study is not intended to examine turnover resulting from movements within a firm's internal labor market (FILM); turnover decisions of those

who work without pay, such as volunteers and some interns (Hom and Griffeth 1995); or other unavoidable situations. Hence, a slightly modified version of the commonly-used definition of turnover (see Mobley 1982) is used in this study: Turnover is the *dysfunctional and avoidable* "cessation of membership in an organization by an individual who received monetary compensation from the organization" (Mobley 1982:10).

Based on this definition, the objective of this study is to identify the correlates and predictors of employee turnover intentions. To meet this objective, this research will answer the following questions: Among manual laborers,

1. is there a significant relationship between *job satisfaction* and turnover intentions?
2. is there a significant relationship between employees' perception of *procedural justice* and turnover intentions?
3. is there a significant relationship between employees' *perception of distributive justice* and turnover intentions?
4. is there a significant relationship between employees' perception of *job rewards* and turnover intentions?
5. is there a significant relationship between employees' perception of *job costs* and turnover intentions?
6. is there a significant relationship between employees' *job investment* and turnover intentions?

7. is there a significant relationship between employees' *perception of alternatives* and turnover intentions?
8. is there a significant difference between *men and women* in turnover intentions?
9. is there a significant difference in turnover intentions between those who are *pursuing a degree* and those who are not?
10. is there a significant difference in turnover intentions by pre-job intent?
11. is there a significant difference in turnover intentions between those who intend to retire within three years and those who do not?
12. is there a significant relationship between *age* and turnover intentions?
13. is there a significant relationship between employees' *tenure* at the company and turnover intentions?
14. is there a significant relationship between employees' *pay* and turnover intentions?
15. is there a significant relationship between *educational level completed* and turnover intentions?
16. What are the variables that predict turnover intentions among manual laborers?

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Job Satisfaction

Many have set out to identify and explain the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover (Rusbult and Farrell 1983; Agho et al. 1993; Hendrix et al. 1999; Mobley et al. 1978, Miller et al. 1979, Brooke et al. 1988, Blau and Boal 1989, Bannister and Griffeth 1986; Hellman 1997). However, the plethora of research on the subject is fraught with contradictions, and thus no definite answer regarding the relationship of these two variables.

These contradictions may be the result of the fact that there has also been little consensus in how satisfaction is defined. Most research assumes a common understanding of what job satisfaction is and fails to define it at all. Research which does define job satisfaction provides disparate definitions. Agho et al. (1993), for example, define job satisfaction as simply the “extent to which employees like their work” (1007). Hendrix et al. (1999) provide a more detailed definition:

The measure of intrinsic job satisfaction included how satisfied the participant was with: the challenge from their work, the job as a whole, feeling of importance from work, variety of things done in job, feeling of accomplishment from work, the work done in the job and amount of interest in the job...Extrinsic job satisfaction...measured how satisfied the employee

was with: the benefits received, pension/retirement, health care benefits, and job security (P. 620).

Further complicating the question of definition is the fact that what Hendrix et al. (1999) classify as extrinsic job satisfaction is measured in other research as separate variables. For instance, in Rusbult and Farrell (1983), pension/retirement could be the operational definition for the variable *investment*; and benefits or job security, depending on how they were defined, could be operational definitions for the variable *job rewards*. Therefore, it is by no means certain that most studies have been measuring the same phenomenon, which may in part explain the disparity of findings in the job satisfaction-turnover relationship.

Mobley et al. (1978) originally found that job satisfaction has no significant effect on turnover. Miller et al. (1979) corroborated these findings. Rather than influencing actual turnover, it was found that the effect of job satisfaction was on thinking of quitting and on intentions (Mobley et al. 1978, Miller et al. 1979, Brooke et al. 1988, Blau and Boal 1989, Bannister and Griffeth 1986). In fact, Hellman (1997) reported that the relationship between job satisfaction and intent to leave “implies that every unit of decrease in job satisfaction reflects approximately a one-half standard deviation increase in intent to leave” (P. 685).

However, contrary to the finding that job satisfaction has no significant effect on turnover, Somers, who used survival analysis techniques in his study, found that “job satisfaction was negatively related to the likelihood of leaving over time” (Somers 1996, P. 323). His findings corroborated those of Darden et al. (1987) who

had also previously used survival analysis techniques. These results are consistent with Locke's (1976) review in which he observed that studies consistently recorded a negative simple correlation between employee turnover and job satisfaction, though the relationship is not a strong one, generally less than .40. Illustrating the contradictory nature of the findings, Mobley et al. (1978) found no significant effect of job satisfaction on turnover but Mobley et al. (1979) found a negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover.

Despite the disparities of definition and of the satisfaction-withdrawal relationship, job satisfaction has been found to be increased by work group cohesion, task identity (Mueller and Price 1990), distributive justice, work motivation, and positive affectivity (Agho et al. 1993:1020), age, perceived task characteristics, and confirmed expectancies (Michaels and Spector 1982:57). It was decreased by an open labor market environment and routinization (Agho et al. 1993).

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment has also been a favorite variable in research that attempts to explain worker turnover. And like job satisfaction, organizational commitment has acquired various definitions. Mueller and Price (1990), for instance, define commitment simply as loyalty. DeCotiis and Summers (1987) define it as "The extent to which an individual accepts and internalizes the goals and values of an organization and views his or her role in terms of its contributions to those goals and values, apart from any personal instrumentalities that may attend to his or her contributions" (P. 448). Also, Rusbult and Farrell (1983) refer to

commitment as “the likelihood that an individual will stick with a job and feel psychologically attached to it, whether it is satisfying or not” (P. 430). Kiyak and Namazi’s view of commitment (1997), excludes any overt components of psychological attachment, and defines commitment as “the likelihood that the employee will or will not seek another position that provides more favorable conditions than the current job” (P. 225). Clearly, definitions lie on a spectrum that ranges from those that reflect “congruence between personal and organizational goals and values,” (Kacmar and Carlson 1999: 976) to those that view commitment as the employee’s strength of involvement in the organization, to those that describe “an exchange of behavior for valued rewards” (Kacmar and Carlson 1999: 976).

As with job satisfaction, the result has been a blurring of the distinction between commitment and other variables and of the relationship of commitment to other variables, such as job involvement, thought to be correlated with turnover. Of particular interest is the relationship between commitment and the variable *turnover intentions*. Indeed, a number of researchers have noted the overlap between the two constructs (Mobley et al. 1979; Porter et al. 1974; Michaels and Spector 1982; Stone-Romero, 1994; Kacmar and Carlson 1999). This overlap is clear in the way that the two constructs have been operationalized. Rusbult and Farrell (1983), in measuring the commitment criterion included the item, “How likely is it that you will quit this job in the near future” (P. 433). Whereas Kiyak and Namazi (1997) assessed intent to leave through responses to a similar question: “Taking everything into consideration, how likely is it that you will try to find another job within the next

year” (P. 232). Some researchers have regarded commitment as an indicator of turnover intentions (Price 1977; Price and Mueller 1981; Kiyak and Namazi 1997), where others have regarded it as a component of turnover intentions (Koch and Steers 1978). Kiyak and Namazi (1997), assert that the absence of commitment is “best assessed by determining an employee’s intent to leave a job” (P. 226). And in fact, intent to leave is the operational definition used for commitment in their study.

Overall, research has found that commitment is antecedent to actual turnover. Despite the lack of consensus on the definition, evidence consistently suggests a significant, negative relationship between commitment and actual turnover (Blau and Boal 1989; Vandenberg et al. 1994; Balfour and Wechsler 1996; Kacmar and Carlson 1999; Kiyak and Namazi 1997, Michaels and Spector 1982, Dailey and Kirk 1992).

Many variables have been found to influence organizational commitment itself. Among the demographic variables are the positive predictor, age, (Dunham et al. 1994) gender, and marital status, with women and married employees frequently reporting higher levels of commitment (Mathieu and Zajac 1990; Grusky 1966; Angle and Perry 1983; Blau and Boal 1989; Cook and Wall 1980; Green et al. 1996; Luthans et al. 1987; McFarlin and Sweeney 1992). Other variables that have been found to predict commitment include job satisfaction (Dailey and Kirk 1992; Williams and Hazer 1986), distributive justice (Kacmar and Carlson 1999, McFarlin and Sweeney 1992, Hendrix et al. 1998), procedural justice (Folger and Konovsky 1989), work schedule flexibility and supervisor work-family support (Aryee et al.

1998), and positive relationships between supervisors and subordinates (Kacmar and Carlson 1999). Additionally, higher rewards and poorer quality job alternatives also encourage commitment (Rusbult and Farrell 1983). The results of Rusbult and Farrell's study (1983) further suggest that investment size and job costs also impact commitment but that their influence increases over time from no substantial influence initially to "an increasingly powerful impact" (P. 436).

Investments

Evidence suggests that commitment "exerts a reasonably powerful impact on job turnover" (Farrell and Rusbult 1981). In fact, although there is no consensus on the question, some studies have found commitment to be a better predictor of turnover than satisfaction (Rusbult and Farrell 1983; Porter et al. 1976; Porter et al. 1974; Koch and Steers 1978). Commitment, in turn, is theorized to be the product of an employee's "side bets" (Becker 1960). That is, the employee has an investment in the organization because other interests, which were originally extraneous to his/her employment, are significantly impacted by work-related decisions he or she has made. Consequently, the person finds his/her future activity constrained by his/her employment. This sense of constraint can result from (1) cultural expectations: for example, an expectation to hold a job for a certain period of time before moving on to another, thus avoiding the reputation of a "job hopper;" (2) impersonal bureaucratic arrangements, like pension funds that may be lost when an employee terminates; (3) individual adjustments to social positions, as in cases where an employee becomes proficient in a job whose skills are not readily

transferred; and (4) the wish to “save face” as when people constrain their activity so as not to be incongruent with the front they have presented.

Although Becker’s work (1960) is often quoted in the study of commitment, Farrell and Rusbult (1981) have observed that research on commitment generally studies the impact of abstract theoretical constructs (like side bets) on commitment, but does not provide a general, predictive theory. Farrell and Rusbult’s aim (1981), therefore, was to outline such a theory, which they termed the investment model. In applying this theory, Farrell and Rusbult (1981) found that investment size is not significantly correlated with satisfaction, but that it is significantly correlated with commitment.

Distributive and Procedural Justice

In keeping with suggestions from Mobley (1977, 1978) and Porter and Steers (1973), the study of worker turnover has evolved from repeated replications of the job satisfaction-withdrawal relationship to a study of the withdrawal decision process in which intermediate steps hypothesized to lead to worker turnover are being examined. In their attempts to develop a comprehensive model of turnover, researchers have only recently begun to turn serious attention to distributive and, particularly, procedural justice as factors predictive of turnover (Hendrix et al. 1998; Dailey and Kirk 1992; Folger and Konovsky 1989). Now, studies have found that job satisfaction is “highly sensitive to...organizational systems of fairness...” (Dailey and Kirk 1992:311), and that “forms of justice appear to be stronger predictors of intent to quit than core work attitudes” (Dailey and Kirk 1992:314)

Distributive justice “addresses employees’ concerns about the fairness of managerial decisions relative to the distribution of outcomes such as pay, promotions, etc” (Dailey and Kirk 1992:307). This definition is based on a perception of fairness that employees develop by measuring their input/output ratios against those of their co-workers (Adams 1965). *Procedural justice* refers to employees’ perceptions of fairness regarding *how* such decisions (i.e. managerial decision regarding the distribution of pay, promotions, etc) are made. Procedural justice is conceptualized in two forms—feedback and planning (Dailey and Kirk 1992).

Dailey and Kirk (1992) found that, although they tend to increase together, distributive justice and procedural justice are indeed two distinct concepts. And, the two forms of justice have differential effects. For instance, pay satisfaction was found to be influenced more by distributive justice than by procedural justice (Folger and Konovsky 1989; Agho et al. 1993). Moreover, distributive justice has been found to have a direct effect on turnover (Hendrix et al. 1989).

Procedural justice in its two forms has been found to be modestly but significantly related to *intent* to turnover (Dailey and Kirk 1992), and has also been positively related to group performance, that is, the quality and quantity of a work group’s output (Hendrix et al. 1998). Also influenced by procedural justice are employees’ commitment to the organization and trust in their supervisors (Folger and Konovsky 1989). The findings of Robbins et al. (2000) are consistent with Folger

and Konovsky's (1989) results regarding the relationship between procedural justice and commitment.

Robbins et al. (2000) further refined the concept of procedural justice making a distinction between instrumental and noninstrumental procedural justice constructs. Instrumental procedural justice focuses on "employee perceptions about formal procedures that would directly affect outcomes (i.e. the bases for promotions and pay raises)" (P. 514). It was operationalized by assessing employee's perceptions of the way performance evaluations were conducted and the way pay raises and promotions were determined. This component, thus, embodies the definition of procedural justice advanced by Dailey and Kirk (1992). The other component proposed by Robbins et al. (2000), noninstrumental procedural justice, assesses "aspects of interpersonal treatment" (P. 514). This was operationalized by assessing the employees' perception of supervisory support and quality of treatment by the supervisor. Interpersonal treatment is a variable that appears to have been largely overlooked in the literature but which is plausible as an antecedent to turnover or turnover intentions.

Much of the literature focuses on those variables that procedural justice impacts. However, perceptions of procedural fairness has been shown to be enhanced by employee participation in pay design (Miceli and Lane 1991) and by equal opportunity perceptions (Witt 1991). Equal participation in pay design "is consistent with a 'fair process effect,' wherein people feel committed to outcomes they chose" (Hom and Griffeth 1995:225). Regarding equal opportunity perceptions, Witt (1991)

found, that for workers “whose effort depends on what the organization gives them”, equal opportunity perceptions “were strongly related to job satisfaction and procedural justice perceptions” (P. 432). This finding, however, did not hold true for workers “whose attitudes and behaviors were more independent of organizational reinforcement” (Witt 1991:433).

Alternatives

Findings on the relationship between alternative jobs and turnover are inconsistent. Armknecht and Early (1972) have suggested that economic conditions are closely related to voluntary terminations. Most frequently, researchers examine this connection by measuring “perception of alternatives.” Unlike the variable *commitment*, *alternatives* was one of the variables employed in Mobley’s (1977, 1978) classic research on turnover, and yet *alternatives* appears to have been given considerably less attention by researchers.

Mobley et al. (1978) found that the “probability of finding an acceptable alternative contribute[s] to eliciting *thoughts* of quitting” but not *intent* to quit (P. 412). However, Lambert et al. (2001) came to the conclusion opposite that of Mobley et al. (1978), reporting that alternatives *do* have an effect on turnover intent, whereas Michaels and Spector (1982) and Dalessio et al. (1986) could not confirm the significance of alternatives in the turnover process. And Miller et al. (1979) reported that the variable *alternatives* is positively related to the *turnover process*.

While there exists great disparity in research that attempts to link alternatives to the turnover process, examinations of other variables influenced by alternatives

produce more consistent results. For example, Farrell and Rusbult (1981) and Agho et al. (1993) found that alternatives have a significant, negative effect on satisfaction. Similarly, job commitment was predicted by alternatives (Farrell and Rusbult 1981; Rusbult and Farrell 1983).

Job Rewards and Costs

Aside from research based on the investment model (Rusbult 1980), *job rewards* and *job costs* appear relatively infrequently in studies of turnover. Perhaps this is because the relationship between these two variables seems too commonsensical to warrant much interest. Instead, a great deal of research has been directed toward discovering the causes and antecedents of *job satisfaction* and *commitment*. However, Farrell and Rusbult (1981) assert that *job satisfaction*, which they found to be indirectly correlated with turnover, is “primarily a simple function of the rewards and costs associated with the job,” and *job commitment* is a “function of rewards, costs, investments, and alternatives” (Farrell and Rusbult 1981: 80).

Rewards, as measured by researchers, include financial incentives (Lambert et al. 2001), high pay, autonomy, and variety (Rusbult and Farrell 1983), prestige and participation (Farrell and Rusbult 1981). *Costs* include unexpected variations in workload, numerous deadlines, inadequate resources, and unfair promotion practices (Rusbult and Farrell 1983).

Lambert et al. (2001) found that financial rewards specifically, though mostly indirect in their effect, also have direct effects on intent to turnover. In fact, other research concurs, observing that two of the major predictor variables of turnover are

affected by rewards and costs. *Job satisfaction* is consistently found to be correlated with reward and cost values (Agho et al. 1993; Rusbult and Farrell 1983; Dailey and Kirk 1992). In fact, Farrell and Rusbult (1981) asserted that “job satisfaction [is] *best predicted by reward and cost values*” (P. 92; *emphasis added*). Job commitment is also significantly correlated with rewards and costs (Farrell and Rusbult 1981; Rusbult and Farrell 1983).

Costs seem to receive even less discussion than rewards. Perhaps it is assumed that costs will have the direct opposite effect of rewards. Rusbult and Farrell’s (1983) finding that greater job rewards and lower job costs induce greater employee satisfaction and commitment is consistent with intuition. However, questions remain as to how job rewards and job costs relate *to each other* in affecting satisfaction and commitment in instances where an employee’s job is characterized by high job rewards *and* high costs. Furthermore, the assumption that the effect of job costs on satisfaction, commitment, and turnover will be commensurately opposite that of job rewards is also questionable. It would appear, then, that although the sparse discussion on job rewards and costs is consistent, there is room for greater development and explanation of their influence on turnover intentions.

Turnover Intentions

While understanding the causes and antecedents of worker turnover has for years been the topic of interest in many studies, intent to turnover has also emerged as a dependent variable. Apart from the fact that this emergence is plausible based

on qualitative assessment, and often, practically expedient, evidence suggests the “importance of intent in predicting behavior” (Tett and Meyer 1993:261).

Studies that have used intent to turnover as the dependent variable, have consistently found that intention is the direct and immediate precursor of worker turnover (Dalessio et al. 1986; Miller et al. 1979; Mueller and Price 1990; Tett and Meyer 1993; Hendrix et al. 1998; Mobley et al. 1978; Kiyak and Namazi 1997). Interestingly, there is also a good deal of consensus regarding the impact of the two much-studied independent variables—commitment and satisfaction. Research suggests, for instance, that while satisfaction has no direct effect on turnover, it does affect turnover intentions (Mobley et al. 1978; Tett and Meyer 1993; Hellman 1997). Empirical evidence indicates that, although commitment is significantly and negatively related to turnover intentions” (Aryee et al. 1998: 80), there is a stronger correlation between satisfaction and turnover intentions than between commitment and turnover intentions (Tett and Meyer 1993; Lambert et al. 2001).

Mueller and Price (1990) supported the hypothesized causal ordering in which satisfaction influenced commitment, which then influenced intent. This finding, however, appears contradictory to Rusbult and Farrell’s (1983) assertion, “it appears that the most important process of change influencing turnover decisions is the process of declining commitment” (P. 437). This finding is buttressed by those of Porter et al. (1976), Porter et al. (1974), and Koch and Steers (1978). However, Mueller and Price’s (1990) finding implies that, conceptually, satisfaction would be the most critical variable. This apparent contradiction may relate to the fact that (1)

Rusbult and Farrell (1983) used commitment and satisfaction as two separate dependent variables, failing to examine the relationship of the two variables to each other; and (2) Rusbult and Farrell's (1983) study was longitudinal, thus focusing on the *process of change* rather than on a static result.

Demographic Variables

Education

Researchers generally do not report the effect of education on turnover and turnover intentions and on their correlates. This may be largely because the category of workers most studied in turnover literature is nurses. In those studies, perhaps researchers assume a similar level of educational attainment, which, if accurate as an assumption, would negate the usefulness of analyzing the effect of education on turnover. However, a study of the impact of *job satisfaction* on turnover intent by Lambert et al. (2001) used a sample that included representatives of all occupations and industries in the United States. Lambert et al. (2001) found that education has no significant effect on job satisfaction.

Gender

Although Aryee et al. (1998) found no significant mean gender difference in, what they called, "retention-relevant outcomes," generally research tends to report the impact of gender on the correlates of turnover, rather than on turnover or turnover intentions themselves (P.82). In studies that report the effect of gender on commitment, some indicate no significant relationship (Kacmar and Carlson 1999; Rusbult and Farrell 1983; Blau and Boal 1989), while others do report a significant

relationship (Mathieu and Zajac 1990; McFarlin and Sweeney 1992). Aryee et al. (1998) for example, found a significant, positive relationship in their regression analysis indicating that women were more committed to the organization than men. However, “there was no significant mean gender difference in organizational commitment and gender was not related to organizational commitment as shown by the zero order correlation” (Aryee et al. 1998: 82). Thus the relationship between gender and commitment is inconclusive.

Findings on the relationship between gender and job satisfaction have also been inconsistent. Britton (1997) found that women have less job satisfaction than men, while Martin (1980) and Lambert et al. (2001) found that men are less satisfied. Others reported no difference in job satisfaction based on gender (Grossi and Berg 1991; Melamed et al. 1995).

Age

Age has had a consistent effect on turnover and turnover intentions and on their correlates: Lambert (2001) and Kiyak and Namazi (1997) found a significant relationship between age and turnover intent. Likewise, Hellman (1997) and Miller et al. 1979 reported a significant, negative relationship between age and turnover. However, Bannister and Griffeth (1986) found that “the effect of age on turnover was indirect through search behavior: the probability of finding an acceptable alternative, thoughts of quitting and intention to search” (P. 440). Mobley et al. (1978) also found a significant relationship between age and intention to search. In

addition, age has also been found to have a positive effect on job satisfaction (Lambert et al 2001; Kiyak and Namazi 1997; Abraham 1999).

Tenure

The findings for tenure are somewhat less consistent than for age. For example, Hellman (1997) and Kiyak and Namazi (1997) found tenure to be significantly related to turnover intention. And Mobley et al. (1978) found that less tenured employees had a stronger *intention to search*. However, Miller et al. (1979) reported no relationship between tenure and turnover. And Bannister and Griffeth (1986) found the effect of tenure on turnover to be “indirect through an affective-cognitive linkage: job satisfaction, thoughts of quitting, and intention to quit” (P. 440).

There is also variation in the findings on the relationship between tenure and job satisfaction. Kiyak and Namazi (1997) reported a positive impact of tenure on job satisfaction whereas Lambert et al (2001) reported a negative effect. According to Lambert et al. (2001) these inconsistencies may be because “the relationship depends on the specific organization and how tenure is viewed. In some organizations, senior workers are highly respected and rewarded, while in others, high tenure is viewed as a liability” (P. 245).

Pay

Halbur (1982) found that salary, along with other structural factors, significantly predicted the likelihood of turnover among nursing personnel. However, Mueller and Price (1990), also in a study of nurses, found that pay had a

negative impact on satisfaction, commitment, and intent to stay. They called this finding “a major anomaly” in light of the fact that “a review of 16 years of research on turnover at the University of Iowa finds that pay commonly is related to satisfaction...” (Iverson and Price 1989 *in* Mueller and Price 1990). One explanation offered for this anomaly was that higher pay was the result of higher tenure, and since the higher tenured nurses had experienced the time when nursing was associated with low pay and little respect, they were the least satisfied.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Framework

This research uses as its theoretical framework the investment model of turnover derived by Farrell and Rusbult (1981; also Rusbult and Farrell 1983). The Rusbult and Farrell theory of turnover incorporates seven variables—job rewards, job costs, job satisfaction, perception of alternatives, investments, commitment and turnover—into a model (See Figure 1) that is expressed in the following equations:

$$\text{SAT} = \text{REW} - \text{CST}$$

$$\text{COM} = (\text{REW} - \text{CST}) + \text{INV} - \text{ALT}$$

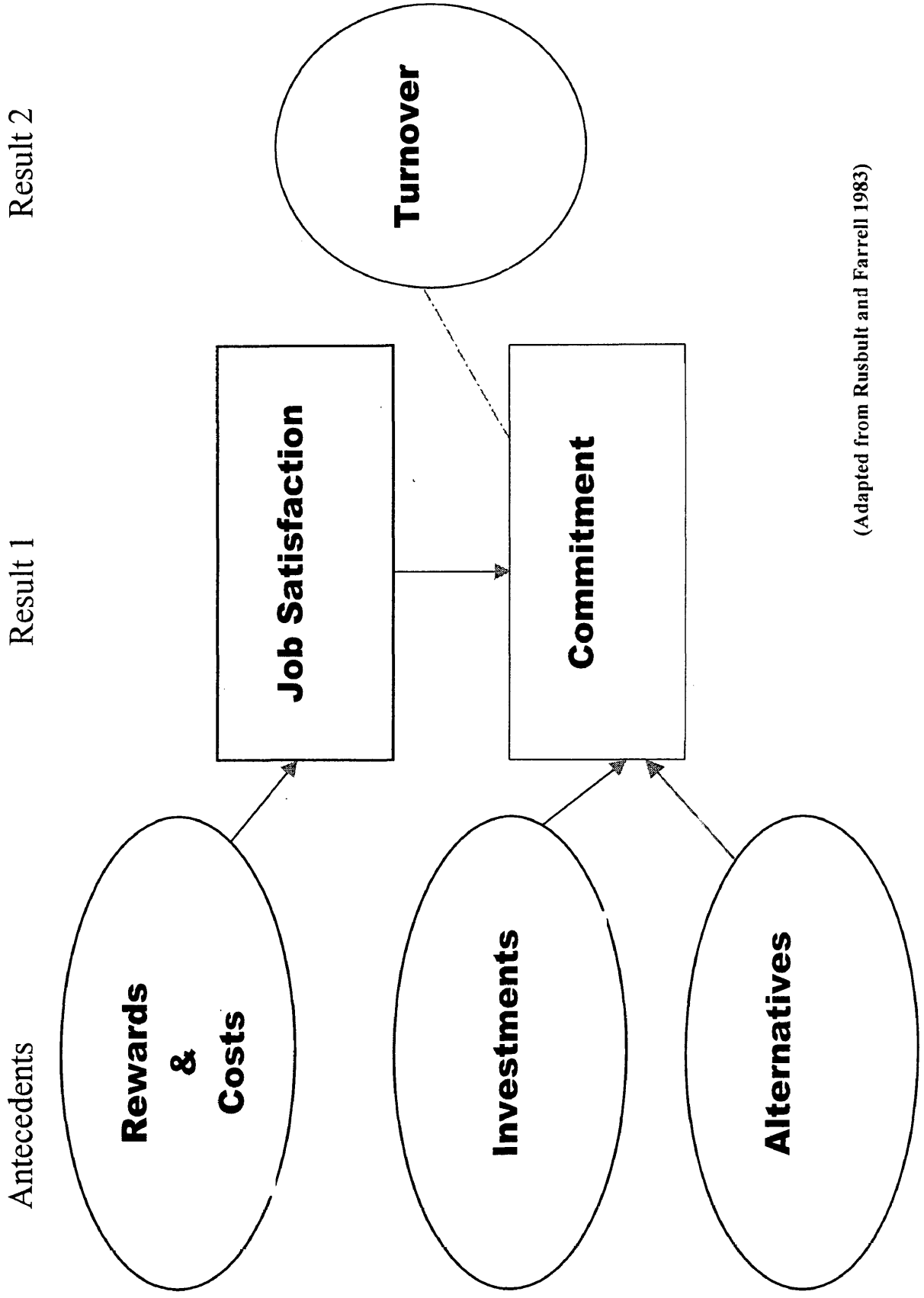
$$\text{that is, COM} = \text{SAT} + \text{INV} - \text{ALT}$$

$$\text{TURN} \approx (\text{COM})$$

According to this model, satisfaction, the degree to which an employee evaluates his or her job positively, is a simple function of the rewards and costs associated with the job. (Job rewards could include such things as high pay, autonomy, and variety, while job costs may include inadequate resources and unfair promotion practices.) That is, satisfaction (SAT) should be greater to the extent that job rewards (REW) are high and job costs (CST) are low.

Commitment, the likelihood of an employee's staying with a job and feeling psychologically attached to it, according to the Rusbult and Farrell model (1983) is a

Figure 1: Rusbult and Farrell Model



(Adapted from Rusbult and Farrell 1983)

function of rewards, costs, investments, and alternatives. (Investments are resources which are linked to the job such as tenure and nonportable training; and alternatives refers to other job options including ‘not working’.) Thus the Rusbult and Farrell model asserts that job commitment (COM) will increase as job rewards increase and as job costs decrease. Job commitment will also increase as investments (INV) increase, and as alternative quality (ALT) decreases.

Rusbult and Farrell (1983) did not define turnover *per se* but rather suggested that job commitment has a direct influence on turnover. Thus turnover results from “decreases in the level of commitment to the job” (P. 430).

The present research uses Farrell and Rusbult’s model (1981) as a theoretical framework, but modifies the model in several ways. (See Figure 2.) Consistent with the exploratory nature of this study, the modifications were designed to make *initial* discoveries about the relationships between the independent variables and turnover intentions among manual laborers. Hence,

1. The present study examines turnover *intentions* instead of turnover itself.
2. Justice perception variables are added to Rusbult and Farrell’s original set of variables because research has found that distributive and procedural justice are stronger predictors of turnover intentions than are core work attitudes (Dailey and Kirk 1992) and because it is intuitively reasonable that the perception of fair treatment will influence turnover intentions.
3. All of the variables included in the modified model are measured directly against the dependent variable.

4. Whereas Rusbult and Farrell (1983) distinguished between commitment and turnover, the present research treats commitment and turnover intentions as interchangeable. This is because the literature reveals a significant amount of overlap between the two constructs such that they are often operationalized in the exact same way. (See Chapter Two for further discussion.)
5. The modified model includes demographic variables.

The following table presents and explains the variables used in the *modified* investment model:

Table 2: *Variables and their Definitions as Used in the Modified Investment Model*

Variable	Definitions
Satisfaction	Extent to which employees positively evaluate their jobs (Rusbult and Farrell 1983)
Job Costs	i.e. unexpected variations in work, numerous deadlines etc (Rusbult and Farrell 1983)
Job Rewards	i.e. high pay, autonomy, variety (Rusbult and Farrell 1983)
Investment	Resources that are linked to the job such as years of service, benefits (Rusbult and Farrell 1983)
Alternatives	Employee's perception of the availability of other jobs or opportunities including 'not working' (Rusbult and Farrell 1983)
Turnover Intention	The likelihood that the employee will or will not seek another job (Kiyak and Namazi 1997: 3 of 24)
Distributive Justice	"addresses employees concerns about the fairness of managerial decisions relative to the distribution" of rewards (Dailey and Kirk 1992:308)
Procedural Justice	Focuses employees' attention on how managerial decisions relative to the distribution of rewards are made (Dailey and Kirk 1992)
Pre-job intent	Employees' turnover intention at the start of their employment
Active pursuit of degree	Assesses whether or not the employee is currently working toward an educational degree

Table 2: *Variables and their Definitions as Used in the Modified Investment Model (Cont 'd)*

Variable	Definitions
Sex	
Intention to retire within three years	
Length of tenure	
Present age	
Wage per hour	
Highest level of education completed	

Chapter 4

Methodology

Data Collection: Survey

A questionnaire consisting of 80 items was used to collect primary data for this study. Eleven items were single-item demographic questions among which six were nominal producing the following variables:

- Educational degree in progress
- Pre-employment career intent with the organization
- Current position
- Other employment besides UPS
- Gender
- Intent to retire within the next three years
- Highest level of education you have *completed* was measured as a continuous variable (See Appendix).

The remaining four demographic questions yielded continuous, ratio level variables:

- Tenure at the company
- Present age
- Length of residence in the Omaha area
- Wage per hour

The remainder of the questionnaire consisted of 69 Likert-like, six-point scale items from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” Using face validity, a

multivariate scale was constructed to operationalize the seven other independent variables and a dependent variable. The potential for response pattern anxiety was addressed by periodically alternating the direction of the questions. Also, internal consistency of all items in each subscale was conducted via cross tabulations. Items that were not consistent with the others were removed from each scale. Consequently, the final items in each variable and the result of Cronbach's analysis for reliability are as follows:

Variable: Reward (Alpha = .61)

Items:

1. I find my job adequately rewarding.
2. For what I do in this organization, I am well paid.
3. I am satisfied with the benefits associated with my job.
4. I receive positive recognition for the work that I do.

Variable: Job Costs (Alpha = .83)

Items:

1. My job demands too much of my time.
2. My job infringes upon my personal life.
3. Had I known the demands of this job in advance, I might not have accepted it.
4. My job is too physically stressful.
5. My job is too emotionally stressful.
6. This job is demeaning.

7. This job is physically hazardous.
8. Often, someone in a higher position treats me in ways I do not appreciate.

Variable: Procedural Justice (Alpha= .92)

Items:

1. I believe my supervisor evaluates my performance fairly.
2. Things are often done according to standard rules in this organization.
3. My supervisor has fair expectations about what I can accomplish everyday.
4. I believe this organization has a fair way of dealing with an employee who violates its rules.
5. If I did something wrong in this organization, management would give me a fair hearing.
6. I am allowed to have an input in how I am evaluated.
7. In my opinion, benefits other than pay, are distributed fairly at my job.
8. In my opinion, available positions are filled in a fair manner at my job.
9. I believe my pay is fair compared to other workers at this company who do jobs that are on a level similar to mine.
10. I believe my pay is fair compared to workers at other companies who do jobs that are on a level similar to mine.
11. I believe I receive as much recognition for my contributions to this company as other workers at my level.
12. I believe work is distributed fairly at this company.

Variable: *Alternatives* (Alpha= .82)

Items:

1. I can get a job similar to this one, at a similar rate of pay, at another company.
2. There are things other than working a traditional job that are real possibilities for me.
3. There are jobs that I can get that are better than the work I do now.
4. In general, the alternatives to my current job are better than what I do now.
5. I am aware of other kinds of work at other companies that I would rather do.
6. In my best judgment, there are available jobs in this city that are similar to what I do.
7. I am aware of better jobs at other companies that I may be qualified for.
8. Jobs like the one I am doing, at the pay I am receiving, do not come along very often.
9. I am aware of jobs at other companies that I am willing to do.
10. Currently, circumstances in my life limit my alternatives to this job.

Variable: *Distributive justice* (Alpha = .83)

Items:

1. In my opinion, benefits other than pay, are distributed fairly at my job.
2. In my opinion, available positions are filled in a fair manner at my job.

3. I believe my pay is fair compared to other workers at this company who do jobs that are on a level similar to mine.
4. I believe my pay is fair compared to workers at other companies who do jobs that are on a level similar to mine.
5. I believe I receive as much recognition for my contributions to this company as other workers at my level.
6. I believe work is distributed fairly at this company.

Variable: Job satisfaction (Alpha = .83)

Items:

1. I am happy with my job.
2. Knowing what I know now, if I had to decide again, I would still take this job.
3. I would recommend this job to someone I care about.
4. This job is the sort of job I wanted when I took it.
5. My job is usually interesting enough to keep me from getting bored with it.
6. Most of the time, my job is not pleasant.
7. I am disappointed that I ever took this job.
8. Most of the time, I enjoy what I do on my job.

The last of the independent variables was *investments* which was yielded Alpha .70.

Items:

1. I have enough seniority to qualify for a promotion if I decide to apply for one.
2. I have strong devotion to this company.
3. I believe I have invested more in my job than most people invest in theirs.
4. There are people I would miss very much if I were to leave this organization.
5. I have made significant contributions to an important project at this organization.
6. I have learned to perform specialized operations at this organization.

Variable: Turnover Intent (Alpha = .79)

Items:

1. As far as I can see, I plan to stay on this job longer than three years.
2. I intend to work at my present position for a long time.
3. I am committed to working for this organization.
4. I hope to quit this job within the next few months.
5. I do not feel any attachment to my job.
6. I hope to find a better job at another organization some day.
7. I frequently look at want ads for new jobs.
8. Even if offered a job at another company, I would prefer to stay at this one.

The questionnaire was distributed at the Omaha hub of United Parcel Service, with the organization's consent and cooperation. However, data collection was confronted with two challenges. The first was that of distribution. Questionnaires could not be mailed to employees because of Privacy Act restrictions. And because of their large number, package handlers do not have mail receptacles at the company. Furthermore, questionnaires could not be distributed by attaching them to employee paychecks because of concerns that might be raised by the union, with whom the organization was in negotiations.

The second challenge was that of company productivity. The organization was willing to participate in the research and eager to learn the results, but to permit employees to complete the questionnaires on company time (the preferred way in order to produce a higher return rate) would, in the short-term, be counterproductive to both productivity and profitability. Therefore, employees were permitted to complete the questionnaire only before or after their shifts or during a ten-minute break.

These restrictions mediating, the UPS retention manager assisted in obtaining a convenience sample by means of a two-pronged data collection endeavor. First, the Retention Manager assigned work group supervisors to distribute questionnaires to the employees who work in two of UPS' loading shifts: the Twilight (approximately 4:00pm to 9:00pm) and the Midnight (approximately 10:00pm to 3:00am). These two shifts together comprise a total of 352 employees. (This number excludes those who were on leave of any kind but includes those who were

absent from work on the days the questionnaires were distributed.) Employees were informed by their supervisors that participation in the survey was voluntary and unpaid. Those who chose to complete the questionnaire could return it either to a questionnaire deposit box in the supervisors' office or to the supervisor directly.

Second, approximately a week later, during the same two shifts, the researcher set up a table in a prominent spot at the hub entrance, with brightly colored signs, a UPS table cloth covering the table, questionnaires, questionnaire deposit boxes, and candy as an invitation. Between the two data collection endeavors, 160 questionnaires were distributed, and 52 were returned yielding a response rate of 32.5%.

Eighty-six percent of the sample was male, and the median age of participants was 21 years. Their median tenure at the organization was ten months, and they were earning a median wage of \$9.50. Approximately 58% were currently working toward an educational degree, and for 65.4%, their position at UPS was their only job.

Chapter 5

Tests and Findings

Each of the research questions in Chapter One was converted to a null hypothesis and tested at $\alpha = .05$ (the Likert-type scales having been converted into weighted indexes). Since this research is mainly exploratory, both the Pearson's r (parametric) and Spearman's ρ (nonparametric) were used for correlation analysis.

Null Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

Test performed: Pearson's r and Spearman's ρ with a probability test of significance

Findings: Test results indicate $r = .058$, $p = .691$ and $\rho = .083$, $p = .566$. Therefore, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. There is no significant relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. See Table 3 for details.

Null Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between employees' perception of procedural justice and turnover intentions.

Test performed: Pearson's r and Spearman's ρ with a probability test of significance

Findings: Test results indicate $r = .024$, $p = .871$ and $\rho = .068$, $p = .644$. Therefore, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. There is no significant

Table 3: Correlation values showing the relationship between continuous independent variables and turnover intention

IV	N	Mean	Pearson's r	p	Rho	p
Length of Tenure	43	27.65	.213	.175	.175	.268
Present Age	51	24.08	.053	.713	.130	.367
Wage per hour	51	10.02	.177	.219	.119	.409
Highest level of Education completed	52	9.63	.055	.702	.025	.861
Job Satisfaction	50	4.09	.058	.691	.083	.566
Procedural Justice	50	4.29	.024	.871	.068	.644
Distributive Justice	51	4.20	-.037	.797	-.146	.312
Job Rewards	52	4.24	.072	.619	.062	.669
Job Costs	51	2.94	-.140	.333	-.170	.238
Investment	50	3.97	-.049	.738	-.062	.667
Alternatives	49	3.73	.039	.791	-.115	.430

relationship between distributive justice and turnover intentions. See Table 3 for details.

Null Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between distributive justice and turnover intentions.

Test performed: Pearson's r and Spearman's ρ with a probability test of significance

Findings: Test results indicate $r = -.037$, $p = .797$ and $\rho = -.146$, $p = .312$.

Therefore, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. There is no significant relationship between distributive justice and turnover intentions. See Table 3 for details.

Null Hypothesis 4: There is no significant relationship between perception of job rewards and turnover intentions.

Test performed: Pearson's r and Spearman's ρ with a probability test of significance

Findings: Test results indicate $r = .072$, $p = .619$ and $\rho = .062$, $p = .669$.

Therefore, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. There is no significant relationship between perception of job rewards and turnover intentions. See Table 3 for details.

Null Hypothesis 5: There is no significant relationship between perception of job costs and turnover intentions.

Test performed: Pearson's r and Spearman's ρ with a probability test of significance

Findings: Test results indicate $r = -.140$, $p = .333$ and $\rho = -.170$, $p = .238$. Therefore, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. There is no significant relationship between perception of job costs and turnover intentions. See Table 3 for details.

Null Hypothesis 6: There is no significant relationship between employees' job investments and turnover intentions.

Test performed: Pearson's r and Spearman's ρ with a probability test of significance

Findings: Test results indicate $r = -.049$, $p = .738$ and $\rho = -.062$, $p = .667$. Therefore, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. There is no significant relationship between employees' job investments and turnover intentions. See Table 3 for details.

Null Hypothesis 7: There is no significant relationship between employees' perception of alternatives and turnover intentions.

Test performed: Pearson's r and Spearman's ρ with a probability test of significance

Findings: Test results indicate $r = .039$, $p = .791$ and $\rho = -.115$, $p = .430$. Therefore, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. There is no significant relationship between employee's perception of alternatives and turnover intentions. See Table 3 for details.

Null Hypothesis 8: There is no significant difference between *men and women* in turnover intentions?

Test performed: T-test with a probability test of significance

Findings: Test results indicate $t = 1.006$, $p = .337$. Therefore, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. There is no significant difference between men and women in turnover intentions. See Table 4 for details.

Null Hypothesis 9: There is no significant difference between manual laborers who are *pursuing a degree* and those who are not in turnover intentions?

Test performed: T-test with a probability test of significance

Findings: Test results indicate $t = -.719$, $p = .859$. Therefore, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. There is no significant difference between manual laborers who are pursuing a degree and those who are not in turnover intentions. See Table 4 for details.

Null Hypothesis 10: There is no significant difference in turnover intentions by *pre-job intent*.

Test performed: T-test

Finding: At $t\text{-value} = .335$, $p = .741$, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. There is no significant difference in turnover intentions between employees who initially planned to make a career of their jobs and those who intended to work only a short time. See Table 4 for details.

Null Hypothesis 11: There is no significant difference in turnover intentions between workers who *intend to retire within three years* and those who do not.

Test performed: T-test

Table 4: T-values showing significant relationships between nominal variables and the index of Turnover Intention

Variable		N	X	t	P
Sex	Male	43	3.58	1.006	.337
	Female	7	3.45		
Intention to retire within 3 years	Yes	7	3.38	-2.62	.014
	No	43	3.61		
Pre-job intent	Make career of it	35	3.59	.335	.741
	Work short time	15	3.54		
Active pursuit of degree	Yes	30	3.56	-.719	.859
	No	21	3.58		

Finding: The t-value yielded -2.62 at $p = .014$. The null hypothesis is rejected; there is a significant difference in intent to turnover between those who intend to retire within three years (mean = 3.38) and those who do not (mean = 3.61). Workers who do not intend to retire within three years have a higher likelihood of turnover intention than those who plan to retire within three years. See Table 4 for details.

Null Hypothesis 12: There is no significant relationship between age and turnover intentions.

Test performed: Pearson's r and Spearman's ρ with a probability test of significance

Findings: Test results indicate $r = .053$, $p = .713$ and $\rho = .130$, $p = .367$. Therefore, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. There is no significant relationship between age and turnover intentions. See Table 3 for details.

Null Hypothesis 13: There is no significant relationship between employees' tenure and turnover intentions.

Test performed: Pearson's r and Spearman's ρ with a probability test of significance

Findings: Test results indicate $r = .213$, $p = .175$ and $\rho = .175$, $p = .268$. Therefore, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. There is no significant relationship between employees' tenure and turnover intentions. See Table 3 for details.

Null Hypothesis 14: There is no significant relationship between pay and turnover intentions.

Test performed: Pearson's r and Spearman's ρ with a probability test of significance

Findings: Test results indicate $r = .177$, $p = .219$ and $\rho = .119$, $p = .409$.

Therefore, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. There is no significant relationship between pay and turnover intentions. See Table 3 for details.

Null Hypothesis 15: There is no significant relationship between education level completed and turnover intentions.

Test performed: Pearson's r and Spearman's ρ with a probability test of significance

Findings: Test results indicate $r = .053$, $p = .713$ and $\rho = .130$, $p = .367$. Therefore, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. There is no significant relationship between education level completed and turnover intentions. See Table 3 for details.

Exploratory Analysis

Upon discovering in the initial analyses that, of the fifteen variables, only one, *intention to retire within three years*, showed significance, further exploration was initiated since scales have potential to obscure the relationships between variables. Hence, an item-by-item analysis of the items of the dependent variable, turnover intentions, was conducted. Using Pearson's r to determine the correlation values, each of the ten continuous, independent variables was measured against each of the eight items of the dependent variable, turnover intentions. (See Table 5.) Likewise, T-tests were

Table 5: Correlation values showing item by item analysis of the relationship between the items of Turnover intentions and the independent continuous variables (Using Pearson's r)

Items	Cost	Rewards	Procedural Justice	Alter-natives	Distributive Justice	Satisfaction	Investment	Age	Wage	Level of Education Completed
IV										
Plan to stay at longer than three years.	-.449* (.001)	.365* (.008)	-.071 (.627)	-.489* (.000)	.189 (.185)	.251 (.079)	.120 (.407)	.271 (.054)	.159 (.265)	-.171 (.226)
Intention to work at present position long time.	-.412* (.003)	.416* (.003)	.021 (.887)	-.427* (.002)	.481* (.000)	.309* (.029)	.168 (.243)	.132 (.361)	.011 (.942)	.052 (.715)
Committed to working for this organization.	-.534* (.000)	.513* (.000)	.295* (.039)	-.420* (.002)	.347* (.013)	.426* (.002)	.337* (.017)	.076 (.594)	-.037 (.795)	-.110 (.435)
Hope to quit this job within the few months.	.229 (.110)	-.159 (.264)	.143 (.326)	.353* (.012)	-.113 (.430)	-.120 (.408)	-.098 (.496)	-.242 (.087)	-.222 (.118)	.169 (.231)

Table 6: T values showing item by item analysis of the relationship between the items of Turnover intentions and the nominal independent variables

Turnover Intent Items	Gender (men, women)	Intent to retire within 3 years (no, yes)	Pre-job intent (career, short time only)	Active pursuit of degree (yes, no)
IV				
Plan to stay at job longer than three years	-2.332* (.035)	.264 (.796)	1.014 (.321)	-2.440* (.019)
Intend to work at present position for long time	-1.065 (.311)	-.131 (.898)	.070 (.945)	-.280 (.781)
Committed to working for this organization	-1.052 (.309)	-.722 (.492)	2.028 (.054)	-.791 (.433)
Hope to quit within next few months	1.242 (.241)	-.308 (.763)	.315 (.755)	1.143 (.258)
No feeling of attachment to job	1.960 (.079)	.708 (.500)	-1.043 (.306)	-.105 (.917)
Hope to find better job at another organization	4.281* (.001)	-.550 (.598)	-2.109* (.043)	2.662* (.011)
Frequently look at want ads for new job	-.314 (.762)	-3.936* (.001)	.334 (.741)	-.048 (.962)
Would stay at this job even if offered another	1.074 (.298)	.085 (.934)	1.065 (.293)	-1.298 (.200)

conducted to discover the correlation values between the items of turnover intention and the nominal, independent variables. (See Table 6.)

The first item of turnover intention was *plan to stay at this job longer than three years*. It was significantly correlated with three of the continuous, independent variables and with two of the nominal independent variables. It was negatively correlated with the variables *cost* ($p = .001$), *alternatives* ($p = .000$), gender ($p = .035$), and active pursuit of degree ($p = .019$), and positively correlated with *job rewards* ($p = .008$). These values indicate that the higher the job cost and the more alternatives the employees perceived, the less likely they were to plan to stay at their jobs longer than three years. And the higher the job rewards, the more likely they were to plan to stay. Women were more likely than men to plan to stay at the job longer than three years, as were employees who were actively pursuing a degree.

Intention to work at the present position for a long time was the second item of turnover intention and was significantly correlated with half of the continuous, independent variables and to none of the nominal independent variables. It was negatively correlated with *cost* ($p = .003$) and *alternatives* ($p = .002$) and positively correlated with *rewards* ($p = .003$), *distributive justice* ($p = .000$), and *satisfaction* ($p = .029$). Hence, the greater the costs and alternatives, the less inclined employees were to work at their present position for a long time; and the more they perceived rewards, distributive justice, and satisfaction, the more they intended to work for a long time in their present position.

Commitment to working for the organization, the third item of turnover intention, was significantly correlated with all of the continuous, independent variables except the demographic ones, but to none of the nominal independent variables. Its correlation with *cost* ($p = .000$) and *alternatives* ($p = .002$) was negative, while its correlation with *rewards* ($p = .000$), *procedural justice* ($p = .039$), *distributive justice* ($p = .013$), *satisfaction* ($p = .002$), and *investment* ($p = .017$) was positive. Thus, employees were more likely to be committed to working for the organization if they perceived low costs, few alternatives, high rewards, and greater procedural and distributive justice. Employees who were satisfied and who had greater investments were also more likely to be committed to working for the organization.

None of the nominal independent variables was significantly correlated with the fourth item of turnover intention which is *hope to quit this job within the next few months*, and only one of the continuous independent variables was correlated. *Alternatives* was positively correlated at .012, indicating that the more alternatives employees perceive, the more likely they are to hope to quit within the next few months.

Five of the continuous independent variables were correlated with the fifth item of turnover intention—*no feeling of attachment to this job*. *Rewards* ($p = .026$), *distributive justice* ($p = .009$) and *satisfaction* ($p = .030$) were negatively correlated, indicating that the fewer the rewards and the less the satisfaction and distributive justice, the more likely the employees are to lack feelings of attachment to their jobs. *Job cost* ($p = .017$) and *alternatives* ($p = .048$) were positively correlated. These values indicate that employees who perceive high costs associated with their jobs and those who perceive more

alternatives are more likely to feel no attachment to the job. None of the nominal variables was significantly correlated.

The sixth turnover intention item, *hope to find a better job at another organization*, was significantly correlated with four of the continuous, independent variables and with three of the nominal independent variables. It was negatively correlated with rewards ($p = .045$), satisfaction ($p = .040$), gender ($p = .001$), pre-job intent ($p = .043$), and active pursuit of degree ($p = .011$). It was positively correlated with cost ($p = .039$) and alternatives ($p = .002$). Thus, men and employees who initially planned to work at their present jobs for a short time only and those who were actively pursuing a degree were more likely to hope to find a better job at another organization, as were employees who perceived greater job costs or more alternatives. Employees who perceived greater rewards or who were satisfied were less likely to hope to find a better job at another organization.

Frequently look at want ads for new jobs was the seventh item of turnover intention and was significantly correlated with six of the continuous, independent variables and to one nominal variable. It was negatively correlated with *intention to retire within three years* ($p = .001$), *rewards* ($p = .000$) *distributive justice* ($p = .000$) and *satisfaction* ($p = .028$) and was positively correlated with *cost* ($p = .013$), *alternatives* ($p = .000$), and *wage* ($p = .038$). Hence, employees who intended to retire within three years were less likely to look frequently at want ads for a new job than those who did not intend to retire. Furthermore, the fewer rewards employees perceived, the less distributive justice they perceived, and the less satisfied they were, the more inclined

employees were to frequently look at want ads for new jobs. The higher the job costs and the more alternatives employees perceived, the greater the likelihood of looking frequently at want ads for new jobs. Surprisingly, higher paid employees were also more likely to frequently search the want ads for a new job.

The last item of turnover intention, *would stay at present company even if offered a job elsewhere*, was significantly correlated with six of the continuous, independent variables, but to none of the nominal independent variables. Negatively correlated with this item were *cost* ($p = .000$) and *alternatives* ($p = .006$). *Rewards* ($p = .001$), *procedural justice* ($p = .026$), *satisfaction* ($p = .002$), and *investment* ($p = .010$) were all positively correlated. The findings thus indicate that employees who perceived high cost and greater alternatives were less likely to stay at the present company if offered a job elsewhere, whereas employees who perceived high rewards and greater procedural justice were more likely to stay, as were employees who were satisfied and those with greater investments.

Having thus identified the correlates of the items of turnover intentions, a regression analysis was conducted to test this study's predictive hypothesis (What are the variables that predict turnover intentions among manual laborers?). The regression analysis tested the relationship between the significant independent variables in the simple correlation analysis and the items of turnover intention. (See Table 7.)

The first regression analysis was conducted with a block entry of four independent variables (cost, alternatives, job rewards, and gender—using dummy values, 1 = men, 0 = women) against the item “plan to stay longer than three years” as the

Table 7: Regression values showing the relationship between the significant independent variables in simple correlation analyses and the items of Turnover Intention

Turnover Intention Items	Independent Variables	b	Standard Error	Beta	Significance
Plan to stay longer than three years.	(Constant)	6.399	1.503		.000
	Cost	-3.600E-03	.094	-.006	.970
	Alternatives	-.590	.219	-.418	.010
	Job rewards	-.949	.501	-.250	.065
	Gender	.259	.206	.187	.216
Intention to work at present position for a long time	(Constant)	2.856	2.115		.184
	Cost	7.968E-02	.110	.114	.475
	Alternatives	-.542	.268	-.341	.050
	Job rewards	2.479E-02	.359	.016	.945
	Distributive justice	.713	.312	.417	.028
	Job satisfaction	-.142	.372	-.082	.704

Table 7 (cont'd): Regression values showing the relationship between the significant independent variables in simple correlation analyses and the items of Turnover Intention

Dependent Variable (Item)	Independent Variables	b	Standard Error	Beta	Significance
	(Constant)	2.261	1.842		.227
	Cost	.124	.092	.217	.185
Commitment to working for current organization	Alternatives	-.307	.231	-.237	.192
	Job rewards	.350	.322	.280	.283
	Distributive justice	.129	.265	.092	.629
	Job satisfaction	.153	.377	.108	.687
	Procedural justice	-7.582E-02	.269	-.059	.779
	Investment	.232	.228	.154	.316
Hope to quit within next few months	(Constant)	.220	.668		.744
	Alternatives	.456	.174	.353	.012

Table 7 (cont'd): Regression values showing the relationship between the significant independent variables in simple correlation analyses and the items of Turnover Intention

Dependent Variable (Item)	Independent Variables	b	Standard Error	Beta	Significance
No feeling of attachment to job	(Constant)	5.991	2.144		.008
	Cost	-.219	.112	-.326	.057
	Job rewards	.151	.364	.103	.681
	Alternatives	.251	.272	.165	.361
	Distributive justice	-.535	.316	-.326	.098
	Job satisfaction	-.468	.377	-.280	.221
Hope to find better job at another organization	(Constant)	2.775	2.159		.206
	Gender	1.239	.628	.259	.056
	Pre-job intent	-.480	.405	-.148	.243
	Working on degree	.829	.380	.274	.035
	Cost	-.129	.113	-.173	.261
	Job rewards	-5.503E-02	.281	-.034	.846
	Alternatives	.611	.262	.361	.025
	Job satisfaction	-.412	.374	-.219	.278

Table 7 (cont'd): Regression values showing the relationship between the significant independent variables in simple correlation analyses and the items of Turnover Intention

Dependent Variable (Item)	Independent Variables	b	Standard Error	Beta	Significance
Frequently look at want ads for new jobs	(Constant)	1.962	3.032		.521
	Cost	4.611E-02	.116	.058	.694
	Job rewards	-.595	.374	-.337	.120
	Alternatives	.561	.302	.296	.071
	Job satisfaction	.437	.451	.203	.338
	Distributive justice	-.405	.330	-.211	.227
	Wage	5.299E-02	.085	.090	.536
	Intent to retire	.770	.581	.168	.193
Stay at present company even if offered a job elsewhere	(Constant)	1.498	1.638		.366
	Cost	-1.950E-02	.083	-.038	.816
	Job rewards	.239	.237	.215	.319
	Alternatives	-5.120E-02	.211	-.044	.809
	Procedural justice	3.033E-02	.244	.026	.902
	Investment	.272	.206	.203	.194
	Satisfaction	.180	.346	.142	.606

dependent variable. Results show that based on the interactive effects of the four independent variables, only “alternatives” ($b = .590$, $Beta = -.480$, $P = .010$) emerged as a significant predictor of the dependent variable. See Table 7 for details.

The second regression analysis was conducted with a block entry of five independent variables (alternatives, job rewards, distributive justice and satisfaction) against the item “intention to work at present company for a long time” as the dependent variable. Results show that based on the interactive effects of the five independent variables, “alternatives” ($b = -.542$, $Beta = -.341$, $P = .050$) and “distributive justice” ($b = .713$, $Beta = .312$, $P = .028$) emerged as significant predictors of the dependent variable. See Table 7 for details.

The third regression analysis was conducted with a block entry of seven independent variables (cost, alternatives, job rewards, distributive justice, satisfaction, procedural justice, and investment) against the item “commitment to working for current organization” as the dependent variable. Results show that based on the interactive effects of the seven independent variables, none emerged as a significant predictor of the dependent variable. See Table 7 for details.

The fourth regression analysis was a simple regression conducted with the independent variable *alternatives* against the item “hope to quit within the next few months” as the dependent variable. Results show that “alternatives” ($b = .456$, $Beta = -.353$, $P = .012$) emerged as a significant predictor of the dependent variable. See Table 7 for details.

The fifth regression analysis was conducted with a block entry of five independent variables (job costs, alternatives, job rewards, distributive justice and satisfaction) against the item “no feeling of attachment to job” as the dependent variable. Results show that based on the interactive effects of the five independent variables, “job costs” ($b = -.219$, $Beta = -.326$, $P = .057$) emerged as a significant predictor of the dependent variable. See Table 7 for details.

The sixth regression analysis was conducted with a block entry of seven independent variables (job cost, alternatives, job rewards, satisfaction, gender—using dummy values 1 = men, 0 = women; pre-job intent—using dummy values 1 = make career of it, 0 = work short time only; working on degree—using dummy values 1 = no, 0 = yes) against the item “hope to find a better job at another organization” as the dependent variable. Results show that based on the interactive effects of the seven independent variables, “alternatives” ($b = -.611$, $Beta = .361$, $P = .025$) and “working on degree” ($b = .829$, $Beta = .274$, $P = .035$) emerged as significant predictors of the dependent variable. See Table 7 for details.

The seventh regression analysis was conducted with a block entry of seven independent variables (cost, alternatives, job rewards, distributive justice, satisfaction, wage and intent to retire) against the item “frequently look at want ads for new jobs” as the dependent variable. Results show that based on the interactive effects of the seven independent variables, none emerged as a significant predictor of the dependent variable. See Table 7 for details.

The final regression analysis was conducted with a block entry of six independent variables (cost, alternatives, job rewards, satisfaction, procedural justice, and investment) against the item “stay at present company even if offered a job elsewhere” as the dependent variable. Results show that based on the interactive effects of the seven independent variables, none emerged as a significant predictor of the dependent variable. See Table 7 for details.

Of all the independent variables tested in regression analysis against the items of turnover intention, only three emerged as predictors at the .05 level of significance: Alternatives, distributive justice, and active pursuit of degree. Of those, *alternatives* is the only one that shows a pattern of predictability. The latter two variables are significant predictors of one item each, whereas alternatives is a significant predictor of half of the turnover intention items: Plan to stay longer than three years, intention to work at present position for a long time, hope to quit within the next few months, and hope to find a better job at another organization.

Chapter 6

Summary of Findings

Stage One of the Analysis

In this study, the Rusbult and Farrell model of turnover was modified by regarding commitment and turnover intention as interchangeable and was simplified by measuring all of the independent variables against the dependent variable. Simple correlation analysis uncovered no significant relationships between the independent variable and turnover intention, with one exception; there was a significant correlation between intent to retire and turnover intention. (See Tables 3 and 4.) Therefore, all but one of the original hypotheses were rejected. Furthermore, even though the hypotheses were founded on past research, the results of this study's initial stage of analysis were not supported by the findings of past research. This study found that:

- there is no significant relationship between *job satisfaction* and turnover intentions. This finding is not consistent with those of previous studies. Although previous research does not consistently indicate a relationship between job satisfaction and turnover, there have been consistent findings that job satisfaction does affect turnover *intentions* (Mobley et al. 1978, Miller et al. 1979, Brooke et al. 1988, Blau and Boal 1989, Bannister and Griffeth 1986). In fact, Hellman (1997) reported that the relationship between job satisfaction and intent to leave “implies

that every unit of decrease in job satisfaction reflects approximately a one-half standard deviation increase in intent to leave” (P. 685).

- there is no significant relationship between the justice perception variables (distributive and procedural justice) and turnover intentions. These findings also differ from those of previous research. In fact Dailey and Kirk (1992) asserted that “forms of justice appear to be stronger predictors of intent to quit than core work attitudes” (P. 314).

- there is no significant relationship between employees’ *perception of job rewards and costs* and turnover intentions. This, too, is a deviation from previous findings. Farrell and Rusbult (1981) suggested that job satisfaction, which they found to be indirectly correlated with turnover, is “primarily a simple function of the rewards and costs associated with the job” (P. 80). Other studies also indicate that job rewards, in particular, have mostly indirect effects on turnover intentions through job satisfaction (Lambert 2001; Dailey and Kirk 1992). However, in the present study, even job satisfaction was not shown to be correlated with turnover intentions. Therefore, this finding also differs from that of previous research.

- there is no significant relationship between employees’ *job investment* and turnover intentions. Becker (1960) theorized, and Farrell and Rusbult (1981) found that investment size is significantly correlated with commitment, which in this study was operationalized as turnover intention. Again, present results differ from past research.

- there is no significant relationship between employees' *perception of alternatives* and turnover intentions. Mobley et al. (1978) found that the "probability of finding an acceptable alternative contribute[s] to eliciting *thoughts* of quitting" but *not intent* to quit (P. 412). This opinion is not unchallenged in the literature, however. Lambert et al. (2001) reported that alternatives *do* have an effect on turnover intent, whereas Michaels and Spector (1982) and Dalessio et al. (1986) could not confirm the significance of alternatives in the turnover process. The present findings are, nonetheless, supported by some previous findings.

- there is no significant difference between *men and women* in turnover intentions. This finding was surprising—given the nature of the work—but not inconsistent with past research. Aryee et al. (1998) found no significant mean gender difference in, what they called, "retention-relevant outcomes" (P. 82). Other studies report the effect of gender on commitment (the dependent variable in this study) and indicate no significant relationship (Kacmar and Carlson 1999; Rusbult and Farrell 1983; Blau and Boal 1989), while others *do* report a significant relationship (Mathieu and Zajac 1990; McFarlin and Sweeney 1992). Nonetheless, the findings of some past research are consistent with the present outcome.

- between workers who are *pursuing an advanced degree* and those who are not, there is no significant difference in the likelihood of having turnover intentions. The question of the relationship between pursuit of an advanced degree and turnover intention is one that emerged out the researcher's experience with the organization and is not tested in other turnover literature.

- *pre-job intent* produces no significant difference in turnover intentions. *Pre-job intent* has not been included in previous turnover studies. It's inclusion in the present study was prompted by Miller et al.'s (1979) untested observation, "Conversations with Guard Members indicated that intentions to quit were often formed at the time of the original enlistment act, before experience in the organization had accrued" (P. 515).

- *intent to retire* does produce a significant difference in turnover intentions. The question of the impact on intent to retire on turnover intentions emerged out of the researcher's experience with the organization. Other research does not address this relationship.

- there is no significant relationship between *age* and turnover intentions. However, previous research has consistently indicated a significant, negative relationship between age and turnover (Hellman 1997; Miller et al 1979).

- there is no significant relationship between employees' *tenure* and turnover intentions. This finding is consistent with that of Miller et al. (1979). Other research, however, *does* find a relationship between tenure and turnover intention (Hellman 1997; Kiyak and Namazi 1997; Bannister and Griffeth 1986). Noting the discrepancy in findings regarding the relationship between tenure and *job satisfaction*, Lambert et al. (2001) suggested that the inconsistencies might be because "the relationship depends on the specific organization and how tenure is viewed" (P. 245). Similarly, it may be that the presence or absence of a relationship between tenure and turnover intentions depends on the nature of the work. Perhaps,

work conditions and the strenuous nature of manual labor nullify any differential impact that tenure might otherwise have.

- there is no significant relationship between employees' *pay* and turnover intentions. This result is contrary to previous research which, in general finds that pay is correlated both to satisfaction (Iverson and Price 1989) and to turnover (Halbur 1982).

- there is no significant relationship between *educational level* and turnover intentions. Research generally tends not to explore the relationship between education and turnover/turnover intentions. This may be because past research has tended to focus on homogenous categories of workers whose professions generally require a similar level of education. However, Lambert et al. (2001), who studied the effect of job satisfaction on turnover intent, found that education has no significant effect on job satisfaction.

Stage Two of the Analysis

Upon discovering that only one research hypothesis was supported by the data and only a few were supported by previous research, further analysis was conducted by testing each independent variable against each item of turnover intentions. The result of the analyses indicated that each item of turnover intention was correlated with at least one of the independent variables. A summary of these findings is as follows: (See Tables 3 and 4.)

- Turnover item, *plan to stay at this job longer than three years*, was significantly correlated with job cost (-), job rewards, alternatives (-), gender (-), and active pursuit of degree (-).
- Turnover item, *intention to work at present position for a long time*, was significantly correlated with job cost (-), job rewards (-), alternatives (-), distributive justice, and satisfaction.
- Turnover item, *committed to working for this organization*, was significantly correlated with job cost (-), job rewards, and alternatives (-).
- Turnover item, *hope to quit this job within the next few months*, was significantly correlated with alternatives.
- Turnover item, *no feeling of attachment to job*, was significantly correlated with job cost, job rewards (-), alternatives, distributive justice (-), and satisfaction (-).
- Turnover item, *hope to find a better job at another organization*, was significantly correlated with job cost, job rewards (-), alternatives, satisfaction (-), gender, active pursuit of degree, and pre-job intent (-).
- Turnover item, *frequently look at want ads for new jobs*, was significantly correlated with job cost, job rewards (-), alternatives, distributive justice (-), satisfaction (-) wage, and intention to retire within three years (-).
- Turnover item *would stay at present company even if offered a job elsewhere*, was significantly correlated with job cost (-), job rewards, alternatives (-), procedural justice, investment, and satisfaction.

Stage Three of the Analysis

The independent variables that were found to be significantly correlated with items of turnover intention were then entered into a regression analysis to test for predictive potential. (See Table 7.) Of the independent variables that were included in the regression analysis three emerged as predictors of various items of turnover intentions at the .05 level of significance: Alternatives, distributive justice, and active pursuit of degree. Of those, *alternatives* is the only one that shows a pattern of predictability. The latter two variables are significant predictors of one item each, whereas *alternatives* is a significant predictor of half of the turnover intention items: *Plan to stay longer than three years, intention to work at present position for a long time, hope to quit within the next few months, and active pursuit of degree.*

The results of the regression analysis are thus partially consistent with the Rusbult and Farrel model (1983), which was the theoretical framework for the present research. Two of the three direct correlates of commitment in Rusbult and Farrell (1983), job satisfaction and investments (See Figure 1) were not found to be significant in the present study. The variable *alternatives* was, however. And because the literature indicates a significant amount of overlap between the constructs job commitment and turnover intentions, the present study operationalized turnover intentions in the same way that Rusbult and Farrell (1983) operationalized commitment. Therefore, the finding that *alternatives* is predictive of turnover intentions is consistent with the Rusbult and Farrell model.

Chapter 7

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to identify the correlates and predictors of turnover intentions among manual laborers. The study was based on Rusbult and Farrell (1983) which involved a sample of nurses and accountants and which found that job cost and job rewards lead to satisfaction which, along with alternatives and investments, predict commitment, of which turnover is a function. (See Figure 1.) However, the present study found, to the contrary, that among manual laborers, job costs, job rewards, job satisfaction, and investment had no effect on turnover intent (the same as the variable, *commitment*, as measured by Rusbult and Farrell 1983). Instead, the variable *perception of alternatives* was the only one that predicted turnover intentions. One reason these findings differ from those of previous research may be the fact that turnover literature has largely overlooked the category of manual laborers.

This oversight may be a significant one. The results of the present study indicate that there is a distinct difference between the patterns of turnover intentions among manual laborers and those of the categories of workers traditionally studied in turnover literature. This difference may stem from the fact that manual labor is an occupational category that is structurally dissimilar from the categories of workers traditionally studied in turnover literature. Those categories, which include nurses predominantly, are “moderately professionalized technical occupations” (Rusbult

and Farrell 1983: 432). Manual labor, however, is neither professionalized nor technical as an occupation (although individuals in manual labor may have professional or technical skills). Manual labor is further distinguished from the traditional categories by the repetitive and continuously strenuous nature of the work and by the fact that workers are often regularly exposed to the elements. Such structural dissimilarities between the occupations may account for the differences in findings regarding turnover intentions. The present findings thus support the observation made by Dalessio et al. (1986) that “turnover models which have been developed are too general to consistently describe the turnover process for any single group. Perhaps more attention should be given to possible differences in the turnover process among members of different occupations...” (P. 257).

From a research perspective, current findings suggest that future studies focusing on turnover among manual laborers should attempt to identify the reasons why alternative jobs appeal to manual laborers *across levels* of investment, satisfaction, and perceived job rewards and job costs. The intuitive explanation focuses on *job costs* associated with the work, such as strenuous labor and harsh working conditions. However, the findings suggest that the intuitive explanation is not accurate. Job costs are not pushing employees out. And job rewards, satisfaction, and investments do not make them more inclined to stay in their present positions. Thus, the present findings raise the question of why even employees who perceive high job rewards and low costs and who have high investments still have turnover intentions when they perceive other job alternatives.

One plausible explanation for this dichotomy may be the fact that these employees' turnover intentions are motivated by the desire to self-actualize. Among manual laborers, this desire may arise from working at a job for which the skills required are not commensurate with employees' perceptions of their own abilities or, perhaps, because of an inconsistency between the occupational status to which the employee aspires and the status given manual labor. Consequently, the wish to self-actualize may be more important to them than the rewards, investments, and satisfaction they garner from their present job and may incline them, as a result, toward other alternatives.

The desire to self-actualize has not been included in previous turnover research, and is not tapped by the variable *job satisfaction*. *Job satisfaction* explores how employees' evaluate their jobs, but does not address employees' aspirations or perception of their own potential. It is reasonable, however, that an employee could find his or her present position satisfactory for the current phase of his or her life or as a "stepping stone" to the next best thing.

This study included the variable, pre-job intent, to ascertain whether employees originally intended to make a career of their present position or to work for a short time only. Despite the fact that they had different turnover intentions at the time they started the job, these findings indicate no significant difference in their turnover intentions after acquiring experience in the job. That there is no difference in turnover intentions could, therefore, indicate that the job did not meet the expectations of employees who originally planned to make a career of it or that their

desire or hope for advancement within the organization has diminished, making them more inclined toward other alternatives.

These findings also have implications for organizations. They suggest that organizations might benefit by changing their strategies for retaining manual laborers. Strategies that include attempts at increasing job satisfaction and distributing more employee benefits may be useful in terms of controlling other types of employee withdrawal behaviors such as absenteeism and tardiness, but for manual laborers such strategies may be costly and ineffective as turnover intervention efforts. Other strategies such as providing manual laborers with *credible* opportunities for career advancement, for example, may prove to be a more effective means of reducing employee turnover.

Limitations

Because a convenience sample was used in this study, the generalizability of the results is limited to the sample itself. The use of the convenience sample was necessary because, particularly in industries that rely heavily on manual labor, the absence of workers from their stations has effects on the production process—and ultimately on profits too—which are immediate and profound. Consequently, for management to encourage employee participation in research on company time is, in the short-term, contrary to company objectives. This unique challenge may explain, in part, the dearth of research among manual laborers.

Another limitation stems from the fact that the distribution of questionnaires was constrained by the organization's own privacy regulations and its current

involvement in union negotiations. These restrictions necessitated the involvement of UPS management and supervisors in the distribution and collection of questionnaires. Their involvement, however, might have influenced employee responses to questionnaire items, causing them to be less forthcoming than they might have been otherwise.

Recommendations for future research

Future research may benefit by examining the impact of employees' desire to self-actualize on turnover intentions. Studies might incorporate variables such as employees' occupational aspirations and their perception of their own skills in relation to the skills required by the job. Future research could also repeat this study using a random sample.

Please fill in the blanks as accurately as possible.

1. How long have you worked for this company? _____
2. Please tell me your present **age** _____ (years only)
3. How long have you lived in the Omaha area? _____
4. What is your wage per hour? \$ _____ per hour

Please select ONE answer.

5. Are you currently working toward an educational degree? Yes No
6. When you applied for *this job*, did you:
 - a) plan to make a career of it.
 - b) intend to work here for a short time only.
7. What is your current position?
 - Package Handler
 - Sorter
8. Are you also working somewhere besides UPS? Yes No
9. What is your gender? Man Woman
10. Do you intend to retire within the next 3 years: Yes No
11. Please select the highest level of education you have *completed*.

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 – 6 th grade | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11 th grade | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14 College soph. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 th grade | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12 th grade | <input type="checkbox"/> | 15 College junior | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 th grade | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13 One year | <input type="checkbox"/> | 16 College senior | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | Vocational School | | 17 First year Graduate | |
| 9 th grade | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14 Two years | <input type="checkbox"/> | School | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | Vocational School | | 18 Second yr Graduate | |
| 10 th grade | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13 College freshman | <input type="checkbox"/> | School | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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