Career Concern as Predictor of Turnover Intention: Empirical Evidence from Education Industry

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ABSTRACT— *Retaining the best employees is of high concern for most organizations and this issue has become a significant focus of attention for many researchers. For this reason, there is the necessity to investigate the factors which influence the employee turnover intention behavior in the organization, specifically to examine the effect of Career concern on turnover intention. Career concern was conceptualized by Adult Career Concern Inventory (ACCI) which used to measure and operationalized the Career concern variable. Data was collected to investigate the relationships in a sample of 270 full time faculty members employed in different private universities of Pakistan. The Finding of this paper indicated that career concern has been found as one of the most important predictor of employee turnover intention. This implies that, if employees are highly concerned about their career (i.e. the progression of their career) they are more likely to leave their current organization, especially if their prospect of advancing their career is not clear or non-existence.*

Keywords— career concerns, turnover intention, faculty members, Pakistan

1. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of employee turnover has become a major concern of employers, as it indicates an ongoing challenge for contemporary practitioners and researchers. For example, In the United States of America (U.S.A.), about 7.7% of the full time faculty members from various universities and colleges had left their posts for other institutions (Abdulkareem *et al*., 2015).Among these academicians, only 30% were being retires, whilst the remaining 70% had left their institutions for number of reasons. Similarly, according to Long & Perumal, (2014) and Abdulkareem *et al*., (2015) recent estimates have indicated that in the year 2012 to 2015, approximately around 19,000 professionals, which includes medical staff, lecturer from various colleges and universities leave Asia-pacific every year to look for a better opportunities in Western countries such as United States, Canada, Germany and United kingdom, among others. Other than that, in the context of higher education institution of Pakistan, majority of the qualitative and quantitative research findings indicate that faculty turnover is one of the major problem for higher education institution especially in private universities of Pakistan due to high switching rate of academicians as compare to public universities of Pakistan (Mubarak, 2012; Yusoff & Khan, 2013).

One important factor that has been found to affect employee turnover intention or stay with an organization is the career concern of employees. Career concern of employees is important because it argued that the desire .need and intention of employees assume to change during their lifetime of career (Cohen, 1991). Now a day's, employees are highly concerned about their career (i.e. the progression of their career) they are more likely to leave their current organization, especially if their prospect of advancing their career are not clear or non-existence. It is normal for people who are concerned about advancing their career to move from one organization to another. They do this especially when the other organization offers a better salary or/and better position. In addition to that, having work experience in several organizations usually looks good on an individual's resume, and often builds up ones' credibility. Hence, these cause such employees to move from one organization to another.

Other than that, studies regarding Career concern are plenty, and a majority of the suggest that career concern predicts turnover intention (Mowday *et al*., 1982; Super *et al*., 1988; Cohen 1993; Morrow & McElroy, 1987, Bassham, 2009). However, most of these studies operationalized career stage in a variety of ways including age, organizational

tenure and position tenure (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Morrow & McElroy, 1987), age and function of age as tenure (Cohen, 1993; Convay, 2004). Hence, the findings of these other researches might not be able to really capture the effect of career concern on turnover intention because there is contradiction in their findings.

2. LITRATURE REVIEW

2.1. Career concern and Turnover Intention

According to Super (1957) the working life of each individual goes through different developmental stages called career stages. In 2004, Super suggested a theory, namely career stage theory, which indicated that people go through different stages of their careers precisely during their lifetime, and it is posited that the desire, need and intention of employees change at various stages of their careers (Cohen, 1987). Each stage of one's career is characterized by several fundamental behavior and psychological adjustments that people have to take up, regardless of their employment or background (Levinson, 1986; Super *et al*, 1996).

According to Greenhaus, (1987) and Super, (1980) basically there are four stage of career. The first stage of career is exploration or organization entry stage (Cohen, 1991). In accordance with Greenhause, (1987), exploration stage "is to select a job and an organization in which to begin career in ones chosen field of interest". That' is the time where employees concerns are learning about the organization culture and are evaluating the degree which suits their needs (including career exploration); at the same time, employees are holding options open for alternative jobs that usually occurs during the 1st year of service (Ornstein, Cron, & Slocum, 1989). The next stage is the early or transition stage. This is the stage when employees concerns are trying to gain the skills and expertise needed to be successful in their jobs (Greenhaus *et al*., 2000). At this stage where employees start to explore out their niches within the organization to set their expectations regarding job and work (GreenHaus, 1987). During third career stage, which is labeled as the mid-career building, where employees concerns shift their focus to "be accepted as a responsible employee to the organization and to make a place for themselves in employment and organization" (Greenhaus, 1987). At this stage, employees are trying to settle in the organization and wish to be promoted (Greenhaus *et al*., 2000). The next stage is the later career stage where employees concerns to become established in the organization and focus not only on their place in the organization, but also on other facets of their lives, such as friends and family, as well as start to focus on retirement (Cohen, 1991; Greenhaus, 1987; Super, 1957).

Hence, career related factor that could affect employees' intention to leave is career concern. In general, it is claimed that if employees who are concerned about the status of their career are more likely to leave the organization with the hope to improve it. Although, no empirical study is available to confirm this, Career concern have been linked to several different organizational outcomes such as organizational commitment, turnover intention, satisfaction and performance (Cohen, 1991). Majority of the previous literature suggest that career stage predicts the relationship between organizational commitment and several outcomes such as turnover intention, job satisfaction and absenteeism, but there is contradiction in their findings (Mowday *et al*., 1982; Super *et al*., 1988; Cohen 1993; Morrow & McElroy, 1987, Bassham, 2009). In addition to that, these studies operationalized the career stage by variety of variable combination including age, position tenure and organizational tenure (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Cohen, 1993; Convay, 2004; Morrow & McElroy, 1987).

Due to the differences in terms of the operationalization of career stage, previous researchers found some significant differences in the relationship between Career concernand behavioral outcomes such as turnover intention (Allen & Meyer, 1993). Thus, it was suggested that Adult Career Concern Inventory (ACCI) should be used to measure and operationalized the Career concern variable. With this, it is increasingly evident that there is a significant relationship between career concern and various job attitudes and work behavior variables (Ornstein, Cron, and Slocum, 1989; Jans, 1989; Isabella, 1988). However, the study of Flaherty and Pappas (2002), found that employees differ in their job satisfaction and intent to remain on the basis of their career concerns. Furthermore, the results of their study revealed that any change in the attitude of sales person depend on the concerns of their individual career. Nonetheless, the study by Griffin, Hogan, and Lambert, (2013) confirms the positive relationship between career concern and intention to leave, indicating that when employees have high career concerns their intention to leave the organization is high. Therefore, on the based on the arguments of previous literatures this study proposed hypothesis:

2.2. The Model and Hypothesis Development

Based on the discussion of previous literature, the research framework showed in Figure 1 is tested. This framework shows the relationship between career concern and turnover intention. Specifically, this study proposed that career concern will have a direct effect on employees' turnover intention.

Hypthesis2: Career concern is positively related with turnover intention.

Figure 1: Proposed model of the Study

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Respondents

The respondents for this study are full-time faculty members working at various private universities, mainly located in Punjab Pakistan. According to Educational Statistics of Pakistan (2013) report, there are 64 private universities established countrywide. However, only 32 private universities located in the Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were selected for the present study by employing cluster sampling technique. There are about 7912 faculty members working as full-time in these 32 private universities, and represent the total population of the study.

In determining an appropriate sample which could produce a reliable results for the study, Hair *et al*, (2011) suggested that good sample size for statistical analysis at least 10-20 times more than variables is needed. Additionally, Hair *et al*. (2011; 2014) recommended that minimum sample size for PLS analysis is about 200 respondents. Hence, a total of 550 questionnaires were personally distributed to the full time permanent faculty member of universities to ensure enough data can be collected for analysis. Out of 550, 53% of the questionnaires were returned. However, only 270 questionnaires were usable for further analysis, while 24 of them were rejected because the major part of the questionnaire was left as blank. The distribution and collection of questionnaires were carried out in period of five months from November, 2014 to March, 2015.

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the 270 respondents of this study. In summary, the majority of the respondents are less than 30 years (54%), are male (59.3%), are married (49%), are equipped with Master degree (77%), have work experience 1-3 year (35%), and holding Lecturer position in the organization (58%).

Table 1 Demographic Profile of Response

Demography	Description	No. of Responses	%
Gender	Male	160	59.3
	Female	110	40.7
Marital Status	Married	132	48.9
	Not Married	130	48.1
	Divorced	8	2.6
Age	Less than 30 Year	144	53.3
	30-40 Year	81	30.0
	41-50 Year	36	13.3
	More than 50 Year	9	3.3
Present Position	Lecturer	157	58.1
	Senior Lecturer	47	17.4
	Assistant Professor	52	19.3
	Associate Professor	7	2.6
	Professor	7	2.6
Working Experience	Less than 1-Year	68	25.2
	1-3 Year	94	34.8
	4-6 Year	61	22.6
	7-10 Year	34	12.6
	More than 10-Year	13	4.8
Qualification	Master or Equivalent	208	77.0
	PhD or Equivalent	62	23.0

3.2. Measurements

The scales used to measure all variables included in this study have been adapted from previous researchers with appropriate modification that is suitable for the sample. The survey questionnaires were consisting of mainly two components. First component comprised of several Likert-type scale items, and the second component described the demographic information of the faculty members (the respondents) of this study. The Likert scale is designed to examine how strongly the respondents agree or disagree with a certain statement (Sekaran, 2006). The purpose of a 7-point Likert scale was to offer respondents more options/choice and better capture variability in their attitudes and feelings (Hinkin, 1995). To measure career concern, a 12-items scale by Perrone, Gordon, Fitch, & Civiletto (2003) was adapted. For, turnover intention was measured with 5 items used by Wayne *et al*. (1997) and Lum *et al*. (1998).

4.   DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1. Assessment of the Measurement Model

In model evaluation the measurement model was undertook to insure about the model validity and reliability. Based on partial least square structural equation modeling, the assessment of measurement model was examined by using SmartPLS 2.0 (Ringle *et al*., 2005). To determine the measurement model convergent validity, discriminent validity and reliability of the measurement of construct have been examined.

Before determining the convergent validity the researcher examined loading and cross loadings of all items of the study variables to point out any problem which serve as a pre requisite for measurement model. As argues by Hair *et al*., (2014) convergent validity is obtained when the factor loading of all the items higher than 0.5 and no loading of any item from other construct have higher loading than the one which think to measure. Regarding this study concerned out of 17 items 13 items have their loading above than 0.5 as shown in Table 2 and Fig 2.

Table 2 Results of Measurement Model

| Construct	Items	Loadings	Cronbachs Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
Career Stage Concerns	CS1	0.747	0.873	0.898	0.527
	CS10	0.585			
	CS12	0.703			
	CS3	0.820			
	CS4	0.699			
	CS6	0.702			
	CS7	0.720			
	CS8	0.804			
Turnover Intention	TI1	0.875	0.800	0.862	0.557
	TI2	0.681			
	TI3	0.727			
	TI4	0.705			
	TI5	0.695			

Table 2 demonstrated cronbachs alpha, composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE) values of all constructs. According to (Fornel and Larcker, 1981; Hair *et al*., 2014) the composite reliability should be accepted at least 0.70 and AVE should be at 0.50. As shown in the Table 2, all the constructs have high reliability and their average variance extracted (AVE) is greater than cut off point of 0.50 which is indication of reliability of the measurement model. This study calculated Cronbachs Alpha to find out internal consistency of the data. According to (George and Mallery, 2003) which provide the rule of for deciding the value alpha; "α> 0.9- Excellent, α< 0.8- Good, α< 0.7- Acceptable. As for as this study concerned, Table 2 indicates that all constructs have Cronbachs Alpha value more than 0.6. So this is the indication of all the variables in the study have good consistency.

Discriminant validity was conducted to assure the external consistency of the model, based on the correlation between the latent variables the constructs were compared with square root of AVEs. As shown in Table 3, the correlation between the constructs is lower than square root averages (AVEs) of which are bolded in diagonal.

Table 3 *Discriminant validity of the Variables*

	CS	**TI**
CSC	**0.7259**	
TI	0.3850	**0.740**

Figure 2 shows the effect of career concern on turnover intention. The R square value which derived from the output of PLS shows that career concern has tendency of influencing 16% in dependent variable (Turnover intention).
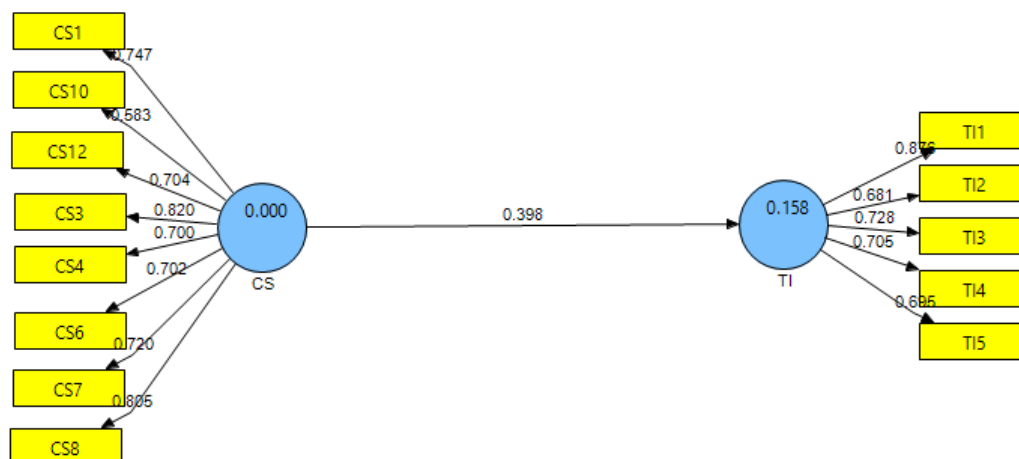
Fig 2 Measurement Model of the Study

4.2. Assessment of Structural Model

After accessing the measurement model, the structural model was assessed by using SmartPLS 2.0. To assess the structural model hypothesis testing with path coefficient and T-value, effect size and predictive relevance of the model were examined.

4.2.1. *Hypothesis Testing*

In PLS, structure model gives inner modeling analysis of the direct relationship among the constructs of the study and their t-values as for as path coefficients. As argued by Hair *et al*, (2014), the path coefficient is same like standardized beta coefficient and regression analysis. Where beta values of the coefficient of the regression and t-values are examined to decide on the significance. Following the rule of thumb by Hair *et al*., (2014), boostraping method was performed (with 500 sampling iterations for 270 cases / observations) to obtain beta values of the coefficient of the regression and t-values which greater than 1.64 is considered to be as significant, which is further used for making decisions on the purposed hypothesis.

The basic purpose of this study is to test the hypothesized relationships among the variables through structural model. In this study one (1) hypothesis which has direct relationships were tested and supported. As shown in Table 4, career concern has a significant positive relationship with turnover intention ($\beta = 0.195$, T-value = 3.26).

Table 4 *Summary of Hypothesis Testing*

NO	Hypothesized Path	Path Cofficient	Standard Error (STERR)	T-Value	P-Value	Decision
1	CS -> TI	0.3981	0.0510	7.80	0.001	**Supported**

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In general the purpose of this study is examining the relationships between career concern, and employees' turnover intention. The results of the statistical analysis provide the evidence that career concern do influence turnover intention. Hence, career related factors such as career concern do have some bearing on employees decisions to leave their organizations, and this factor must be examine more closely.

One of the main objective of this study was to examine the effect of Career concern on turnover intention, and the findings confirms the findings of previous studies (Cohen, 1991; Flaherty & Pappas, 2002; Conway, 2004; Greenhaus, 1987; Super, 1957; Griffin *et al.*, 2013) in which it was found that this variable has a significant positive effect on turnover intention. In fact, in this study Career concern have been found as one of the most important predictor of employee turnover intention. In other words, if employees are highly concerned about their career (i.e. the progression of their career) they are more likely to leave their current organization, especially if their prospect of advancing their career is not clear or non-existence. It is normal for people who are concerned about advancing their career to move from one organization to another. They do this especially when the other organization offers a better salary or/and better position. In addition to that, having work experience in several organizations usually looks good on an individual's resume, and often builds up ones' credibility. Hence, these cause such employees to move from one organization to another.

Based on these findings, it is important for organizations to overcome the issue of employee turnover intention, organization also must provide career development programs for accommodating employee's career needs and also provide career growth opportunities to satisfy their expectations. By doing this, the awareness of organization also increases on the issue regarding the career concern of employees related to their turnover behavior.

In conclusion it has been shown that Career concern was a factor for which employees reported dissatisfaction which ultimately increase the employee turnover intention. The finding of this study gives strong support for the argument career concern absolutely influences turnover intention. It also indicates that failure to implement this factor might be one of the reasons organizations were not much more successful in reducing employee turnover. Therefore, the managers and policy makers should make some strategies and policies for career development of employees.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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