

Relative Dissatisfaction and Its Impact on Employees' Intention to Quit

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Abstract

This study aims at showing the factors of relative job dissatisfaction and the influence of those factors on employee intention to quit. The study has conducted a field survey of 143 respondents from different famous private sector companies of Bangladesh. The findings of this study are that most of the factors of relative job dissatisfaction lead to employee intention to quit. Such as: in the expectation of more pay and better working conditions employees intend to quit the job or organization, similarly employees possess the intention to quit when they want to lessen their workload or to get good supervision. Likewise, employees possess the intention to quit the job or organization in case of getting sound retirement benefits. On the other hand, employees are not found to possess the intention to quit the organization or job in order to get and accept more challenging jobs. The findings of this study will help manager and concerned authorities to be aware about the factors of relative job dissatisfaction of an employee as well as to take care about the factors that lead the employees to possess the intention to quit the organization which is similarly harmful for any organization as the real turnover.

Keywords: Relative dissatisfaction, turnover intention, factors, turnover.

1. Introduction

1.1 Relative Dissatisfaction

Relative dissatisfaction may be defined as a situation in which employees are not directly dissatisfied with the current jobs but search for better opportunities. DoMonte 2010 defines relative dissatisfaction as the intensity of seeking for another job. Lambert (1991) and Allen and Van Der Velden (2001) define it as the behavior of employed individuals who search for a better job while others do not. So relative dissatisfaction of an employee regarding his or her job refers to the situation whereby he or she is not dissatisfied with his/her current job but the tendency to seek another better alternative job.

1.2 Dissatisfaction and Turnover intention

Dissatisfaction with one's job may result in higher employee intention to quit (Chaulagain, & Khadka, 2012). Mobley's (1977) model suggests that thinking of quitting is the next logical step an employee experiences after dissatisfaction, but there are several other steps an employee might undergo before actually quitting. Those steps include: evaluation of expected utility of search and cost of quitting, intention to search for alternatives, search for alternatives, evaluation of alternatives, comparison of alternatives vs. present job, and intending on leaving (Mobley, 1977). In some study the relationship between job dissatisfaction and employee intention to quit is described as a process in which job dissatisfaction is the first step, followed by intention to leave, which finally, in some cases, can result in actual turnover (Mobley et al., 1978; Bannister and Griffith, 1986). Hom and Griffith (1991) proposed that dissatisfaction may stimulate a general predisposition to withdraw, thus mobilizing more specific withdrawal intentions and employees are most apt to engage in the behavioral response of exit when experiencing dissatisfaction. Delfgaauw (2007) argued that employees' intention to quit is a result of dissatisfaction and its relevance is based on assumption that dissatisfied workers are more likely to search a new job than satisfied workers. He points out three main reasons that workers may have intention to leave their current job and search for a new one: (i) discomfort with an organization's specific job domain, like management; (ii) availability of a new job opportunity which yields higher expected utility than the current job; (iii) a feeling that some aspects of their current job can be improved upon (Delfgaauw 2007). March and Simon (1958) argued that employee intention to departure results from two main factors. The first one is the perception about ease of movement from job to job that has evolved to mean perceived job alternatives. The second one is the desirability of movement that has evolved to mean job satisfaction. It is also supported in the work of Mobley (1977), he argued that staff turnover intention results from a particular combination of job dissatisfaction and perceived job alternatives.

2. Prior Empirical Works

Most of the previous literature emphasize that job dissatisfaction can be a strong incentive to seek alternative opportunities and this ultimately most of the time initiates employee intention to quit the current job.

1. Lambert (1991) and Allen & Van Der Velden (2001)

Lambert (1991) and Allen and Van Der Velden (2001) in their studies identified the theory of On-The-Job Search which explains the behavior of employed individuals who search for a better job while others do not. This behavior of the employees they labeled as relative dissatisfaction.

2. Lee and Mitchell (1994)

In their study they proposed that not only job dissatisfaction causes the process of employees' intention to quit or job turnover but also the subjective expected utility of the other opportunities.

3. March and Simon (1958)

They argued that voluntary employee departure intention results from two main factors. The first one is the perception about ease of movement from job to job that has evolved to mean perceived job alternatives. The second one is the desirability of movement that has evolved to mean job satisfaction.

4. Mobley (1977)

He argued that staff turnover intention results from a particular combination of job dissatisfaction and perceived job alternatives. In this study he formulated a model which suggests that thinking of quitting is the next logical step an employee experiences after dissatisfaction, but there are several other steps an employee might undergo before actually quitting. Those steps include: evaluation of expected utility of search and cost of quitting, intention to search for alternatives, search for alternatives, evaluation of alternatives, comparison of alternatives vs. present job, and intending on leaving

5. Do Monte, (2010)

He identified job dissatisfaction is actually a variable on-the-job search intensity of those people who were currently employed. This condition (being employed) is what he showed as the concept of relative dissatisfaction. Every worker in this condition can decide whether to look for a new job or not. Do Monte, (2010) outlined that each employed worker is able to determine his own level of job satisfaction. Thus, even considering that their level of satisfaction is high, the employee may seek a new job because he expects to further increase the level of job satisfaction. Hence, the demand for new job may not be directly related to job dissatisfaction in current position but the expectation of achieving a higher expected utility (job satisfaction) with a new employment. In this context, the measure of job dissatisfaction adopted is based on-the-job search behavior of employed workers and it depends on the intensity of the search which can assume different levels of dissatisfaction. The proxy variable used to measure the degree of the job dissatisfaction (relative dissatisfaction) is the intensity of seeking for another job.

6. Lee et al., (1999); Lee et al., (1996); Lee & Mitchell, (1994)

They showed the unfolding model of voluntary turnover, the model in their study identifies four major turnover paths which are differentiated by the different combinations of (a) the presence or absence of a shock as a turnover initiator, b) the presence or absence of a scripted action plan for a specific shock, (c) the relative level of job dissatisfaction in the decision process, (d) the presence or absence of an alternative job. Some turnover paths are initiated by a shock. A shock is a jarring event that leads someone to deliberate (to grow intention) about leaving his or her job and can be negative, positive, or neutral; job-related or non-job-related; internal or external to the individual; and expected or unexpected events (e.g., unsolicited job offers, promotion, changes in marital state, transfers, firm mergers, etc.)

7. Lee (2013)

Being forwarded from the unfolding model of turnover Lee divided the movers of the path #3 Lee et al., (1999) of the unfolding model into two subgroups. One subgroup consists of leavers who are quite satisfied with their current jobs, but still leave for a better alternative (e.g., an unsolicited job offer). Another subgroup consists of leavers having the intention to leave or ultimately leave who are not dissatisfied with their current jobs, but leave for something better when a certain kind of shock creates relative dissatisfaction (e.g., a career change after recovering from an illness).

8. Pathman et al (2002)

They studied the job satisfaction, dissatisfaction and turnover intention or the ultimate turnover of the physicians and the major findings of their study is relative dissatisfaction with pay and with relationships with communities are associated with plans for leaving in nearly all physician groups. For specific specialty and age groups, anticipated departure is also correlated with relative dissatisfaction with other selected areas of work.

3. Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are to describe the factors of relative job dissatisfaction as identified in the earlier literature and to show the influence of these factors on the employees' intention to quit.

4. Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis

This study described the employees' intention to quit (turnover intention) as dependent variable and the factors of relative dissatisfaction as dependent variables those are: income and working conditions, supervision and workload, retirement benefits and job challenges. Hence it will construct the regression model using multiple regression

analysis. The model is as follows:

$$Y = a + b_1 x_1 + b_2 x_2 + b_3 x_3 + \dots + b_n x_n$$

Where,

Y= Intention to quit

x₁, x₂, x₃, and x_n= The factors of relative job dissatisfaction

a= constant

b₁, b₂, b₃, and b_n= The coefficients

Therefore, the outline of the model of the study is:

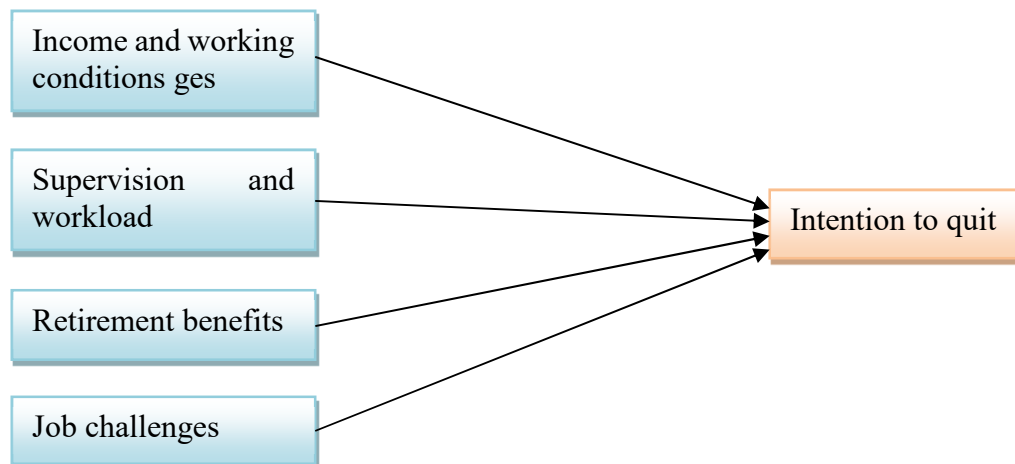


Figure 1: the turnover intention model caused by relative job dissatisfaction

Hypothesis: this study drew the following hypotheses in order to show whether there is any influence of the factors of relative dissatisfaction on employees' intention to quit:

H_{a1} = There is a significant influence of Income and working conditions on employee intention to quit;

H_{a2} = There is a significant influence of Supervision and workload on employee intention to quit;

H_{a3} = There is a significant influence of Retirement benefits on employee intention to quit;

H_{a4} = There is a significant influence of Job challenges on employee intention to quit;

5. Methodology

5.1 Sampling area and sample selection

This research was based on a field work conducted in two largest cities of Bangladesh: Dhaka and Chittagong. Simple random sampling technique was used to collect data from the respondents.

The survey questionnaire was distributed to 150 employees of different renowned private sector companies of Bangladesh as: banks, insurances, garments, pharmaceuticals and private universities. Among the distributed questionnaire 148 responses were received. Of them 5 unusable responses were found. Eliminating those 143 respondents' data was used for this study.

5.2 Sources of data

Both the primary and secondary data were used in the present study. Secondary data and information were collected from the existing literature in the said field and the primary data and were collected through the questionnaire survey.

5.3 Questionnaire design and tools used

A structured questionnaire with both closed and open ended questions was used for collecting primary data. For the closed ended questions, five point Likert scale was used, where: 1= strongly agree, 2 =agree, 3= neutral (neither agree nor disagree), 4= disagree, and 5= strongly disagree. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyze and interpret the data. The following table 1 shows the factors (variables/constructs) of relative job dissatisfaction and their corresponding items which was included in the questionnaire:

Table 1: constructs (variables) and corresponding items

Constructs	Corresponding items	References
Income and working conditions	1. Expectation of high salary; 2. Expectation of more secured job; 3. In search of better working environment; 4. To get more sound administration; 5. In search of more renowned institution and 6. To get more facilities.	Alam and Hasan (2015); Talukder et. al (2014); Alam and Bhuiyan (2015); Islam and Alam (2015)
Supervision and workload	1. To get more freedom at work; 2. In search of less work pressure; 3. To get less work hours.	
Retirement benefits	1. Availability of pension facilities; 2. To get provident fund facilities; 3. To get gratuity facilities.	
Job challenges	In search of more challenging jobs	

5.4 Reliability and validity of data

The initial reliability of the items was verified by computing the Cronbach's alpha. The Cronbach's alpha suggests that a minimum alpha of .6 is sufficed for early stage of research. The Cronbach's alpha estimated for all of the variables was .815 (table 2). As the Cronbach's alpha was much higher than .6 the constructs were therefore deemed to have adequate reliability. Prior to data collection, the questionnaire were given to 10 respondents to assess the completeness of language, as well as the understanding of the items and get suggestions.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.815	14

6. Analysis of Findings

This study has used the multiple linear regression analysis to test the hypotheses drawn in the framework part. The analysis and interpretation of the data are shown in the following table:

6.1 Test of the hypotheses

The following table 3 shows the regression coefficients relating to the factors of job dissatisfaction and their influence on employee intention to quit, which also determine the accept-reject criteria of the hypotheses drawn in this study:

Table 3: The regression model summary

Independent Variables	Hypotheses	B	t	P value	Comments
(Constant)		.655	2.162	.036	
Pay and working conditions	Ha1: IWC--> IQ	.062	6.787	.000	Accepted
Supervision and workload	Ha2: SW--> IQ	.216	5.430	.000	Accepted
Retirement benefits	Ha3: RB--> IQ	.071	6.402	.000	Accepted
Job challenges	Ha4: JC--> IQ	.042	.706	.484	Rejected
Dependent Variable: Intention to quit, $r^2 = .874$, adjusted $r^2 = .707$					

The table (table 3) shows that the hypotheses Ha1, Ha2 and Ha3 are accepted and the hypothesis Ha4 are rejected. That means pay and working conditions, supervision and workload and retirement benefits have a significant influence on the employee intention to quit on the other hand the job challenges has no significant influence on the employee intention to quit. Elaborately it can be said that in the expectation of more pay and better working conditions employees intend to quit the job or organization, similarly employees possess the intention to quit when they want to lessen their workload or to get good supervision. Likewise, employees possess the intention to quit the job or organization in case of getting sound retirement benefits. But regarding the job challenges employees are found to be fearful. That means employees are not intended to quit the organization or job in order to get and accept more challenging jobs.

In the above table it is also seen that the value of r square is .874 and adjusted r square is .707. In case of multiple regression analysis the value of adjusted r square is to interpret. So over 70% of the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables in the model of this study.

7. Conclusion

Probably most widely studied topic of organizational behavior is job satisfaction. Human expectation is unlimited and changes relatively based on the existing available facilities and intention to get more than available. The study can conclude that the absence of elements of job satisfaction not only the reasons that employees intend to leave rather it depends on the deficiency of the existing organizational elements and conditions or even the willingness to get more from somewhere else (other organization). Different including this one define this issue as relative job dissatisfaction. It is impossible to limit satisfaction level within the capacity and boundary of an organization. Level of satisfaction differs from person to person, as no two human beings are identical. But there are some guiding factors which can determine the overall level of satisfaction of the employees in an organization. This study shows the factors of relative job dissatisfaction described in different literatures as: income and working conditions, supervision and workload, retirement benefits and job challenges. The findings of this study are that most of the factors of relative job dissatisfaction lead to employee intention to quit. Such as: in the expectation of more pay and better working conditions employees intend to quit the job or organization, similarly employees possess the intention to quit when they want to lessen their workload or to get good supervision. Likewise, employees possess the intention to quit the job or organization in case of getting sound retirement benefits. On the other hand, employees are not found to possess the intention to quit the organization or job in order to get and accept more challenging jobs.

8. Implications

Almost all of the managers or authorities are found worried about their employees go dissatisfied, absenteeism, having the intention to quit the organization or even ultimate for turnover. The findings of this study will help manager and concerned authorities to be aware about the factors of relative job dissatisfaction of an employee as well as to take care about the factors that lead the employees to possess the intention to quit the organization which is similarly harmful for any organization as the real turnover.

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