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EXPLORING THE FACTORS INFLUENCING TEACHERS' TURNOVER INTENTION IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS IN ETHIOPIA

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Abstract

The management of teacher turnover for any institution is thought to be a crucial issue in the competitive world of today. The study proposes to investigate factors, that determine teachers' turnover intention in Ethiopian government schools in the District of Aalicho Wuriro. Descriptive and explanatory research design, with a quantitative research approach, was used to achieve the objectives. Primary data from 274 teachers, were gathered by

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employing self-administered and modified questionnaires, using the Likert Scale. The results of the study revealed that job satisfaction (JS), workplace environment (WE), alternative job opportunity (AJO), employee supervisor relationship (ESR), salary, and work life balance (WLB) reported significant correlation with turnover intention (TI). The findings also revelaed that all independent variables, except alternative job opportunity, significantly determined TI. Finally, the researchers suggest to the local authorities and school administrators, to create pleasant and favourable working environment for the teachers. It is also important to create conducive environments where teachers feel they are valued.

1. Introduction

Institutions make huge investments in their employees' recruitment and selection, training and development, and retention, in order to reduce personnel turnover. Despite the lack of a common framework for studying staff turnover from a holistic perspective, wide arrays of factors have been found to be helpful in interpreting teacher turnover. Therefore, it is necessary to gain a deeper understanding of employee turnover, specifically its causes, effects, and possible solutions, that managers might implement to combat it. Whether it occurs through resignations or through terminations ordered by the employer, teacher turnover is potentially expensive and may have adverse effects. Organisations may experience a negative effect from employee turnover due to the high cost of hiring, training, and retaining recruits and productivity loss during the search for replacement employees. Against this background, **Ekabu (2019)** found human costs of turnover not only in the form of lost friendship and perks but also in the form of family disruption.

Teacher turnover is a global issue, affecting students all around the world **(Qin, 2019)**. Teachers' TI has far-reaching implications, for all types of profit and non-profit organisations. In the sphere of human resource management, the issue of TI is becoming increasingly significant. If an employee's desire to leave his current job develops into an actual turnover, new hires must be sought and organised. It is also expected to consider the time and money required for another worker to perform as efficiently as desirable. Teachers' turnover is an important factor in many schools around the world. The term "teacher turnover" refers to the ratio between the average number of teachers in a school and the number of teachers that must be replaced in a certain time period. Teachers' turnover is defined by **Beam (2009)** as the estimation of the number of employees that a school should hire to replace the present workforce, during a specific time period.

Keeping track of teacher turnover is regarded as a crucial duty for every school in today's competitive world. Achieving the institutional long-term goal, requires successful turnover management. All schools worry about teacher turnover but historically, the education sector has experienced it at a particularly high rate, with more than one third of teachers leaving the school during their first three to five years

of employment **(Ingersoll & Strong, 2011)**. The higher education institutions will be affected as a result of turnover in recruitment and selection, training and development, induction and orientation cost **(Harris and Ellis, 2018; Ajayi and Olatunji, 2019)**. Higher number of turnover results in loss of talented employees, which has a detrimental impact on organisational effectiveness **(Shin and Jeung, 2019)**.

2. Review of Literature

Deniz (2020) defined turnover intentions, also referred to as quits, as employees' intentional and purposeful desire to leave the school. For the sake of this study, teachers' anticipated likelihood that they will leave a school at specific stage, is referred to as teacher TI. **Rizwan et al., (2014)** investigated the factors influencing TI of teachers in a study done in Pakistan. The study concluded that organisational commitment affects employees' intentions to leave their jobs. Employee TI is low when there is a strong level of employee commitment to the organisation. This study discovered a correlation between employee involvement in self-governing work and issue solving and a reduced likelihood of turnover. Additionally, this study discovered a strong relationship between job performance and job happiness and turnover intention. **Khan & Qadir (2016)** examined the factors that influence teachers' intentions to leave their jobs. **Park (2015)** also looked at the factors that influence students' intention to leave higher education institutions. **Waititu (2013)** carried out a research in Kenya, to examine the variables affecting teacher retention in public secondary schools in the Limuru area. The study revealed that work discontent and inadequate pay, increased employees' intentions to leave their jobs, which ultimately led to actual turnover. The study concluded that characteristics of workplaces, including administrative issues, too much of work, and little engagement in decision-making, do in fact cause discontent, which finally results in turnover.

Jeston (2013) conducted another research in Tanzania, with the goal of evaluating teacher turnover and how it affected secondary school students' academic performance. The major finding of this study was socio-economic and political factors were the dominant factors for the existence of teachers' turnover. Alternative job opportunities refer to the potential employment options that individuals have outside of their current job. These opportunities can arise from various sources such as job postings, networking, or headhunting. The relationship between alternative job opportunities and TI is a complex one **(Seman et al., 2022)**. On the one hand, the presence of attractive alternative job opportunities can increase an employee's likelihood of considering leaving the current position. This is particularly true if the alternative offers better compensation, benefits, career growth prospects, or a more desirable work environment. The existence of jobs, with higher salaries elsewhere, is one of the most frequently cited reasons, offered by employees, for leaving their current employers. A study, conducted by **Ekabu (2019),** discovered that compensation was substantially connected with TI among secondary school teachers in Meru Kenya. According to **Nawab and Bhatti (2011)**, compensation is one of the factors influencing employee turnover. The working environment is one of the things, that could influence a teacher's intention to leave teaching. According to **Kakar et al., (2022)**, the main reason for employees' strong intention to leave their positions is unfavourable and inadequate working conditions. The working environment, ignored within most organisations, has a negative impact

on the productivity of their staff **(Spector, 1997)**. A conducive work environment consists of employee safety, job security, exceptional relations with colleagues, recognition of good performance, motivation to do well and involvement in company decision making. JS has been noted as a crucial factor in predicting the likelihood of turnover. If they are not happy with their employment, employees are inclined to leave the company. JS has an impact on whether employees stay with the company or leave **(Aydogdu and Asikgil, 2011)**. Low JS had exerted significant and negative impact on Irish primary school teachers during COVID-19 **(Minihan et al., 2022)**. According to **Chaulagain and Khadka (2012)**, job dissatisfaction might lead to a higher rate of teacher turnover. JS and intention to leave are correlated. In addition to that, a study conducted by **Weldeyohannes (2016)** in Tigray, indicated that there was high dissatisfaction among teachers in relation to the rewards and benefits that they get.

Work-life balance has a major impact on employees' inclination to leave or stay with a company. According to Callan (2007), managing and stabilising personal needs, including family, hobbies, community work, and other activities, is the major goal of the work-life balance. The management must prioritise the concerns of the employees' work lives in the current, fiercely competitive labour market, where it is difficult to recruit and keep qualified workers. According to **Räsänen et al., (2020)**, lack of commitment and excessive workload were the main reasons for teacher TI. The majority of public organisation systems and operations are hierarchical and have a negative impact on the effectiveness and productivity of the organisation because this relationship is crucial in determining employees' intention to leave their jobs **(Muzeyin et al., 2022; Ahmed, et al., 2022)**. Employee turnover may be influenced significantly by their connection with management. Employees expect to have positive working relationships with managers and supervisors as well as to be treated fairly and with respect. Employees require supervisors, who are fair to them. Employee JS rises when they perceive their bosses to be fair, reasonable, and supportive. Additionally, JS among employees rises when the manager demonstrates concern for the welfare of the team as well as emotional intelligence and support **(Thomran et. al, 2021)**.

3. Statement of the Problem

Teacher turnover is a worldwide issue, that affects students all over the world **(Qin, 2019).** Teachers' TI has some remarkable consequences for any type of profit or non-profit making organizations. In the field of human resource management, the issue of TI is becoming a serious issue. According to **Toker (2011),** the basic determinant of teacher turnover is psychological factors like organizational commitment and JS. In South Africa, a study conducted by **Neinaber and Masibigiri, (2012),** on determinants of teacher TI, indicated that factors for teacher TI were rigid and poor work environment, absence of training, lack of recognition, better job offer, poor career path, limited job opportunity, low salary and absence of organizational justice. The optimal teacher turnover rate, according to many research publications, is 10% of the total number of employees per year. However, the Alicho Wuriro area in Ethiopia has an annual growth rate of about 11.2%, which is much higher than the average. Although a sizable percentage of employees leave over the course of the six academic years, the actual reason for teacher turnover has not been found, and to the best of

the researchers' knowledge, no research has been done about TI in the Ethiopian District of Alicho Wuriro. It is, therefore, evident that there is a research gap that needs to be filled. Hence the aim of this study is to fill this gap by identifying the variables, that affect teachers' intention to leave the government schools of District of Alicho Wuriro in Ethiopia.

4. Need of the Study

The study introduces a novel theoretical framework, for understanding the factors that influence teachers' intention to leave government schools in Ethiopia. Further, it makes some practical advice to policymakers on how to monitor and reduce teacher turnover intentions. Finally, scholars and academics will see it as valuable addition to the relevant literature. The study is one of the most recent on this subject, to the best of the researchers' knowledge.

5. Objective of the study

The study was undertaken to determine the factors, that influence teachers' turnover intentions, in government schools in Ethiopia.

6. Hypotheses of the Study

H_1: Alternative job opportunity has no significant impact on teacher TI in Alicho Wuriro district schools.

H_2: Salary has no significant impact on teacher TI in Alicho Wuriro district schools.

H_3: Working environment has no significant impact on teacher TI in Alicho Wuriro district schools.

H_4: Job specification has no significant impact on teacher TI Alicho Wuriro district schools.

H_5: Work life balance has no significant impact on teachers' TI in Alicho Wuriro district schools.

H_6: Employee supervisor relationship has no significant impact on teacher TI in Alicho Wuriro district schools

7. Research Methodology

7.1 Sample Selection

The target population of the study was 875, who were working in the Alicho Wuriro schools. The sample size was calculated, by using the (Yemane, 1967) sample size determination formula. The sampling design, utilized in this study, was probabilistic sampling, with a simple random sampling technique. Accordingly, 274 respondents were selected as the sample from those schools and the valid responses for the analysis were 266.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$ Where; n = sample size

N = total population size

e = is the error term tolerable=0.05

$$n = \frac{875}{1+875(0.05)^2} = \frac{875}{3.19} = 274 \text{ teachers.}$$

7.2 Sources of Data

The study used both primary and secondary data. The primary data were taken from teachers in Alicho Wuriro district schools in Ethiopia, using structured questionnaires. Secondary data were collected from books, journals, magazines, websites and others relevant sources.

7.3 Period of Study

The study was conducted during November 2022 and April 2023.

7.4 Tools used in this study

Descriptive analysis, correlation, and multiple regression models were performed, using SPSS software.

8. Data Analysis

Data were collected from a sample of teachers and analysed in accordance with the study's objectives. The study utilised quantitative analysis. Pearson Correlation is a statistical approach, for determining whether or not there is a link between the dependent and independent variables. Further, regression analysis was used to determine which independent variables were most relevant in explaining teachers' turnover intention.

8.1 Demographic Profiles of the sample from Alicho Wuriro District Schools in Ethiopia

Descriptive analysis of the sample yielded personal information of respondents, as shown in **Table-1**. The information, analysed in this part, was related to respondents' gender, age, levels of education and marital status. The demographic characteristics of the respondents revealed that the majority of respondents were male, represented by 199(74.8%) of the whole sample, while female were represented by 67 (25.2%). Regarding the composition of age, it was found that 152(57.1%) respondents were between the age of 26-35, 92 (34.6%) respondents were in the age category of 18-26, 12(4.5%) respondents were between the age of 36-45, and 10(3.8%) respondents were between the age of 45 and above. In other words, majority of respondents were in the age group between 26 to 35. The results of the level of education revealed that 138 (51.9%) respondents reported diploma qualification, 125(47%) respondents had acquired degree qualification and 3 (1.1%) respondents possessed masters qualification. In otherwords, majority of teachers reported diploma qualification. Majority of respondents were married, represented by 186 (69.9%) of the whole sample while unmarried respondents were represented by 80 (30.1%).

8.2 Correlation Analysis Regarding Factors Influencing Teachers' Turnover Intention in Government Schools in Ethiopia

In this study, Pearson's correlation analysis was performed, to quantify the strength of correlation between instructors' intention to leave the profession and its influencing factors (**Table-2**). According to **Pallant (2016)**, the correlation coefficient, which ranges from -1 to +1, is a highly helpful tool for summarising the relationship between two variables. Following the instructions provided by **(Field, 2009)**, his classification of the correlation coefficient (r) was used to interpret the correlation result and the strength of the association between variables. 0.1 to 0.3 is weak. Moderate is defined as 0.3 to 0.5 and strong is above 0.5. The correlation matrix, in the Table, shows that there was moderate and strong correlation between the working environment, employee supervisor relationship, work life balance, alternative job opportunity, salary, JS and turnover intention. Therefore, the correlation magnitude was r = 0,430, 0.667, 0.737, 0.393, 0.627, 0.832, with p-value=0.000. Among all determinant factors, JS recorded the highest correlation coefficient at 0.832 while alternative job opportunity registered the least correlation coefficient, at 0.393.

8.3 Multiple Regressions Regarding the Factors Influencing Teachers' Turnover Intention in Government Schools in Ethiopia

Regression and Correlation techniques imply a relationship between two different variables, and both use the same set of fit scores, drawn from similar subjects (**Marczyk et al., 2005)**. Regression analysis is classified into two

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types: simple regression and multiple regressions. Researchers attempt to estimate the dependent variable, using an independent variable in simple regression. Multiple regressions estimate or predict the dependent variable, using more than one independent variable. Hence multiple regression analysis was utilised in this study, to determine how much the independent variable, would predict the dependent variable. The regression analysis revealed that the significance levels of six independent variables, namely, JS, Alternative Job Opportunity, Working Environment, Salary, Work Life Balance, Employee Supervisor Relationship, recorded at 0.000, 0.307, 0.000, 0.000, 0.000 , 0.000 and 0.04 respectively, were less than 0.05. This demonstrated a considerable link between the independent and dependent variables. Since the predictor variable coefficients were statistically significant at less than 0.05, then all the alternative hypotheses were accepted, except the alternative job opportunities against which the null hypothesis was accepted. As shown in **Table-3**, the Beta Coefficient (B) result indicates the degree of the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable.

9. Findings of the Study

❖ The results of the study revealed that majority of respondents were male whereas the minority was females. With regard to education level, the study's results found that the majority of respondents had a diploma qualification. Additionally, the majority of respondents were married.

❖ The results of the study revealed that majority of respondents tended to agree with the studied factors, that would affect teacher turnover intention, with different levels of agreement.

❖ Based on Pearson correlation coefficient, the study established moderate, strong and positive significant correlation between salary, job satisfaction, work life balance, alternative job opportunity, employee supervisor relationship and work environment and teachers' turnover intention

❖ The regression analysis results indicated that salary, employee-supervisor relationship, job satisfaction, work-life balance significantly influenced teachers' turnover intention to leave the school.

❖ Further, the study's findings demonstrated that the working environment did have considerable impact on instructors' intentions to leave. However, the study's findings found that alternative work did not have any impact on teachers' turnover intention to leave their schools.

10. Suggestions

To reduce skilled teachers' TI as well as their actual turnover, the researchers recommend that the management and school administrators should consider the salary issues. They should pay sufficient salary, that matches with other equivalent qualification in other industries. The immediate superiors should recognise teachers for their achievements, create favourable and achievable functioning of the school and create opportunities to involve teachers in the activities of the school. Work pressure should be minimized to allow teachers, to enjoy their personal life. The amount of leisure time given to teachers should be reasonable. Considering the feeling of teachers to balance their personal and work life, should be paid more attention.

11. Conclusion

Salary, JS, work-life balance, alternative job opportunities, employee-supervisor relationship, and work environment all played significant roles in determining TI. A competitive salary would

help employees to feel valued and motivated to stay with the organization. JS is crucial as it directly impacts an employee's commitment and loyalty to the job. Maintaining a healthy work-life balance allows employees to have personal time and reduces burnout. Alternative job opportunities can tempt employees to leave if they perceive better prospects elsewhere. A positive employee-supervisor relationship fosters trust and support, reducing TI. Lastly, a conducive work environment that promotes collaboration and growth positively influences TI, by creating a sense of belonging and engagement among employees. This study was aimed to investigate the factors contributing to teachers' TI in Alicho Wuriro District. This was done by investigating the relationship between each determinant factor and TI, using correlation and regression analysis.

The findings of the study revealed that 83.4 % of the variance on TI can be predicted by salary, JS, work life balance, alternative job opportunity, employee supervisor relationship and work environment. The results of regression analysis indicated that the five independent variables, except alternative job opportunity, significantly affected teachers' intention to leave the school. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that all hypotheses could be accepted, except the hypothesis related to alternative job opportunity, which was rejected.

12. Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study was delimited to factors, that influence teachers' turnover intentions in government schools in the District of Alicho Wuriro in Ethiopia. One limitation of the study was its narrow scope, which restricted the generalizability of the findings. By focusing solely on government schools within the District of Alicho Wuriro in Ethiopia, the study was not able to fully capture the diverse range of factors, which could influence teachers' turnover intentions in other regions or types of educational institutions. As such, the findings may not be applicable to broader contexts beyond the specific district under investigation. Additionally, factors, unique to other regions or types of schools, were not considered, potentially limiting the comprehensiveness of the study's conclusions.

13. Scope for further research

The current study covered selected government schools in the District of Alicho Wuriro in Ethiopia. Future studies may focus on extending the area of research and increasing the sample size of schools. It may also take into consideration the moderation effect of other variables. Additionally, researchers could investigate additional factors that may contribute to teachers' decisions to leave their positions, such as promotion, training, professional development opportunities, and socio-economic factors. Conducting longitudinal studies could also provide valuable insights into how these factors evolve over time and their impact on turnover rates.

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Table-1: Descriptive Analysis of Teacher in Alicho Wuriro District schools in Ethiopia

No	Particulars	Frequency	Percent (%)
1	**Gender**		
	Male	199	74.8
	Female	67	25.2
2	**Age**	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
	18-25	92	34.6
	26-35	152	57.1
	36-45	12	4.5
	Above 46	10	3.8
3	**Level**	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
	Diploma	138	51.9
	Degree	125	47.0
	Masters	3	1.1
4	**Marital Status**	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
	Married	186	69.9
	Unmarried	80	30.1

Source: Primary Data & Computed using SPSS

Table-2: Results of Correlation Analysis Regarding Factors Influencing Teachers' Turnover Intention in Government Schools in Ethiopia

	Turnover Intention	Working Environment	Employee Supervisor Relation Ship	Work Life Balance	Alternative Job Opportunity	Salary	JS
TI Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-Tailed) N	1 266						
Working Environment Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-Tailed) N	0.430** 0.000 266	1 266					
Employee Supervisor Relation Ship Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-Tailed) N	.667** 0.000 266	.247** 0.000 266	1 266				

Work Life Balance Pearson Correlation	.737**	.205**	..582**	1			
Sig. (2-Tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000				
N	266	266	266	266			
Alternative Job Opportunity Pearson Correlation	.393**	.260**	.233**	0.129*	1		
Sig. (2-Tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.036			
N	266	266	266	266	266		
Salary Pearson Correlation	0.627**	0.276**	0.603**	0.367**	0.234**	1	
Sig. (2-Tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
N	266	266	266	266	266	266	
JS Pearson Correlation	0.832**	0.381**	0.538**	0.654**	0.171**	0.477**	1
Sig. (2-Tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.005	0.000	
N	266	266	266	266	266	266	266

Source: Primary Data & Computed using SPSS

Table-3: Results of Regression Analysis Regarding the Factors Influencing Teachers' Turnover Intention in Government Schools in Ethiopia

Coefficients							
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Decision based on the finding
	Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	
1	(Constant)	0.871	1.027		-4.744	0.000	
	Working Environment	0.202	0.047	0.123	4.347	0.000	Accepted
	Employee Supervisor Relationship	0.106	0.036	0.107	2.913	0.004	Accepted
	Work Life Balance	0.456	0.058	0.282	7.800	0.000	Accepted
	Alternative Job Opportunity	-0.060	0.058	-0.027	-1.023	0.307	Rejected
	Salary	0.269	0.040	0.221	6.680	0.000	Accepted
	JS	0.537	0.045	0.443	11.912	0.000	Accepted

Dependent Variable: Teachers TI
Coefficients of the predictor variables were statistically significant at less than 0.05
Source: Primary Data & Computed using SPSS