

Job Satisfaction and Perceived Organizational Support as a Susceptibility Factor of the Intention to Quit: A Cross-Cultural Study

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Organizational support has been accredited valuable consideration due to its profound impact on the workplace. Job satisfaction has been observed to be influenced by how supportive a work setting is perceived to be. Moreover, organizational support has been observed to influence the intention to quit. The present study investigated employee's satisfaction with their jobs and intention to quit and the mediating role of perceived organizational support. A sample of 146 participants was collected from organizations. A data of 73 participants were collected from Karachi, Pakistan and 73 participants were collected from Abu Dhabi, UAE. Administration of the research measure on participants included: Demographic Details, the Global Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (GJSQ), Perceived Organizational Support Scale (POSS) and Intention to Quit Scale. It was found that job satisfaction significantly predicts the intention to quit and perceived organizational support ($p < .000$). Moreover, perceived organizational support predicts intention to quit ($p < .000$) significantly. However, perceived organizational support doesn't mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and the intention to quit ($p > .05$).

Keywords: Job satisfaction, intention to quit, perceived organizational support

As the world of retail and business advances, organizations also undergo transitional phases where downturn has been one of the serious issues adversely affecting this particular sector. Worldwide, banking organizations are in desperate financial assistance from the government due to the major crisis they have undergone. During this recession period, most companies have been forced to lower their costs in order to survive, where the competitive world is at its peak. An often used strategy in practice to deal with increased expenses is to reduce employee costs by either terminating employees or reduce employee career opportunities. This whole situation gives birth to the most devastating mental state where an employee feels dissatisfied with the job he has. If an employee no longer experiences job satisfaction, he surely will lose interest in the job and would feel overburdened and stressed due to the mammoth amount of work load.

Due to the uncertain job market, organizations have been extensively studied mainly to understand the determinants which contribute towards job satisfaction. It is said to be the most frequently researched area in the field of research in Industrial and Organizational Psychology where colossal amount of evidences contribute to the betterment of the organizational sector mainly because work can be termed as one of the key components in our lives (Levy, 2006). It is difficult to define job satisfaction with reference to a particular construct. In the previous years, many different models have been studied by the researchers to explain the concept of job satisfaction. Muchinsky (2006) stated that it is the level of pleasure yielded from the jobs by an employee. Outcome from a job such as presentation, turnover and intention to quit are considered to have a profound link with job satisfaction (Brown & Peterson, 1993). Employees will have a higher degree of job satisfaction if their expectation is parallel with what they are actually receiving from it (Levy, 2006).

Employee's decision of either continuing the current career can be influenced with job satisfaction with an organization (Knight, Crutsinger, & Kim 2006). That's when an employee decides to either quit his job or stay in it till he gets a new option. It has been discovered that job satisfaction is a significant predictor of intention to leave the job for both the genders (Lease, 1998). In order to assist in understanding the means to reduce turnover, the impact job satisfaction has on intention to quit will prove to be extremely important (Tan, Tan, & Tiong, 2007).

To be precise, actual behavior can be determined instantly with intentions (Firth, Mellor, Moore, & Loquet, 2004). A predecessor of actually leaving a job can be defined as an intention to quit (Mobley, Horner, & Hollingsworth, 1978). The avoidant behavior an employee elicits at work increases the level of dissatisfaction with one's job (Mobley, 1977). Job satisfaction is strongly detrimental to intention to quit (Johnston, Varadarajan, Futrell, & Sager, 1987). However, there are multiple explanations linked with one's intention to quit the particular job. The literature elicits that supportive organizational settings will have an affirmative association with job satisfaction whereas unconstructive associations with the intention to quit and work stress. Thus, supporting the fact that if an employee perceives his organization to be supportive, his intention to quit his job would reduce significantly.

Currently it has been discovered that social support has the capability to mediate the interaction amongst job satisfaction and intention to quit. The direction and potential of the interaction between independent and dependent variables is said to be affected by a mediator (Baron & Kenny, 1986). In the research conducted during the previous years, both

supervisory and organizational support were considered as mediators (Karasek, Triantis, & Chaudhry, 1982)

The focus of the present study is to further the research on organizational support, specifically focusing on the mediating relationship between organizational support and job satisfaction. Few researches support the idea that job satisfaction is dependent on how well the organization deals with the internal matters which would affect the growth of the organization e.g. administration and support while executing tasks, job related complexities, communicative competencies at the management level, training and promotion policies, (Anderson, 1984). In the ocean of expensive literature, a positive relationship is depicted in various kinds of supports which also include organizational support and job satisfaction (Baruch-Feldman, Brondolo, Ben-Dayana, & Schwartz, 2002).

Organizational support has the magical impact where it can convert a work atmosphere into a pleasant or an unpleasant place to spend time in. Social support and the workplace have been studied extensively in the previous years, to be precise the role of supervisor support was of great interest. Social relations in the workplace may make a key contribution to employees' job satisfaction, productivity and well-being (Hodson, 1997). Rewards which are tangible (influence over policy, salary, designation) prove to elevate perceived support (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). Organizational support and its relationship with job satisfaction are examined here to see if the above evidence holds true in a retail environment. The present research aimed to provide insight into how job satisfaction affects the intention to quit an organization and the mediating role of perceived organizational support plays at work.

In a nutshell, the current study aims at understanding the interaction between the variable of job satisfaction and the intention to quit the job. Mediating role of the variable perceived organizational support was also catered and how the presence of a supportive environment can lead to a healthy mental functioning which would enhance the overall productivity of a person. To be precise, the current study aimed at investigating the psychological pressure an employee would feel if he lacks a comforting organization environment. Moreover, it also targets the studying of the aftermath of job satisfaction and organizational support. Therefore, one of the variables of interest of the present study is the intention to quit. No employee will leave his job if he is satisfied with it or feels valued. Various researches have shown extensive evidences on the interaction between all the variables. Few of the studies are mentioned in the following literature. Perceived organizational support can reduce absenteeism, affects the commitment they feel to the organization and influence turnover (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). Furthermore, it was expected that the results of the present study would find similar findings, that organizational support can reduce an employee's intention to quit (McCalister, Dolbier, Webster, Mallon, & Steinhardt, 2006). The feelings produced from resulting in being treasured are seen to create more satisfaction in employees and lessen their inclination to quit the organization (Levy, 2006). To sum it up, intentions to quit the job can prove to be harmful for the quality of work which would result in job dissatisfaction. However, if an employee feels that he has a supportive organization, he would be more satisfied with the job thus experiencing less intention to quit the job.

Hypotheses

- There will be a predictive association between job satisfaction and intention to quit.

- There will be a predictive association between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction.
- There will be a predictive association between perceived organizational support and intention to quit.
- Perceived organizational support would mediate the relationship of job satisfaction and intention to quit.

Method

Participants

Participants were selected using the purposive sampling technique. Data was collected from the various organizations such as private banks, audit firms and petroleum companies of Pakistan and UAE. The reason why UAE was chosen for the comparison was the close observation of the organizational setting in UAE which was very similar to the one in Pakistan. Moreover, a lot of Pakistani bankers migrate to UAE for good and spend their lives winning bread for their families for over 4 decades. The impact UAE's job market has on Pakistani employees is very profound. Thus, this study also gave the opportunity to investigate the level of job satisfaction Pakistani employees have within the country and abroad. Only Asian employees were selected from UAE due to the similar pressure they experience in their working environment as Pakistanis. In total there were 146 participants (mean age = 31.1; SD = 6.66) out of which 73 participants (57 males and 16 females) were from the private organizations in Karachi, Pakistan and 73 participants (49 males and 24 females) were collected from Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. The limited sample size was due to the busy schedules and unavailability of the participants. A total sample of 100 employees was contacted for the administration of the research measure out of which 27 had refused to spare time due to the work load. This lucidly shows how occupied they were with the workload which kept them away from sparing 10 minutes for the scale administration.

Measures

First of all, permission was taken from the authors of the research measures before starting the data collection. Later, the participants were provided with the research measures in the following sequence. Initially they were presented with the demographic form which had the following details: name, age, gender, education, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, income group, marital status, residential locality, occupation, job status (permanent or contract), number of jobs changed, designation, duration of work experience, job equity index, frustration index and total working hours at work.

Followed by the demographic form, **Global Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (GJSQ; Quinn & Shepard, 1974)** was administered which had 4 items and the responses were rated on the 7-point likert scale (*1= strongly disagree to 7= strongly agree*). Maximum score was 28 and minimum score was 3. Higher scores reflect a higher level of job satisfaction. It has a strong coefficient alpha reliability value of .83.

After this, **Perceived Organizational Support Scale (POSS; Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, & Lynch, 1997)** was administered. It is comprised of 8 items where the participants had to rate on a 7-point likert scale (*1= strongly disagree to 7= strongly agree*). It has a maximum score of 56 and minimum score of 8. Higher the scores, higher is

the perceived organizational support. The scale has good coefficient alpha reliability value i.e. .81.

After the administration of first two scales, **Intention to Quit Scale (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1979)** was presented to the participants. This scale had 3-items and the responses were rated on a 5-point likert scale where 1= *strongly disagree* to 5= *strongly agree*. Maximum score was 15 and minimum score was 3. Higher values reflect towards strongest intentions to quit the job. The scale’s alpha reliability value is .75.

Procedure

Since the present study employed a cross-cultural correlational method, the participants had to be approached in two separate countries. The managers of the organizations were initially contacted through the phone calls to take an appointment from them. They were then asked for permission verbally to administer research measures. After their approval, all the officer level employees were approached individually for the administration of the research measures. Each questionnaire took 7-10 minutes for the completion. The participants were informed about the purpose of the research which was then followed by debriefing them about the research measures. The research measures were administered in the same order in both countries. The participants were not informed about any time restriction. They had complete right of withdrawal from participating in the study. After the administration of the research measures, they were thanked for participating in the study and for sparing their valuable time for it.

Results

To evaluate demographic information, descriptive statistics were applied. Both Linear and Step Wise Regression Analyses were applied using SPSS-20. It was discovered that job satisfaction predicts intention to quit ($p < .000$). Perceived organizational support predicts job satisfaction and intention to quit ($p < .000$). However, perceived organizational support doesn’t mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and intention to quit ($p > .05$). Furthermore, analysis indicates that participants belonging to UAE score higher on the variables of intention to quit as compared to Pakistani participants ($p < .001$).

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Age of Sample

Variables	Males	Females	Total sample	
	M	M	M	SD
Age (total)	31.66	29.73	31.1	6.66
Age (Pak)	32.39	28.73	31.43	6.24
Age (UAE)	30.92	30.63	30.82	7.08

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of the Variable of Further Demographic Details Overall and Cross Culturally

Variables	Pakistan (n = 73)	U.A.E (n = 73)	Total sample (N = 146)
Marital Status			
Single	21	26	47
Engaged	4	4	8
Married	47	43	90
Divorced	1	0	1
Widow	0	0	0
Job Status			
Permanent	59	70	129
Contract	14	3	17
Input >Output			
YES	48	48	96
NO	25	25	50
Frustration Index			
YES	34	39	73
NO	39	34	73

Table 3

Summary of Linear Regression with Job Satisfaction (JS) as a Predictor of Intention to Quit (ItoQ)

Dependent Variables	R	R ²	Adj R ²
ItoQ	.491	.241	.236

df = 144

a. Predictors: (Constant), JS

b. Dependent Variable: ItoQ, POS,

Table 4

Summary of Linear Regression with Perceived Organizational Support (POS) as a Predictor of Job Satisfaction (JS) and Intention to Quit (ItoQ)

Dependent Variables	R	R ²	Adj R ²
JS	.493	.243	.238
ItoQ	.356	.127	.120

df = 144

a. Predictors: (Constant), POS

b. Dependent Variable: JS, ItoQ

Table 5
t-Tests Depicting the Cross Cultural findings on Overall Samples of all Variables

Variables	Mean change	t	p
JS	.918	1.064	.289
ItoQ	-2.49	-3.279	.001***
POS	.027	.023	.982

df = 144, ***p < .001

Table 6
Stepwise Regression Analysis Predicting Intention to Quit (ItoQ) from Job Satisfaction (JS) on Entire Sample, Perceived Organizational Support (POS) as the Mediator

Variables Entered	Model Summary			ANOVA		Coefficient				
	R	R ²	Adj R ²	F	p	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	p
Step I						B	SE	B		
Constant						20.599	1.337		15.412	.000
JS	.491	.241	.236	45.73	.000	-.447	.066	-.491	-6.763	.000
Step II										
Constant						22.766	1.789		12.748	.000
JS	.508	.258	.248	3.283	.072	-.379	-.075	-.417	-5.035	.000
POS						-.099	.055	-.150	-1.812	.072

Note: R² = 0.241 for step 1. ΔR² = 0

Discussion

The behavior revealed by the employees is of great significance for the organization. The growth, turn over, productivity, popularity in the market, is all dependent on how well employees perform. Keeping this view in mind, the fact that captured the attention of the present study was: a) why an employee plans to quit his organization? b) What factors would stop him from doing so? Similarly, the mediating factors were also studied which helped in analyzing empirically the major issues involved in employee's turnover. The main rationale of the present study was to investigate whether job satisfaction would predict intention to quit in the organizational setting in two different countries, i.e. Pakistan and UAE. The results were statistically significant indicating job satisfaction as a predictor of intention to quit ($R^2 = .241$, $F(1, 144) = 45.73$, $p < .000$, Table 6) (Moore, 2002). Thus, on multiple occasions it has been observed that job satisfaction seems to be the prime reason behind employees quitting their jobs (Barak, Nissly, & Levin, 2001). Furthermore, various researches (Mobley, 1978; Price & Mueller, 1981; Shore & Martin, 1989; Aryee & Wyatt, 1991; Chan & Morrison, 2000; Ghiselli, Lopa, & Bai, 2001; McBey & Karakowsky, 2001) posited a significant negative relationship between job satisfaction and intention to leave the organization.

The current research was also focused on knowing the predictive relationship of perceived organizational support with job satisfaction. It was found that perceived organizational support significantly predicted job satisfaction. Furthermore, perceived organizational support significantly predicted intention to quit. So far, the trend is observed that if the employees are satisfied with their jobs, there would be less intention to quit the organization and that organizational support plays a major role in predicting their intention to quit. A possible explanation for the results so far, be it Pakistan or UAE or anywhere else in the world, the support employees receive from their working environment keeps them motivated. It connects employees more with the organization and increases their sincerity with it. Similarly, Aselage and Eisenberger (2003) posited that in return for a high level of support, employees work harder to help their organization reach its goals. This reflects to the notion that employees feel satisfied with the job which has a more supportive working environment. It was further argued that organizational support has a significant effect on job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Aube, Rousseau, & Morin, 2007; Riggle, Edmondson, & Hansen, 2009). This result is supported by several studies in which it was discovered that job satisfaction is positively influenced by perceived organizational support (Buchanan, 1974; Tansky & Cohen, 2001; Riggle, Edmondson, & Hansen, 2009; Gu & Siu, 2009). Moreover, Munn, Barber, and Fritz (1996) conducted a study in which they found that lack of supervisory support was the best predictor of job dissatisfaction and intention to leave a job.

To further the interest, the mediating role of the perceived organizational support was studied in understanding how it influences job satisfaction and intention to quit. The results from the hierarchical regression showed that perceived organizational support does not mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and intention to quit (Table 6). Similar findings were reported by Rahim and Psenicka (1996) who were unsuccessful in investigating a moderating impact of social support in the association between turnover intentions and job related stress. It could be due to the fact that employees need other factors to be present, in amalgamation with support from their organization to shrink their intention to quit. Another possible explanation could be, organizational support can fluctuate the level of job

satisfaction. However, the interaction between job satisfaction and intention to quit will not get influenced by the amount of organizational support present. Consequently, a person with a decline in job satisfaction will not experience any change in their intentions to quit due to the organizational support present in their working environment. Similarly, if an employee is dissatisfied from the job due to his low wage, irrespective of how much support and help he is getting, the likelihood of quitting the job would be high. In another study it was found that there are few factors responsible for the change in the job satisfaction such as: interesting and challenging work, self-direction, responsibility, variety and opportunities to use one's skills and abilities, pay, promotions, fringe benefits, security and comfortable working conditions, facilitating or motivating task performance and maintaining membership (Katz & Maanan, 1977; Mottaz, 1988).

Additionally, there was a significant difference observed in the intention to quit an organization between both the countries (t ($df = 144$) = -3.279, $p = .001$). Employees in UAE are more likely to quit their jobs irrespective of they are highly paid and have permanent jobs due to various reasons: sudden changes in the competitive working environment, lack of sincere advices from the social network, sudden growth in the job market which encourages the employees to move to a better and safer opportunity, leaving behind the organization they previously worked with. However, this strengthens on the fact that employees living in UAE are less loyal to their organizations.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, the aim of the research was to analyze the impact job satisfaction has on the intention to quit a job. It is concluded that if job satisfaction is lower among employees, they are more likely to develop intentions to quit the job. Furthermore, perceived organizational support plays a significant role for both job satisfaction and intention to quit a job. It was noted that if organizational support is present in the work environment, the employees are less likely to quit the job. But if the work load increases, the employees would try to escape from the job by any means i.e. quitting it. However, perceived organizational support doesn't mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and intention to quit. It can also be concluded that when studied cross culturally, although more employees were on permanent contracts in UAE as compared to the employees in Pakistan, yet it doesn't reduce their intention to quit their jobs. Higher rate of quitting the jobs was observed in UAE.

Limitations

Like other researches, this research too has various limitations. Most importantly, the organizations targeted were mostly the private sectors. In such firms, the employees are well aware of the purpose and significance of the research. They were very cooperative in the administration of the research measures. However, the same research should also be conducted in the government sector for better results. This study is also gender bias. If the same number of males and females were taken, gender analysis could yield profound results in both the countries. This would help in understanding the trend of how both the genders deal with their professional problems. Future studies should cater to the limitations this research has. Larger sample would also prove to be more reliable and generalizing the results would be more objective.

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