

SIGNIFICANCE OF DEMOGRAPHICS AS PREDICTORS FOR COMMITMENT AND CONSEQUENT ITL AMONG TEACHERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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ABSTRACT: Multi-dimensional factors operate behind the success and failure of individuals' professional career. Among them, demographics (personal attributes) occupies the most prominent status as both social and professional life of individuals is directly related to its different parameters in the institutions (higher education) such as qualification, academic department, designation, gender, age, experience, marital status, and domicile. Social, financial, and domestic stability on the part of an individual (teacher) lead to his/her sound state of mind. Being the backbone of the socio-academic and socio-economic position of the country, higher education institutions are the only source of the human resources for both industrial and service sector. Similarly, these institutions are also responsible for providing diverse human resources (workforce) to diverse sector of country. In this regard, teachers/academicians play strategic role in establishing the credibility and availability of these human resources. Professional consistency of the faculty members (academicians) gets hampered due to Intention to Leave (ITL) which is induced due to multiple social and financial priorities having the primary relationship with demographic characteristics.

Keywords: Intention to Leave, Demographics, Higher Educational institutions & Academicians

INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions perform the primary duties in the development and success of any country through providing standard education to coming posterity. In this regard, it is pertinent to state that educational institutions should effectively utilize all the existing sources towards the said development. Similarly, these institutions also direly need certain resources for the smooth running of the system. For this purpose, the committed workforces are the most important foundation for sustainable academic development in the higher educational institutions [1]. Excellence in education sector especially in the sphere of teaching can only be attained through the performance of the workforce that is the teaching faculty in universities. Higher education yields highly talented and professionally skilled experts who can bring revolution in every sector of society by providing an academic leadership of high caliber and vision [2]. All these could only be possible, when academicians (teachers) are satisfied from the institutional policies regarding their professional status and the demographic priorities.

The demand for talented teachers has significantly increased with large scale establishment of universities in the private sector. The universities are willing to offer them very attractive pay packages commensurate with their skills, experience, and knowledge. Higher educational institutions are facing difficulties to retain their academic staff in Pakistan due to financial crunches, both in the private and public sectors [3]. In this regard, the academic staff those who are more committed are likely to invest their skills at the higher levels in their parent institutions. Therefore, the stakes are high as stakeholders both in the public and private sector are facing an acute shortage of qualified teaching faculties due to their high aspiration regarding their socio-economic status. Thus fostering commitment among the teachers is the most important objective on part of institutions. Committed employees are expected to stay longer as compared to their counterparts those who show

lower affiliations [4]. In this regard, lower affiliations, nurturing the ITL among the teachers and results in leaving the present institution.

ommitted faculty members willingly go beyond the call of responsibility for their parent institutions. Their behavior regarding the academic services can deeply affect the entire profile of their institution, which in turn can enhance the overall rating of their respective institution [5]. Researchers who have conducted a faculty survey of higher educational institutions identified that professional development, pay packages, and personal attributes are the key factors for organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and last but not the least the ITL. In this context, demographics have a strong impact upon the professional pursuit of the academicians as the retention of academic faculties is directly related with his/her personal attributes. The whole phenomenon, in turn imparts an obvious academic boost to the concerned institution. The concerned institution can stand on the strong footings by building the sustainable institutional commitment among faculty members [6]. In this regard this review is an effort to theoretically analyze the impact of certain demographics on the commitment level and the corresponding ITL.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employees Commitment

With a continuous ongoing research, it has been concluded that commitment and job satisfaction are inversely proportional to the switchovers. The employee, provided with all the amenities as per his/her qualification, skill and experience, will certainly focus upon tasks assigned to him/her. He/she will be well abreast of the goals of the institution and will endeavor to their best to accomplish them as well. In the higher educational institutions, the teacher will try to deliver all what he/she possesses to the best wishes of their students. They will also strive hard to acquire the standards at par with those as observed internationally [7]. It is also reported that the level of psychological affiliation among such teachers is elated

regarding their focus upon their work which makes them committed with their institution. Their attitude with their immediate boss, colleagues, subordinates and their students is friendly enough which makes the working environment more conducive for the highest output [8]. In this case, the graph of the job satisfaction attains its peak value as the commitment level is very high as well. The ITL in the above said circumstances do not arise as the employee prefers to continue in the institution by declining all the offers whatsoever [9].

In this regard, one's spouse plays a pivotal role in determining the work place for a teacher as the both husband and wife would like to work in the same city. The highly experienced and qualified persons possess high aspiration as well regarding pay package and other service benefits. In this regard, to meet their priorities they can switchover to any other institution whenever they find a chance around. Within the department, the issue of seniority and high profile tasks also put the concerned teacher in an embarrassing situation. Similarly, the impact of the marital status upon the ITL is diverse as both married and unmarried faculty members intend to leave due to their own concerns [5]. Keeping in view the above factors, the ITL further generates the switchover as the academicians will prefer to leave the institution for the better opportunities as offered to them by other institutions. The socio-financial reasons are also very much dynamic behind ITL and finally the switchover [6]. In this regard, it is only commitment which nurtures the emotional attachment among the academicians. Therefore, higher the commitment, lower will be the ITL while, on the other hand, lower the commitment, higher will be the ITL.

Intention to Leave (ITL)

The intention to leave can be well defined as parting the ways psychologically. Further, it is the individual's behavioral approach to depart from institutions while switchover is the well thought and pre-planned separation from the institution. On the part of educational institutions, it is most pertinent to create conducive environment for an employee to make his/her stay as longer as it can be. Otherwise, institution has to carry burdens of switchovers which is much costly both socially, academically and financially [10]. The literature revealed that there is the strong and direct relation of employees' commitment with promotion, pay, rewards, pensions and other fringe benefit and the overall job satisfaction was found to have a significant but negative relationship with switchover [11]. The switchovers rate is likely to be higher in institution that have lower level of commitment and job satisfaction. Moreover, the literature shows that the demographics (personal attributes) also have a significant impact on the job satisfaction and commitment of workforce, working in different sectors, particularly the teaching faculty of the higher educational institutions in Pakistan.

The ITL refers to discontentment of employees manifested by the lack of affiliation with his/her job. It is multi-faceted phenomenon which must be elaborated to find the remedies for the utmost benefits of every institution. In

contemporary situation, the commitment is tightly bonded with the social and financial privileges those which are awarded to employee. The commitment may get shattered as the new opportunities occur with comparatively better packages [12]. There are numerous higher educational institutions in the private sector those which are licensed by the HEC to award both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. Among them some are highly reputed and competing with the public sector higher educational institutions. These institutions are always a source of great attraction for the teachers with the higher qualifications, skill and experience [5]. The situation is further aggravated when the ITL occurs among the faculty members due to their personal attributes. Most of the teachers prefer to work within or nearby to their native homeland. Secondly, in the later ages, the academicians due to their health hazards intend to work in the more comfortable and soothing working environment [6].

Demographics (Personal Characteristics)

The statistical data about the main socio-economic features of the community can be developed by its gender, age, literacy rate, education level, saving rate, income and investment level, occupation, religion, marital status, death rate, birth rate, average age at marriage and average size of a family. The demographic factors, as stated above, help in the compilation of the census about any segment of the population [7]. Different studies showed that these demographics variables have shown diverse impact upon the diverse phenomenon. In turn, the literature evolved from the same census provides the basis to analyze different variables, both independent and dependent, those which determine the organizational commitment [13]. During the past decades, these demographic variables were used as independent variables to check and analyze its impact upon certain variables (dependents) in different contexts. In this research the department, gender, designation, qualification, gender, experience, age, marital status and domicile are the demographic variables which are discussed categorically. It will be concluded that the demographics are directly proportional or inversely proportional to the ITL which results in the long and short tenure in certain institution [5].

Department/Section

On the part of the institution, as they deal with the different individuals, they must select the right person on the right job. If the person pursues his/her career in such department where he/she can deliver according to their qualification then this phenomenon will cast positive effect on their commitment level and ultimately the institution will be the beneficiary [14]. It is an accredited fact that individuals (employees) will be more satisfied and committed when they deliver their services in certain places wherein they feel comfortable. On the other hand, when academicians feel uncomfortable in their working environment/places, they will shows declined output and will results in lower commitment level [5]. Last but not the least, the professionalism among the employee results in an elevated commitment level and reduces the ITL. The employee on right job and in the right department/section completely focuses upon his/her assignments and the endeavors to accomplish and achieve

the tasks and the goals as furnished by the institution [6]. In this regard, the relevant section/place play an important role in making the employees more committed.

Designation/Professional status

In the higher education institutions, due to financial constraints and the statutory limitations, the institutions cannot adjust the high profile faculty accordingly. Resultantly, the phenomenon of ITL is developed among those who are affected which culminate at the switchovers [15]. The qualified teachers are very much concerned about the position/designation held by them as it is the root cause of the professional rivalry in almost every institution. Higher qualification and the lower designation are the main cause of embarrassment which lessens the commitment level to such an extent that the employee intends to leave and prefers to switchover [5]. In this regard, the employees those who are working on higher position with lower qualification increases embarrassment level among those employees who are working on lower positions with the higher qualifications. In the financial perspectives, the role of designation is pivotal as the pay package, advance increments and the pension benefits are bracketed with one's professional status he/she occupies [16]. In this regard, every individual in institution should hold the positions commensurate with their knowledge and skills.

Qualification/Academic Status

The academic credentials are considered as the vital components in the professional life of the individuals. The academic status that commensurate with the academic qualifications is also the phenomenon of great concerns for the employees (academicians) working in higher education institutions. In private sector, the qualification and the experience are the utmost priority for the employment. In the case, if the qualified person is adjusted against the post of lower cadre then there is a gap which appears between the achievements and efficiency because the performance level of the employee comes down due to the ensuing disparity [13]. Otherwise, in case the higher post is occupied by the highly qualified person, the results will be entirely different and the yield will get high. In this case, the employee manifests his/her maximum capabilities to achieve maximum output to the benefit of the institution [5]. Still, the highly qualified employees are also prone to the switchovers when the institution fails to accord them with proper socio-economic status [16]. The academicians with higher qualifications and higher status will be more committed as compared to other counterparts.

Gender

The gender is also considered as vital factor which may affect the level of commitment on part of academicians. The male employees have their own concerns regarding their commitment with the institution. It has been observed that the beginners prefer to launch their career in those institutions where the majority of their co-workers are female as, according to them, working with the females, the time period and efficiency and ultimately the output level gets enhanced [17]. The research also reveals that the married employees have to face some very strong

restrictions from their spouse to work in the institutions where the majority of their co-workers are female. On the contrary, some of the male workers show their reluctance to work with female employees on the pretext of social and religious bindings. So, phenomenon of ITL is observed in both female and male simultaneously whether they are married or not [5]. Even then it is very difficult to conclude the proportion of institutional commitment with gender that whether it is direct or inverse [16]. However, different studies endorsed the relationship of gender with certain research variables (independent and dependent).

Experience/Expertise/Professional tenure

The institution, in same line, has a strong role in retaining the experienced workers by enhancing their privileges. The literature revealed that the professional status get improved when the employees prolong their stay in the institutions. The employees those who are devoted to their assigned tasks and prefer to stay longer are short listed [14]. The high ups award higher positions, bonuses, increments and other benefits to employees in lieu of their institutional commitment. Still, some employees get lured and decide to switchover because of certain socio-economic constraints [18]. The professional rivalries, extra perks and privileges, cultural and linguistic differences, delegation of the extra powers, schooling of the children, spouse occupation, family feuds and age long enmities may overwhelm the experience-based institutional commitment and may cause the ITL. In this regard, when the individuals fails to obtain the desired status in institutions, then they will search for other lucrative opportunities whenever arises/offers and consequently the whole phenomenon culminates at the switchover [5].

Age

The literature revealed that in general, the switchover rate among the employees of the older age is greater as compared to the younger. The factors of high experience, greater skills, higher qualification, increased family liabilities, sickness for the home station and last but not the least, the higher skills may cause the ITL among the aged employees to switchover from one institution to another [7]. The literature also revealed that the commitment level increase as the age of the employees increase. The fact is that, due to longer affiliation, the individuals feels the emotional attachment with the concerned institution. Therefore, the organizational commitment and the ITL are diversely related with the age factor as the both phenomenon can be observed prominently among the younger and the aged employees simultaneously [19]. In the higher education institutions, the aged teachers with the higher qualification, if not accorded with the appropriate professional status always aspire for the better positions [5]. The said employees will thus leave the institution and join the other institution wherein they are offered with certain better positions.

Marital Status

The literature shows that the married employees, in maximum cases, are observed to be more committed and professionally sound in their career. They are bound to stay

longer in an institution due to many reasons which include the spouse occupation, schooling of the children, sound lodging whether official or rented, home station and relatives [13]. Still, in certain cases the married employees are also affected by the ITL. Sometimes the working environment does not suit him/her regarding the working hours which may affect his/her marriage life to much extent [20]. The grooming of his/her children has a strong linkage with the commitment level and ultimately with the switchover as well. The literature revealed that the married employees always prefer to deliver their services in their homelands due to their domestic obligations. This demographic parameter has diverse impact on employee's organizational commitment which may overwhelm his/her affiliation about his/her commitment with the institution [5]. In this regard, the marital status occupy a unique standing among demographic variables.

Domicile/Dwelling

On the other hand, the employees those who are working away from their home stations are badly affected by the ITL. Conversely, the switchover rate is considerably high among such employees. They always avail employment opportunity whenever it arises in and around their native home/region. The statistics also shows that most of the seasoned and well experienced employees prefer to pursue their career away from their birth places due to some unfavorable and unavoidable socio-economic reasons. It can be concluded that the domicile of an employee has diverse impact on the organizational commitment [5]. The academicians, those who are working away from their homes are always desire to get their jobs near to their home stations. The main reason behind is their domestic priorities and other domestic obligations. The academicians has badly affected as most of the faculty members has left the institution to pursue their career in their home stations due to the emergence of various certain other institutions in diverse areas [6]. In this regard, the demographic variable (domicile) play a significant role in increasing the commitment level and also increases the ITL among the academicians in certain cases.

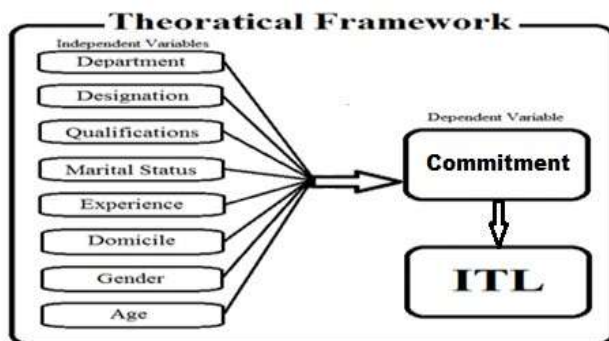


Figure 1.1 Theoretical Framework

DISCUSSIONS

The regional, cultural, linguistic and even racial origin of employee affect his/her commitment level. In this regard, the domicile of the employee is highly considered while

employed in the higher educational institution along with the qualification and experience to make his/her stay as longer as it can be. Moreover, the employee's social and financial status has been concluded to be matter of high concern as pay packages and other benefits draw a strong line between the organizational commitment and ITL [5]. There is a strong linkage between the commitment level and the age of an employee as it is mostly observed that the aged persons prefer to pursue their career steadfastly. The phenomenon of ITL is very rare among aged employees as they are well aware of the social and health hazards regarding the switchovers. The attitudes and behaviors of an employee are the replica of their moral attachment with the institution which has a key role in enhancing commitment level [6]. Unless and until the employee is highly satisfied on his/her job in all respect, he/she will never show a remarkable restraint against ITL and the ultimate switchovers. On the part of the institution, the whole phenomenon of ITL is based upon the criterion which demands that right person should be employed for the right job [16].

The academicians are the main source to determine the academic standards and the rating of an educational institution. In the same line, the social, academic and financial standards of a higher educational institution can only be boosted up through the performance of the employees (academicians). The employment and retention of the faculty members is the matter of high concern for those who are sitting at the helm of institution [1]. The transparency and standards maintained in this regard play the pivotal and main role in enhancing the institutional commitment among the academicians. The participation and in turn, the contribution level on the part of the fresh faculty members toward their corresponding institution must be analyzed and enhanced on the priority basis. These employees are most vulnerable to the phenomenon of ITL and may face utmost difficulties to get them settled in the new working environment because of their wavering attitudes [21]. In this regard, the related literature revealed the diverse results from diverse studies regarding the impact of certain demographics on both the commitment and ITL among the academicians in the context of higher educational institutions.

The literature provides the evidence that employees, due to their diverse demographic origins, they possess different attitudes towards the organizational commitment. The demographic factors greatly affect the research variables as they vary according to the socio-economic conditions those which are prevailing in the different countries [22]. In the developing countries, the magnitude of the organizational commitment differs as compared to the developed one's due to the gradient regarding economic resources, budgetary allocations to the education sector, job availability, social security and last but not the least the political stability [5]. In the countries like Pakistan, the higher educational institutions in the public sector are facing an acute problem of the organizational commitment among the faculty members due to lack of adequate resources and appropriate policies. Already, there is a dearth of experienced, qualified

and skilled teachers as parallel to the public sector, the private sector is also making a huge investment in the education sector [6]. Consequently, the highly qualified faculty members are finding it very difficult to prolong their stay in a university as they are persistently driven by the personal attributes and the phenomenon of ITL due to the offers with better pay packages and other benefits [16].

CONCLUSION

The issue of ITL exists in every private and public sector higher education institution, however the nature and intensity in this regard differs from institution to institution, country to country and from times to times. Thus, different measures are needed to address the issue of ITL in different situations. The existing literature suggests that ITL is a leading and critical problem for the public sector universities like Pakistan where the private sector is the main competitor with a strong financial base and clientele as well. The success of these institution depends upon the committed level on the part of their academicians. The committed workforces, through their certain well concerted efforts can bring up the status of these institutions at par to the international standards. Contrary to this, the public sector universities are facing with an acute financial constraints resulting in the switchover on the wide scale. In this regard, among other factors which are responsible for the ITL, the demographic variables are also vital for bringing the variations in the minds of the academicians. In this regard, the current study will be helpful for the institutional high-ups to take certain measure to satisfy their faculty members demographically. Therefore, the institutional authorities are required to focus more on the demographic characteristics of the academicians by increasing their level of commitment and by decreasing the ITL.

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