Exploring the level of Job Embeddedness among College Faculty

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Abstract

Job Embeddedness is relatively a new and theoretically a rich construct. It includes on the job factors and off the job factors which help in measuring an employee's intention to stay. The job embeddedness model by Mitchell and Lee (2001) has 6 original dimensions. Organization links and community links (individual connections with people in the organization and community), organization fit and community fit (individual perception of fit within an organization and community), organization sacrifice and community sacrifice (what the individual gives up when leaving the organization or community). Ramesh & Gelf and worked on its extension. Three new dimensions were added by Ramesh & Galfand (2010) by including family factor (family links, family fit, and family sacrifice) and suggested that this factor would predict turnover in a better way. Job embeddedness enables us to look the relations of an employee and the employer in a new context. The uniqueness of this construct is its focus on retention instead of turnover. The objective of this study is to explore the job embeddedness level of college faculty members of Higher Education Department, Govt of Punjab. 459 college faculty members were selected by using convenience sampling technique. Data was collected using job embeddedness questionnaire. Analysis of the collected data revealed that college faculty members showed high mean score on organization fit and community fit dimension of job embeddedness model. Demographic factors like gender, work experience, locality and designation showed a significant effect on job embeddedness level of college faculty members. College faculty stands on a medium level on job embeddedness scale.

Key words: Job embeddedness, Turnover, Link, Fit, and Sacrifice

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Introduction

Retention of employees is compulsory for survival of any organization in business world. It is also essential for achievement of big goals (Hom, 1995). Organizations have a goal to keep its brilliant staff (Pfeffer, 1994). In spite of all the efforts of organizations, the speed of voluntary turnover is to wering. Organizations are trying their best to retain its labor force. Those organizations that can preserve employees have an advantage. Organizations which cannot retain employees have to face downfall (Mitchell, Holtom, & Lee, 2001).

Now days, Researchers in management, psychology and different social sciences are more interested in knowing the factors which keep an employee on job. This phenomenon is called job embeddedness. It is a most modern construct. This newest construct of job embeddedness came in educational field from organizational psychology and management. Research on this construct is comparatively very small than turnover and other topics of organizational behavior. Researches so far tell that Job embeddedness has a negative relationship with turnover. Job embeddedness is an anti withdrawal construct. It focuses on the factors which facilitate a worker to stay on job. Turnover focuses on the process to leave job. Reitz & Anderson (2011) describe reasons to stay on job were not necessarily the same as to leave that job. Factors of turnover are different from factors of Job embeddedness. Turnover is undoubtedly a different construct from Job embeddedness.

Mitchell (2001) says that embeddedness suggests that there are several strands that tie an employee and his or her family in a social, psychological, and financial web that include work and non-work friends, groups, the community, and the physical environment in which he or she lives".

Job embeddedness presents new breadth of the relation of an employee and an employer. Latest job embeddedness model focuses on factors which make possible for an employee to stick to job.

Job embeddedness is a construct presented by Mitchell and his co researchers. In 1995, Terry Mitchell, Tom Lee, and their co researchers at the University of Washington were revising a document that reported a qualitative test of their unfolding model of voluntary turnover which was later known as Lee et al.1999 and began planning a subsequent quantitative test of the model. At that time, Miriam Erez visited Foster School of Business at Washington and joined the ongoing weekly conversation on turnover research.

Throughout those discussions on voluntary employee turnover, Lee recommended that they considered a switch from their (then) five-year focus on the turnover, and the group agreed. Job embeddedness is a advanced theoretical framework to understand employee retention. Over the next few months, the research group read and discussed various articles on the subject of involuntary turnover. During that process Lee noted that their conversations focused questions, why do employees leave job? Lee raised a point here. We should focus on why employees stay?

Mitchell said that he had been at Washington since 1969, and Lee responded that he had been at Washington since 1983. Mitchell then said that they knew more about staying than leaving. This is how a new model of job embeddedness came forward (Lauver, 2001).

According to Lee et al. (2004), there is a major difference between job embeddedness and traditional turnover research.

This construct is based on Lewin's field theory and ecological system theory. Job embeddedness is an exclusive construct. Job embeddedness focuses on as to why an employee stays on job rather than as to why does he/she leave it. This exceptionality makes this construct different from other constructs. Job embeddedness focuses on factors which keep an employee on job (Mitchell et al., 2001). Job embeddednesss focuses on total factors which enable a person to stay on job. Job embeddedness is a more flexible construct to judge employee retention. It is a broader variable as it focuses on both the employee's stay and intent to leave a job.

Mitchell *et al.* (2001) gave first ever model of job embeddedness which consists of six dimensions later. Ramesh (2010) took initiative to expand the model of job embeddedness. Particularly these authors had attributed the importance of this model. They included family in it to discover the extent to which the family members play a role in the job embeddedness of a person. Ramesh (2001) explains that one area that I recognized as imperative based on former research is the control of *family opinions* on the individual's turnover decision."

Gelfand, Raver & Erhart (2002) are of the opinion that job embeddedness is theoretically a rich concept. It is very necessary to understand its deepness. Family is considered important all over the world. Family is a primary part of an individual's life. Family has a strong power to interfere in individual's professional matters. A huge bulk of cross cultural research suggests that insertion of family dimension can improve the richness of job embeddedness. Radha Krishanan & Chan (1997) reported that Asians regard their family goals as important as their own goals.

They explained that family members are frequently consulted on occupational issues. According to Ramesh (2010) that was not a new proposal. Early in the extension of turnover model, the first ever effort was made by March &Simon in 1958. They suggested that family converse and comment organizations in which one works.

Biebly (1992), Orthner & Pittman (1986) are of the opinion that there is a wide difference in work and family. Many models are based on it. Due to the varying demographics and world, it is difficult to recognize their influences. Studies on collectivistic cultures propose that family has a deep control on a person's decision. Radford, Mann, Ohta and Nakane (1991) proposed in their research that it is a trend in collectivistic cultures to consult family and companions in making choices.

Wasti (2002) extended the construct of organizational commitment in Turkish (collectivistic) culture. It was based on focus groups. She considered additional emic items that measured issues such as duty to the organization and the opinion of the family about the appropriateness of the organization for the individuals e.g. ("My family thinks this organization is a good fit for me."). She selected sample from Turkish culture and collected data from workers on commitment, allocentricism - idiocentrism and turnover intentions. She revealed the fact that family displeasure is a reason to leave a job.

Wasti came to know the fact that this link was stronger for an individual who was allowed allocentric values and weaker for those who accepted idiocentric values. Similarly, Posthuma, Joplin& Maertz (2005) anticipated that our understanding about turnover can be enhanced by focusing on normative expectations from the family that relate to quitting the organization.

According to Lee and Maurer (1999)when work stress obstructs with family and household tasks, family members might force a worker to quit. It is suggested by most of the turnover models that family has a strong influence on an employee's decision to quit (Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Mobley et al., 1979; Steers & Mowday, 1981).

A huge bulk of research on American expatriates proved that family has a strong link with turnover intentions (Blake & Stephens, 1989; Caligiuri, Hyland, Joshi & Bross, 1998; Shaffer Harrison, Gilley, & Luk, 2001). Bhaskar, Shrinvas, Harrison, Shaffer and Lok (2004) analyzed earlier studies on emigrants' adjustment. They found that family spousal adjustment is a strong determinant of adjustment which is considered necessary for success in job.

Mc Phearson, Smith Lovin and Brashers (2006) found in their study that there was a tendency to develop social circle of individual specially bonding with family from 1985 to 2004. Ramesh & Gelfand (2010) described that they recognized family opinions is an indispensable element of connection to the job. Thus, after careful study of earlier literature, a new element "family" was added to job embeddedness model.

Different steps were adopted in this concern i.e. q sorts, and subject expert opinion and confirmatory factor analysis to inculcate this new dimension in Job embeddedness model. Ramesh and Gelfand added family domain in job embeddedness model. The purpose of this dimension was to know the extent to which family influences one's work, decisions and attachment to organization. Ramesh & Gelfand's work wished to observe the family embeddedness and its influence on work and community aspects of job embeddedness model.

So, three new sub dimensions were added into this model by Ramesh & Gelfand (2010).

1. Family fit

2. Family links

3. Family sacrifices

Job Embeddedness covers all aspects of an individual's life i.e. community life and professional life. Therefore, it has many dimensions/factors.

1). *Organization fit* (fit with an organization)

2). Community fit (fit with a community)

3). *Family fit* (fit with family)

4). Organization link (connections with people in the organization)

5). *Community links* (connections with people in the community)

6). Family links (connections with family)

7). *Organization sacrifice* (what the individual gives up when leaving the organization)

8). *Community sacrifice* (what the individual gives up when leaving the community)

*9). Family sacrifice (*what the individual and family gives up when leaving the job*)*

"Fit" is defined as the supposed comfort level of an employee with the organization and environment. An employee's approach for the future in the current organization, career goals and personal values are significant elements of the "fit" between an employee and the

organization. **"Links"** are explained as formal or informal relations between a person and Institutions or other people. According to Maertz *et al.,* (1994) some links are more imperative than others. Many researchers recommend that there is a stress to stay on a job, which is from family, group members and other co-workers.

"Sacrifice" is explained as the apparent cost of material or psychological benefits that a worker has to tolerate by leaving one's job.

Organization Fit explains an employee's adjustment with organization (Mitchell *et al*., 2001).

Community fit explains to what extent a person perceives he or she fits into their immediate community and surroundings (Mitchell *et al*., 2001).

Family Fit Perception of a family how well the organization fits the employee (Ramesh .A & Gelfand, 2010).

Organization Link Formal and informal links between employer and worker in organization are organizational links (Mitchell *et al*., 2001).

A large number of studies show that some cultures stress on social interdependence (Singelis & Brown, 1995), while Hofstede (1991) is of the opinion that some cultures have a tendency towards looser social relations. For collectivists social ties and bondings are very important and these relations have control on an individual's life and decisions.

Community Link Community link recognizes "The significant influence of family and other social institutions and their influence on decision making" (Mitchell *et al*., 2001).

People like to make social terms within community. Social link in community are very challenging in collectivistic cultures.

Organization Sacrifice describes the loss which one has to tolerate if he/she leaves any job (Mitchell *et al.,* 2001).Organizational sacrifice consists of financial benefits. A study by Rehu, Lusk & Wolff (2005) American workers find monetary benefits and high salary imperative than Chinese workers. Same study showed that Chinese workers gave less weight age to health benefits as compared to American workers. Chinese workers were found to be more conscious about getting benefits for help in old age. Organizational sacrifice holds a significant position in individualistic culture. Workers who belong to individualistic culture have a propensity to be wealthy. But in collectivistic countries people are mostly poor. According to Hofstede (1991) financial benefits are very important.

Community Sacrifice describes the loss of social and professional terms and relations in community when one leaves job (Mitchell *et al.*, 2010).

An individual loses many social attachments and relations by leaving job. Mitchell et al., (2001) are of the opinion if the progress of some individual involves transfer that individual will not think about that option. There are many reasons as to why fit with community is important. Community sacrifice means movement from one place to another which is most suitable for him.

In collectivistic cultures an individual may sacrifice his group life due to relocation. Triandis & Vassiliou (1972) in individualistic cultures people like to be alone and show less concern with groups. It is probably the greatest sacrifice from an individual to leave his community. Leaving a community is much difficult than moving inside the community (Triandis et al., 1988).

Family Sacrifice defines family sacrifice as what the family would have to give up if they moved (Ramesh, 2010).

It means what a person will leave or sacrifice if he/she leave current job. Many public organizations in Pakistan are also now facing human capital crisis because of turnover. It is opinion of experts that socialization within an organization can reduce the causes of turnover (Podskoff, 2003).

This study aims to explore the job embeddedness level of college lecturers in Punjab i.e. why college faculty is deeply embedded to their job. This study will facilitate us to know the role of different dimensions of job embeddedness in a lecturer's life. It will also bring to light the main factor plays vital role, i.e. organization, community and family.

This study studied the effects of gender, age, length of service, academic qualification and marital status.

Age

Cotton and Tuttle (1986) explained that age is negatively related to turnover. Results of many researches show that age has a negative relationship with turnover (Barber & Grawitch, 2009).

Gender

It is usually observed that women experience less connection to organization than men. Griffeth *et al.* (2000) in their meta-analysis demonstrated that females have a inclination to leave job more than males. Study by Royalty (1998) showed that turnover in females is high because of

labor women and illiterate ladies. Educated women and men show same behavior regarding turnover. Previous studies show mixed results.

Marital status

It is a perception that marital status has an important effect on the way individual reacts in any situation based on his duties and commitments.

Cotton and Tuttle (1986) proved in their study that married individuals stick more to their jobs than unmarried people (Chompookum & Derr, 2004). A study by Abelson (1987) showed that old and married people stay more on their jobs because they have many responsibilities and children to bring up. The results on the relationship between marital status and predictive model of turnover intentions showed that workers who are married adopt organizational attitudes easily as compared to their single and childless colleagues (Huffman, young court, Payne & Castro, 2008).

Educational level/Qualification

According to Tanova & Holtom, (2008) education level does not have considerable impact on job embeddedness level of any employee. It is not necessary that a person who is highly qualified will have high level of embeddedness in job.

Experience

Old and experienced workers are more embedded in jobs than young workers (Tanova & Holtom, 2008). Experience has a negative and significant relationship to an employee's decision to leave job (Plooy & Roodt, 2013) .Workers who have less experience often take risks. They easily accept such jobs which are below their abilities at the start of their career. The results of a meta analytic research by Griffeth *et al.* (2000) showed that the more an employee is experienced, the less he/she will leave a job.

Objectives of the Study

1. To explore the level of Job embeddedness of college faculty.
2. To discover the level of different dimensions of job embeddedness i.e.(Organization, Community and family fit link and sacrifice).
3. To uncover the difference in perception of male and female college faculty members on job embeddedness.

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the mean score of job embeddedness level of college faculty members on the basis of gender.

2. There is no significant difference in the mean score of job embeddedness level of college faculty members on the basis of locality i.e. belongingness to urban and rural areas.

3. There is no significant difference in the mean score of job embeddedness level of college faculty members on the basis of length of service.

4. There is no significant difference in the mean score of job embeddedness level of college faculty members on the basis of qualification.

5. There is no significant difference in the mean score of job embeddedness level of college faculty on the basis of age group.

6. There is no significant difference in the mean score of job embeddedness level of college faculty on the basis of designation.

7. There is no significant difference in the mean score of job embeddedness level of college faculty on the basis of marital status.

Methodology

Quantitative research technique was used to conduct this study. This study was descriptive in nature. Cross sectional survey was used for collection of data. Cross sectional survey technique is considered most appropriate whenever a study is conducted to explore the level of any construct.

Population

The total population of this study was college faculty (Male &female) of all the public colleges of Punjab. 459 College faculty members of Lahore Division were sample of this study and they were selected through convenient sampling technique by using sample size calculator .Margin of error was 5% and confidence interval was 98%.

Instrument of study

Perception of college faculty was taken with the help of a mixed version of two available questionnaires of Job Embeddedness. The researcher selected items from both questionnaires according to the need and framework of study. First 8 variables were on gender, designation, age, academic qualification and teaching experience, spouse job status, marital status and personal job status. Cronbach,s alpha was 90.

 The purpose of the questionnaire was to determine to what extent college faculty is embedded in their job using dimensions of this questionnaire.7 point likert type scale was used to record the responses of respondents.

Procedure

Data was collected by researcher herself from college faculty members of Lahore Division. **Data Analysis** t test, ANOVA and Post Hoc test Tukey's HSD were applied to see difference among different groups on the basis of gender, work experience, locality, age, marital status and designation. Demographic factors like gender, work experience, locality and designation showed a considerable effect on job embeddedness level of college faculty members. College faculty stands on a medium level on job embeddedness scale.

Results and findings

Level of Job Embeddedness

1-3	Low
4-5	Medium
6-7	High

Factor wise and overall Mean Scores of College Faculty Members on Job Embeddedness

Factor	N	X	Level
Community Fit	340	5.32	High
Organizational Fit	340	5.12	High
Family Fit	340	4.88	Medium
Community Sacrifice	340	4.86	Medium
Organizational Sacrifice	340	4.85	Medium
Family Sacrifice	340	4.36	Medium
Community Link	340	3.85	Low
Organizational Link	340	4.83	Medium
Family Link	340	2.8	Low
Overall mean of study	340	4.26	Medium

The male faculty members were found more embedded in their job than female. There is a possibility that male are the earning hands in family culture of the country like Pakistan. Due to joblessness in the country now-a-day male members stick to the job.

The college faculty members who belonged to rural areas were more embedded in job than urban faculty members. May be the reason of their embeddedness is less social exposure in rural areas. They are happy and satisfied with whatever they have with them.

Significant difference was found among the job embeddedness level of different groups of college faculty members on the basis of their work experience. Job embeddedness level varies in different groups. Teachers having experience of 11-15 years exhibited highest level of job embeddedness.

Study found that there was a major difference in the job embeddedness level of different groups of college faculty members on the basis of designation. Assistant professors and Associate professors were found more embedded in job.

Results showed no considerable difference in the mean score of level of job embeddedness among members of the college faculty on the basis of age and marital status and academic qualification. College faculty members who possess Post Doctorate degree were found more embedded.

Overall level of job embeddedness of college faculty was medium as mean score difference was 4.26.

Recommendations

It is recommended to enhance the level of job embeddedness of female members of college faculty; the government should give those seats near home stations /on home stations. Easy transfer policies should be made so that they may work with more enthusiasm.

It is necessary for a better performance from urban faculty members to make them more embedded in their jobs .For this purpose organizations should facilitate them in terms of working hours, transport, and facility of day care centers for kids of female employees in colleges in urban areas. Further studies should be done on why rural college faculty members are more embedded than rural.

The job embeddedness level of college faculty members who have experience of11-15 years is considerably more than those members who have 1-6 years of experience. Whereas comparison among 11-15 years and other is not significant. Further researches must be done on this.

It is recommended to enhance the job embeddedness level of lecturers especially because results of study show that assistant professor and associate professors are more embedded in

their job. In the light of results on academic qualifications it is recommended that college faculty members should be given more chance to acquire higher degrees like post doctorate .As college faculty members who possessed post doctorate degree were found more embedded.

In Pakistan's cultural context more studies are needed to investigate the job embeddedness level of college faculty as these results are different from European context. Reasons of this should be probed.

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