

## Shall I Stay or Shall I Go? Examining the Influence of Pay Satisfaction and Workplace Environment on Turnover Intention among Employees of Humanitarian Organizations in the North East-Nigeria

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### Abstract

Reports of employees of humanitarian organizations seeking alternative employment have raised concerns about turnover intention in the sector. This study examined the influence of pay satisfaction and workplace environment on turnover intention among employees of humanitarian organizations in Maiduguri, Nigeria. A cross-sectional survey design was adopted, and 132 employees were randomly selected from four humanitarian organizations. The participants consisted of 96 (72.7%) males and 36 (27.3%) females aged between 20 and 50 years. Data were collected using the Pay Satisfaction Questionnaire (PSQ), the Working Environment Scale (WES), and the Turnover Intention Scale (TIS). Data were analyzed using Standard Multiple Regression analysis. The results indicated that pay satisfaction significantly predicted turnover intention among employees ( $\beta = .144$ ,  $t = 1.66$ ,  $P < .001$ ). Workplace environment also showed a significant positive influence on turnover intention ( $\beta = .362$ ,  $t = 4.42$ ,  $P < .001$ ). Furthermore, the joint contribution of pay satisfaction and workplace environment significantly predicted turnover intention among employees of humanitarian organizations [ $R^2 = .528$ ,  $F(3, 128) = 47.736$ ,  $P < .05$ ]. Based on these findings, it is recommended that humanitarian organizations implement policies that improve employees' pay satisfaction and workplace conditions in order to reduce turnover intention and enhance organizational effectiveness.

**Keywords:** Pay Satisfaction, Workplace Environment, Turnover Intention, Humanitarian Organization.

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## Introduction

The increase in the number of armed conflicts has consistently caused an escalation in humanitarian crisis which in turn has also increased the demand for humanitarian workforce to respond to the needs of the affected people in different capacities. Similarly, due to the huge humanitarian needs, there is also the springing up of more humanitarian organizations with high needs for skilled staff in the sector which has led to employees leaving one organization to another in search of career opportunities and other employees' personal reasons. This indeed, no doubt has become a concern for most humanitarian organizations as this may lead to a decrease in the effectiveness of the employees which could put additional pressure on the remaining employees who may have to deal with additional workload thereby further impacting their intention to leave or stay.

Employees' turnover as a concept has over the years become a main concern for humanitarian organizations. This has not only become an issue that humanitarian organizations must deal with, but its effect has also resulted to a reduction in the organizations' productivity and achievement of their objectives due to the exit of skilled employees within these organizations. Despite this, not much efforts have been made to have a comprehensive research to the factors and consequences that influence employees' turnover in the humanitarian sector (HPG Report, 2002).

The rate at which employees gallivant from one organization to another is becoming worrisome globally. The reason(s) for quitting the job differs from individual to individuals, however, leaving one's job may not be unconnected with dissatisfaction with the job, dissatisfaction with the organization, inability to cope with responsibility, moving out of the area, retirement, inability to get on with colleagues and line managers, career development or career change and domestic reasons (Issa&Adebola, 2014). Moreover, the consequences of employee's turnover are enormous because it is not just limited to an increase in direct cost such as hiring and training costs of new employees, low productivity, losing the best personnel, difficulty in achieving the organizational goals but also increase in the indirect costs such as reduced morale, increased pressure among the remaining staff, work overload, and loss of social capital to mention but a few (Hussain & Asif, 2012, Niguse, 2019).

According to Sumarto (2009), turnover intention is a picture or thoughts of looking for work in another place, the tendency or intention of employees to stop working voluntarily in their work in search of other jobs or organizations. George and Jones (2008) define turnover intention as a voluntary and conscious desire to leave an organization for good in the future. Although, this desire to move is often overlooked but is an important problem for organization managers. It is important for management to learn why employees develop the intention to quit their jobs because high turnover rates can damage organizational morale and make employees not develop identification of their company. It is on the premise of this that the study is aimed at exploring the influence of perceived pay satisfaction, supervisory support and workplace environment on turnover intention among workers of humanitarian organizations in Maiduguri, Nigeria.

The general objective of this research is to explore the factors that influence employees' turnover in humanitarian organizations.

## Literature Review

### *Pay Satisfaction and Turnover Intention*

Onadiran and Arogundade (2021) examined the influence of pay and career satisfaction on employees' turnover intention in a Nigerian Techie Start-up. A total of 200 participants were selected using a convenient sampling technique and a battery of psychological tests consisting of Turnover Intention Scale, Pay Satisfaction Scale and Career Satisfaction Scale were used to collect data from the participants. The data collected were analysed using Independent T-Test and

Regression Analysis to test the hypotheses and the findings revealed that participants classified as having higher pay satisfaction reported significantly lower turnover intention compared to participants classified as having lower pay satisfaction. Also, participants classified as having higher career satisfaction reported a significantly lower on turnover intention compared to participants classified as having lower career satisfaction. Furthermore, pay satisfaction and career satisfaction accounted for 16.3% of the observed variance on turnover intention

Asekun (2015) attempts at investigating the relatedness of pay satisfaction, job satisfaction and employee turnover in business organizations in Lagos Nigeria. Data were collected from workers of various organizations who were students of a part time educational programme in Lagos, Nigeria. Out of the 140 questionnaires distributed to the survey participants, only 96 of the 120 questionnaire returned were usable. The survey used Pay Satisfaction Scale (PSS), the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) and Turnover Intention Questionnaire (TIQ) as measures in the study. The data obtained were analyzed using Correlation Analysis and Regression Analysis. The results of the analysis indicated that the relationship between pay satisfaction and employee turnover intention was positive, this was the expected direction. The result also confirmed the second hypothesis that there was a positive association between pay satisfaction and job satisfaction and lastly the study suggested that, pay satisfaction and job satisfaction could jointly predict employee turnover.

Hasibuan et al. (2019) examined the effect of pay satisfaction on turnover intention on permanent employees of PT. Bank Muamalat Indonesia, Tbk Medan. This research using all the subject in population, that is all permanent employees of PT. Bank Muamalat Indonesia, Tbk Medan. Data collection method in this study is using likert scale, namely turnover intention scale and pay satisfaction scale. The results were analyzed statistically using multiple regression, and it shows that pay satisfaction have significant effect on turnover intention even it is on a little impact.

Hissom, (2013) argue that the most common reason for employee's turnover rate being so high is salary scale since employees are usually in search of jobs that pay well. Undoubtedly, in a situation whereby two employees perform the similar work with similar responsibilities and yet one of the employees is at advantage when it comes to remuneration obviously the employees that is at disadvantage will surely be looking for a better offer. It is not uncommon to find out that organisations that pay less will have a higher labour turnover than those that higher.

Kianiet al.(2020) investigated the Impact of Rewards and Supervisor Support on Turnover Intentions with the Mediating Effect of Affective Commitment among University Lecturers in Public and Private Universities of Islamabad, Pakistan. The quantitative technique was used to collect data from a sample of 278 university lecturers of both public and private universities in Islamabad through close-ended questionnaires. Stratified simple random sampling technique was implemented in this study. The data was analyzed through correlation and regression analysis while using SPSS. For mediation, the Preacher and Hayes Test has been used to check the mediation effect of affective commitment between independent and dependent variables used in this study. Findings show that rewards and supervisor support played a pivotal role in the reduction of turnover intentions among lecturers and developed a stronger level of affective commitment for their respective universities.

Chepchumba and Kimutai (2017) examined the relationship between payment system and employees' turnover intention in 7 Safaricom dealers operating business in Eldoret Municipality, Kenya. The findings show a non-significant relationship. Mendis (2017) examined the impact of payment system on employee turnover in logistic industry of Sri Lanka. The outcome showed payment system as a powerful predictor of labour turnover. Akhtar et al. (2016) explored the association between payment system and turnover intention of faculty members at business school in Pakistan. The result reported a non-correlating relationship.

### *Workplace environment and employees' turnover intention*

Ira et al. (2018) examined the influence of workplace environment on turnover intention of 4-star hotel employees in Padang City, Malaysia. Findings shows a positive significant correlation between workplace environment and turnover intention. Kwenin (2013) examined the relationship between workplace environment and employee retention in Vodafone Ghana limited. Findings indicated a positive relationship.

Abu Rumman et al. (2013) examined the impact of workplace environment on job turnover of five-star hotels in Al-aqaba City. Findings showed a significant relationship between working environment and turnover intention. Rampur (2010) concludes that employees also push to leave job due to the dissatisfaction in their present workplace. In a similar vein, Hissom, (2013) argue that employees are more likely to stay in an organisation that the working environment is predictable and conducive.

Malik et al. (2020) carried a cross-sectional study aimed to investigate the role of motivation and work environment in the turnover intentions of bank officers. It was hypothesized that motivation and work environment would predict turnover intentions while the work environment would moderate the relationship between motivation and turnover intentions. The results revealed that extrinsic motivation negatively predicted turnover intentions while work environment moderated the relationship of both types of motivations with turnover intentions.

Applebaum (2010) argue that physical environment (noise, air quality, light, toxic exposure, temperature, humidity, aesthetics), and stress can affect the level of job satisfaction and will ultimately trigger turnover intention. There is a strong evidence that physical work environment not only affects job satisfaction, but also employee performance, employee injury, behavior, communication patterns, fatigue, error rates, and physical and psychological stress. Research by Lu et al. (2017) found that turnover intention was significantly associated with job satisfaction, work stress, work-family conflict and sociodemographic factors, including working hours per week, working in urban/rural areas, type of institution, and age.

Adebayo and Ogunsina (2011) suggest that when employees feel satisfied with the style of their supervisor, they tend to be more motivated and tend not to intend to quit the organization. The implication is that employees with higher work stress experience will experience low levels of job satisfaction and vice versa, resulting in turnover intention. Moreover, Lee et al. (2016) suggest that it is necessary to make improvements to the work environment and reduce work stress so that it is expected to reduce employee turnover. However, it was hypothesized in this study as follows:

- i. Pay Satisfaction will significantly influence turnover intention among employees of humanitarian organizations in Maiduguri.
- ii. Workplace Environment will significantly influence turnover intention among employees of humanitarian organizations in Maiduguri.
- iii. Pay Satisfaction and Workplace Environment will jointly and significantly influence turnover intention among employees of humanitarian organizations in Maiduguri.

## **Method**

### *Design*

The study employed a cross-sectional survey approach. This approach was favoured because the data collected was used for analyses at a particular point in time.

### ***Participants and Procedures***

Participants for the study were 132 employees randomly selected from four humanitarian organizations in a cross-sectional survey. They comprised of 96(72.7%) males and 36(27.3%) females. Their age ranged between 20 and 50 years. 76 (57.6%) of the participants were married and 56 (42.4%) were singles. In respect to educational qualification 3 (2.3%) of the participants are holders of school certificates, 28 (21.2%) hold diploma certificates. 71 (53.8%) are graduates with first degrees while 30(22.7%) holds post graduate degree. Analysis also shows organizational tenure of the participants. A total of 54 (40.9%) while 78 (59.1%) have years of work experience between 5 years and above. A total number of 132 copies of the research instruments were administered to the respondents in their various organizations.

### ***Instruments for Data Collection***

Data for the study were collected using a set of questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised three scales.

***The Pay Satisfaction Questionnaire:*** Pay Satisfaction Questionnaire developed by Heneman and Schwab (1985). The scale was designed to assess employees' level of satisfaction with different aspects of their compensation within an organization. The instrument consists of 18 items that assess employees' perceptions and feelings regarding their pay and compensation system. Although the original scale measures pay satisfaction across four dimensions (pay level, pay raise, benefits, and pay structure/administration), the present study treated the scale as a composite measure of overall pay satisfaction. This approach is consistent with studies that aggregate the items to obtain a global indicator of employees' satisfaction with their remuneration. Responses to the items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 – Very dissatisfied to 5 – Very satisfied.

Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they were satisfied with various aspects of their pay. Sample items include: "My take-home pay," "My current salary," and "The company's pay structure." For the purpose of this study, scores on all 18 items were summed to obtain a single composite pay satisfaction score, with higher scores indicating higher levels of satisfaction with pay. Previous studies have reported good internal consistency for the scale with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.81 to 0.95 across subscales, while the overall scale reliability has been reported to be approximately 0.89, indicating strong reliability. In the present study, the reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach's alpha, and the scale demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency.

***The Working Environment:*** Working environment was measured using the Working Environment Scale (WES) developed by Mohapatra and Srivastava(2003). The scale was designed to measure employees' perceptions of the quality and conduciveness of their workplace environment. The Working Environment Scale consists of 27 items that assess various aspects of the organizational work setting such as physical working conditions, availability of work facilities, safety, interpersonal relations, and general organizational climate. The items are rated on a 5-point Likert response format ranging from 1 – Strongly Disagree to 5 – Strongly Agree. Respondents are required to indicate the extent to which each statement describes their work environment.

All items are positively keyed and are scored from 1 to 5. The responses are summed to obtain a total score, with higher scores indicating a more favourable and supportive working environment, while lower scores indicate a less favourable working environment. The developers reported that the scale has adequate reliability and validity for organizational research, with internal

consistency reliability coefficients of 0.91, indicating acceptable reliability. In the present study, the total score obtained from the scale was used as a composite measure of working environment.

**Turnover intention:** The turnover intention scale was measured with Price's (2001) 14-item index with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.867 reported for the scale. The index consists of 14 items that assess employees' thoughts about quitting their job, intentions to search for alternative employment, and likelihood of leaving their current organization. The items capture different aspects of withdrawal cognition such as thinking about leaving, planning to leave, and evaluating alternative job opportunities. Respondents indicate their level of agreement with each item using a Likert-type response format, typically ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Sample items include: 'I frequently think about quitting my job'. 'I will probably look for a new job in the near future, 'I often consider leaving this organization''.

Scores on the items are summed to obtain a composite turnover intention score, with higher scores indicating stronger intention to leave the organization and lower scores indicating weaker intention to quit.

### Data Analysis

Data collected for the study were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 26. During the pilot study, confirmatory factor analysis was performed on the three scales to ascertain the presence of subscale and to determine the strength of items on the scales. In the main study, frequencies were used to summarize and describe the demographic characteristics of the participants. Standard Multiple Regression was used to test the hypotheses postulated for the study; that is, to assess the independent and joint influence of pay satisfaction and workplace environment on turnover intention.

## Results

**Table 1:** Inter-correlational among the study variables

S/N	Variable	X	SD	1	2	3
1	Pay satisfaction	11.55	2.51	-		
2	Workplace environment	12.55	1.76	.259**	-	
3	Turnover intention	12.38	2.22	.144**	.352**	-

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and inter-correlations among pay satisfaction, workplace environment, and turnover intention among humanitarian workers in Maiduguri.

The result shows that pay satisfaction is positively and significantly related to workplace environment ( $r = .259$ ,  $p < .01$ ). This indicates a weak but significant relationship, suggesting that humanitarian workers who perceive their workplace environment more favourably also tend to report higher levels of pay satisfaction.

Similarly, pay satisfaction has a positive and significant relationship with turnover intention ( $r = .144$ ,  $p < .01$ ). However, this relationship is very weak, implying that pay satisfaction is only minimally associated with employees' intention to leave. Furthermore, workplace environment is

positively and significantly related to turnover intention ( $r = .351, p < .01$ ). This relationship is moderate in strength, indicating that workplace environment is more strongly associated with turnover intention compared to pay satisfaction. The positive direction suggests that as perceptions of the workplace environment change, turnover intention also increases, which may reflect underlying issues such as stress, insecurity, or challenging working conditions typical of humanitarian job.

**Table 2:** Standard Multiple Regression Analysis Showing independent and joint influence of pay satisfaction and workplace environment on turnover intention

Variables	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Df	F	$\beta$	t	Sig
<b>Constant</b>						<b>-4.294</b>	<b>.000</b>
<b>Pay Satisfaction</b>	<b>.757</b>	<b>.528</b>	<b>2,136</b>	<b>47.736</b>	<b>.144</b>	<b>1.658</b>	<b>.000</b>
<b>Workplace Environment</b>					<b>.362</b>	<b>4.422</b>	<b>.000</b>

The results in Table 2 show that pay satisfaction independently and significantly predicted turnover intention among employees of humanitarian organizations in Maiduguri ( $\beta = .144, t = 1.66, P < .001$ ). The result indicated that pay satisfaction contributed 14.4% in the total variance observed in turnover intention.

The influence of workplace environment on turnover intention was also assessed and the results presented in Table 2. The results reveal that workplace environment significantly predicted turnover intention ( $\beta = .362, t = 4.42, P < .001$ ). The result indicated that workplace environment significantly contributed 36.2% of the total variance observed in turnover intention among employees of humanitarian organizations.

Finally, the result presented in the table 2 above revealed that there is a significant joint influence of pay satisfaction and workplace environment on turnover intention among employees of humanitarian organizations in Maiduguri.  $R^2 = .528, F(3, 128) = 47.736, P < .05$ . Thus, the result indicates that pay satisfaction and workplace environment jointly contributed 52.8% of total observed variance in turnover intention.

## Discussion

This study was designed to investigate factors contributing to turnover intention among humanitarian workers in Maiduguri, Borno State. Quantitative analysis shows that Pay satisfaction significantly influence employees' turnover intention among employees of humanitarian organizations in Maiduguri. This implies that pay satisfaction is critical factor in enhancing positive attitudes of employees. These positive attitudes include intention to stay with organization. The results of this study has lend credence to findings of other researchers such like Fapohunda (2012) who maintained that pay is a significant factor in human resources management which covers financial benefits in the form of wages, Onadiran & Arogundade (2021) whose results of the study

showed that participants who were noted to have higher pay satisfaction reported significantly lower turnover intentions in contrast to participants who were noted to have lower pay satisfaction who showed high turnover intentions tendencies.

The finding of the study is also consistent with results many other studies in turnover intention literature. For example, Hasibuan et al. (2019) examined the effect of pay satisfaction on turnover intention of bank employees in Indonesia and result shows that pay satisfaction have significant effect on turnover intention even it is on a little impact. Hissom, (2013) argue that the most common reason for employee's turnover rate being so high is salary scale since employees are usually in search of jobs that pay well.

Undoubtedly, in a situation whereby two employees perform the similar work with similar responsibilities and yet one of the employees is at advantage when it comes to remuneration obviously the employees that is at disadvantage will surely be looking for a better offer. It is not uncommon to find out that organisations that pay less will have a higher labour turnover than those that higher.

The implication of this finding and those of other researchers is that where organizations fail to take pay satisfaction of its employees as a priority there will be likelihood of dissatisfaction which could leads to intention to look elsewhere for better pay. It is clear therefore that most of the humanitarian organizations whose employees are not satisfied with their pay will have high incidence of intention to quit among the employees compare to those organizations where employees are satisfied with their pay.

The analysis further indicates that there was a positive relationship between workplace environment and turnover intention among employees of humanitarian organizations in Maiduguri. The quality of employees' workplace environment impacts on the turnover intention of employees. Past studies have also shown that workplace environment is an important determinant of turnover intention of employees. (Chandrasekar, 2011; Vischer, 2008). Similarly, Kwenin (2013) ; Malik, et al. (2020), Rampur (2010) confirmed the impact of workplace environment on turnover intention among employees. The findings conclude that employees push to leave job due to the dissatisfaction in their present workplace. In a similar vein, Hissom, (2013) argue that employees are more likely to stay in an organisation that the working environment is predictable and conducive. The implication of this result is that increase in positive workplace environment will reduce turnover intention among employees. It has been demonstrated that workplace environment plays a fundamental role in employees' intentions to leave an organization or stay with an organization.

Finally, the analysis of the study shows that pay satisfaction and workplace environment jointly had greater influence turnover intention than when they were assessed independently. This implies that several factors could be responsible for intention of employees of humanitarian organizations in Maiduguri to leave their present jobs. It is therefore evident to the management of these organization to design policies that will enhance positive attitudes of the employees towards their organizations by instating good remuneration accompanied with good working environments. This is consistent with the findings of Kiani et al. (2020) where they reported that pay and conducive working environment play an important role in the reduction of turnover intentions among the universities lecturers. This implies that both pay satisfaction and favourable working environment are important factors that could reduce turnover intention among employees of humanitarian organizations.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that both pay satisfaction and workplace environment have significant independent and joint influence on turnover intention. From the foregoing, it is recommended that:

- i. Management of the humanitarian organizations should be mindful that not only does pay satisfaction impact individual positive attitude, aggregate pay satisfaction of employees may have an important linkage with overall organizational attitudes, which, in turn, can impact the organization's competitiveness among rival organizations. Although not new, this finding serves to remind managers of the organization that one way to reduce turnover is to attend to pay satisfaction of employees. Placing simultaneous emphasis on the multiplicity of factors contributing to overall pay satisfaction such as pay level, the quality and timing of information that employees receive about pay, and the quality of employee benefits is highly recommended.
- ii. Humanitarian organizations should create a harmonious non-physical work environment to enhance intention to stay among the employees. Paying attention to the physical work environment of employees at work is also critical as this could help retain committed employees.

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