
INFLUENCE OF PERCEIVED JOB STRESS AND WORKPLACE INCIVILITY ON TURNOVER INTENTION AMONG SELECTED WORKERS IN LAGOS METROPOLIS

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of job stress and workplace incivility on turnover intention among selected workers in Lagos metropolis. A survey research design was adopted and data were collected from three hundred and eighty-eight (388) participants (M= 145, F=243) using a battery of psychological test that is made up of Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS), Job Stress Scale (JSS) and Turnover Intention Scale (TIS). The data were analyzed using percentages and linear regression analysis to test the hypothesis. The result revealed that job stress and workplace incivility jointly accounted for 8% of the variance in employees' turnover intention. However, workplace incivility contributed more than job stress to the variance in employees' turnover intention. The Beta calculations showed that higher variation was explained by workplace incivility ($\beta = 0.25$) compared to job stress ($\beta = 0.14$). The implication of these findings substantiates the needs for managers of human resources to create a healthy work environment void of uncivil behaviour and job stress in order to retain employees in the organizations.

Key words: *Job Stress, Workplace Incivility, Turnover Intention.*

Introduction

One of the primary goals of modern organizations is to sustain productivity and maximize profitability through efficient and effective workforce. Thus, employees' retention remains a critical concern for managers, particularly in this era of globalization where organizational competitiveness has triggered high employees migration among and across organizations and industries.

Social analysts have found that employees' turnover is a major issue in organizations because of the challenges associated with high staff turnover, these include high cost of embarking on advertising, recruitment, selection of new personnel, training cost, increase the workload as well as other negative impacts on for the remaining employees and organization (Abbasi and Hollman 2008; Wang, 2010; Perryer, Jordan, Firns and Travaghone, 2010; Balogun and Olowodunoye, 2012).

Turnover intention is a negative job attitude that could result to apathy. Loss of employees may have a detrimental effect on the organizational performance, productivity, and effectiveness. These far-reaching consequences make it crucial for the industry to find ways to ensure employees' commitment and protect employees from emotional exhaustion, which appear decisive for voluntary turnover (Bakker, Demerouti, and Schaufeli, 2003; Perryer et al., 2010).

Thus, the need for organizational leaders to be proactive in preventing employees', particularly those considered to be highly productive from leaving the organization. One effective preventive measure of controlling employee turnover is prompt identification of possible causes of employees' turnover intention and strategies to remedy such as well as measures to restore the desire to stay on the job in the employee (Saeed, Waseem, Sikander, and Rizwan, 2014).

Employees Turnover Intention

Jacobs and Roodt (2007) conceived employee turnover intention to mean a mental decision prevailing between an individual's approach with reference to a job to continue or leave the job. Turnover intention or intention to quit or leave (as used interchangeably in literature) is an individual desire or willingness to quit or leave employer organization. It is a measurement of whether a business' or organization's employees plan to leave their positions or whether that organization plans to remove employees from positions and this can be either voluntary or involuntary (Elangovan, 2001). According to Price (2001), it is not just intending to quit the location, but the work role, the job, and also the organization. Turnover intention has been found to be one of the major determinants of turnover behavior (*Applebaum, Fowler, Fiedler, Osinub & Robson, 2010*)

Unlike actual turnover, turnover intention is not explicit. Intentions are a statement about a specific behavior of interest. Turnover intention is defined as the reflection of "the (subjective) probability that an individual will change his or her job within a certain time period" and is an immediate precursor to actual turnover. Actual intention and turnover intention have been measured separately; however, actual turnover is expected to increase as the intention increases. According to Saeed et al. (2014) turnover intention is the employees plans to leave their jobs immediately or in the nearest future. Turnover intention can be either voluntary or involuntary. In voluntary turnover, employee leaves the organization willingly. It occurs when the employees have alternative best opportunity. While involuntary turnover intention occurs when organization isn't satisfied with an employee performance and makes decision to fire him. When employees are not satisfied with their jobs and organizations have no trust in their employees the employee's intention towards turnover will be greater; they will leave the organization and the duration of their job will be smaller (Jeffrey, 2007).

In addition, *Applebaum et al. (2010)* conceived employee turnover intention to mean individuals' own estimated probability (subjective) that they are permanently leaving the organization at some point in the near future. The reasons for such have been found be classified into five factors namely: job related factors such as job characteristic and job

social support; individual attributes such as demographics and human capital; organizational factors such as organizational culture and human resource practices; environmental factors such as technology advancement and perceived job alternativeness; psychological factors such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment .

Wright and Bonett (2007) found that when an employee is dissatisfied with his or her job, he or she looks for other opportunities which can give him or her happiness or satisfaction, thereby causing high turnover intension. Thus, job dissatisfaction is viewed as significant predictor of turnover intention (*Applebaum et al., 2010*) while job satisfaction and organizational commitment may be intermediate of turnover intention as well as actual turnover (Wright and Bonett, 2007).

Firth, David, Mellor, Moore and Claude (2007) maintained that managers can lower employees' turnover rate by reducing employees' turnover intention through conscious effort to regulate the relationships between supervisors and subordinates in order to reduce stress from management. Hennberger&Sousa-Poza (2007) report that the major negative consequence of employee turnover on organization is the heavy cost of replacing such employees, that is, the organization may spend big portion of her time and resources in recruiting and selecting best fitted employee to fill up the vacancy.

Predictors employee's turnover intention.

Several scholars have investigated the determinants of employee turnover intentions. Wang (2010) in his study of theoretical model of staff's turnover intention based on organization commitment and work stress, using 378 staffs in hotels in Yangtze, discovered that career development and intercommunication tend to become the primary factors to influence staff turnover intention while organization commitment and work stress have significant relationship with staff turnover intention. The staff turnover rate would be low if the hotel can help the staff to improve career development expectation, build smooth communicating channels, enhance organization commitment, and reduce work stress.

Mahmood and Abdul (2009) report employee turnover intentions from two dimensions, that is controllable and uncontrollable factors. Controllable factors are the organizational factors which include satisfaction with pay, satisfaction with working conditions, satisfaction with supervision, organizational commitment, and Job stress. While uncontrollable factors are the environmental factors which include Job hopping and perceived alternative employment opportunities. They discovered that job stress was the most significant controllable factor for switching job from one to another organization. Job hopping and alternative employment opportunities on the other hand were both significant determinants of employees' turnover intention.

In a related study, Husain, Siddique, Ali, Ali and Akbar (2015) found out through their study of causes of employee turnover intention in the banking industry of Pakistan that employee turnover intention has a significant relationship with the variables i.e Job satisfaction, trust relationship, job security, organizational commitment and job stress, but it has insignificant relationship with Person Organization Fit whereas the major contributor to turnover intention is Job Stress. They therefore concluded that intention of employees to leave or quit a job is greatly affected by lack of commitment to the organization, stress, trust relationship, job security and job-satisfaction. Thus, workload monitoring and supervisory subordinate relationships from the management can not only reduce stress, but can also increase job satisfaction, job security and commitment to the organization.

Kraemer and Gouthier (2012) report that various studies have examined causes for high turnover intentions (e.g. Sawyerr, Srinivas, and Wang, 2009), which offer reliable predictors of actual turnover behavior (Chen et al., 2011). In particular, research applying the job demands– resources (JD-R) model has shown that job demands and resources evoke two independent processes that determine turnover intentions: a negative health impairment process and a positive motivational process (Bakker, Demerouti, and Schaufeli, 2003; Demerouti et al., 2001). Thus, job stress experienced by employees an important factor affecting how employees commit to organizations. Muhammad et al. (2013) opined that stress exists in every organization, either big or small and work places and organizations have become so complex by what they do. They further submitted that job stress has significant effect over employees' performance and many organizations are trying to cope with this scenario. Job stress occurs when employees perceive an imbalance between their work demands and their capability and resources to meet these demands. This phenomenon has cost organizations billions of dollars globally. American businesses losses an estimated 200 billion dollars annually, while the UK losses an estimated 63 billion pounds annually to job stress. This is the cost for health care, higher rate of absenteeism, and turnover and lower performance (Anderson, 2003).

Also, Nienaber and Masibigiri (2012) while exploring factors influencing voluntary turnover intent of Generation X public servants in South African discovered that such factors as the nature of the job, traditional attitudes, and organizational context, both on the macro and micro-levels significantly stood out. Given their unique characteristics, Generation X is a turnover risk, which is facilitated by employee mobility. They therefore submitted that line manager has control over all the components influencing turnover intent, while engagement is omnipresent in these components. It is the role and responsibility of the line manager to facilitate engaged employees, which would equate to affectively committed employees, by attending to these components. In so doing the line manager can prevent the costly implications of employee turnover while capitalizing on their value to the organization.

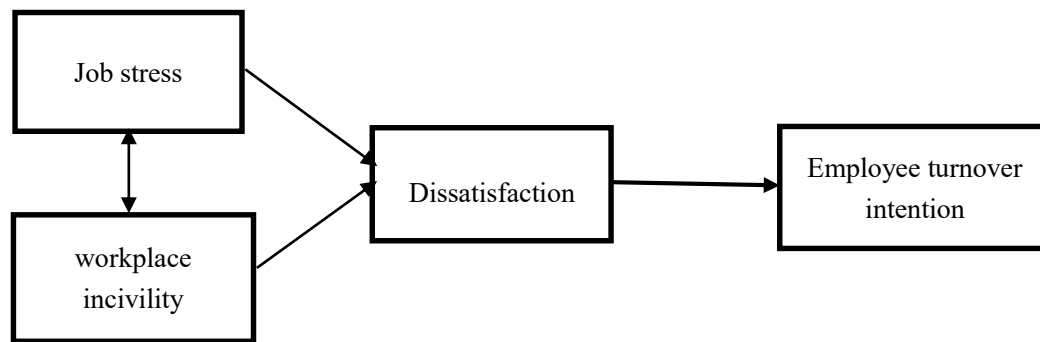
Another factor of interest underlying employee turnover intentions in work places is incivility. Workplace incivility can be described as “low-intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect. Uncivil behaviors are characteristically rude and discourteous, displaying a lack of regard for others.” When the instigator aims to injure the targeted employee or organization, then the uncivil conduct constitutes psychological aggression (e.g., Baron, 2004; Neuman, 2004). Individuals targeted with uncivil work behavior report greater job-related stress, distraction, and dissatisfaction; lower creativity and cooperation; and greater psychological distress.

Over time, they lose commitment to their organizations and quit at higher rates (Cortina et al., 2001, Lim et al., 2008; Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, 2000; Pearson et al., 2001; Pearson & Porath, 2004; Blau, & Andersson, 2005). Even employees who only experience incivility second-hand (e.g., witnessing the mistreatment of colleagues) show lower job satisfaction and commitment and greater job burnout and turnover intentions (Lim et al., 2008; Miner-Rubino & Cortina, 2009). Cortina (2009) notes that 'these adverse consequences of incivility have financial implications for employers, who must absorb the costs of employee distraction and discontentment, job accidents, substance abuse, sick leave, work team conflict, productivity decline, and turnover'.

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From the foregoing, it is evident that attempt has been made over the years by researchers to understand the major determinants of turnover intention and develop some managerial implications to deal with the problem of high turnover rate. Previous studies have also indicated that job stress and incivility significantly correlated with job dissatisfaction which in turns affect the decision of employees whether they want to continue or quit the job (Tuzun, 2007). However, the present study is an indigenous effort to explore the influence of job stress and workplace incivility on employees' turnover intention in Nigerian private and public employees and organizations.

Conceptual Model



H₁. Job stress and work place incivility will significant predict employees' turnover intention among employees.

METHOD

Participants and Procedure

This study is a non-experimental and quantitative study. The *Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS)* , *Job Stress Scale (JSS)* and *Turnover Intention Scale (TIS)* were used for data collection. A purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample of 388 participants who duly responded to the standardized tests (Male=145, Female=243). The participants were selected from reputable private and public organizations in Lagos, Nigeria (Names of the organizations withheld for confidential reason). The socio-demographic details of the participants are shown in Table 1. All the ethical requirements for conducting research were observed: permission was obtained from the human resources managers of the organizations, participation in the study was voluntary and participants were neither compelled nor compensated for completing the psychological tests. The tests were completed in the familiar atmosphere of their offices after telling them the purpose of the study.

Measures

A battery of psychological test was used for data collection.

Section A (Bio-data) – designed to obtain demographic information such as age, sex, educational qualification, marital status and nature of organization from respondents.

Section B – Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS) developed by Cortina, Meagley, Williams and Langhout (2001) and improved upon by Cortina and Meagley (2009) consisted of ten items designed to assess workplace incivility. Each item of the scale measured the frequency to which individual employee experience uncivil behavior from colleagues or superior. A sample item is “How often has your supervisor/co-worker put you down or was condescending to you in some way” and participants responded using a 5-point scale ranging from once or twice a year (1) to everyday (5). Cronbach’s alpha of 0.88. was established for this study.

Section C –Job Stress Scale (JSS) developed and standardized by Parker and Decotis (1983) consisted of thirteen items designed to obtain information on degree to which employees perceive their jobs as stressful. The JSS measured stress along two dimensions. The first dimension being time stress (feeling of being under constant pressure) and the second dimension being anxiety (job feeling of anxiety) occupational stress among employees. This was executed on a five-point Likert-type scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree). Higher scores depicts a higher degree of perceived occupational stress and vice versa. Cronbach’s alpha of 0.86. was established for this study.

Section D –Turnover Intention Scale (TIS) consists of three items designed to obtain information on turnover intention. Respondents were required to express their opinion by ticking one of the alternatives on a seven point scale i.e. Strongly Disagree -1; Disagree Moderately -2; Disagree -3; Unsure -4; Agree Moderately -5; Agree -6; Agree Strongly -7. A sample item is “Think about quitting my present job”. Cronbach’s alpha of 0.87. was established for this study.

Data Analyses

Responses to the psychological tests were entered accordingly into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 on a personal computer. Data were coded and analyzed using t- independent test, correlation and linear regression analysis.

Table 1: Social Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Variables		Frequency	Percentage %
Gender	Male	145	37.4
	Female	243	62.6
Age range	21-30 Years	241	62.1
	31-40 Years	88	22.7
	41-50 Years	39	10.1
	51 Years & Above	20	5.2
Marital Status	Single	163	42
	Married	225	58
Organizational Type	Private	190	49
	Public	198	51
Educational Qualification	BSc	334	86.1
	MSc	54	13.9

Table1 above shows the socio-demographic attributes of the participants. In terms of the gender of participants, 37.4% were males and 62.6% were females, the age range shows that 62.1% of the participants were within ages 21-30, 22.7% within ages 31-40, 10.1% within ages 41-50, while 5.2% were at least 51years old. In terms of the marital status of participants, 42.0% of the participants were single, while 58% were married. In terms of the organizational distributions , 49% of the participants were from private organization while 52% were from public organization. Finally, 86% of the participants had

Bachelors of Science degrees, while 13.9% had Master of Science degrees.

The Results of Hypothesis Testing:

H₁. Job stress and work place incivility will significant predict employees' turnover intention among employees.

In order to test the hypothesis, a multiple regression analysis was computed and the result is shown below:

Table 2 Multiple Regression Model Summary Variable

			Turnover Intention			
Model Summary			B	SE	t-B	Sig
Multiple R =	0.289	(Constant)	23.100	2.638	8.755	0.000
R-Square =	0.083	Incivility	0.247	0.078	3.164*	0.002
Regression F=8.491* (P=0.000)		Stress	0.137	0.037	3.671*	0.000

Predictor variables: Job stress and work place incivility

Dependent variable: Employees' turnover intention

Table 2 shows that the Job stress and work place incivility jointly accounted for 8% variance in employees' turnover intention. Although, the Beta calculations show that workplace incivility had a higher predictive value of ($\beta = 0.25$), compared to job stress of ($\beta = 0.14$). In view of the foregoing, the hypothesis which states that Job stress and workplace incivility will significant predict employees' turnover intention is accepted .

DISCUSSION

This study examined the influence of stress and incivility at work place on turnover intention among selected workers in Lagos metropolis. It was found that job stress and work place incivility jointly accounted for 8% of the variance in employees' turnover intention report. The finding reveals that an increase in the job stress and workplace incivility lead to increases in employees' turnover intention experiences. This finding agrees with that of Mohammad et al. (2013) who reported a significant relationship between job stress, workload, environment and employee's turnover intentions. They found that employee's turnover intentions are positively related with job stressors. Thus, an increase in the job stress results to increase employee's turnover intentions.

Firth et al. (2007) also supported that a range of factors that lead to job related stress (stressors) make employees to quit their organizations. These, they found to include unstable, unsecured work environment, job insecurity, discontinuity, procedural injustice and workplace incivility and related violence. Nasrin and Hojat (2013) also found a significant relationship between job stress, turnover intention and job performance.

Arising from the above findings, it could be concluded that job stress is a catalyst of employees' turnover intention. Thus, the main task of managers therefore is to reduce the stress factors identified in a job and eliminate them as soon as possible in order to avoid employees' frustrations, job dissatisfaction as well prevent turnover intention.

Other research findings that support the roles of workplace incivility, job stress, cognitive distraction, psychological distress, and lower job satisfaction on creativity and turnover intention includes: Cortina & Magley, 2009; Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, 2005. Cortina et al. (2009) reported that incivility negatively impacted on individual behavior and performance in the study of US federal courts. They stated incivility translates mainly to turnover intentions. Dion (2006) also noticed workplace incivility and occupational stress increase intention to quit and decreases satisfaction.

It is important to note that workplace incivility may not have direct influence on turnover intentions of employees, but it has the potential to increase the stress and dissatisfaction levels of employees on the job, there making the job uninteresting, decreasing job performance and attitude (Cortina et al., 2009). Thus, the findings of the present study provided additional empirical support to ways of minimizing employees turnover intention in the Nigerian work environments.

Future research seek for other method like experiments to curb the major limitation that common to all survey research studies, in that it precludes any inference of causality. This is due to the fact that paper and pencil tests in the absence of the manipulation of an independent variable, cannot be used to established cause-effect relationships between variables as compared with experimental studies.

In conclusion, the researchers recommend that human resource managers should create an enabling environment that will reduce job stress as well as promote peaceful and cordial relationships among employees and management in order to minimize employees' turnover intention.

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