

Relationship between job satisfaction and voluntary turnover intention in the manufacturing industry for sustainable growth: A systematic review



Wong Yee Fong¹, Wong Chee Hoo^{1,2,*}, Sudhakar Madhavedi^{1,3}

¹Faculty of Business and Communications, INTI International University, Nilai, Malaysia

²Faculty of Management, Shinawatra University, Pathum Thani, Thailand

³Business Management Department, Kshatriya College of Engineering, Armoor, India

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ABSTRACT

In today's workplaces, employee turnover rates are increasing. Modern organizations face many challenges because of the rising rates of voluntary turnover. In Malaysia, a developing nation, the manufacturing industry needs efficient growth, making a strong workforce essential. Recently, the manufacturing sector in Malaysia has seen the highest voluntary turnover rates among all industries in the country. This study aims to explore the link between job satisfaction and voluntary turnover intentions and to analyze the factors that affect this relationship. A unique aspect of this study is the use of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) methodology to collect and evaluate research on voluntary turnover intention and job satisfaction. The study finds that job satisfaction significantly influences the likelihood of voluntarily leaving a current job.

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1. Introduction

There has been an increase in the rate of employee turnover in today's workplace. Employee turnover can be broken down into two categories: voluntary turnover and involuntary turnover on the job. Involuntary turnover occurs when employees are terminated or laid off by their employers, whereas voluntary turnover occurs when individuals decide to leave their jobs on their own accord (An, 2019).

The term "voluntary turnover" refers to those instances in which an employee decides to stop working voluntarily. External factors such as intelligence, attitudes, past history, gender, interests, age, and length of work are some of the factors that influence employee turnover (Chiat and Panatik, 2019). Other factors that influence turnover include age, gender, and interests. It has been found that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are related to employee turnover (Skelton et al., 2020).

According to Malek et al. (2018), turnover refers to the process by which employees leave an

organization, at which point they are required to be replaced immediately. This is one of the most significant losses that a company will suffer when a large number of employees leave the company, particularly those employees who are candidates for employment. Over the course of the past few years, Malaysia's attrition rate, also known as voluntary turnover, has been constantly making progress. According to statistics provided by AON Hewitt, the attrition rate, also known as the voluntary turnover rate, in Malaysia's various industries rose from 9.5% in 2015 to 13% in 2017.

According to the 2021 Employee Movement and Retention Report (employmenthero.com), 61% of Malaysian workers plan to change jobs within the next 12 months. Organizations are facing significant challenges due to the increased rate of voluntary turnover, which has become a major concern globally. The manufacturing industry in Malaysia is crucial to the country's economy, and employees are among the most valuable assets in any business, especially in today's competitive market (Yeoh and Ibrahim, 2020). When businesses need to rehire, they incur additional costs such as advertising, retraining, and supervisory time. Turnover has been a persistent issue for Malaysian manufacturing companies and has become a serious problem for nearly all Human Resource Departments in these industries (Yeoh and Ibrahim, 2020). Studies have shown that higher turnover rates can threaten both personnel and financial performance (Chan et al.,

* Corresponding Author.

Email Address: cheehoo.wong@newinti.edu.my (W. C. Hoo)

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Corresponding author's ORCID profile:

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0691-4463>

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2017). Given the importance of employees to the industry, addressing turnover intention is essential.

2. Literature review

According to Belete (2018), the term "employee turnover intention" refers to the likelihood that an employee will leave the position that they are currently holding. The term "turnover intention" typically refers to the intention of employees to leave their jobs voluntarily, whereas the intention of employees to leave their jobs involuntarily will not be given priority in this study. This is due to the fact that employees do not initiate involuntary turnover.

A significant amount of research has been done in the past to investigate the connection between being happy in one's job and the desire to quit one's job voluntarily. The vast majority of academics are of the opinion that job satisfaction and intention to leave are contrary to one another and that job satisfaction and intention to leave are incompatible with one another. To put it another way, a low level of job satisfaction is a precursor to an increased likelihood of leaving the company. Furthermore, according to DiPietro et al. (2020), researchers believe that low levels of job satisfaction among employees in an organization lead to increased rates of employee turnover, absenteeism, and a lack of commitment.

Job satisfaction refers to a positive and enjoyable emotional state that persists regardless of an employee's experiences in the workplace. According to Shafique et al. (2018), supervision is an essential factor in determining employee performance and perceptions of the company. This is true regardless of individuals' personal characteristics or the design of their jobs. Furthermore, it is asserted that employees who are content with their jobs carry out their duties more effectively and are more likely to wish to remain with the organization. According to Nguyen et al.'s research from 2020, a contented worker is one who strives to improve the outcomes associated with their work. A recent study by Tang et al. (2024) found that high levels of life satisfaction boost intrinsic motivation and an overall positive outlook.

The following research questions, to which a response will be provided, will be the researcher's primary emphasis in order to comprehend the trend of study on voluntary turnover intention, job characteristics, and job satisfaction:

1. What is the main purpose of the studies?
2. What are the main methods used in employee engagement studies?
3. Which nations are involved in the studies?
4. In what year was the article released?

3. Methodology

The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) process is used in this research method to collect and evaluate research on topics related to voluntary turnover

intention and job satisfaction (Paul and Criado, 2020). This approach is known as a systematic literature review approach. Ebscohost and Google Scholar, two online databases, were used to find the literature. By using the PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram for the Systematic Review, the current researcher searches databases using all the variables from the current study in pairs, namely job satisfaction and voluntary turnover intention.

The domain-based structured review focuses on examining what has been achieved and what is still lacking in recent studies from 2017 to 2022 regarding the direct relationship between job satisfaction and voluntary turnover. Additionally, the review includes only published journal articles and dissertations, excluding conference papers, to ensure that the information sources are from reputable journals and universities. The complete strategy process is shown in Fig. 1.

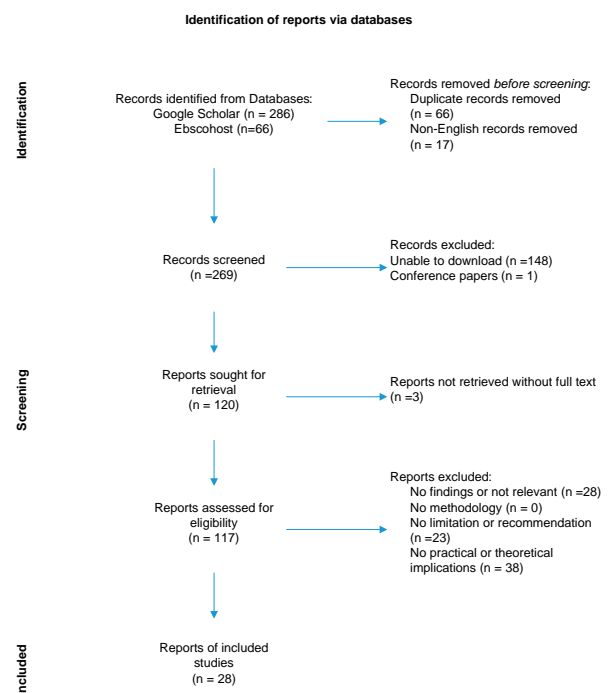


Fig. 1: Diagram of the article selection process using PRISMA

3.1. Job satisfaction and voluntary turnover intention

Fig. 1 shows that during the records screening process, 148 out of 269 records were excluded because they were not available in Portable Document Format (PDF). Additionally, three reports could not be retrieved in full text. Prior to screening, all non-English papers were excluded. In the final step of screening, the full-text reports were assessed for eligibility based on the systematic table criteria. Reports were excluded for various reasons: 28 were not relevant to the current topic, 23 lacked limitations or recommendations for further research, and 38 had no practical or theoretical implications. Ultimately, 28 reports were selected for systematic review, consisting of 2 reports from 2017, 9 from

2018, 4 from 2019, 6 from 2020, 2 from 2021, and 5 from 2022.

4. Results and discussion

The selected studies examine the relationship between job characteristics, job satisfaction, and voluntary turnover intentions. The following section will use these articles to address the research questions.

4.1. What is the main purpose of the studies?

A total of 28 carefully chosen studies examining the link between job satisfaction and voluntary turnover were categorized into seven groups based on their factors: organizational commitment, work-life balance, performance, engagement at work, and turnover intention. Out of the 28 studies, 29% of selected studies are associated with work stress (Lu et al., 2017; Hakim and Sudarmiatin, 2018; Simangunsong and Maryam, 2018; Prasada and Sawitri, 2019; Djatmiko et al., 2019; Li et al., 2021; Wulansari et al., 2021). 29% of selected studies are associated with turnover intention (Larkin-Perkins, 2017; De Simone et al., 2018; Pekdemir et al., 2018; Edwards-Dandridge et al., 2020; Nemțeanu and Dabija, 2020; Nnah, 2020; Sulistiyono and Aima, 2020; Du Plessis and De Beer, 2022). 18% of selected studies are associated with work-life conflict (Lu et al., 2017; Jabeen et al., 2018; Kumara and Fasana, 2018; Al Musadieq, 2020; Fu et al., 2020). 11% of selected studies are associated with work engagement (Zhang et al., 2018; Park and Johnson, 2019; Lahat and Marthanti, 2021). 7% of selected studies are associated with organizational commitment (Astuti and Surya, 2020). 3% of selected studies are associated with the work environment (Purwanti and Indradewa, 2022). 3% of selected studies are associated with performance (Shu et al., 2018).

Based on the findings of the PRISMA systematic review examining the relationship between job satisfaction and voluntary turnover, it is evident that a significant proportion of the reviewed papers were associated with work stress and work-life conflict. These results highlight the multifaceted nature of

factors influencing job satisfaction and voluntary turnover in the workplace. Prioritize employee well-being and implement measures to identify and address factors contributing to job dissatisfaction and turnover intention, thereby promoting employee retention and organizational success.

4.2. What are the main methods used in employee engagement studies?

Based on the findings from all 28 studies, it is apparent that quantitative research methods were uniformly employed to investigate a range of theories concerning beliefs, characteristics, thoughts, behaviors, variable relationships, and social variables. These studies utilized surveys with questionnaires based on research variables, which were transformed into measurements and indices to formulate the survey questions. This approach allowed researchers to collect data from specific populations and examine various psychological phenomena in both past and present contexts.

In conclusion, the consistent use of quantitative research methods across these studies underscores the importance of empirically examining the relationships between different variables and understanding the complexities of human behavior within specific populations. This approach facilitates the collection of robust data that contributes to advancing knowledge in the field of psychology and informs strategies for addressing various social and behavioral challenges.

4.3. Which nations are involved in the studies?

Fig. 2, a bar chart, shows the number of reports by countries or regions from 2017 to 2022, based on data extracted from Google Scholar and Ebscohost databases. The current researcher reviewed 28 reports on job satisfaction and voluntary turnover intentions conducted in 11 countries. The breakdown of reports is as follows: 1 from Sri Lanka, 1 from Turkey, 5 from the United States, 1 from India, 10 from Indonesia, 1 from Romania, 1 from South Africa, 5 from China, 1 from the United Arab Emirates, 1 from Pakistan, and 2 from Italy.

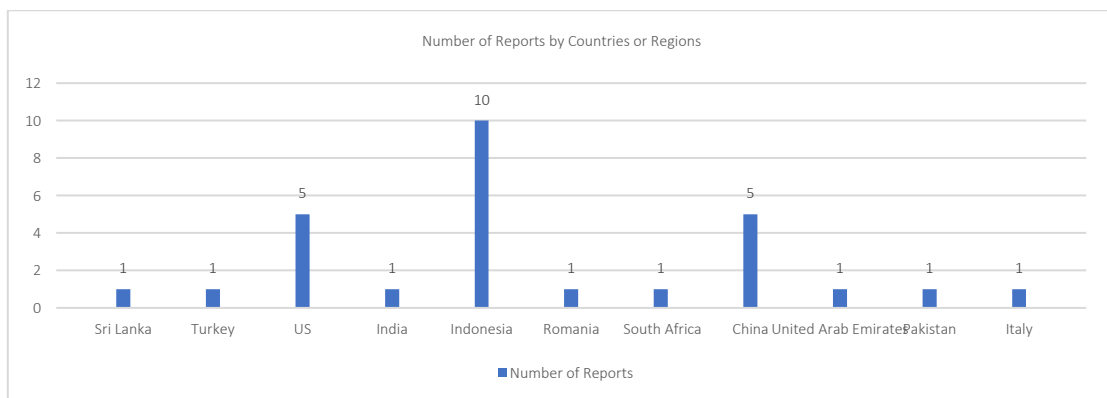


Fig. 2: Number of reports by countries or regions from 2017 to 2022

According to the PRISMA systematic review, no papers on the subject had been published in Malaysia. Consequently, future researchers should focus on conducting more studies aimed at enhancing job satisfaction to mitigate voluntary turnover intention. This is crucial as voluntary turnover intention continues to pose significant challenges in Malaysian workplaces, necessitating further investigation and intervention.

4.4. In what year was the article released?

Fig. 3 shows that a total of 28 reports were systematically reviewed. The breakdown by year of publication is as follows: 2 reports in 2017, 9 reports in 2018, 4 reports in 2019, 6 reports in 2020, 2 reports in 2021, and 5 reports in 2022.

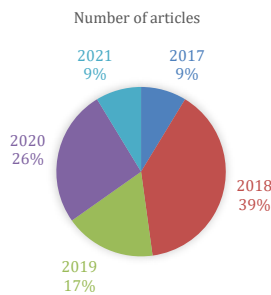


Fig. 3: Year of reports released from 2017 to 2022

Out of the 28 articles, most were published in 2018 (39%), followed by 2020 (26%). This indicates that the issues of voluntary turnover intention and job satisfaction were of significant concern during 2018-2020. Given the limited number of papers published on this topic after 2020, it is crucial for future researchers to explore strategies to improve job satisfaction and reduce voluntary turnover intention. Addressing this issue is vital due to the ongoing challenges it presents in modern workplaces. Therefore, further research is needed to find and implement effective measures to create a more sustainable and productive work environment.

4.5. Finding of the studies

A quantitative survey of 163 people was conducted in India in 2018 to address a research gap. The study examined job satisfaction characteristics and their effects on job performance and turnover intention, using SPSS 20 and AMOS for analysis. The findings showed that job satisfaction significantly influenced plans to leave the company ($p < 0.001$). In another quantitative study from Indonesia, 82 nurses were surveyed. This study looked at organizational commitment as a mediator between work motivation, job satisfaction, and turnover intention among nurses at South Kuta Private Hospital. It found a significant link between job satisfaction and turnover intention (Astiti and Surya, 2020).

Romanian researchers conducted a 766-person quantitative survey in 2020. The study highlighted

how workaholicism and work engagement affect job satisfaction and turnover intention. The study used AMOS analysis. Study results show a significant unfavorable association between job satisfaction and turnover intention ($p < 0.001$) (Nemțeanu and Dabija, 2020). US researchers conducted a 2017 quantitative investigation with 153 participants. The study used SPSS for multiple linear regression analysis. The study examined whether intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction predicted retail sales personnel' voluntary turnover intentions (Larkin-Perkins, 2017). The study found that internal and external job satisfaction can predict employee turnover.

In 2020, 150 Indonesian employees participated in a quantitative study. The study found a strong link between job satisfaction and the desire to leave one's job. Al Musadieg's (2020) study examined how job conflict, participation, and family work conflict affect turnover intentions. The survey also investigated work satisfaction and career change intentions. A 2018 Indonesian quantitative study with 121 participants examined the links between working stress, job satisfaction, organizational climate, and Mayapada Hospital nurses' desire to resign abruptly. Simangunsong and Maryam (2018) found a positive association between job satisfaction and the desire to leave, with a t-value of 5.83, over the crucial value of 1.96. Using structural equation modeling (SEM), the study found a positive association.

A 332-person quantitative research was done in South Africa in 2022. The study examined the links between job happiness, employee voice, quiet, turnover intention, and work-related rumination (affective, problem-solving, and detachment). The study investigated if these factors are related. In Mplus 8.4 CFA analysis, all dimensions except emotional rumination, employee voice, and work satisfaction exhibited significant associations. Du Plessis and De Beer (2022) found a significant inverse association between work satisfaction and the likelihood of leaving one's current position ($p < 0.001$).

A 2022 quantitative study in China used the PROCESS macro for SPSS and AMOS to analyze 505 individuals. The study examined the direct and indirect effects of work-family conflict on turnover intention. The mediating factors of psychological contract and job satisfaction were considered. Li et al. (2021) found that job satisfaction decreased the intention to leave. In 2019, 155 US registered nurses participated in a quantitative survey. The study examined whether hospital work engagement and job satisfaction predicted RN turnover. Edwards-Dandridge et al. (2020) found a substantial link between turnover intention and work satisfaction. Multiple linear regression showed a statistically significant link.

A 275-person Indonesian quantitative survey was conducted in 2022. The study used SEM-PLS for analysis. The study examined how work environment and culture affect turnover intention, utilizing job satisfaction as an intermediate. Bekasi's privately owned type B hospital hosted the research.

(Purwanti and Indradewa, 2022) Job satisfaction was correlated with relocation with a p-value of 0.048. It used SPSS 20.0 and AMOS 21.0 for analysis in China in 2018. The article sampled 121 people. The study found a strong association ($b=0.082$, $p<0.001$) between work satisfaction and the likelihood of resigning. Shu et al. (2018) showed that job happiness had a smaller effect on work performance for family members than for non-family members.

A 2022 Indonesian quantitative study using SmartPLS found that work happiness does not affect the propensity to resign. Wulansari et al. (2021) analyzed an Indonesian Big Four PAF auditor's intention to resign. The study examined how excessive workload, work stress, and job satisfaction affect this purpose. A 100-person quantitative survey was conducted in Indonesia in 2018. The study examined how work-related stress affects resignation from a privately owned hotel in Karawang, West Java. The study used bootstrap-confidence mediation analysis. Direct testing shows a substantial and direct relationship between the two variables (0.151 0.264). Hakim and Sudarmiatin (2018) discovered that PT Infomedia Solusi Humanika-Malang employees' intention to depart is positively correlated with job satisfaction. This is due to organizational dedication.

A 2018 quantitative study in the UAE evaluated the association between quality of work life (QoWL), job satisfaction, and turnover intention among Emirati women in public sector companies. The analysis used partial least squares SEM. The survey sampled 323 people. Jabeen et al. (2018) found a strong link between work satisfaction and turnover. It confirmed the adverse relationship between work satisfaction and turnover. A 317-person Indonesian quantitative study was conducted in 2020. The study examined how career progression, remuneration, and job satisfaction affect the intention to leave the profession. The study examined AJB Bumiputera 1912 headquarters workers. Job satisfaction negatively affected employees' propensity to leave the company, according to SmartPLS (Partial Least Squares) analysis (Sulistiyono and Aima, 2020).

The study examined work satisfaction and turnover intention using SEM and PLS. The study showed a t-statistic of 11.546 and a -0.795 original sample value. These data show that job satisfaction significantly reduces turnover intention (Prasada and Sawitri, 2019). This is the result of a 2019 Indonesian quantitative study with 150 participants. The study examined and predicted how work stress, leadership quality, work motivation, organizational culture, and job satisfaction affect job quitting.

In 2017, 3563 people participated in a quantitative study in China. Job satisfaction, work stress, work-family conflict, and turnover intention among Guangdong physicians were examined in the study. Additionally, it tried to discover elements of turnover intention in this group. Lu et al. (2017) discovered that work satisfaction directly affected turnover intention. Analysis used SEM. A

quantitative study in China in 2021 developed and tested a moderated mediation model of work stress, job satisfaction, and turnover intention with 506 participants. The article found a significant association between job satisfaction and turnover intention ($\beta = -0.57$, $p < 0.001$) (Li et al., 2021). The study used structural equation modeling.

A 2019 quantitative study in Indonesia used Bootstrapping and PROCESS Macro for SPSS. The study sampled 100 people. The study examined how work-related stress affects job satisfaction and intention to leave. A luxury hotel in Karawang, West Java, hosted the research. According to Prasetyo et al. (2019), work satisfaction negatively correlated with the intention to leave one's current employment (p-value = 0.000). A 269-person quantitative survey was done in Pakistan in 2022. The study examined how perceived work stress affects turnover intention and job satisfaction. The study also examined how work satisfaction affects perceived work stress and turnover intention. The 2022 article found a negative relationship between work satisfaction and turnover.

In 2020, 82 people will participate in a US quantitative study. Nurses' impressions of their work environment, managerial support, development prospects, and inclinations to resign are examined in the study. Employees' intrinsic and extrinsic work satisfaction and inclinations to leave were examined using multiple linear regression analysis. Employee intentions to depart were substantially predicted by intrinsic and extrinsic work satisfaction (Nnah, 2020). In 2018, Italy did a quantitative study with 194 nurses and 181 patients. Job satisfaction correlated positively with patient satisfaction (De Simone et al., 2018). The study examined how self-efficacy, agentic skills, job satisfaction, and work engagement affect nurses' intention to quit the hospital. The study also examined patient satisfaction and the relationships between these factors.

A 2019 quantitative study in the US examined job satisfaction, work engagement, and turnover intention among health science instructors. The study involved 249 participants and used methods such as correlations, reliability, construct validity, and hierarchical multiple regression. It found that intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction explained 39.6% of the variance (Park and Johnson, 2019). Similarly, a 2021 Indonesian quantitative study with 100 participants explored how work engagement, workplace stress, and job satisfaction affect turnover intention, with job satisfaction acting as an intervening variable. The study revealed that job satisfaction significantly influences turnover intentions, as indicated by a p-value of 0.000, which is below the 0.05 threshold (Lahat and Marthanti, 2021). The 2018 article shows China's quantitative study results. The 2426-person study examined how professional identity, job happiness, and work engagement affect township health inspector turnover intention. The article also examined how job satisfaction and work engagement mediate

professional identity and turnover intention among Chinese township health inspectors. Zhang et al. (2018) found significant study results ($p < 0.001$).

5. Conclusion

Out of the above 28 research studies, 27 of them proved that there is a significant direct relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction, indicating the higher the job satisfaction, the lower the voluntary turnover intention. These findings proposed that job satisfaction is significantly correlated with voluntary turnover intention.

After analyzing other published papers using the PRISMA method, it was found that there exists a noteworthy correlation between job satisfaction and voluntary turnover. Thus, the primary objective of this paper has been achieved. It has been observed that manufacturing employees with high-quality job satisfaction tend to have lower intentions of voluntary turnover. Studies indicate that employees with favorable job satisfaction exhibit higher levels of organizational commitment and a decreased likelihood of quitting their jobs. When employees perceive their job as challenging, offering growth opportunities, and providing autonomy and control, they are more inclined to be actively engaged and experience a sense of fulfillment in their work (Nikolova et al., 2019).

5.1. Limitations and further study

This systematic study has certain limitations that need to be addressed in future research. The findings suggest the necessity of a larger sample size for a more thorough and detailed analysis. Initially, this review used only a small sample size. Therefore, future studies should aim to include larger samples to improve outcomes in relevant fields and increase significance for participating countries, particularly Western nations like Germany and the United Kingdom. Another limitation identified is the restricted number of databases used. Expanding the range of databases for research will provide a more comprehensive overview of significant studies on this topic.

Compliance with ethical standards

Conflict of interest

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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