
**PERSON-ORGANIZATION FIT AND EMPLOYEE TURNOVER
INTENTION AMONG UNIVERSITY TEACHERS: THE MEDIATING
EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT**

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the role of Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit) in turnover intention of university teachers and also to evaluate organizational commitment as a mediator. In this quantitatively designed research, data were collected through survey instrument adopted from relevant studies by simple random sampling technique from faculty members of the universities and their campuses present in rural areas of Sindh, Pakistan. The sample for this study is 210 employees from rural Sindh-Pakistan, and the population represents universities teaching staff under permanent and non-permanent employment type. In data analysis through Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) in Smart PLS Version 4, this study revealed that P-O Fit relates negatively with turnover intention, means higher the P-O Fit of university teachers less likely they quit their current jobs. Results further indicate that P-O Fit has direct significant and positive impact on organizational commitment and organizational commitment has a direct and significant negative impact on turnover intention. It was also reported in findings that organizational commitment mediates the relationship between P-O Fit and turnover. This suggests that the greater P-O Fit causes more commitment of faculty within higher education institutions and this ultimately reduces job quitting intention of employees. Moreover, the indirect effect of P-O Fit through organization commitment is strengthened and further minimizes the turnover intention of the teaching staff.

Keywords: Person-organization fit, turnover intention, university teachers and organizational commitment.

INTRODUCTION

In today's knowledge-comprehensive and extremely competing era the preservation of managerial individuals is a great challenge being faced by organizations (Aguenza & Som, 2018). The definition of employee loyalty has changed dramatically as the relationship with an employer and an employee has grown. About 80 percent of respondents indicated in a recent workforce survey that their concept of faithfulness in the scope of job has changed over time (Murdock, 2017). Every three employees surveyed in the 'Randstad Corporate Branding Research 2017' reported freely that they are not loyal to any sector and could quit for a better pay package (Ghosh, 2017). A scenario in which company success is determined not only in conditions of worker efficiency but also worker faithfulness (Rai et al., 2018). This warrants study consideration to look at the factors impacting an employee's belonging to his/her organization. The turnover can impact both public and private organizations performance and working structure. There are evidence that reveal that factors that can indicate workers turnover such as work-life stability, work-family divergence, physical and psychological health, and the work connected factors like job satisfaction, Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit), and commitment (Yang et al., 2017). Experienced personnel are vital capital for business organizations (Sartono et al., 2018). Therefore, they must be retained by providing all required facilities and fixing their problems too.

Several studies have recently examined the connection between the combinations of human resource management practices on employee perception; P-O Fit, and work fulfillment. Their results support the idea that human resource management practices have an impact on P-O Fit and job satisfaction (Kooij & Boon, 2018). Similarly, the authors Kakar et al. (2019) applied human resource management practices package such as organizational training and growth in relation to P-O Fit and revealed that they are positively correlated. Literature review of the research witnesses that human resources practices such as recruitment and selection, job placement, trainings and performance evaluation were positively linked with employees' perception of P-O fit (Kooij & Boon, 2018). The same study argue that fitting employees with the organization is one of the main objectives of human resource management practices, it can be

clarified when the organization introduces human resource management practices, it will serve as a message that the organization cares about its employees and is ready to invest in their growth.

Enormous literature is available on turnover intention and employee retention; however, the empirical studies are scarce particularly in context of university teachers in rural areas of Sindh, Pakistan. Most of the current literature on Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit) and its relation with turnover intention show the evidence in context of business organizations and institutions in urban cities, providing an opportunity to conduct research on challenges of educational institutions in rural areas of Sindh. Though, various studies have focused on exploring the impact of organizational commitment on employees turnover intention, yet the limited research exists in context of assessing the mediating role of organizational commitment on the relationship between P-O Fit and employees turnover intention among the teaching faculty of universities present in remote areas of Sindh. Challenging socio-cultural conditions, lack of good infrastructure, different organizational setting aspects in rural areas such as low salaries and less access to other facilities for good living standard may impact P-O Fit and also the influence of organizational commitment on turnover intention. To fill this research gap, we designed a study in context of universities of rural Sindh for understanding the factors that impact on retention of teaching staff. In this context, the current study has main objective to provide deep understanding and insights that how P-O Fit and organizational commitment are key factors that decrease turnover intention of the university teachers in the rural areas of Sindh, Pakistan. Further, this research also answers the research questions; does P-O fit influence turnover intention and organization commitment? Is there any impact of organizational commitment on turnover intention? Does organizational commitment mediate the association between P-O and turnover intention?

RESEARCH GAP

Although large numbers of studies have been undertaken that report on retaining employees and knowing their turnover intention, however the scarce researches concentrating on university faculty of the rural areas, specifically in rural Sindh, provide a huge research-gap

for our study. Previous studies major focus was on examining Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit) in context of institutions in urban set-up and corporations, nonetheless, researches addressing on the challenges of education institutions that they encounter in rural regions seems overlooked (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Verquer et al., 2003). Additionally, investigations are there on exploring the impact of organizational commitment on turnover intention but very limited studies have examined the mediating influence of organizational commitment on the link between P-O Fit and turnover intention among teaching staff of the universities of the rural areas (Meyer et al., 1991; Cho & Son, 2012). Unique social and cultural dynamics and resources constraints in rural settings can pose great challenges for universities and faculty which can also contribute in P-O Fit and how organizational commitment impact turnover (Hausknecht et al., 2008; Hom et al., 2017). In this context, to fill the research gap, current research aims to evaluate the role of person-organization fit in employee turnover intention and also assess the mediating the role of organizational commitment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Underpinning Theory: Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA) was used in person-occupation fit, which states that there is a connection between Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit) and job satisfaction. It argues that in challenging working environment if workers expectations and demands are not fulfilled by the organizations, their work satisfaction plummets, and they eventually quit the organization (Liu et al., 2010). P-O Fit influences the turnover intention in the context of theory of work adjustment. The theory of job fit (Judge, 1994) suggests that the way people adapt to another environment, this is also aligned with Adam's Equity Theory and Stacey John's Equity theory. TWA suggests creating the fit between employee and organization environment for greater success. TWA is also aligned with Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, which maintains that individuals who develop strong psychological resources have high level of P-O Fit (Jin et al., 2018). The authors Liu et al. (2010) suggest that P-O Fit creates strong perception of employees for sticking with organization which reduce employees' turnover intention.

In an investigation, author Van Vianen (2018) highlighted that when organization's culture and practices are in accordance with employees' capabilities then they feel more satisfied with their jobs and give maximum output. This agrees with Theory of Trait Activation of Tett and Burnett (2003) which argues that staff performance will be excellent in organizations which offer supportive environment for employees' traits and where employees experience more compatibility then they are unlikely to quit that organization.

Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit) and Turnover Intention:

The fit or unfit between person and job or organization can impact employee outcomes. Research findings witnessed that P-O fit is positively related with turnover intention of employee (Hessari et al., 2023). Employees' decisions to stay or leave their organizations are affected by the P-O Fit, also that it will be less likely for employees with higher levels of employee commitment to leave their employer (Sharma, 2019). Andela and van der Doef (2019) and Kakar et al., (2019) indicated that positive P-O Fit interpretation decreases the risk of workers leaving the job. Other studies have also identified inverse relationship between P-O Fit and turnover intent in non-academic work environments (Jin et al., 2018). P-O Fit will reduce turnover intention because of the high perception of P-O Fit achieves goals, values in their working environment through the influence of job satisfaction (Jin et al., 2018). P-O Fit elements, including value congruence, goal congruence, KSA (Knowledge Skills Ability) also affect the purpose of turnover job. The perceptions of job characteristics and the work environment have an effect on turnover intention (Raeesi et al., 2020). The following hypothesis has been developed from literature review:

H₁: There is a significant negative relationship between P-O Fit and turnover intention.

Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit) and Organization

Commitment: The more committed employees are more productive and stay more than less committed. It is reported by research insights that greater level of P-O fit increases the organizational commitment which subsequently decrease the turnover intentions of the staff (Bai & Vahedian, 2023). This guides that when employees are more fit within the organizations then their devotion for the work increases that

influence negatively on employees intention to quit their employment. According to the study findings of Margaretha and Wicaksana (2020), P-O Fit relates favorably and substantially with organizational commitment. In addition, P-O Fit also impacts positively on the employee's conduct of organization citizenship. Person-organization fit has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment; fit employees in the organization will be more committed to their organization. Therefore, as the similarity between people and organizations increases, committed employees become more happy, dedicated, and efficient and are likely to choose to stay in that organization. The research of Abdurachman and Siswati (2017) reported that culture and values are generated by a high degree of conformity between person values and organizational values that makes employees feel relaxed. Employees who have a high P-O Fit often have high loyalty to the organization and a willingness to do additional work for the organization. This guides us to build following hypothesis:

H₂: There is significant and positive relationship between P-O Fit and organizational commitment.

Organization Commitment and Turnover Intention: When workers are satisfied with their jobs and feel dedicated to their organizations, they prefer not to willingly terminate their employment. If organizations consider decreasing their employees' turnover intention, they should concentrate on paying more than any other factor, as compensation seemed to be the most important motivation for happiness (Agustine & Nawangsari, 2020; Ramlah et al., 2021). If an organization aims to reduce turnover, prioritizing a robust compensation system is essential. This approach has shown to decrease turnover intention while fostering a stable and motivated workforce by addressing one of the most significant extrinsic factors influencing employees' decisions to stay or leave (Hartono et al., 2021; Ohunakin & Olugbade, 2022). This doubtful attitude of staff to stay or leave the organization can have harmful impact which can decrease their overall efficiency, boost their absences, and have several other consequences that will affect the company. Increasing wages and providing promotion opportunities lead to more happy workers and decrease their plans for quitting current jobs (Biltawi et

al., 2020). The relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intention is important for organizations, as employees who are committed to the organizations, they typically give a guarantee of improved results and they are happy with their job, thus reducing absenteeism and turnover (Ahmed et al., 2017). Based on this, the following hypothesis has been developed:

H₃: There is significant and negative relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intention.

Organization Commitment as a mediator: The literature review showed that organizational commitment helps in reducing the turnover intention (Bai & Vahedian, 2023). It is reported in the research work of the author that organizational commitment has a mediating effect on the association between performance appraisal and turnover intentions, it also guides that mediation of organization commitment reduces the negative effects on turnover and helps to diminish job leaving desires of the staff (Alqahtani, 2024). Authors Laily et al. (2023) concluded in the research that organizational commitment is very critical factor as a mediator that buffers the negative effects of burnout and retains the employees by stopping job leaving tendencies. This means that organization commitment is very important that can assist in achieving HR objectives by making staff to stay with organization for longer time. This suggests for developing this study hypothesis that:

H₄: Organization Commitment mediates the relationship between P-O Fit and Turnover Intention.

Conceptual Framework

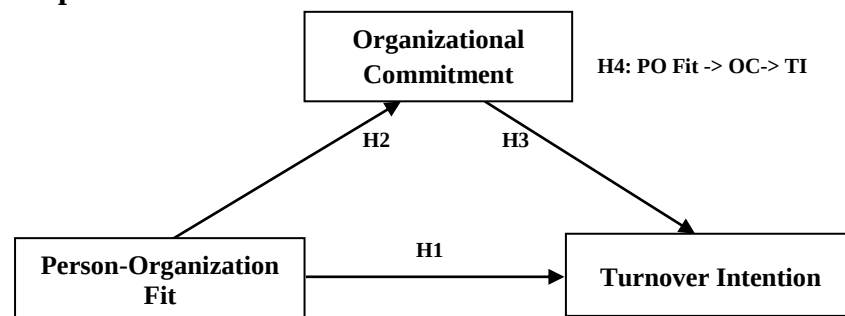


Figure-1: Research Framework (Moynihan & Pandey, 2008).

Research framework of this study (see Figure 1) illustrates the hypothesized links and variables of this study. Person-Organization fit is the independent variable, Turnover intention is the dependent variable and organizational commitment is the mediating variable.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In research methodology, this research has used quantitative methods and primary cross-sectional data have been collected through survey questionnaire for explanatory purposes and to address the research question. The sample for this study shows 210 faculty staff including lecturers, Assistant Professors, Associate Professor and Professor from general Public sectors universities of rural Sindh, Pakistan. The survey instrument was distributed through email and WhatsApp means and simple random sampling technique was used. For results and hypotheses testing of this study, the quantitative data were analyzed through Partial Least Square (PLS) Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Measurement Model Assessment: For evaluating measurement model we first checked factor loadings of reflective indicators. Table 1 shows (also see Figure 2) that loadings of all indicators of the constructs in our study model are above given threshold of 0.708 and 0.40 of the authors given guidelines (Hair et al., 2021; Hulland, 1999). The results in the table also indicate Cronbach Alpha, rho_A and Composite Reliability values, which are computed to know internal consistency reliability of the constructs (Sarstedt et al., 2019). Hence, the variables organizational commitment (OC), Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit) and Turnover Intention (TI) are reliable to measure as values of Cronbach Alpha, rho_A and Composite Reliability are above 0.80 and 0.90 than the required cut off. The AVE values are also greater than required 0.50 which also confirm convergent validity of our measurement model (see Table 1).

Discriminant validity is checked through Fornell and Larcker Criterion and HTMT Ratio in PLS-SEM (Algorithm) to know how much variable is different practically from other variables in a model (Chin, 2010; Hair et al., 2021). Table 2 reports that the diagonal bold italic values are greater than correlated values of other variable which

confirms discriminant validity of the model. Another way to assess discriminant validity is through Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT). Table 3 tells that all values are below recommended values of 0.85 and 0.95 (Henseler et al., 2016). This means discriminant validity has been established.

TABLE-1
LOADINGS, CONSTRUCT RELIABILITY & VALIDITY

Items	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_ A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
OC1	0.810	0.893	0.903	0.914	0.543
OC2	0.674				
OC3	0.748				
OC4	0.830				
OC5	0.724				
OC6	0.577				
OC7	0.752				
OC8	0.699				
OC9	0.783				
PO.Fit1	0.827	0.904	0.927	0.919	0.535
PO.Fit10	0.770				
PO.Fit2	0.780				
PO.Fit3	0.682				
PO.Fit4	0.792				
PO.Fit5	0.572				
PO.Fit6	0.672				
PO.Fit7	0.692				
PO.Fit8	0.706				
PO.Fit9	0.785				
TI1	0.944	0.932	0.937	0.957	0.880
TI2	0.939				
TI3	0.932				

Source: This study

TABLE-2
DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY_ FORNELL-LARCKER CRITERION

Variables	OC	P-O Fit	TI
OC	0.737		
P-O Fit	0.135	0.731	
TI	-0.565	-0.406	0.938

Source: This study

TABLE-3
DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY_ HETEROTRAIT-MONOTRAIT
RATIO (HTMT) - MATRIX

	OC	P-O Fit	TI
OC			
P-O Fit	0.163		
TI	0.610	0.398	

Source: This study

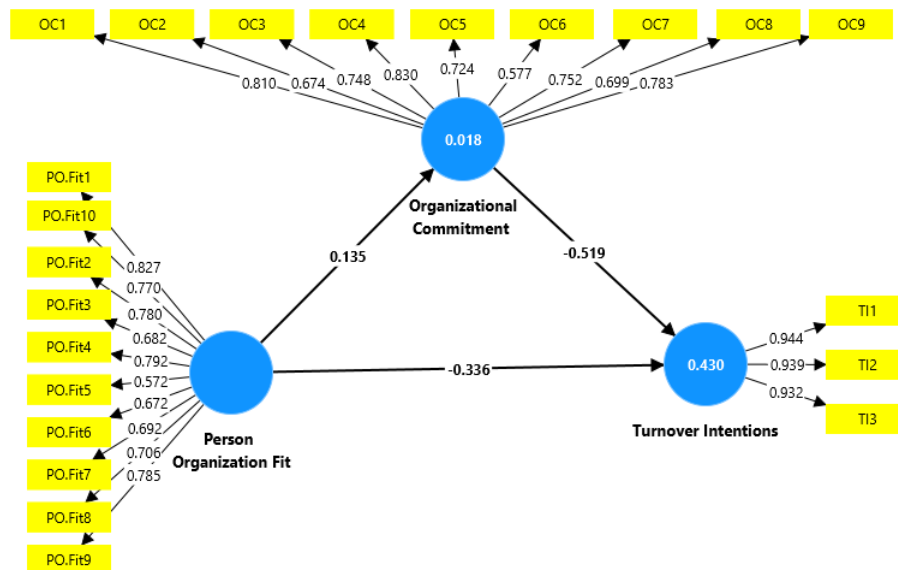


Figure-2: Measurement Model Assessment

Source: This study

Structural Model Assessment and Hypotheses Testing: The structural model paths were evaluated through bootstrapping procedure in PLS_SEM (see Figure 3). The results in Table 4 depicts

that Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit) has direct negative impact on Turnover Intention (TI) which is significant too ($\beta = -0.336$, $t = 6.852$, $p < 0.05$). This supports hypothesis one (H1) and suggests that when employees find themselves more fit in organizations then they are unlikely to leave those organizations. In Table 4, the P-O Fit is reported to have positive and significant relationship with OC ($\beta = 0.135$, $t = 2.696$, $p < 0.05$). Hence hypothesis two (H2) is accepted as more the P-O Fit, more the employees will be committed with organization. OC has been observed to have negative impact on TI ($\beta = -0.519$, $t = 9.697$, $p < 0.05$) which is significant too (see Table 4). This confirms hypothesis three (H3) of our study which describes that higher the organizational commitment of employee less the turnover intention of employees.

Table 5 results indicate the predictive ability through determination of R^2 and predictive relevance through Q^2 predict, which satisfy the suggested criteria as R square values meet the threshold and Q square values are greater than zero (0).

As organizational commitment (OC) is the mediator variable between P-O Fit and TI. Table 6 displays that OC mediates the relationship between P-O Fit and TI ($\beta = -0.070$, $t = 2.402$, $p < 0.05$) which means that staff having more P-O Fit are more committed with the organizations and less they are inclined to quit organization; turnover intention is reduced. This agrees with hypothesis four (H4) of our study.

TABLE-4
DIRECT PATHS COEFFICIENTS, STDEV, T VALUES, P VALUES,
CONFIDENCE INTERVAL & VIF

Direct Paths	Original sample (O)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	2.5%	97.5%	VIF
P-O Fit -> TI	-0.336	0.049	6.852	0.000	-0.421	-0.228	1.019
P-O Fit -> OC	0.135	0.050	2.696	0.007	0.018	0.219	1.000
OC -> TI	-0.519	0.054	9.697	0.000	-0.618	-0.407	1.019

Source: This study

TABLE-5
R SQUARE & Q SQUARE PREDICT

Variables	R Square	Q ² Predict
OC	0.018	0.009
TI	0.43	0.417

Source: This study

TABLE-6
INDIRECT PATH_ MEDIATION ANALYSIS

Indirect Path	Original sample (O)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
P-O Fit -> OC -> TI	-0.070	0.029	2.402	0.016

Source: This study

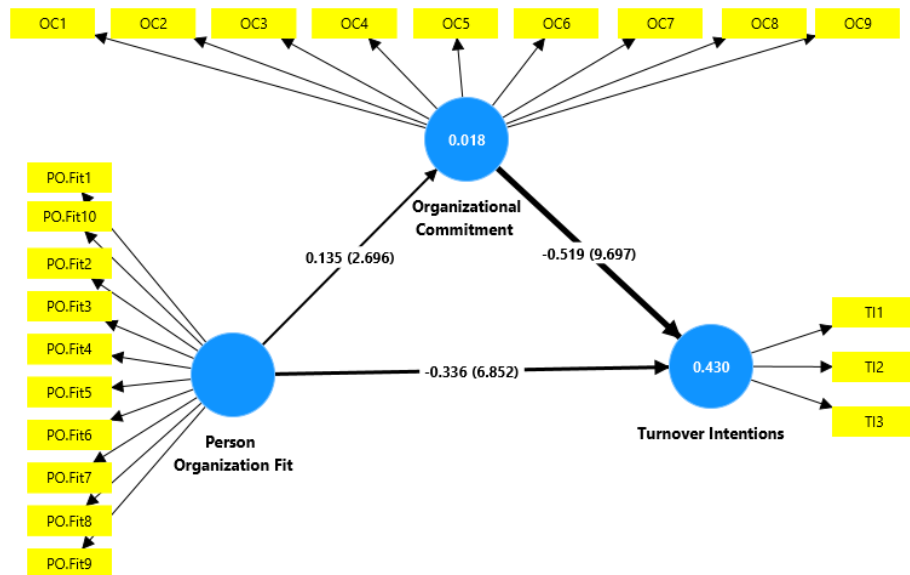


Figure-3: Structural Model Assessment, Hypotheses Testing, Highlighted Paths

Source: This study

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the data analysis, hypotheses testing and results of this study, the discussion, conclusion and recommendations are given.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study reported that Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit) has a negative relationship with turnover intention. This means when university teachers find themselves more fit in organizations then they are less likely to quit that organization. The closer match of teachers' personality and characteristics with universities' goals and values bring more satisfaction and enhance productivity and hence employee stay in organization is strengthened. These findings are consistent with research studies of authors (Andela & van der Doef, 2019; Kakar et al., 2019). Whereas it was also observed in the findings of this study that P-O Fit does have a positive impact on Organizational Commitment (OC) of the faculty members in the university which is in agreement with past investigations (Margaretha & Wicaksana, 2020). Furthermore, results also indicated that organizational commitment does have a negative relationship with turnover intention. This suggests that as OC of university teaching staff increases it reduces the turnover intention, which is beneficial for organizations (universities). This is because frequent leaving of teachers from institutions of higher learning will create a huge shortage of faculty which can impact the learning process of students. Universities administration and HR departments may not be able to fill positions of teaching staff promptly. Relating to this, similar results were also reported by some past studies of authors (Biltawi et al., 2020; Ahmed et al., 2017). In mediation analysis, the findings show that OC mediates the relationship between P-O Fit and turnover intention. These are aligned with authors' previous research outcomes (Alqahtani, 2024; Bai & Vahedian, 2023; Laily et al., 2023). Hence, personnel such as university faculty members having more P-O Fit are more committed and their turnover intentions are minimized. This is very beneficial for the higher education institutions to retain the faculty members as more experienced teachers are an asset for quality teaching and research. Therefore, it is mandatory for the universities to have good HR departments who can make proper human resources planning and can meet shortage of staff on time. Furthermore, recruitment and selection should be done carefully to select right teachers for teaching jobs whose qualities and personality match with universities culture, values and goals. This would lead towards more committed teaching staff with no desires of leaving job.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is limited to the teaching staff of the higher education intuitions operating in the Rural Sindh, Pakistan. In sampling technique, the research has boundaries in using simple random sampling technique due to time and resources constraints. Future research need to concentrate on a number of character variables such as pre-regularization contract, citizenship behavior, and cultural adoption, all of which can contribute to the Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit) theory's new perspectives. New research is also required to look on a hypothetical understanding of how to enhance positive workplace interactions.

THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

This empirical study contributes in understanding theory of job fit of Judge (1994) as results indicate that person-job fit influence turnover intention of staff and causes them to retain in organizations. In addition, the Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA) given by Liu et al. (2010), explaining if employees' demands are not met by the organization, the job satisfaction suffers, and they eventually leave. This is also validated by our research findings.

PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Practically, this study contributes in understanding that right person for the right job increases compatibility, which results more job satisfaction, increase the organizational performance and reduce turnover intention. In universities, teachers whose skills and abilities do not match with jobs then they often quit. There may be various reasons for quitting job but primary reason is unfit with job which causes dissatisfaction and ultimately leaving job. Now universities can take measures as frequent turnover of teaching faculty could be harmful, so right personnel can be hired who match with job or have more person-job fit characteristics and would result less turnover intention.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study can be implied to bring Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit) and reduce a turnover intention which is the major problem in organizations. The results also support Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA) as more P-O Fit leads to more job

satisfaction of university teachers which is strengthened by organization commitment and employees remain intact with universities as a bond. Based on these research results, the recommendations are given: first, organizations such as universities need to hire teachers based on their knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform that job. Second, universities must adopt such steps in test, interviews and demonstrations that help to select teaching staff who match university and teaching values, organization culture and organization vision and mission. Third, universities and teaching institutions can also provide teachers trainings on creating fit between teachers and organizations, which will create more compatibility between faculty members and organization and would reduce turnover intentions among teaching staff. Finally, more opportunities of career growth and advancement, research and leaning and commercialization of research to be facilitated for job satisfaction and retaining best teachers and researchers in higher academic institutions present in rural areas of the country.

CONCLUSION

Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit) is very important concept, if employees' characteristics align with organization culture, values, mission and goals then individuals are satisfied with their jobs and turnover intentions are minimized. Current study results showed that university teachers with higher person-job fit leads to lower turnover intention. This means more person-job fit causes teaching staff of higher institutions to feel satisfied and unlikely to leave their jobs. Furthermore, the mediating effect of organizational commitment on the link of P-O Fit and turnover intention is also strong. Organizational commitment not only reduces the job quitting intentions of faculty members of universities in rural areas but also strengthens the P-O Fit effect which makes employees more committed and chances of leaving employment are further reduced.

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