

## The Relationship between Job Satisfaction & Employee Turnover Intention in Zimbabwean Rural District Councils

William Makumbe

Department of Management Studies, Great Zimbabwe University, Zimbabwe

\*Corresponding Author

William Makumbe

Email: [makumbe.william@gmail.com](mailto:makumbe.william@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** The study sought to investigate the relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover intention in Zimbabwean rural district councils. The major variables in the study related to job satisfaction were level of pay, promotion, co-worker relationship and supervision, which have an impact on employee turnover intention. The statistical findings obtained support the hypothesis in the research literature which states that there is a negative relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover intention.

**Keywords:** Job satisfaction, Employee turnover intention, pay, promotion, co-worker relationship and supervision

### INTRODUCTION

The subject of job satisfaction has been a subject of interest for many years. Many scholars studied on the topic but they left gaps in terms of theoretical and empirical literature ranging from geographical, methodologies used, time as well as the nature of organizations studied, this has motivated this research to be undertaken from the Zimbabwean perspective. Contemporary organisations view their employees as major assets driving organisational productivity. Satisfied employees are keen to stay in an organisation for a long time where they are willing to contribute to organisational development and productivity, thereby reducing some organisational costs [1].

Different scholars reflect that whenever an employee is not satisfied he or she can intend to exit the organisation. Meaghan [2] highlighted that poor job satisfaction causes the loss of intellectual capital. The same scholar also said that competitors might also gain potential workforce coming from organisations whose jobs are not satisfying. What is critical is that organisations have to satisfy their employees to arrest employee turnover or reduce the degree of employees wanting to leave their areas of employ. When employees are dissatisfied with the job, there are increased chances of high employee turnover intention [3]. Organisations concentrating on improved job satisfaction can reap positive results such as improved organisational performance, reduced turnover and increased productivity [4]. Employees might delay the action to leave the organisation, but the intention to exit might exist among employees. It is therefore critical to work on factors that retain employees as business managers.

In Pakistan, Khan and Aleem [31] in their study in health sector, they found out that, when employee is not given a relatively fair level of pay, he or she can intend to exit, the organisation. In relation to this study, Sokoya [5] stressed that an employee can only be satisfied when the working environment is conducive, when one is well compensated and when there is social love, hence, the intention to leave the organisation might be eliminated. In Chicago, Locke [6] highlighted that organisations have to fully understand factors that shapes job satisfaction, so that they manage them to reduce the intentions to exit the organisation by employees.

Armstrong [7] in Pennsylvania stressed that job satisfaction is a strong indicator of employee turnover intention, every increase in job satisfaction leads to a decrease in employee turnover intention. Other researches have linked job satisfaction to loyalty, productivity, commitment & intentions to quit [8, 9]. Sutherland [10] noted that employees anticipate being in the organisation even in foreseeable future, hence, they need policies and practices which address issues like training and development, promotion and reward system to stimulate them to stay in the organisation. Park and Kim [35] proposed that to lessen turnover intention, the organisation has to reduce job dissatisfaction. The researchers contributed that job satisfaction as an employee's attitude is influenced by co-workers, nature of work, pay, contingent rewards, operating procedures, promotion and fringe benefits.

From the background above it is apparent that most of the researches have been concentrated in other areas hence a gap exists from the Zimbabwean perspective. This study therefore sought to bridge the lacuna.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

High job satisfaction enables the organisation to retain and attract new potential workforce that can position a company in a strategic competitive position in the market, hence, reducing the level of employee turnover in an organisation [9]. Increased productivity, performance, efficiency, growth and retention of human capital in an organisation are associated with job satisfaction [11].

Despite the obvious benefits of understanding job satisfaction, this concept has not been given the importance it deserves. Furthermore, to the researcher’s knowledge no study has been carried out to establish the intentions of employees in Zimbabwean organisations. This study was an attempt to understand job satisfaction and employee turnover intentions in Zimbabwean rural district councils.

**RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

The main objective of the study is to investigate the relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover intention using the level of pay, promotion, co-worker relationship & supervision as independent constructs.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

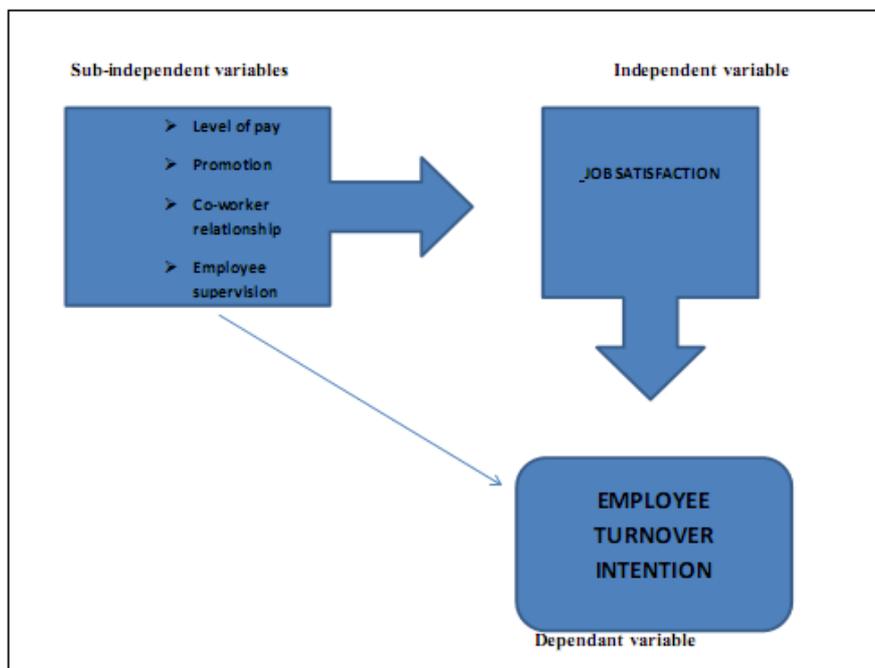
**Job satisfaction**

Armstrong [7] point out that job satisfaction is the attitudes and feelings people have about their work. Berry [12], in his definition stressed that job satisfaction

is an individual’s reaction to the job experience. Spector [13] regards job satisfaction as the extent to which people like or dislike their work. Armstrong [7] imparted a view that job satisfaction relates to the perception that an employee has towards one’s job, hence, organisations have to craft a working environment having most appropriate work factors that satisfies their employees. Kim, Leong and Lee [32] view job satisfaction as the extent to which a worker feels positively or negatively about the job. Hulin and Judge [29] proposed that job satisfaction involves multidimensional psychological response to one’s job they stressed that those responses have cognitive, affective and behavioural components. Locke [6] described job satisfaction as pleasurable or positive emotional state as a result of evaluation of the job or job experiences.

**Employee turnover intention**

Turnover intention represents the probability that an employee wants to leave an organisation. Hence job satisfaction is a critical determinant of whether an employee can stay or leave an organisation. Mano-Negrin and Tzafrir, [14] proposed that when job satisfaction is poor, an employee initially intend to exit, but may stay for some time, as the situation stiffens, he or she would take possible actions to leave the organisation. In other words, employee turnover is not an event; it is a gradual process of disengagement that can take days, weeks, months or even years until the actual decision to leave occurs.



**Fig-1: Conceptual Framework**

**Pay and employee turnover intention**

Pay is part of rewards that recognise the efforts exerted by an employee [12]. Level of pay simply means the money that an employee can be paid by the employer for the work he or she has done [5]. Mello [15] pointed out that money given to an employee is a way to entice him or her to stay in organisation, it encourages employee to focus on the achievement of organisational goals. Sutherland [10] emphasised that an employee has to be given equitable and adequate rewards that suits his or her time and efforts in the organisation. A well paid worker may never intend to exit the organisation. Hence, whenever the level of pay is poor, or does not meet the daily needs of an employee, he or she can be dissatisfied, which eventually induces the sense to vacate the organisation. Ali [1] postulated that when the level of pay is high, so does the job satisfaction, and when job satisfaction is high employee turnover intention is minimised.

#### **Promotion and employee turnover intention**

Employees are willing to attain higher positions from their current one's which expresses their recognition by the organisation from their work efforts [28]. Literature extracted by many scholars implies that whenever an employee is given a higher position or rank he or she feels part of the organisation and enjoys a sense of belonging in the organisation. Samuel and Chipunza [16] believe that job growth, recognition and advancement opportunities have a great impact on intentions to quit the job.

Promotion might induce the zeal to the employee to work harder in the attainment of organisational goals and strive for higher positions [12]. Memon *et al* [17] pointed out that an organisation has to invent effective human resources promotion policies and procedures that recognise the employees' efforts to mitigate the turnover intention. Gavino *et al.* [26] and Eisenberger *et al* [18] also pointed out that employees need be promoted to increase contribution to organisational success and to inculcate a spirit of enjoying working in the organisation.

#### **Co-worker relationship and employee turnover intention**

Co-worker is someone whom one works with, usually not one's manager or boss. The relationship that an employee has with his or her work mates working with him or her everyday does impact on how that employee is satisfied with the job. The job can be much more attractive when one is well related to his co-workers, which would determine the extent to which an employee wants to stay or leave the organisation. Co-worker relationships are critical means of growth and support. When one gets love & sympathy the more a person can intend to stay for long time in the organisation. Gkorezis & Petridou [27] noted that co-

worker relationship is critical because it affects employee's mental health, motivation as well as employee well-being. Some researchers found out that organisations have to create environment conducive for effective relationships among its employees so that a sense of belonging is inserted in an employee's mind, which might reduce high turnover [34].

Friendship at workplaces encourage organisational unity where employees share ideas and social issues which might eventually satisfy an employee, hence limited chances to intend to quit one's job. Tews *et al* [20] contributed that high co-worker relationship encourage improved teamwork, improved employee morale, higher employee retentions rates and increased productivity. Hamilton [19] concluded that co-worker relationship makes employees feel comfortable with their work mates and reduce feelings of insecurity and uncertainty. Bebe [21] pointed out that "relationship with co-workers can help reduce job overload, stress and burnout because co-workers can support instrumentally and emotionally, resulting to reduced turnover intention and increased employee stay." The findings of these authors buttress the fact that a friendly atmosphere reduces turnover intention

#### **Supervision and employee turnover intention**

Research indicates that supervisory support lead to high emotional interaction with employees, which would positively impact on job satisfaction, hence, employee turnover intentions [22]. Kalliath and Beck [23] highlighted that supervisory support has an impact to job satisfaction. They emphasised that when the supervisor is not skilled enough on how to treat his subordinates, he or she can suppress the human rights of his subordinates and cannot deliver that which satisfies an employee thereby increasing the employee turnover. Proper supervision should be effective, supportive and non-intrusive [36]. Tepper [37] expressed the issue of abusive supervision, which he said has a great influence on turnover intention; he noted that subordinates enjoy their work when their supervisors impart social love and human respect.

Employees are highly critical of being supervised strictly in areas where they can achieve results without the input of superiors. Lee and Bruvold [32] and Berry [12] stated that supervision has to be done skilfully, as good supervision enhances job satisfaction, which in turn eliminates the employee's intentions to exit the organisation where one is employed.

#### **RESEARCH METHOD**

**Research Approach** A quantitative research approach was followed using cross-sectional design and a convenience sample ( $N = 1\ 000$ ) from ten rural district

councils in Zimbabwe. Creswell [2] states that “quantitative research is an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables”. The variables can then be measured by instruments so that numerical data can be analysed using statistical procedures. The variables that were measured included pay promotion, co-worker social support & supervisor support.

**Population**

The population for this study was 3,000.

**Sampling**

This study employed the convenience sampling method. Walliman[38] explains that convenience sampling methods are used where the sample are easily and conveniently available.

**Research Instrument**

The researcher finds the use of questionnaires very ideal data collection methods for the study. Questionnaires are advantageous because one can get respondents to complete questionnaires in a short space of time; they can be checked for accuracy by the test administrators; they are relatively cheap; easy to complete and the respondents can be reached over long distances.

**Measuring battery**

**Job satisfaction questionnaire**

This is an instrument for independent variable. A measuring instrument that the researcher used came from other researchers who researched on the related topic. All questions pertaining to independent variable, which is job satisfaction, came from, Xiangping Wu who studied his topic on factors influencing employee turnover intention, in the case of Retail Industry in Bangkok Thailand, which was conducted 2012.

**Employee Turnover Intention Questionnaire**

For the dependant variable, employee turnover, three questions came from [3]

**RESULTS**

**The effect of level of pay on job satisfaction**

On the level of pay, there were more negative correlation coefficients ranging from -.632 to -.744 indicating that pay is not satisfying at the workplace. The first aspect asked the respondents was based on how the level of pay is reasonable to one’s work efforts in the organisation, the negative correlation coefficient found was -.744, this value indicates that employees perceive that they are not fairly paid. The table below shows the results:

**Table 1: Pearson’s correlation coefficient for level of pay**

|                          |                     | Levelofpay | mypayisreaso<br>nable | payissufficient | payincreaseis<br>appropriate | appropriatesa<br>laryscale |
|--------------------------|---------------------|------------|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Levelofpay               | Pearson Correlation | 1          | -.744**               | -.632**         | -.653**                      | -.740**                    |
|                          | Sig. (2-tailed)     |            | .000                  | .000            | .000                         | .000                       |
|                          | N                   | 60         | 60                    | 60              | 60                           | 60                         |
| mypayisreasonable        | Pearson Correlation | -.744**    | 1                     | .212            | .151                         | .424**                     |
|                          | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000       |                       | .104            | .248                         | .001                       |
|                          | N                   | 60         | 60                    | 60              | 60                           | 60                         |
| payissufficient          | Pearson Correlation | -.632**    | .212                  | 1               | .721**                       | .660**                     |
|                          | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000       | .104                  |                 | .000                         | .000                       |
|                          | N                   | 60         | 60                    | 60              | 60                           | 60                         |
| payincreaseisappropriate | Pearson Correlation | -.653**    | .151                  | .721**          | 1                            | .684**                     |
|                          | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000       | .248                  | .000            |                              | .000                       |
|                          | N                   | 60         | 60                    | 60              | 60                           | 60                         |
| appropriatesalaryscale   | Pearson Correlation | -.740**    | .424**                | .660**          | .684**                       | 1                          |
|                          | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000       | .001                  | .000            | .000                         |                            |
|                          | N                   | 60         | 60                    | 60              | 60                           | 60                         |

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The other aspects focused on the sufficiency, appropriateness of salary scale and the period of increase which all negative as shown in the table above. The level of pay therefore lacks in adequacy and is considered not satisfying in councils.

**The effect of promotion on job satisfaction**

Using the results from the table-2 the Pearson’s Correlation coefficient, gives negative values ranging from -.215 to -.557 indicating that promotional issues are not stimulating job satisfaction at the workplace. The first question asked the respondents whether the organisation offered professional development opportunities, the findings produced a negative correlation coefficient of -.557. This result

reflected that employees were not given the right professional development opportunities. A negative correlation coefficient of -.425 for learning and growth revealed that some organisations were not giving

learning & growth opportunities. A negative correlation coefficient of -.215 on promotion was an indication that employees deserving were not being promoted.

**Table 2: Pearson’s correlation coefficient for promotion**  
Correlations

|                          |                     | promotion | professional development | learning and growth | promotion to high rank | opportunities to advance |
|--------------------------|---------------------|-----------|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| promotion                | Pearson Correlation | 1         | -.557**                  | -.425**             | -.215                  | -.542**                  |
|                          | Sig. (2-tailed)     |           | .000                     | .001                | .099                   | .000                     |
|                          | N                   | 60        | 60                       | 60                  | 60                     | 60                       |
| professional development | Pearson Correlation | -.557**   | 1                        | .594**              | .373**                 | .881**                   |
|                          | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000      |                          | .000                | .003                   | .000                     |
|                          | N                   | 60        | 60                       | 60                  | 60                     | 60                       |
| learning and growth      | Pearson Correlation | -.425**   | .594**                   | 1                   | .211                   | .721**                   |
|                          | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .001      | .000                     |                     | .106                   | .000                     |
|                          | N                   | 60        | 60                       | 60                  | 60                     | 60                       |
| promotion to high rank   | Pearson Correlation | -.215     | .373**                   | .211                | 1                      | .382**                   |
|                          | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .099      | .003                     | .106                |                        | .003                     |
|                          | N                   | 60        | 60                       | 60                  | 60                     | 60                       |
| opportunities to advance | Pearson Correlation | -.542**   | .881**                   | .721**              | .382**                 | 1                        |
|                          | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000      | .000                     | .000                | .003                   |                          |
|                          | N                   | 60        | 60                       | 60                  | 60                     | 60                       |

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**The effect of co-worker relationship and job satisfaction**

Based on the findings of the research, there is evidence that respondents are not fully satisfied with their co-workers which cause poor job satisfaction. As

depicted on the Table below, there is negative correlation of variables with values ranging from -.164 to -.690. This is an indication of poor relationships at the workplace.

**Table 3: Pearson correlation coefficient for co-worker relationship**  
Correlations

|                         |                     | coworker relationship | relation with coworkers | acceptance by coworkers | help from coworkers | help in various ways |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| coworker relationship   | Pearson Correlation | 1                     | -.489**                 | -.690**                 | -.164               | -.499**              |
|                         | Sig. (2-tailed)     |                       | .000                    | .000                    | .211                | .000                 |
|                         | N                   | 60                    | 60                      | 60                      | 60                  | 60                   |
| relation with coworkers | Pearson Correlation | -.489**               | 1                       | .640**                  | -.045               | .261*                |
|                         | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000                  |                         | .000                    | .731                | .044                 |
|                         | N                   | 60                    | 60                      | 60                      | 60                  | 60                   |
| acceptance by coworkers | Pearson Correlation | -.690**               | .640**                  | 1                       | .294*               | .670**               |
|                         | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000                  | .000                    |                         | .023                | .000                 |
|                         | N                   | 60                    | 60                      | 60                      | 60                  | 60                   |
| help from coworkers     | Pearson Correlation | -.164                 | -.045                   | .294*                   | 1                   | .336**               |
|                         | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .211                  | .731                    | .023                    |                     | .009                 |
|                         | N                   | 60                    | 60                      | 60                      | 60                  | 60                   |
| help in various ways    | Pearson Correlation | -.499**               | .261*                   | .670**                  | .336**              | 1                    |
|                         | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000                  | .044                    | .000                    | .009                |                      |
|                         | N                   | 60                    | 60                      | 60                      | 60                  | 60                   |

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The third aspect of help from co-workers at work produced a negative correlation of -.164, which reflects that employees are not fully satisfied with help they get from other workers in relation to their work activities. The last aspect of co-workers help in various ways has a negative correlation of -.449, hence in terms of personal life, employees are not getting the help they expect from other co-workers.

**The effect of supervision relationship on job satisfaction**

The table below shows the negative correlation coefficients -.271 to -.329 and a positive of .096. Signifying poor supervision at the workplace. Employees are not happy with the supervisory relationships.

**Table 4: Pearson’s correlation coefficient for supervision**

**Correlations**

|   |                     | supervision | advnacenotic<br>eofchanges | attendanceto<br>workproblem<br>s | supervisorinfl<br>ateperforman<br>ceratings | praiseforgood<br>workdone |
|---|---------------------|-------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| supervision                                 | Pearson Correlation | 1           | -.271*                     | -.329                            | .096  | -.282                     |
|   | Sig. (2-tailed)     |             | .037                       | .010                             | .464  | .029                      |
|   | N                   | 60          | 60                         | 60                               | 60  | 60                        |
| advnacenotic<br>eofchanges                  | Pearson Correlation | -.271*      | 1                          | .909**                           | .855**                                      | .693**                    |
|   | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .037        |                            | .000                             | .000  | .000                      |
|   | N                   | 60          | 60                         | 60                               | 60  | 60                        |
| attendanceto<br>workproble<br>ms            | Pearson Correlation | -.329       | .909**                     | 1                                | .759**                                      | .809**                    |
|   | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .010        | .000                       |                                  | .000  | .000                      |
|   | N                   | 60          | 60                         | 60                               | 60  | 60                        |
| supervisorinfl<br>ateperforma<br>nceratings | Pearson Correlation | .096        | .855**                     | .759**                           | 1   | .616**                    |
|   | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .464        | .000                       | .000                             |   | .000                      |
|   | N                   | 60          | 60                         | 60                               | 60  | 60                        |
| praiseforgood<br>workdone                   | Pearson Correlation | -.282       | .693**                     | .809**                           | .616**                                      | 1                         |
|   | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .029        | .000                       | .000                             | .000  |                           |
|   | N                   | 60          | 60                         | 60                               | 60  | 60                        |

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In terms of attendance to work problems there is a negative correlation coefficient of -.329, indicating supervisors do not attend to work problems. The last aspect affected a negative correlation coefficient of -.282 reflects that supervisors are not fully giving praises to their subordinates for the work done.

**Analysis of Employee Turnover intention (dependant variable)**

The research findings revealed that many employees have the plan to exit their organisations. This section gives evidence that when an employee is not satisfied he or she can plan to leave the organisation for better opportunities.

**Table 5: Pearson’s correlation coefficient for employee turnover intention**

**Correlations**

|                                      |                     | turnoverintention | lwilllookforjobnextyear | loftenthinkaboutquitting | lamactivelysearchingforjob | limagineworkingatdifferentworkplaces |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| turnoverintention                    | Pearson Correlation | 1                 | .899**                  | .842**                   | .752**                     | .818**                               |
|                                      | Sig. (2-tailed)     |                   | .000                    | .000                     | .000                       | .000                                 |
|                                      | N                   | 60                | 60                      | 60                       | 60                         | 60                                   |
| lwilllookforjobnextyear              | Pearson Correlation | .899**            | 1                       | .812**                   | .802**                     | .790**                               |
|                                      | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000              |                         | .000                     | .000                       | .000                                 |
|                                      | N                   | 60                | 60                      | 60                       | 60                         | 60                                   |
| loftenthinkaboutquitting             | Pearson Correlation | .842**            | .812**                  | 1                        | .892**                     | .873**                               |
|                                      | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000              | .000                    |                          | .000                       | .000                                 |
|                                      | N                   | 60                | 60                      | 60                       | 60                         | 60                                   |
| lamactivelysearchingforjob           | Pearson Correlation | .752**            | .802**                  | .892**                   | 1                          | .807**                               |
|                                      | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000              | .000                    | .000                     |                            | .000                                 |
|                                      | N                   | 60                | 60                      | 60                       | 60                         | 60                                   |
| limagineworkingatdifferentworkplaces | Pearson Correlation | .818**            | .790**                  | .873**                   | .807**                     | 1                                    |
|                                      | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000              | .000                    | .000                     | .000                       |                                      |
|                                      | N                   | 60                | 60                      | 60                       | 60                         | 60                                   |

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As depicted by the table above the correlations coefficients found range from .752 to .899 showing that more respondents are in favour of quitting their workplace. The first aspect was asking whether an employee has a plan to look for another job next year, Pearson’s correlation coefficient reflected a positive correlation of .899. This also indicates that in the employees’ minds there are intentions to leave and seize other opportunities outside the organisation. The question of an employee to often think about quitting one’s job produced the positive of .842, which also point out that there may be other reasons keeping these employees at their organisations, but they have plans in their minds to exit. A positive correlation coefficient of .752 proved that some are actively searching for other jobs. The Pearson’s correlation of .818 on the last question shows that some employees imagine themselves working in other organisations.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The main research problem of the study was based on analysing the relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover. In regard to the results computed for independent variables which were; level of pay, promotion, co-worker relationship and supervision showed more negative correlations ranging from -.752 to -.744 and the dependant variable showed positive correlation coefficients of .752 to .899. These

research findings reveal that there is negative relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover intention. The research findings were consistent with the literature raised by various researchers on the related topic, such as [5, 15]. These researchers emphasised that there is a negative relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover intention. Khan and Aleem [31] & Gkorezis & Petridou [27] also found out that there is inverse relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover intention.

**IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study aids the management team to be aware of the impact that job satisfaction has on employee turnover intention. When there is high job satisfaction, there would be reduced employee turnover intention; hence, there are benefits that arise due to low employee turnover intention. Job satisfaction reduces recruitment and training costs, promotes good reputation and image and aids in employee retention.

On the other hand when there is job dissatisfaction this might lead to high employee turnover intention. This is likely to result in poor organisational performance, reduced productivity and efficiency, loss of social capital, reduced morale and high recruitment costs. Thus, the study gives an

appreciation of how the organisation can benefit of lose as far as job satisfaction is concerned.

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