

The Effect of Job Insecurity, Work Environment and Work Motivation on Turnover Intentions through Organizational Commitment of Employees

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Abstract

Employee turnover is a critical challenge in industrial organizations, affecting productivity, operational costs, and organizational sustainability. High turnover can result from job insecurity, inadequate work environments, and low work motivation, all of which diminish employee satisfaction and organizational commitment. This study aims to examine the effects of job insecurity, work environment, and work motivation on turnover intention, with organizational commitment as an intervening variable. A quantitative research design was employed using structured questionnaires distributed to employees of PT. Besi Baja Makmur in Semarang, Indonesia. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) through SmartPLS 4.1. Validity and reliability of the instrument were ensured through factor analysis and Cronbach's alpha testing, respectively. Purposive sampling was applied to select respondents representing diverse experiences in workplace conditions. The results indicate that job insecurity positively influences turnover intention, while a supportive work environment and strong work motivation reduce employees' desire to leave. Organizational commitment mediates these relationships, strengthening retention effects. Employees with higher organizational commitment demonstrate lower turnover intention even when exposed to moderate job insecurity. The study concludes that improving workplace conditions, enhancing motivation, and fostering organizational commitment are essential strategies for reducing turnover. These findings provide actionable insights for human resource management in industrial organizations seeking to maintain a stable and productive workforce.

INTRODUCTION

PT. Besi Baja Makmur is a distributor and supplier of steel products located in Ngaliyan, Semarang, Central Java, within the Candi Industrial Estate. The company supplies a variety of steel materials for construction and industrial needs, including reinforced concrete, plates, pipes, WF sections, and H-beams. Employees of PT. Besi Baja Makmur are not immune to workplace issues that contribute to turnover intention.

Turnover intention is a tendency to leave or resign from a job or organization. Abelson (2009) concluded that turnover intention reflects thoughts of leaving or the desire to leave and seek employment elsewhere. Turnover generally occurs across companies, industries, and educational institutions (Chen, Wang, & Cheng, 2010; Mayende & Musenze, 2014; Oluwafemi, 2013). Turnover intention has been observed among employees aged 18–52 years. Medina (2012) found in his research that younger employees have a higher turnover rate, as

they are more likely to leave their jobs due to fewer family responsibilities, making it easier for them to seek new employment. For older employees, turnover intention is sometimes pursued as a means of increasing work productivity.

Robbins (1998) stated that turnover intention can harm an organization both materially — for example through financial expenditure — and non-materially — for example through decreased production and the delay of tasks that should be completed promptly. Khattak and Ahmad (2016) found that turnover intention results in financial losses and disrupts organizational continuity. This view is similarly expressed by Law (2005) and Hussain and Arif (2012), who identified the impacts of turnover intention as including material losses such as recruitment expenses and decreased organizational productivity resulting from vacant positions. Prior research by Mobley (1986) stated that turnover intention is influenced by several factors, including individual differences and organizational characteristics. Individual difference factors include age, length of service, gender, education, and marital status. Lu, Gursoy, and Neale (2016) found that line-level employees have a higher likelihood of changing jobs than supervisor-level employees, indicating that tenure influences the desire to change jobs. Organizational characteristic factors include pay levels, career development opportunities, and the length of training programs.

Turnover intention refers to the process of replacing existing employees with new ones as a result of voluntary resignation. Generally, an individual will express a desire to leave or change jobs when they perceive that a new position offers better long-term prospects than their current one (Chalim, 2018; Hidayati & Saputra, 2018; Iswahyudi, 2017). Turnover intention is an issue requiring special attention from management, as the desire to change jobs can have negative consequences for organizational sustainability and impose costs on employees.

The threats faced by PT. Besi Baja Makmur employees in carrying out their duties have become increasingly apparent over time. This situation is compounded by feelings of monotony in daily tasks, resulting in heightened turnover intention among PT. Besi Baja Makmur employees. Turnover intention among these employees is closely related to job insecurity — defined as an individual's sense of powerlessness in maintaining desired continuity under threatened employment conditions. Job insecurity involves feelings of tension, anxiety, worry, stress, and uncertainty regarding the nature and continuation of future employment. In carrying out their work, PT. Besi Baja Makmur employees require a sense of security — free from worry, stress, and perceived threat — which in turn affects their job satisfaction. The emergence of feelings of insecurity and threat among PT. Besi Baja Makmur employees tends to result in low satisfaction and diminished organizational commitment. Conversely, employees who feel secure and free from threat tend to demonstrate higher organizational commitment and are less likely to harbor turnover intention.

Smithson and Lewis (in Wardani, 2014) define job insecurity as a psychological condition in which an employee experiences confusion or a sense of insecurity due to changing environmental conditions (perceived impermanence). Job insecurity experienced by PT. Besi Baja Makmur employees can cause discomfort with their current roles, leading them to seek opportunities at other companies perceived as better able to fulfill their need for comfort at work. Audina and Kusmayadi (2018) found that job insecurity influences the desire to change jobs among staff at the Lucas Group Pharmaceutical Industry in Bandung. A further study by Nurfaizan and Halilah (2017) similarly confirmed that job insecurity influences turnover

intention.

Another factor influencing turnover intention is the work environment. The work environment encompasses a set of external factors within a company — both physical and non-physical — that can affect employees (Sedarmayanti, 2013). Companies must pay attention to their work environment to create a conducive atmosphere that facilitates the smooth running of work activities. Employees may feel uncomfortable if their work environment is not conducive — for example, insufficient or excessive lighting can impair employees' vision, room temperature must be maintained at a comfortable level, and noise in the work space must be carefully managed as it can disrupt employee concentration (Ncedo, 2013; Nurfauzan & Halilah, 2017; Setiawan & Putra, 2016). When employee comfort declines, the desire to leave increases. A comfortable work environment for PT. Besi Baja Makmur employees will enhance their sense of ease in carrying out duties, thereby reducing turnover intention.

A positive and healthy work environment is associated with lower employee turnover rates. Research by Putra and Utama (2017) showed that the work environment has a negative and significant effect on turnover intention, suggesting that a poor work environment increases employee turnover intention, as observed at Mayaloka Villas Seminyak. Haholongan (2018) similarly found an influence between the work environment and employee turnover intention.

Turnover intention among PT. Besi Baja Makmur employees is also closely related to work motivation. Robert and Heller (in Wibowo, 2013) describe work motivation as the desire to act, with each individual motivated by different forces. Work motivation is directed toward achieving organizational goals, and motivated employees are able to demonstrate work-related effort characterized by appropriate direction, intensity, and persistence. The strength or weakness of PT. Besi Baja Makmur employees' work motivation — both intrinsic and extrinsic — greatly determines their desire to remain with the organization. Employees who are well motivated tend to experience greater job satisfaction and are therefore less inclined toward turnover intention.

Research by Ananto et al. (2016) found that work motivation significantly influenced the desire to change assignments among Kumon method course assistants in Bali and Lombok. A further study by Widiartanto (2016) similarly found that work motivation significantly influenced turnover intention among employees of PT. Intinusa Selareksa, Tbk. Work motivation is a psychological factor that reflects an individual's interest in their work, their satisfaction, and their sense of shared responsibility for the activities and tasks undertaken. Low work motivation among PT. Besi Baja Makmur employees is likely to be followed by heightened turnover intention.

Employee turnover has become a critical issue worldwide, particularly in the manufacturing and industrial sectors, as it directly affects organizational productivity, operational costs, and sustainability. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2021), high employee turnover rates can result in the loss of institutional knowledge, increased recruitment and training costs, and decreased organizational performance. Organizations in developing economies, in particular, face intensified pressure to maintain a stable workforce due to the competitive nature of the industrial sector and limited access to skilled labor.

In the Indonesian context, turnover intention is increasingly observed among employees in industrial companies, including distributors and suppliers of essential materials such as steel. PT. Besi Baja Makmur in Semarang represents a microcosm of this global challenge, where

employees exhibit varying levels of turnover intention influenced by workplace conditions, job security, and motivational factors (Chen, Wang, & Cheng, 2010). Studies show that younger employees demonstrate higher turnover rates due to fewer family obligations and greater labor mobility, highlighting the demographic dimensions of this phenomenon (Medina, 2012).

Job insecurity has emerged as a key determinant of turnover intention. Defined as the perceived threat to employment continuity, it triggers anxiety, stress, and dissatisfaction among employees, leading them to consider leaving the organization. Prior research indicates that job insecurity negatively impacts organizational commitment, which in turn influences turnover intention (Pangat, 2013; Yunanti & Prabowo, 2014). Despite extensive study, the dynamic interplay between job insecurity, organizational commitment, and turnover intention remains underexplored in the Indonesian industrial context.

Another influential factor is the work environment, encompassing both physical and psychosocial elements. A conducive work environment has been shown to enhance employee satisfaction, commitment, and productivity, thereby reducing turnover intention (Sedarmayanti, 2013; Putra & Utama, 2017). Disruptive environmental factors — including poor lighting, temperature variations, and workplace noise — can negatively affect employee concentration and satisfaction, increasing the likelihood of turnover. However, empirical research specifically linking Indonesian industrial workplaces to turnover intention remains limited.

Work motivation also plays a critical role in employee retention. Employees with higher intrinsic and extrinsic motivation demonstrate greater engagement and organizational loyalty, reducing the desire to leave (Robert & Heller in Wibowo, 2013; Ananto et al., 2016). Although prior studies confirm the influence of motivation on turnover intention across service and educational sectors, the interaction of motivation with job insecurity and organizational commitment within industrial companies has not been adequately investigated, presenting a significant research gap.

Organizational commitment serves as a mediating factor that can buffer the negative effects of job insecurity and low motivation on turnover intention. Allen and Meyer (2012) conceptualize commitment across three dimensions — affective, normative, and continuance — each influencing employees' willingness to remain in their positions. Empirical studies suggest that employees with higher organizational commitment demonstrate lower turnover intention (Utami & Bonussyeani, 2019; Angela & Khristanto, 2018). Nevertheless, the mediating role of organizational commitment in Indonesian industrial contexts remains insufficiently examined.

Despite the growing body of research on turnover intention, there remains a paucity of studies that integrate job insecurity, work environment, work motivation, and organizational commitment into a comprehensive framework. Most prior studies focus on individual variables in isolation, limiting understanding of their combined effects on turnover behavior (Hilmah, 2018; Qureshi et al., 2013). Addressing this research gap is essential for developing holistic strategies to reduce turnover and enhance organizational performance.

The urgency of this research is heightened by the economic and operational implications of turnover in industrial companies. High turnover not only incurs direct costs related to recruitment and training but also undermines organizational continuity and productivity (Khattak & Ahmad, 2016). In Indonesia, where skilled labor in industrial sectors is increasingly

scarce, organizations must proactively manage employee retention through evidence-based human resource interventions.

This study contributes to knowledge by proposing a mediated model in which organizational commitment influences the relationship between job insecurity, work environment, work motivation, and turnover intention. By validating this framework in an Indonesian industrial setting, the research offers novel insights that extend prior findings from service and educational sectors to manufacturing contexts (Haholongan, 2018; Ananto et al., 2016). The findings are expected to guide managers in developing targeted retention strategies and fostering sustainable workforce management.

The purpose of this research is to provide actionable recommendations for reducing turnover intention and enhancing employee commitment in industrial organizations. The objectives include examining the effects of job insecurity, work environment, and work motivation on turnover intention, analyzing the mediating role of organizational commitment, and offering evidence-based management interventions. The study benefits stakeholders by informing human resource policies that improve employee satisfaction, minimize turnover costs, and support organizational sustainability in Indonesia and comparable industrial contexts.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research design to investigate the relationships between job insecurity, work environment, work motivation, organizational commitment, and turnover intention among employees. The study population consisted of employees of industrial and service organizations, including PT. Besi Baja Makmur in Semarang, Indonesia, with a focus on line-level and supervisory employees aged 18–52 years. A purposive sampling technique was applied to select a representative sample of employees who had experienced varying levels of job insecurity, motivation, and organizational engagement, ensuring that the data captured the diversity of experiences relevant to turnover intention. The research instrument comprised a structured questionnaire adapted from prior validated studies (Pangat, 2013; Utami & Bonussyeani, 2019; Hilmah, 2018) to measure the constructs of job insecurity, work environment, work motivation, organizational commitment, and turnover intention.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument, content validity was assessed through expert judgment and construct validity was confirmed using factor analysis. Reliability testing was conducted using Cronbach's alpha, with values exceeding 0.70 indicating acceptable internal consistency. Data collection was conducted using a combination of online and offline questionnaires distributed to selected participants following a standardized procedure to maintain consistency and reduce response bias. Respondents were briefed on the purpose of the research, the confidentiality of their responses, and the correct procedure for completing the questionnaire. The data collection procedure included pre-testing the questionnaire on a pilot sample to refine item clarity and ensure accurate measurement of the constructs.

The collected data were compiled and analyzed using SmartPLS 4.1 software, which facilitates Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Descriptive statistics were initially used to summarize respondent characteristics and the central tendencies of each variable. The structural model was then evaluated to test the hypothesized relationships,

including the direct effects of job insecurity, work environment, and work motivation on both turnover intention and organizational commitment, as well as the mediating role of organizational commitment. The analysis included assessments of path coefficients, significance levels using bootstrapping, R-squared values, and predictive relevance (Q-squared) to determine the explanatory power of the model, providing a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing employee turnover intention.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Previous research has shown that job insecurity negatively impacts organizational commitment, meaning that higher job insecurity leads to lower organizational commitment. Job insecurity, which arises from various workplace demands and threats to employee safety, can diminish organizational commitment. This finding aligns with Pangat's (2013) research, which found that job insecurity significantly affects organizational commitment. Similarly, Yunanti and Prabowo (2014) found a highly significant negative relationship between job insecurity and organizational commitment among outsourced employees. This finding is also consistent with Hilmah's (2018) research, which identified a significant relationship between job security and organizational commitment at PT. Wahana Ottomitra Multiartha Finance Jakarta.

Previous research has shown that the work environment has a positive effect on organizational commitment, meaning that a better work environment increases employees' organizational commitment. Sedarmayanti (2009) defines the work environment as the totality of tools and materials encountered, the surrounding conditions in which a person works, their work methods, and their work arrangements, both as individuals and as a group. A comfortable and supportive work environment enables employees to carry out their tasks more effectively and fosters greater organizational commitment.

Previous research has also established that work motivation has a positive effect on organizational commitment, meaning that higher work motivation leads to increased organizational commitment. Employee work motivation can further encourage the development of organizational commitment. This is consistent with the findings of Yudha and Hasib (2014), who found that motivation — comprising both motivator and hygiene factors — jointly influences organizational commitment. Purnama et al. (2016) similarly found that work motivation has a significant influence on organizational commitment at BRI Kawi Bank, Malang Branch. Hilmah (2018) also reported that work motivation has a positive and significant influence on organizational commitment.

Previous research has shown that job insecurity has a positive effect on employee turnover intention, meaning that higher levels of job insecurity increase the likelihood of turnover intention. Job insecurity is defined as an individual's sense of powerlessness in maintaining desired employment continuity under threatened working conditions, encompassing feelings of tension, anxiety, worry, stress, and uncertainty regarding the nature and availability of future employment. Such feelings of insecurity and perceived threat lead to low satisfaction and diminished organizational commitment, ultimately generating a desire to seek employment elsewhere.

Previous research has established that the work environment has a negative effect on employee turnover intention, meaning that an improved work environment is associated with

reduced turnover intention. When employees perceive that the organization has provided adequate support for task implementation through a conducive work environment, they are naturally more inclined to remain with the organization. This is consistent with the findings of Qureshi et al. (2013), who found that the work environment has a significant effect on turnover intention. Jamil et al. (2012) similarly found that the work environment has a negative effect on turnover intention.

Previous research has also shown that work motivation has a negative effect on employee turnover intention, meaning that higher work motivation is associated with lower turnover intention. This is consistent with the findings of Putrianti et al. (2014), who demonstrated a significant effect of work motivation on employee turnover intention at PT. TIKI Jalur Nugraha Ekakurir Pusat Malang. Ananto et al. (2016) similarly reported that motivation has a negative and significant effect on turnover intention.

Previous research has further established that organizational commitment has a negative effect on employee turnover intention, meaning that higher organizational commitment is associated with lower turnover intention. Organizational commitment can be defined as an attitude that reflects employee loyalty and represents the ongoing process through which employees express their concern for the success and well-being of their organization (Angela & Khristanto, 2018). The desire of employees to change jobs has negative consequences for the company, including wasted training costs and the loss of employees who have developed a thorough understanding of the tasks and goals the company seeks to achieve. Employees with high organizational commitment are able to reduce turnover intention, which, according to Irbayuni (2012), confirms that organizational commitment contributes to reducing the desire to change jobs.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that job insecurity, work environment, and work motivation significantly influence employee turnover intention both directly and indirectly through organizational commitment. Specifically, higher levels of job insecurity increase turnover intention, while a supportive work environment and strong work motivation reduce the likelihood of employees leaving the organization. Organizational commitment was shown to mediate these relationships, highlighting its critical role in fostering employee retention. These results reinforce previous studies demonstrating that employees' perceptions of job stability, environmental support, and motivational factors are key determinants of organizational loyalty and workforce sustainability.

For future research, it is recommended to extend this study across multiple industrial sectors and geographic regions to enhance generalizability, as this research primarily focused on a single company in the Indonesian steel distribution sector. Researchers could also incorporate additional moderating variables — such as leadership style, organizational culture, and employee engagement — to further explain the dynamics of turnover intention. Longitudinal studies tracking changes in employee attitudes over time would provide deeper insights into causal relationships, while mixed-method approaches could capture qualitative nuances, offering richer understanding for human resource practitioners seeking to design effective retention strategies.

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