JOB SATISFACTION AND INTENTION TO QUIT OF IT INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

Dr Sandeep,

Assistant professor,

Dept of Commerce,

Atma Ram Sanatan Dharma college, (university of Delhi),Delhi

Abstract :

The relationship between job satisfaction and employee‟s intention to quit is a major issue now days. The present study explores performance orientation, organizational deviance, and organizational citizenship behaviour as outcomes of intention to quit of Indian IT professionals. Intention to quit has been getting attention in the context of employee attrition, with focus on its antecedents. A related aspect that needs attention is the outcome of intention to quit, where little research has occurred, especially in the Indian context. These factors become critical in the context of human resource management because employees who want to quit may become less productive or even dysfunctional for the organization. Interviews and a questionnaire based survey were used in this research. The survey was conducted using software professionals with work experience of less than five years, with the results based on 550 responses. The initial results show that as hypothesized, intention to quit does lead to less performance orientation, higher organizational deviance, and less organizational citizenship behaviour. Further, exploration using structural equation modelling shows that performance orientation mediates the relationships between intention to quit and organizational citizenship behaviour as well as between intention to quit and organizational deviance. This study‟s findings imply that organizations need to understand that employees with a high intention to quit can prove costly from multiple dimensions.

Keywords : Job satisfaction, employee, intention to quit, IT, human resource management,

1. Introduction

In the last two decades, Indian organizations have received considerable global attention with specific focus on software services outsourcing. The information technology (IT) industry is considered one of the "hot sectors" for investment in India (Budhwar, 2001, p. 558). The Indian software services sector is growing at a phenomenal pace in terms of both revenue and global spread of clients. Indian organizations and large multinational corporations (MNCs) have established facilities and have expanded rapidly in terms of employee strength. With this boom comes a significant increase in the demand for a skilled workforce in this sector. Even amidst the

current global economic crisis, as the industry has faced difficult times, revenues of Indian firms are still growing. With increasing cost cutting and productivity priorities, India is still the primary location for outsourcing. Firms thus need to retain quality talent and recruit employees with the required skill sets and experience to attain sustainable competitive advantage. People management challenges still hold high priority.

Even considering the sector‟s growth and creating a number of new jobs, attrition has been a major concern for IT firms. In this context, it is interesting to look at actions and behaviours of employees when they are thinking of quitting an organization. When people wish to leave an organization, it is plausible that they engage in deviant behaviours or reduce their effort for performance. These behaviours are explored in this re- search as possible outcomes of intention to quit.

Earlier studies conducted in the context of the new economy sector in India such as business process outsourcing (BPO) organizations point out that attrition is one of the key problems in this sector (Budhwar, Luthar, & Bhatnagar, 2006; Budhwar, Malhotra, & Singh, 2009; Budhwar, Varma, Singh, & Dhar, 2006; Raman, Budhwar, & Balasubramanian, 2007).

This problem was found to be more serious at entry/junior level. These studies have empha-sized the significance of employee retention in this sector and the crucial role of HRM systems in this regard. Looking through the prism of the Indian cultural, political, and economic environment, formalized systems like those in developed countries, specifically proper selection, training, and career development processes, are considered key for attracting and retaining good talent.

In this study, we have examined IT professionals who work in software services organizations in the field of software development and maintenance. They are graduates in engineering or the computer applications field. Indian IT professionals are regarded as some of the best in the field and have emerged as the most sought-after intellectual talent across the globe. The software industry also created a huge mass of knowledge workers in the country. In a country with one of the highest rates of unemployment, software professionals enjoy a high demand in the job market. According to a case study by Harvard Business School (Ghemavat, 2002), approximately 75,000 new IT professionals join this industry annually. Among these, more than 70% are qualified engineers.

To understand the outcomes of intention to quit, we have mainly considered a theoretical background of social exchange, equity theory, leader-member exchange, and psychological contract. These theories try to provide a rationale for an individual‟s desire to quit an organization based on the poor quality of reciprocation for his or her efforts by the organization, poor supervisory support, lack of justice, and unmet expectations in terms of various facets of the organizational life. Literature shows that the significant gap in this area relates to the outcomes of intention to quit. Employees thinking of quitting may exhibit behaviours that are undesirable to the health of the organization. The significance of exploring

these outcomes is that an employee who stays in the organization against his or her inclination can cause damage in terms of poor quality of work and affect the morale of other employees with his or her deviant behaviours. In the current scenario of economic downturn, employees with high intention to quit exhibiting deviant behaviours can be detrimental to the organization.

This study aims to bridge one of the major research gaps in the field of intention to quit by examining its outcomes for knowledge workers employed in the new economy sector in India. Based on a literature review, context analysis, and primary data collected from relevant stakeholders in the IT industry, the three plausible outcomes of intention to quit are organizational deviance, performance orientation, and organizational citizenship behaviours. All three outcomes have major significance for employee behaviours in the workplace. From a research perspective, this model will provide a basic framework for conceptualizing outcomes of intention to quit.

2.   Background

Social exchange theory, psychological con- tract theory, and leader-member exchange are used as theoretical foundations of this study because they deal with an individual‟s expectations, actions, and behaviours based on his or her interactions in various modes with different constituents in an organization. The basic premise is that factors in the organization or in the environment create certain negative responses in individuals, which make them think of quitting the organization. A person who has made up his or her mind to quit the organization may engage in actions or behaviours that are not good for the organization. Intention to quit gains importance based on the premise that it largely results from psychological contract violations, unmet expectations, and perceived lack of reciprocity in exchange.

Social exchange theory essentially looks at the relationship between two entities, which can be between two individuals or between an individual and a social system such as an organization. The relationship of an individual with an organization and his or her contribution in terms of in-role behaviour, extra-role behaviour (citizenship), and commitment can be based on the social exchange perspective and the norms of reciprocity as- sociated with it (Settoon, Bennett, &Liden, 1996). The reciprocity norm of social life (Gouldner, 1960) can be used as the basis of the employee-organization relationship. Employee behaviours and job outcomes may be affected by expectations of better returns from the organization. Reciprocation on the organization‟s part can be in the form of pay, a good work environment, support for career growth, and development opportunities, for example. Hofmann, Morgeson, and Gerras (2003), referring to Graen (1976) and Graen and Scandura (1987), linked the social exchange and reciprocity norm to the leader member exchange theory. Essentially, employees reciprocate the leader‟s (supervisor‟s) support through activities that are in line with the expectations of the leader/supervisor. High quality leader-member exchange is reflected in improving expected job performance and good citizenship behaviours (Settoon et al., 1996). Pos- itive social exchanges will lead to better performance, higher commitment, less intention to quit, and citizenship behaviours (Wayne, Shore, &Liden, 1997).

Adam‟s equity theory extends the social exchange perspective to incorporate the inequity aspect (Taris, Kalimo, &Schaufeli, 2002). Equity theory forms the basis of fairness in the social exchange perspective. Lack of equity is reflected in poor perceptions regarding organizational justice, which in turn can lead to employee behavioural or task outcomes such as dissatisfaction, lack of commitment, and poor performance (Cosier & Dalton, 1983; Deluga, 1994; Taris et al., 2002).

3. Conceptualization and Hypotheses

Intention to stay (quit) is defined as the ex- tent to which an employee plans to continue (discontinue) the relationship with his or her employer (Kim, Price, Mueller, & Watson, 1996). In the context of intention to quit, outcomes other than actual turnover have not been explored properly, nor been given the requisite attention in the literature. One of the notable exceptions to this is Bowen‟s study (1982), which looked into the unintended consequences of intention to quit, mentioning absenteeism and lower performance as some of the outcomes. Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982) brought forward similar views while discussing the outcomes of intention to quit, especially when the per- son stays in the system irrespective of his or her ill feeling. They mentioned alcoholism, sabotage, absenteeism, and work slowdowns as some of the ways employees express dis- satisfaction. Another interesting study in this direction was Withey and Cooper‟s (1989) work, which explored exit, voice, reduced loyalty, and neglect as responses of dissatisfaction among employees. Some of the aspects such as calling in sick, arriving late, making errors, reducing extra work, and avoiding active involvement were seen as part of neglect and reduced loyalty. With advances in research and the introduction of newer concepts, these outcomes can be categorized into expressions of organizational deviance, poor performance orientation, and reduced organizational citizenship behaviours.

Organizational deviance is exhibited in terms of absenteeism, slacking at work, and alcoholism, among other behaviours. Bowen (1982) and Mowday et al. (1982) discussed absenteeism, slacking at work, and alcoholism as some of the withdrawal behaviours, and there have been calls for research in these areas. Similarly, Bolin and Heatherly (2001) looked at devi- ance from a perspective of theft, substance abuse, absenteeism, and privilege abuse. From an employee‟s point of view, with decreasing commitment toward the organi- zation and higher intention to quit, he or she may be less inclined to follow organizational norms and workplace etiquette. Deviant behaviours may also be a way of expressing one‟s dissatisfaction with the organization. This may lead to negative behaviours with other employees, poor performance, misuse of organizational resources, and silent protest in the form of arriving late or being absent from work without informing. Organizational deviance is understood as "voluntary behaviour that violates significant organizational norms and in so doing threatens the well being of the organization" (Robinson & Bennett, 1995, p. 556). Authors have also stated that organizational deviance has not been given due importance in research, while concepts such as organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) have been extensively studied. Studying deviant behaviours as an outcome of intention to quit would therefore be interesting for both research and practice. These deviant

behav- iors can be detected and can help in either retaining the employee or taking adequate precautions to reduce adverse effects of deviant behaviours.

Performance orientation refers to the part of an individual‟s goal orientation where he or she is focused on task performance and the need to perform well in the eyes of peers and the supervisor. Sujan, Weitz, and Kumar (1994) commented that this orientation causes employees to work within their skill sets and project themselves as good performers. While studies have looked into personality, business, and work satisfaction-related issues, no study has linked performance orientation to the psychological contract/social exchange perspec- tive. An individual‟s performance orientation is linked strongly to final performance and the individual‟s effectiveness in an organizational context (Sujan et al., 1994). In the context of withdrawal behaviours, one of the plausible outcomes is low performance. It is understandable that a person who is planning to discontinue his or her organizational membership may not be interested in showing better performance and getting rewards associated with it. Hence, lower performance orientation may be one of the immediate outcomes of intention to quit. Organizational citizenship behaviour has gained considerable importance in organizational research in the past few years. Organ (1988), in his much quoted and well-known book *Organizational Citizenship Behaviour—the Good Soldier Syndrome,* defined OCB as "individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognised by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate pro- motes the effective functioning of the organisation" (p. 4). From the perspective of the social exchange theory, equity theory, and psychological contract theory, the explanation is that an employee who is satisfied with his or her organization in terms of job, rewards, and support provided is more inclined to stay and exhibit pro-social behaviours. These behaviours may be more than what the organization expects from the individual in his or her formal job description. Organ and Ryan (1995) reconfirmed the importance that OCB as a concept was receiving in the literature, stating that employees‟ citizenship behaviours shape the social and organizational context that enables task effectiveness. The behaviours considered as citizenship are those directed toward helping other individuals, groups, and the organization. Examples include helping a co worker who is over-burdened with work and talking positively about the organization. Studies (Cropanzano, Rupp, & Byrne, 2003; Organ & Ryan, 1995; Turnip- seed &Murkison, 2000) have explored the role of justice, job satisfaction, and commitment in determining citizenship behaviours and have found significant correlations. The role of intention to quit in predicting citizenship behaviours, however, has not been explored. Based on social exchange theory and psychological contract theory, it can be postulated that when a person thinks of discontinuing membership with an organization, the orientation for engaging in citizenship behaviours drops considerably.

The importance of these outcomes is clear: they may cause poor productivity and low morale, negatively affect the general working environment, and signal actual turnover. A recent study that partially linked these outcomes to the intention to quit was conducted by Lee, Mitchell, Sablynski, Burton, and Holtom (2004). They looked at job embeddedness, which was conceptualized as an anti-withdrawal concept and showed its positive impact on performance,

citizenship, and less absenteeism. This study also draws us to explore further the outcomes with a more specific construct, that is, intention to quit.

4.   Intention to Quit and Organizational Deviance

Research has indicated that intention to quit is highly correlated ($r = 0.49$) to actual turnover (Bowen, 1982). Intentions to quit also result in unwanted outcomes such as absenteeism and low performance (Bowen, 1982). Employees may also exhibit deviance from organizationally accepted behaviour. Organizational deviance looks at behaviours that are directed at the organization itself or its systems. These are issues such as calling in sick, lying about work hours (which are related to absenteeism), and ignoring instructions (Aquino, Lewis, & Bradfield, 1999). Kammeyer-Mueller, Wanberg, Glomb, and Ahlburg (2005) looked at these behaviours as organizational withdrawal behaviours and studied them as antecedents of actual turnover. Hence, we hypothesize:

H1: Higher intention to quit will lead to higher organizational deviance.

5.   Intention to Quit and Performance Orientation

Performance orientation is a dimension of goal orientation and is linked to performing well in an organization in order to attain certain rewards (Kohli, Shervani, &Challgalla, 1998). This would be a relevant outcome for the organization because employees with intention to quit may be intentionally performing low even though they have the potential to perform better. Performance orientation is linked strongly to eliciting a positive evaluation from others (Sujan et al., 1994); therefore, employees with intention to quit may not be interested in a positive evaluation by superiors and may not be interested in performing to gain such feedback. Harrison, Virick, and William (1996) have noted that both turnover intention and performance are antecedents of turnover. Sturman and Trevor (2001) also indicated that a causal order of the three variables is not clear in the literature. It is plausible, how- ever, that turnover intention may cause low performance orientation. In this context it is hypothesized that *H2: Higher intention to quit will lead to lower performance orientation.*

6.   Intention to Quit and Organizational Citizenship Behaviours

Another interesting outcome of the intention to quit may be its effect on organizational citizenship behaviour. Many of the variables the literature has discussed in the context of turnover intention are described as antecedents of OCB or have been used in the OCB literature. Procedural and distributive justice are considered major predictors of OCBs (Moorman, 1991; Organ & Ryan, 1995; Williams, Pitre, &Zainuba, 2002). Other predictors of turnover intention like organizational commitment and job satisfaction have also been studied in the context of OCB.

Parnell and Crandall (2003) have looked at intention to quit and OCB as separate dependent variables with organizational commitment and job satisfaction as major antecedents. Aryee, Budhwar, and Chen (2002) considered both turnover intentions and OCB as work outcomes in their study, in which they looked at the mediating effect of trust between organizational justice and work outcomes. The correlation table in their paper showed significant correlation between turnover intentions and organizationally directed OCB. Collectivism is high (Budhwar, 2001) in the cultural context of India; therefore, the importance of OCB increases. Individuals looking for long-term stay in their organizations prefer to develop stronger relations with their colleagues through more citizenship behaviours. On the other hand, it is possible that a person with high intention to quit may be less inclined toward citizenship behaviour. A tentative reason may be his or her detachment from the social system of the organization. Hence, we hypothesize that

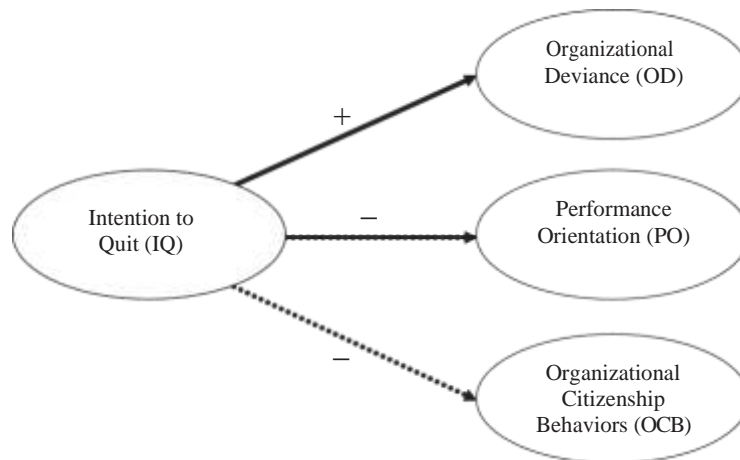*H3: Higher intention to quit will lead to lower organizational citizenship behaviours.*

Figure 1 shows the hypothesized model of the outcomes of intention to quit.

7. Methodology

The study used both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The hypotheses were tested using quantitative methods. Semistructured interviews were conducted with the software professionals, human resource managers, project managers/leaders, and top management executives. Most of the interviews lasted for 30 to 90 minutes. The interviews were recorded with respondents" permission. In a few cases, where respondents were not comfortable recording their responses, notes were taken. Further, six interviews were conducted with individuals who had quit software service organizations. Content analysis of these interviews helped us to understand the business con- text of software firms, the nature of services these firms offered, and the context of the organization and to explore the variables studied.

Apart from the interviews conducted to understand the context of the IT industry and IT professionals in general, inputs were gathered from software professionals (target population),

project managers/leaders, HR managers, and the top management team. This was done concurrently with administering the survey. The interviews were conducted with the above-mentioned individuals across different locations, including facilities of the same organization in different locations. Interviews were conducted in four facilities across four locations of a major Indian IT services firm and in three different facilities of another major IT services firm. The purpose of the interviews was twofold:

1. To understand the context of the organizations studied to improve the analysis of the input gathered through the survey questionnaire.

2. To explore organizational and individual aspects that could not be gathered effectively through the survey instrument.

Informal discussion and observations also aided in deriving a better perspective of the context of this study.

The questionnaire for the survey was designed based on standard scales. The following scales were used to measure the variables:

Intention to Quit: The items for intention to quit were drawn from Kim et al. (1996). There were six items in the scale. Cronbach"s alpha in Kim et al."s (1996) study was reported as 0.85. In the present study, Cronbach"s alpha is 0.76. The scale comprised items such as "There is no reason for continuing with the present job."

Organizational Deviance: The measure of organizational deviance was taken from Aquino et al. (1999). Twelve items were used to measure deviance. Cronbach"s alpha was 0.76. In the present study, it was 0.84. The scale comprised items such as "I have intentionally arrived late for work."

Performance Orientation: Performance orientation was measured using a scale developed by Sujan et al. (1994). The scale was modified to suit the context of this study. Ten items were used to measure performance orientation. Cronbach"s alpha in this study was 0.71. The scale comprised items such as "I am concerned about how my performance compares with other employees."

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour: OCB was measured based on the Williams and Anderson (1991) scale. Seventeen items were used to measure OCB as behaviours directed towards individuals (OCBI), behaviours directed at an organization (OCBO), and employee in-role behaviours (IRB). The coefficients of alpha for the scales as reported in the earlier studies ranged from 0.80 to 0.94. In the present study, Cronbach"s alpha was 0.78. The scale comprised items such as "I go out of the way to help new workers." When estimating the survey sample based on power of 0.80 and significance level of 0.05 with a conservative estimated strength of relationship to be 0.2, the minimum sample size is 194 for bivariate correlations (Cohen, 1988, p. 103). Hinkin (1995), citing Rummel (1970) and Schwab (1980), stated that the ratio of items to

sample can be in the range of 1:4 to 1:10 for exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. Hinkin (1995) referred to the latest studies and stated that even a sample of 200 will suit a confirmatory factor analysis. Going by the larger sample requirement, a sample size of around 200 respondents was suggested for the 45 items that were included in the survey.

One concern of this study was the use of self-reports for sensitive information such as organizational deviance. Though the use of self-reports has been criticized, research has shown that they yield reliable information (Aquino et al., 1999; Kline, Sulsky, &Rever- Moriyama, 2000). As was done by Aquino et al. (1999), the present research design took precautions to keep respondents‟ identities confidential. Care was taken to avoid items directed toward the respondent‟s identity, and the survey instrument was handed over directly to the researcher.

Approximately 1,500 questionnaires were distributed in 15 organizations. The survey instruments were sent to a contact in the participating organizations. An accompanying letter contained a brief introduction to the study and a firm assurance of confidentiality. Participants were not required to identify themselves and were provided with an envelope to seal and return the filled questionnaire. A total of 575 completed questionnaires were re- turned to the researcher. After screening the returned questionnaires, 550 were used for final analysis. After data entry, the data integrity checked. A sample of 20 survey instruments was checked for matching with the data file.

Out of the 15 organizations from which data was collected, nine were services organizations and two were product organizations. IT services organizations are essentially focused on firm-specific, customized application development and management and product organization work to develop IT products that can be sold in a generic market. Product organizations are more focused on in- novation and research and are perceived to provide work that is more meaningful to employees. The average age of the respondents was 25.6 and the range was from 23 to 28 years.

Regression analysis and structural equation modeling were used as quantitative data analysis techniques. After regression analysis, we explored further relationships using structural equation modeling (SEM). In the discussion of SEM as a data analysis tool, the concept of latent and observed variables needs to be understood. Latent variables are those theoretical constructs in behavioural sciences that cannot be measured directly. These are phenomena that are observed/measured in terms of certain behaviours that are believed to represent them (Byrne, 2001). Latent variables are the constructs or factors that are measured by observed variables or indicators (Kline, 1998). Essentially, in the survey study we undertook, the observed variables were the items in a scale that measured a broader construct.

Structural equation modeling allows a researcher to conduct confirmatory model testing, competing model testing, and model development. In the case of confirmatory model testing, a single model is specified and the statistical significance of the model is tested. In the case of competing models, the researcher specifies alternative models derived from theories and the better-fit model is accepted. In the case of model development strategy, re-specification to

models is suggested based on theoretical and empirical justifications (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998; Kline, 1998). Structural equation modeling allows the researcher to test multiple interrelationships among latent variables in a model and test models where a latent variable can be an independent variable to one variable and dependent variable to an- other variable. Apart from the strictly confirmatory model testing, SEM helps in develop- ing theory (Anderson &Gerbing, 1988).

The model fit in SEM is examined using the chi-square test and various fit indices. The fit measures can be categorized into absolute or incremental. Shah and Goldstein (2006), referring to Hu and Bentler (1998), stated that absolute measures indicated the degree to which a hypothesized model could reproduce the sample data, and the incremental indices measured the proportional improvement in fit when the hypothesized model is compared with a restricted baseline model. The generally reported fit statistics are c2 statistics, root mean square error of approximation, goodness of fit, and root mean square residual (RMR or SRMR). The major criticism of relying on the c2 test is that it fails with large samples; hence, other fit measures are developed and relied upon (Byrne, 2001; Shah & Goldstein, 2006). As far as fit indices are considered, we use the normed c2, standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), goodness of fit index (GFI), Tucker Lewis index (TLI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Hu and Bentler (1998) also recommended using SRMR, supplemented by TLI and RMSEA, for the maximum likelihood method when sample size is not small. In case of GFI and TLI, a value of 0 indicates the worst fit and 1 indicates a perfect fit. A value of less than 0.8 is considered adequate for a good fit for RMSEA, while for SRMR a value of 0 indicates perfect fit. Studies have reported relative fit indices of value around 0.8 to be of acceptable fit though marginal (e.g., Dabholkar, 1996). We also looked at the factor score weights of the observed variables on all the latent variables. It is required that the factor score weights of any observed variable be highest for its linked latent variable. This condition was satisfied in the model.

The SEM was done using AMOS 16. The "basic" feature of AMOS 16 was used to code the relationships and test the scales for confirmatory factor analysis. Modification indices were used to find the better-fit models that describe possible causal structures. As use of modification indices requires that there should be no missing data, mean substitution was done using Systat 11.

8.   Results

Organizational Context and Employee Behaviours

Attrition is considered a major issue in the Indian IT industry. To understand the behavioural patterns exhibited before quitting, questions were asked about the observed signals of turnover intentions. One widely stated observation was that people planning to quit generally voice a greater number of issues and problems. Showing less interest in work and less participation in work-related discussions, arriving late, taking more leaves, misusing Internet facilities, and

complaining about the organization or people are some of the mentioned signals of intentions to quit. Employees having higher intentions to quit also showed less interest in other organization-related activities. On the other hand, it was also found that some people who had plans to quit behaved very professionally and generally tried to create a positive impression while leaving. As discovered in the interviews, people planning to quit may not show an evident lack of task performance; however, they try to limit their involvement in other activities that are happening in the organization.

Generally observed symptoms of deviant behaviours were higher absenteeism, sickness, spreading rumors, a higher level of cynicism, lack of interest in work and other organizational activities, arriving late and leaving early, insubordination, and general lack of initiative. Several of the behaviours are interconnected. As one interviewee commented regarding a manager confronting an employee on coming late: "*And the person would be asked to explain why he is late by one hour and that guy would start coming late by two more hours next day*." The behaviour of arriving late leading to subtle insubordination also hints that deviant behaviours worsen if not dealt with properly. Some managers also commented that although deviant behaviours were observed, rarely did they cross the limits and most were controlled. Many employees intending to leave the organization want to make a decent exit, as they believe that spoiling their network with superiors may adversely affect any help needed from them in future. In addition, organizations try to communicate that relevant departments/individuals (for example, the HR department) are well connected with their counterparts in other organizations. It is generally emphasized that people who cross limits while leaving organizations cannot easily get away with it.

As a whole, the qualitative analysis gave two broad outputs. First, it clearly showed the possibility of support for the hypothesized relationships (managers and other employees clearly indicated that individuals having intention to quit seemed to exhibit deviant behaviours, reduction in citizenship behaviours, and lack of performance orientation). Second, it also threw more light on the behaviours associated with the outcomes of intention to quit. In the context of the IT industry, some of the evident deviant behaviours such as alcoholism or outbursts in the workplace may not be exhibited. The deviant behaviours may be subtle, but the possi- bility of their having grave consequences may be higher (e.g., creating defects in a software code, incorrect defect resolution).

Results of the three simple regressions in Table I show that all beta coefficients are significant at p £ 0.001. The signs of the relationships are as hypothesized for these variables. The results show that the relationship of intention to quit with organizational deviance is one of the highest (b = 0.409). Adjusted R^2 shows that intention to quit explains 16.6% of the variation in organizational deviance. Other outcomes have significant but weaker relationships.

Table II shows the results of the SEM when the three outcome variables are taken separately. All fit measures are well within the specified limits, and all beta coefficients are significant at p £ 0.001.

The hypotheses that higher intention to quit will lead to higher organizational deviance (H1), less performance orientation (H2), and less organizational citizenship behaviour (H3) are supported by data displayed in Tables I and II.

Post Hoc Exploration of Relation- ships in the Integrated Model

In addition to the above analysis, SEM allowed us to test the three outcomes of intention to quit in a single model and apply modification indices to show a betterfit model. Figure 2 shows the betterfit model with exploratory relationships based on modification indices given by AMOS. In the model having better fit, we found that performance orientation fully mediates the relationship between intention to quit and OCB and partially mediates the relationship between intention to quit and organizational deviance.

Results of Simple Regressions

Dependent Variable: Intention to Quit

Equation	Independent Variable	Adjusted R^2	*F*-Statistics	Beta
1	Organizational deviance	0.166	106.861***	0.409***
2	Performance orientation	0.033	19.358***	−0.188***
3	Organizational citizenship behaviors	0.036	20.964***	−0.195***

***$p \leq 0.001$, **$p \leq 0.01$, *$p \leq 0.05$, two-tailed test.

Results of Three SEM Models

Model	Relationship	Standardized Beta	Fit Measures
1	Organizational deviance ←Intention to quit	0.457***	Normed χ^2 = 2.044 SRMR = 0.0435 GFI =0.948 TLI =0.943 RMSEA = 0.044
2	Performance orientation ←Intention to quit	−0.288***	Normed χ^2 = 2.397 SRMR = 0.0448 GFI =0.962 TLI =0.955 RMSEA = 0.051
3	Organizational citizenship behaviors ← Intention to quit	−0.264***	Normed χ^2 = 1.914 SRMR = 0.0450 GFI =0.961 TLI =0.955 RMSEA = 0.041

***$p \leq 0.001$, **$p \leq 0.01$, *$p \leq 0.05$, two-tailed test.

9. Discussion

Results show that higher intention to quit will lead to higher organizational deviance, less performance orientation, and fewer organizational citizenship behaviours. On the basis of theories in social exchange and psycho- logical contracts, we can argue that once the employee feels that the psychological con- tracts have been broken and the quality of exchanges is no longer good, this will lead to less performance orientation, citizenship behaviours, and higher deviant behaviours. As Kickul, Neuman, Parker, and Finkl (2001) pointed out, from the perspective of the psychological contract, these behaviours are employees" reactions to unmet expectations and lack of fair treatment. These behaviours may increase when an employee decides to quit the organization.

Looking at each of the outcomes, organizational deviance is expressed in terms of absenteeism, misconduct in the workplace, spreading rumors, disrupting the workplace ambience, and ignoring supervisors" instructions, among other behaviours. Deviant behaviours may be an attempt to convey un- heard voice and/or an expression of freedom from organizational rules. IT professionals, HR managers, and line managers commented in the interviews that some of the observable behaviours when someone was thinking of quitting include arriving late, leaving early, being cynical regarding various issues, taking frequent leaves, or slacking at work. Taking leave on medical grounds also increased substantially.

Performance orientation is related to the employee"s effort to project him or herself as a good performer, motivation to achieve, and trying to do the job in the best possible way and time. It may be possible that if a person is thinking of quitting, he or she has already lost the feeling of a quality social exchange in the organization. Apart from social exchange, an individual planning to quit may want to free him- or herself from various job duties so that he or she can quit without a fuss. This may even be preferable to showing good performance. As discussed in one of the case studies related to this research (Krishnan & Singh, 2008), individuals may be looking at all the possibilities related to quitting. Hence, they will be less inclined toward work and more focused on getting a different job or exploring avenues for higher studies. Interviews have shown evidence that one of the most observed activities related to less performance orientation and organizational deviance is spending time on non-work activities such as preparing for higher studies, taking extensive breaks during office hours, and even spending more time on social networking sites.
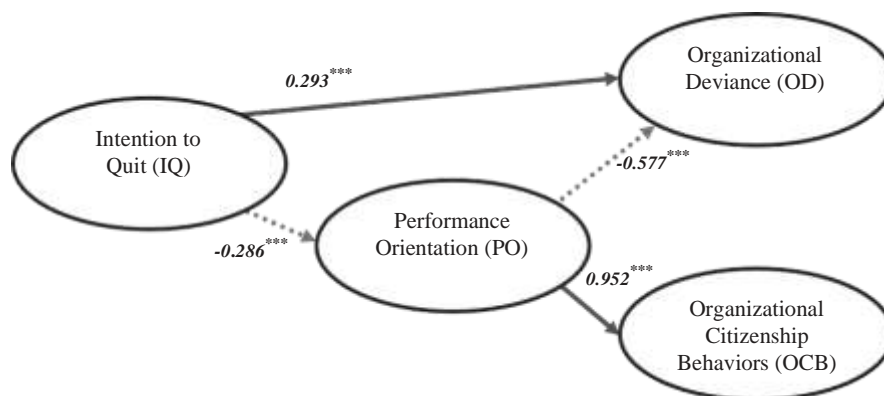
Figure 2 : Final model of the outcomes of intention to quit

Turnley, Bolino, Lester, and Bloodgood (2003) showed that citizenship behaviours have strong implications based on psychological contracts that are fulfilled. Regarding a person who is thinking of quitting, he or she may have already lost the feeling of being part of the organization and hence a citizenship feeling may not exist. OCB is reflected through the actions that are beyond the tasks a person is supposed to do; therefore, detachment from the organization can lead an employee to withdraw from those activities. Organ, Podsakoff, and MacKenzie (2006) noted that in the eventuality of poor social exchange in an organization, a few of the likely outcomes would be to reduce OCBs, task performance, and compliance with enforceable directives. They also pointed out, however, that if an employee cares about his or her performance appraisal, censures, and pay raises, the safest option would be to reduce OCBs. We can add that once a person is thinking of quitting, he or she may not be concerned as much about performance appraisal or associated pay raises, as these are future scenarios that are applicable only if he or she remained with the organization. This argument is sup- ported by this study‟s results, which show that the software professionals who were thinking of quitting exhibited high organizational deviance and less performance orientation. This result should be analyzed in light of the fact that the target group had a high degree of external opportunities. In the case of OCBs, some respondents observed that most people thinking of quitting often did only the bare minimum tasks at work. Here we also add to the study of Chen, Hui, and Sego (1998), who studied OCB as a direct predictor of actual turnover. The link between intention to quit and OCB was not made clear in the study. Hence, by linking the current study to Chen et al. (1998), we can say that OCB can be conceptualized as a mediator of intention to quit and actual turnover. Content analysis of the interviews also further explained these relationships by underlying the context that indicated a higher level of professionalism in the target group and better organizational mechanisms to prevent deviant behaviours.

The relationships based on modification indices of AMOS showed that intention to quit affects organizational citizenship behaviours and organizational deviance through performance orientation. These two relationships show that once an individual decides to leave, he or she is

less inclined to be a good performer, which in turn can lead to fewer citizenship behaviours and higher deviance.

Looking at the relationships of intention to quit with its outcomes, organizational deviance has the strongest relationship. It should be noted that there might be moderating effects of other factors that are linked to relationship between intention to quit and its outcomes. Ilies, Scott, and Judge (2006) pointed toward the role of personality dimensions on the patterns of OCBs exhibited, and Zimmerman (2008) established the relationship of personality traits to turnover decisions. Similarly, Turnipseed (2002) looked at OCB as an outcome of ethics of individuals. Employees who are more ethical may show higher OCBs. The argument for OCBs can also be extended to other outcomes of intention to quit. It is quite possible that employees who are more ethical might exhibit fewer deviant behaviours. According to Budhwar (2001), some of the typical traits/behaviours exhibited by Indians in the workplace include high collectivism and interdependence, obeying seniors, unwillingness to accept added responsibilities, and reluctance to deal with uncertain situations. Generally, individuals with these traits will refrain from activities that are not encouraged by their organizations. In Indian organizations, which do not provide job security, white-collar employees are wary of showing deviant behaviour if they are looking for longer service in the organization. In addition, in the close- knit social structure existing in India, individuals are conscious of their image. An employee not intending to leave his or her organization will try to have a positive image among colleagues/friends. Hence, some of the cultural implications can also be considered as a variable that can influence the outcomes such as organizational deviance.

The support for our hypotheses on out- comes of intention to quit reflects the importance of the phenomenon of intention to quit. Employee deviance, poor performance orientation, and lack of citizenship behaviours can have many serious implications for the organization beyond just the poor performance of a few individuals. It can lead to loss of employee morale and thus damage the work culture in the organization.

The importance of these outcomes in the context of intention to quit comes into focus as an indication of actual turnover. The results indicate that outcomes such as deviant behaviours, less performance orientation, and fewer citizenship behaviours happen when employees think of quitting and can be used as a signal to increase retention efforts before actual quitting.

Interviews with managers and employees also suggested typical behaviours associated with poor employee engagement include spending a long time in the cafeteria, updating one‟s resume on the job site, networking actively outside the workplace for possible openings, providing information to newcomers to the organization/team that may not be motivating, and spending more time on self- development. This last behaviour might include updating oneself on technologies, project assignments, and developments in the field in order to prepare oneself for a possible job interview. Interestingly, an experienced project manager commented that a person who is planning to quit spends more time on learning and updating him- or herself on the various parts of the project in which the team is engaged. This also suggests exploring another area of

outcome of intention to quit as a future research gap-learning orientation as an outcome of intention to quit.

The SEM also showed relationships that are more exploratory in nature based on a betterfit model. It is interesting to note that organizational citizenship behaviours in the better-fit model did not have a direct link with intention to quit but act through performance orientation. This gives us an indication that organizational citizenship behaviours can be a more visible outcome of intention to quit. A person having a higher intention to quit can show lower performance orientation and thus lower organizational citizenship behaviours. Logically, this line of thought is prudent because citizenship behaviours are actions beyond one‟s task performance, and variations in performance orientation will happen before any changes in organizational citizenship behaviours. Similarly, we found a relationship between performance orientation and organizational deviance behaviours. The results showed partial mediation of performance orientation in the relationship between intention to quit and organizational deviance.

Examining these relationships in the context of the IT professionals makes our results more interesting. Organizational deviance has one of the strongest relationships with intention to quit. It is quite possible that young IT professionals will be inclined to show their thoughts of quitting through behaviours such as absenteeism, unprofessional behaviours at work, and engaging in activities that can be considered misconduct. It is also interesting to note that these behaviours may be more prominent and visible in the case of the sample we are studying and hence easy for the organization to address.

With the conceptualization of outcomes of intention to quit, future research can build upon this model by testing more variables that mediate the relationship between intention to quit and actual quitting. Further, the effect of moderating variables, especially personality related variables, could be examined. Other factors may moderate the link between intention to quit and its outcomes. For ex- ample, Ilies et al. (2006) pointed toward the role of personality dimensions on the patterns of OCBs exhibited. Similarly, Turnipseed (2002) looked at OCB as an outcome of individuals‟ ethics. Employees who are more ethical might show higher OCBs. The argument for OCBs can also be extended to other out- comes of intention to quit. Employees who are more ethical might exhibit less deviant behaviours. In addition, the moderating effects of job-related factors such as years of experience, hierarchical level, gender, etc., on the links between intention to quit and its outcomes need to be tested. The exploratory model derived in SEM also needs to be further studied, because research is limited on the outcomes of intention to quit. In addition, stronger theoretical explanations for these explored relationships are a pointer for further research.

10.   Conclusion and Implications

The study looks at the outcomes of intention to quit among knowledge workers in India. There is a significant gap in the turnover literature regarding the outcomes of intention to quit. This clearly indicates a potential area for research. We hypothesized that higher intention to quit would lead to higher organizational deviance and lower performance orientation and organizational citizenship behaviours. Because the available literature was limited, we followed a two prong approach of semistructured interviews and survey method. Content analysis of the semi-structured interviews added significant value to the quantitative analysis of the hypothesized and the post hoc exploratory relationships. Because there was more than one dependent variable in the holistic model, multiple regression analysis was not possible. We therefore used SEM to analyze the exploratory integrated model. Without SEM it would not be possible to look at interrelationships among the three dependent variables. These interrelationships gave directions for interesting future studies.

The support for our hypotheses on the outcomes of intention to quit showed the importance of intention to quit in the con- text of its outcomes. Employee deviance and low performance orientation and citizenship behaviours can not only lead to poor individual performances but also be bad for the organization‟s overall well-being. With the business of IT organizations heavily dependent on onsite clients, these behaviours can, in turn, lead to poor customer relationships. We came to the conclusion that high intention to quit not only leads to an employee moving to a "maintenance" mode in terms of his or her performance, but can also create trouble for the organization. It is also apparent that it is difficult for organizations to manage such employees, because some of them take more time off from their job. In one of the interviews, a project manager commented, "One of the easily observable things is the increase in number of intermittent „sick leaves‟ and sudden expression of negative behaviours like coming late to work and often missing from the desk." The cost of these behaviours can be high both in terms of direct billing of the resource and the employee‟s utilization and overall impact on the morale of the immediate community. Hence, it is of paramount importance for organizations in this industry to identify the signals conveyed by these outcomes of intention to quit and install mechanisms to detect deviant behaviours.

This study can be linked to best practices that organizations can implement at various levels to reduce the impact of intention to quit. One important aspect of IT organizations in India is they promote a culture of freedom and fewer rules. Many human resource management policies have evolved to promote this, such as flexible work hours. The manager‟s training and his or her utilization of practices such as counseling, development planning, and career planning and his or her supporting the subordinate through various initiatives such as mentoring can help increase the subordinate‟s engagement. A proactive HR department that can help employees find alternative opportunities within the organization can also help reorient the employee from the immediate negative environment that is creating intention to quit. Our interviews suggested that it is very rare that an individual quits without his or her immediate peers/team mates knowing this intention as exhibited through behaviours. Organizations can thus reduce intention to quit through various touch points and processes that can help identify some of the outcomes of intention to quit and bridge the gaps that are causing intention to quit.

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