



## IMPACT OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE ON TURNOVER INTENTION: A STUDY OF WORKING WOMEN

CHHAYA WADHWA\*

\*Assistant Professor, Apeejay School of Management,  
Sector 8 , Institutional Area, New Delhi, India.

### ABSTRACT

*The objective of this study is to extend prior research by investigating the impact of work-life balance and organizational climate in an employee's intent to leave an organization. The information was gathered from 230 women working in various organizations of Delhi NCR. The results of Pearson correlation showed a significant association between Work family conflict, organizational climate and turnover intention. Regression analysis indicates that 51% variance in turnover intention can be attributed to work-family conflict and unsupportive organizational climate.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Organizational climate, Turnover intention, Work-life balance, work-family conflict.*

### INTRODUCTION

One of the most researched topics in organizational behavior is turnover intention. Workplace turnover has become increasingly important in recent years. Regardless of the type of organization, voluntary turnover is disruptive and harmful to the organization. It is also costly, both directly and indirectly (Cascio, 1991). It is usually the most competent workers who quit, since it is relatively easy for them to obtain work elsewhere (Locke, 1976; Wright, 1993). As organizations face tight labor markets and skill shortages (Batt & Valcour, 2003), companies that retain their most valued staff members, save money while safeguarding their intellectual capital (Mitchell, et al., 2005).

Turnover intent is the cognitive process of thinking, planning, and desiring to leave a job (Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino, 1979). According to Mobley (1982); Steers and Mowday (1982); Black and Stevens (1989) intention to stay is significantly negatively correlated with turnover. Mitchell, et al., (2000) posit that it is easier to measure turnover intent than voluntary

turnover as administrative records may be unavailable, incomplete, or inaccurate. In their analysis of occupational turnover, Dalessio, Silverman, and Schuck (1986) stated:

more attention should be given to the direct and indirect influences of variables on intention to quit as opposed to the actual act of turnover. From the employer's standpoint, intention to quit may be a more important variable than the actual act of turnover. If the precursors to intention to quit are better understood, the employer could possibly institute changes to affect this intention. However, once an employee has quit, there is little the employer can do except assume the expense of hiring and training another employee (p. 261).

Work-life balance has been described as the self-perceived, satisfactory integration of personal time, family care, and work with a minimum of role conflict (Clark, 2000; Ungerson & Yeandle, 2005). An added source of stress in an employee's life is the phenomenon of work-family conflict (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1999). In the contemporary world, more families (with or without children) are required to earn a dual income in order to meet their financial commitments, so that both partners are breadwinners (Skinner & Pocock, 2008). In order to balance work and family commitments, an increasing number of contemporary women and men are finding themselves involved in work and family arrangements that were largely unknown to their parents' generation (Barnett & Rivers, 1996; Hoshschild, 1997). This could also be the leading factor in creating work-family conflict. Literature suggests that the absence of work-family balance, typically defined in terms of elevated work-family conflict has been shown to affect important organizational outcomes, such as job satisfaction (Netemeyer et al., 1996), organizational commitment (Wiley, 1987), employee turnover (Netemeyer et al., 1996), absenteeism and tardiness (Goff, Mount, & Jamison, 1990; Hammer, Bauer, & Grandey, 2003; Thomas & Ganster, 1995), and job performance (Aryee, 1992; Frone, Yardley, & Markel, 1997; Kossek, Colquitt, & Noe, 2001; Wayne, Musisca, & Fleeson, 2004).

**Work-family Climate** The construct of work-family climate, or how supportive an organizational workgroup is of the integration of its employees' work and family lives, has been referred to as culture (Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999; Warren & Johnson, 1995), organizational perceptions (Allen, 2001; Jahn, Thompson, & Kopelman, 2003), and climate (Adams, Woolf, Castro, & Adler, 2005; Anderson, Morgan, & Wilson, 2002; Hannigan, 2004). The climate of an organization focuses on each individual's perception they have of the work environment, and depending on their perceptions, this may influence (either improve or worsen) the outcomes of performance in the workplace (Bochner, 2003). There is increasing evidence that the ways employees perceive their work environment may influence their behavior in ways that support the objectives and the goals of the organization (Rosete, 2006).

A supportive work-family climate is one in which organizations understand and support that a person's family is their first priority, even above the employee's work and the organization. Another dimension of the unsupportive work-family culture/climate in Thompson et al.'s definition, is the perceived negative career consequences, implying that workers are indirectly penalized for utilizing work-life benefits. The extant literature clearly suggests that supervisors who support work-family balance supportive climate contribute to increased job satisfaction (Bond et al., 2002; Repetti & Cosmas, 1991; Saltzsein et al., 2001; Thomas & Ganster, 1995; Allen, 2001), career satisfaction (Aryee & Luk, 1996), organizational commitment (Allen, 2001; Bond et al., 2002) and to decreased work-family conflict (Anderson et al., 2002; Bond et al.,

2002; Frone et al., 1997; Goff et al., 1990; Thomas & Ganster, 1995; Carlson & Perrewe, 1999), absenteeism (Goff et al., 1990), work distress (Frone et al., 1997), and depression (Thomas & Ganster, 1995), less intention to quit (Allen, 2001; Thompson et al., 1999).

The objective of this study is to extend prior research by investigating the impact of work-life balance and organizational climate in an employee's intent to leave an organization and the extent to which these variables can predict the turnover intent of working managers in the Delhi NCR region.

## MEASURES

Work-family conflict (WFC) was assessed using 5 items scale by Netemeyer et al., 1996,(in Fields 2002). The scale had five response choices ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. A sample item is "The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life". Higher scores reflect higher level of conflict. The Cronbach's alpha of this scale = .81

Turnover Intentions. Turnover intentions were assessed with a single item, "Taking everything into consideration it is very likely that I will genuinely make an effort to find a new job with another employer within the next one year?" from Spector et al. (1988). Response choices ranged from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Higher scores reflect higher levels of intentions. This single-item measure has been used in several prior studies and has been shown to relate significantly to both job satisfaction and turnover (e.g., Spector, 1991).

Organizational Climate was assessed using three items, two taken from the scale by Thompson, Beauvis & Lyness(1999) and one item adapted from Allen(2001), "In this organization, individuals who take time off (leaves) to attend top personal matters are viewed as not committed to their work. Response choices ranged from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Higher scores reflect higher levels of unsupportive negative organizational climate. The Cronbach's alpha of this scale = .75

## PARTICIPANTS AND DATA COLLECTION

Non probabilistic convenience sampling was used to collect the data. Only female managers working in various organizations like FMCG, Banking and Insurance sector, Retail Industry, BPO and KPO's, ITES and other sector were included in the study. Two hundred and thirty participants were included in analyses. The majority of participants (73%, n=167) were married; and 27% (n=63) were single. The ages of the participants ranged from 20 to 60 years , with the 32% respondents in the age group of 20-30years ; 32% in the 31-40 years age group; 10% in the 41-50 years age group and 15% in the 51-60 years age group. There was no respondent in the age group of 60+ years, this could be because, in most organizations the retirement age is 60 years.

## RESULTS

Pearson's product moment correlations were conducted to measure the strength and direction of the relationships between the continuous variables of the effect of work on family, organizational climate, and turnover intention. A matrix of Pearson's correlations is presented in Table 1. Both

the study variables, work to family conflict and unsupportive organizational climate had statistically significant correlations with turnover intent.

TABLE 1

## Correlations

		Turnover Intention	Work Family Conflict	to org Climate ie negative climate
Turnover Intention	Pearson Correlation	1	.691**	.616**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	230	230	230
Work to Family Conflict	Pearson Correlation	.691**	1	.672**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	230	230	230
Unsupportive org Climate ie negative climate	Pearson Correlation	.616**	.672**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	230	230	230

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

It is observed here that there is a high positive correlation between turnover intention and work family conflict with 'r' value of .691, significant at 99% confidence level. This means that turnover intention is affected significantly due to an increase in work family conflict or decrease in the work life balance.

Positive correlation was also found for turnover intention and unsupportive organizational climate with 'r' = .616. The correlation is significant at 99% confidence level. This implies that unsupportive organizational climate would have a direct effect on the turnover intention of an employee. Also there is a positive correlation between work family conflict and unsupportive organizational climate, meaning thereby that the employees will experience higher level of work to family conflict in the presence of an unsupportive, negative organizational climate.

Both the predictor variables were regressed simultaneously to determine the relative contributions of the predictors to turnover intention. The outcomes of these regressions are shown in Table 3.

Table 2 indicates that fifty one (51%) of the variance in turnover intention can be accounted for by Work-Family Conflict, and unsupportive organizational climate as shown in table 4 below. Table 3 indicates that the developed model is significant at .000 level.

TABLE 2

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.721 <sup>a</sup>	.520	.516	1.077

a. Predictors: (Constant), Unsupportive org Climate ie negative climate, Work to Family Conflict total

TABLE 3

**ANOVA<sup>b</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	285.233	2	142.616	122.879	.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	263.463	227	1.161		
	Total	548.696	229			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Unsupportive org Climate ie negative climate, Work to Family Conflict

b. Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention

TABLE 4

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.253	.262		-.966	.335
	Work to Family Conflict	.881	.108	.506	8.142	.000
	Unsupportive org Climate ie negative climate	.427	.096	.277	4.454	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention

**LIMITATIONS**

The data for this study were collected from Delhi NCR representative sample however, several limitations to the present study should be considered. The first limitation is the use of cross-sectional data, which implies that cause and effect relations cannot be inferred from the findings reported here. Future research that uses a longitudinal methodology may be better suited to determine the causal status of the relationships examined in this study. A second limitation is the

self-report single source data. Thomas & Ganster (1995), observe, that this is a common problem in work-family conflict research because the key constructs are often based on perceptions and thus depend on self-reported data, which can raise concerns about common method variance. Last but not the least, the dependent variables, turnover intention, was measured by a single item, which might have attenuated some of the relationships.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Organizations face an increasing need to attract and sustain a productive workforce to ensure continued organizational success. The objective of the current research was to investigate turnover intentions. The results of Pearson Correlation and Multiple Regression proved that there was a significant positive correlation between work family conflict and turnover intention; turnover intention and unsupportive organizational climate; and work family conflict and unsupportive organizational climate. The regression analysis indicates that 51% variance in the turnover intention of an employee can be attributed to work to family conflict and unsupportive organizational climate. Perceived organizational climate is critical for work-family conflict and turnover intentions. Baron (1985) observed that the individuals who consistently experience unpleasant or dissatisfying environments or situations develop a state that is referred to as dissonance, and then attempt to reduce or eliminate dissonance. Employees who are happy with their overall jobs have far less reason to leave. This study also draws attention to the need for organizations to create workplace environments that are worker and family friendly and understand that both spheres are essential for the effective functioning and performance of the employee.

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