

# **Moderating Roles of Organizational Commitment Dimensions and Relationships between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention of Academics: The Equity Theory Perspectives**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study seeks to evaluate the moderating roles of organizational commitment dimensions and relationships between job satisfaction and turnover intention of academics considering the equity theory perspectives. The study made use of cross-sectional data where a sample of 274 was drawn from a population of 874 academic staff of the university. Respondents cut across professors to graduate assistants. Self-administered questionnaire was employed; lecturers were given questionnaire during union meetings and some in their offices. The data was analyzed using mean, standard deviation and correlation coefficients while the hypotheses were tested using regression analysis. The findings show that job satisfaction has only indirect effect on turnover intention when there is a high level of affective commitment. In the unionized environment, where pay and other conditions of service is determined through collective bargaining, affective commitment becomes a dominant factor in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover process. The study recommends organizational commitments by both private and public entities so as to engender job satisfaction capable of increasing turnover

**Keywords:** Affective commitment, job satisfaction, turnover intention, Continuance commitment, normative commitment.

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## **I. Introduction**

High employees turnover especially professionals have remained a serious concern to many organisations for long irrespective of their sizes (Lee & Mitchell, 1994; Govindaragu, 2019). This may likely continue in emerging economies like Nigeria because of dynamism in working environment. These costs are both direct and indirect such as disruptions of organisational daily routines, work overload on remaining employees, emotional stress; and could also portray organisation negatively to both internal and external public (Tumwesigye, 2010; Singh & Loncar, 2010; Jayasundera, Jayakody, & Jayawardana, 2016). Thus, to manage this scenario, research has focused on identifying the antecedents of turnover, March and Simon (1958) earlier identified the main antecedents of turnover as a reflection of individual's perception about the desirability and

ease of movement. Overtime, the desirability has been equated to mainly job satisfaction and ease of movement equated mainly to perceived job alternatives; the two constructs (Job satisfaction and perceived job alternative) were the major focus of studies on employee turnover in the 90s (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Recently, researchers have identified more antecedents of turnover/turnover intentions to include but not limited to inadequacies of: job satisfaction (Singh & Loncar, 2010), pay satisfaction (Yadav & Gupta, 2017; Singh & Loncar, 2010), organisational justice (Yadav & Gupta, 2017; Govindaragu, 2017), organisational support (Tumwesigye, 2010) and organisational commitment (Tumwesigye, 2010). Despite the effort of the early and recent researchers, no consensus has been reached on all the antecedents of turnover intentions, thus, major interests of researchers have continued to be directed at identifying them (Govindaragu, 2019).

The high level of interest shown by researchers in respect to turnover intention notwithstanding, it might be unjustifiable to say that research in respect to the construct is conclusive especially in emerging/developing economy like Nigeria where few studies have been carried out. Academic institutions of higher learning seem to be among the least researched in Nigeria as it concerns turnover intention. Surprisingly, academic staff of these institutions seems highly mobile occupationally because of the uniqueness of their services; some lecturers even seek other employment offering outside the university system because of perceived better working environment (Satope and Akintunde, 2013). There is a high turnover of academic staff of universities in Nigeria (Gbenu, 2013), which has continued to impact negatively on productive teaching and learning and in the past, contributed to the cycle of crises in the universities (Albert, 2014). Given the important roles universities play in the development of every country through research and knowledge impartation, it is imperative that turnover intention is examined because of their negative impact on Nigerian Universities.

We attended to this problem by examining the relationships organisational commitment and job satisfaction have with turnover intention, explore the ability of job satisfaction and organisational commitment to predict turnover intentions, and also offer insight on the moderating role of organisational commitment dimensions on the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention of academic staff of Nigerian Universities, with a focus in Ebonyi State University.

The study is timely because, no doubt there is a large body of literature and studies on the linkage between work-related factors and employee turnover intent in different parts of the world, but such studies are scanty in Sub-Saharan Africa (Gyensare, Otoo, Asare and Twumasi, 2015). Secondly, there are much scantier of studies exploring antecedents of turnover intention in Nigerian universities especially as it concerns academic staff. Little has been heard about job satisfaction and organisational commitment as predictors of turnover intention among academic staff in Nigerian Universities.

Thirdly, studies have failed to consider the moderating role of organisational commitment on the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention in Nigerian Universities. While many studies have posited that lack of job satisfaction is a major antecedent of turnover intention, there are evidence that some workers remain in their organisation even when they are not satisfied (Dochery and Barns, 2005), although it has been observed that employees still leave their jobs even when there is no alternative (Mowday, Porter & Steers, 2013), research has failed to explore why employees decide to stay in their work organisation when they have opportunity to work elsewhere, despite job dissatisfaction. Considering the above scenario and the paucity of employment opportunities in Nigeria, there is a likelihood that different dimensions of organisational commitment could moderate academics decision to continue to work in their organisations even when they are not satisfied. Such investigation seems not available currently in any university in Nigeria and this study is aimed at filling these gaps.

## **II. Theoretical background and Hypotheses**

### **2.1 Equity Theory**

Equity theory focuses mainly on exchange relationship where employees give something (input) in expectation of something in return (Al-Zawahreh & Al-Madi, 2012). Adams (1963) who propounded the theory posits that employee compares the ratio of his input and outcome to input and outcome of some referent groups. These groups may be colleagues, relatives, individuals themselves, individuals in different but comparable role inside or outside their work organisation (Al-Zawahreh & Al-Madi, 2012). While input could be experience, education, skills, effort; outcome could be pay, benefits, rewards and so on, the comparative assessment either reveals a sense of equity or inequity (Ngo-Henha, 2017). Adams (1963) observes that if an employee notices inequity, he will try to restore equity in different ways including leaving the situation (organisation). Griffith and Gaertner (2001) observe that turnover process is initiated by perceptions of inequity in relationship to job satisfaction. This suggests that a person who perceives equity in what his/her job offers will hardly be dissatisfied and may be reluctant to quit.

Although Singh and Loncar (2010) argue that availability of referent group shrinks within the framework of equity theory in a unionized environment because pay are determined through collective bargaining, thereby making pay unsusceptible to change even when there are input differentials, the scenario in

Nigerian universities are different. Despite having Umbrella union under Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), the principle of university autonomy has created big differentials in administration of compensation, promotion and other benefits. Secondly, the dichotomy between Federal, State and Private Universities may not be bridged even in the near future. Thirdly, lecturers sometimes leave the country entirely, while others move to other sectors of the economy, hence, employees in this type of environment use both internal (within a given organisation/occupation) and external (outside the organisation/occupation) (Griffeth & Gaertner, 2001) as sources of referents. To this end, in their study on a role for equity theory in the turnover process, Griffeth and Gaertner (2001) concluded that equity perceptions on satisfaction affect intention to quit. They however called for more studies for better understanding of voluntary employee turnover under equity theory given that only 6 per cent of variance in turnover intention was explained by their model. This study is also a response to that call.

## *2.2 Turnover/Turnover intention*

Employee turnover refers to a situation where an employee ceases to be an employee of an organisation (Ngo-Hanha, 2017), it is also seen as the rate of movement of employees in and out of an organisation (Abdulraheem & Adebola, 2014), or a permanent movement of an employee beyond the boundary of an organisation. Turnover can be seen from three perspective (Shim, 2010; Ellet, Ellis, & Westbrook, 2007) unavoidable, desirable and undesirable turnover. Unavoidable turnover occurs due to retirement, sickness, permanent disability and family related issues. Desirable turnover applies to incompetent employee while undesirable applies to competent, skilled and talented employee leaving the organisation against the will of the employer (Ellet, Ellis, & Westbrook, 2007). Turnover is also classified as voluntary and involuntary, involuntary turnover refers to permanent release of an employee from his/her employment by the employer. It occurs when the employer decides to terminate the employment relationship with the employee, while voluntary turnover is the decision of employee to leave an organisation willingly (Gill, et al., 2013). People decide to willingly leave their organisations for so many reasons including lack of job satisfaction, lack of organisational commitment, poor compensation, absence of career advancement opportunities and so on (c.f. Lum, et al. 1998; Lo, Chien, Hwang, Huang & Chiou, 2018)

However, despite the existence of situations that generate discontent in employees, the decision to leave an organisation by employee is always weighed thoroughly, not only do they assess the existence of opportunities elsewhere, but also ponder their feelings (Ngo-Helen, 2017). Turnover is costly to the organisation because it takes both money and time to replace such employee (Singh & Loncar, 2010; Holtom, Mitchell & Lee, 2008). A lot of empirical research has proved that turnover intention has a strong positive relationship with actual turnover, and can be used as a valid alternative for research on actual turnover (Bothma & Roodt, 2013). Turnover intention refers to the probability that an employee will leave his or her job voluntarily in the period ahead (March & Simon, 1958). It is workers estimated intention of leaving an organisation at some point in life (Ahmad & Riaz, 2011), conscious willfulness of staff to seek other alternative job opportunities in other organizations (Ucho et al., 2012). Employees may decide to leave their jobs not only when there are opportunities but even when there are no other job opportunities (Mowday, et al., 2013)

A large number of studies have analysed the influencing factors of turnover intention, these includes but not limited to external environment factors such as local level of employment and alternative job opportunities (Jayasundera et al., 2016; Perreira, Berta, Hebert 2018), internal individual factors like work abilities (Tsai, Huang, Chien, Chiang, Chiou, 2016), and job related factors such as job satisfaction, organisational justice, workstress, affective commitment, work hours and so on (Lum, et al. 1998, Derycke, Clays, Vlerick, D'Hoore, Hasselhorn & Braeckman, 2012; Lo, Chien, Hwang, Huang & Chiou, 2018; Yarbrough, Martin, Alfred & McNeill, 2016). From these studies, three major determinants of turnover intention emerged as individual factors (age, education, experience sex), external or economic opportunities factors (employment perceptions, unemployment rate, unionism) and work related factors (job satisfaction, organisational justice, organisational commitment and so on) (Lum, et al. 1998; Jayasundera et al., 2016).

## *2.3 Job satisfaction and Turnover intention*

Following the identification of job dissatisfaction as one of the major factors that leads to employee turnover, Mobley (1977) developed a model linking job dissatisfaction to eventual turnover, subsequently, Mobley, Griffeth, Hand and Meglino (1979) expanded Mobley model to include organisational and job related variables that were seen to be relevant in the turnover process. Dissatisfied by the previous models of turnover processes, Lee and Mitchell (1994) presented the unfolding model of voluntary employee turnover where they tried to explain the generic cognitive processes that lead to employee voluntary turnover. They came up with four (4) specific decision paths which are heavily influenced by job dissatisfactions. However, the model focused more on work environment and how employees interpret such environment which leads to decision alternative identification and then response based on their subjective judgment. Nevertheless, they spur many researchers to study deeply the relationship/effect of job satisfaction on turnover intention.

Job satisfaction which is seen as a positive feeling one has resulting from assessment of the job characteristics (Robbins & Judge, 2009), a pleasurable emotional state resulting from achieving one's job value (Eslami and Gharakhani, 2012), or a motive reaction to a job condition measured in terms of how results meet up or exceed expectation or/and a measure of very positive to very negative attitude (Khan, 2006; Rehman et al, 2013; Odoch & Nangoli, 2014), tends to measure the level of employee contentment with everything about his job. Individual differences play a very big role in achieving satisfaction since satisfaction could be intrinsic or extrinsic (Weiss et al, 1967 in Eslami & Gharakhani, 2012).

Job satisfaction is a multidimensional construct and the dimensions are popularly known as facets (Singh and Pandey, 2004). Till date, there is no consensus on job satisfaction facets by researchers. For instance, Gangai and Agrawal (2015) listed appreciation, benefits, job conditions, pay, promotion, supervision and organisation's policies and procedures. Tarkyilmaz, Akman, Ozkan and Pastuszak (2011) identified empowerment, participation, working conditions, rewards & recognition and training/personal development as five major facets. Odebiyi and Olaoye (2013) listed the dimensions as work itself, pay, promotion, recognition, working condition, supervision and co-workers. Luthans (2005) listed work, pay, promotion, supervision, and coworkers as major facets of job satisfaction. They have formed the bulk of main reasons for industrial conflict between Nigerian government and Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). Secondly some studies have observed their strong positive relationship with work related outcomes (c.f. Rehman et al. 2013; Azeem, 2010), and further analysis is required to either prove their relevance or otherwise in predicting turnover intention of academic staff in the university.

Pay deals with all forms of monetary rewards given to the employee arising from the services he renders as demanded by his job (Fattah, 2010 in Rehman et al. 2013). Although adequate salary structure will likely improve the level of job satisfaction (Marginson, 2003), it does not mean that individuals that earn more money are always more satisfied in their jobs (Spector, 2008). *Promotion* not only provides employees the opportunity for personal growth but also more responsibilities and increased status in such organisation and even in the society (Spector, 1993 in Lumley, Coetzee, Tladinyane & Ferreira, 2011). Thus, organisation that its promotional opportunities are perceived to be fair may likely enhance the job satisfaction of its employees (Spector, 1997). *Co-workers* satisfaction deals with the level of satisfaction as it concerns members of employees' technical support and social behaviour (Bas & Ardic, 2002). Coworkers help individual satisfy social needs (Lumley, et al. 2011) and increases satisfaction when they are supportive and friendly. *Work itself* could also affect the level of satisfaction one experiences in his/her job. Employees prefer work that is mentally challenging, offers some level of freedom and involves variety of tasks (Lumley, et al, 2011). It could be in form of paid time off, employee services and protection (Calvin & Bongani, 2017), use of company-owned property, health club membership, relocation payment and so on (Martocchio, in Calvin & Bongani, 2017), it contributes to overall job satisfaction.

Studies show job satisfaction as a major antecedent of employee turnover (Swider, Boswell and Zimmerman, 2011). It is seen as one of the leading factors in turnover intention (Christian & Ellis, 2014). Under equity theory, it is believed that a satisfied employee will have less intention to quit, this have been confirmed in so many studies in different parts of the world. For instance, Zheng, Meng, Yang and Liu (2018) found a direct significant negative effect of job satisfaction on turnover intention in a study that examined township health inspectors in China. Ucho et al. (2012) reported a significant inverse relationship between job satisfaction and civil servants in Benue state of Nigeria. In Australia, Joyce and Wang (2015) conclude that low satisfaction of doctors is associated with their intention to leave the medical workforce, those who has high job satisfaction are also reported to have lower intention to leave in Slovenia and Austria (Jiménez, Milfelner, Žižek, and Dunkl, 2017)

Although the evidence of inverse relationship abound in literature, Dochery and Barns (2005) observe that there is likelihood that some professionals may be more attached to their job and therefore display less propensity to quit irrespective of satisfaction level since they see it as a calling. Secondly, studies of job satisfaction within a country provide a culture specific approach (Iornem, 2018), creating more need for studies of this nature. We therefore hypothesize as follows:

H1: Job satisfaction is inversely related to turnover intention of academics

#### 2.4 Organizational Commitment and Turnover Intention

Organisational commitment which is defined as a psychological state that binds an individual to a course of action aimed at achieving organisational target and/or the degree in consistencies of attitudes, beliefs and behaviours towards an organisation, enhances willingness and persistence in courses of action that seek to better the organisation (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005; Meyer & Herscovitch; Eslami & Gharakhani, 2012). Since it is seen as a measure of employee's attachment to and identification with his/her job (Mitonga-Moga, Flotman, & Cilliers, 2018), it has been linked to reduction in negative work attitudes such as turnover, absenteeism and so on (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, Topolnytsky, 2002). The three factor model-affective,

normative and continuance commitment as proposed by Meyer and Allen (1991) is highly accepted among scholars.

Affective commitment deals with workers staying in the organisation because of their attachment to, recognition with, and willingness to participate and identify with the organisation (Sabir, Ilyas, & Amjad, 2011; Rehman, et al. 2013), a sentimental attachment, strong sense of belonging that elicits full participation in the organisation activities (Meyer & Allen, 1997). People that are affectively committed to an organisation are psychologically attached to it (Gangai & Agrawal, 2015), and willingly exert required effort to ensure organisational objectives are achieved.

Affective commitment is the most accepted and studied among the 3-model commitment proposed by Allen and Meyer (Yang, Pu Guan, 2019) and considered the most consistent and powerful antecedent of turnover intention (Perryer, Jordan, Firms, Travaglione, 2010; Meyer, et. al., 2002). Many studies observe inverse relationship between affective commitment and turnover intention (for instance, Wong, Ngo and Wong, 2002; Joarder, Sharif & Ahmed, 2011). However, we argue that an academic that is emotionally attached to his/her institution will likely have less intention to quit, hence we hypothesize that:

H<sub>2</sub>: Academics that are affectively committed to his/her institution will have less intention to quit  
Continuance commitment refers to employee continued maintenance of employment relationship because of perceived cost of leaving. Cost may or may not be work related, such as giving up seniority based privileges, relocation of one's family, inability to get another job as a result of age, lost of friendship or relationship built for many years in the organisation, or even retirement benefits (Allen & Meyer, 1991; Singh & Pandey, 2004; Imam, Raza, Shah & Raza, 2013; Chien-Hung & Wen-Cheng 2012). Studies show that continuance commitment has inverse relationship with turnover intention (Law, 2009; Perryer et al. 2010). We therefore hypothesize as follows:

H<sub>3</sub>: The higher the continuance commitment of academic, the lower the intention to quit  
Normative commitment on the other hand, is response to rewards received in advance from organisation by an employee (Allen & Meyer, 1991). Here, the continued maintenance of employment relationship is morally and ethically induced because of feeling of obligation to repay (Ranita, 2017), or because they feel grateful to the organisation (Singh & Pandey, 2004). A study of Schalk and Van-Rijkevorsse (2007) in 126 call centers in Netherland reported a direct negative effect of normative commitment on turnover intention. Similar findings reported by Yao and Wang (2006) in China, Mehdi, Zahra & Mahshid (2013) in Kazeroon city in Iran, Gyensare et al. (2015) in Ghana also found a significant inverse relationship between normative commitment and turnover intention. We hypothesize thus:

H<sub>4</sub>: Normative commitment inversely relates to turnover intention.

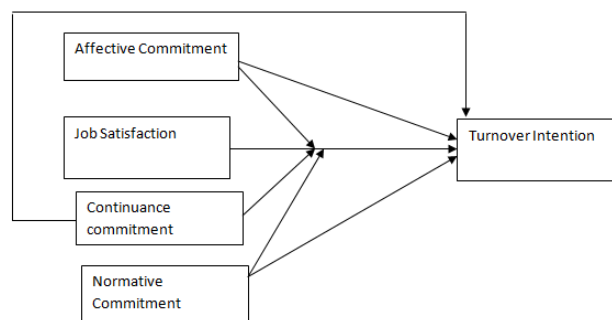
## 2.5 The mediating role of organisational commitment on the Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intentions

Turnover presents a major problem to organisation in terms of recruitment cost and organisational continuity (Lum et al. 1998), and therefore deserves attention of forward looking managers of higher institutions of learning. Although the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover has relatively been consistent, it usually account for small percentage of the variance in turnover. Moreover, while Singh and Loncar (2010) found a negative relationship between satisfaction and turnover intention, they observe that increase in compensation alone may not be sufficient to decrease turnover. Similarly, Lum, Kervin, Clark, Reid and Sirola (1998) opines that job satisfaction have only indirect effect on turnover intention. We therefore hypothesize as follows:

H<sub>5</sub>: Affective commitment moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention

H<sub>6</sub>: Continuance commitment moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention

H<sub>7</sub>: Normative commitment moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention. The hypothesized relationship is represented in figure 1:



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework.**

### III. Methodology

#### 3.1 Sample and Data Collection

The study made use of cross-sectional data. A sample of 274 was drawn from a population of 874 academic staff of the university. Respondents cut across professors to graduate assistants. Self-administered questionnaire was employed, lecturers were given questionnaire during union meetings and some in their offices. Thus, a total of 274 copies of questionnaire were distributed, 227 were retrieved out of which 16 copies have incomplete response which rendered them invalid, leaving a balance of 211 or 77 percent valid response rate. The summary of the demographics of the respondents is presented in Table 1, the result shows that gender distribution skewed in favour of men, they constitute 81 per cent of the respondents while female constitute 19 percent only. Regarding age, 50.7 percent were above 46, 46.4 percent were between ages 32-45 while 2.8 percent were between the ages 25-31. The result also shows that 87.2 percent of the respondents are married while 12.8 percent are single. Also, 42.2 percent of the respondents have spent between 4-8 years in the University, this is the highest among the categories. Respondents who have spent below 4 years is 2.1 percent, 28.4 percent have spent between 9-13 years, 16.6 percent have spent between 14-18 years while respondents with over 19 years of experience were 10 percent. Finally, majority of the respondents (62.6 percent) have been educated to the PhD level, 34.6 percent M.Sc/MBA level while only 2.8 percent are educated to B.Sc/BA level.

**Table 1. Respondents' Demographics Characteristics**

Variable	Description	Count (n = 211)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	171	81
	Female	40	19
Age	25-31	6	2.8
	32-38	42	19.9
	39-45	56	26.5
	Above 46	107	50.7
Marital Status	Single	27	12.8
	Married	184	87.2
Years of Experience on the job	Below 4 years	6	2.8
	4-8 Years	89	42.2
	9-13 years	60	28.4
	14-18 years	35	16.6
	Above 19 Years	21	10.0
Highest Educational qualification	B.Sc/BA	6	2.8
	M.Sc/MA	73	34.6
	PhD	132	62.6

Source: SPSS ver. 23.0

#### Research Construct Operationalization and Measures

Job satisfaction measures can be approached from two perspectives-global and facets approach (Azash & Thirupula, 2017). The global approach assesses the overall attitude/perception of satisfaction level, while facets approach seeks to understand which parts of job produces satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Azash & Thirupula, 2017). Global, facets and combination of both have been used to measure job satisfaction (Spector, 2008, Fields 2002). However, combination helps to obtain a complete picture of employee job satisfaction. Examples of global job satisfaction measures are the job in general (JIG) scales developed by Ironson, Smith, Brannick, and Gibson (1989) and job satisfaction index (JSI) developed by Rothe in (1959). The use of facet measures improves effective interpretation (Morrison, 1996), reduces the possibility of a careless response to a single question that may invalidate the measure, improves accuracy (Arnold, Silvester, Patterson & Robertson, 2005) and helps to identify the critical area (s) of dissatisfaction that needs improvement (Spector, 1997).

Researchers recommend combining both measurements because specific facet satisfaction measures may better reflect changes in relevant situational factors, whereas, responses to a global measure are more likely to reflect individual differences (Azash & Thirupula, 2017). Each facet of job satisfaction was measured with four items. Hence, five facets of job satisfaction were measured with 20 items. Examples of the items are: I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do, I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases (pay); those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted, people get ahead as fast here as they do in other places (promotion).

Similarly, organisational commitment scale items developed and validated by Allen and Meyers (1990); Meyer and Allen (1991) were used in the study. The items have been used by many scholars and its validity across cultures established (cf. Darja 1999; Abdullah 2011; Almansour 2012; Odoch & Nangoli, 2014).

Each dimension was measured with 6 items, totaling 18 items. Examples of the items are: I will be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organisation, I really feel as if this organisation’s problems are my own, (Affective); I feel I have too few options to consider leaving this organisation, it would be very hard for me to leave my job at this organisation right now even if I wanted to (Continuance); I would feel guilty if I leave this organisation now, this organisation deserves my loyalty (Normative).

Lastly, turnover intentions were measured with items adapted from Kim, Song and Lee (2016) and Larbrague et al (2018). It was measured as a uni-dimensional construct. Some of the items are: I often think about quitting lecturing job, I would like to leave this university and work in another university.

#### IV. Analysis and Findings

**Table 2: Mean, standard deviation and correlation coefficients of variables**

Constructs	Mean (S.D)	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Affective	3.29 (.89)						
2. Normative	3.09(.88)	.546**					
3. Continuance	3.11 (.84)	.387**	.252**				
4. Job Satisfaction	2.93(.46)	.626**	.385**	.269**			
5. Commitment	3.17(.67)	.839**	.781**	.697**	.555**		
6.Turnover Intention	3.32(1.06)	-.551**	-.497**	-.214**	-.361**	-.520**	

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

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

Source: SPSS ver. 23.0

Table 3 shows the mean, standard deviation and the inter-relationship between all the dimensions of organisational commitment, job satisfaction and turnover intention. The table shows that academics in the institution are committed given that all the mean score for the 3 dimensions of organisational commitment are above 3 (3.29, 3.09, and 3.11). Majority of the respondents seem not satisfied since the mean score of total job satisfaction is 2.93 which is less than cut off point of 3 in the 5-point Likert scale. Consequently, many of the respondents have intention to quit from the university as seen from the mean score of turnover intention (3.32). It was also observed that affective commitment is positively related to job satisfaction ( $r = 0.626, P < 0.001$ ) and inversely related to turnover intention ( $r = -0.551, P < 0.001$ ); normative commitment is positively related to job satisfaction ( $r = 0.385, P < 0.001$ ) and inversely related to turnover intention ( $r = -0.497, P < 0.001$ ); continuance commitment is also positively related to job satisfaction ( $r = 0.269, P < 0.001$ ) and inversely related to turnover intention ( $r = -0.214, P < 0.003$ ). There is a strong significant positive relationship between organisational commitment and overall job satisfaction ( $r = 0.555, P < 0.001$ ) while a strong significant inverse relationship was observed between job satisfaction and turnover intention ( $r = -0.361, P < 0.001$ ) and between organisational commitment and turnover intention ( $r = -0.520, P < 0.001$ ).

**Table 3: Multiple regression for job satisfaction and turnover intention**

Variables	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F-value	Sig	Standardized Beta	t-value	Sig
	0.431	0.186	0.166	9.371	.000 <sup>b</sup>			
Pay						-0.171	-2.290	0.023
Promotion						-0.323	-4.296	0.000
Workitself						-0.035	-0.533	0.595
Coworkers						-0.105	-1.610	0.109
Benefits						0.079	1.126	0.261

Source: SPSS ver. 23.0

The result of multiple regressions used in further test of hypothesis one is presented in Table 5. The regression is meant to help understand contributions of different facets of job satisfaction to variance in turnover intention. From the table, promotion made the highest contribution with 32.3 percent (-0.323), followed by pay with 17.1 percent (-0.171) and coworkers 10.5 percent (-0.105). The contributions of work itself and benefits are very minimal (-0.033, 0.079) and statistically not significant. The coefficient of variation R<sup>2</sup> is small (0.186), it shows that only 18.6% of variation in the dependent variable (turnover intention) is explained by the independent variable (job satisfaction). The adjusted R<sup>2</sup>, which indicates the generalizability of the model to the whole population (Al-dalahmeh et. al., 2018), is only 0.02 (0.166) less than R<sup>2</sup>, this value shows that if the total population had participated in the study, there will only be 0.02 or 2% less variance in the outcome. The

ANOVA test shows that  $F$ -ratio = 9.371, and  $p$ -value < 0.001 and explains that there is less than 5% chance that an  $F$ -ratio of this magnitude occur by chance. Since the  $p$ -value (<0.001) is less than the significance level (0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate accepted, this means that job satisfaction is inversely related to turnover intentions of academics.

Table 4: Multiple regression for organisational commitment and turnover intention

Variables	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F-value	Sig	Standardized Beta	t-value	Sig
	0.605	0.366	0.357	39.814	.000 <sup>b</sup>			
Affective commitment						-0.431	-6.215	.000
Continuance commitment						0.092	1.534	.127
Normative commitment						-0.285	-4.306	.000

Source: SPSS ver. 23.0

The test of the relationship between different dimensions of organisational commitment as stated in hypotheses 2 to 4 was carried out with Pearson Product Moment correlation as presented in Table 3. The result shows that affective commitment has a strong inverse relationship with turnover intention ( $r = -0.551$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ), normative commitment also has a significant strong negative relationship with turnover intention ( $r = -0.497$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ) while continuance commitment has small but significant inverse relationship with turnover intention ( $r = -0.214$ ,  $P = 0.002$ ). The regression analysis was aimed at further understanding the contributions of each dimension to the predictive ability of organisation commitment to turnover intention. Earlier, Multicollinearity was assessed through variable inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance value, VIF ranged from 1.447 to 1.605 which is far below 10 and tolerance value ranged from 0.623 to 0.786 which are above 0.10 cut off point as recommended by Pallant (2011). Therefore, there is no multicollinearity among the variables. From the regression analysis, organisational commitment has a high ability to predict turnover intention with  $R^2$  of 0.366 or 36.6 percent of variance predicted,  $F$ -ratio = 39.814, and  $p$ -value < 0.001. Affective commitment contributed most ( $\beta = -0.431$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ), followed by normative commitment ( $\beta = -0.285$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ) while continuance commitment contribution was not statistically significant ( $\beta = 0.092$ ,  $P = 0.127$ ). The hypothesis five was tested using process macro 3.4, model 1. The result showed that the model is a significant predictor of turnover intention  $F(3, 207) = 34.535$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0.334$ . The interaction effect is significant:  $b = -0.50$ ,  $t(207) = 3.02$ ,  $P < 0.001$  with increase in  $R^2$  contribution by 0.029. The conditional effect of affective commitment shows that at -1sd (-887) on the centered affective commitment variable (representing very low affective commitment), the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention was minimally positive and not statistically significant ( $b = 0.481$ ,  $se = 0.245$ ,  $P = 0.051$ ). Similarly, at the mean (i.e. at 0) on the centered moderator variable (representing medium or moderate affective commitment), the relationship was also positive but not statistically significant ( $b = 0.037$ ,  $se = 0.171$ ,  $P = 0.83$ ). However, at +1sd (i.e. +887) on the centered affective commitment variable (representing high affective commitment), the relationship was negative and significant ( $b = -0.41$ ,  $se = 0.204$ ,  $P = 0.047$ ). The result suggests that affective commitment moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention, thus, hypothesis five is supported.

Moderation analysis was also carried out to evaluate hypothesis six using process macro 3.4, model 1. The result showed that the model significantly predicts turnover intention;  $F(3, 207) = 12.853$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0.157$ . The interaction effect was significant ( $b = -0.483$ ,  $se = 0.198$ ,  $P = 0.015$ ). The unconditional interaction effect between the moderating variable (Continuance commitment) and independent variable (job satisfaction) increased the  $R^2$  by 0.024 and was significant ( $P = 0.015$ ). The interaction slope provides more insights into the moderating effect of continuance commitment on the relation between the dependent and independent variables: at -1sd (i.e. -0.843) on the centered continuance commitment variable (i.e. low continuance commitment), the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention was negative but not statistically significant ( $b = -0.404$ ,  $se = 0.222$ ,  $p = 0.70$ ). Secondly, at the mean (i.e. 0) on the centered moderator variable (representing medium or moderate continuance commitment level), a significant inverse relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention was observed ( $b = -0.811$ ,  $se = 0.153$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ). Finally, at +1sd (i.e. +0.843) on the centered continuance commitment variable, a significant negative relationship was also observed between job satisfaction and turnover intention ( $b = -1.218$ ,  $se = 0.230$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ). The result supports hypothesis 6, we therefore conclude that continuance commitment moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention.

The result of moderating effect of normative commitment on the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention explains that 30 percent of variance in turnover intention,  $F(3, 207) = 28.96$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ,



$R^2 = 0.30$ . The interaction effect was also significant ( $b = -0.431$ ,  $t(207) = -2.096$ ,  $P = 0.037$ ), and increased the  $R^2$  by 0.015, thus, there is strong evidence of moderation. The interaction slope shows that the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention was not significant at the point where -1sd (-0.881) on the centered moderator variable (representing the lowest level of normative commitment) ( $b = 0.043$ ,  $se = 0.280$ ,  $P = 0.878$ ). This, however, changed significantly at the mean (i.e. 0) on the centered moderator variable (representing medium or moderate level of normative commitment), as appreciable significant inverse relationship was observed between job satisfaction and turnover intention. The interaction slope shows that turnover intention was minimal at +1sd (i.e. +0.881), representing the highest level of normative commitment, significant inverse relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention was also observed, ( $b = -0.716$ ,  $se = 0.191$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ), thus, hypothesis 7 which states that normative commitment moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention is supported.

## V. Discussion

From the above empirical results, several findings were made. First, inverse relationship was observed between job satisfaction and turnover intentions of academics. This indicates that turnover intentions declines as level job satisfaction increases. The finding corroborates many other similar findings albeit in other parts of the world (Swider, Boswell and Zimmerman, 2011; Maqbool et. al., 2012; Albattet and Som, 2013; Gyensare et al., 2015; Zheng, Meng, Yang and Liu (2018) and other sectors in Nigeria (Ucho, Mkavga and Onyishi, 2012; Gbenu, 2013). However, the regression analysis shows that variation in turnover intention predicted by job satisfaction is low (16.6%). This study is therefore, the first to empirically investigate the facets of job satisfaction that plays major role in turnover process among academics in Nigerian Universities.

Secondly, the study found strong inverse relationships between affective commitment, normative commitment and turnover intention, and a weak negative relationship between continuance commitment and turnover intention. Our finding is also in line with the findings of Maertz, Griffith, Campbell, and Allen (2007); Law, (2009); Perryer et al. (2010) and that of Yao and Wang (2006); Mehdi, Zahra and Mahshid (2013); Gyensare et al. (2015) who found inverse relationships between continuance and normative commitment respectively. Our finding however is unique because we went further to look into a population that has been under studied especially in the developing economy like Nigeria.

Thirdly, the study found a strong moderating effect of affective commitment on the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention. In fact, in the model, job satisfaction has no direct effect on turnover intention. Interestingly, at the lowest level of affective commitment, the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention was positive albeit not statistically significant. Thus, indicating that in absence of affective commitment, academics intention to quit remain relatively the same irrespective of job satisfaction level. Therefore, when the outcome from that of internal referent group is seen to be relatively the same, job satisfaction becomes relatively redundant while affective commitment takes a more prominent role in the turnover process.

Fourthly, we observed that continuance commitment significantly moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Unlike affective commitment, even at the lowest level of continuance commitment, the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention was negative though not statistically significant. As continuance commitment increases to moderate level, the negative relationship increased tremendously and was statistically significant, this climaxed at the highest level of continuance commitment, supporting the finding of Fayyazi and Aslani (2015). In other words, when academics maintain employment relationship with their institution because of fewer alternatives, they tend to have high intention to quit because at this point, job satisfaction becomes very relevant in the turnover process. This shows that satisfaction to a great extent determines their decision to either quit or remain with the institution given any better opportunity.

## VI. Conclusions

The effect of job satisfaction on turnover intention has attracted extensive attention in management literature. Despite large studies that observe negative relationship between the two variables, Lum et al (1998) argue that job satisfaction has only indirect relationship with turnover intention. Iornem (2018) also argues that the effect is culture specific while Hulin et. al. (1985); Singh and Lancur (2010) opine that the effect of job satisfaction on turnover intention is profession/occupation dependent. Thus, this study made the following theoretical contribution: First, job satisfaction has only indirect effect on turnover intention when there is a high level of affective commitment. In the unionized environment, where pay and other conditions of service is determined through collective bargaining, affective commitment becomes a dominant factor in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover process. This negates the held views in some studies that job satisfaction only is the major reason for high turnover intentions (Christian & Ellis, 2014; Fayyazi & Aslani, 2015).

Secondly, this study considered a unique and diverse population (academic), from a developing country (Nigeria). Therefore, the finding enriches the studies conducted in other parts of the world and contributes to comprehensive understanding of the role of organisational commitment in the link between job satisfaction and turnover intention in a different culture and environment.

Finally, in response to Griffeth and Gaerthner (2001) call for more studies for better understanding of voluntary employee turnover under equity theory, the study showed that while equity contributes to job satisfaction which in turn affects turnover intention negatively, it is more prevalent when employees maintain high level of both continuance and normative commitment as seen from our result, but when affective commitment is dominant, employees tend to under play the relevance of equity in the turnover process.

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