



Queensland University of Technology
Brisbane Australia

This may be the author's version of a work that was submitted/accepted for publication in the following source:

Keating, Byron, Beatson, Amanda, & Worsteling, Asha
(2024)

What do we know about the causes of turnover?: Report 1 - Scoping Review.

Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Qld.

This file was downloaded from: <https://eprints.qut.edu.au/256182/>

© Consult author(s) regarding copyright matters

This work is covered by copyright. Unless the document is being made available under a Creative Commons Licence, you must assume that re-use is limited to personal use and that permission from the copyright owner must be obtained for all other uses. If the document is available under a Creative Commons License (or other specified license) then refer to the Licence for details of permitted re-use. It is a condition of access that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights. If you believe that this work infringes copyright please provide details by email to qut.copyright@qut.edu.au

License: Creative Commons: Attribution-No Derivative Works 4.0

Notice: *Please note that this document may not be the Version of Record (i.e. published version) of the work. Author manuscript versions (as Submitted for peer review or as Accepted for publication after peer review) can be identified by an absence of publisher branding and/or typeset appearance. If there is any doubt, please refer to the published source.*

What do we know about the causes of turnover?

Byron W. Keating, Amanda Beatson, and Asha Worsteling

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|-----------|------------------------|
| 01 | Table of Contents |
| 02 | Executive Summary |
| 04 | Introduction |
| 06 | Understanding turnover |
| 09 | Impact of job demands |
| 12 | Role of environment |
| 17 | Recomendations |
| 20 | References |

Disclaimer

QUT advises that the information contained in this report comprises general statements based on scientific research. To the extent permitted by law, QUT is not liable to any person or organisation for any consequences, including but not limited to losses, damages, costs, expenses and any other consequences arising directly or indirectly from using the information provided in this publication (in part or in whole) and any information or material contained in it.

For further information, please contact:
Professor Byron Keating
QUT Business School
byron.keating@qut.edu.au

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview of the research program

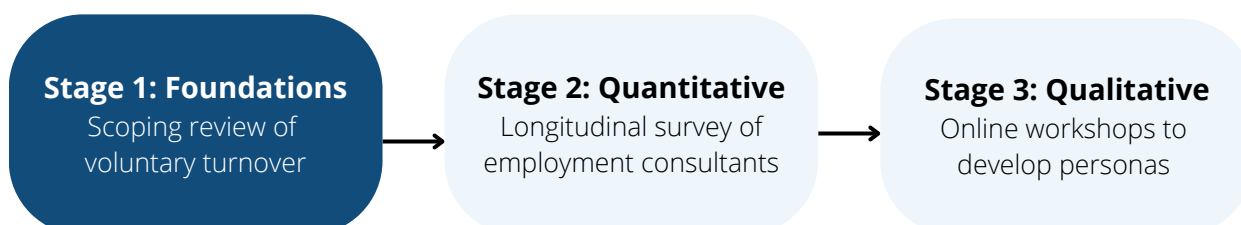
Attracting and retaining high-quality staff is one of the key challenges facing Disability Employment Service (DES) providers. The purpose of this project is to work with a small group of service providers to better understand the drivers of voluntary turnover in the sector, and importantly, to identify recommendations that can help improve the retention of good employment consultants (ECs). Three specific research questions have been identified to guide this work:

1. What are the characteristics of a “good” EC in the DES program?
2. What are the drivers of turnover for different types of ECs, giving regard to different organisational types, settings, and different operational needs?
3. What can organisations do to reduce EC turnover and to improve the retention of good ECs?

The project will take around 12 months to complete and will use a sequential explanatory mixed methodological approach involving three data collection stages. In Stage One, we will focus on reviewing what is already known about voluntary turnover. This will be done by conducting a scoping review of the academic and practitioner literature on voluntary employee turnover. The second stage will build on this foundation using quantitative analysis via a longitudinal survey of current and former employees to understand how the EC role differs across providers and to examine how the drivers of loyalty and attrition vary across the sector. The data gathered will be complemented with organizational data. The analysis of this data will focus on examining how individual-level differences and specific contextual factors drive changes in organisational commitment, productivity, and turnover over time.

The final stage of the project will seek to explore the findings from Stage Two using qualitative research and online workshops with site managers and ECs. Drawn from different regions, these workshops will be used to develop and refine a range of personas to help unpack areas where attention can be directed to better respond to the needs and expectations of the different EC types.

The three stages are shown in the figure below, with the key insights related to Stage One (the focus of this report), presented on the following page.



#1

Job demands increase turnover intention

- Job demands are any part of an employee's job that requires expending personal resources or effort.
- Job demands increase employee strain and burnout while decreasing motivation.
- The loss of motivation and increase in strain then leads to higher turnover intentions and withdrawal behaviours.
- High turnover intention is strongly correlated with future turnover.

#2

Job resources decrease turnover intention

- Job resources are any part of an employee's job that are supportive and help the employee to undertake the requirements of their role.
- Job resources increase employee motivation and decrease strain.
- Higher motivation and lower strain leads to lower turnover intentions and therefore less turnover.

#3

Contextual factors impact turnover

- The availability of other relevant job opportunities (e.g., during periods of low unemployment) contributes to turnover.
- Collective turnover is where dissatisfaction, and eventually turnover, are contagious among employees of an organisation.
- An organisation's country and industry influence how employee's evaluate job demands and resources.
- Personal characteristics also impact the likelihood of turnover.

#4

Recommendations for reducing turnover

- Organisations should seek to reduce unnecessary job demands and increase job resources.
- Organisations should hire employees who contribute to a positive organisational culture, supporting high person-organisation fit.
- Implementing appropriate induction processes and human resource (HR) systems, such as exit interviews, can provide insights that can help reduce turnover.

INTRODUCTION

How common is turnover in DES?

While there is currently no reliable estimate available for turnover within DES, the most recent workforce census report from the National Disability Service [1] reveals that turnover within organisations providing disability support services in Australia was concerningly high and on the rise.

Based on survey data obtained from NDS members between June and December 2021, the average turnover rate of 19% (weighted for employment type - permanent, part-time and casual) was significantly higher than that of other industry sectors. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the average turnover rate across all sectors in 2021 was 9.5%. The turnover rate for employees in disability support was more than double this figure, and significantly higher than other allied healthcare services (8.7%) and general administration and support services (12.4%).

The NDS findings concur with data from the NDIS, where the turnover rate among disability support workers was estimated to be about 21% [2]. Perhaps of more concern, however, was their finding that 42% of workers intended to leave their current job sometime in the next three years. Of those with turnover intentions, around half planned to not only leave their current employer but they intended to leave the NDIS workforce. The report authors, the Behavioural Economics Team of the Australian Government (BETA), calculated that this would require 213,000 new workers by 2024 on top of hiring an additional 83,000 to keep up with growth.

Method used for Stage 1 (Scoping Review)

The report presented here is based on a scoping review of the academic literature on turnover. Due to the substantial academic literature on turnover, the present scoping review was limited to meta-analyses and systematic reviews (the gold-standard for academic literature).

The scoping review followed the six-step method outlined by Arksey & O'Malley [3], which involved:

1. Identification of the research question(s);
2. Identification of studies relevant to the research question(s);
3. Selecting studies for inclusion;
4. Charting information and data within the included studies;
5. Collating, summarising, and reporting results of the review; and
6. Consultation with stakeholders and experts.

The search process resulted in the identification of 105 publications. A thematic analysis of the findings was performed, and the results of this analysis are summarised in this report.

What is the impact of turnover?

A recent report prepared by the authors of this report for Disability Employment Australia (DEA) revealed that turnover rates among frontline staff are much higher than that of management and executive staff [4]. Drawing on interviews with 62 senior managers from 35 DES provider organisations, the findings emphasised the negative impacts of high frontline staff turnover on key performance indicators related to the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of services offered. The research also found that turnover of frontline staff created serious challenges for DES providers due to the steep learning curve for new employment consultants, and the difficulty of attracting and retaining good staff given the financial constraints of the DES business model.

The key negative impacts of turnover reported include:



Staff shortages. A high turnover means frequently losing staff with developed skills, knowledge, and expertise, often resulting in organisations lacking the requisite human capital to operate effectively. DES providers report significant challenges in recruiting specialist staff, meaning that turnover often leads to long periods of skills shortages in their organisations.



Increased stress and dissatisfaction. High levels of turnover within an organisation signals to other employees that there are high levels of stress and dissatisfaction within the organisation. Those negative perceptions around work are contagious and increase stress and dissatisfaction among remaining employees.



Lower employee engagement. Much of employee engagement and embeddedness comes from their relationship with their co-workers. However, those relationships take time to develop and are less likely to occur with high turnover.



Poor outcomes for customers. High staff turnover results in the loss of crucial relationships with clients. This is of particular concern for DES providers where the quality-of-service delivery relies heavily on the continuity of service with a specialist who has in-depth knowledge of the specific needs of their clients and a breadth of skills to support them.



Lower organisational performance. When all of the outcomes are combined, organisational performance is reduced. Costs associated with staffing are increased while performance is decreased, which can result in lowered revenue. Thus, financial performance is decreased.

Using the Victorian Government's turnover cost calculator [5], the award rate for disability support workers [6], and the more conservative NDS turnover rate (19.5%) - we estimate the cost of turnover can be as much as \$436,696 a year per 100 employees.

UNDERSTANDING TURNOVER

Voluntary turnover is defined as the movement of employees outside the boundary of an organisation [7]. As is typical of most research on turnover, our focus is on employees leaving rather than entering the organisation.

Consistent with this definition, it is noteworthy that the majority of research into voluntary turnover tends to focus on the correlation between potential causes of turnover intentions and behaviours. These studies most commonly use surveys to ask participants questions about the factors that are hypothesised to impact turnover, and then follow up with the employee or their organisation at some later time to observe actual turnover behaviour (i.e., did they quit). As the generalisability of such cross-sectional studies is quite low, we focus on reviewing meta-analyses and systematic reviews to ensure that the findings of the current research is as trustworthy as possible.

What are the key predictors of turnover?

While the causes of voluntary turnover remain a contested topic area, there is broad agreement on some of the key predictors [8]. Two of the most commonly cited predictors of turnover are job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Both have been reliably shown to have a significant negative relationship with turnover (i.e., as satisfaction and commitment go up, turnover goes down). Similarly, prior research has found that people with more personal resources, such as coping skills, positive dispositions, and career commitment, tend to have lower rates of turnover intention. Likewise, other predictors such as training, development, promotional opportunities, good leadership and management, perceptions of justice and fairness, and good HR practices have frequently been shown to reduce turnover intention.

The table below provides a summary of the key drivers of turnover intention and voluntary turnover identified from our review of the literature. While some of the drivers have received mixed support across our sample and appear to vary contextually (e.g., characteristics of the job), high workload, manager and customer incivility, poor leadership and management, role conflict, and role ambiguity have all been shown to be positively related to turnover intention (i.e., as these factors increase, so too does turnover).

While turnover intention and turnover behaviour are often used interchangeably within the literature, Rubenstein et al.'s [8] meta-analysis found that, on average, there is a half-a-unit increase in turnover behaviour for every one-unit increase in turnover intention. Though the correlation between turnover intention and turnover behaviour was positive and statistically significant (0.56), this finding underscores the importance of measuring the two concepts separately to avoid overstating the impact of particular predictors on actual turnover. For example, burnout and exhaustion are twice as likely to lead to high turnover intentions than to result in actual turnover behaviour.

| Predictors | Negative (reduce turnover) | Positive (increase turnover) |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| Individual attributes | Age, married with children, conscientiousness, emotional stability, tenure, intrinsic motivation. | Openness to new experiences, external locus of control. |
| Aspects of job | Job security, job characteristics, pay, routinisation, workload, communication. | Role ambiguity, role conflict, labour market conditions. |
| Job attitudes | Job involvement, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, other commitment and satisfaction. | Absenteeism, low performance, lateness, cognitive withdrawal, job search. |
| Organisational setting | Coping, engagement. | Stress and exhaustion, climate, organisational support, rewards. |
| Employee-context interface | Influence, job embeddedness, justice, leadership, peer relations, cultural fit. | Work-life conflict, psychological contract breach. |

Are there any clues in the research on managing turnover in DES?

Unfortunately, there is almost no research addressing the issue of turnover in the area of disability employment. We could only identify one publication that directly investigated turnover among disability employment staff [9]. This study investigated the causes of turnover intention in frontline staff involved in delivering a vocational rehabilitation program for people with severe mental illness in Norway. The findings suggested that higher levels of job satisfaction, work meaningfulness, satisfaction with supervision, satisfaction with promotional opportunities, trust in management, welfare administration, and satisfaction with aspects of the job were all negatively related to turnover intentions. Moreover, higher levels of work-related stress were observed to lead to higher levels of turnover intention. They found that people who had higher levels of emotional instability were more likely to have higher turnover intention, and that job satisfaction was extremely important to such individuals.

A little closer to home, an NDIS report [2] suggested a range of predictors that were shown to influence turnover intentions among frontline staff providing disability support services in Australia. The top 10 concerns cited in this report (listed in order of importance) are shown below:

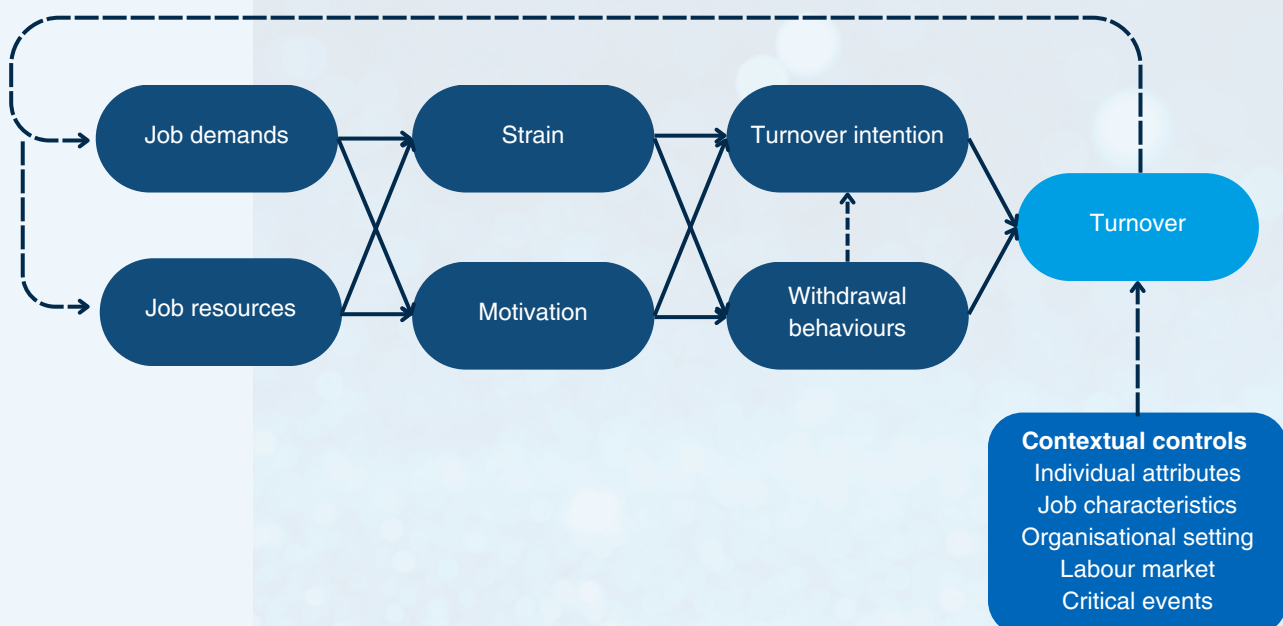
1. Too high a workload
2. Concerns about the quality of service under NDIS
3. Paperwork or NDIS procedures
4. Negative workplace culture or management issues
5. The pay and/or benefits
6. Risk to health, safety and/or wellbeing
7. Lack of career progression opportunities
8. The rostering and/or work hours
9. Job insecurity
10. Personal reasons (e.g. study, family responsibilities)

One of the key findings of the recent qualitative research undertaken by the authors of this report for DEA is that most DES provider organisations do not have a clear strategy for managing turnover among frontline staff [4]. Responding to an expressed need for guidance on how to reduce voluntary turnover among good employment consultants, this report reviews the best available evidence to develop the first conceptual framework for managing turnover of frontline staff employed to provide employment services to people with disabilities.

HOW IS TURNOVER IMPACTED BY JOB DEMANDS?

While a list of turnover predictors provides a helpful starting point for understanding the drivers of voluntary turnover, there is also a need to understand how such drivers are influenced by the nature and context of the work being done. To guide the work of subsequent stages in this research program, we draw on a well-established theoretical model in organisational psychology. Known as the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model [10], we use this model as a lens for interpreting how the resources available to employees in a given organisational setting can help to mitigate the impact of job demands and reduce turnover intentions. In doing so, we use the JD-R model as a theoretical framework for better understanding the relationship among the different turnover predictors.

Job demands and resources (JD-R) model of turnover



How can job resources help to mitigate job demands and reduce job strain and turnover?

All work involves demands that may be perceived as taxing to employees. This requires that employees make value judgements regarding whether the rewards and supports received are worth their efforts. If a person is satisfied with their job resources, they might perceive their job demands to be lower and less taxing. JD-R suggests that organisations should strive to provide the right level of job resources needed to reduce the strain created by job demands, recognising that while these resources also introduce organisational costs, they can lead to savings via a corresponding reduction in turnover intentions.

The main job resources identified by our scoping review include:

1. Training, development, and promotion opportunities
2. Good leadership and management
3. High income, rewards, and recognition
4. Social support from co-workers and leaders
5. Organisational justice and fairness
6. Supportive HR practices
7. Positive organisational cultures and climates and good working conditions
8. High levels of participation and autonomy in decision-making.

Resources can also come from the employee themselves, having the same effect of reducing the negative impacts of job demands. These personal resources are aspects outside the workplace that support an employee to undertake their role, such as:

1. High levels of job performance
2. Skills, abilities, and experience
3. Self-efficacy and conscientiousness
4. Positive disposition and affectivity
5. Coping skills (e.g. resilience, emotional stability, and self-esteem)
6. Career commitment and satisfaction.

What is the role of motivation in turnover decisions?

JD-R also posits that job demands and resources impact organisational outcomes via a second, motivational pathway. In addition to the strain pathway we read about in the previous section, unreasonable job demands can contribute to reduced employee motivation, as expressed via job satisfaction, organisational commitment, job embeddedness, and engagement. This scoping review found that employees with lower motivation levels (i.e., low in satisfaction, commitment, etc.) had poorer performance and productivity and were more likely to leave an organisation.

Similar to the strain pathway, job resources can also mitigate job demands via increased motivation. Our review suggests that access to sufficient resources can ameliorate job demands by increasing intrinsic motivation. Ensuring employees have the resources to do their jobs well is one of the key ways that humans satisfy their psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. For example, resources like good leadership and management increase intrinsic motivation by providing constructive feedback that satisfies an employee's need for autonomy and competence. Similarly, investments that contribute to a healthy organisational culture can also increase intrinsic motivation by satisfying an employee's need for relatedness.

Unfortunately, the opposite is also true. Inadequate job resources can thwart the satisfaction of these basic psychological needs and become a source of demotivation, particularly if remuneration is insufficient to provide extrinsic motivation.

How do job motivation and strain interact to impact turnover?

One way to think of the two competing mechanisms of strain and motivation is to picture a set of scales where the goal is to try and find a balance between job demands and resources. While the state of equilibrium would be different for different employees and organisations, when the balance is good for both organisation and employee, a status quo scenario emerges where motivation is sufficient to keep an employee committed and the resources available are sufficient to keep strain from job demands to a manageable level for staff. In this situation, turnover intentions and subsequent turnover behaviour are both reduced. A useful early warning system for whether there is equilibrium is to observe employee withdrawal behaviours, which are shown in the literature to be correlated with both turnover intention and behaviour.

This makes intuitive sense. Employees who have high levels of strain will initially seek to reduce the strain through withdrawal behaviours. Some examples of withdrawal behaviours that have been shown to be associated with higher levels of turnover are:

1. Absenteeism
2. Lateness
3. Lowered productivity
4. Lowered organisational citizenship behaviour
5. Actively searching for other work.

Treating withdrawal behaviours as an early warning system is helpful for organisations as these behaviours are often observable many months before turnover intentions develop.



HOW DOES WORK ENVIRONMENT IMPACT TURNOVER?

There are many factors that could influence the way that job demands and resources are perceived, and the associated strain and motivation mechanisms described previously. Our conceptual framework identifies some specific contextual influences that were dominant within the literature: labour market conditions, normative influences, time and critical events, and organisational and personal-level factors. Each of these environmental influences is discussed within this section of the report.

What is the impact of the labour market?

People are inherently social creatures, and what comes along with that is an innate and automatic tendency for social comparisons. In the work environment, employees are constantly, potentially even without realising it, comparing their jobs with other available options. Essentially, people compare the job demands and resources of their current position with the job demands and resources they perceive to be attached to other people or other positions they could attain.

If there is low unemployment or many job opportunities in an employee's field, it is more likely that some of those job opportunities would seem desirable. In this instance, the employee will compare their current position to those other desirable and attainable positions, which might make them perceive their job demands to be more arduous and job resources to be insubstantial. This, in turn, increases their level of strain and lowers motivation, leading to higher turnover intentions.

Conversely, if there is high unemployment or a low number of other job opportunities for the employee to compare their position to, the comparison point is more likely to be less desirable job prospects, making their current job demands and resources appear more favourable. Thus, decreasing strain, increasing motivation, and reducing turnover intentions.

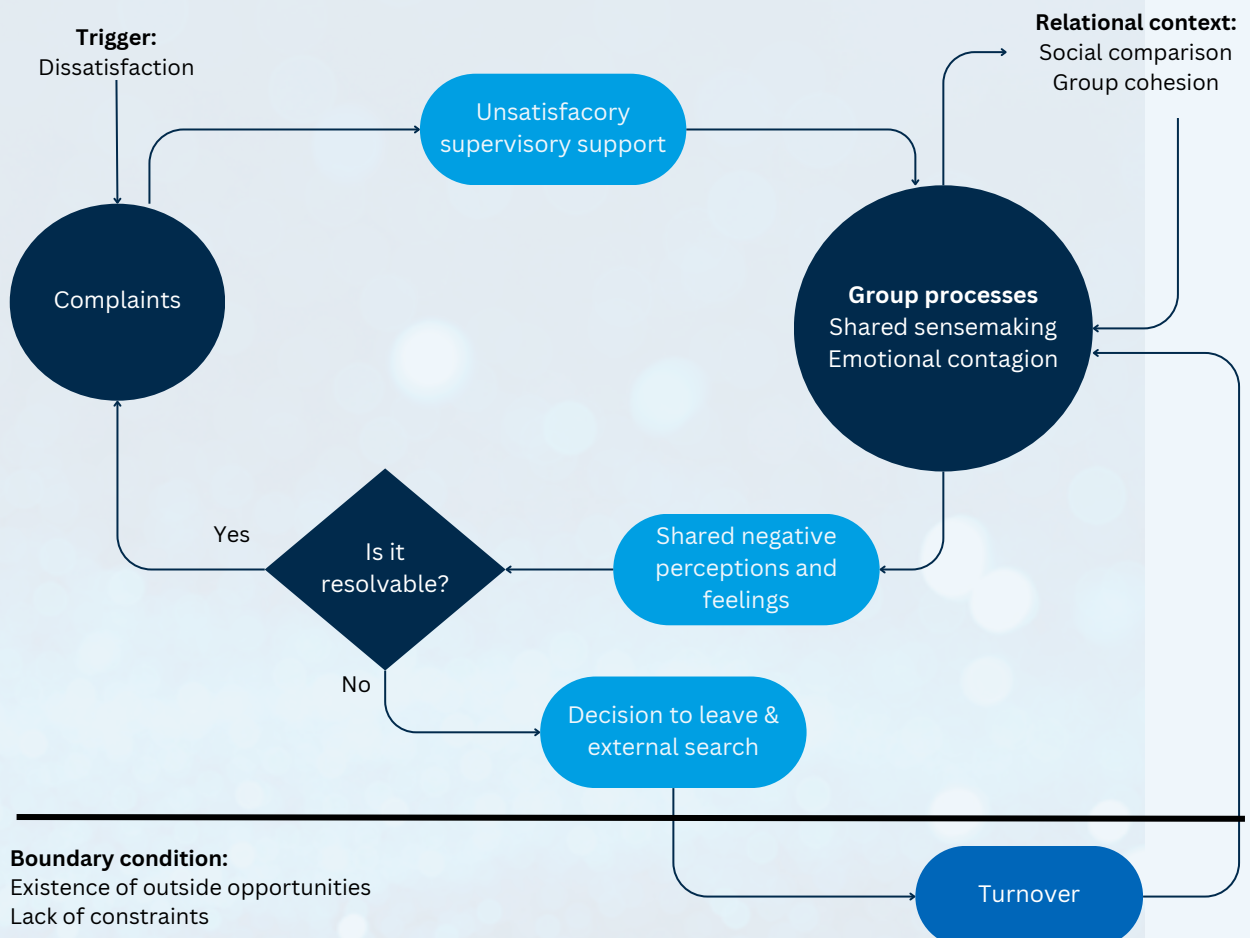
How does normative influence impact turnover?

The second contextual factor that impacts turnover is the baseline turnover rate within an employee's department, organisation, or industry. Again, the impact of turnover of other employees impacts an individual's perception of their position through social comparison. This social comparison process is why organisations might frequently observe that employees tend to leave organisations in large groups. The theory of collective turnover describes this process (Bartunek et al., 2008).

In summary, the model suggests that an initial sense of dissatisfaction amongst some members of an organisation is not addressed, resulting in an escalation of negative feelings towards the organisation. This sense of dissatisfaction then transfers to other employees through group processes known as shared sensemaking, emotional contagion, and social comparison. The longer the complaints go unaddressed, the more shared negative feelings grow until group members collectively decide to quit.

The initial employees' decision to quit then triggers higher turnover intention in the remaining employees as they can now directly compare their employment situation to that gained by the employees who left. In addition, issues that caused the initial dissatisfaction are often made worse by the departure of those employees as the organisation is now under-resourced. Thus, the cycle continues until the organisation resolves the underlying issues.

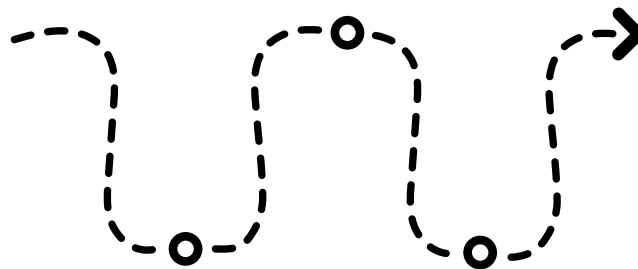
Normative influence and turnover



What is the impact of time and critical events on turnover intentions?

JD-R tends to assume that strain progressively builds up based on job demands that become increasingly overwhelming, leading to turnover intentions and turnover behaviour. However, such additive models of human behaviour have been shown to have limited explanatory value. One of the primary limitations of this approach is the idea that people follow a logical or consistent thought process where they continually evaluate their job demands against their job resources. This assumes, among other things, that employees have a rational, pre-existing mental model for weighing the importance of different demands and resources.

Even if such a mental model existed, it is extremely difficult to estimate how this mental model might change over time or as a consequence of significant life events. Time and significant events can substantially alter the relative importance of different demands and resources and may even lead to a completely new mental model [11]. For example, an employee that falls pregnant might decide to quit not necessarily because they experienced an increase in demands or dissatisfaction with the resources provided by their employer; it is simply that their life circumstances and goals have shifted in a way that requires a change in their work circumstances. Similar impacts can also occur due to events in the workplace. For example, being asked to do something that is illegal or being offered a better job by a competitor. Both examples can result in a breach of the psychological contract that can negate the espoused demands-resources trade-off, particularly if the employee feels that the behaviour of the organisation is unjust or self-serving.



How does organisational setting influence turnover?

The industry in which an organisation is situated has been shown to have a significant impact on turnover. Studies looking at the impacts of various predictors on turnover found that they were often significantly moderated by the organisational setting. The underlying job demands and resources often have similarities with employers in the same industry but varied dramatically between industries. As a consequence, it is important to take care when drawing on research undertaken in different operational settings as employees may not have the same perception of job demands and resources. For example, the negative impacts of role stressors were reported to be more substantial among frontline hospitality workers compared to other industries, with co-worker support identified as a critical job resource that compensated for the absence of other organisational-provided resources [12].

Not only can the perception of job demands and resources vary between industries, but the impact of strain and motivation on turnover intentions and behaviours can also be different. One of the studies in our review found, for instance, that military employees experience strain more intensely leading to a stronger correlation between turnover intention and actual turnover [13]. Similarly, studies find that the relationship between motivation (e.g., organisational commitment, job satisfaction) and turnover intention is stronger in white-collar employees than in blue-collar ones. While a possible explanation could be differences in the baseline turnover rate and labour market conditions, more empirical research is needed to systematically investigate these influences between and within different organisational settings (e.g., DES program).

Care also needs to be taken when considering the results of research undertaken in different countries, as baseline turnover rate and labour market conditions were observed to differ between countries. While these differences might be explained by cultural differences in how job demands and resources are likely to be perceived, there is also a need for more empirical research to understand how such differences influence the strains and motivations related to turnover. For instance, one study in our review found that the relationship between job demands (e.g., work-family conflict) and turnover intention was stronger in employees who scored higher on the cultural trait of individualism rather than collectivism [14]. Other studies have found, however, that the impact of individualism on turnover is dependent on the power distance and masculinity of a national culture [15].

What is the impact of individual attributes on turnover?

The findings of the turnover research reviewed suggest that particular groups of people are more likely to have higher turnover rates than others. For example, one of the more robust findings about the impact of demographic characteristics on turnover found that older employees are less likely to quit their jobs in any given period than younger employees. Several factors could cause this. Some studies suggest that younger workers may be more likely to quit their jobs because younger generations have higher expectations regarding the job resources they should receive from their employers. Also, if the baseline turnover rate among an employee's peers is high, they may be more likely to quit their jobs because there is a high acceptance rate for that behaviour [16]. A final explanation links the impact of demographic characteristics to tenure and seniority, where older employees are less likely to quit their jobs as they have more to lose and would find it more difficult to secure a comparable opportunity (i.e., lower number of roles at the more senior level).

Regarding personality characteristics, employees who score higher on emotional stability and conscientiousness were also observed to be less likely to quit their jobs than employees who scored higher on negative affectivity. These employees were more likely to consider their responsibilities to their employers and customers and were less likely to be impulsive thereby reducing the likelihood that they will spontaneously quit their jobs after a critical event. On the other hand, employees higher in negative affectivity may be more likely to experience high levels of strain and low levels of motivation, leading to a higher likelihood of turnover [17].

How does person-organisation fit impact turnover?

While individual attributes impact turnover, the primary way they do this is via the fit an employee has with the overall organisation. The reviewed literature suggested that employees are more likely to seek out employment opportunities and remain employed at organisations exhibiting values aligned with those of the employee, and where the work environment includes other people who are similar to themselves on a range of sociodemographic characteristics. Conversely, employees are more likely to leave organisations they deem a bad fit or dissimilar to themselves.

Some of the studies reviewed also highlighted that the negative relationship between age and turnover is even stronger in organisations with a higher-than-average employee age. Similarly, the relationship between gender and turnover is more pronounced in organisations dominated by a particular gender (e.g., females are less likely to quit than males when the workplace is female-dominant), and the relationship between education and turnover is significantly more negative in organisations where the average level of education is higher. Essentially, person-organisation fit suggests that the more homogenous an organisation is, the lower its turnover rate will be.

RECOMMENDATIONS

While a large body of the reviewed literature aims to understand the causes and consequences of turnover, there is scant literature evaluating the efficacy of specific organisational interventions that can be implemented to reduce turnover. However, based on the results of this review, several inferences can be drawn concerning some strategies that organisations might implement to reduce turnover.



Monitor job demands

Excessive job demands are a substantial predictor of turnover. Reducing unnecessary job demands as much as possible is in the organisation's interest. As employees compare their present position to other possibilities when determining job satisfaction, managers and leaders should ensure that the job demands associated with employment in their organisation do not exceed general expectations within the industry, or similar organisations where employees might look to move to.



Improve job resources

Contrary to common opinion, findings from many studies included in this review suggest that reasons for quitting are equally a result of job resources such as a lack of support, pay, or positive work climate, as they are of high job demands. Since job demands cannot always be altered (as they are often inherent to the job), a clear direction would be to focus on improving job resources.

Key job resources identified in this review as needing attention relate to; improving HR practices, leadership, professional development, social support, and remuneration. For example, while an organisation might first seek to increase job resources through a review of their remuneration policies, the literature suggests that they might benefit more from focusing on leadership development. Such an initiative would work to improve the quality of supervision and leader support, and could improve the workplace climate so that employees feel more satisfied in their jobs, even if the remuneration package was not as competitive.



Personnel selection

It is hardly surprising that the literature recommends that organisations should have criteria in their employee selection based on the organisation's expectations and the requirements of the role. The results from this review, however, provide some guidance for achieving this criteria. Characteristics such as self-efficacy, resilience, and goal setting for example, were found to contribute to an individual's personal resources from which they can draw, to help reduce strain and increase motivation. Similarly, dispositional traits like conscientiousness and emotional stability, which have been linked to lower turnover, might be other criteria employers might look out for.

Given the importance of person-organisation fit, managers might seek to hire individuals with a higher perceived fit with the organisation's values and demographic profile. However, we would encourage organisations to exercise caution as other research has shown that homogenous organisations tend to have lower levels of innovation which can lead to poor performance in the longer-term [18]. Organisations should focus, instead, on person-organisation fit based on values rather than demographics.



Induction processes

A common theme discussed in the research on turnover is the importance of expectations. Like other perceived opportunities, employees will also compare their job demands and resources with the expectations of their role and the organisation. If expectations are met, even if job demands are high, the employee is less likely to experience strain because they were prepared for those demands. However, strain is more likely if expectations are not clear. As such, an induction process that provides clear and realistic expectations of the role can reduce turnover down the track.

Another advantage to a good induction process is that it can provide additional job resources if done correctly. Employees can get to know each other to provide co-worker support, they can be taught new skills to give them the ability to undertake the requirements of the role, and can embed new employees into the workplace culture.



Actively keep track of dissatisfaction and withdrawal behaviours

Measuring dissatisfaction and withdrawal behaviours in staff is important for two reasons. First, by identifying employee dissatisfaction early, the causes of the dissatisfaction can be addressed before they develop into turnover intentions. Second, given what is known about collective turnover, addressing dissatisfaction in a timely manner is crucial to ensuring that dissatisfaction does not spread.

As measuring dissatisfaction and turnover intention is not straightforward as employees may feel uncomfortable disclosing that type of information, measuring withdrawal behaviours is a good proxy. This measurement can be done much less obtrusively and can be used as a proxy measure of dissatisfaction and turnover intention.



Exit interviews

For the same reason that managers should take care to monitor withdrawal behaviours, they should also systematically evaluate the causes of employee turnover. Performing exit interviews can help managers identify any common causes of turnover, and then use this information to develop response strategies. In doing so, managers should be aware of how the dissatisfaction from an employee who quit may be indicative of a broader issue. In recognising the potential broader issue, managers can stop the collective turnover cycle.

REFERENCES

1. National Disability Services (2022). New report shows critical need for allied health workers, as wait lists grow across the country. <https://www.nds.org.au/news/new-report-shows-critical-need-for-allied-health-workers-as-wait-lists-grow-across-the-country>.
2. BETA (2022). NDIS workforce retention: Findings from the NDIS workforce survey. <https://behaviouraleconomics.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/projects/ndis-workforce-retention-survey.pdf>.
3. Arksey, H., & O'Malley, L. (2005). Scoping studies: towards a methodological framework. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1364557032000119616>.
4. Keating, B., Beatson, A., Waller, I., Riedel, A., Mulcahy, R., & Worsteling, A. (2023). Innovating Disability Employment Services: The Impact of Institutional Forces. *Available upon request*.
5. State Government of Victoria. (2022). Staff turnover calculator. Business Victoria. <https://business.vic.gov.au/tools-and-templates/staff-turnover-calculator>
6. Fair Work Ombudsman (2023). Health Professionals and Support Services Award. https://library.fairwork.gov.au/award/?krm=MA000027#P1278_98672.
7. Price, J. (1977). *The Study of Turnover*, Iowa State University Press, Ames, IA.
8. Rubenstein, A., Eberly, M., Lee, T., & Mitchell, T. (2018). Surveying the forest: A meta-analysis, moderator investigation, and future-oriented discussion of the antecedents of voluntary employee turnover. *Personnel Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12226>
9. Butenko, D., Rinaldi, M., Brinchmann, B., Killackey, E., Johnsen, E., & Mykletun, A. (2022). Turnover of IPS employment specialists: Rates and predictors. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*. <https://doi.org/10.3233/JVR-221195>
10. Bakker, A., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The Job Demands-Resources model: state of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710733115>
11. Lee, T., & Mitchell, T. (1994). An Alternative Approach: The Unfolding Model of Voluntary Employee Turnover. *Academy of Management Review*. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1994.9410122008>
12. Park, J., & Min, H. (2020). Turnover intention in the hospitality industry: A meta-analysis. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102599>
13. Hom, P., Caranikas-Walker, F., Prussia, G., & Griffeth, R. (1992). A Meta-Analytical Structural Equations Analysis of a Model of Employee Turnover. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.77.6.890>
14. Yildiz, B., Yildiz, H., & Ayaz Arda, O. (2021). Relationship between work–family conflict and turnover intention in nurses: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.14846>
15. Wong, K., & Cheng, C. (2020). The Turnover Intention-Behaviour Link: A Culture-Moderated Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Management Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12520>
16. Bal, P., & Jansen, P. (2016). Workplace Flexibility across the Lifespan. In *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/s0742-730120160000034009>
17. Zimmerman, R. (2008). Understanding the impact of personality traits on individuals' turnover decisions: A meta-analytic path model. *Personnel Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2008.00115.x>
18. Østergaard, C., Timmermans, B., & Kristinsson, K. (2011). Does a different view create something new? The effect of employee diversity on innovation. *Research Policy*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2010.11.004>

