



The Relationship between Perceived Organizational Support, Career Commitment, and Employee Retention. A study among Educational Sector of Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.71145/rjsp.v3i1.114>

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Abstract

This study aims to examine how Career Commitment mediates the connection between Perceived Organizational Support and employee retention. Data from 100 respondents across 21 educational institutions in Gilgit-Baltistan were analyzed. The dimensionality and validity of the study variables were examined using regression analysis. The results indicate that Perceived Organizational Support is key in forecasting employee retention. The link between Perceived Organizational Support and employee retention is mediated by Career Commitment. The data were restricted to a cross-sectional design within the Gilgit-Baltistan setting, making it potentially unsuitable for generalization across Pakistan. Moreover, the sample size is smaller in comparison, yet the results are not negatively impacted. In the Pakistani setting, studies on the link between Perceived Organizational Support (POS) and Career Commitment remain few. By studying the function of career commitment as a mediator in the relationship between POS and employee retention, this study seeks to close that gap.

Keywords: Perceived Organizational Support, Career Commitment, Employee retention, Gilgit-Baltistan Pakistan

Introduction

Retaining employees is the largest issue facing businesses worldwide in the current economic climate of instability and uncertainty (Pfeffer, 1994). HRM has become a crucial component of a long-term, in depreciating competitive edge (Kumar and Kaushik, 2013). Organizational performance is impacted by employee turnover since it depletes experienced staff (Walsh and Taylor, 2007). The three R's—reward, recognition, and respect—are what keep employees in an organization and are ultimately in charge of increased productivity, lower absenteeism, a more enjoyable workplace, and higher wages (Nazia and Begum, 2013). The retention of skilled workers is anticipated to be one of HRM's primary responsibilities with the implementation of strategic HRM (Bhatnagar, 2007). Employees are the company's most strategic asset since they are valuable, difficult to copy, and non-replaceable, according to the resource-based view (RBV), which serves as the foundation for competitive advantage (Barney, 2001).

Key tactics for keeping staff members have been found by several academics to include job enrichment, financial incentives, career progression prospects, a good work environment, and work-life balance (Allen et al., 2003; Ghosh et al., 2013; Pfeffer, 1994). Other researchers divide retention techniques into more general groups: career development (Agarwala, 2003), employee engagement (Palmer & Gignac, 2012), and learning orientation (Kyndt et al., 2009). Seven key elements for employee retention—challenging work assignments, continual learning opportunities, good peer connections, fair compensation, and acknowledgement of accomplishments, work-life balance, and effective communication—are underlined in past research (Walker, 2001). According to Guchait and Cho (2010), almost 80% of workers actively search for a better work environment, which emphasizes even more the need of creating a motivating organizational culture to keep talent. Three main elements affect employee performance: effort, organizational support, and individual skills; organizational support is therefore very important in improving general job efficiency (Schermerhorn et al., 1990). Studies by Rogg et al. (2001) confirm even further that job satisfaction and employee commitment are favorably correlated with a supporting environment.

Since career commitment is vital to employees' skill development, career advancement, and the necessary long-term engagement with their company (Colarelli & Bishop, 1990; Fu, 2011), it has always been a major concern in today's changing workforce (e.g. Blau, 1989). Career commitment, according to Blau (1985), is the level of attachment someone have to their line of work. Career commitment has received less scholarly attention in the literature, despite being easily distinguished from the pertinent workplace attitudes of affective organizational commitment and job involvement (e.g. Blau, 1989; Zhang, Wu, Miao, Yan, & Peng (2014) have strongly recommended conducting additional studies to gain a comprehensive understanding of the relationships among professional commitment, its outcomes, and key determinants).

Despite being a part of the "commitment" literature, which has mostly been examined in the literature on vocational psychology, career commitment has gotten less attention from academics than other types of commitment in the workplace (Katz et al., 2019; Zhu et al., 2020). Employer success depends on career passion since it motivates employees and increases output (Van der Heijden et al., 2022). The importance of career dedication was felt in both ethnic and non-ethnic communities (Hu, D., Zhou et al., 2022). Career commitment has an effect on workers' careers, job performance, and job happiness, all of which have an effect on workforce stability (Dang et al., 2020). Career commitment, according to Hall (1971), is the degree of drive a somebody has to perform a particular job. Career commitment may be a far better predictor of turnover intention than organizational commitment when "leaving the work" refers to "changing careers" rather than "changing organizations," according to research (Blau, 1989). Career-focused workers are more likely to understand the nature of their work and might be able to get past emotional exhaustion.

On the plus side, academics may contribute to the institutional, social, and emotional worth of their work by putting their all into it (Amin et al., 2017). Given the significance of job satisfaction for academics, a review of the literature on job satisfaction predictors was conducted with an emphasis on the academic setting. One of the most crucial factors may be raising academics' job happiness through strong professional dedication (Abbas, Z., et al., 2025).

This study adds much to the body of knowledge already in use by offering analysis of staff retention policies in underdeveloped areas like Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan (G.B.). It uses POS and experimentally studies its effects on employee retention to find and evaluate retention techniques. The theoretical groundwork of this study is formed by Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) and the Organization-Employee Interaction model (Rhoades et al., 2001; Ghosh & Sahney, 2011). Though important, POS has not been extensively acknowledged as a direct indicator of staff retention, so scholarly debate has paid less attention to it. This work fills in that void by including career commitment as a major determinant of retention. In Pakistan, the link between POS, career commitment, and staff retention is yet mostly unexplored (Akgul et al., 2025).

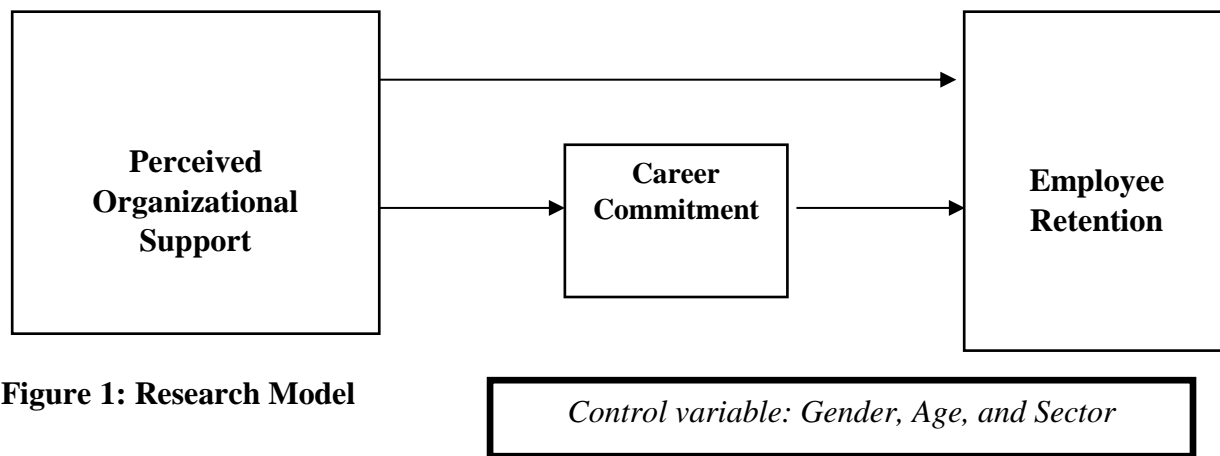


Figure 1: Research Model

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Retention

A positive work environment plays a crucial role in enhancing employee engagement and organizational support (Ma Prieto & Pérez-Santana, 2014). Several factors contribute to the workplace environment, including organizational policies, managerial support, and peer collaboration (Broad & Newstrom, 1992). Theories on social and organizational support suggest that well-structured support systems strengthen employees' commitment and foster a stronger emotional attachment to their organization (Rhoades et al., 2001). A well-maintained workplace promotes greater employee participation, leading to increased productivity (Ma Prieto & Pérez-Santana, 2014). Moreover, a supportive work setting fosters innovation and positive work behaviors (Ma Prieto & Pérez-Santana, 2014). Prior research indicates that organizations that cultivate a positive work atmosphere experience higher employee commitment (Rhoades et al., 2001) and lower turnover rates (Eisenberger et al., 2002).

Retention of managers inside companies depends critically on the presence of personal interactions and a supportive surroundings (Ghosh and Sahney, 2011). Research show that staff turnover is highly influenced by encouraging organizational policies (Huselid, 1995). Employee turnover and the quality of the given supervision show a negative correlation. Furthermore, employees who feel their supervisors show greater attention towards their welfare and a more significant appreciation of their efforts will have a lower voluntary turnover rate (Eisenberger et al., 2002). As thus, one

may argue that staff retention is mutually affected by the supposed working environment. A supportive work environment helps activities meant to promote preferred conduct (Ma Prieto and Pérez-Santana, 2014) and the establishment of discretionary behaviours (Janssen, 2000; Gilbreath, 2004). Moreover, Lingard and Francis (2006) showed that the presence of a supportive work environment shapes the relationship between job burnout and work-family challenges, especially with regard to perceived organizational support, relationships with colleagues, and interactions with managers.

Hytter (2007) has also shown that factors such as rewards, leadership style, career opportunities, training and skill development, physical working conditions, and work-life balance indirectly affect retention in the workplace. According to Ramlall (2003), individuals look for jobs at organizations that provide a comfortable work atmosphere and suitable acknowledgment of their employees' efforts. The research by Kyndt et al. (2009) has examined how organizational factors (such as appreciation, stimulation, and work pressure) and personal traits (like self-perceived leadership qualities and a learning mindset) can positively influence employee retention.

Employers can increase their competitive edge and lower employee turnover by carefully selecting candidates and integrating them into the company culture (Dawson and Abbott, 2011). Organizations use leadership and organizational culture to foster a positive learning environment (Lancaster and Milia, 2015). According to Chan et al. (2008), workers who benefit from psychosocial support in the workplace show greater job engagement analyzing these components as part of both technical and social organizational subsystems, Ghosh & Sahney (2011) investigated the link between job qualities, technology support, and POS. While an unsupportive culture raises turnover rates, Ghosh et al. (2013) propose that employees are more likely to stay in a firm with a pleasant and encouraging atmosphere. Retention rates rise when workers feel appreciated, acknowledged, and supported inside their company (Eisenberger et al., 2002).

Within organizational dynamics, a supportive work environment enhances managerial effectiveness and strengthens workplace relationships (Bamel et al., 2013). Organizational support is closely linked to recognition and inclusivity from senior management (Wayne et al., 1997). Both managerial and peer support contribute to the development of innovative ideas and the adoption of new workplace practices (Ma Prieto & Pérez-Santana, 2014).

Based on the existing literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Perceived Organizational Support is positively and significantly related to employee retention

Perceived Organizational Support and Career Commitment

Perceived organizational support (POS), which is based on organizational support theory, is founded on an individual's overarching beliefs regarding the degree to which the organization prioritizes their well-being and appreciates their contributions (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001, p. 501). Furthermore, studies indicate a significant correlation between perceived organizational support and a range of employee outcomes, including performance, commitment, satisfaction, and intentions regarding turnover. For instance, Kim (2017) demonstrated that POS was an essential prerequisite for the commitment and satisfaction of sports authorities. Moreover, a comprehensive meta-analysis involving 167 studies revealed that perceived organizational support significantly influences the reduction of employees' intentions to leave, while simultaneously enhancing their commitment and satisfaction (Riggle, Edmondson, & Hansen, 2009). Nevertheless, there exists a deficiency in thorough research examining the influence of perceived organizational support on job satisfaction, career commitment, and the

intention to leave one's position. Consequently, it is essential to examine the impact of POS on the commitment, satisfaction, and retention intentions of football referees.

According to the theoretical framework, workers who feel high degrees of perceived organizational support are likely to reciprocate by attitudes and actions improving the general welfare of the company (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Research show a favorable link between job attendance and performance measures as well as perceived organizational support, therefore supporting the ideas of social exchange theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990). This link also spans affective organizational commitment (Eisenberger et al., 1990), the probability of providing helpful suggestions for organizational improvement, and the propensity to help colleagues (Shore & Wayne, 1993). In contrast to those who feel less valued by the company, employees who experience a higher sense of perceived organizational support seem to be more inclined to show commitment and may be more open to taking on extra responsibility or participating in activities that benefit the company considering all the elements (Organ, 1988). Moreover, some research show that POS might help the person as well as the company. George, Reed, Ballard, Billingsley, B.S., & Cross's 1992 study on the experiences of nurses tending to AIDS patients found that social support and POS acted as a moderator in the relationship between exposure to AIDS patients and depressed mood. Those with lowest degrees of POS showed a clear relationship between exposure and mood.

Thus, on the basis of above literature, the following hypotheses can be proposed.

Hypothesis 2: Perceived Organizational Support is positively and significantly related to Career Commitment

Career Commitment and Employee Retention

In addition to raising organizational expenses, an employee's departure lowers the caliber of services provided by the company (Olsen et. al., 2019). According to earlier studies, employees quit their jobs because there are little prospects for career advancement (Haldorai, et. al., 2019). Career commitment has a detrimental impact on turnover intention (Masud, et. al., 2019). Because employees want to remain with the company for a long time, career commitment has a significant and beneficial impact on employee retention (Haque et. al., 2019).

Higher degrees of career commitment have been found to dramatically lower turnover intentions as workers who are committed to their professions are less inclined to leave their employment (Haque et al., 2019). Retention depends critically on career progression as those who are looking for professional development usually stick to their companies (Van der Heijden et al., 2019). On the other hand, whilst organized career advancement improves long-term employee retention, a lack of professional development chances usually results in increased turnover (Haldorai et al., 2019).

Hypothesis 3: Career Commitment is positively and significantly related to Employee Retention

Mediation of Career Commitment

According to Hall (1971), the act of actively participating in and identifying with one's own professional progress is known as career commitment. Career commitment only partially mediated the relationship between turnover intentions and the perception of organizational politics. These results show that managers can effectively address employees' careerist attitudes by creating a robust framework for career advancement perceptions (Kim et al., 2016). Job satisfaction and basic self-evaluations are influenced by career commitment to some extent (Zhang et al., 2014). Conflicts between support from supervisors, family, and the workplace are mediated by affective commitment (Khan et al., 2020). The results were derived on data collected from 389 Korean employees. While also affecting employees' desire for training participation and turnover

intentions, career commitment helps to balance professional achievement with ethical work behaviours. Furthermore underlined by current studies is the relationship between organizational politics and employees' readiness to participate in training initiatives (Kim et al., 2016).

A person's commitment to their long-term work goals and professional development shows in their career commitment (Blau, 1989.). Those that are very dedicated to their professions make sure that their personal ambitions line with organizational goals, thereby guaranteeing mutual advantages (Indra et al., 2023). Damayanti (2017) claims that career commitment is much shaped by work-life balance. While people who are committed to their jobs regularly hone their skills and maintain long-term employment, frequent career changes can prevent professionals from realizing their full potential (Niu, 2010). While Janib et al. (2021) noted a substantial association between career commitment, job performance, and workload management, Zhang et al. (2014) discovered that job satisfaction is closely correlated with career commitment. Furthermore fitting as mediators between supervisory support and turnover intentions is career commitment and person-organization (Khan, 2021).

Hypothesis 4: Career Commitment mediates the relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Retention

Research Methodology

Data were gathered from various full-time and part-time employees in the educational sector of G.B. Pakistan. Participants for the data collection were selected using convenience sampling techniques. Data were gathered through Softcopy online via WhatsApp, FB, and Email, as well as hardcopy.

A covert letter was attached with questionnaires that explained to the respondents the purpose of the study. And informed respondents that their response to this questionnaire is treated confidentiality and anonymity. Their response is used only for academic purposes. There were 150 questionnaires given in total, 118 of which were returned with 100 of them being useful. Useable data had a response rate of 66.66%. Table 1 provides information about the distribution and characteristics of the sample. According to the results, men made up 70 percent and women, 30%. (28 percent) of the total respondents were single, and (72%) were married. The remaining respondents (17 %) were part-time workers, making up the bulk of respondents (83 %). Furthermore, 10% of the participants fell within the age range of 18 to 25 years. A comparative analysis reveals that 65% of respondents fell within the age bracket of 26 to 40 years. Twenty-five percent of participants fell within the age range of 41 to 60 years. Among all respondents, 80% effectively executed their roles in Teaching and Management, 5% were engaged in the maintenance department, 10% offered technical services, and the remaining 5% comprised clerical personnel. From A majority of the respondents, comprising 60 percent, possessed job experience ranging from 0 to 5 years. A mere 0.5 percent had experience between 6 and 10 years, while 25 percent fell within the 11 to 20-year bracket. Additionally, 10 percent of respondents reported having 21 to 30 years of experience, and notably, there were no respondents with over 30 years of experience.

Measures

The supposed organizational support was evaluated using three instruments: Rhoades et al., 2001; Ghosh and Sahney, 2011. Three components taken from the analysis of career commitment served as the mediator (Blau, 1985). Every research variable was scored on a 5-point Likert scale; a score of 1 denoted great disagreement and a score of 5 great agreement. Cronbach's alpha allowed one to determine the dependability of apparent organizational support: 0.771. Using a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5, 1 signifying Strongly Disagree and 5 denoting Strongly Agree, the three items were evaluated. The Cronbach alpha dependability for career commitment turned out to be 0.832.

Table 1: Distribution and Characteristics of Sample

Variable	Categories	No	(%)
Gender	Male	70	70
	Female	30	30
	Total	100	100
Marital Status	Single	28	28
	Married	72	72
	Total	100	100
Age	18-25	10	10
	26-40	65	65
	41-60	25	25
	Over 60	0	0
	Total	100	100
Work status	Full time	83	83
	Part time	17	17
	Total	100	100
Position	Teaching /Management	80	80
	Maintenance	05	05
	Technical Service	10	10
	Clerical	05	05
	Total	100	100
Experience	0-5	60	60
	6-10	05	05
	11-20	25	25
	21-30	10	10
	Over 30	0	0
	Total	100	100

Employee retention (dependent variable). To measure staff retention, three items were utilized (Seashore et al., 1982). Every item was scored using a Likert scale of 1 to 5, where 1 meant "Strongly Disagree" and 5 meant "Strongly Agree." Employee retention's Cronbach alpha reliability was (0.899).

Controlling element / Controller Variable The study's control variables were age, gender, and sector, based on a previous Khan study from 2022. The study employed the following variable coding: Age (1 = under 25 years, 2 = 26-30 years, 3 = 31-40 years, 4 = 41-50 years, 5 = 51-60 years, and 6 = over 60), gender (1 = male, 2 = female), and section (1 = public, 2 = private).

Results

In order to manage the fluctuations in employee retention associated with the demographic variable analyzed in this research, a one-way ANOVA was utilized. The results of the One-Way ANOVA (see table 2) demonstrated that the mean value of employee retention exhibited no significant variation when analyzed across Gender, Age, and Sector.

Table 2: One-way ANOVA

	ER	
Sources of variation	F statistics	p-value
Gender	.312	.764
Age	1.988	.144
Sector	.851	.453

ER= Employee Retention

Statistical Tools: Means, standard deviation, correlations, Reliabilities and multiple regression analysis also using SPSS 22 version.

Table 3: Means, Standard deviation, correlation and Reliabilities

	Mean	SD	1	2	3
POS	3.76	0.71	(0.771)		
CC	3.75	0.98	0.526**	(0.832)	
ER	3.53	0.93	0.603**	0.888**	(0.899)

POS= Perceived Organizational Support, CC= Career Commitment, ER= Employee Retention

Table 3 shows that staff retention (0.603, $p = .000$) shows a strong positive connection with perceived organizational support, therefore giving complete support for hypothesis 1. Consequently, the link between perceived organizational support and career commitment is positively significant (0.526, $p = .000$), thereby confirming hypothesis 2. With a correlation value of 0.888 ($p = .000$), the association between career commitment and employee retention is clearly really high, therefore supporting hypothesis 3 and 4 in an interesting way.

Regression Analysis

The present study utilized the mediation model proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986) to assess the relationships among the variables. Regression analysis was conducted to examine both the direct effects and the mediating role of the variables. The results of the regression analysis, as shown in Table 4, reveal that perceived organizational support has a strong and statistically significant impact on employee retention ($\beta = 0.816$, $R^2 = 0.273$, $p = .000$), leading to the confirmation of Hypothesis 1. Furthermore, perceived organizational support was found to have a significant and

positive effect on Career Commitment ($\beta = 0.717$, $R^2 = 0.121$, $p = .000$), supporting Hypothesis 2. Additionally, the results indicate that Career Commitment positively and significantly influences employee retention ($\beta = 0.815$, $R^2 = 0.942$, $p = .000$), confirming Hypothesis 3.

Table 4: Regression Analysis

Predictor	<u>Career Commitment</u>			<u>Employee retention</u>		
	B	R ²	▲R ²	B	R ²	▲R ²
Direct effect						
POS	0.717***	0.121	0.222***	0.816***	0.273	0.275***
CC				0.815***	0.942	0.941***
Indirect effect						
POS X CC				0.228***	0.859	0.858***

N = 100. POS = perceived organizational support, CC = Career Commitment
 * = $p < .05$. ** = $p < .01$. *** = $p < .001$. ns = not significant

The results of the mediating regression analysis shown in Table 3 show that career dedication acts as a mediator in the link between employee retention and apparent organizational support. With a p-value of 0.000, the study produced $\beta = 0.228$, $R^2 = 0.859$, and $\Delta R^2 = 0.858$, so approving the acceptance of Hypothesis 4. The relationship between employee retention and perceived organizational support is investigated in this paper, with particular attention on career commitment's partial effect.

Discussion

The study endorses and agrees with all the hypotheses. The research shows that the Employee Retention is positively influenced by perceived organizational support. An employee's sense of pleasure with their job and company is enhanced by an encouraging work environment, particularly through perceived organizational support. This support helps to retain convinced and motivated employees. When organizational support is viewed positively, it boosts employee retention and reduces turnover probability. Earlier findings indicate that the following dimensions of the Supportive Work Environment are expected to affect Employee retention:

- Perceived Climate
- Peer Group Interaction

Managerial Implications

The study indicates that to retain experienced and productive employees within the organization, supervisors, managers, and organizations—particularly the HR department—should prioritize perceived organizational support. To ensure that an employee can be retained sustainably, the following strategies and mechanisms may prove to be very useful:

- Promotion
- Friendly Environment
- Get feedback about task

To gain a competitive edge, organizations, especially in the service and education sectors, should have their management teams across all relevant areas—including human resources, finance, marketing, operations, and supply chain support their employees by fostering a supportive work environment.

Limitation and future research

The results of this study, conducted in G.B Pakistan's education sector, may not be applicable to other contexts. Future studies may encompass additional sectors from across the country to explore and uncover valid and reliable outcomes. The present research controlled for employee demographics such as Age, Gender, and Sector; therefore, future studies could incorporate different demographic variables. Results and findings of the current study are derived from the education sector. Future studies may be conducted by researchers comparing banking and tourism; they might employ two dependent variables, such as Retention and Turnover intention, in a Comparative Study.

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