

Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment and Turnover Intention of University Teachers in China's Pearl River Delta

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ABSTRACT

Various literature reviews have investigated teachers' turnover intention in the universities. However, little is known about employee turnover intention within higher education institution in China's Pearl River Delta. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intention among academic staffs in higher education institution in China's Pearl River Delta. In this study, job satisfaction acts as independent variables, turnover intention acts as dependent variable. Meanwhile, organizational commitment acts as mediating variable. This study adopts correlational study survey to answer the three research questions developed. The method of data analysis includes descriptive statistics, mediating effect analysis and structural equation modeling (SEM). The results show that there was a positive correlation between job satisfaction and organizational commitment (0.664, $P < 0.01$), a positive predictive effect of job satisfaction on organizational commitment; a negative correlation between job satisfaction and turnover intention (-0.574, $P < 0.01$); a negative predictive effect of job satisfaction on turnover intention; a negative correlation between organizational commitment and turnover intention (-0.656, $P < 0.01$); a negative effect of organizational commitment on turnover intention. Organizational commitment played a part of mediating role in the influence of job satisfaction on turnover intention, and the mediating effect was 0.568. Limitations of the study and recommendations for future research were also presented in this study. This research should serve as a guide to management in higher education institution, especially in China's Pearl River Delta. Higher education institution should pay attention to human resource construction, improve job satisfaction, enhance employees' organizational commitment, formulate scientific evaluation and incentive methods, improve decision-making ability and policy-making level, and reduce turnover intention.

Keywords: Job satisfaction; organizational commitment; turnover intention; mediating effect; university teachers in China's Pearl River Delta

1. INTRODUCTION

Porter & Steers (1974) believed that turnover intention referred to an individual's behavioral tendency to leave the original unit after he or she was dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the organization [1]. In fact, the success of university education depended on the excellence of its teachers, however, turnover intention could impact the maintain of their qualified teachers. Today, high rate of labor movement became a problem for organizations in China, teachers would like to gain a better job when they had the capacity. What made a teacher successful in the universities and the job being an

efficient teaching profession has been a central question of the higher educational institution. The policy, include enhancing the job satisfaction and organizational commitment of the teachers, stemmed the tide of high turnover [2].

According to Bedeian (1981), turnover intention was a kind of psychological behavior, which referred to the tendency and psychological state that an individual intended to leave his current job to find another job [3]. Price and Spiro (1977) divided turnover into two types: active turnover and passive turnover [4]. Active turnover was the turnover trend caused by individual's subjective tendency, while passive turnover was the organization's

active dismissal of individual employees. According to Hay (2002), organizational managers generally paid more attention to the individual's active turnover behavior, because active turnover could bring the loss of brain drain to the organization and make the organization fall into a passive situation [5]. As Ajzen (1991) pointed out, the main research direction of turnover intention was individual active turnover behavior and its matching behavior tendency [6].

Job satisfaction, the individual's degree of job satisfaction, a subjective response to work experience, and an attitude or emotional response to the work has been shown to infect the inclination and deliberate willingness to quit one's job or one's profession [7]. The efficiency and performance of college teachers depended on the cultivation and support of human resources [8, 9]. In fact, colleges have been facing the challenge of high turnover rate, which brought huge financial and non-financial costs [10]. According to the research of TETT and MEYER (1993), the turnover intention of employees would linkage among those variables [11], for example, Jang & Kandampully (2018) found that organizational commitment of employees in higher education completely mediated the relationship between service-oriented leadership and turnover intention [12]. Besides, merit pay was found to have a significant and negative effect on teacher job satisfaction, especially when using a two-stage analysis [8]. Meanwhile Jehanzeb & Mohanty (2018) pointed out that there was a close relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention [13]. Nazir Haider Shah et al., (2015) pointed out that teachers' job satisfaction influenced students of all schools at every level [14]. Therefore, Job satisfaction of teachers in higher education was critical for better work performance, reduced turnover intention, enhanced organizational commitment, and decreased job burnout [15].

The concept of organizational commitment was first proposed by Becker (1960). He believed that if there was an interest exchange relationship between members of an organization and their organization, and employees got economic or other benefits from the organization, they would be willing or have to stay in the organization [16]. Later studies pointed out that organizational commitment was not a pure economic behavior as Becker pointed out. According to Mowday et al., (1979) organizational commitment was a kind of emotion, which was the dependence of employees on the organization, the degree of personal participation and emotional attachment to the organization [17]. Porter et al., (1974) believed that organizational commitment was the degree of individual identification and commitment to the organization [1]. With the deepening of research, scholars began to explore the internal dimensions of organizational commitment. Allen and Meyer (1990) first divided organizational commitment into two dimensions: sustained commitment and emotional commitment, and then added normative

commitment [18]. This division of the internal dimension of organizational commitment has been widely recognized by the academic community. Emotional commitment referred to that individuals did not work for material benefits, but have deep feelings for the organization, and individuals were willing to sacrifice themselves for the organization; sustained commitment was an economic commitment, in which individuals could get rich material gains in the organization, and they would suffer economic losses if they left the organization, so they were willing to stay in the organization; normative commitment was a kind of value judgment and cognition, and it was a kind of responsibility. The loyalty of an individual to an organization was also a kind of morality. When an individual gained profits or improves himself in the organization, he would return more to the organization.

Recent researches in China's Pearl River Delta have provided a lens through which we could better understand employees of the enterprises job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intention [19-21]. The reported staff turnover rate was high in China's Pearl River Delta because of the active economic development, and the potential high costs related to an employee's leave made the retaining talent becoming critical and necessary [22]. Considering different working condition between the enterprises and universities, there were many important factors affecting teachers' job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intention in China's Pearl River Delta. According to Muhammad Ehsan Malik et al., (2010) higher education was not immune to the problem of low job satisfaction [9]. There was a significant relationship among turnover intention, job satisfaction and organizational commitment of teachers in higher education [2].

2. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

2.1 The relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment of employees in Higher Education

Sumi Jha. (2021) found that there was a positive and significant correlation between job satisfaction and organizational commitment [23]. It was found that job satisfaction had a positive impact on emotional commitment about teachers in higher education [24], and teacher development programs had a positive impact on teachers [25]. NYB Butar (2020) studied the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment to teacher performance. The results showed that there was a strong positive correlation between organizational commitment and job satisfaction [26]. In addition, some scholars believed that the impact of job satisfaction on organizational commitment was significant, with medium intensity and statistical significance [27-29]. Xu

Yun, Yao Jing and Jin Chenxia (2019) found that there was a positive correlation between professional commitment and professional satisfaction when they studied the relationship among professional commitment, professional satisfaction and job burnout of special educational teachers, and they believed that professional commitment had a positive predictive effect on professional satisfaction [30]. Based on the above analysis, the hypothesis is put forward

H1: job satisfaction is positively correlated with organizational commitment

2.2 The relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention of employees in Higher Education

There was no consensus on the concept of job satisfaction. Some researchers regarded it as a whole concept [31, 32], while others regarded it as a causal concept. According to Herzberg (1959), job satisfaction could be divided into intrinsic satisfaction and extrinsic satisfaction. Factors directly related to work, such as sense of achievement, recognition, promotion and responsibility, can be regarded as intrinsic satisfaction; external additional things, such as remuneration, technical management, working conditions and interpersonal relationship, can be regarded as extrinsic satisfaction [33, 34]. According to the research of Wong et al., (1998), it was a common research method to divide job satisfaction into two dimensions: internal satisfaction and external satisfaction [35]. Musella, F et al., (1968) believed that internal satisfaction was the satisfaction one got from work, mainly in self-esteem, sense of achievement, sense of autonomy and control. External satisfaction referred to individual satisfaction from outside work, such as superior recognition, interpersonal relationship, salary and promotion [36].

Job satisfaction was matters of concern relation to turnover intention in any organization. In fact, individuals became committed to organizations for a variety of reasons, including Pay and continuance commitment [14]. The literature suggested that there was a strong relationship between job satisfaction and its pay and continuance commitment with turnover intention among teachers [14]. Huang, W.R. & Chih Hao, Su. (2016) found that job satisfaction and turnover intention were significantly negatively correlated through principal component analysis [37]. Abate & Jason AJ. (2016), which studied the relationship between employee job satisfaction, job ownership and turnover intention. They were more likely to stay in their original jobs, that was, the higher their job satisfaction, the less likely they were to leave [38]. Based on the above analysis, the hypothesis is put forward:

H2. There is a negative correlation between job satisfaction and turnover intention

2.3 The relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intention of employees in Higher Education

Organizational commitment has been described include affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Lynn (1989) proposed that organizational commitment had a strong relationship with turnover intention [39]. Terason (2018) found that organizational commitment played a mediating role, and suggest further investigation in other cases, and consider one of the antecedents of job satisfaction [40]. Organizational commitment was the most potent contributor to the prediction of turnover intention of teachers [41]. In addition, the government, policy makers and employers of labor became the important factor for the organizational commitment.

Muhammad Ehsan Malik. (2010) studied the relationship between job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intention through a survey of 331 of university teachers in public sector of Pakistan, using stepwise regression analysis and one sample t-tests. The results showed that, firstly, turnover intention was negatively correlated with job satisfaction; secondly, the relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intention was stronger than job satisfaction [9]. Victoria A. (2006) studied 274 full-time employees and found that job satisfaction and organizational commitment would increase and turnover intention will decrease with the increase of matching degree between demand supply, person group, person work and person organization [42]. Nazir S. et al., (2016) took 202 employees in southern China as the research objects, and used structural equation model to study the influence of organizational compensation on organizational commitment and turnover intention. It was found that emotional and normative commitment were negatively correlated with turnover intention [43]. Based on the above research, the hypothesis is put forward:

H3: organizational commitment is negatively correlated with turnover intention in Higher Education

2.4 The effect of organizational commitment on job satisfaction and turnover intention of employees in Higher Education

Mathews, Sherry L. (2018) found that organizational commitment had a negative impact on turnover intention and a positive impact on job satisfaction for teachers in higher education [44]. Yücel (2012) found that job satisfaction was one of the most important factors of organizational commitment and turnover intention; high level of job satisfaction led to higher commitment and lower turnover intention; job satisfaction had a positive predictive effect on organizational commitment and a negative predictive effect on turnover intention Function [45]. Organizational commitment predicted turnover

intention better than job satisfaction for teachers [46]. Due to the influence of other variables, the effect of job satisfaction on turnover intention was not consistent. Yuan Shuyu and Liu Ruizheng (2016) showed that organizational commitment played a partial mediating role in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention. Based on the above research, the

following hypothesis is put forward

H4: organizational commitment plays a mediating role in the impact of job satisfaction on turnover intention in Higher Education

Based on the above analysis, the analysis model is established as follows.

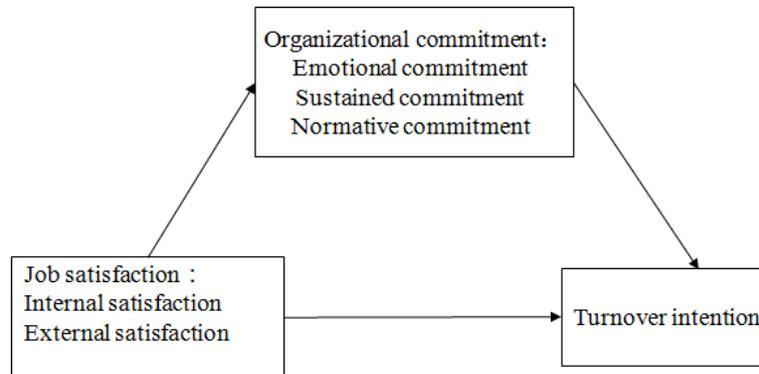


Figure 1: mediating relationship model of organizational commitment

Source: self-made by the author

3. METHOD

3.1 Participants

The research objects were university teachers in nine cities of China’s Pearl River Delta. Before the survey, some university teachers have been selected for testing, and the questions have been adjusted and optimized through exploratory factor analysis to form a formal questionnaire. 405 questionnaires were sent out through

the Internet, e-mail, paper materials and other forms, and 382 valid questionnaires were received, with a recovery rate of 94.3%. The investigators were distributed in 9 cities in the Pearl River Delta, which was representative. Among the respondents, the proportion of men and women was basically the same, mainly in the age of 30-39 and 40-49. Most of them have bachelor degree or above, and their income was between 5000-15000. The distribution of working years is relatively wide, and the majority of them have worked for less than 15 years. The demographic characteristics are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: demographic characteristics of respondents

Variable	category	frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	196	51.3
	Female	186	48.7
Age	Under 29	33	8.6
	30-39 years old	161	42.1
	40-49 years old	122	31.9
Education	Over 50 years old	66	17.3
	Junior college or below	34	8.9
	undergraduate	202	52.9
Profession title	Master degree or above	146	38.2
	Primary title	38	9.9
	Middle title	175	45.8
Monthly income	Associate senior title	101	26.4
	Advanced title	39	10.2
	Below 5000	6	1.6
	5001-10000	153	40.1
	10001-15000	163	42.7
Less than 5 years	15001-20000	46	12.0
	20001 and above	14	3.7
		97	25.4

Working years	6-10 years	71	18.6
	11-15 years	92	24.1
	16-20 years	49	12.8
	21-25 years	26	6.8
	26 years and above	47	12.3

Data source: self-made by the author

3.2 Investigation methods

Through quota sampling method, 45 people were allocated to each city, and quota sampling was helpful to ensure that each city has respondents; simple random sampling method was adopted to select research objects. Simple random sampling could ensure that all members of the survey population have equal opportunities to be selected as survey samples in each city. The questionnaire adopts structured scale design, and the data was collected through three scales. The design of the scale enabled researchers to obtain the necessary information from the respondents. The scale includes three variables: job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intention.

3.3 Reliability and validity analysis

It was generally believed that the reliability coefficient Cronbach's α greater than 0.70 was sufficient [47], which could be used to judge the good consistency between the items of each scale. The Cronbach's α coefficient of the overall consistency of the questionnaire was 0.887. The Cronbach's α coefficients of job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intention were 0.942, 0.806 and 0.893 respectively. The Cronbach's α coefficients of the three variables in this study were all greater than 0.8, which showed that they had good reliability. The kmo value of the questionnaire was 0.932, $P < 0.001$. The approximate chi square of Bartlett's sphericity test was 8500.23, $DF = 630$, $P < 0.001$. It was generally believed that $0.8 < kmo < 0.9$ was suitable for factor analysis, $kmo > 0.9$ was very suitable for factor analysis, which indicated that the statistical results of this questionnaire had good validity, and the items had statistical significance, which was very suitable for factor analysis.

3.4 Measuring tools

The Minnesota job satisfaction scale (MSQ) developed by Weiss et al., (1967) was widely used [48].

Job satisfaction from two dimensions of internal satisfaction and external satisfaction was measured. Wong et al., (1998) believed that job satisfaction was generally measured from two dimensions of internal satisfaction and external satisfaction [35]. According to the short version of MSQ questionnaire and the actual situation of China, the questionnaire has 19 items, including 11 items of internal satisfaction and 8 items of external satisfaction.

Allen & Meyer (1990) measured organizational commitment from three dimensions: affective commitment, continuous commitment and normative commitment [18]. The measurement tools, they developed, were generally accepted by the academic community. In later studies, the Cronbach's α coefficient of the scale was generally greater than 0.8. In this study, Allen and Meyer's Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) was selected and modified according to the Chinese context. There were 13 items in the questionnaire, including 4 items (including 2 reverse items) in emotional commitment dimension, 5 items (including 1 reverse item) in continuous commitment dimension and 4 items (including 1 reverse item) in normative commitment dimension.

The turnover intention scale designed by Mobley et al. (1977) has good reliability and validity[49]. The questionnaire has been widely used at home and abroad. In this paper, the turnover intention scale designed by Mobley et al., [49].

The above three questionnaires were all based on Likert five subscale, in which 1 meant totally inconsistent, 2 meant inconsistent, 3 meant general, 4 meant consistent and 5 meant completely consistent. Pearson of SPSS 20.0 was used for product moment correlation analysis, and bootstrap method was used for test.

4. RESULT

4.1 The relationship among job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intention of university teachers

Table 2: correlation coefficients of job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intention of university teachers

Variable	mean value	standard deviation	A	A1	A2	B	B1	B2	B3	C
A job satisfaction	3.7296	0.64808	1							
A1 internal satisfaction	3.9595	0.62420	0.878**	1						
A2 external satisfaction	3.4997	0.80535	0.929**	0.638**	1					
B organizational commitment	3.6380	0.62292	0.664**	0.607**	0.598**	1				
B1 emotional commitment	3.8685	0.78570	0.595**	0.532**	0.545**	0.778**	1			
B2 continuous commitment	3.8131	0.75360	0.349**	0.351**	0.289**	0.717**	0.397**	1		
B3 specification commitment	3.2323	0.91941	0.555**	0.491**	0.513**	0.780**	0.400**	0.298**	1	
C turnover intention	2.1099	0.87882	-0.574**	-0.513**	-0.526**	-0.656**	-0.621**	-0.431**	-0.449**	1

Note: ** indicates significant correlation at 0.01 level (bilateral).

Data source: self-made by the author

Table 2 showed the correlation coefficients among the three variables. There was a significant correlation between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and there was a strong correlation between job satisfaction and organizational commitment (0.664, $P < 0.01$). Among them, the correlation between external satisfaction and affective commitment was high (correlation coefficient is 0.545), the correlation between external satisfaction and sustained commitment was low (0.289), and the correlation between external satisfaction and normative commitment was in the middle level (0.513), which showed that external satisfaction was the main predictor of affective commitment; the correlation between internal satisfaction and organizational commitment was in the middle level (0.532, 0.351, 0.491), and the correlation between internal satisfaction and organizational commitment was in the middle level (0.532, 0.351, 0.491) The overall correlation between intention and organizational commitment was slightly higher than external satisfaction (0.607 > 0.598). 595), followed by normative commitment and continuous commitment. Job satisfaction has a strong predictive effect on emotional commitment. First null hypothesis is confirmed.

There was a significant correlation between job satisfaction and turnover intention (- 0.574, $P < 0.01$). There were significant correlations between internal

satisfaction, external satisfaction and turnover intention (- 0.513, - 0.526), indicating that internal satisfaction and external satisfaction have the same predictive effect on turnover intention. Second null hypothesis is confirmed.

There was a significant correlation between organizational commitment and turnover intention (- 0.656, $P < 0.01$). Among them, compared with continuous commitment and normative commitment, emotional commitment has a significant and stronger correlation with turnover intention. The correlation coefficients of the three dimensions and turnover intention were -0.621, - 0.431, - 0.449, respectively, $P < 0.01$. Third null hypothesis is confirmed.

4.2 The mediating role of organizational commitment in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention

If the independent variable indirectly affected the dependent variable through an intermediate variable, the intermediate variable was the intermediate variable. The previous study focused on the cause factors of turnover intention regarded organizational commitment as a mediator[50]. This paper set the job satisfaction of university teachers as the independent variable, organizational commitment as the intermediary variable and turnover intention as the dependent variable.

According to the above analysis, the relationship between job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover

intention of university teachers, was the condition of mediating effect analysis.

Table 3 regression analysis of mediating effect model of organizational commitment

Predictive variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	β	t	β	t	B	t
Gender	-0.0973	-1.3242	0.0739	1.5402	-0.0483	-0.7257
Age	-0.0423	-0.5407	0.0467	0.9134	-0.0114	-0.1606
Education	0.0368	0.4498	-0.0618	-1.1562	-0.0042	-0.0565
Profession title	-0.0142	-0.2722	-0.0197	-0.5686	-0.0273	-0.5790
Monthly income	-0.0919	-1.6139	0.0674	1.8102	-0.0473	-0.9154
Working years	-0.0339	-0.7243	-0.0009	-0.0306	-0.0346	-0.8172
Job satisfaction	-0.7460	-13.0321	0.6162	16.4746	-0.3375	-4.9674
Turnover intention					-0.6629	-9.2565
R ²	0.3635		0.4590		0.4829	
F	23.6049		35.0741		34.6487	

Note: model 1 is job satisfaction to predict turnover intention; Model 2: job satisfaction predicts organizational commitment; Model 3 is the prediction of turnover intention by job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Data source: self-made by the author

Table 4 the mediating effect of organizational commitment on the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention of University Teachers

Mediating variables	Effect quantity	Coeff	BootSE	LLCI	ULCI
	Total effect	-0.7460	0.0572	-0.8585	-0.6334
Organizational commitment	Direct effect	-0.3375	0.0679	-0.4711	-0.2039
	Indirect effect	-0.4085	0.0546	-0.5205	-0.3072

Data source: self-made by the author

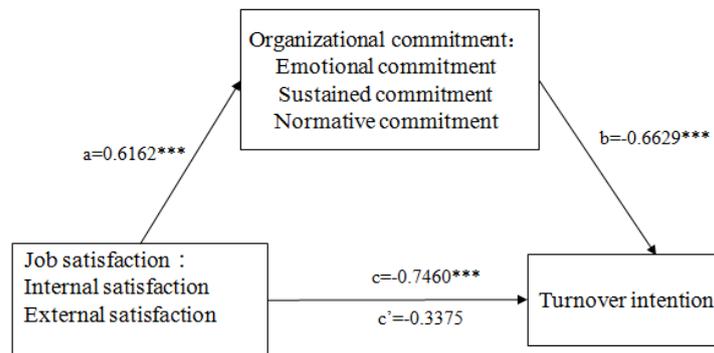


Figure 2: mediating relationship model of organizational commitment

Data source: self-made by the author

The mediating role of organizational commitment in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention was analyzed following the procedures recommended by Bootstrap method [51]. Considering the

influence of control variables, after controlling the demographic variables, as shown in Table 3, table 4 and Figure 2, within the 95% confidence interval, the confidence interval of the intermediate test did not

include 0 ([- 0.5205, - 0.3072]), and the confidence interval of the direct effect did not include 0 ([- 0.4711, - 0.2039]), $P < 0.001$. The results indicated that the independent variable was independent of the dependent variable. The mediating variables have significant effects on the dependent variables. After controlling for demographic variables, the total effect coefficient of job satisfaction on turnover intention was $C = -0.7460$. The influence coefficient of job satisfaction on organizational commitment was $a = 0.6162$, the influence coefficient of organizational commitment on turnover intention was $b = -0.6629$, and the mediating effect coefficient of organizational commitment was $-0.4085 (= a * b)$, which explains 54.76% of the total variance $= ab/(ab + c') * 100$. After excluding the mediating effect, the direct influence coefficient of job satisfaction on turnover intention was -0.3375 , which explains 45.24% of the total variance $= 1 - 54.76\%$. It showed that organizational commitment played a partial mediating role. Fourth null hypothesis is confirmed.

5. DISCUSSION

Based on this idea, this paper studied the relationship among job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intention of university teachers in China's Pearl River Delta, and established an analysis model. This paper mainly revealed the influence of job satisfaction on turnover intention, and discussed the influence of job satisfaction on organizational commitment, organizational commitment on turnover intention. The mediating role of organizational commitment between job satisfaction and turnover intention was explored in this paper.

Job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intention among teachers in China has been extensively researched. we can better understand the status of teachers [52]. However, few people studied the relationship among job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intention of university teachers, especially in China's Pearl River Delta. Furthermore, Shenglan Huang and colleagues (2017) found that the actual staff turnover rate was above 16 per cent in China [22]. Some scholars have studied the lack of job satisfaction and organizational commitment were the main reasons for the high turnover intention and turnover rates in China's Pearl River Delta [53]. According to Yong Lu. et al., (2017), Job satisfaction, work stress, work-family conflict, hours worked per week, working in an urban/rural area, types of institution and age were the important factors of turnover intention in China's Pearl River Delta [54]. However, the relationship of job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intention of university teachers in China's Pearl River Delta has limited research.

This paper showed that there existed positive and significant relationship between organizational

commitment and job satisfaction with teachers in China's Pearl River Delta. This conclusion was consistent with the research result of Nawab Samina et al. (2010), and hypothesis H1 has been verified [55]. Consistent with the study hypothesis H2, job satisfaction and its two dimensions were significantly related to organizational commitment and its three dimensions for university teachers, the finding was in line with that of Guest Olusegun (2015). Job satisfaction has a significant negative predictive effect on turnover intention. Organizational commitment and its three dimensions were significantly negatively correlated with turnover intention, indicating that organizational commitment has a negative predictive effect on turnover intention, which was consistent with the research result of Salleh et al. (2012), and H3 hypothesis has been verified. Through multiple regression analysis, assuming H4 is confirmed, organizational commitment played a partial mediating role in the negative impact of job satisfaction on turnover intention.

Previous studies showed that most organizations regard human resources as the most valuable competitive advantage, and talent construction was the key to the development of higher education [25]. In order to maintain the educational competitiveness, higher educational institution should pay attention to talent construction and improve employee satisfaction. The more satisfied the employees were with their work, the better the organizational commitment was. Among them, the external satisfaction of university teachers has a greater impact on emotional commitment. However, there were lacked of the attention of the needs of teachers and they faced with the multiple adaptive challenges such as the title of atechanical post, housing and payment in China, in which case the support from universities was important [56].

The mediating role of organizational commitment in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention was significant in the current study. When organizational commitment, emotional, commitment continuous, commitment specification commitment was played their roles, the university teachers could view it in a positive light, so their job satisfaction would increase. Previous studies showed that the increase of job satisfaction would result in stronger organizational commitment, which was proven to be a stronger predictor of turnover intention than job satisfaction itself [57]. There was showed that the relation between job satisfaction and turnover intention was mediated by organizational commitment in the current study. That meant that even though teachers have high job satisfaction in their awareness, they may still report high turnover intention if organizational commitment was weak. Such result confirmed that organizational commitment was a very important factor to the stability of teachers [58].

At present, in order to make the teachers really willing to work in the universities for a long time and have a sense of ownership, so as to have emotional sustenance on the universities, it was necessary to improve the teacher satisfaction, especially the external satisfaction. According to Aydogdu & Asikgil (2011), job satisfaction and organizational commitment were negatively correlated with turnover intention [59]. Other scholar has found a significant relationship between these three variables, and have come to a similar conclusion: as long as the employee satisfaction was improved, they should make a commitment, so that their turnover intention can be abandoned [58]. It depended on the degree of satisfaction and commitment to achieve the organizational and personal goals that the employees of higher education can work at ease. In order to enhance the loyalty of employees, the premise of higher education was to improve the job satisfaction of employees. If employees were satisfied with their work and always feel proud of their decent work, it would significantly reduce their turnover intention.

As Ting (1997) said, “external rewards are considered satisfactory” [60]. Therefore, higher education should pay attention to the following aspects to further improve the job satisfaction of teachers, so as to achieve the purpose of retaining talents: firstly, formulating a reasonable distribution system, such as ensuring the timely and reasonable growth of the salaries of all kinds of personnel at all levels, at the same time, taking into account the fairness, preventing the formation of polarization and reverse incentive caused by too high or too low; besides, optimizing the distribution system. All kinds of performance evaluation index system and wage distribution system ensured the effectiveness of positive incentive. Secondly, setting up fair and reasonable promotion channels, which were linked with workload and performance evaluation, not only education background, professional title and awards. Thirdly, increasing investment in improving working conditions, including increasing staff to reduce the work intensity of employees, paying attention to personnel training and humanistic care, and improving the working conditions of employees. Fourthly, creating a good working environment and atmosphere, including the management should constantly improve and optimize the leadership decision-making ability, so that all kinds of decision-making could continue to provide standardized guidance and services for scientific and technological innovation.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research helped to provide new understanding to both researchers and universities in China’s Pearl River Delta. it showed the relationships between three elements of job satisfaction and four components of organizational commitment and their effect on the levels of turnover intention in universities in

China’s Pearl River Delta. This research showed that a positive correlation between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, a positive predictive effect of job satisfaction on organizational commitment that job satisfaction played a positive role to organizational commitment leading toward reducing turnover intention. Besides, organizational commitment played a part of mediating role in the influence of job satisfaction on turnover intention. The finding supported for the management to get an insight into the levels of job satisfaction and organization commitment among teachers by taking regular assessments that may give a complete view in China’s Pearl River Delta.

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