



Dynamics of Job Hopping in Indonesia: A Social Exchange Theory Approach in Mitigating Employee Turnover Intention

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Abstract. The phenomenon of job hopping, particularly among the younger generation such as Millennials and Gen Z, has become increasingly popular and a common habit in the Indonesian workforce. Although it is often regarded as a way to accelerate career advancement and increase salary, high employee mobility actually triggers an increase in turnover intention, which can undermine corporate stability and performance. This study aims to understand job hopping in Indonesia and explore how social exchange theory can be utilized to reduce employees' desire to resign. This study employs a qualitative approach with a literature review method to examine the reciprocal relationship between employees and organizations. The study demonstrates that a high level of desire to change jobs is primarily influenced by job dissatisfaction, excessive workload, and inadequate working environments. Through the lens of Social Exchange Theory, it is evident that fulfilling the physical and psychological needs of employees, along with fair and inclusive talent management, can foster a mutually supportive atmosphere among colleagues. When employees perceive fairness in the distribution of facilities and receive strong support from the organization, they will be more loyal, thereby reducing their likelihood of resigning from their jobs. This study offers tangible benefits for companies in designing strategies to manage a working environment that is more flexible, creative, and capable of responding to the expectations of the younger generation.

Keywords: Job hopper, Job hopping, Social Exchange Theory, Turnover Intention.

1 Introduction

Human resources are the most crucial asset within an organization to achieve organizational goals, both in the short and long term. These goals can be achieved if employees work diligently, demonstrate commitment, and remain open to new things for the advancement of their careers. It is undeniable that some employees cannot commit to an organization for an extended period. They move from one company to another due to several reasons, one of which is finding better opportunities elsewhere. This phenomenon has existed since the beginning of the industrial era and is known as job hopping. Individuals who practice this are called job hoppers [1].

This phenomenon is becoming more widespread among young workers, particularly the Millennial and Gen Z generations. In the past, frequently changing jobs within a short period was often viewed as a lack of loyalty, but now many young people instead regard it as a strategy to accelerate career development. Simply put, job hopping is the habit of changing workplaces within a relatively short period, usually less than one to two years at each company. This phenomenon is frequently carried out to achieve higher salary increments, better positions, and to seek a healthier work environment [2]. Job hopping is the habit of moving from one company to another every one or two years, undertaken by employees based on personal choice, not due to dismissal.

The 2025 Deloitte Global Gen Z and Millennial Survey report indicates that career mobility is one of the primary characteristics of today's working world. The survey, which involved 23,482 respondents across 44 countries, noted that nearly a third or 31 percent of Gen Z plan to change jobs within the next two years. Meanwhile, 17 percent of millennials expressed similar plans [3]. This shifting of jobs occurs amidst significant changes regarding expectations toward the working world, global economic conditions, as well as the rising pressure of living costs that affect the financial stability of the younger generation [3].

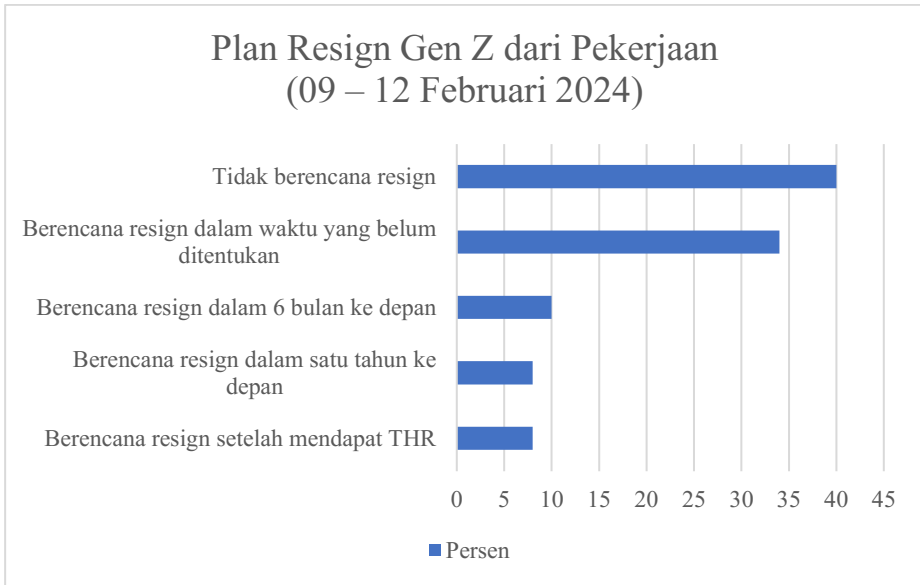


Fig. 1 Gen Z's Plans to Resign from Their Jobs

The accumulated resignation intent among Gen Z shown in market observations amounts to 60%, a figure significantly higher than the Gen Z who have no plans to resign at 40% [4]. Gonews news portal explained that waves of mass employee resignations became a major spotlight in the Indonesian working world in 2025. This phenomenon raises deep questions regarding the causes and its impact on company and workforce dynamics. The mass resignation phenomenon reflects a gap between employee expectations and the reality they face in the workplace. Today's employees do not merely seek financial compensation, but also a supportive work environment, growth opportunities, and a good work-life balance. Therefore, companies are demanded to be more responsive and adaptive in meeting these expectations to retain their best talent [5].

This phenomenon reflects a fairly deep dissatisfaction among the younger generation regarding the job conditions they experience. An individual's desire to leave an organization or seek a better job is known as turnover intention [6]. The primary factor causing the desire to move from a job is dissatisfaction with that job [7]. However, this desire does not directly cause employees to decide to resign.

Job hopping can serve as a career enhancement strategy for employees. Yet on the other hand, employees who frequently move places can be characterized as employees who lack loyalty to the company. Certainly, this becomes a reflection of two contradictory sides. This issue presents a research gap to be further investigated by examining the patterns of turnover intention from the company. Accordingly, this study not only contributes to theoretical development but also provides relevant practical implications for companies facing the challenges of employee turnover intention. This novelty is expected to stimulate further academic discussion and help companies

formulate strategies that are adaptive, innovative, and oriented toward management patterns in the workplace environment.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Social Exchange Theory

The definition of social exchange theory refers to social exchange theory from a workplace perspective. It is explained that employees in an organization can exchange commitment as a reciprocity for organizational support. This finding allows us to build an argument that the nature of the relationship between the parties involved in the exchange process can influence psychological exchange. In other words, the closer the relationship between the two parties (pluralistic exchange), the more psychological exchange will occur [8].

Social Exchange Theory within the scope of work, such as the exchange of valuable knowledge, generally operates based on the norm of reciprocity, so that everyone involved in such social interactions expects balanced rewards or even rewards that exceed what they have put in. If individuals do not receive the expected amount of rewards, they deliberately hide their expertise and skills instead of sharing them with others to minimize the potential losses caused by such activities [9].

2.2 Turnover Intention

The definition of turnover intention refers to an employee's desire to leave the organization where they currently work. This is a psychological process where employees begin to consider leaving their jobs and looking for new job opportunities. This intention can be seen through employee behaviors that indicate dissatisfaction or a desire to move. Such behaviors include actions aimed at avoiding various aspects of the job, as well as an attitude of non-participation in various work situations [10]. Turnover intention can also be interpreted as the movement or exit of employees from an organization. Furthermore, the term also refers to the number of employees leaving the organization within a certain timeframe [11].

Turnover intention is the intent shown by employees to leave the company [12]. This can encompass their considerations to stop working, search for new job opportunities, and ultimately leave the company completely [13]. The intention to leave a job is a decision made mentally by a person when faced with the choice to remain in their current job or leave it [14]. The indicators of turnover intention consist of thoughts of quitting, discomfort at work, and the intention to search for another job [15].

3 Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach to identify social phenomena and develop new interpretations based on existing literature studies [16]. This can be done to clarify research gaps, develop theories from conditions in the field, and portray complex realities [17] [18].

4. Results & Discussion

Based on the literature study that has been conducted, the findings show that patterns of employee turnover, in this case turnover intention from the company, can cause massive impacts that have the potential to disrupt the achievement of organizational goals if not managed properly and professionally. Productivity, innovation capabilities, and the quality of services within an organization can be affected if employees holding strategic roles leave the company. Furthermore, the costs resulting from employee turnover must not be overlooked; in addition to clearly visible costs such as recruitment, advertising, and training costs, there are also indirect hidden costs, such as the time required for new employees to run their tasks effectively, project delays, decline in customer relationship quality, as well as a drop in morale and stability among the employees who choose to stay [19].

To reduce employee turnover rates, organizations need to make efforts to minimize the stress felt by employees, handle workloads appropriately and effectively, reduce role conflicts that may occur among colleagues, and provide sufficient and adequate support [20]. The working environment within an organization must also be carefully considered. Employees have physical and psychological needs that must be met; they require a work environment that is bright, clean, comfortable, free from noise, and provides a sense of security while at the workplace [21]. An organization's efforts to retain employees will provide sustainable benefits, not only by ensuring that talented employees remain to support organizational growth but also by avoiding the costs arising from recruitment and training of new employees.

In this regard, if a stakeholder in the company has a comprehensive understanding of employees' intentions to resign, the company can attempt to correct the factors that cause those intentions and prevent actual employee resignations from happening [22]. Conversely, if a large volume of sudden employee turnover occurs because the company is unaware of such plans, let alone understands the triggering factors, then the company can only scramble to handle the impacts of that turnover [23]. These efforts include, but are not limited to, the time and cost required to search, screen, recruit, and train new employees [23]. Companies need to implement talent management balanced with various other human resource management practices to enhance the perception of distributive justice and organizational support; for instance, by giving rewards to employees based on their contribution, effort level, and performance level. Secondly, talent management also needs to be evaluated to determine which approach is more suitable: an exclusive approach or an inclusive approach. The application of inclusive talent management can serve as a solution to better develop employees according to their respective talents and abilities [24].

5 Conclusion

This study indicates that the phenomenon of job hopping can be prevented if companies begin to pay attention to employees' working environments, work cycles, and workloads. By doing so, the company will be able to reduce employee turnover rates driven by the intention to resign. Moreover, employee turnover exerts a high influence

on the execution of activities and productivity within the company. Furthermore, if a company loses potential employees who can master the work well and adapt quickly to the work environment, this becomes an absolute loss experienced by the company. The company will require time and costs to replace those potential employees who resigned. In addition, companies need to implement sound and structured talent management governance; this can be designed to maintain employee competence levels and serve as a platform for the company to provide appreciation based on employee contributions, so that employees feel valued by the company and experience positive support from the organization.

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