



## THE ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR AS A MEDIATOR IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB SATISFACTION AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS

Tiara Dean Risa<sup>1✉</sup>, Debora E. Purba<sup>2</sup>

Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Indonesia

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### Abstract

*This study was conducted to investigate the mediating effect of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in the relationship between job satisfaction & turnover intentions. Drawing on social exchange theory, it is expected that individuals with high job satisfaction, indicated by positive emotions towards aspects of work, will show high levels of OCB by helping their coworkers and the organization, and in turn show low turnover intentions. Data were taken from teachers in an International School in Jakarta (N = 80). Result showed that OCB was found to fully mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions, indicating that all variance of job satisfaction was translated into turnover intentions via OCB. Theoretical and practical implications were further discussed.*

## INTRODUCTION

Turnover intentions, defined as employees thoughts and desires to leave the organization in a given period of time, are early signals of the actual employee turnover within the organization (Mobley, 2011; Purba, Oostrom, Born, & Van der Molen, 2016). Employees with high turnover intentions will usually be involved in unproductive behaviors such as increased absenteeism, laziness, increased violations of work rules and protests against superiors (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000; Harnoto, 2002). For that reason, it is important to investigate factors related to turnover intentions.

Previous studies found job satisfaction to be one of the consistent factors of turnover intentions across time (Mudor & Tooksoon, 2011; Saeed, Waseem, & Sikander, 2014; Susskind, Borchgrevink, Kacmar, & Brymer, 2000). Luthan (2005) defined job satisfaction as a state of happy or positive emotion originating from individual experience at work. When employees are satisfied with their current job, they will tend to feel positive about the tasks on the job, and feel comfortable with their current work (Karim & Rehman, 2012). However previous research found that job satisfaction had small correlation coefficients with turnover intentions (ranging from  $r = 0,17 - 0,29$ ) (Amah, 2009; Asegid, Belachew & Yiman, 2014; Azeez, Foluso, & Adeoye, 2016), indicating a mediator exists between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. In this study, we argue that organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) mediates the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

Bateman and Organ (1983) defined OCB as behaviors undertaken by employees which are not part of their official roles, with the aim of helping others complete their tasks and helping organization keep its good reputation, utilize the working time

efficiently and obey the organization rules. Organ (1988) explained that satisfied employees will tend to have high OCBs as a form of retribution against the organization, as the organization has treated them well. Organ's contention was supported by subsequent studies that have also found a positive relationship between job satisfaction and OCB (Saifudin, Ishfaq & Adeel, 2016; Ulndag, 2011; Werner, 2007). The relationship between job satisfaction and OCBs is a form of social exchange theory (SET), which explains the existence of mutual relationships between individuals and organizations. In SET perspective, individuals will tend to continue their social relationship because they expect other parties to reciprocate and satisfy their needs, and in return they will show positive behaviors toward others (Kelley & Thibaut, 1959). Thus, when employees feel the fulfillment of the aspects of job satisfaction of the organization, such as the opportunity of the promotion, comfortable working environment, and support from superiors and colleagues, then the individual will tend to give positive responses directed at colleagues in the form of helping those who are absent, orienting new employees, and sharing new knowledge, as well as behaviors directed at the organization in the form of keeping the organization's good reputation and refraining from complaining about the organization in and outside the organization..

The relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and turnover intentions has been widely studied over the years (Chen, 2005; Chen, Hui, & Sego, 1998; Kim, Lee, & Choi, 2012; Ulndag, 2011). The intensity of OCBs may indicate employee's willingness and inclination to be more attached to the organization (Chen et al., 1998); hence, low levels of turnover intentions. Saifudin, Ishfaq and Adeel (2016) added that the lower the level of employee's organizational citizenship behavior, the higher

the hint of employee reluctance to become part of the organization and the higher their chances of leaving the organization.

Based on those relationships, we argue that OCB mediates the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. This study contributes to the literature by adding a psychological mechanism of OCB in the job satisfaction and turnover intentions relationship based on social exchange theory. Satisfaction with aspect of job, namely work/ job, pay, promotion, supervision, and coworkers, leads to employee moral obligation to reciprocate in the form of behaviors that are not required in their formal job descriptions but if performed, will lead to higher organizational productivity. Those behaviors include helping new employees socialize in the organization, helping colleagues who are absent and keeping organizational good reputation by utilizing the working time, helping supervisor and obeying the organization rules. By conducting these behaviors, employees feel positive about their job and the organization and perform low levels of absenteeism, tardiness, and lateness. Thus, employees in turn show low levels of turnover intentions. Based on the above argumentation we hypothesize the following: Organizational citizenship behavior will mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions

## **METHOD**

### **Sample & Procedure**

Samples of the current study are all Indonesian teachers in an International school in Jakarta ( $N = 80$ ). Teachers are valuable workforce for international schools because of their high competencies in teaching and foreign language. International schools are increasingly competing to hire teachers, and this condition leads to high levels of turnover among teachers (Resnik, 2017). Data were collected by distributing questionnaires to all

population. We ensure confidentiality and voluntary nature of the study by adding an informed consent form in which we inform them that their data were confidential and anonymous, and that they may decide to stop their participation whenever they want.

### **Measures**

The 6 item of turnover intentions scales were taken from the revision version of the Mobley, Horner and Hollingsworth (1978) questionnaires that have been modified in Lee, Hung and Chen (2012) and adapted into the Indonesian language version by Khalida (2014). The scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), an example item is "I often think of quitting from my current job". Coefficient  $\alpha$  of the turnover intentions scale is 0.868.

The 10 item of job satisfaction was adapted from measuring tool by Spector's *Job Satisfaction Survey* (1985), which has been adapted into the Indonesian language version by Tonia (2014). The scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), an example item is "I get the same chance to level up if it works well". Coefficient  $\alpha$  of the job satisfaction scale is 0.730.

The 14 item of organizational citizenship behavior was adapted from William and Anderson's (1991) scale, which has been adapted into the Indonesian language version by Fahri (2017). The scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), an example item is "I help with the work of absent co-workers." Coefficient  $\alpha$  of the organizational citizenship behavior scale is 0.858.

### **Control Variables**

Several previous studies have revealed that tenure has a significantly negative relationship with turnover intentions (Karatepe et al., 2006; Nadiri & Tanova, 2010; Ulindag et al., 2011). Tenure can be

explained as the length of time that employees spend on the jobs they have in their current organizations (Ng & Feldman, 2013). Further, HR experts argue that high tenured employees typically tend to be reluctant to leave the organization due to the accumulation of investments provided to the organization (Maden, 2014). Therefore, we will control for tenure in the present study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows means, standard deviations and correlations of study variables. Table 1 shows that gender is positively related

with job satisfaction ( $r = 0.29, p < 0.05$ ) but not significantly related with OCB and turnover intentions. Tenure is positively and significantly related with job satisfaction ( $r = 0.23, p < 0.01$ ), and negatively and significantly related with turnover intentions ( $r = -0.38, p < 0.05$ ).

Job satisfaction is positively and significantly related with OCB ( $r = 0.71, p < 0.01$ ) and negatively and significantly related with turnover intentions ( $r = -0.28, p < 0.05$ ). OCB is found to be negatively and significantly related with turnover intentions ( $r = -0.36, p < 0.01$ )

**Table 1. Means, SDs, and Correlations of demographic data and study variables**

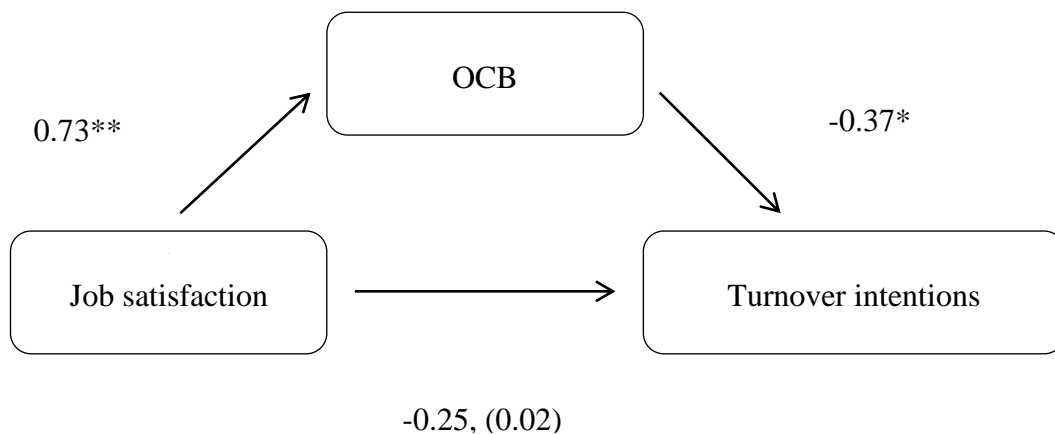
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>
1. Age	36.84	8.54	NA						
2. Gender	1.65	0.48	-0.05	NA					
3. Education	3.79	1.05	0.24 *	0.00	NA				
4. Tenure	6.20	5.02	0.28 *	0.13	0.04	NA			
5. Job satisfaction	3.27	0.78	-0.01	0.29 **	0.18	0.23 *	(0.73)		
6. Organizational Citizenship Behavior	2.83	0.79	0.05	0.18	-0.16	0.18	0.71 **	(0.86)	
7. Turnover intentions	3.18	0.92	-0.13	-0.06	-0.19	0.34 **	-0.28 *	-0.36 **	(0.87)

Note. N=80. \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \* $p < 0.05$ . Age and tenure were measured in years.

Gender was dummy-coded (1 = male, 2 = female). Educational level was dummy-coded (1 = bachelor, 2 = post graduate).

To test the mediating effect of OCB, we employed Hayes' *PROCESS macros on SPSS version 23*. The significance of the resulting effect coefficient is determined by the value of the Confidence Interval (CI), where the lower limit CI and the upper limit do not include zero indicating a significant coefficient. The significance indirect effect shows a significant mediator role. Partial mediation occurs if the direct effect is still significant, while the full mediation occurs if the direct effect is not significant.

We tested the mediation model by including tenure as a control variable, in which we found to influence turnover intentions significantly ( $\beta = -0.05, p = 0.001$ ). Figure 1 shows that OCB mediates the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions (*Indirect effect* = -0.2700, *Boot SE* = 0.1424, *95% CI* [-0.574, -0.025]). It was also found that OCB fully mediated the relationship, because the direct effect of job satisfaction on turnover intentions was found to be nonsignificant (*direct effect* = 0.02, *SE* = 0.18, *95% CI* [-0.327, 0.370]).



*Note.* Indirect effect = -0.2700, Boot SE = 0.1424, 95% CI [-0.574, -0.025]. The coefficient between the brackets is the direct effect of job satisfaction on turnover intentions after controlling for OCB.

**Figure 1. Main analysis results**

This study aims to investigate the mediating effect of OCB on the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions in an international school in Jakarta. Our findings showed that OCB fully mediated the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

To our knowledge, this study is among the first to consider OCB as a mediator in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Previously OCB has been widely studied as a mediator variable in explaining the relationship between organizational culture, workplace spirituality, perceived organizational support, and psychological empowerment with turnover intentions (Ahmad & Islam, 2014; Ahmed, Shaukat, & Ramzan, 2013; Anvari, Barzoki, Amiri, Irum, & Shapourabadi, 2017; Dwivedi, 2017). Previous studies supported the proximal relationship between OCB and turnover intentions ( $r = 0,39 - 0,623$ ) (Chen, 2005; Kim, et al., 2012; Ulndag, 2011), indicating the robust role of OCB as the mediator variable.

Based on the results, individuals who feel that their job satisfaction aspects are met by the organization, will tend to reciprocate to

the organization by demonstrating positive and supportive behaviors such as OCB with the aim of increasing the productivity and effectiveness of the organization, thereby reducing their intentions to leave the organization for wanting to contribute longer with the organization.

The underlying mechanism of OCB in job satisfaction - turnover relationship is explained using social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). As Bateman and Organ (1983) stated that employees with high job satisfaction tend to exhibit pro-social behavior such as OCB, as a return for the organization who has fulfilled their needs. High levels of OCBs indicates that employees feel they belong to the organization and they want to be more attached to their organization and to contribute for a longer time (Chen, Hui & Segeo, 1998; Saifudin, Ishfaq & Adeel (2016).

This research suggests some practical implications that can be applied in an organizations as an effort to retain their employees. Organizations can focus on several aspects of work such as the work itself, pay, promotions, supervision and co-workers. With the fulfillment of these aspects, the employee's satisfaction will increase and

in turn decreases their turnover intentions. HR initiatives that can be done by the organization is to employ High Performance Work Systems (HPWSs), bundles of HR initiatives, to increase employees job satisfaction and performance. Examples of HPWSs are training for current and future skills, job enrichment, employee participation programs, and employee ownership program.

## CONCLUSION

The current study contributes to the literature by showing the mediating effect of OCB on the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions by employing social exchange theory. Despite the contribution, there are several limitations that should be considered in designing future research in this area of study. First, this study may not be generalized to the other populations, because we used specific samples of one school. It is suggested that future research to replicate our study to other populations to see whether our findings are reliable across populations. Second, we used self-reported measures to measure all study variables that raised the possibilities of the common method bias (CMB) and social desirability bias (Podsakof, MacKenzie, Lee & Podsakoff, 2003). CMB is a bias that occurs because all variables are taken with the same method (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Meanwhile social desirability issues are caused by the nature of the measuring tool that uses the statement, so it can cause the tendency of individuals who do not want to disclose the real situation and fill it in accordance with social norms. In this study, several precautions were taken to minimize common method biases by ensuring the participants that our research was voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. To minimize social desirability issues, we ensured them that there were no correct or incorrect answers for the given items in the survey. However, future research is suggested to use

others-rating or objective data to minimize the biases. Third, we used cross-sectional design that limited our ability to confirm the causal relationships between variables. Future research is suggested to use longitudinal studies or experimental studies to establish causal relationship between study variables. In conclusion, the present study has confirmed the negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Furthermore, the study confirmed that OCB fully mediated the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions relationships.

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