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## Effects of Demographic Factors on Employees Intention to Leave in Selected Private Universities in Southwest, Nigeria

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### **Abstract:**

*This paper investigated effects of demographic factors on employees' intention to leave among full-time academic staff of selected private universities in Southwest Nigeria. As a descriptive survey, the study population comprised 21 private universities in Southwest Nigeria that have been in existence for at least six years and a population of 1,320 full-time academic staff members and 465 were selected for the study. Validated Questionnaire was used to collect data while reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. It was found that six out of the seven demographic variables (age, marital status, length of service, education level, present academic rank present monthly income) have significant influence on the intention of employees to leave their universities ( $p < 0.05$ ). The finding shows that gender had no significant influence on the intention of employees to leave their universities ( $p > 0.05$ ). The results further implied that present academic rank had the most significant influence on the intention of employees to leave their present universities. Useful recommendations were made.*

**Keywords:** Demographic factors, turnover, private university, Southwest, Nigeria

### **1. Introduction**

Employee turnover has to do with the proportion of employees that leave an organization during a given time period (Newstrom, 2011; Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, & Wright, 2009). According to Abassi and Hollman (2000), employee turnover is the rotation of workers around the labour market and between firms, jobs and occupations. It is the discontinuance of membership in an organization by the person who received monetary compensation from the organization (Mobley, 1982). According to Kakes (2010), turnover is a silent but effective profit killer and many employers are facing turnover issues that they did not have to deal with in the past. It is one of the costly and seemingly intractable human resource challenges confronting several organizations globally (Shamsuzzoha & Shumon, 2007; Slocum & Hellriegel, 2007). In essence, the rate at which employees leave some organizations is more than the rate at which they join the organizations (Ferguson & Brohaugh, 2009; Holland, Sheehan, & De Cieri, 2007). Employee turnover intention is influenced by many factors such as work-related factors, personal characteristics and external factors. Demographic factors such as gender, age, tenure also influence employees' turnover intention (Williams & Hazer, 1986; Mobley, 1982). According to Samad (2006), empirical studies indicate that demographic variables are relevant to turnover intentions.

Academic staff retention has been a pertinent issue in higher education institutions and indeed a global phenomenon which affects both the developing and industrialized countries (Tetty, 2006). In Nigerian universities, the turnover rate of academic staff is high. Such turnover usually involves movement of highly skilled academic staff either from state and federal universities to private or vice-versa (Adeniji, 2011). Startup, Gruneberg and Tapfield (1975) note that some of these lecturers hardly stay for a long time in such universities before moving again. Similarly, Oredein and Alao (2010), observe that there is a growing labor turnover intention among lecturers in Nigerian universities, resulting in frequent change of lecturers within an academic session. This raises great concern for academic administrators in Nigeria (Ologunde, Asaolu & Elumilade, 2006), especially in view of the fact that researchers have demonstrated that turnover intention plays a vital role in forecasting the actual employee turnover and that turnover intention is the immediate precursor to, as well as the strongest predictor of actual turnover (Lee & Liu, 2007; Hendrix, Robbins & Summers, 1999).

Public universities had a near monopoly in providing university education in Nigeria until 1999 (Ajadi, 2010), when the first private universities were established; namely, Babcock University, Ilishan Remo Ogun State; Igbinedion University, Okada, Edo State; and Madonna University, Okija, Anambara State (Obasi, 2006). Since then, there has been tremendous growth of private universities in Nigeria (Akpotu & Akpochofo, 2009). With the increase in the number of private universities in Nigeria, it is readily observable that workers, especially academic staff, move from one private university to the other in search of greener pastures. However, what seems not to be known and understood is whether this rapid and frequent movement is an index of the influence of demographic factors. This

certainly raises concerns for private universities in Nigeria in general and South-West Nigeria in particular, where many of the private universities (21 out of the 50 approved as at 2012) are located (NUC, 2012).

This paper sets out to ascertain the influence of demographic factors on employees' intention to leave the selected private universities in South-West Nigeria, and suggests what the management could do to enhance employees' retention of their skilled and qualified workers and thereby reduce employees' intention to leave.

## 2. Literature Review & Hypotheses Development

An employee's intent to leave is his inclination to quit the job (Matin, 1979). Intention, according to Berndt (1981), is a statement about a specific behavior of interest. Mobley, Griffeth, Hand & Meglino (1979) conceptualize intentions as statements regarding the specific behavior of interest. Employees' intention to leave is consistently related to turnover behavior. Sousa-Poza and Henneberger (2002) defined turnover intention as the subjective probability that an employee will change his or her job within a certain time period. It also refers to an employee's estimated probability that he will leave an employing organization (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986). Lyons (1971) asserts that turnover intention is an employee's propensity to leave the current job.

According to Hunjra, Ali, Chani and Ur-Rehman (2010), intention to leave is a psychological process and it is hard for researchers to comprehend it. Tett and Meyer (1993) described intent to leave as an awareness and thoughtful grit to leave the organization. They claimed that turnover intention is a conscious willfulness on the part of employees to seek for other employment opportunities in other organizations. It is also the intention of employees to quit their organization (Ali, 2009). Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982) noted that employees with high degree of turnover intentions from an organization will subjectively admit that they will be leaving the organization in the near future.

Previous studies have indicated that turnover intention is the immediate precursor of actual turnover (Hom & Griffeth 1991; Steel & Ovalle, 1984; Bluedorn, 1982; Mobley et al., 1979). Lasun and Nwosu (2011) add that intention to quit is probably the most important immediate antecedent of turnover decision. However, some researchers have discovered that intention to leave or stay is the strongest predictor of actual turnover (Lee & Liu, 2007; Griffeth, Hom & Gaertner, 2000).

Turnover intention plays a vital role in forecasting the actual employee turnover (Hom & Griffeth, 1991). Actual turnover and turnover intention have been measured separately; however, actual turnover is expected to increase as the intention to leave increases. Turnover intention captures the individual's perception and evaluation of job alternatives (Mobley et al., 1979). Mobley (1977) developed a model of employee's turnover decision process that begins with the evaluation of one's current position and eventually leads to either voluntarily quitting or staying through a process of evaluation. The evaluation process examines job satisfaction or lack of it, the expected costs of leaving one's current position, as well as the existing alternatives. The intention to leave occurs immediately before one either actually leaves the current position or stays. Therefore, one could conclude that the intention to leave one's position is a good predictor of actual turnover and that job satisfaction has a major role to play on employee turnover intention.

There are several reasons why employees think of quitting or quit one organization for another and these can stem from both the employer and the employees (Slocum & Hellriegel, 2007). However, Ongori (2007) points out that there is no standard reason why people leave or think of leaving their workplaces. Generally, the reasons or factors could be considered in terms of 'pull', 'push', and 'other' factors (Brown, 2007). *Pull factors* are series of reasons that attract the employees to another workplace. For instance, availability of a better paying job or opportunity for advancement can pull an employee to leave the old job (Brown, 2007; Shamsuzzoha & Shumon, 2007). *Push factors* are aspects that push employees to the exit door. It is also called controlled factors because these factors are internal and can be controlled by organizations (Ali Shah, Fakhr, Ahmad & Zaman (2010).

Demographic factors like gender, age, level of education, tenure, rank and level of income could also influence employees' turnover intention and have been theorized and empirically shown to be significant predictors of employee job satisfaction and intention to leave (Williams & Hazer, 1986; Mobley, 1982). Zhou and Volkwein (2004), argue that some demographic factors also influence employees' intention to leave by exerting a 'push' force or pressure on the employees to consider leaving their current jobs. According to Khatri, Budhwar and Fern (2009), demographic factors that have been found to have a stable relationship with employees' intention to leave in past researches include age, tenure, level of education, and level of income.

Several studies have reported a negative relationship between turnover intentions of employees and some demographic factors such as age, tenure and income level (Wai & Robbinson, 1998; Weil & Kimball, 1995). However, level of education is positively associated with employees' intention to leave (Berg, 1991; Igbaria & Grenhaus, 1992). Samad (2006) examined the contribution of demographic variables, job characteristics and job satisfaction on turnover intentions in Malaysia. The study revealed that some demographic variables (age, income, and tenure) had significant negative effect on turnover intentions.

Gender has been found to affect turnover and employees' intention to leave (Kuzyk, 2008). Igbaria and Barouudi (1995) observe that the role of gender on employees' intention to leave is very obvious. However, Khatri, Budhwar and Fern (2009) noted that research findings on gender and turnover intentions are mixed. For instance, some researchers discovered that female employees were more likely to quit or tended to have greater intention to leave their workplace than their male counterpart (Gow, Warren, Anthony, & Hinschen, 2008; Dodd-McCue & Wright, 1996). On the contrary, other findings indicate that male employees have greater intention to leave or seek other employment opportunities than their female counterparts (Judeh, 2012; Summers & Hendrix, 1997). The reason, according to Sicherman (1996), may be that women are preferred over men while granting higher wages which can eventually influence male employees' intention to leave. Elaine (1997) noted that males are the breadwinners of the family and they have greater achievement orientation than females. Khatri, Budhwar and Fern (2009) add that males may leave their current jobs in favor of a more attractive job if their expectations are not met. We thus hypothesize that:

- H1: there is an association between gender of employee's and employee's intention to leave.

Age has been identified as another demographic factor influencing employees' intention to leave organizations (Harrison & Hubbard, 1998; Igbaria & Guimaraes, 1993). Age, among the demographic variables, has been found to be the most consistent in influencing employees' intention to leave. It has been found that younger employees have greater intention to leave than older ones (Judeh, 2012). This may imply that the younger the employees, the more likely they are to think of leaving their current workplace (Johnsrud & Heck, 1994; Smart, 1990). Sousa-Poza and Henneberger (2002) point out that younger employees tend to change their employment more often, since they are experiencing an experimental phase at the beginning of their professional life. However, there is a negative relationship between age and intention to leave (Wai & Robinson, 1998; Weil & Kimball, 1995). This implies that as employees' age increases, the desire to leave the organization decreases. It is hypothesized that:

- H2: there is an association between employee's age and employee's intention to leave.

Another demographic factors influencing intention to leave by workers are tenure and income. Tenure and income are found to be negatively related to employee turnover intentions and turnover (Perez, 2008; Griffeth et al, 2000). The length of service in an organization, also known as tenure, is viewed as a factor that can influence employee turnover and intention to leave (Igbaria & Guimaraes, 1993). According to Sousa-Poza and Henneberger (2002), increased tenure shows to be strongly related to propensity to remain. Longer tenured employees are more likely to stay in the organization than those with shorter tenure (Griffeth, Hom & Gaertner, 2000). This may imply that the longer an employee is with an organization, the less likely that employee is to leave. It is thus hypothesized that:

- H3: there is an association between employee's tenure and employee's intention to leave.
- H4: there is an association between employee's income and employee's intention to leave.

Level of education is another factor. According to Becker (1993), education is an investment in human capital. Royalty (1998) posits that it is often assumed that the level of education has a positive effect on the probability of job mobility since a high education is often associated with better labor-market alternatives. Campbell (1997) point out that some examinations did not reveal a significant direct impact on turnover intention. However, Berg (1991) and Cotton and Tuttle (1998) assert that the level of education of workers sometime influence their decisions to stay or leave. It is thus hypothesized that:

- H5: there is an association between employee's level of education and employee's intention to leave.

In respect to marital status, Ryan, Ghazali and Mohsin (2011) observe that marital status has no impact on employees' intention to leave an organization. Judeh (2012) discovered in his study that there is no significant difference between marital status and intention to leave. However, Robbins, Judge, Millet and Waters-Marsh (2008) assert that research consistently indicates that married employees have fewer intentions to leave and are more satisfied with their jobs than unmarried employees (Mackay, 1999). Robbins et al, (2008) add that marriage imposes increased responsibilities that may make a steady job more valuable and important. This may be one of the reasons why married employees have fewer intentions to leave and even turnovers than employees who are not married. We hypothesize that:

- H6: there is an association between employee's marital status and employee's intention to leave.

And finally we also hypothesize that:

- H7: there is an association between employee's demographic factors and employee's intention to leave.

### 3. Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to investigate the influence of demographic factors on employees' intention to leave an organization. Descriptive research seeks to find answers to questions through the analysis of variable relationship (Best & Kahn, 1998). The population of study consisted of the 21 government approved private universities in South-West Nigeria. The sample for the study consisted of five (5) private universities in South-West Nigeria out of the 11 private universities, in four states (Ogun, Oyo, Osun, and Lagos), that have been in existence for at least six years as at 2012. The five selected private universities for the study; namely, Covenant, Redeemers, Babcock, Bowen and Lead City were drawn from three states (Ogun, Oyo and Osun). Therefore, the population of the study consisted of 1320 full-time academic staff members. A sample size comprising 465 full-time academic staff members were selected using random sampling technique. Questionnaires were used to collect data which was validated through a pilot test while reliability was measured using the Cronbach-alpha method. A value of 0.902 was obtained, indicating that the instrument was reliable for the study.

The administration of the questionnaire was done with the help of two trained research assistants. Out of the 465 questionnaires administered, returned were received from 396 (85% response rate) respondents. Out of this figure, returns from 31 respondents were badly filled and discarded. Returns from the remaining 365 (78.5%) respondents were dully completed and used for the study. The data was analyzed using descriptive (i.e. frequency count and percentages) and inferential statistics (i.e. Kruskal-Wallis) and multiple regression was used to test the hypothesis. The hypothesis formulated was tested at 0.05 level of significance

### 4. Findings

#### 4.1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The results indicate that 59.2% of the respondents were male while a sizeable percentage of 40.8% were female. Majority (70.7%) of the respondents were below 50 years while only 29.3% were above 50 years, which could mean that majority of the respondents in the sampled private universities are in their middle ages and this age usually constitute the vibrant cream of the workforce in the academic setting.

With regard to marital status, majority (70.7%) of the respondents are married, followed by respondents who are single (25.5%) and widowed (14 or 3.8 %) while other options made available in the question attracted no respondent.

Years of working experience have revealed that 63% of the respondents have put in between 4-9 years of experience while 25.8% of the respondents have worked for 1-3 years. This was followed by 7.4% of the respondents who have been on the job for 10-12 years and 3.8% of the respondents have worked for 13-15 years. This implies that there could be a high rate of employee turnover in academic sector due to voluntary turnover leading to their destructive effect on both the universities and employees, forcing employees to look for better work conditions elsewhere.

The educational qualification of the respondents revealed that majority of them possessed Master's Degree (214 or 58.6%) and this was followed by those who possessed Doctoral Degree (136 or 37.3%). The number of respondents with first degree certificate amounted to 4.1% while none of the respondents had below first degree certificate. This interpretation confirms that the policy of NUC which has made it compulsory for academic staff member of any university to possess a minimum qualification of a first degree certificate in a relevant field.

In respect of present academic ranks of the respondents, the highest frequency of academic ranks in the sampled universities falls on Lecturer II, accounting for 108 (29.6%) of the respondents. However, a categorization of the spread of the academic ranks of the respondents indicates that 91 (24.9%) are in the training ranks (Graduate Assistant and Assistant Lecturer), 232 (63.5%) are in the Lecturer cadre (Lecturer II, Lecturer I and Senior Lecturer), while 42 (11.5%) are in the Professorial cadre (Associate professor and Professor). Since majority of the respondents are in the Lecturer cadre, which is the mid-point between the training and Professorial cadres, they are more likely to express their unbiased opinions on the issues raised in the survey.

The distribution of respondents by income earned per month showed that more than half of the respondents (201 or 55.1%) earned N100, 000-N200, 000. This was followed by 116 (31.8%) who earned between N201, 000-N400, 000. The distribution of income earned shows that at the lower extreme, 31(8.5%) of the respondents earned below N100, 000 while at the higher extreme, 17 (4.7%) of the respondents earned above N400, 000. Those who earned more than N400, 000 are Professors while most of those that earned below N100, 000 worked in the Graduate Assistant position (compare with academic rank of respondents). A majority of the respondents who earned N100, 000-N200, 000 were within the categories of Assistant Lecturer and Lecturer II. This is within the maximum income earned by these groups of Lecturers in the private universities in Nigeria. This salary scale may also determine the intention of employees to either remain in or leave the institutions.

Table 1 provides frequency counts and percentages on the intention to leave an organization of full-time academic staff members of five selected private universities in South-West Nigeria (Covenant, Redeemers, Babcock, Bowen and Lead City). The analysis in Table 1 shows that 89 (24.4%) respondents, considered their job as the best they had so far, and therefore planned to make it a life-time career as well as intend to stay in their University for the rest of their career. This implies that they have no intention to leave. Similarly, many respondents (142 or 38.9%), considered their current jobs as second best, just one step below what they ultimately want to spend their life time in. To this effect, they intend to stay in their University for many years.

| S/N   | Item  | Freq. | %    |
|-------|---|-------|------|
| 1     | My job in this University is the best so far. I intend to stay in this University for the rest of my career.  | 89    | 24.4 |
| 2     | My job is second best. I intend to stay in this University for many years.  | 142   | 38.9 |
| 3     | My job is a stepping stone to what I ultimately wanted as a career. I will seek greener pastures when opportunities are available. I intend to stay in this University for a few years.         | 110   | 30.1 |
| 4     | My job is hardly what I want but shall stick to it for the time being. I am currently looking for another job with better prospects. I intend to stay in this University for a very short time. | 21    | 5.8  |
| 5     | My job is below personal expectation. I took it only because there are no other immediate openings available. I intend to leave this University as soon possible.                               | 3     | .8   |
| Total |   | 365   | 100  |

Table 1: Participants' Responses to Intention to Leave the Organization Questions

However, 110 respondents (30.1%) took their job as a stepping stone to what they ultimately want as a career and would seek greener pastures when opportunities are available. In other words, they intend to stay in their University for a few years. The intention to leave is obvious. A total of 21 respondents (5.8%) saw their job as hardly what they want but chose to stick to it for the time being. They seek other job opportunities with better prospects and had the feeling of resigning any time. Hence, they planned to stay in their University for a very short time. The intention to leave is very clear. Moreover, 3 respondents (0.8%) declared that their job is below personal expectation but they took it only because there are no other immediate openings available. They came to work each morning with a heavy heart and intend to leave the University as soon as possible. These employees are just hanging in there. In summary, 231 respondents (63.3 %) do not have intention to leave whereas 135 (36.7 %) have intention to leave their universities.

#### 4.2. Test of Hypotheses

This section involves the test of the research hypotheses using the multiple regression. The hypothesis was tested individually between the variables. The data for demographic factors were created by summing the items for each of the dimensions to create new variable. The results of the regression analysis are presented in Tables 2 and 3 respectively.

| ANOVA(b)   |                |     |             |        |          |
|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|----------|
| Model      | Sum of Squares | Df  | Mean Square | F      | Sig.     |
| Regression | 63.384         | 1   | 63.384      | 98.997 | .000 (a) |
| Residual   | 232.413        | 363 | .640        |        |          |
| Total      | 295.797        | 364 |             |        |          |

a Predictors: (Constant), demographic  
b Dependent Variable: Intention to leave an organization

Table 2: Regression Analysis of Overall Demographic Factors  
Significant at  $P < 0.05$

| Variable                                | F-value | P-value | Remark          |
|---|---------|---------|-----------------|
| Gender                                  | 2.037   | 0.089   | Not Significant |
| Age                                     | 14.406  | 0.000   | Significant     |
| Marital Status                          | 11.163  | 0.000   | Significant     |
| Length of Service at Present University | 6.633   | 0.000   | Significant     |
| Highest Educational Attainment          | 11.446  | 0.000   | Significant     |
| Present Academic Rank                   | 20.612  | 0.000   | Significant     |
| Present Monthly Income                  | 19.114  | 0.000   | Significant     |

Table 3: Results on the Influence of Demographic Factors on Employees' Intention to Leave their Universities  
Significant at  $P < 0.05$

Table 2 shows the regression analysis of overall or combined demographic factors. The analysis revealed that the combined demographic factors have significant influence on employees' intention to leave the selected universities. Hence H7 is not rejected. Furthermore, Table 3 shows the result of the influence of individual demographic factors on employees' intention to leave their universities. The analysis revealed that at a significance level of 0.05, six out of the seven demographic variables (age, marital status, length of service, highest education attainment, present academic rank present monthly income) have significant influence on the intention of employees to leave their universities ( $p < 0.05$ ). However, Table 3 shows that gender had no significant influence on the intention of employees to leave their universities ( $p > 0.05$ ). The results further implied that present academic rank had the most significant influence on the intention of employees to leave their universities.

However, this section was further analyzed, using the Kruskal-Wallis statistical test analysis, to ascertain the mean ranks of the demographic factors that significantly influence employees' intention to leave the selected private universities in South-West Nigeria. Table 4 presents the mean rank of demographic factors to show which ones have more influence on employees' intention to leave the organization than the others.

| Demographic Factors of the Respondents  |                        | Mean Rank of Employees' Intention to Leave their Organizations |
|---|------------------------|--|
| Age                                     | 30 yrs and below       | 225.58   |
|   | 31-40 yrs              | 212.03   |
|   | 41-50 yrs              | 158.63   |
|   | 51-60 yrs              | 130.77   |
|   | 61 yrs and above       | 103.33   |
| Marital Status                          | Single                 | 234.68   |
|   | Married                | 166.89   |
|   | Widowed                | 136.50   |
| Length of Service at Present University | 1-3 yrs                | 211.72   |
|   | 4-6 yrs                | 201.27   |
|   | 7-9 yrs                | 144.54   |
|   | 10-12 yrs              | 172.17   |
|   | 13-15 yrs              | 128.25   |
| Highest Educational Attainment          | Bachelor's Degree/eqv. | 238.97   |
|   | Master's Degree        | 205.14   |
|   | Doctoral Degree        | 141.99   |
| Present Academic Rank                   | Graduate Assistant     | 246.09   |
|   | Assistant Lecturer     | 208.54   |
|   | Lecturer II            | 214.79   |
|   | Lecturer I             | 179.57   |
|   | Senior Lecturer        | 137.46   |

|                                      |                     |        |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|--------|
|                                      | Associate Professor | 72.06  |
|                                      | Professor           | 96.84  |
| <b>Present Monthly Income</b>        | Below N100,000      | 247.24 |
|                                      | N100,000-N200,000   | 203.89 |
|                                      | N201,000-N300,000   | 163.88 |
|                                      | N301,000-N400,000   | 109.17 |
|                                      | Above N400,000      | 100.59 |
| <b>University of the Respondents</b> | Babcock             | 183.15 |
|                                      | Redeemers           | 203.02 |
|                                      | Bowen               | 173.52 |
|                                      | Covenant            | 170.21 |
|                                      | Lead City           | 194.51 |

*Table 4: Mean Rank of Significant Demographic Factors that Influence Employees' Intention to Leave Significant at  $P < 0.05$*

The findings indicate that on the overall, younger employees (40 years and below) had greater intention to leave their universities than older employees. Also, employees who are not married (singles) had greater intention to leave their universities than married employees. Those employees with fewer years of service in their present universities (1 to 6 years) had greater intention to leave than those with more years of service. The analysis also indicates that employees with lower educational attainment, especially Bachelor's Degree or equivalent, had greater intention to leave their universities than employees who have doctoral degrees.

The findings also revealed that the respondents who are graduate assistants had greater intention to leave than those in the higher cadre. Present monthly income was a major factor that significantly influences employees' intention to leave their universities. Findings also show that employees with lower salaries (below N100, 000) had greater intention to leave their universities than those with higher salary. On the overall, in the five selected private universities in South-West Nigeria investigated, employees at University B have greater intention to leave their University than others.

## 5. Discussion

The foregoing shows the analysis of data collected for this study. It was revealed that the respondents differed in their opinions about the seven demographic variables. At a significance level of 0.05, all the demographic factors (except gender) have significant influence on employees' intention to leave their universities ( $p < 0.05$ ). The findings of this study are therefore in consonance with the findings of Sanjeekumar (2012), Khatri, Buhwar & Fern (2009) and Samad (2006) which state that demographic variables such as age, income, tenure, level of education and level of income have significant effect on employees' intention to leave an organization.

The findings of this study also indicate that gender has no significant influence on employees' intention to leave their universities. This is in harmony with some findings of other empirical studies that indicate that there is no significant difference between gender and intention to leave an organization (Griffeth et al, 2000). Similarly, other researchers discovered that there is no relationship between gender and intention to leave (Wai & Robbinson, 1998; Miller & Wheeler, 1992). Moreover, Rehman, Ahmad, Ilyas, Maqbod and Rashid (2011) assert that gender biases have no significant effect on turnover intentions because sometimes, the respondents may hesitate to reveal their true feelings due to cultural considerations. The findings, however, differs from the empirical findings of Knapp (2009) which states that gender has significant influence on turnover intention, even though there is no clear cut gender distinction in this regards. For instance, some findings indicate that male employees have greater intention leave an organization or seek other employment opportunities than their female counterparts (Judeh, 2012; Hunjra, Ali, Chani & Ur-Rehman, 2010).

This study also revealed that younger employees have greater intention to leave their universities than older employees. This is congruent with the findings of Judeh (2012), Sanjeekumar (2012) and Knapp (2009). This may imply that the younger the employees, the more likely they are to think of leaving their current workplaces (Johnsrud & Heck, 1994). Sousa-Poza and Henneberger (2002) point out that younger employees tend to change their employment more often, since they are experiencing an experimental phase at the beginning of their professional life. Robbins et al, (2008), add that employees usually have fewer alternative job opportunities as they get older. Also, older employees are less likely to resign than younger ones because their long tenure tends to provide them with higher wage rates and more attractive retirement benefits.

The findings of this study also revealed that the employees who are not married (singles) have greater intention to leave their universities than married employees. This tends to support the findings of Robbins et al, (2008) who assert that research consistently indicates that married employees have fewer intentions to leave and that marriage imposes increased responsibilities that may make a steady job more valuable and important. However, the findings of this study differ from those of Ryan et al. (2011) that indicated that marital status has no impact on employees' intention to leave an organization. Judeh (2012) discovered in his study that there is no significant difference between marital status and intention to leave.

According to the findings of this study, the employees with fewer length of service have greater intention to leave their universities than those with more years of service. This is in agreement with the findings of Sousa-Poza and Henneberger (2002), which states that increased tenure is strongly related to propensity to remain. This is also consistent with the findings of Griffeth et al, (2000) and Somers (1996) which state that longer-tenured employees are more likely to stay in an organization than those with shorter tenure.

The result of the analysis in this study indicates that employees with lower educational attainment, Bachelor's Degree or equivalent and those with lower academic rank (Graduate Assistants and Assistant Lecturers) have greater intention to leave their universities than employees who have doctoral degrees. This is also in consonance with the findings of Tettey (2006) which states that junior academic staff (Assistant Lecturers and Lecturers) is more likely to leave their present job than the senior staff.

However, the findings of this study differ from the findings of Igbaria and Grenhaus (1992) which state that higher educated employees have higher turnover intention. Berg (1991) also discovered that there is a positive relationship between employee level of education and intention to leave an organization. An employee with higher education and skill has a higher affinity to find more demanding job with higher salary. Hatton and Emerson (1998), add that if an employee with a higher education and skill feels that there is no acknowledgement through a more enriching job and consequently higher compensation to his or her abilities, that employee is likely to quit.

Present monthly income was a major factor that can influence employees' intention to leave their universities in this study. Findings show that employees with lower salaries had greater intention to leave than those with higher salary. This is in consonance with the findings of Shamsuzzoha and Shumon (2007) that indicated that less salary was the highest among the causes of employee turnover intentions, as well as that of Tettey (2006) which states that salary was a key factor that influences employees' decision or intention to leave their present place of work. Hom and Griffeth (1995), Carsten and Spector (1987) add that poor salary is a major reason why employees leave or think of leaving their current places of work.

Salary is significant for retaining employees thereby reducing employees' intention to leave (Noe et al, 2009). Farris (2000) noted that financial reward is one of the major reasons why employees work in an organization. Low salary or inadequate pay and benefits are major reasons why teachers leave their current employer and sometimes their profession (Sanjeevkumar, 2012; Rampur, 2009). The prospect of getting higher pay elsewhere is one of the most obvious contributors to turnover (Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Carsten & Spector, 1987). However, Noe et al, (2009) add that employers seeking to lure away another organization's employees often do so by offering higher pay. Unequal or substandard wage structure may influence employees' turnover intention (Handelsman, 2009). A number of studies also suggest that salary and benefits are one of the top reasons why employees leave or have intention to leave their current employment (Neiderman & Sumner, 2004; Ghiselli, La Lopa & Bai, 2001). The prospect of getting higher pay elsewhere is one of the most obvious contributors to turnover. This suggests that poor or low salary is a universal factor that significantly influences employees' intention to leave an organization.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Considering the findings of this study, it was concluded that intention to leave an organization is a very important predictor of actual employee turnover. Also, demographic factors have significant influence on employee's intention to leave the selected private universities in South-West Nigeria. One-third (37%) of the employees surveyed in five selected private universities in South-West Nigeria have intentions to leave their universities. It was concluded, that employee's intention to leave in private universities in Southwest Nigeria is a function of some demographic variables such as age (that is, younger employees), marital status (that is, single employees), length of service (that is, employees fewer length of service), educational attainment (that is, employees with lower educational attainment), academic rank (that is, Graduate Assistants and Assistant Lecturers), and monthly income (that is, employees with lower salaries).

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that the management of private universities in Nigeria should put in place a development package that would address the work-related factors that the younger workers were not satisfied with, such as pay, benefits and advancement opportunities. Since younger employees, according to the findings, had greater intention to leave and also had the lowest education attainment, academic rank, and monthly salary, this suggestion would reduce their intention to leave, because, the more the employees are satisfied with the work-related factors, the less their intentions to leave the organization.

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