

A Phenomenological Study of Self-Regulation Among Employees in Deputy Department Head Positions Who Exhibit Turnover Intentions

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Keywords:

Phenomenology;
self-regulation;
turnover intention

ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine self-regulation in employees holding deputy department heads who have intentions to quit their jobs. Self-regulation is an individual's ability to control their thoughts, feelings, and behavior through internal processes, so they can achieve desired goals. Meanwhile, intention to quit is a psychological concept that describes an employee's intention to leave their job voluntarily. This study used a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. The participants were two individuals who had worked for 10-25 years. The research location was Bekasi City. Data analysis used interview, observation, and documentation techniques. The analysis results for both respondents showed different factors causing turnover intention. Respondent 1 had a significant influence on workload, while respondent 2 was more influenced by career path. Self-regulation aspects included job satisfaction, organizational commitment, work stress, self-development, and perceptions of alternatives. Respondent 1's most prominent aspect was workload. Respondent 2's most prominent aspect was self-development or career path in influencing turnover intention. Both respondents underwent several self-regulation processes, including self-observation, judgment, and self-response. Based on these analysis results, it can be concluded that both respondents were able to self-regulate.

INTRODUCTION

The position of deputy department head in a company is often viewed as a career aspiration for employees seeking professional advancement. To maintain this role, employees require adequate experience, knowledge, and skills. In addition, individuals in deputy department head positions must demonstrate both physical and psychological readiness, as this role represents not only an achievement but also a mandate with significant responsibility. In *Organizational Behavior*, it is stated that employees at the managerial level carry greater ethical responsibility and accountability because their decisions have a wide-ranging impact (Liyanti, 2024). The quality of human resources, especially in strategic positions, determines a company's progress or decline. Effective human resource management positively influences organizational outcomes, whereas poor management reduces employee productivity and performance, thereby increasing the intention to leave the organization. Alam, as cited in (Tettie Setiyarti, 2015), states that an employee's intention to leave the organization, or turnover intention, is typically marked by clear indicators and is influenced by several factors, including the work environment, leadership style, compensation, and work-related stress. According to (Robbins & Judge, 2017), turnover intention is the conscious and deliberate desire of an employee to leave the organization in the near future without coercion. In a study conducted by (Friska Julyani Mengko, 2018), although the definition of "employee" is not

explicitly stated, the terms worker, laborer, and employee in the private sector are generally considered equivalent to employees as defined in laws and regulations. In industrial psychology, employees are regarded as strategic organizational assets, particularly in the era of globalization characterized by intense market competition and high demands for professionalism. Under such conditions, companies are required to implement strategies focused on responsiveness, quality improvement, productivity, and cost efficiency to sustain industrial competitiveness (Mehrasa & Abhar, 2011).

This situation raises questions about actual conditions in the field regarding employees in the industrial sector. Do employees truly welcome job opportunities and investment with the same optimism expected by the government, or do they encounter a different reality? An interesting phenomenon has emerged: despite relatively high unemployment rates, some employees face a different issue—the intention to seek new employment that is perceived as more suitable and aligned with their expectations and needs. This condition indicates that job availability is not always directly proportional to employee satisfaction or their willingness to remain within an organization. Employees who have attained deputy department head positions have typically experienced various challenges and fluctuations in fulfilling their roles. Their performance, enthusiasm, and organizational commitment may vary over time. In this context, the “high tide” phase reflects a productive period characterized by creativity, strong achievements, and high morale. Conversely, the “low tide” phase represents declining motivation, routine fatigue, and reduced energy in carrying out responsibilities. Such conditions are natural, as employees do not remain in a constant state over the long term. Both internal and external factors can influence an individual’s work rhythm. As noted by (Stephen P. Robbins, 2013), if periods of decline are not addressed promptly, they can reduce individual and team performance and negatively affect the achievement of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for which they are responsible. On the other hand, during periods of improved performance, innovation and collaboration tend to increase, enabling both individuals and organizations to develop optimally. Turnover intention must therefore be addressed as a serious organizational issue, given the increasing desire among employees to change jobs. In the context of the manufacturing industry, individual behavior plays a critical role from both psychological and social perspectives, as it is directly linked to team stability and the achievement of production targets. The phenomenon of turnover intention becomes particularly crucial when relevant departments face difficulties in securing competent human resources to meet productivity goals.

Based on the phenomena and facts described above, turnover intention remains prevalent among employees. Therefore, this study aims to explore more deeply the realities in the field regarding how employees experiencing turnover intention engage in self-regulation, as well as how the self-regulation process unfolds among those occupying deputy department head positions. It is expected that this research will provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of self-regulation in the face of pressure and the tendency to leave the organization.

METHOD

This study aimed to understand in depth the experiences of employees in deputy department head positions in regulating themselves when facing work pressure that had the potential to trigger turnover intention. The research focused on employees’ subjective experiences in dealing with pressure, examining how they felt, interpreted, and responded to such situations. It also explored applied self-regulation as an internal mechanism through which employees managed emotions, motivation, and cognition in order to maintain psychological resilience when facing work-related challenges. In addition, this study examined factors

influencing turnover intention, enabling a more comprehensive understanding of self-regulation and turnover intention among employees in strategic organizational roles.

To obtain rich and relevant data, the researcher selected a small number of informants to ensure depth of insight. Informants were chosen based on their suitability to provide meaningful information aligned with the study's objectives. A total of two main participants and two supporting informants were involved, which was considered sufficient to explore deeply the personal experiences and forms of self-regulation among employees in deputy department head positions.

This study employed a qualitative approach. To support data credibility, two expert informants were included: a division head and a deputy department head who directly supervised the participants. Their perspectives were used to complement and validate the findings related to turnover intention and participants' experiences.

Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, with a focus on capturing participants' subjective experiences. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted to explore participants' perceptions, meanings, and experiences in managing work pressure and turnover intention.

Data analysis was conducted systematically by organizing and interpreting the collected information. The process involved transcribing the data, reviewing and understanding the content, coding key points, grouping codes into themes, and interpreting the findings. To ensure credibility and validity, techniques such as triangulation, member checking, audit trails, and researcher reflexivity were applied.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In the results of interviews and observations with participants, it can be seen in the big theme of turnover intention in participants and how participants can regulate themselves when there is an intention to leave the organization or turnover intention.

Thinking about looking for other job information while still an employee feels that the workload is getting higher

This theme shows the participant 1 HRS (initial) intention of the participant to move the Company from the previous Company to another Company that is considered better. Or in the stage of looking for opportunities in other companies:

In the interview, he revealed that when looking at the workload and responsibilities of the job, "It's hard, sometimes when there is a problem, it feels like the work is on everyone's shoulders" the participant said that the workload sometimes increases significantly, especially when having to handle additional work outside of the main job description. This condition becomes an additional source of stress, although he still feels able to manage and complete his primary responsibilities (HRS.171225.J19). Thinking about leaving work is conveyed as follows: "It seems necessary to meditate on it, mas" answer to the question about the intention to leave. This attitude shows self-awareness and a reflective evaluation process of the existing opportunities, although at this stage a definite decision to change jobs has not been formed. This experience shows the ambivalence of the participants between the psychological demands they feel and the professional commitment that is still maintained (HRS.171225.J23).

Meanwhile, participant II MMN (initial) revealed "There is a special job, there is additional work, my special job is supporting the production of printing goods. Additional work is a lot of work programs to increase human resources that are too high". Work pressure is felt as a routine experience in the participants' daily lives. Stress is slowly considered an integral part of the work routine. However, the continuous increase in work demands increases psychological pressure and creates vulnerability to turnover intention. This experience showed

that there is a normalization of stress that has the potential to negatively impact the long-term well-being of participants (MMN.151225.J18; MMN.151225.J19).

Furthermore, from the results of the interview with participant II, the occurrence of turnover intention, in addition to the workload, there are also other factors, namely because of the hampered career path as expressed by participant II, "I think education and job placement are quite linear, so I think they are quite good. However, in one case, the career path feels strange, for example, the level of managers who have retired are still employed in the same position. makes regeneration unhealthy". (MMN.151225.J39). The participant explained that formally, employees are placed according to their education strata and expertise. However, in practice, participants interpreted the existence of anomalies in the career path system. The existence of managers or division leaders who have entered retirement but still occupy the same position is perceived to have the potential to cause organizational stagnation. This condition hinders the development of internal talent, lowers employee motivation, and has an impact on the regeneration of companies that are considered not to run healthily. Based on the two participants above, it can be seen that both participants have the intention to leave the Company.

Considerations for Quitting Work

This theme discusses the reasons for the two participants to stop working from the Company quoted from the following interview:

In the participants, HRS revealed from the interview "In my heart, there is an intention to go out but seeing the competition that is getting tighter, sometimes I think again" He views that the increasingly fierce competition requires hard work and continuous capacity building, so that organizations and individuals are required to continue to improve (HRS.171225.J5). This view is strengthened by his experience of seeing the emergence of new competitors, which according to him is a source of competitive pressure as well as a signal of the need to improve performance so that the company remains able to compete (HRS.171225.J6).

In participant II (MMN) it is different from participant I (HRS) in considering or reason to stop working, this is according to the interview fragment of participant II (MMN) feeling that he is older and less confident to get another job.

"Wkwkwk, it's been a long time, yes, I've thought about looking for another company that goes more international. Despite having an attachment to the company, participants began to experience a feeling of stagnation in career development. This issue is conveyed in a way that tends to be light, but contains a deep sense of anxiety. Participants feel that there is no longer enough room for self-development and career advancement in the organization in the long term, because reaching a higher level of position is affected by age. In the subjective experience of the participants, this condition gives rise to the desire to obtain greater opportunities, both in the form of new challenges and a clearer career path (MMN.151225.J6).

Based on the results of the interviews with the two participants above, it can be said that in the process of turnover intention of an employee can occur due to several things but the most dominant in the phenomena studied is caused by the workload and career path that is hampered. It can be found that, when employees experience more workload there is a greater chance of experiencing turnover intention.

The desire to transfer jobs from the Company can occur due to many things, such as the results of the interview above which emphasizes employees about performance, work environment, work culture, compensation and leadership style, but the most dominant of the above interviews is workload and career path. This is in accordance with research from (Nilhar Apriani et al., 2023) which states that the results of empirical studies show that the factors that trigger turnover intention include aspects of work, job satisfaction, work stress, age, education level, work culture, work pressure, workload, and job insecurity.

This is strengthened by the results of research by (Alhimni Fabiansyah & Almaas Adibah, 2024) in 10 themes of reasons that underlie individuals choosing to settle or change jobs, namely work environment factors (colleagues, leaders, workplace conditions), salary, workload, opportunities for self-development and career paths, organizational culture, adaptability in a new work environment, desire to explore experiences from other workplaces, an individual's belief in his company, an individual's perspective on his or her abilities in the workplace.

Even though the employee has the intention to change jobs, the decision is still made through careful consideration from the employee's internal and external factors. This is where the role of self-regulation is needed to consider whether or not to leave work. When employees can find out the stages of employee self-regulation: When in the phase of feeling the workload and incompatibility of the Company's policy on career paths that are hampered, this is where employees begin to consider whether they leave or not. This is where the initial intention to stop working began.

The Role of Self-Regulation (Koping) in the Integration of Modern Approaches and Islamic Values

In the interview that has been conducted, it was explained that the application of self-regulation based on the integration of modern approaches and Islamic values allows individuals to keep striving and complete work in accordance with Allah's commands. In the Qur'an: "Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change the condition of themselves" (QS. Ar-Ra'd: 11). The concept of Islamic coping in reducing turnover intention in several main ways, namely: patience, gratitude, *tawakal* and *dhikr*.

Solutions Implemented to Overcome High Turnover Intention in Automotive Companies

The solution that must be done so that the turnover intention in the company can decrease. Steps that can be taken to reduce turnover intention are: Companies need to periodically evaluate policies that have the potential to burden employees in order to create a healthy and sustainable work environment. Excessive workload and not considering employee conditions can reduce their motivation, productivity, and loyalty. By conducting evaluations, companies can ensure that each policy remains in line with the organization's goals without neglecting employee welfare. In addition, companies need to carefully evaluate the policy of utilizing retired employees, by placing them proportionately, for example as experts or advisors, without hindering job regeneration and long-term organizational strengthening.

The results of the discussion were about the factors that cause high turnover intention, namely internal and external factors. Self-regulation in employees who experience turnover intention is quite influential, with coping strategies carried out including withdrawing from work for some time, doing mindfulness while enjoying coffee in the outdoors, and practicing sharia teachings with patience, gratitude, *tawakal*, and *dhikr*.

The solution to reduce the turnover intention of the company is to conduct periodic work evaluations. Through this evaluation, companies can find out employee performance, identify obstacles faced, and understand their needs and expectations. Thus, the career path or regeneration process can run well.

CONCLUSION

Turnover intention refers to an employee's desire to leave the company and seek alternative employment, a condition that underscores the importance of effective self-regulation in guiding decision-making and sustaining work engagement. The findings indicated that although employees in deputy department head positions had achieved career advancement, they still experienced turnover intention influenced by both internal and external

factors. For participant HRS, internal psychological strain and external pressures such as workload and social comparisons contributed to work stress and the desire to leave; however, these were managed through coping strategies such as self-healing activities and professional discussions, which helped maintain job continuity. Similarly, participant MMN experienced turnover intention primarily due to organizational factors, including excessive workload, suboptimal organizational culture, and perceived inconsistencies in career progression, which led to dissatisfaction; nevertheless, this was mitigated through long-term career planning, value alignment evaluation, and communication with top management. Overall, the study highlighted that self-regulation plays a critical role in helping employees manage stress and remain in their positions despite challenges, suggesting that organizations should actively support the development of self-regulation to reduce turnover intention. Future research is recommended to involve a larger and more diverse sample across different industries and organizational levels to enhance generalizability and to further examine additional variables, such as leadership style and organizational support, in influencing self-regulation and turnover intention.

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