

Determinants of Teacher Turnover in Private Schools of Mahalaxmi Municipality, Lalitpur

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Abstract

This study investigates the determinants of teacher turnover intention in Nepalese private schools, focusing on the relationship with supervisors, compensation, work conditions, job enrichment, and recognition. The research aimed to analyze how these variables relate teacher decisions to leave their organizations. Data were collected from 264 teachers working in private schools in Mahalaxmi municipality, Lalitpur through a structured questionnaire on a five-point Likert scale. Descriptive and correlational research designs were employed, and Pearson's correlation analysis was used to assess the relationships among the variables. Results indicated that compensation and recognition significantly reduce turnover intention, highlighting their critical role in retention strategies. Interestingly, work conditions showed a positive and significant association, suggesting that better work environments may paradoxically increase turnover intent by encouraging teachers to seek better opportunities. Relationships with supervisors and job enrichment demonstrated no significant associations. The study offers theoretical insights into motivation and job satisfaction frameworks and practical recommendations for enhancing employee retention in private educational institutions.

Keywords: Relationship with supervisors, Compensation, Work conditions, Job enrichment, Recognition, Turnover intention

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Introduction

Educational institutions are instrumental in shaping human capital for national development, and their success largely depends on the competence and stability of their academic staff (Shrestha, 2025). According to Nwadiani et al. (2002), faculty members' quality, quantity, and effectiveness directly influence the overall educational outcomes. In higher education, faculties are considered the most valuable human assets, creating competitive advantages for their institutions (Adhikari & Shrestha, 2024; Shrestha & Chhetri, 2025; Adhikari & Shrestha, 2023; Collins & Clark, 2003). Retaining qualified staff is especially critical in the education sector, where the loss of experienced educators can undermine institutional effectiveness and academic excellence. Hussain (2005) highlights that this challenge has intensified as institutions face increasing pressure to attract and retain capable faculty, with failure to do so risking organizational setbacks, as observed by Day and Glick (2000). With numerous employment opportunities emerging in the sector, faculty retention has thus become a strategic priority for educational institutions globally.

The issue of employee turnover has gained prominence across industries, particularly in education, as organizations struggle to maintain skilled professionals amid rising competition (Ju & Li, 2019). Turnover is a complex problem with far-reaching consequences, impacting productivity, financial stability, and organizational goals (Ju & Li, 2019). The departure of key employees disrupts operations and necessitates costly recruitment and training, emphasizing the importance of understanding and addressing its root causes. Alkahtani (2015) emphasizes that organizational success hinges on retaining its critical workforce, and recent trends reveal that high turnover rates hinder various sectors' progress (Chiat & Panatik, 2019). Factors influencing turnover include organizational conditions such as pay, work environment, and size, as well as external factors like economic conditions, making it a multifaceted problem that demands comprehensive solutions.

In the education sector specifically, high teacher turnover significantly hampers organizational stability and student achievement (Aboudahab et al., 2022). Globally, the teacher turnover rate surpasses many other professions, with negative impacts on the quality of education and organizational continuity (Nwadiani, 2002). Private schools, in particular, face heightened challenges, as experienced teachers are in high demand and their loss affects learning quality and organizational stability (Chiat & Panatik, 2019). In Nepal, employee turnover in private schools has reached alarming levels, with studies like Upadhyaya et al. (2013) reporting rates as high as 18% in Butwal Municipality. Contributing factors include low salaries, lack of professional development opportunities, job insecurity, and insufficient recognition. The scarcity of research specifically on teacher retention in Nepalese private schools complicates efforts to develop effective strategies, despite the sector's critical role in providing quality education. This study aims to analyze the factors influencing turnover in Nepalese private schools, particularly in Mahalaxmi municipality, focusing on relationships with supervisors, compensation, work condition, job enrichment, and recognition. The findings will provide valuable insights for school managers, policymakers, and stakeholders to develop targeted retention strategies, fostering a more supportive work environment and reducing turnover rates.

Literature review

Employee Turnover and Factors Determining Turnover

Employee turnover is a crucial concept in organizational behavior and human resource management, referring to the process where employees leave an organization and are replaced by new hires. It encompasses voluntary departures, where employees choose to leave, and involuntary ones, such as layoffs or terminations (Shrestha, 2025). Nguyen (2024) describes turnover as the ratio of employees who leave over a specific period compared to the organization's average workforce, viewing it as part of a cyclical process of filling vacancies. High turnover rates often signal underlying issues like poor management, low employee engagement, or inadequate compensation, while low rates typically indicate a satisfied and stable workforce. The causes of turnover are multifaceted and can vary widely among individuals, making it a complex issue for organizations to manage (Adhikari, 2022). Factors influencing turnover include internal elements such as work environment, job satisfaction, relationships with supervisors, career development opportunities, and organizational culture (Pradhan et al., 2024). Employees are more likely to leave if they feel undervalued or dissatisfied with their roles. External factors, including economic conditions, industry trends, and job market opportunities, also significantly impact turnover. In educational institutions, organizational conditions like leadership quality and work environment are particularly influential in determining turnover rates, as emphasized by Mohammad and Borkoski (2024). Understanding these diverse factors enables organizations to develop strategies aimed at reducing turnover, improving employee retention, and fostering a more engaged and committed workforce.

Empirical Review

Thapa and Shrestha (2025) investigated the impact of factors such as compensation, career development, work-life balance, work environment, team dynamics, and leadership on employee retention. Their findings showed that compensation, career development, and team dynamics positively influence retention, indicating that improvements in these areas could reduce turnover. Conversely, work environment, work-life balance, and leadership did not significantly impact retention. Similarly, Khadayat et al. (2024) found that supportive supervisor relationships, favorable work conditions, and recognition significantly boost job satisfaction, thus reducing turnover intentions. K.C. and Bhusal (2024) identified that cultural aspects enhance organizational commitment and decrease turnover. Iraki (2024) highlighted the significance of work environment, training, and organizational policies on teacher performance. Idah (2024) emphasized that better remuneration, job security, and career opportunities improve job satisfaction and decrease turnover. Selesho and Matjie (2024) identified factors like micromanagement, poor communication, workload, and low pay as prominent drivers of turnover. Nguyen (2024) stressed collaboration and emotional support as vital for teacher satisfaction. Similarly, Mohammad and Borkoski (2024) revealed that lack of leadership support and limited career growth contributes to high turnover. Kaunda and Phiri (2024) found that compensation, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and benefits significantly influence retention, with comprehensive benefits being crucial. Al-Mahdy and Alazmi (2023) noted that principal support indirectly reduces turnover via increased teacher satisfaction. Scallan et al. (2023) identified effective leadership practices, like recognizing teachers and clear communication, as essential in low-turnover schools. In the US, Ingersoll and Tran (2023) linked high turnover in rural schools to poor working conditions. Li and Yao (2022) conducted a meta-analysis, noting burnout and stress as key factors increasing turnover, while organizational commitment and trust provided protective effects. Casely-Hayford et al. (2022) found health, motivation, and collegial support crucial for

retention, and Zhu et al. (2022) emphasized that organizational commitment and psychological capital negatively influence turnover intentions. Liu et al. (2021) revealed resilience reduces burnout and turnover, while Neupane (2019) identified salary, leadership, and growth opportunities as critical, and Kong et al. (2017) highlighted the importance of organizational commitment and rewards. Shah and Jumani (2015) stressed job satisfaction's role, especially pay, while Suta (2013) and Shah et al. (2010) demonstrated that personal factors and demographic influences significantly drive turnover intentions.

Research Methods

Research Design

This study has employed descriptive and causal-comparative research designs. The descriptive research design has been used to assess the status of teacher turnover intention in Nepalese private schools, while the causal-comparative research design has been applied to analyze the impact of relationships with supervisors, compensation, work condition, job enrichment, and recognition on turnover intention.

Population and Sample, and Sampling Design

Since this study has focused on employees of private schools in Mahalaxmi municipality, the total population has consisted of all teachers working in private schools within the municipality. Out of this population, a sample size of 385 has been selected for the study. Out of them, only 264 (68.57 percent) responses were received and used for data analysis purposes. Snowball sampling techniques were applied to get adequate sample of respondents. The respondents' demographic information is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the respondents

Variables	Level	N	%
Age	20–30	116	43.9
	30–40	92	34.8
	40–50	32	12.1
	Below 20	24	9.09
Marital Status	Unmarried	102	38.6
	Married	158	59.8
	Others	4	1.52
Level of Education	Masters and Above	80	30.3
	Bachelors	108	40.9
	Higher Secondary Level	54	20.5
	Secondary Level	22	8.33
Experience	7–10 years	87	33
	1–3 years	95	36
	5–7 years	82	31.1
Nature of Job	Full-Time	194	73.5
	Part-Time	52	19.7
	Permanent	14	5.3
	Contract Basis	4	1.52

Table 2 reports the demographic and employment characteristics of the respondents. The majority are aged 20–30 years (44%), followed by 30–40 years (35%), with smaller proportions below 20 years (9%) and 40–50 years (12%). Most are married (60%), and a significant portion is unmarried (39%). Regarding education, 41% have a bachelor's degree, with 30% holding a master's or higher qualification. Most work full-time (74%), while smaller groups are part-time (20%) or on contractual/permanent basis.

Nature and Sources of Data

This study has utilized a quantitative research approach, with primary data collected through a structured questionnaire survey. The questionnaire has been designed based on insights from previous studies, along with consultations with the senior experts and school management. The survey questionnaire consisted cover letter, and

demographic information of the respondents using multiple choice questions. Similarly, a five-point Likert scale was to scale the items of turnover intention and five independent variables ranging from "strongly disagree" (scored as 1) to "strongly agree" (scored as 5), to measure respondents' views. Table 2 indicates the items used in each study variable with their reliability scores.

Method of Analysis

The study has used descriptive analysis and correlation analysis to determine factors of teacher's turnover. Similarly, Pearson correlation was the inferential statistic used to analyze association amount the study variables specifically the independent variables and the dependent variable. The study has used descriptive analysis and correlation analysis to determine factors of teacher turnover. Similarly, Pearson correlation was the inferential statistic used to analyze the association among the study variables.

Table 2: Reliability score of the data collection instruments

Code	Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
RS	Relationship with Supervisors	0.85	6
CS	Compensation	0.89	7
WC	Work Condition	0.76	5
JE	Job Enrichment	0.91	6
RG	Recognition	0.91	5
TI	Turnover Intention	0.91	7

Table 2 indicates that variables exhibit acceptable to excellent reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.76 to 0.91. Turnover Intention (0.91), Recognition (0.91), and Job Enrichment (0.91) demonstrate excellent reliability, while Compensation (0.89) and Relationship with Supervisor (0.85) indicate good consistency. Work Condition has the lowest reliability (0.76) but remains acceptable. These findings confirm that the instrument is reliable for measuring the intended constructs, ensuring consistency in responses. Further refinement could focus on improving the reliability of work condition by assessing individual item contributions.

Research Framework and study hypotheses

The conceptual framework of the study aims to investigate the relationship between relationship with supervisors, compensation, work condition, job enrichment, and recognition with turnover intention. Figure 1 depicts the study variables of the study.

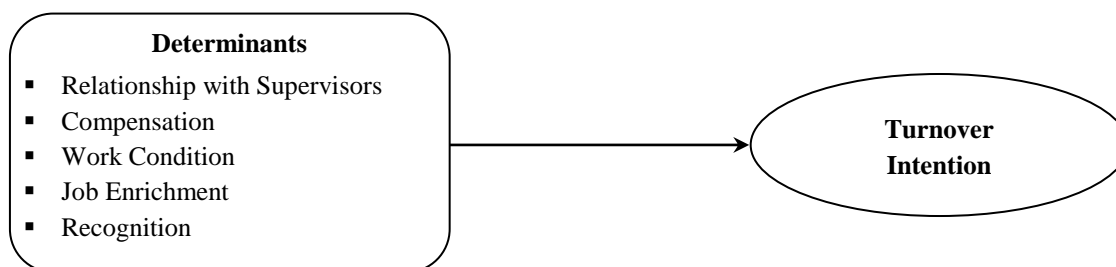


Figure 1: Research Framework of the Study (Source: Khadayat et al., 2024)

The framework illustrates the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. In this context, the independent variables—such as relationships with supervisors, compensation, work conditions, job enrichment, and recognition—are factors believed to influence teachers' turnover intention. The dependent variable is the turnover intention, representing teachers' likelihood or intention to leave their jobs. The framework posits that improvements or deficiencies in the independent variables can directly impact turnover intention. For example, better supervisor relationships and recognition may decrease turnover, while inadequate compensation or poor work conditions may increase it. This model helps understand how these factors collectively influence teacher retention. The following study hypotheses have been constructed to analyze the degree and direction of the relationship between the study variables.

- H1: Teacher's relationship with supervisors is significantly associated with turnover intention.
- H2: Existing compensation of the teachers is significantly associated with turnover intention.
- H3: The work conditions of teachers are significantly related to turnover intention.
- H4: The job enrichment provisions are significantly associated with turnover intention.
- H5: Recognition of teacher's performance is significantly associated with turnover intention.

Results and Findings

Descriptive Statistics of the study variables

Table 3 depicts basic descriptive statistics on turnover intention and its determinants in Nepalese private schools as per teachers' perceptions.

Table 3: Summary of Descriptive Statistics

Code	Variables	Mean	S.D
RS	Relationship with Supervisors	3.496	0.729
CS	Compensation	2.961	0.926
WC	Work Condition	3.323	0.677
JE	Job Enrichment	3.492	0.902
RG	Recognition	2.961	0.966
TI	Turnover Intention	3.267	0.933

The mean score for relationships with supervisors (RS) is 3.496, indicating generally positive perceptions, with employees feeling supported. Compensation (CS) has a mean of 2.961, reflecting a neutral to slightly negative view, suggesting inadequate financial rewards. Work condition (WC) has a mean of 3.323, indicating moderate satisfaction, though improvements are needed. Job enrichment (JE) scored 3.492, implying that employees find their jobs somewhat motivating and growth-oriented. Recognition (RG) has a mean of 2.961, suggesting employees feel their efforts are not sufficiently acknowledged, which could impact satisfaction. The overall turnover intention (TI) score is 3.267, indicating a moderate level of employees considering leaving. Addressing factors like compensation and recognition could help reduce turnover intention and improve retention.

Association between the selected determinants and turnover intention

Table 4: Result of correlation and hypotheses tests

Variables	Correlation coefficient	p-value	Hypotheses	Hypotheses test result
RS	-0.215	< .001	Teacher's relationship with supervisors is significantly associated with turnover intention.	Accepted
CS	-0.335	< .001	Existing compensation of the teachers is significantly associated with turnover intention.	Accepted
WC	-0.124	0.044	The work conditions of teachers are significantly related to turnover intention.	Accepted
JE	-0.205	< .001	The job enrichment provisions are significantly associated with turnover intention.	Accepted
RG	-0.397	< .001	Recognition of teacher's performance is significantly associated with turnover intention.	Accepted

The result has indicated that the relationship with supervisors (RS) has an inverse and significant association with the turnover intention (TI) of the teachers ($r = -0.215$, $p < .001$). In addition, compensation (CS) of teachers (CS) has a moderate negative and significant relationship ($r = -0.335$, $p < .001$) with turnover intention. Work condition (WC) has a weak negative and significant association with turnover intention ($r = -0.124$, $p < .05$). Similarly, job enrichment (JE) and turnover intention has a significant negative association ($r = -0.205$, $p < .001$). Finally, the correlation between recognition (RG) and turnover intention is negative and significant ($r = -0.397$, $p < .001$). Based on these empirical results, all independent determinants have inverse and significant associations with the turnover intention of the teachers thus all hypotheses have been accepted. Similarly, no strong association between the variables was observed.

Discussion

This study found that in Nepalese private schools, key factors such as relationships with supervisors, compensation, work conditions, job enrichment, and recognition negatively influence teachers' intentions to leave. Specifically, higher rewards and acknowledgment (recognition) and better compensation have moderate and significant effects in reducing turnover intention. Relationships with supervisors and job enrichment, however, showed weaker but still significant negative impacts. Interestingly, work conditions, although negatively associated, had a less robust impact,

and in some findings, better work environments unexpectedly increased turnover intentions, possibly prompting teachers to seek other opportunities.

These findings align with recent research. Ghasemy and Yuan (2024) observed that situational factors, including recognition and compensation, impact turnover in Malaysian universities. Khadayat et al. (2024) also identified supervisor relationships, work conditions, and recognition as crucial for employee retention. K.C. and Bhusal (2024) emphasized organizational culture's role, especially clan culture, in reducing turnover, which complements this research. Conversely, Iraki (2024) reported that compensation and leadership did not significantly influence teacher performance, which contrasts with this study's conclusions.

Additional studies support these results—Idah (2024) found a negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover, reinforcing the importance of compensation. Nyongesa et al. (2024) highlighted professional well-being and recognition as vital for retention, aligning with current findings. However, some research, like Shaya et al. (2024), focused more on leadership stresses, showing divergence regarding compensation's role. Overall, improving compensation, recognition, and supervisor relationships can effectively reduce turnover intentions, although the impact of work environments warrants further exploration.

Conclusion

The basic aim of this paper was to analyze the association of private school teacher's turnover intention with some selected determinants. The study findings indicate that various factors significantly influence teachers' turnover intention. Teacher-supervisor relationships (RS), compensation (CS), work conditions (WC), job enrichment (JE), and recognition (RG) all show negative correlations with turnover intention, suggesting that improvements in these areas may reduce turnover intention. All hypotheses tested were accepted, confirming their significant associations. Among these, recognition of performance (RG) exhibited the strongest relationship, followed by compensation and teacher-supervisor relationships. Addressing these key factors could be crucial for retaining teachers, enhancing job satisfaction, and reducing turnover rates in educational institutions.

Implications

The empirical findings of this study may support schools to formulate and enforce some specific policies and programs in order to minimize their turnover intention. For this purpose, schools may adopt a comprehensive strategy. Offering competitive salaries and financial incentives can attract and retain talented teachers, while formal recognition systems foster motivation and job satisfaction. Enhancing work conditions and providing career development opportunities are essential to keep staff engaged and prevent external job moves. Training programs for supervisors can strengthen leadership and communication, promoting better engagement with employees. A structured retention plan combining financial rewards, career growth, and employee well-being will more effectively minimize turnover rates. Future research should explore additional psychological and organizational factors like job stress, organizational commitment, and work-life balance. Long-term studies and sector comparisons can reveal evolving challenges and sector-specific factors, while qualitative methods like interviews can provide deeper insights into employee motivations. Examining different regions and types of private schools will enable tailored retention strategies, addressing unique institutional needs, and enhancing overall workforce stability.

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