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Factors Associated with Intentions to Leave or Stay among Faculty Members in the Colleges of Pharmacy in Metro Manila

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Research Article

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Abstract

Objective: To determine the factors that are associated with the intentions to leave or stay among the faculty members in the Colleges of Pharmacy in Metro Manila.
Methodology: The study employed a correlational research design with survey and interview as data collection methods. All faculty members employed in the twelve schools of pharmacy in Metro Manila were included in the survey. Interviews were conducted for the 11 schools of pharmacy through the deans or a college representative either via face to face, phone or email correspondence.
Results: Results revealed that faculty members are predominantly female, single, with mean age of 35 years, with Bachelor's degree, with rank of instructor, work full time and are more likely to stay (mean=5.04) than leave (mean=3.13) in the next 5 years. Females, those with graduate education, married, with higher academic ranks, permanent, full time, from privately funded institution and higher salaries demonstrated higher average intention to stay scores and consequently lower average intention to leave scores. Campus governance, perceived institutional support and salary were identified as explanatory variables for intention to stay while stress, campus governance and salary for intention to leave.
Conclusion: The study results suggest that college or university officials have the capacity to minimize turnover through attending to institutional and contextual aspects of their work environments.

Keywords: *Intention to leave, intention to stay, faculty retention*

Introduction

Faculty turnover and retention are underlying concerns for colleges and universities across different disciplines both in the national and international settings. While there have been a dearth of literature regarding this issue in the national context, these are widely studied concepts in education in the international setting because of the perceived effects on the quality of teaching and schooling[1][2][3].

In the field of pharmacy, faculty retention is viewed with increasing urgency because of the pressing concerns in the academe such as unfilled vacancies, projected rise in the enrolment and consequently increased faculty demand, increased faculty retirements, increased non-academic salaries that entice steer potential faculty members into non-academic careers, decreased numbers of professional students entering graduate education and increased opportunities for faculty members to work outside the academy[4][5][6]. International literature abound that investigate faculty retention and turnover in an effort to identify strategies in order to address this concern [3][6][7][8][9][10]. In the Philippines however, there have been no published studies yet that look at this concept. This study aimed to describe the current faculty workforce in Metro Manila, identify issues confronting faculty retention by assessing faculty intentions to stay or leave the academe and determine factors associated with it.

Material and Method

The The study employed a correlational research design to explore the relationships between the independent variables (demographic variables, institutional characteristics, contextual work environment) and the dependent variables, intention to leave and intention to stay.

Population of the Study
This study included 12 of the 13 schools of pharmacy in Metro Manila. The survey targeted all the faculty

members of the schools of pharmacy. Interviews were conducted with the deans of these schools.

Instrumentation

This study utilized a structured questionnaire for the survey and a schedule for the interview. The questionnaire was adapted from the works of Conklin and Desselle (2007 and 2010)[6][7], Smart (1990)[11], Rosser (2004)[12], Eisenberger et al. (1986)[13], and Gmelch et al.(1984)[14].

The four-page questionnaire consisted of 6-point Likert scale items which measured organizational decline (4 items), campus governance (6 items), perceived institutional support (9 items), job satisfaction (26 items) and stress (17 items). Demographic characteristics, other institutional characteristics and salary and benefits were also asked. Intentions to stay and leave were measured from a scale of 1 (extremely likely) to 7 (extremely unlikely). Likewise, reasons that will most likely make the faculty leave or stay in the University were asked. The instrument was pre-tested in order to determine the appropriateness and clarity of the items and was revised accordingly.

For the interview, the schedule primarily consisted of open ended questions which asked about number of students, teachers, vacancies and faculty retention concerns.

Data Collection Procedure

Endorsement from the Philippine Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (PACOP) was sought prior to conduct of study. Approval was then obtained from the deans of the schools. Questionnaires were sent to these schools personally or through their deans to be distributed to their faculty members. The survey was conducted from November 2011 to January 2012.

Interviews with the deans of the schools of pharmacy and PACOP president were conducted in order to understand the concerns of school administrators regarding faculty retention. This also served as a venue to clarify some issues that were revealed in the survey.
Informed consent for all forms of data collection was collected to ensure that participation in the study was voluntary.

Analysis of Data

All quantitative data were encoded in Microsoft Excel 2007, after which imported to SPSS version 12, where all statistical tests were performed. Pearson correlation and multiple regression analyses were performed on the dependent and independent variables to test for any significant relationships. Prior to the multiple regression analysis, all non-metric variables were converted to dummy variables through indicator coding.

The key informant interviews were initially transcribed verbatim using a template specific to the form used during the interview. These were then coded and displayed in matrices using Microsoft Word 2007. Content analysis was performed on the qualitative data generated.

Results

Demographic Characteristics

Of the 12 schools of pharmacy included, only one was publicly funded. The number of teachers per school varied from six (6) to 34. The number of students per school was also highly varied. A total of 58% (107 out of 184 faculty members) participated in the study. Majority of the respondents of the survey were female, single, with mean age of 35 years, with Bachelor's degree, with rank of instructor, with a temporary appointment and work full time (Table 1). In the interview with the deans, it was found that the number of part time faculty members ranges from 6% to 100%.

Institutional and Work Environment Characteristics

Eighty two percent (82%) of the respondents were from private institutions (Table 1). Majority of the faculty members' responsibility was teaching and only 27% mentioned research as one of their functions. About 36% of the respondents were involved in research. Research productivity however was low as indicated by the average number of publications of one (1) per faculty produced in the last two years.

Only twenty four percent (24%) indicated a salary range of PhP20,001-25,000 (USD: $477-596) a month. The benefits received by teachers were also varied. These included paid leaves (sick, maternity, paternity, study), sponsorship to conferences and seminars, educational benefits for dependents, hospital benefits, longevity pay, hazard allowance and subsistence allowance among others.

The mean score for organizational decline was 2.49 (Table 2). Organizational decline is a measure of the perceptions of the enrolment and financial concerns that an institution is experiencing. Mean ratings close to 1 denote no or limited financial concerns. The average score therefore denotes that the faculty perceived that their institutions are suffering from limited financial concerns although they also felt that the institutions have only slightly addressed whatever financial concerns it is experiencing as demonstrated by the 3.17 mean score.

The average campus governance score was 4.65 (Table 2). Campus governance is a measure of the perceptions of the type of governance or management that an institution has. Values close to 6 or away from 1 indicate that the institution has a democratic form of governance. The score suggested that faculty members felt that governance in their institutions is somewhat

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Faculty-respondents (n=107)

VARIABLES	ATTRIBUTES	%	FREQUENCY
Sex	Male	30.8	73
	Female	68.2	33
Age	Mean	35.2	
Highest educational attainment	Bachelor	46.7	50
	Master	37.4	40
	Doctorate	9.3	10
	Others	3.7	4
Civil status	Single	72.9	78
	Married	23.4	25
	Separated/ divorce	0.9	1
	Others	0.9	1
Academic rank	Instructor	48.6	52
	Assistant Professor	21.5	23
	Associate Professor	11.2	12
	Professor	4.7	6
	Lecturer	3.7	3
	Other	4.7	5
Average length of employment	Mean		7 years
	Range		0 – 34 years
Work status	Part time	14	15
	Full time	81.3	87
Type of appointment	Temporary	49.5	53
	Permanent	42.1	45
Type of institution	Private		
	Public		
Average monthly income (in Philippine Peso) 1USD = PhP41.97	Less than 10,000*	8.4	9
	10,000 – 15,000	17.8	19
	15,001 – 20,000	23.4	25
	20,001 – 25,000	24.3	26

democratic in nature. There were venues for them to share their opinions and be involved in the decision-making process.

Table 3 presents the average scores of faculty perceptions on their work environment. The perceived organizational support mean score was 4.63 which indicated positive perceptions by teachers on the support provided to them by their respective colleges. The mean job stress score was 2.90 which indicated moderate stress. Among the different dimensions of stress, the faculty considered time constraints (3.23) as most stressful followed by receiving inadequate salary to meet financial needs (3.44). Department influence (2.49) was considered as least stressful which indicated positive working relationships with their department chairs. The average job satisfaction score was 4.46. Among its different dimensions, faculty members scored highest in collegiality (4.89) and lowest in scholarship (4.11).

Factors associated with Intentions to Stay and Leave

The average intention to stay score was 5.04 while the average intention to leave score was 3.13. The range of mean intention to stay scores across schools was a high 6.50 to a low 3.75, although among individuals it ranged from 1 to 7 for both variables. The three most frequently cited reasons to stay in the academe were (good) relationship with colleagues, job security, good reputation of institution and relationship with college administration. On the other hand, the three most common reasons to leave academe were desire for change, seeking for an alternative career path and low salary. Interviews with the deans also cited similar reasons why their faculty members remain or leave the academe.

Table 2. Perceptions of Faculty Respondents on Institutional Characteristics and their Work Environment (n=107)

VARIABLES		MEAN	SD
Organizational decline		**2.49**	**0.97**
Campus governance		**4.65**	**0.88**
Perceived organizational support		**4.63**	**0.92**
Job stress	**DIMENSIONS**		
	Reward and recognition	3.03	1.47
	Time constraints	3.23	1.51
	Department influence	2.49	1.41
	Professional identity	3.08	1.48
	Student interaction	2.71	1.25
	Overall job stress score	**2.90**	**1.18**
Job satisfaction	Resources for scholarship	4.11	1.24
	Equitable and supportive climate	4.54	1.00
	Requirements for promotion and tenure	4.42	1.13
	Availability of a graduate program	4.39	1.24
	Collegiality	4.89	0.94
	Teaching environment	4.77	0.88
	Overall job satisfaction score	**4.46**	**0.92**

The mean intention to stay scores revealed that females, those with graduate education, married, with higher academic ranks, permanent, full time, from privately funded institution and higher salaries had higher scores and are therefore more likely to stay in the academe (Table 3). Consequently faculty members with these characteristics also demonstrated lower intention to leave scores.

For intention to stay as the dependent variable, out of the 18 variables entered into the analysis, Pearson correlation coefficients revealed only five variables to be significantly associated (Table 4). In contrast, with intention to leave as the dependent variable six variables were significantly correlated.

Multiple regression analysis with intention to stay as dependent variable afforded three variables namely, campus governance, perceived institutional support and dummy for more than 25,001 (Figure 1). These variables explained 20.9% variation in intention to stay. Among these variables, the dummy variable, more than 25,001 (salary), is the strongest predictor for a person to stay in the academe.

Table 3. Mean and SDs for Intentions to Stay and Leave Scores across Demographic and Institutional Characteristics (n=107)

VARIABLES	ATTRIBUTES	INTENTION TO STAY	INTENTION TO LEAVE
Sex	Male	4.90 (2.01)	3.00 (2.02)
	Female	4.94 (1.97)	3.23 (1.96)
Education	Bachelor	4.36 (2.03)	3.69 (1.99)
	Master	5.27 (1.91)	2.32 (1.52)
	Doctorate	6.33 (1.63)	1.67 (1.63)
Civil status	Single	4.68 (1.98)	3.14 (1.94)
	Married	5.85 (1.77)	2.31 (1.65)
Academic rank	Instructor	4.54 (2.02)	3.44 (1.99)
	Assistant Professor	5.17 (1.47)	2.50 (1.24)
	Associate Professor	5.88 (2.23)	2.13 (2.23)
	Professor	5.00 (2.83)	3.00 (2.83)
	Lecturer	5.00 (3.46)	2.33 (2.31)
Tenure	Temporary	4.61 (1.95)	3.32 (1.85)
	Permanent	5.30 (2.14)	2.52 (1.06)
Appointment status	Part time	4.64 (1.86)	3.09 (1.76)
	Full time	4.91 (2.08)	3.02 (2.01)
Ownership of school	Private	4.89 (1.99)	2.98 (1.95)
	Gov't.	4.88 (1.99)	3.25 (2.02)
Salary	Less than 10,000	3.83 (1.94)	4.00 (1.67)
	10,000 - 15,000	4.27 (2.10)	3.27 (2.28)
	15,001 - 20,000	4.69 (2.14)	3.46 (2.15)
	20,001 - 25,000	4.44 (1.89)	3.17 (1.82)
	Other	6.25 (1.57)	2.00 (1.55)

Table 4. Pearson Correlation of Independent Variables with Intentions to Stay or Leave

	INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	INTENTION TO STAY		INTENTION TO LEAVE	
		r	p	r	p
Demographic characteristic	Dummy for assistant professor	0.10	0.22	-0.14	0.17
	Dummy for senior faculty	0.11	0.22	-0.11	0.21
	Dummy for part time	-0.13	0.18	0.18	0.10
	Sex_female	0.04	0.37	-0.16	0.13
	Dummy for married	0.14	0.15	-0.09	0.26
	Length of employment	0.23*	0.04	-0.24*	0.04
Institutional characteristic	Age of the Colleges of Pharmacy	0.21	0.06	-0.10	0.23
	Teaching hours	-0.21	0.06	0.22	0.05
	Campus governance	0.39**	0.00	-0.37**	0.00
	Organizational decline	-0.15	0.14	0.22	0.05
Work environment characteristic	Dummy for 10,000-15,000	-0.04	0.38	-0.12	0.21
	Dummy for 15,001-25,000	-0.14	0.16	0.30*	0.01
	Dummy for more than 25,001	0.36**	0.00	-0.30*	0.02
	Teaching load	0.00	0.47	0.02	0.45
	Perceived institutional support	0.37**	0.00	-0.26*	0.03
	Number of students	-0.17	0.11	0.39**	0.00
	Stress	0.04	0.38	-0.01	0.47
	Job satisfaction	0.30*	0.01	-0.27*	0.02

*Significant at α = 0.05, **Significant at α = 0.01

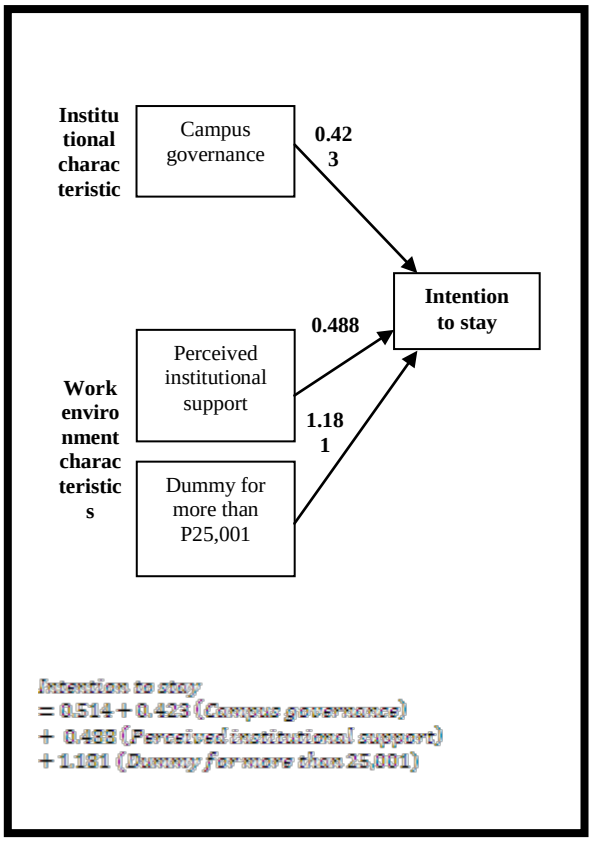

Figure 1. Regression Model for Intention to Stay

Multiple regression analysis with intention to leave as the dependent variable on the other hand showed the variables, stress, campus governance and dummy for more than 25,001, to explain 17.5% of the variation in intention to leave. The regression model and equation generated are shown in Figure 2. The model indicates that campus governance is the strongest predictor for a faculty to leave the academe.

The interviews conducted with the heads of the colleges revealed that the number of faculty members at present is sufficient although some indicated having faculty retention concerns especially those with primarily part time faculty.

Discussion

The pharmacy faculty workforce in Metro Manila is predominantly young and female and may be classified in the early stages of their careers as demonstrated by the large proportion in the instructor level. There was also a high percentage of faculty members without graduate degrees, non-tenured and work part time. Beardsley et al. (2008)[4] implicated that a relatively large number of practice faculty members in the non-tenure track can be indicative of faculty retention concerns which was actually confirmed in the interviews with the

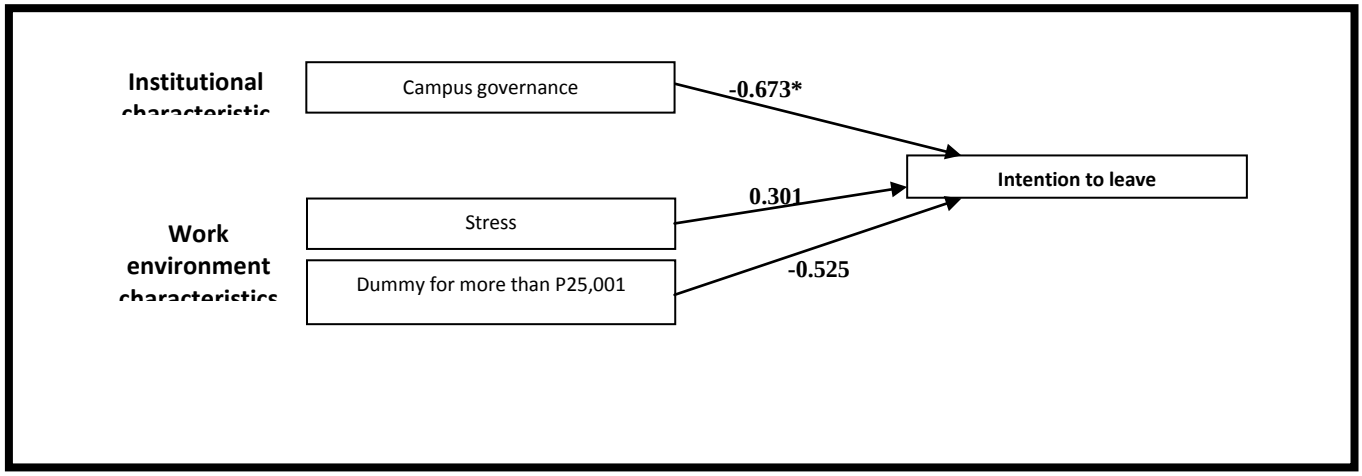

Figure 2. Regression Model for Intention to Leave

deans. The demographic characteristics of the pharmacy faculty in Metro Manila are in contrast with that of the US where the existing concerns include feminization and "graying" or retirement[5]. The pharmacy faculty in Metro Manila has always been dominated by females although the changing demographics of having a significant number of young faculty presents extra challenges on retention considering the increasing lucrative opportunities to work outside the academe either in the country or abroad.

The demographic characteristics of the faculty also provide specific directions in designing appropriate faculty development programs. Faculty development approaches should differ depending on the career stages of the faculty members since they have varying needs. Lipetz et al. (1986)[15] further added that it should address the full spectrum of faculty responsibilities as well as needs identified by the institutions and faculty themselves and must therefore include instructional, organizational and personal aspects for them to truly have a lasting impact.

The average intention to stay score is relatively higher than and negatively correlated with intention to leave. In general, this indicates that faculty members are more likely to stay in the academe in the next five years. This corroborates with the results of the interviews in that a majority of the deans admitted that there are no faculty retention concerns at present. However these figures might be too fragile considering that the demographic characteristics painted a different picture.

Overall, intention to stay can be explained by campus governance, perceived institutional support and salary (dummy for more than 25,001). On the other hand, stress, campus governance and salary (dummy for more than 25,001) are factors that could explain variation in intention to leave. Salary is a widely accepted and studied concept that significantly affects faculty retention. While researches suggest that salary is not the most important aspect of faculty satisfaction, it is identified as a major reason for leaving the academe [11][12][16][17][18]. Perceived institutional support is the second highest explanatory variable for intention to stay. Dee (2004)[19] suggested that faculty members are likely to continue working in an organization when their expectancies and values are adequately fulfilled which can be explained by the norm of reciprocity. Support can come as mentoring programs, professional support or other related faculty development programs which literature suggests have been effective strategies to retain faculty[18][20]. The type of governance also affects a faculty's likelihood to stay or leave the academe. Smart (1990)[11] denoted that the adoption of a more democratic governance pattern and faculty perceptions of greater influence in the governance process contribute to higher levels of job satisfaction which in turn could reduce a faculty's intentions to leave. In this study however, job satisfaction is not a significant explanatory variable for both intentions. This could indicate that job satisfaction indirectly affects faculty intentions especially so that it is significantly correlated with campus governance. There are conflicting studies on job satisfaction and stress as predictors of a person's intention to leave the academe. Some studies indicate that job satisfaction significantly predicts a person's intention to leave in both academic and non-academic organizations [11][12]. Barnes et al. (1998) [21] demonstrated stress specifically that which is associated with excessive time demands to explain 11% of the variance in intent to leave academia. Others however suggested that job satisfaction and stress are important quality of work life variables but play a relatively small role in turnover intentions and actual turnover rates[6].

In general, these results suggested that organizational climate or environment appeared to be a key explanatory variable for the variances observed in either intention. Even the frequently cited reasons for leaving or staying in the academe are within the realm of organizational environment or the dissatisfiers in Herzberg's motivation-maintenance theory. Literature states that

behaviour of people in organizational life is a function of the interaction between their inner motivational needs and characteristics and characteristics of the environment [22].

The regression models however generated in this study can only explain 20.9% and 17.5% respectively of the variations in these dependent variables. While the amount of variance explained is relatively small, this is actually consistent with the amount of variance commonly explained in studies of college attrition [11] and even slightly higher to that of Smart (1990) from which the model was adapted.

This study however is not without limitations. It relied on self-reports and therefore accuracy of data actually depended on the honesty of the respondents. There is also a potential for nonresponsive bias given the low response rates and a dominance of fulltime faculty who responded even when interviews with the heads of the school revealed a substantial number of part time faculty members. The amount of variance that can be explained by the variables in the models generated is also relatively low and should therefore be interpreted with caution.

Conclusion

The results of this study revealed that the factors significantly associated with intention to leave and intention to stay are the institutional factor, campus governance; and work-environment variables, perceived institutional support, stress and salary. These variables fall within the realm of organizational climate. Hence, this study especially highlighted the importance of organizational climate in the behaviour of people in an organization. These suggest that educational leaders have the capacity minimize turnover by altering the organizational environment and hopefully indirectly alter or influence the inner state of the individuals that make up the organization. If the institution aims to enhance retention among its faculty, it could increase the support it provides to its faculty endeavours, reduce stress, adopt more democratic leadership styles and initiate more democratic governance processes.

Faculty intention to leave the academe is a complex phenomenon. Results of this study and existing literature implicate that there is neither one model that could adequately explain faculty turnover or retention nor a model that may be applicable to all institutions. Institutional differences exist and it is in this context that faculty retention must be understood in order to identify specific strategies to effectively address these. While faculty retention is not yet an emerging concern for some schools of pharmacy in the country, there is a need to monitor, evaluate trends and study current workforce in order to detect problems early on and hence appropriate policies or programs can be created to resolve such concerns.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Dr. Loquias did the conceptualization, conduct of the study, data analysis and manuscript write- up. Dr Sana significantly contributed in the overall conception, analysis and interpretation of study results.

PEER REVIEW

Not commissioned; externally peer reviewed

DECLARATION

The full paper will be orally presented in the 24th FAPA Congress to be held at Bali, Indonesia on September 13-16, 2012.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no competing interests