

## Full Length Research Paper

# The Pattern, Intent, and Causes of Employees Turnover in Debreberhan University

Haile Kalayu<sup>1,2</sup>, Bekele Meaza<sup>1</sup>, Melese Abebe<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Management, College of Business and Economics, Debreberhan University, Debreberhan, Ethiopia

<sup>2</sup>Department of Management, College of Business and Economics, Raya University, Maichew, Ethiopia

Corresponding author. E-mail: [hailekl4@gmail.com](mailto:hailekl4@gmail.com), [medbekele@gmail.com](mailto:medbekele@gmail.com), [melese.abebe@gmail.com](mailto:melese.abebe@gmail.com) ORCID ID  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5303-8289>

Accepted 27 January, 2020

In this survey study the investigators used a quantitative research method and a stratified sampling technique. Data was collected from the existing staff through a five-point Likert scale structured questionnaire. Besides the overall trend of human resource mobility was collected from the HR Directorate of the organization. To organize and process the data gathered through the questionnaire the software Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyze the data. All the data collected is presented in the form of tables. It is, then, concluded that DBU has had a high rate of turnover for the last four years from 2004 to 2007 E.C. (with an average 9.04% and 8.23% turnover rate of academic and administrative employees, respectively). It may also keep facing Turnover of its employees in the future as it is evident from the data analysis that a large amount of the employees of DBU usually think to leave the organization soon if any alternative job comes. The main push causes of turnover intention in both the academic staff and administrative staff are: inadequate salary, inadequate fringe benefits, and inadequate motivation and encouragement, among others.

**Keywords:** Employees Turnover, Pattern of Employees Turnover, Turnover Intent, Causes of Turnover, Human Resource Management

## INTRODUCTION

Human power is the key resource to any organization. Goals that are set at the corporate level can be achieved through the unreserved effort exerted by employees of any organization. Similarly, instructors and administrative staff members in higher institutions, such as Debreberhan University, have an indispensable role in working towards producing capable graduates that the labor market requires to accomplish different tasks. Hence, proper handling of the human power in any organization is the major focus of any manager to be competent in the competitive and dynamic business world through reducing turnover of experienced and best employees. Employee turnover is a well-recognized issue of critical importance to organizations. The question of employee turnover has come to gain greater attention, especially in this new century. Organizations all over the world, in various industries, have faced this problem at

some stages of their evolution. Companies now take a deep interest in their employee turnover rate because it is a costly part of doing business. Lack of employee continuity involves high costs in the induction and training of new staff. Organizational productivity is also one of the challenges that arise as a consequence of turnover (Siong et al., 2006). There are costs like costs of replacing the leaving employee, costs of training and development (both on-the-job and off-the-job training costs), indirect costs like costs of stoppage and postponement of tasks, etc. As a result of excessive turnover organizations incur additional costs and hold their performance. Existing staff will be stressed due to the additional responsibilities to cover the vacant posts. Regarding financial costs, for instance, NGOs are forced to allocate significant amounts of money. For vacancy advertisements up to Birr 1,035 per half a page of

onetime advertisement in the newspaper and recruitment costs like pre-employment medical cost Birr 300, transportation to duty station Birr 1300, travel expense Birr 400 for a single employee, Group orientation Birr 2160, Relocation/shipment expenses for personal belonging ETB 1,500.00. Even smaller organizations are forced to assign personnel to process frequent staff resignations and recruitment activities. As a result of the high turnover in the organizations, most of them are exposed to low productivity in terms of quality and quantity of work (Yared 2007). This may in return significantly affect the organization by creating difficulties in achieving its desired mission at the required time. In the case of higher educational institutions, the cost of employee turnover is higher as human resources with knowledge and competencies are the key assets and it affects the academic and research activities of the universities. Quitting in the mid of the semester, the effect is very high as it is difficult for both the university to arrange the substitute and the student to adjust/accept new instructors in the middle of the course the same is true for administrative employees. Debreberhan University, which is an 8-year-old university, is established in the 600-year-old historical town-Debreberhan – a town situated in Amhara Region, North Shoa zone, 130 km away from Addis Ababa in the north. The most powerful explanation for the establishment of the University is the government's commitment to the expansion of quality higher education as well as ensuring a reasonable distribution of higher education in the country. Based on these organizing explanations the foundation stone was laid down on 9th May, 2005 G.C by Her Excellency w/ro Genet Zewdie, the then Ministry of Minister of Education of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Thereafter, the construction of the university was started on a total land area of 102 hectares which was given by the City Administration of Debreberhan Town. The initial intake capacity of the university (in Jan. 2007 G.C.) was 725 students who joined into 5 departments with 68 instructors and 7 administrative staff. But now, the enrolment has significantly increased to around 14,000 regular, extension, and summer students who joined 35 departments/ programs under ten colleges, two institutes, and eight postgraduate programs. Miraculously to its being young, the management fervently and zealously envisions becoming one of the best universities in Ethiopia by 2020 G.C. Hence, it is adamantly and unrelentingly working and undertaking massive organizational activities in terms of human resource development and construction with an overview to further enhance its institutional capacity in areas of producing competent graduates, conducting problem-solving research, and offering community services.

([http://www.dbu.edu.et/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=67&Itemid=77](http://www.dbu.edu.et/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=67&Itemid=77) accessed: Friday, 08 Jul 2016) Debreberhan University as an emerging higher

education institution is trying its level best to make remarkable records in the achievements of educational quality goals of the nation. And it is by utilizing its human resource capabilities that the desired accessibility and quality of education is to be ensured. Therefore, retaining competent employees is more valuable than hiring new employees since it is as such difficult to replace them. Several efforts have been made by Debreberhan University to make its working environment conducive to its workers: Many things have changed since the establishment of the university in 1999 E.C. especially the facilities essential to employees in the effective and efficient performance of their jobs like offices, computers, internet services, availability of books and other equipment's, cafeteria services, a well fenced gardens of the compass, provision of housing services and training and development opportunities are the most evident good job done so far, among others. These efforts along with the health advantage of the natural weather conditions of the town, Debreberhan, can attract employees to and retain in the university. However, there may be further work expected to be done if it is possible to retain some of the employees moving out of the organization. Being able to make workers stay in their current jobs is as crucial as or maybe more important than giving them opportunities for training and development. To do this, clearly discovering the real trend of turnover during the seventh year lifetime of the university, and knowing the causes of the turnover intent is mandatory as it could help in finding the solutions the university should be able to perform in its future run of producing competent students in the market. And so, as employee turnover is a widely researched phenomenon, a huge amount of theoretical and empirical literature identified various factors/reasons responsible for employee turnover. However, there is no standard reason why people leave organizations (Ongor 2007). Retention of employees has been termed as one of the most significant challenges of the 21st century (Drucker 1999). Studies have differentiated between actual turnover and turnover intent, with more focus on turnover intent. Actual turnover is more difficult to predict because it involves the study of those individuals who have left their organizations. It is difficult to trace such individuals and retrieve data from them. However, turnover intent is termed to be the most predictive sign of actual turnover in an organization (Bluedorn 1982). In today's world of knowledge-based economy, universities are recognized as major actors in economic development and growth. To play this role successfully, universities need to have well-qualified and motivated staff. This involves both the academic and administrative staff. University employees, especially, academic staff are a key resource to the institution's success. The performance of academic staff, both as teachers and researchers determines, to a large extent, the quality of the student experience of higher education and has a significant impact on student learning and

thereby on the contribution that such institutions can make to society. However, one of the biggest challenges many African Universities continue to face is the attraction and retention of top performers (Mihyo 2007). Employee retention is becoming an important issue for organizations. For that reason, the study mainly focused on the turnover intention and causes of intent to turnover at Debreberhan University.

### Statement of the Problem

The costs of employee turnover and replacement are huge and becoming less bearable in the fast-paced economy. Public Universities in Ethiopia, altogether, have been experiencing accelerated labor turnover seemingly due to different factors (Debrah 1994). As one of the higher education institutions in Ethiopia, Debreberhan University is facing the problem of high turnover as more choices have become available to a limited pool of instructors. For instance, according to the data from the human resource management directorate of Debreberhan University, 87 (78 male and 7 female) instructors and 75 (49 male and 26 female) administrative employees that total of 162 employees have vacated their current jobs from July, 2012 to October 18, 2013 alone. Compared to the 409 instructors, 471 administrative employees, and 68 technical assistants a total of 948 employees that are on the job in the same year, this rate of turnover is a bit high. At Debreberhan University, it was reported and observed that several instructors decided to quit academics for different known and/or unknown reasons. Some of the general reasons mentioned in the exit questionnaires filled out by employees who quit their jobs are resignation and transfer. Specifically a few of the causes, which were specified in the annual performance report and some from the employees' informal communications in the university, which drive the employees not to stay in the organization understudy are inadequacy of the benefits package (compensations); the closeness of the university to the capital city of the country, Addis Ababa, where there can be wide chance of applying for vacancies to be employed in permanent and part-time basis; for positions that are better paying which enable them accumulate enough financial resource; and to ensure comfortable retirement. Almost no studies have been carried out on turnover intentions in the university so far and no significant remedial action is in use to address this problem in the university. Preliminary findings from other industries carried out in different countries have pointed out different reasons for intentions of employees to quit a job. The preliminary study made in this research has found some reasons for turnover at Debreberhan University. However, without further investigation, the same reasons explored for other industries cannot be claimed for Debreberhan University. The aforementioned causes of turnover in organizations under study need

more tangible data through detailed inquiry. Therefore, this study mainly aimed to figure out the pattern of employee turnover using concrete data from concerned units, discover the employee turnover intentions and the reasons for the turnover intent, verify the level significance of the relationship between pull factors of turnover, push factors of turnover, personal factors of turnover, and the turnover intention.

### Research Questions

Hence our specific research questions were: i. What does the pattern of employee turnover look like? ii. To what extent of the existing employees have the intention to leave? iii. Which college/school/institute is the most susceptible to turnover? iv. What are the causes of intent to quit the job? v. Do the overall pull factors of turnover have a positive and significant relationship with turnover intention? vi. Do the overall push factors of turnover have a positive and significant relationship with turnover intention? vii. Do the overall personal factors of turnover have a positive and significant relationship with turnover intention? Specific objectives The study comprises the following specific objectives i. To find out the pattern of turnover experienced in DBU over the last four years ii. To know the turnover intention of employees iii. To identify the most susceptible college/school/institute for turnover iv. To investigate the main causes of intent to turnover v. To discover the level of significance of the relationship between the push factors of turnover and turnover intention vi. To discover the level of significance of the relationship between the pull factors of turnover and turnover intention vii. To discover the level of significance of the relationship between the personal factors of turnover and turnover intention

### Hypotheses and Theoretical Framework of the Study

The following hypotheses were tested in this study.  
 H1: Personal factors have a positive and significant contribution to turnover intention  
 H2: Pull factors have a positive and significant contribution to turnover intention  
 H3: Push factors have a positive and significant contribution to turnover intention  
 The following model depicts the relationship among the independent and dependent variables, forming the theoretical framework (Figure 1).

### Significance of the study

This study is among the few first comprehensive studies of teacher turnover in Ethiopian public universities specifically in Debreberhan University. It might have both practical and theoretical significance: i. It may advance knowledge and understanding of the causes of academic turnover at Debreberhan University and it may also be

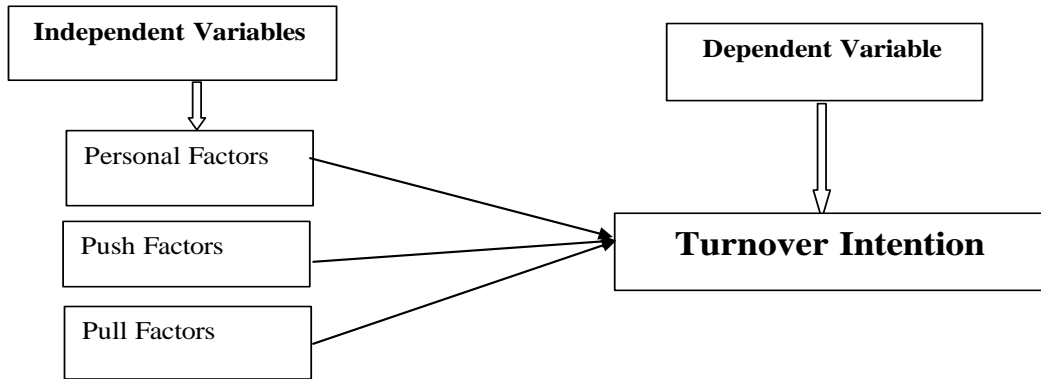


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

used to assist public policy formulators and the university administrations in formulating strategies to increase job satisfaction, retention rates, and organizational commitment among employees. So, it will provide a basis to make amendments to improve the working conditions of instructors and other employees to retain them. ii. It answers and clears out the controversies about the pattern and causes of turnover by giving clear insight to different stakeholders. iii. The result of the study can be extrapolated across the higher education sector in the rest of universities in Ethiopia and quality standards of education can therefore be raised by having satisfied and committed instructors and other employees. iv. It can also be used as a reference by potential researchers in and out of Debreberhan University for further research that may be carried out in the future.

**RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

**Research Design**

According to Wolman and Kruger (2004), the research design describes the plan in which information is obtained from the research participants. In the plan, it must be clearly illustrated how participants will be selected to get valid and reliable research results. The investigators in this study used a quantitative method. The study is a survey type used to assess the turnover intention of instructors and administrative employees.

**Sample and Sampling Technique**

To determine the sample size the formula for calculating a sample for proportion was used.

$$SSo = \frac{Z^2 X(P)X(1-P)}{c^2} \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

Where: SS = Sample Size

Z = Z-value (e.g., 1.96 for a 95 percent confidence level) P = Percentage of population picking a choice, expressed as decimal

C = Confidence interval, expressed as decimal (e.g., .04 = +/- 4 percentage points)  
Correction for finite population:

$$SS = \frac{SSo}{1 + \frac{SSo - 1}{Pop}} \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

Where: Pop =Population

Source: <http://williamgodden.com/samplesizeformula.pdf>  
In 2014/15 there were **870** instructors (Male =658, Female = 63) and **797** administrative/supportive workers including technical staff that make a total of **1667** employees.

Applying the sample determination formula and assuming a 95% confidence level, P = 0.5, and confidence interval= 0.04, out of those employees who are currently on job **441** were planned to participate in the study. Proportionately **229** respondents were from the academic staff and the remaining **212** were from administrative staff. From the population appropriate sample for questionnaire administration was determined by using a stratified sampling technique to give equal weights to Faculties, Colleges, Institutes, and the supportive staff in the university.

**Source of Data and Data Collection Method**

The researchers employed (used) both primary and secondary data. First-hand data was collected through a questionnaire filled out by the existing academic and supportive staff of Debreberhan University. About secondary sources, documents/files from the human resource management directorate of the university were referred to take data on employee turnover from 2004 to 2007 E.C. And to support the research study with other related research we have looked at the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Central Statistical Agency Analytical Report on the 2013 National Labor Force Survey.

**Table 1.** The Pattern of DBU Employees Turnover rate

Year in E.C	Academic staff			Administrative staff		
	Employees who quit	Number of Employees At the end of Fiscal year	Turnover rate (%)	Employees who quit	Number of Employees At the end of Fiscal year	Turnover rate (%)
2004	60	644	9.32	33	441	7.5
2005	52	678	7.67	60	573	10.5
2006	97	762	12.73	56	706	7.93
2007	56	872	6.42	58	841	7.00

**Instrument and Procedure of Data Collection**

Data was collected from 441 workers at Debreberhan University using a structured questionnaire. In the questionnaire, each statement was measured using a 1-5 Likert Scale with a rating of 1 indicating "Not at all" and a rating of 5 indicating "Very high." The questionnaire was adopted from previous research and modified in a way suitable for this study.

**Methods of Data Analysis and Presentation**

To organize and process the data gathered through the questionnaire the software Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyze the data. The descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) help to describe the general level of agreement of respondents to the factors/causes of turnover and turnover intention. It reveals the conformity of respondents' perceptions about the factors/causes of turnover and turnover intention.

Likewise, the inferential statistics i.e. the correlation, and analysis of variance results generated from the package were used to test the hypotheses developed. The correlation analysis helps know the nature of the relationship or the degree of association between the factors/causes of turnover and the turnover intention. ANOVA was also used to investigate if a significant difference exists in turnover intention among the different age groups, marital status, and among the different levels of education.

The demographic data of both administrative and academic staff in the form of frequency and percentage are presented in tables. The pattern of employee turnover from 2004 to 2007 E.C. is also presented in tables and bar graphs. Correspondingly, the descriptive statistics result in the form of mean and standard deviation as well as the correlation analysis, and ANOVA results are presented in tables as well.

**Data Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation**

An employee attitude survey was done on the causes and intentions of turnover. A total of 441 questionnaires

were distributed proportionately with 229 questionnaires to the academic staff and the remaining 212 to the administrative staff. Out of the 229 questionnaires dispensed to academic employees 147 (64.20%) questionnaires were returned and qualified for analysis. And among the 212 questionnaires dispatched to administrative staff 145(68.4%) were gathered and qualified for analysis. And so, the researchers believe that the response rate is adequate to carry out the analysis and perform it accordingly.

Thus, the data collected through the questionnaire supported by the findings of labor mobility by the federal statistical agency and the data from the human resource directorate about the pattern of employee turnover are analyzed and interpreted in this section. This chapter mainly comprises the demographic characteristics of respondents, the descriptive statistics, and the inferential statistics including correlation analysis and the analysis of variance to address all the objectives and hypotheses of the study.

**Pattern of DBU Employee Turnover**

Turnover is calculated as the ratio of persons who left the agency for any reason to the total number of persons at the end of each fiscal year. Therefore, according to the data we had from the human resources directorate, the turnover rates of Debreberhan University during the period of September 2004 E.C to August 2007 E.C. of both administrative and academic staff are as follows (Table 1).

As cited in HRVoice.org 2009, 'The April 2009 issue of the Academy of Management Journal of the article entitled "Searching for the Optimal Level of Employee Turnover"; the researchers discovered that there is no optimal level of turnover for full-time employees. They found that 0% was the ideal voluntary turnover rate simply because the loss of productivity was too great when any employee left, regardless of whether or not they were performing employees. This shows that the fewer the number of employees who quit the organization the better, since each newly hired employee will have associated challenges for the organization. But this might not be the optimal rate of turnover for part-tim

**Table 2.** DBU Employees' Intention to quit the job

Degree of Agreement	Academic staff			Administrative Staff		
	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
Strongly disagree	2	1.3	4.3	3	2.1	4.2
Disagree	7	4.8		6	4.1	
Neutral	16	10.9		23	15.9	
Agree	40	27.2		37	25.5	
Strongly agree	82	55.8		76	52.4	
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>145</b>	<b>100%</b>	

employees.

Therefore, from the above table and the respective Bar charts of patterns of employee turnover of Debreberhan University employees, we can see that the highest turnover was shown in 2005 E.C. while the lowest was scored in 2007 E.C. in both the administrative and academic staff.

Calculating the average turnover rate of employees of Debreberhan University it becomes 9.04% and 8.23% for academic and administrative employees, respectively. This rate is then far more than the ideal (best) turnover rate of zero for full-time employees.

To support the above analysis (Shaw 2010) concludes that substantial evidence indicates that turnover rates have negative implications for several dimensions of organizational performance (e.g., safety, productivity, and monetary), that the content of turnover rates plays a role in the magnitude and form of the relationship between turnover rates and organizational performance, and that turnover rates affect distal measures (e.g., profitability, financial performance) through decreased productivity and losses in human and social capital. It is obvious that irrespective of the level/amount of turnover rate, employee turnover is costly. Different kinds of literature estimate that turnover can cost from 30 to 250% of the employee's annual salary to replace them, depending on the employee's level, experience, skill, etc. So, it is important to reduce the turnover of full-time employees as much as possible.

Therefore, from the above data on employee turnover rate, we can conclude that the organization's understudy has been losing a substantial number of its academic and administrative employees in each of the previous four years for different reasons. Thus it can be said that Debreberhan University has been incurring the possible implicit and explicit costs of turnover.

### Descriptive Statistics

In this section, the mean score, frequency, and percentage were calculated to determine the level of agreement of respondents regarding their intention to quit jobs. The mean and standard deviation values/scores are also used to investigate the most exposed college to turnover, and finally, the causes of turnover were also

ranked by comparing their mean value/score. The following criterion was designed by Best (1977) as cited by Melese (2013). In this research 1 is assigned to strongly disagree/Not at all and 5 to strongly agree/Very high. So, the translation of level ranking is analyzed based on the following criteria.

- Agreement level 1.00 – 1.80 Means strongly disagree/not at all
- Agreement level 1.81 – 2.60 Means disagree/very low
- Agreement level 2.61 – 3.40 Means neutral/low
- Agreement level 3.41 – 4.20 Means agree/high
- Agreement level 4.21 – 5.00 Means strongly agree/very high

As it is indicated above the analysis of respondent's level of agreement with each statement was made accordingly. DBU Employees' Intention to Quit Job

As it has been noted by different sources intention to quit is a predictor of an actual turnover. With this in mind, we have asked the respondents about their general intent to leave their current organization. So, regarding this issue, employees were given two questions whether they would leave their current job soon if they find a job and if they often think about quitting their job.

Then the staff's general intent to leave their current job based on their agreement level with the questions asked is presented below in Table 2 for both the academic and administrative staff. And so the following result has been found according to their response.

As Table 2 indicates the majority of the academic staff of DBU 112(83%) of the participants agreed that they have the intention to quit their current job but only 9(6.1%) of the respondents do not have the intention to leave while 16(10.9%) of the respondents remain neutral. Likewise, the majority of the administrative staff 113(77.9%) do agree that they will leave their current job if they find an alternative job but only 9(6.2%) of the respondents do not have the intention to leave while 23(15.9%) of the respondents remain neutral. The mean values of each category of staff are 4.3 and 4.2 for academic and administrative staff respectively. These mean values as per the degree of agreement criteria provided above lie on strongly agree.

**Table 3.** Comparison of Intention to Quit Job among Colleges/Institutions/Schools

	College/Institution/School	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
<b>A</b>	Business and Economics	19	4.4	.69	5 <sup>th</sup>
<b>B</b>	Engineering	33	4.0	1.24	8 <sup>th</sup>
<b>C</b>	Law	4	4.5	.58	3 <sup>rd</sup>
<b>D</b>	Natural science	18	4.6	.49	2 <sup>nd</sup>
<b>E</b>	Education	2	4.5	.71	4 <sup>th</sup>
<b>F</b>	Computing science	15	4.3	.90	6 <sup>th</sup>
<b>G</b>	Health Science	24	4.7	.55	1 <sup>st</sup>
<b>H</b>	Social science	24	4.1	1.03	7 <sup>th</sup>
<b>I</b>	Agriculture	8	3.6	1.19	9 <sup>th</sup>
	Total	147	4.3	.94	

Therefore, it is evident that a large amount of the employees of DBU have strong intentions to quit and usually think to leave the organization soon if any comfortable alternative job comes. As per the literature, turnover intention is a predictor of actual turnover and the fact that most of the employees of DBU have an intention to quit would cost the organization its employees in which it invested (directly and indirectly) the last couple of years for training (on-the-job and off-the-job) and developing them and other costs like costs of selection and recruitment, existing employees moral loss, workload to the existing staff, the stoppage/delay of work till new employees are hired, etc.

**Comparison of Intention to Quit Job among Colleges of DBU**

One of the objectives of the study is to discover which college of DBU is vulnerable to turnover. This section then specifically addresses this objective of the study by comparing the mean values of intention to quit asked by the participants. Table 3 below summarizes the mean/score of responses from the academic staff of DBU.

As can be seen from Table 3 above Health Science leaves a mean value of 4.7 is ranked first, Natural Science College to leave a mean value of 4.6 is ranked second, employees in the College of Law are 3rd most susceptible to turnover, and College of Agriculture is ranked 9th with a mean value of 3.6. However, when we look at their agreement level they all lie on agree and strongly agree which means employees in every college want to leave if they possibly get other jobs.

Hence, the three most turnover-vulnerable colleges/institutions in DBU are Health Science, Natural Science, and College of Law while the College of Agriculture is the least susceptible one. This may maybe for different reasons that we did not include in this study (the reason why the above three colleges happen to be

the most susceptible to turnover).

**Causes of Employees’ Turnover Intention**

In this section both the academic and administrative have answered the question inquired to them concerning what the major enforcing factors would be that may oblige them to think about resigning from their current organization.

The following three consecutive Tables have summarized the major pull, personal, and push factors that influence them to think about leaving their job for alternative jobs Table 4.

Pull factors are those reasons that attract the employee to a new place of work. In some papers pull factors are named as uncontrolled factors because it is out of the control of organizations.

Regarding the pull factors of turnover, to distinguish the first five major causes of intention to quit the main factors were ranked by contrasting the mean values of responses from 147 academic staff and 145 administrative staff participants of the study.

Accordingly, for the academic staff, almost all the above-mentioned factors with a mean value greater than 3.4 are highly enforcing them to resign: higher/better salary, Career advancement/promotion, good organization culture, more financial benefits, more respect and values by the management and other staff of the organization, more freedom and autonomy, more research facilities and fund, good organization support, career advancement/promotion, well reputation of other alternative organizations, job security outside, better financial benefit of establishing own-business, location of alternative organizations in good region/city, except for workload (with mean value of 2.94) and availability of good education for children (with mean value of 2.99) which have low influence on turnover intention of the academic staff.

As to the administrative staff, the majority of the pull

**Table 4.** Pull Factors of Employees Turnover Intention

Academic Staff				Administrative Staff			
Pull Factors	Mean	Std. Dvn.	Rank	Pull Factors	Mean	Std. Dvn.	Rank
1. Higher/better salary	4.23	.93	1 <sup>st</sup>	1. Higher/better salary	3.98	1.04	1 <sup>st</sup>
2. Career advancement/promotion	3.98	.99	8 <sup>th</sup>	2. Career advancement/promotion	3.83	1.02	3 <sup>rd</sup>
3. More research facilities and fund	4.01	.99	6 <sup>th</sup>	3. Job security outside	3.34	1.151	11 <sup>th</sup>
4. Job security outside	3.71	1.01	10 <sup>th</sup>	4. Other alternative organizations are located in good region/city	3.51	1.09	6 <sup>th</sup>
5. Other alternative organizations are located in good region/city	3.63	1.14	12 <sup>th</sup>	5. More freedom and autonomy	3.43	1.11	8 <sup>th</sup>
6. More freedom and autonomy	4.05	1.01	5 <sup>th</sup>	6. More respect and values	3.85	1.14	2 <sup>nd</sup>
7. More respect and values	4.15	.88	4 <sup>th</sup>	7. Good organization culture	3.55	1.01	5 <sup>th</sup>
8. Good organization culture	4.16	.85	2 <sup>nd</sup>	8. More financial benefits	3.80	1.15	4 <sup>th</sup>
9. More financial benefits	4.16	.92	3 <sup>rd</sup>	9. Less workload (life-work balance)	3.34	1.12	9 <sup>th</sup>
10. Less workload (life-work balance)	2.94	1.00	14 <sup>th</sup>	10. Higher education opportunities	3.34	1.15	10 <sup>th</sup>
11. Higher education opportunities	3.74	1.23	10 <sup>th</sup>	11. Availability of good education for children	3.08	1.18	14 <sup>th</sup>
12. Availability of good education for children	2.99	1.30	13 <sup>th</sup>	12. Good organization support	3.50	1.07	7 <sup>th</sup>
13. Good organization support	3.99	.95	7 <sup>th</sup>	13. Well reputation of other alternative organizations	3.24	1.07	13 <sup>th</sup>
14. Well reputation of other alternative organizations	3.80	.86	9 <sup>th</sup>	14. Better financial benefit of establishing a business	3.29	1.16	12 <sup>th</sup>
15. Better financial benefit of establishing a business	3.73	1.13	11 <sup>th</sup>	-	-	-	-
<b>N</b>	<b>147</b>			<b>N</b>	<b>145</b>		

factors that score a mean value of greater than 3.4 (higher/better salary, more respect and value by the management and other staff of the organization, career advancement/promotion, more financial benefits, good organization culture, location of alternative organizations in good region/city, good organization support, and more freedom and autonomy) are highly influencing them to have the intention to resign.

But issues related to job security (with a mean value of

3.34), less workload (with a mean value of 3.34), higher education opportunities (with a mean value of 3.34), availability of good education for children (with a mean value of 3.08), well reputation of other alternative organizations (with a mean value of 3.24), the better financial benefit of establishing own-business (with a mean value of 3.29) are not highly enforcing factors.

Then, the five most influencing pull factors of turnover intention of academic staff of DBU are higher/better



salary (with mean value of 4.23), good organization culture (with mean value of 4.16 and standard deviation of 0.85), more financial benefits (with mean value 4.16 and standard deviation of 0.92), more respect and values by the management and other staff of the organization (with mean value of 4.15), and more freedom and autonomy (with mean value of 4.05).

In the same way, the five most influencing pull factors of the turnover intention of administrative staff are higher/better salary (with a mean value of 3.98), more respect and values by the management and other staff of the organization (with a mean value of 3.85), career advancement/promotion (with a mean value of 3.83), more financial benefits (with a mean value of 3.80), good organization culture (with a mean value of 3.55).

Among the pull factors, what we can find in common in both the academic staff and administrative staff are: higher salaries, more respect and value, good organizational culture, and more financial benefits (Table 5).

Personal factors such as health problems, family-related issues, children's education, and social status contribute to turnover intentions. However, very little amount of empirical research work is available on personal-related factors.

In this part, the mean scores of personal factors of turnover intention are ranked so that those with the highest enforcing result can be identified i.e. to know the level of influence of each personal factor.

Accordingly, for the academic staff, almost all the above-mentioned factors with mean values less than 3.4 are less concerned about the intention to quit. The academic staff cannot only comply with the rules and regulations of the organization (with a mean value of 3.64) which is highly enforcing them to think about leaving their current organization.

For the administrative staff, a similar result has been found to that of the academic staff: no personal factor is a serious reason for the turnover intention of the administrative staff because all the personal factors have a mean score of below 3.41 but above 1.8 which indicates low or else very low influence on turnover intention.

Generally, we cannot say that the above personal factors, like health problems, family-related problems, the influence of co-workers who left, etc., are not forcing both the academic and administrative employees of DBU as all their mean values are above 1.8 and below 3.41. But it can be concluded that their influence is low/very low.

Push factors are aspects that push the employee towards the exit door. In the literature, it is also called controlled factors because these factors are internal and can be controlled by organizations.

Regarding the push causes of intention to leave their job, in the same way as the above pull factors and personal factors, we have ranked the main push factors by contrasting the mean values of responses from 147

academic staff and 145 administrative staff participants of the study to distinguish the first five major causes of intention to quit.

According to the results in Table 6 above the following push factors of turnover are not major causes of turnover intent for the academic staff: job security, perception about smallness in size of the present organization, perception about the location of the organization being in a small town, the possible existence of conflict among employees, the job is not according to their social status, office and teaching workload, work-life balance, and disrespect by the students. All these do have a mean value between 1.8 and 3.4, which indicates that they have only a low/very low influence on the employees' intention to leave. The remaining push factors have a high influence on the intention to quit.

Correspondingly, as to the administrative employees, Table 6 above indicates the push factors which have only low or very low influence are: the possible existence of excessive attendance, too much interference/involvement of superiors/managers, workload, lack of work-life balance, lack of freedom, possible existence conflict among employees, job insecurity, perception about smallness in size of present organization, perception about the location of the organization being in a small town, and the job being not according to my social status. All these do have a mean value between 1.8 and 3.4, which indicates that they have only a low/very low influence on the employees' intention to leave. The remaining push factors have a high influence on the intention to quit.

On the contrary, the mean value of the response from participants shows the five most influencing push factors of the turnover intention of the academic staff of DBU are inadequate salary to fulfill their personal needs (with a mean value of 4.47), inadequate fringe benefits (with a mean value of 4.31), the existence of unfairness or less justice in the organization (with a mean value 4.10), lack of motivation and encouragement for good work (with a mean value of 4.03), and less comfortable working environment (with a mean value of 3.97).

As to the administrative employees, inadequate salary (with a mean value of 4.28), lack of motivation and encouragement for good work (with a mean value of 4.12), inadequate fringe benefits (with a mean value of 4.11), lack of career advancement (with a mean value of 3.88), and disrespect by the management/superiors (with a mean value of 3.85) are the first five push factors of intent to turnover.

The common push factors for both the academic and administrative staff are inadequate salary, inadequate fringe benefits, and inadequate motivation and encouragement.

The salary and benefit issues are also listed as the major pull factors of both administrative and academic staff. The factor related possibility of career advancement/promotion is mentioned among the most

**Table 5** Personal Factors of Employees Turnover Intention

Academic Staff				Administrative Staff			
Personal Factors	Mean	Std. Dvn.	Rank	Personal Factors	Mean	Std. Dvn.	Rank
1. My health problem	2.73	1.44	7 <sup>th</sup>	1. My health problem	2.94	1.28	5 <sup>th</sup>
2. My family related problem	3.07	1.35	4 <sup>th</sup>	2. My family related problem	2.90	1.20	6 <sup>th</sup>
3. My children education : because good schools are not available in the city	2.42	1.32	10 <sup>th</sup>	3. My children education : because good schools are not available in the city	2.80	1.22	7 <sup>th</sup>
4. The social status of teachers is quite low	3.37	1.27	2 <sup>nd</sup>	4. Social status of my work title is quite low	3.16	1.27	3 <sup>rd</sup>
5. Teaching is a difficult job	2.31	1.26	11 <sup>th</sup>	5. My job is a difficult job	3.14	1.21	4 <sup>th</sup>
6. Some of my friends/relatives are changing jobs	2.42	1.21	9 <sup>th</sup>	6. Some of my friends/relatives are changing jobs	2.77	1.23	8 <sup>th</sup>
7. Because of absence of fun	2.64	1.33	8 <sup>th</sup>	7. Because of absence of fun	2.75	1.19	10 <sup>th</sup>
8. I do not like the style/personality of my immediate boss	2.80	1.33	6 <sup>th</sup>	8. I do not like the style/personality of my immediate boss	3.19	1.25	2 <sup>nd</sup>
9. I want to leave with my family as my organization is located in another area	3.07	1.30	3 <sup>rd</sup>	9. I want to leave with my family as my organization is located in another area	2.76	1.34	9 <sup>th</sup>
10. I am unable to publish research paper as required	2.99	1.22	5 <sup>th</sup>	10. I am unable to follow the organization's rules and regulation	3.28	1.31	1 <sup>st</sup>
11. I am unable to follow the organization's rules and regulation	3.64	1.31	1 <sup>st</sup>	-	-	-	-
<b>N</b>	<b>147</b>			<b>N</b>	<b>145</b>		

serious pull factors for administrative staff than the academic staff.

### Inferential Statistics

In this section of the analysis of the study, a simple bivariate correlation and ANOVA were employed to test all its hypotheses. While Correlation analysis helps to know the degree of relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables, ANOVA was used to make sure if there is any significant difference in intention to quit job between/among age groups, marital status, and level of education.

### Correlation Analysis: Turnover Intention and Factors of Turnover Intention

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient is a

statistic that indicates the degree to which two variables are related to one another. The sign of a correlation coefficient (+ or -) indicates the direction of the relationship between -1.00 and +1.00. Variables may be positively or negatively correlated. A positive correlation indicates a direct, positive relationship between two variables. A negative correlation, on the other hand, indicates an inverse, negative relationship between two variables (Haile 2013).

In this section, the first three hypotheses developed were tested based on the correlation result summarized in Table 7.

### H1: Personal factors have a positive and significant contribution to turnover intention.

According to the correlation result in Table 7 above for the academic staff ( $r = 0.054$ ,  $p = 0.517$ ), there exists a

**Table 6.** Push Factors of Employees' Turnover Intention

Academic Staff				Administrative Staff			
Push Factors	Mean	Std. Dvn	Rank	Push Factors	Mean	Std. Dvn.	Rank
1. My salary is not enough to fulfill my needs	4.47	.84	1 <sup>st</sup>	1. My salary is not enough to fulfill my needs	4.28	1.10	1 <sup>st</sup>
2. Fringe benefits are less	4.31	.93	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2. Fringe benefits are less	4.11	1.09	3 <sup>rd</sup>
3. My job is not secured	3.07	1.20	13 <sup>th</sup>	3. My job is not secure	2.99	1.25	14 <sup>th</sup>
4. Size of present organization is small	2.67	1.05	19 <sup>th</sup>	4. Size of present organization is small	2.41	1.10	19 <sup>th</sup>
5. Organization is located in small town	2.73	1.14	18 <sup>th</sup>	5. Organization is located in small town	2.42	1.11	18 <sup>th</sup>
6. The job is not according to my social status	2.65	1.16	21 <sup>st</sup>	6. The job is not according to my social status	2.93	1.14	16 <sup>th</sup>
7. The working environment is not good	3.97	1.11	5 <sup>th</sup>	7. The working environment is not good	3.58	1.14	7 <sup>th</sup>
8. Lack of motivation and encouragement for good work	4.03	1.14	4 <sup>th</sup>	8. Lack of motivation and encouragement for good work	4.12	1.00	2 <sup>nd</sup>
9. There is conflict among employees	2.79	1.12	17 <sup>th</sup>	9. There is conflict among employees	2.43	1.07	17 <sup>th</sup>
10. Lack of recognition of my work	3.70	1.13	8 <sup>th</sup>	10. Lack of recognition of my work	3.52	1.17	8 <sup>th</sup>
11. Lack of freedom in present organization	3.67	1.22	9 <sup>th</sup>	11. Lack of freedom in present organization	3.22	1.22	10 <sup>th</sup>
12. Lack of career advancement	3.58	1.14	10 <sup>th</sup>	12. Lack of career advancement	3.88	1.07	4 <sup>th</sup>
13. Lack of research facilities and opportunities	3.86	1.02	6 <sup>th</sup>	13. More office work load	3.27	1.14	9 <sup>th</sup>
14. More office work load	2.80	1.13	16 <sup>th</sup>	14. The Job makes me too tired to enjoy my family life	3.00	1.15	13 <sup>th</sup>
15. More teaching workload	2.86	1.12	15 <sup>th</sup>	15. My job does not give me enough time for my family	2.97	1.13	15 <sup>th</sup>
16. The Job makes me too tired to enjoy my family life	2.67	1.13	20 <sup>th</sup>	16. Superiors get too involved/intervened in my job	3.15	1.18	11 <sup>th</sup>
17. My job does not give me enough time for my family	2.63	1.12	22 <sup>nd</sup>	17. Disrespect by the management/superiors	3.85	3.55	5 <sup>th</sup>
18. Superiors get too involved/intervened in my job	3.48	1.18	11 <sup>th</sup>	18. There is no fairness/justice in the Organization	3.72	1.14	6 <sup>th</sup>
19. Disrespect by the students	3.05	1.26	14 <sup>th</sup>	19. Excessive attendance	3.01	1.13	12 <sup>th</sup>
20. Disrespect by the management/superiors	3.86	1.20	7 <sup>th</sup>	-	-	-	-
21. There is no fairness/justice in the organization	4.10	1.07	3 <sup>rd</sup>	-	-	-	-
22. Excessive attendance	3.46	1.24	12 <sup>th</sup>	-	-	-	-
<b>N</b>	<b>147</b>			<b>N</b>	<b>145</b>		

**Table 7.** Correlation Analysis: Turnover Intentions and Factors of Turnover Intentions

Variable	Academic Staff		Administrative Staff	
	Turnover Intention		Turnover Intention	
	Pearson Correlation(r)	Sig. (2-tailed)	Pearson Correlation(r)	Sig. (2-tailed)
<b>Pull Factors</b>	- 0.016	0.843	0.215**	0.009
<b>Personal Factors</b>	0.054	0.517	0.030	0.719
<b>Push Factors</b>	0.388**	0.000	0.005	0.956

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). Source: Survey Results (2016).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). N = 147 for AcS and n = 145 for AdS

positive but not significant relationship between turnover intention and personal factors of turnover. For the administrative staff, the correlation result is ( $r = 0.030$ ,  $p = 0.719$ ) which shows a positive but not significant relationship between turnover intention and personal factors of turnover.

Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected for both academic staff and administrative staff.

### **H2: Pull factors have a positive and significant contribution to turnover intention.**

As far as the relationship between pull factors and the turnover intention for the academic staff is concerned, the correlation result in Table 7 above reveals a negative relationship with a correlation coefficient value of ( $r = -0.016$ ), (P-value of 0.843) which is not significant at ( $p = 0.05$ ). However, for the administrative staff, the correlation coefficient for pull factors is ( $r = 0.215^{**}$ ), (P-value of 0.009) which indicates a positive and significant relationship (at  $p = 0.01$ ).

Thus, the hypothesis is rejected by the academic employees and it is accepted by the administrative staff.

### **H3: Push factors have a positive and significant contribution to turnover intention**

Still looking at Table 7 above the academic employee's response result indicates a correlation coefficient of ( $r = 0.388^{**}$ ) and (p-value of 0.000) which point out a positive and significant (at  $p = 0.01$ ) relationship of pull factors of turnover and turnover intention. Nevertheless,

for the administrative staff, the relationship of pull factors of turnover and turnover intention as per the result is positive with a correlation coefficient of ( $r = 0.005$ ) but not significant (with a p-value of 0.956) at  $p = 0.05$ .

Consequently, the hypothesis is accepted in the case of the academic staff and it is rejected in the case of the administrative staff.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

i. The result of data analysis shows that in the last four years, DBU has been losing a substantial number of its employees (with an average of 9.04% and 8.23% turnover rate of academic and administrative employees) for different reasons. The fact that a considerable number of its academic and administrative employees served less than a year can indicate DBU has hired a substantial number of employees to replace those who quit their jobs.

ii. DBU may keep facing Turnover of its employees in the future as it is evident from the data analysis that a large amount of the employees of DBU have strong intentions to quit and usually think of leaving the organization soon if any comfortable alternative job comes.

iii. Turnover intention is found to be higher in the Health Science, Natural Science, and Law Colleges than in the rest of the colleges.

iv. Looking at the specific pull factors independently, the major causes of turnover intention in both the academic staff and administrative staff are: higher salary elsewhere, more respect and value, good organizational culture, more financial benefits, more freedom and autonomy (for the academic staff) and career advancement/promotion (for the administrative staff).

v. Personal factors in general have a low influence on both academic and administrative employees' turnover intention. But, the academic staff are not able to comply with the rules and regulations of the organization which is the only major personal cause of intention to quit.

vi. The major push causes of turnover intention in both the academic staff and administrative staff are: inadequate salary, inadequate fringe benefits, inadequate motivation encouragement and the existence of unfairness or less justice with a less comfortable working environment (for the academic staff) and lack of career advancement including disrespect by the management/superiors (for administrative staffs).

vii. Altogether, for the academic staff, it is the push factors that have a positive and significant contribution to

the intention to quit. However, for the administrative employees, it is the pull factors found to have a positive and significant contribution to the intention to quit.

#### Recommendations

Based on the analysis and findings, the following recommendations are forwarded to reduce or if possible eliminate causes of turnover in the working environment.

□ The efforts exerted so far by the management of DBU to reduce staff turnover and retain competent staff are worthy of doing and should be kept doing.

□ DBU needs to keep working on providing those staff who need further formal education with education opportunities so that it can make the working environment suitable for work. There is a strong positive correlation between increased levels of employee training and decreased turnover. Much training literature states that increased training promotes a high degree of job satisfaction, which in return leads to retention (Gustafson, 2002).

□ On the other hand, DBU should take measures to overcome the possible loss of a large number of its academic employees as their educational attainment increases i.e. after they hold their Masters and PhD degrees so that DBU will be able to avoid/reduce the loss of the competence of the employees and associated costs of training and developing them.

□ Organizations should take serious preventive and corrective measures. To do so it should conduct regular stay interviews to discover what it could do to make its employees stay by finding out what they are dissatisfied with. It shouldn't wait until people quit. The stay interviews would be more important than the exit interviews because the former one is more preventive. Therefore, there should be a mechanism by which the HRM of the organization consults existing staff to find out what makes them unhappy and satisfied to stay.

□ Effective internal retention strategies should be designed to minimize the potential turnover of its employees especially those around Health Science College.

□ The only personal factor that seriously forces the academic staff to think about resigning is the inability of employees to comply with the rules and regulations of the organization. Therefore, it would be good for the DBU to involve inputs from the subordinates every time rules and

regulations are to be developed, and if possible to revise every binding rule and regulation with the participation of the academic staff.

□ In any organization, there should be an appropriately designed way of entertaining and solving staff grievances and discipline issues. Therefore, to minimize or avoid what the employees say there is a lack of justice and fairness, the grievance and discipline hearing body of DBU will have a great role. It may have to work on: creating awareness about how the employees should bring their grievances and discipline issues,

solving/keep solving the issues honestly and based on the given procedures, and creating transparency in disseminating every result of solved grievances and discipline issues to the DBU community is also imperative.

□ Integrity, respecting and trusting employees, and providing much autonomy, the degree to which an employee exercises power and freedom relative to his or her job, increase feelings of personal responsibility and a sense of belongingness in the organization. Maybe for the academic staff autonomy can be expressed in terms of the academic freedom mentioned in Article 15/1 of the university legislation i.e. every academic staff shall have the right to exercise academic freedom consistent with the university mission. So, by doing these and by creating other favorable conditions DBU should and can make the working more comfortable to its employees.

□ Employees tend to stay in organizations when they feel that their capabilities, efforts, and performance contributions are recognized and appreciated by others. Therefore, there should be enough motivation, encouragement, and recognition for the employees. Recognition and encouragement may not only be rewarding top performing staff annually: it can also include visiting employees' offices and giving inspiration, officially appreciating the whole community for their performance in annual/semester meetings by posting Thank you messages, writing appreciation letters to individual employees, etc.

□ The issue of the need for better salaries as the cause of turnover in DBU might be a national problem and may need a national solution. As per the findings of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Central Statistical Agency's annual research report on causes of labor mobility in 2013, the first major reason for paid urban labor mobility at the national level is better payment/ income. But DBU as one organization can and should develop an organizational-specific compensation structure that includes adequate fringe benefits (e.g. Time-off pay benefits providing paid vacation not only as a university but also as colleges or departments, Non-pay benefits like improving the services in the cafeteria, improving timing of the transportation services being given, providing medical services). Making improvements on daily allowances, the payments of module preparation as well as other teaching materials, and the payments of distance education services to the academic staff can also reduce the complaint on shortage of compensation. But, to assure the adequacy and fairness of each of the compensations/benefits being provided, general discussions must be made with the employees. So, DBU needs to evaluate its benefit structure and should pay competitive compensations that pay off the workload. Research indicates that investments such as pay and benefits in the human capital of an organization reduce voluntary turnover. Moreover, offering fringe benefit plans significantly decreases employee turnover (Lee et al.

2006).

□ The organization should design and provide the administrative staff with career advancement opportunities adequately not only to retain them but also to make them exert their utmost effort to the achievement of the organizational goals. DBU should better use internal recruitment from the existing workforce than external recruitment. Hiring should only be made from outside labour market when the internal employees are not suitable or exhausted. Internal human resource development should be made in a way the employees can fill future vacant positions.

□ By and large, DBU should further improve on the aforementioned internal/push causes of the turnover so that the effects of the specific personal and pull factors can also be minimized.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First of all, our gratitude goes to the staff/management in the research and community service directorate of DBU for the initiation and support to conduct this research study thinking that solutions can be found through this research work.

Our special thanks would be to both the academic and administrative employees of Debreberhan University for their contribution to the successful completion of this study by giving the needed data with integrity and commitment.

Finally, we are also grateful to the human resource directorate of DBU for the unreserved willingness to see the research done and for providing us with the required data.

### Declaration of Interest Statement

We hereby declare that no conflict of interest in this paper.

### REFERENCES

- Siong ZMB, Mellor D, Moore KA, Firth L (2006). Predicting Intention to Quit in the Call Center Industry: Does the Retail Model Fit? *J. of Managerial Psychology*, 21(3): 231 - 243.
- Yared D (2007). Staff Turnover in International Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): A Case Study of International Rescue Committee (IRC), Addis Ababa University School Of Graduate Studies.

Ongori H (2007). A Review of the Literature on Employee Turnover. *Afri. J. Bus. Manage.*, pp. 049-054.

Drucker P (1999). *Management for the 21st century*, New York: Harper Collins.

Bluedorn A (1982). A unified model of turnover from organizations. *J. Human Relations*, 35(2):135-153.

Mihyo BP (2007). Staff retention in African Universities and Links with Diaspora study. Report on the working group on Higher Education, Windhoek.

Debrah Y (1994). Management of operative staff in a labour-scarce economy: the views of human resource managers in the hotel industry in Singapore. *Asia Pacific J. Human Resources*, 32(1): 41-60.

Shaw JD (2010). Turnover rates and Organizational performance. Carlson School of Management, University of Minnesota, organizational psychology review, available at <http://opr.sagepub.com/content/1/3/187.refs>.

Melese A (2013). Factors affecting teacher job satisfaction in Ethiopian Government Universities, Addis Ababa University School of Commerce.

Haile K (2013). The Effect of Human Resource Management Practices on Employees