

Perceptions of Work Environment in Ethiopian Higher Learning Institutions: A Search for Antecedents of Organizational Commitment and Turnover among Debu University Instructors

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to examine the level of instructors' fairness perceptions in the workplace i.e. the quality of leader-subordinate relationship, procedural and distributive justices of the existing organizational practice. In addition, it uncovers the extent to which the work environment within the university is instrumental in boosting organizational commitment and increases the likelihood of staying in the system. The sample included 103 instructors (93 males and 10 females) representing different levels of qualification and academic rank. Data were obtained using self-report measures. The instruments were developed and partly adapted. The major variables include workplace variables (i.e. Instructors fairness perception of distributive and procedural justice, and leaders' behavior [Leader-Member – Exchange (LMX)], affective organizational commitment, overall job satisfaction, and intent or non-intent to quit. To examine the role of the major variables of interest, descriptive, bivariate, and multivariate statistics are used. The results indicate that work environment variables have significantly predicted instructors' commitment to their university and intent to stay or leave. Implications of the findings in terms of bolstering the quality of university teaching in Ethiopia are discussed.

Introduction

Recently the World Bank Sector Study report disclosed that among the major impediments in the higher education expansion programs undertaken by the government of Ethiopia has been staffing the new programs and the recently inaugurated colleges with qualified instructors (World Bank 2003). It also calmly warns that reliance on expatriates in the midst of such ambitious expansion would not be sustainable and recommends the need for an extensive capacity building scheme. Apparently, shortage of experienced staff remains to be a formidable obstacle undermining the ongoing efforts for achieving the required quality while at the same time increasing access to tertiary

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education. In the presence of such a challenge, a primary step would be retaining professionals working in the system via improving the work environment. In particular, through maintaining the culture of transparent and participatory decision-making, maintaining fair leadership culture with respect to assignment of work load, performance assessment, distribution of benefits. Ensuring these human resource factors is believed to contribute towards building organizational commitment and minimize turnover (Hannam and Jimmieson 2002; Chang 1999).

On the other hand, the expansion higher education entails extra-role behavior from its staff since everything starts from scratch. This is particularly apparent in Debu University, where virtually all the faculties and colleges¹ are launched in 2000, with the exception of Awassa College of Agriculture and Wondo Genet College of Forestry that have longer experience and a relatively well qualified staff. Therefore, the freshness of the university alone leaves much to be desired from the leadership. This includes improving the work environment and putting in place participatory decision-making to build organizational commitment and arrest the high rate of faculty turnover.

A better understanding of the existing state of affairs, however, entails a closer look at how instructors perceive their work environment considering the changing situation that require a renewed motivation and readiness to deal with the challenges and opportunities. This is important as most studies in the area were restricted to primary and secondary teachers' career commitment (Menna and Tefaye 2000), level of stress (Darge 2002; Getachew 1998), working condition (Tefaye 2003) related to turnover intention and behavior. As a result, little research attention has gone into addressing issues related to working conditions and turnover in the context of higher education institutions except the limited studies which attempted to draw the

¹The other major component of Debu University is Dilla College of Teacher Education and Health Sciences established in 1996. The Faculty of Health Sciences is now being transferred to Awassa, expanding it self to a full-fledged College of Health Sciences.

attention of stakeholders to the alarming proportion of brain-drain among Ethiopian academics specifically focusing on Addis Ababa University (Seyoum 1992; 2000; Dejene 2000). In one of such studies, Dejene (2000) suggested the importance of assessing the social-psychological factors that contribute to the migration of the highly educated. This study is therefore one of such attempts to fill the gap by empirically uncovering the degree to which human resource factors are related to faculty turnover intention and affective organizational commitment.

Against the backdrop of the apparent challenges facing higher education today, this paper deems it necessary to look into the extent to which perceived work environment in these institutions influences faculty commitment and intention to remain in the system. This is taken to be important as instructors who are loyal for the goals and values of their university stay in their career (Chang 1999) and work for the betterment of their institutions. This study, therefore, is interested in finding out the degree to which instructors' perception of work environment predicts their commitment to their employing higher education institution and related to their intention to stay in it in the context of Debub University.

Conceptual Framework

In this section, an attempt is made to review the conceptualization of work environment and its relationships with organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intention and behavior. First, we shall start with the conceptual clarifications of work environment, organizational commitment, and the existing empirical relationship with intent to continue or to terminate the employment relationship with a particular organization.

Work environment

In the existing literature, the term organizational climate is sometimes used to describe the nature of the workplace (Wiss 1999) or work

environment (Conley and Muncey 1999). But, the nature of the variables that characterizes work environment is not uniform across studies depending on the objectives and goals of the researchers. However, the term work environment will be used in this study.

Even though educational organizations are different from non-educational organizations in important ways, one can see a number of similarities between them. Thus, similar to other type of organizations, in the context of educational organization, work environment variables also constitute physical facilities (Firestone and Pannell 1993; Tnaguri 1968; Conley and Muncey 1999), social relation (collegiality), employee-supervisor relations, shared organizational values and standards of behavior (quality of leader-subordinate relationships), participatory decision-making (existence of procedural justice), intrinsic and extrinsic work features job autonomy, salary, career development, opportunities for other pecuniary rewards (Conley and Muncey 1999). However, consistent with Hannam and Jimmieson (2002) this study conceptualizes work environment variables in higher education institutions to include instructors' fairness perception regarding (1) *procedural justice* (participatory decision-making and supervision) and (2) *Distributive justice* (fair allocation of workload and benefits), and (3) leader-subordinate relationships (the quality of leader-member-exchange (LMX)). Hence, instructors' views about their work environment would be based on these conceptual definitions.

Organizational Commitment

There is adequate evidence to suggest that organizational commitment is strongly related with organizational citizenship behavior (Hannam and Jimmieson 2002), work environment variables (Conley and Muncey 1999; Firestone and Pannell 1993) employee's job satisfaction and turnover intention (Chang 1999). Generally, it is found to play a useful role in fostering organizational success.

For the most part, the research literature adapts Meyer and Allens' (1990) three-dimensional conceptualization which demonstrates

affective, continuance, and normative dimensions as separate constructs. Among these, the most widely studied dimension is affective commitment (Chang 1999). Affective commitment is defined as 'the degree to which an individual is psychologically attached to an employing organization through feelings of loyalty, affection, belongingness etc... .' (Jaros et al. 1993) depicting employees' emotional bond, and moral attachment to an organization. On the other hand, continuance commitment is based on extrinsic motivational value of working in that organization. It refers to commitment related to the costs that employees pay for leaving the organization. Contrary to affective commitment, continuance commitment results from the exchange of relationships between employees and the organization (Huselid and Day 1991). The third dimension is normative commitment. It constitutes the moral component of the fact that it concerns employee's feelings of obligation or responsibility to remain within the organization (Allen and Meyer 1990).

According to Allen and Meyer (1996), the most relevant dimension to assess employees' organizational commitment with respect to organizational citizenship behavior is affective commitment. This is because affective organizational commitment elicits those behaviors that do not depend primarily on reinforcement or formal rewards (Hannam and Jimmieson 2002). Thus, this study adapts this dimension to collect data on organizational commitment. In quite the same way, since monetary rewards are less likely to be satisfactorily improved in the foreseeable future in the Ethiopian reality, this study opts to consider the extent to which work environment variables are related to affective organizational commitment

Work Environment as Antecedent of Organizational Commitment and Turnover Intention

Organizational research reveals that a wide range of employee, task, organizational and leader characteristics are consistently found to predict different types of OCBs across a range of occupations (Podsakoff et al. 2000). Having reviewed these studies, Hannam and

Jimmieson (2002) identified relevant affective job characteristics and work environment variables which predict organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and employee turnover intention and behavior. These include: (a) job satisfaction and organizational commitment - along with job satisfaction, affective organizational commitment is most frequently cited as antecedents of turnover behavior (Allen and Meyer 1996); (b) leader behaviors - leadership appears to have strong influence on employee's willingness to engage in OCBs (Hannam and Jimmieson 2002; Podsakoff et al. 2000). However, studies show that it is not the kind of leadership that matters, but rather the quality of employee-leader relationship (Podsakoff et al. 2000). The quality of the relationship between a subordinate and a leader is often called "leader-member - exchange (LMX)" (Hannam and Jimmieson 2002). According to Podsakoff et al. (2000) the other leadership variable that positively related to OCB is the leader's contingent reward behaviors such as expressing satisfaction or appreciation for good performance; (c) fairness perception - fairness or justice perception refers to whether or not employees feel organizational decisions are made equitably and with necessary employee input (usually referred to as procedural justice) and whether or not employees perceive that they are fairly rewarded given their level of training, tenure, responsibility or workload (called distributive justice).

Generally, employees' perceptions of justice in an organization are positively related to OCB, organizational commitment and turnover intention (Moorman 1991; Chang 1999). Moreover, it is adequately documented that a number of workplace, affective and job-related environmental variables are meaningfully related (Luthanos et al. 1987; Hauselied and Day 1991; Mathieu and Zajac 1990; Conley and Muncey 1999) to OCB. On the other hand, organizational commitment predicts organizational citizenship behavior which is substantially related to a number of work-related variables including (a) job-search behaviors, turnover, absenteeism, and extra-role behaviors and performance; (b) attitudinal, affective, and cognitive constructs such as job satisfaction, job involvement, and job tension; (c) characteristics of the employee's job role and autonomy and responsibility, role conflict and ambiguity,

and (d) personal characteristics of the employee such as age, sex, need for achievement, and job tenure (Bateman and Strasser 1984; Mathieu and Zajac 1990).

Taken together, the literature provided adequate theoretical and empirical support regarding the favorable and unfavorable effect of work environment variables on affective job characteristics, primarily on job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and turnover intention and behavior. Further, socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, tenure, and education are also found to be significantly related with organizational commitment and turnover. Based on this theoretical and empirical framework, the present study intends to address the effect of work environment factors on faculty level of organizational commitment and intent to leave or stay in a university in the context of a developing country.

Thus, against the backdrop of the theoretical framework developed above, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

- How do instructors perceive their work environment? Are there differences attributable to socio-demographic variables?
- To what extent fairness perception in terms of distributive and procedural justice and the quality of relationship between staff and leaders (LMX), affects instructors' commitment to their organization and intent or non-intent to stay in a university?
- Is satisfaction with salary related with turnover intention and other work attitude variables?

Research Design

Sample

The sample was drawn from all faculties and colleges of Debu University. The affiliated colleges are located at three different places

namely, Awassa, Dilla, and Wondo Genet. Awassa hosts two colleges – Awassa College of Agriculture and Awassa College of Health Sciences and three other faculties (the faculties of Social Science and Natural Science, and the Faculty of Technology). Dilla hosts the Dilla College of Teacher Education; and Wondo Genet hosts the College of Forestry. The target population which focuses only on the local academic staff was expected to have 302 faculty members (Debu University Ten Year Strategic Plan, Draft Document 2003). A total of 124 (41.1%) faculty members were randomly given the questionnaires as they volunteered to participate in the survey. However, 21 respondents were not able to return the questionnaire, and thus made the response rate to about 83% which is quiet acceptable (Wiersma 2000). In other words, the sample made up about 34.1% (N= 103; males 90.7 % and females 9.3 %) of the population under study. The mean age of the sample was 33.2 with a standard deviation of 7.46 years; and mean teaching experience of 5.08 years with a standard deviation of 5.19 years. Table 1 and Table 2 describe the sample across academic rank, level of education, and gender.

Table 1: Participants by Level of Education and Gender

Education	Gender		Total	%
	Male	Female		
PhD	4	1	5	4.9
M.A./MSc./ MD + Speciality	53	2	55	53.4
MD/DVM	7	-	7	6.7
B.A./B.Sc.	16	7	23	22.3
Diploma	13	-	13	12.6
Total	93	10	103	100
%	90.3	9.7	100	

Table 2: Participants by Academic Rank and Gender

Academic Rank	Gender		Total	%
	Male	Female		
Associate Professor	2	-	2	1.9
Assistant Professor	6	1	7	6.8
Lecturer	53	2	55	53.4
Assistant Lecturer	4	-	4	3.9
Graduate Assistant	15	7	22	21.4
Technical Assistant	13	-	13	12.6
Total	93	10	103	100

Instruments

Self-report measures were developed and partly adapted to assess workplace variables [i.e. instructors fairness perception of distributive (allocational) justice and procedural justice, and perceived quality of relationship between leaders' (deans and heads of departments) and staff members (instructors)], affective organizational commitment, and overall job satisfaction. Further, a questionnaire was developed to elicit personal information about the study participants. The details are presented hereunder.

Work Environment: Instructors' perceptions of their work environment includes two major areas. These are: (1) Fairness perception - This focuses on instructors' perception of fairness in terms of procedural justice (i.e. transparency and participatory decision-making) and distributive justice (i.e. allocation of workload and benefits). In each case, two-items were developed to assess these constructs. (2) Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Measure – two items tapping instructors' views of the quality of relationship with institutional leaders were developed to assess leader behavior. Thus, to assess these work environment factors, a total of six items were used. The response set was based on five-point scale ranging from (“very true” to “not at all true”). The internal consistency reliability of the overall 6-item measure was found to be acceptable ($\alpha = .65$).

Satisfaction with Salary: Instructors' perception of salary adequacy considering the type of work they are doing and comparability of salary amount with salaries of their counterparts working in other organizations. Two items were used to assess both factors rated in five-point Likert –type agree-disagree scale.

The Measure of Organizational Commitment: Organizational commitment was assessed with a translated and adapted version of Meyer and Allen (1991) affective commitment dimension; This was done because, affective commitment maintains behavioral direction where there is little expectation of formal rewards (Allen and Meyer 1996). Sample items include: "The College/University has a great deal of personal meaning to me". The rating of items was made based on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from "Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree". The internal consistency reliability of the adapted sub-scale was found to be high (alpha = .74).

Overall Job satisfaction: Instructors' level of overall job satisfaction was measured based on a single-item: "When all things about your job are considered, how satisfied are you?" The rating scale ranges from "Very Satisfied" to "Very Dissatisfied". The reason for using this was because single-item measures of job satisfaction are effective and less time consuming (Nagy 2002).

Method of Data Analysis

The methods of data analysis used in this study comprised univariate, bivariate and multivariate statistical analyses procedures. Specifically, descriptive statistics zero-order correlation, F-test, and moderated hierarchical logistic and multiple regression procedures were employed. Data entry and analyses were performed using SPSSWIN version 10.

Results

As indicated in the method section, the results of the univariate, bivariate and multivariate statistical analyses were performed to answer

the questions put forward in the present study. To begin with, the results of the descriptive statistics will be given. Before the presentation of the multivariate analyses, however, an inter-correlation matrix computed among the variables of interest will be discussed.

Descriptive Results

This section presents the results of the descriptive statistics. Accordingly, instructors' perceptions of the work environment, salary amount, organizational commitment and intent to stay in or leave the university have been described by academic rank. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Means, SD, and F-statistics of Scores on Dimensions of Work Environment by Academic Rank

Academic Rank	Distributive Justice			LMX ^a			Procedural Justice		
	M	SD	F	M	SD	F	M	SD	F
Assist. Prof >	6.22	1.30		8.56	.88		5.78	1.92	
Lecturer	6.83	1.59		8.55	1.30		5.42	1.61	.57 (ns)
Assist Lecturer <	5.88	1.66	2.63*	7.81	1.41	3.07*	5.58	1.90	
Technical Assistant	6.85	.99		8.92	.95		6.08	1.55	
Total	6.54	1.52		8.41	1.23		5.57	1.71	

* p < .05; ^a LMX = Leader-Member-Exchange

Dimensions of work environment were represented by six items. Hence, each of the categories (LMX, Procedural Justice and Distributive Justice) were represented by two-items. Table 3 presents means, standard deviations, and F-test results. As shown, perceptions of fairness in terms of allocation of workload, distribution of benefits and the quality of staff-officials relationships did not bring about variations among instructors despite differences in academic rank. Similarly, no differences was found in relation to distributive justice (i.e. differences in perceiving allocation of benefits and workload). Specifically speaking about instructors' perception of distributive justice, one can observe from the overall average score (Mean = 6.54 and SD = 1.52) that instructors are in an ambivalent situation. Hence, instructors generally reported that there was neither a fair practice nor can they full heartedly

claim that the leadership was transparent. More seriously, however, instructors assess the extent to which there exists transparent and participatory decision-making (Mean = 5.57 and SD = 1.71). The overall mean indicate that instructors were clearly dissatisfied with it. On the other hand, even though a significant F was observed, no two groups showed important differences.

In contrast, Leader-Member-Exchange (LMX) was the most favorably perceived work environment factor (Mean=8.42 and SD=1.23). It focused on quality of relationships between instructors and immediate superiors in a work context (i.e. department heads and faculty deans).

Table 4: Instructors' Assessment of Salary Adequacy and Comparability

Academic Rank	Salary Adequacy				
	SD	DS	UD	DA	SD
Assist. Professor >	7	1	1	-	-
Lecturer	35	18	1	1	-
Assistant Lecturer	3	1	-	-	-
Graduate Assistant	10	8	2	1	1
Technical Assistant	6	5	2	-	-
Total	61	33	6	2	1
%	59.2	32	5.8	1.9	0.9
Academic Rank	Salary Comparability				
	SD	DS	UD	DA	SD
Assist. Professor >	6	3	-	-	-
Lecturer	27	20	3	5	-
Assistant Lecturer	3	-	1	-	-
Graduate Assistant	10	8	1	1	2
Technical Assistant	7	3	3		
Total	53	34	8	6	2
(%)	51.5	33.0	7.8	5.8	1.9

Figure 1 shows the proportion of study participants who responded to the item: "If you get a chance for a better salary in another organization, would you leave this University?". The bar graph depicts that the majority (68%) said "yes" to the question, indicating that they would

leave if they get better salary, while the remaining 32% preferred to remain. Further, as shown in Table 5, out of the total that preferred leaving, 5 out of 9 have a rank of assistant professor and above, and 38 out of 55 are lecturers.



Figure 1: Proportion of Instructors who intended to stay or quit

Table 5: Faculty Intent to Stay or Quit by Academic Rank

Academic Rank	Leave		Stay		Chi-square
	N	%	M	%	
Assist. Prof >	5	6.1	4	2.9	3.07*
Lecturer	38	37.4	17	17.6	
Assist Lecturer <	1	2.7	3	1.3	
Graduate Assistant	15	19.5	7	7.0	
Technical Assistant	11	8.8	2	2.2	
Total	70	68	8.41	1.23	

$\chi^2 = 3.07, p < .05, df = 1$

On the other hand, affective organizational commitment was relatively high among faculty members. According to the data, the overall average in six-item affective organizational commitment scale was found to be 20.8 with a standard deviation of 4.32 (Mean = 20 and SD = 4.32: Maximum possible score is 30). This shows that the instructors care about the university and its future. If there is anything that makes them leave, it has little to do with lack of concern and emotional tie with the university.

Correlation

This section presents the results of a correlation analysis computed to find relationships among the participants' socio-demographic characteristics, work environment variables [i.e. fairness of institutional leadership in relation to procedural justice, distributive justice and Leader-Member-Exchange (LMX)], affective job characteristics (organizational commitment and overall job satisfaction), and intention to stay in or leave the university.

Accordingly, age is significantly correlated with tenure ($r = .77$; $p < .0001$), and academic rank ($r = -.61$; $p < .0001$). But tenure is related markedly with level of education ($r = .23$, $p < .001$), and academic rank ($r = .32$, $p < .0001$). Similarly, overall job satisfaction was significantly correlated with academic rank ($r = .32$; $p < .001$) and level of education ($r = -.19$; $p < .05$). This can partly be explained by a significant association of age with tenure which positively influence faculty members to develop a sense of belongingness and ownership which, in turn fosters affective attachment to the university.

The correlation results which concerns the monetary aspect of working in the higher education system (i.e. instructors' perception about the adequacy and comparability of their salaries vis-à-vis their counterparts working in other organizations) with participants' background characteristics, comparability of salary amount found to be inversely related with level of education ($r = .19$; $p < .05$) and academic rank ($r = -.23$; $p < .001$). However, this finding should be interpreted with caution.

That is, even though dissatisfaction with the existing salary scale was reported to be very high among senior academic staff, junior and less experienced instructors were not satisfied either. In particular, instructors unfavourably rated adequacy and comparability of salary with increasing level of education and academic rank; the average ratings (i.e. salary adequacy: Mean = 1.74; SD = .97; salary comparability: Mean = 1.53; SD = .79) could be qualitatively interpreted as swinging between "Very dissatisfied" and "Dissatisfied". In addition, comparability of salary amount markedly correlated ($r = .29$; $p < .001$) with overall job satisfaction. This reveals that instructors' perception of a comparably low salary relative to professionals working in other organizations seem to play a de-motivating role by lowering their overall satisfaction of working in a university setting.

Similarly, bivariate relationships further revealed significant relationships between work environment variables and affective job characteristics and turnover intention. Specifically, instructors' perception of fairness correlated with turnover intention ($r = .26$; $p < .001$), overall job satisfaction ($r = .36$; $p < .0001$), and affective organizational commitment ($r = .31$; $p < .001$). Further, procedural justice was also positively associated with faculty intention to leave the university ($r = .26$; $p = .27$; $p < .001$), affective organizational commitment ($r = .29$; $p < .001$), and overall job satisfaction ($r = .19$; $p < .05$).

Results of the Multivariate Analyses

In this section, an attempt is made to find the factors which predict affective organizational commitment and faculty turnover intent or non-intent to leave the university among the set of variables categorized under socio-demographic, work environment, salary, and affective job characteristics. To find out which variable among the set of variables identified have a significant predictive efficacy vis-à-vis turnover intention and affective organizational commitment, two different multivariate procedures were used. These were: A Logistic Regression (LR) analysis and a Linear Multiple Regression Analysis. These categories of variables were entered in three steps and thus for each

dependent variable identified three different models were constructed. This was done to examine the effect of two major reasons (1) The hierarchical procedure helps to reveal the effect of both group of variables and individual variables and (2) the increasing or declining effects could be seen by examining the changes in the amount of shared variance (R^2 and $R^2 L$) (Cohen 1999).

As depicted in Table 5, the Logistic Regression Models reveal that socio-demographic variables have almost no effect on faculty intent or non-intent to leave with the exception of age which has demonstrated a marginal significance. On the contrary, however, Model II shows that work environment factors generally significantly predicted faculty intent to stay or leave (Model Chi-square = 16.86; $p < .001$). A closer look at specific contributions indicates that Procedural Justice (Model II: Wald = 6.14; $p < .01$, $df = 9$; Model III: Wald = 6.12, $p < .01$; $df = 10$) is found to noticeably affect turnover intent followed by Leader-Member-Exchange, (Model II: Wald = 3.65; $p < .05$, $df = 9$; Model III: Wald = 3.67, $p < .10$, $df = 10$) and perceived fairness of leadership with respect to distributive justice (Model II: Wald = 2.91; $p < .10$, $df = 9$; Model III: Wald = 2.73 $p < .10$, $df = 10$) in that order. Further, salary adequacy and comparability were included to find their possible effects. However, both variables did not come out as significant predictors in the presence of work environment variables. Model III added Overall Job Satisfaction into the equation; yet no meaningful increment has been observed since both the Improvement Chi-square (Chi-square = .026, *ns*) and percentage of correct classification did not show increments (see: Table 5).

Similarly, multiple regression models were fitted in three steps considering affective organizational commitment as the dependent variable. Here the objective was to find which variables are important in predicting instructors' commitment to their university as an organization. Based on conceptual models provided in the existing literature (Allen and Meyer 1996; Hannam and Jimmieson 2002) and a bivariate screening made in the present study, relevant variables were identified to be included in the model.

Like in the earlier analysis, the results of the linear multiple regression entered in three steps (see Table 7) revealed tenure (Model I: $\beta = .40$; $p < .01$; Model II: $\beta = .38$; $p < .01$; $\beta = .41$; $p < .01$) as a reliable predictor of affective organizational commitment. Since, in all of the three models fitted, longer service in the university was found to be a precursor of commitment to it. This finding is expected because similar studies in non-educational organizations also found similar results (Luthanos et al. 1987; Mathieu and Zajac 1990; Meyer et al. 1993). Age is also related to organizational commitment even though it failed to reach the required level of significance (Model I: $\beta = -.31$; $p < .10$; Model II: $\beta = -.29$; $p < .10$). One important point worth mentioning here is the positive beta coefficients revealing a direct predictive relationship between age and organizational commitment. This is interpreted to mean younger instructors tend to be less committed than older ones. Partly, this can be explained by a strong association of age with tenure ($r = .77$; $p < .001$).

Table 6: Mean, SD, and Inter-correlation Matrix of Selected Study Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1 Age	31.8	6.57	-	-.03	-.65***	.77***	-.61***	.14	.03	-.00	-.18	-.15	-.00	.03	.15
2 Gender	1.08	.97		-	.05	.04	.05	.08	.02	-.06	.12	.08	.11	.03	.23**
3 Education	3.76	1.33			-	.48***	.95***	.02	-.06	.06	.11	-.23**	-.14	-.04	.19*
4 Tenure	4.38	4.30				-	-.40***	.11	-.01	.04	-.04	-.03	.09	.21*	.00
5 Rank	3.96	1.63					-	-.06	-.04	.09	.06	-.19*	-.11	.02	.32***
6 LMX	8.48	1.27						-	.20*	.32***	.17	-.04	-.11	.14	.03
7 Distributive Justice	6.61	1.34							-	.45***	.13	.23*	.26**	.31***	.36***
8 Procedural Justice	5.57	1.70								-	.18	.29**	.27**	.29**	.19*
9 Sal adequacy	1.74	.97									-	.67***	-.03	.08	.16
10 Sal comparability	1.53	.77										-	.03	.12	.29**
11 Turnover Intention	.32	.47											-	.08	-.08
12 Org Commitment	20.8	4.30												-	.19*
13 Overall Job Sat.	2.58	1.23													-

*p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001;

Note: The variables were coded as follows: Gender: Male = 1; Female = 2; Education:; Diploma = 1 (lowest); PhD= 6 (highest); Residence: urban = 1; suburban = 2; rural = 3; School level: primary = 1, secondary = 2.

Figures along the diagonal represent internal consistency reliabilities (i.e. coefficient alphas)

Table 7: Regression Model for Organizational Commitment as a Dependent Variable

Variables	Model I		Model II		Model III	
	B	β	B	β	B	β
Demographic var.						
Age	.20	.31*	-.19	.29*	.22	.34
Gender	-.06	-.00	-.04	-.00	.61	.04
Education	1.23	.38	1.42	.44	1.44	.35
Rank	.94	.36	1.03	.39	.81	.31
Tenure	.40	.40***	.38	.38***	.41	.41***
Salary						
Adequacy	-	-	.068	.079	.039	.045
Comparability	-	-	.243	.255***	.208	.219***
Work environment						
Distributive Justice	-	-	-	-	.78	.24**
LMX	-	-	-	-	.28	.08*
Procedural justice	-	-	-	-	.31	.12
R ²	.099*		.112		.222***	
adj R ²	.05		.05		.138	
Change R ²	-		.013		.110****	

* p < .10; ** p < .05; *** p < .01

Note:

The variables were coded as follows: Gender: Male = 1; Female = 2;
Education: Diploma = 1; B.A./BSc = 2; MD = 3; M.A./MSc = 3; Mphil = 5; PhD = 6.

In Model II, salary adequacy and salary comparability were introduced in the model; however, only salary comparability ($\beta = .26$, $p < .01$) made a significant contribution but the R² change did not show a marked increase. In step 3, however, work environment variables were entered in the equation (see: Model III). The results indicate that distributive justice came out as significant ($\beta = .24$, $p < .05$) while LMX ($\beta = .08$, $p < .10$) was important and equally useful as procedural justice.

Table 8: Logistic Regression Models with Turnover Intention as Dependent Variable

Variables	Model I		Model II		Model III	
	B	Wald	B	Wald	B	Wald
Demographic var.						
Age	-.12*	3.14	-.13*	3.05	-.13*	3.06
Education	.15	1.43	.03	.00	.04	.00
Rank	.65	1.52	.42	.68	.42	.68
Tenure	.10	.10	.14	2.79	-.067	-.125
Work environment variables						
Procedural Justice	-	-	.49***	6.14	.49***	.6.12
LMX	-	-	.46**	3.65	.46*	3.67
Leadership Fairness	-	-	.36*	2.91	.37	2.73
Salary						
Adequacy	-	-	-.12	.12	-.12	.11
Comparability	-	-	-.27	.34	-.26	.32
Overall Job satisfaction	-	-	-	-	.05	.03
Chi-square	6.15		16.86****		17.12***	
Degrees of freedom	4		9		10	
Improvement Chi-square	-		10.31***		0.26	
Degrees of freedom			5		1	
% Correctly predicted	66.02		71.84%		71.84%	

* p < .10; ** p < .05; *** p < .01

Note:

The variables below were coded as follows: Gender: Male = 1; Female = 2; Education: PhD =6; Mphil= 5; MA./MSc = 4 ; MD = 3, B.A./BSc = 2; Diploma =1; Academic Rank: Associate Prof=7; Assistant Prof. = 6; Lecturer:=5; Assistant Lecturer = 4; Graduate Assist II = 3; Graduate Asist I = 2; and Technical Assist = 1
LMX = Leader - Member - Exchange.

On the other hand, the Logistic Regression models fitted to examine the antecedents of faculty turnover intention among the work environment variables considered. Model I introduced selected socio-demographic variables. But no significant predictive relationship was found. In *Model II*, however, work environment variables were entered and the results show that this group of variable made a substantial contribution to the overall model (Model Chi-square = 16.86, p < .001). However, the effects of socio-demographic, salary adequacy, salary comparability, and overall job satisfaction were also studied. Further,

the improvement of Chi-square was found to be significant ($\chi^2 = 10.31, p < .01$) which portrays the overall fit of Model II accompanied by a marked increase in the percentage of correct prediction (Model I: % correct prediction = 66.02; *Model II*: % correct prediction = 71.84%). In Model III, overall job satisfaction was added, and it neither contributed to the total prediction nor did it directly predict intent or non-intent to stay. Hence, no model improvement was observed. In general, among work environment variables, procedural justice (Wald = 6.14, $p < .01$) and LMX (*Model II*: Wald = 3.65, $p < .05$, $df = 9$; *Model III*: Wald = 3.67, $p < .10$; $df = 10$) lost its significance when overall job satisfaction was introduced in the model. This may be due to the mediating effect of overall job satisfaction in the relationship between LMX and turnover intention.

Discussion

As it is evident from previous sections, this study examined to what extent faculty members in Debu University perceived their work environment based on the identified factors. These factors were perceived as fairness of institutional leadership in terms of distributive and procedural justices and perceived quality of leader-member-exchange. The analysis which was based on descriptive statistics reveals that leadership practices are far from being fair with respect to administrative practice at college and faculty level. Further, it also indicates fairness in terms of distributing benefits, responsibilities, and workload among members. Even though much cannot be said about the nature and magnitude of this problem; with the data at hand, such practices could lead to low commitment to the university or its constituent faculties and colleges as it was observed among school teachers (Tesfaye 2003). In other words, the study found that affective organizational commitment is significantly correlated with distributive justice ($r = .31, p < .001$) in terms of allocation of benefits and workload and procedural justice ($r = .29, p < .01$). Moreover, procedural justice was also significantly associated with overall job satisfaction ($r = .36, p < .001$). The most serious is, however, what instructors have reported about procedural justice which underlies

lack of transparent and participatory decision-making. This is found to be the salient dissatisfying factor for instructors than any other work environment variable considered. In particular, the empirical evidence suggest that instructors who are the ones who actually implement these decisions reported to have little role. At any rate, this may not positively contribute to organizational success since the main assets of an organization/institution are its employees (in this case, faculty members) not the buildings, or the machines inside them (McShane and Von Glinow 2000). On top of that, it would have a negative effect on institutional accomplishment via eroding instructors' sense of belongingness to their university and their readiness to assure its successes and become a liability for its possible failures.

On the other side of the spectrum, however, instructors have positively assessed their relationship in work setting with their immediate superiors. This would facilitate the possible social support that might be provided from immediate supervisors i.e. department heads and faculty deans. Furthermore, it would facilitate a sense of collegiality and foster organizational citizenship behaviors among staff members (Hannman and Jimmieson 2002; Moonmen 1991).

The other important factor that is considered in this study concerns the financial reward structure, particularly the salary scale. In this analysis, two things were stressed. One was adequacy of salary amount relative to the nature of work instructors are doing. The other issue concerns whether or not salary amount is comparable to those who have similar educational qualification and work experience. Even though this issue has been raised by many scholars (Seyoum 1992; 2000; Dejene 2000) and has also been a major source of dissatisfaction among academics in most higher education institutions (Workneh and Tessema 2002), there seem to be less enthusiasm to give appropriate response to this longstanding issue. Whatever the outcome of these questions may be, instructors' reactions to these questions would provide a base-line about their attitudes towards the existing salary structure. The inspection of Table 4 portrays the assessment of faculty members regarding the adequacy and

comparability of their salaries. The results show that almost all the respondents (96%) believe that their salaries are not adequate (61% very inadequate and 33% inadequate) – and with regard to its comparability –the majority (85%) perceived that it is comparably less than what their counterparts earn elsewhere. This appears to be an area that needs to be revisited if quality is to be synchronized with ensuring access.

In an attempt to find the role of work environment variables in affecting instructors' intent to stay or leave and affective organizational commitment in the presence of socio-demographic variables, two multivariate analyses procedures were performed namely, Linear Multiple Regression and Logistic Regression Analyses. The reason for the use of the latter was the fact that the dependent variable (Intent or non-intent to leave Debu University) is a dummy variable. The results showed that affective organizational commitment has been significantly predicted by salary adequacy, and perceived quality of Leader - Member-Exchange (LMX). On the other hand, high affective organizational commitment was found to be linked with beliefs that instructors' salaries are comparable with their counterparts (similar qualification and experience) working in other organizations; perceptions of fairness with respect to the allocation of workload and benefits and favorable perception of the quality of Leader-Member-Exchange – i.e. favorable staff-officials work-relations. However, among the socio-demographic variables, affective organizational commitment was found to be substantially influenced by tenure. This is consistent with similar studies (Luthanous et al. 1987). This is so because working for a long time in a given organization tend to increase organizational commitment due to a number of reasons including favorable interpersonal relationships, investment of time and effort for the realization of institutional goals, and the responsibilities assumed by staff members during their stay. Generally, work environment variables significantly contribute to the total prediction ($R^2 = .110$, $p < .001$) which indicates their importance in meaningfully affecting instructors' emotional attachment to the university.

With regard to faculty intent to leave or stay in the university, generally the descriptive statistics indicate that the majority (68%; $\chi^2 = 3.07$, $p < .05$; $df = 1$) want to leave. Closer inspection of the data in Table 5 tabulated by academic rank further confirms that in all categories over 50 % of the instructors (with the exception of assistant lecturers) reported to have contemplated to leave. This portrays an undesirable scenario from the perspective of institutional development and quality in the unfolding system of higher education in Ethiopia.

A look into work environment variables demonstrated that the role of workplace factors - fairness perception with respect to procedural justice made a substantial prediction (*Model I*: Wald = 6.14, $p < .01$; *Model II*: Wald = 6.12, $p < .01$). Fairness perception in relation to participation in decision-making and transparency in administration of the affairs the respective colleges and faculties increases the likelihood that instructors' would intend staying while on the contrary, perception of autocratic culture of decision-making increases the probability of leaving. Similarly, faculty members' perception of cordial relations with immediate supervisors (deans and heads of departments) increase the likelihood of remaining, and lack of these favorable interpersonal relations fosters thinking to quit.

In the presence of work environment variables, however, financial aspects of university teaching seem to play a less important role. As it turned out, instructors tend to give much importance to workplace factors than monetary rewards when it comes to intending or not intending to leave. On the other hand, even though affective attachment to the university is high, the temptation of greener pastures elsewhere in the midst of inadequate financial rewards is so compelling. Of course, the fact that instructors should aggressively seek supplementary income via part-time employment and/or consultancy works would substantially contribute for reduced quality of instruction in higher education institutions. Similar studies in other contexts also substantiate the above argument revealing that inadequate salary may lead to engagement in other business to

compensate for the financial deficiencies in a way that is detrimental to the quality of academic activities (Darling-Hammond and Sclan 1996). Hence, instructors' preference to stay may be convincing to the extent that financial problems do not pose a serious problem. In fact, faculty members' intent to stay in a situation where their salary is rated as inadequate could be partly attributable to affective attachment to the university and partly to the existence of alternatives mechanisms of boosting their income. This latter scenario clearly depicts the increased likelihood of forced-engagement with other activities including non-academic business for merely survival-related reasons, which, in turn engender a setback in the overall academic quality via sharing the time spent on research, preparation for teaching, advising and other administrative activities. Hence, faculty members' intention to continue serving despite low pay does not necessarily imply that they have the necessary psychological and economic containment to be able to effectively contribute towards achieving the desired quality of higher education.

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