

Exploring Staff Turnover and Turnover Intentions in Selected Colleges of Education in the Oti Region, Ghana

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Abstract

Staff turnover is the frequency at which staff leave one entity for another and need to be replaced, whilst staff turnover and turn intention are the employees' reported willingness to leave or consider leaving an organization. The increasing rate of staff turnover and turn intention remains a major issue that affects the stability of institutions, the quality of teaching, and research generation. Even while institutions spend money on training their workers, many nevertheless lose trained employees, which raises questions about how to keep them. The study utilised a mixed-methods research methodology, combining quantitative survey data from 100 staff members with qualitative views from 15 intentionally selected senior staff in the colleges of education in the Oti Region of Ghana. Data were gathered from January to March 2025 by structured surveys and semi-structured interviews. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to look at quantitative data, and thematic analysis was used to look at qualitative data. Using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory as a guide, the study discovered that both economic elements (income, allowances, retirement benefits) and non-economic factors (career progression, leadership practices, workload, and institutional support) influence people's desire to leave their jobs. Inferential analysis indicated strong correlation among work satisfaction, salary, and turnover ($p < 0.05$). The study finds that while financial incentives are crucial, non-monetary variables like recognition, professional growth, and participative leadership are just as significant for keeping personnel. It suggests that competitive pay structures, clear career paths, better research assistance, and governance systems that include everyone should be put in place.

Keywords

Ghana, Colleges of Education, Staff Turnover and Turn Intention, Higher

1. Introduction

Generally, institutions of higher learning are the bedrocks of knowledge generation, innovation, and national advancement. Their primary objective is to teach, do research, and serve the community, which depends significantly on the proficiency, dedication, and stability of their personnel (Altbach et al., 2009). Staff members undertake multiplicity of task, including teaching and mentoring students, obtaining funds, as well as doing research, and participating in institutional governance. This makes the stability and retention of faculty members crucial for preserving educational quality, promoting student success, and fulfilling long-term institutional objectives (Tetty, 2006).

In recent years, several higher education institutions have been experiencing increasing rates of staff turnover and turn over intention to leave or actual exit behaviour. This phenomenon is especially alarming due to its extensive ramifications because it disturbs the continuity of academic programs, postpones research initiatives, undermines mentorship systems, and diminishes morale among the remaining personnel (Hom et al., 2017). The recruitment and onboarding of new faculty members entail considerable financial and administrative expenses, encompassing advertising, training, and diminished productivity during transition phases (Griffeth et al., 2000).

Turnover and turnover intention in academia is a complex phenomenon influenced by organisational and individual factors. Several reasons for this are low pay, lack of opportunities for career advancement, too much work, poor leadership at the organisation, and a lack of recognition or professional support (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). These problems are worsened by structural problems, such as how overly bureaucratic governmental institutions are and the increased competitiveness of the job market for talented staff, including academic staff (Altbach et al., 2009). In certain places, outside factors like brain drain, political instability, and poorly financed schools make the problem worse (Tetty, 2006).

Moreover, turnover and turnover intentions do not transpire consistently across all academic settings. Variations in turnover trends are influenced by distinctions between public and private institutions, generational expectations of younger teachers, and variances in regional financing or policy frameworks. Comprehending these subtleties is crucial for formulating focused and sustainable employee retention strategies (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002).

This study aims to examine the fundamental reasons, discernible patterns, and possible solutions associated with staff turnover in colleges of education in the Oti region. The research utilises a mixed-methods strategy that combines quantitative data from surveys and qualitative insights from semi-structured interviews to provide a comprehensive knowledge of this critical subject. The results are anticipated

to guide institutional policy, human resource practices, and wider dialogues on staff management.

Problem statement

Employee turnover and turnover intention is a major issue in modern organizations, especially in higher education, where human capital drives teaching, research, and innovation. Moderate staff mobility can rejuvenate an organization, but excessive turnover intention typically indicates structural and managerial issues that can damage institutional effectiveness and long-term viability.

Colleges of Education in Ghana have changed significantly since becoming tertiary. This transformation has increased staff expectations by adding administrative, research and academic duties to their portfolio. However, remuneration, career advancement, research support, and institutional governance have not necessarily increased with these enlarged duties. Many personnel feel dissatisfied, frustrated, and less committed to the organization, which increases their desire to leave.

The significant investment that Colleges of Education in Ghana, particularly those in Oti Region, make in staff development through sponsorship for advanced academic levels is troubling. Despite these investments and policy interventions, there is growing evidence that many beneficiaries have substantial turnover intentions and leave the colleges shortly after graduating to find better employment. This reduces financial and human capital, disrupts academic programs, increases staff effort, and diminishes institutional capability.

Despite global research on staff turnover and retention, there is little empirical evidence on the determinants of staff turnover and turn intention in Ghanaian colleges of education within the Oti Region, especially using integrated methodological approaches that capture both measurable trends and lived experiences. Existing studies often focus on universities, use single-method techniques, and urban context, overlooking the peculiarities of Colleges of Education in Oti Region.

Thus, these institutions need a thorough and empirical study of staff turnover and turn intention determinants. Understanding these elements is crucial to developing evidence-based human resource policies and institutional initiatives to improve staff retention, job satisfaction, and Ghana's higher education system's sustainability and efficacy in the Oti Region.

Statement of the Problem

Employee turnover intention remains a major challenge confronting Colleges of Education in Ghana, particularly within the Oti Region. The transition of Colleges of Education into tertiary institutions has significantly expanded academic and administrative responsibilities, yet institutional conditions relating to remuneration, promotion, workload, and research support have not improved proportionately. As a result, many staff members experience dissatisfaction and increasing intentions to leave their institutions.

This study specifically focuses on selected Colleges of Education in the Oti Region, namely Dambai College of Education and Jasikan College of Education.

These institutions continue to invest substantially in staff development and post-graduate training; however, growing turnover intention among trained personnel threatens institutional stability, academic continuity, and educational quality.

Despite increasing concern regarding staff retention in Ghanaian higher education, limited empirical studies have examined turnover intention within Colleges of Education using an integrated mixed-methods approach. This study therefore investigates the major determinants of staff turnover intention and explores practical retention strategies within selected Colleges of Education in the Oti Region.

Research Objective

- 1) To examine the primary factors contributing to staff turnover in the selected colleges of education in the Oti Region.
- 2) To assess the effects of compensation, workload, career advancement opportunities, and job satisfaction on turnover intentions among staff.
- 3) To explore institutional strategies for improving staff retention in selected colleges of education.

Research Questions

- 1) What are the primary factors contributing to staff turnover in the selected colleges of education in the Oti Region?
- 2) What are the effects of compensation, workload, career advancement opportunities, and job satisfaction on turnover intentions?
- 3) What practical institutional strategies can be used to improve staff retention?

2. Literature Review

This section examines the current literature on employee turnover, specifically within the higher education sector. It examines the concept and importance of turnover, the distinct issues encountered by academic institutions, and the principal variables affecting faculty retention and attrition.

Turnover and its Impact

Employee turnover and turnover intentions refer to the rate at which employees exit an organisation and are subsequently replaced within a given period. It represents a critical workforce indicator, reflecting not only staffing stability but also the overall health of organisational systems and practices. Price (2001) categorises turnover into two principal forms: voluntary turnover, which occurs when employees choose to leave of their own accord, and involuntary turnover, which results from organisational decisions such as dismissals, retrenchment, or contract expiration. Among these two forms, voluntary turnover is often of greater concern to researchers and managers because it frequently signals underlying dissatisfaction with remuneration, working conditions, leadership style, organisational culture, or limited opportunities for career advancement. When competent and experienced employees voluntarily exit an organisation, it raises important questions about institutional climate, employee engagement, and retention strategies.

The impact of turnover extends far beyond the mere replacement of personnel.

As [Mobley \(1982\)](#) argues, high turnover rates are associated with substantial direct and indirect costs, including recruitment expenses, selection procedures, onboarding, and training of new staff. Beyond these financial implications, turnover disrupts workflow continuity, weakens team cohesion, and erodes institutional memory and accumulated tacit knowledge. The departure of experienced staff often results in productivity gaps and increased workload for remaining employees, which may in turn lower morale and trigger further turnover intentions ([Mobley, 1982](#); [Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000](#); [Hom, et al., 2017](#)). In academic institutions, the consequences are even more profound. The replacement of specialised staff is neither immediate nor straightforward, given the need for subject-matter expertise, pedagogical competence, and familiarity with institutional systems. Moreover, sustained student and faculty relationships, mentorship roles, research continuity, and curriculum development efforts are adversely affected when experienced faculty members leave. Consequently, persistent turnover in educational settings not only undermines administrative efficiency but also threatens the quality of teaching, research output, and overall institutional effectiveness ([Tetty, 2006](#); [Altbach, et al., 2009](#)).

Turnover and Turnover intentions in Academic Institutions

Employee turnover and turnover intentions within academic institutions presents dynamics that are distinct from those observed in many other sectors. Unlike corporate environments where tasks may be more easily redistributed or standardised, academic work is multifaceted, combining teaching, research, community engagement, and administrative responsibilities. According to [Johnsrud and Rosser \(2002\)](#), the demanding nature of any role in the academic setting, characterised by heavy teaching loads, research expectations, committee assignments, and student mentoring creates a high-pressure environment that may lead to stress and burnout, particularly where institutional support systems are weak. When experienced faculty members leave, institutions do not merely lose personnel; they lose research continuity, supervisory relationships, curriculum development expertise, and institutional memory. Given the long gestation period required for developing research projects, supervising postgraduate theses, and building scholarly networks, turnover can significantly disrupt academic productivity and diminish student satisfaction.

Beyond operational disruption, turnover in higher education has broader implications for educational quality and institutional reputation. [Adeyemi \(2012\)](#) argue that the exit of experienced staff often leads to weakened student and staff engagement, reduced instructional effectiveness, and reputational damage, especially when departures occur within critical or high-performing departments. Furthermore, the increasingly globalised academic labour market has intensified competition for qualified scholars, as well as educational administrators. Institutions with limited funding, weaker conditions of service, or inadequate retention policies are particularly vulnerable to losing talent to better-resourced universities at both national and international levels ([Altbach et al., 2009](#)). This “brain drain”

phenomenon is especially pronounced in developing countries, where disparities in remuneration, research infrastructure, and career advancement opportunities are substantial (Tetty, 2006).

In the specific context of Colleges of Education, the effects of turnover are even more pronounced due to their specialised mandate of training pre-service teachers. Unlike large research universities that may have broader faculty pools, Colleges of Education often operate with limited staff strength and rely heavily on subject specialists in areas such as Mathematics Education, Science Education, and Educational Psychology (Darling-Hammond, 2017). According to Aulia and Haerani (2023), the resignation of a tutor in a specialised field, particularly after being sponsored for further studies, derails the institution's ability to be competitive whilst it struggles to find a replacement with comparable qualifications and pedagogical competence. This situation can lead to increased teaching loads for remaining tutors, delayed course offerings, and reduced supervision capacity for student teachers during teaching practice. For example, the departure of a single experienced methodology tutor may affect multiple cohorts of trainees, thereby compromising the quality of teacher preparation and weakening the institutional capacity to deliver quality teacher education (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Akyeampong, 2017).

Moreover, Colleges of Education in Ghana frequently invest scarce resources in sponsoring tutors for master's and doctoral programmes as part of national reforms aimed at upgrading teacher education. When such beneficiaries exit shortly after completing their studies, often attracted by improved salary scales and research opportunities in universities, the sponsoring college experiences both financial loss and capacity gaps. This pattern not only undermines institutional stability but also affects accreditation standards, programme delivery, and long-term strategic planning. Consequently, while turnover is a general organisational challenge, its impact within Colleges of Education is uniquely severe, given their limited staffing flexibility, specialised mandate, and critical role in national human capital development.

Factors Contributing to Turnover

Extensive research has identified multiple, interrelated factors that contribute to employee turnover intentions within academic institutions. These determinants are often conceptualised as either extrinsic factors, those related to tangible conditions of employment such as salary, workload, and institutional policies or intrinsic factors, which relate to psychological fulfilment, motivation, and professional satisfaction. In practice, turnover rarely results from a single cause; rather, it emerges from the cumulative effect of organisational, professional, and personal considerations (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Understanding these factors is essential for developing effective retention strategies within higher education.

Compensation and benefits remain among the most frequently cited predictors of turnover. Currivan (1999) found that dissatisfaction with pay and fringe benefits significantly increases employees' intentions to leave. In academic contexts, this is-

sue is particularly salient where remuneration does not correspond with qualifications, research expectations, and heavy teaching responsibilities (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). When academic and highly skilled administrative staff perceive inequity between their level of education and their compensation, especially in comparison to peers in other institutions or sectors, turnover intentions tend to rise (Tetty, 2006). This aligns with Equity Theory, which posits that perceived imbalances between employee inputs and organizational rewards generate dissatisfaction, reduced commitment, and withdrawal behaviours (Adams, 1965; Fitzgerald, Avirmed, & Battulga, 2025). In many developing contexts, disparities between universities and Colleges of Education further intensify this challenge, as academics may migrate to institutions offering more competitive salary structures, improved conditions of service, and stronger research incentives.

Career advancement opportunities also play a crucial role in retention. The availability of transparent promotion pathways, opportunities for professional growth, and access to senior academic and administrative ranks significantly influences organisational commitment. When promotion criteria are unclear, perceived as biased, or structurally limited due to few senior positions, staff may experience frustration and stagnation. Such perceptions weaken affective commitment and increase the likelihood of seeking employment elsewhere (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Research suggests that employees who perceive limited upward mobility demonstrate stronger turnover intentions than those who see clear prospects for advancement (Allen et al., 2003). In academic institutions, delays in promotion, limited research funding, and inadequate mentorship structures often contribute to this perception of career stagnation.

Organisational culture and leadership style further shape employees' attachment to their institutions. Supportive leadership characterised by open communication, fairness, and participatory decision-making has been positively associated with job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Allen et al., 2003). Conversely, authoritarian leadership styles, internal politics, and lack of transparency in decision-making processes may foster distrust and disengagement. Academic environments thrive on collegiality, intellectual autonomy, and shared governance; when these principles are undermined, faculty morale may decline, thereby increasing turnover propensity. Leadership that fails to recognise academic contributions or provide constructive feedback can further exacerbate dissatisfaction.

Work-life balance has also emerged as a significant determinant of turnover in higher education. The expanding demands placed on both academic and administrative staff, including large class sizes, research output requirements, administrative duties, and community service obligations often create role overload. Where institutions lack adequate administrative support or equitable workload distribution, academics may experience chronic stress and burnout. Prolonged exposure to such pressures diminishes job satisfaction and increases withdrawal cognitions. Studies consistently link excessive workload and poor work-life bal-

ance with higher turnover intentions among faculty members (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002). In teaching-focused institutions, particularly those with limited staffing capacity, heavy teaching loads can significantly erode personal well-being and professional fulfilment.

Intrinsic factors such as job satisfaction and motivation are equally critical in explaining turnover behaviour. Drawing on Herzberg's (1966) two-factor theory, intrinsic motivators, including recognition, achievement, autonomy, meaningful work, and opportunities for professional growth are central to sustained job satisfaction. When these motivators are present, employees are more likely to develop strong organisational commitment. However, their absence may not only reduce satisfaction but also stimulate turnover intentions. In academic settings, intellectual autonomy, research engagement, scholarly recognition, and professional development opportunities function as powerful intrinsic motivators. When institutions fail to cultivate these elements, faculty members may perceive diminished professional fulfilment and consequently seek more supportive environments.

In sum, turnover in academic institutions is driven by a constellation of inter-related extrinsic and intrinsic factors. Compensation inequities, limited career progression, unsupportive leadership, excessive workload, and reduced intrinsic motivation collectively shape employees' decisions to remain or exit (Moblely, 1982; Currivan, 1999; Allen et al., 2003; Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002; Herzberg, 1966). Addressing turnover, therefore, requires a holistic approach that integrates financial, structural, managerial, and psychological considerations within institutional policy frameworks.

This review illustrates that turnover in academia is affected by a complex interaction of financial, structural, and psychological variables. Comprehending these processes is essential for formulating effective retention measures and guaranteeing institutional resilience amid increasing rivalry and academic pressures.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on Maslow's Hierarchy of demands Theory, which asserts that human motivation is influenced by the satisfaction of a sequence of hierarchical demands, from fundamental physiological necessities to advanced self-actualization requirements. The idea offers a valuable perspective for comprehending the behaviour of both academic and administrative staff, especially with job satisfaction, motivation, and turnover intentions in higher education institutions.

Maslow classifies human requirements into five tiers: physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization needs. The theory posits that humans are compelled to fulfil lower-level demands prior to advancing to higher-level requirements. When these demands are unfulfilled, discontent ensues, potentially resulting in withdrawal behaviours such as diminished commitment or intentions to exit an organisation.

This study operationalised Maslow's framework to elucidate the elements af-

fecting staff turnover and turn intention in College of Education in Ghana.

At the physiological level, needs pertain to fundamental economic survival, exemplified in this study by wages and allowances. The results indicated that insufficient remuneration is a significant factor influencing turnover intention, implying that when fundamental financial demands are unmet, employees are more inclined to contemplate departing from their organisations.

The safety needs tier includes employment security, stability, and future safeguarding. This study reflects these needs in terms of employment security, pension plans, and retirement benefits. When personnel see ambiguity in their employment arrangements or insufficient long-term stability, their organisational commitment wanes, heightening their intention to depart.

At the social needs level, individuals pursue a sense of belonging, collegial relationships, and a supportive workplace environment. This is seen in individual connections, collaboration, and institutional culture inside academic institutions. An absence of collegial support or a harsh work environment may diminish social commitment to the institution and increase turnover intention.

The esteem needs level pertains to acknowledgement, regard, and occupational position. This study defines esteem needs through advancement chances, titles, and acknowledgement of scholarly achievements. The results demonstrate that restricted career progression and insufficient recognition substantially affect employees' intentions to depart, underscoring the significance of esteem-related elements in academic and career retention.

At the self-actualization stage, individuals pursue personal growth, fulfilment, and the realisation of their complete potential. This includes research possibilities, professional development, and intellectual interaction within the academic sphere. The study revealed that insufficient research funding and restricted professional growth chances hinder personnel from attaining self-actualization, thereby elevating their propensity to pursue opportunities elsewhere.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs offers a thorough framework for comprehending the interplay between economic (lower-level) and non-economic (higher-level) elements that affect staff turnover and turn intention. The approach emphasises that merely addressing financial needs is inadequate; institutions must also cultivate supportive environments that foster professional development, acknowledgement, and substantive participation.

This paradigm illustrates that turnover intention among personnel is influenced not by a singular issue, but by the aggregate inadequacy in fulfilling several levels of requirements. Therefore, effective retention methods at Colleges of Education must employ a comprehensive approach that concurrently tackles financial, organisational, and professional aspects of staff motivation.

Conceptual Framework

This study conceptualises staff turnover and turn intention as a function of both economic and non-economic factors, grounded in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory. The framework assumes that when different levels of staff needs are un-

met, the likelihood of turnover intention increases.

Core Structure of the Framework

- Independent Variables (Predictors):
 - Economic Factors
 - Salary
 - Allowances
 - Retirement benefits
 - Non-Economic Factors
 - Career advancement opportunities
 - Leadership practices
 - Workload
 - Institutional support
 - Research opportunities
- Mediating Variable:
 - Job Satisfaction/Motivation
(reflecting the degree to which Maslow’s needs are fulfilled)
- Dependent Variable:
 - Staff turnover and turn intention

Framework Explanation

The framework posits that economic factors address lower-level needs (physiological and safety), while non-economic factors address higher-level needs (social, esteem, and self-actualisation). When these needs are adequately satisfied, staff are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction and organisational commitment, thereby reducing their intention to leave.

Conversely, when these needs are unmet, dissatisfaction emerges, leading to increased turnover intention. For example, inadequate salary undermines basic needs, while lack of career progression and research support limits professional fulfilment. The framework therefore highlights that turnover intention is not caused by a single factor but results from the combined effect of multiple unmet needs.

Conceptual Framework Diagram



3. Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a convergent mixed-methods design, combining quantitative survey data with qualitative interview data to offer a thorough knowledge of the factors influencing staff turnover. This approach was selected due to the intricate nature of staff turnover as an institutional issue that cannot be comprehensively explored through a singular methodological perspective. The study integrated both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to provide extensive statistical evidence and to elucidate the underlying contextual factors influencing staff turnover in certain colleges of education.

The quantitative component entailed the gathering of numerical data via standardised questionnaires distributed to academic and administrative personnel. The surveys were created to assess critical factors influencing turnover, including as remuneration, career progression prospects, workload, job satisfaction, and plans to leave the organization. This component yielded quantifiable data that facilitated statistical study of trends, correlations, and predictive variables affecting staff turnover.

The qualitative component comprised semi-structured interviews with institutional executives and designated staff members. The interviews provided participants the chance to articulate their comprehensive experiences and perceptions of the institutional, professional, and personal elements influencing turnover decisions. The study obtained detailed insights into leadership effectiveness, institutional support systems, professional development challenges, and organisational atmosphere.

The amalgamation of both data sets enabled the study to transcend superficial statistical correlations and incorporate comprehensive explanatory viewpoints. This enhanced the overall rigour of the research by enabling findings from one strand to corroborate and substantiate those of the other.

The convergent mixed-methods methodology facilitated the triangulation of findings by integrating statistical analysis of turnover drivers with contextual insights derived from participants' lived experiences. This design facilitated the concurrent collection of quantitative and qualitative data, which were analysed independently and subsequently integrated during interpretation to discern convergence, divergence, and complementarity in the results.

The triangulation approach yielded quantitative results that offered empirical evidence on the amount and relevance of turnover factors, while qualitative discoveries contextualised these results by elucidating the mechanisms and reasons behind the operation of such factors within institutional contexts. For instance, whereas survey data may identify remuneration as a determinant of turnover, interview data provide a more profound insight into the interplay between salary dissatisfaction, professional recognition, advancement prospects, and institutional leadership.

This methodological approach bolstered the study's reliability, validity, and

comprehensiveness by ensuring that results were substantiated by several sources of evidence. The research's practical significance was enhanced by producing findings that are statistically robust and institutionally anchored, therefore providing more dependable recommendations for policy and practice in staff retention within Colleges of Education.

This design's adoption aligns with the recommendations of mixed-methods scholars like [Creswell and Plano Clark \(2018\)](#), who assert that convergent designs are especially appropriate for studies aiming to validate findings across diverse data sources while equally prioritising both quantitative and qualitative components.

The mixed-methods convergent parallel design strengthened the study by facilitating a comprehensive analysis of staff turnover and turn intention, integrating statistical generalisation with contextual depth and explanatory richness.

Demographics and Subset

The study's sample consisted of personnel from two selected Colleges of Education in Ghana, intended to represent diverse institutional characteristics and geographical distribution. These universities were chosen to offer a comprehensive insight into the perspectives of staff across the colleges of Education sector.

One hundred staff members participated in the quantitative phase of the study as survey respondents. Furthermore, 15 senior academic personnel were intentionally chosen to engage in the qualitative phase via interviews. The participants were chosen based on their experience, institutional positions, and capacity to offer comprehensive insights into staff retention and turnover intentions.

Sampling Methodology

The research was carried out in two designated Colleges of Education in the Oti Region: Dambai College of Education and Jasikan College of Education. A stratified random sampling method was employed to choose 100 survey participants from academic and administrative staff categories, ensuring proportional representation across institutions. Furthermore, 15 purposively chosen participants, comprising principals, department heads, and senior staff, were enlisted for comprehensive interviews due to their administrative positions and institutional expertise. This facilitated the acquisition of comprehensive, contextually relevant data essential for a more profound analysis of the study issue.

Instruments for Data Collection: Survey Questionnaire

The structured questionnaire consisted of five major dimensions measured on a five-point Likert scale: compensation satisfaction, career advancement opportunities, workload perception, job satisfaction, and turnover intention.

- Compensation satisfaction (5 items)
- Career advancement opportunities (4 items)
- Workload perception (5 items)
- Job satisfaction (6 items)
- Turnover intention (4 items)

Reliability Assessment:

Cronbach's alpha coefficients for all scales exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.70, confirming internal consistency: compensation ($\alpha = 0.82$), career advancement ($\alpha = 0.79$), workload ($\alpha = 0.84$), job satisfaction ($\alpha = 0.87$), and turnover intention ($\alpha = 0.81$).

Qualitative Strand

Qualitative data were derived primarily from semi-structured interviews, supplemented by institutional document review where relevant. Interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic content analysis involving data familiarization, open coding, category generation, and theme development.

Interviews

The qualitative component comprised semi-structured interviews, allowing participants to articulate their perspectives while adhering to the study's objectives. The interviews examined themes including Leadership techniques, Professional advancement, and Institutional assistance. This method produced comprehensive insights into the experiences and perspectives of personnel concerning turnover intentions.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were examined utilising the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (e.g., regression and correlation analysis) were utilised to analyse patterns and correlations among variables.

Qualitative data were examined by thematic analysis, which included systematic coding, categorisation, and the discovery of reoccurring themes. This technique facilitated the analysis of participants' experiences and corroborated the elucidation of quantitative results.

Survey Questionnaire

The survey instrument consisted of closed-ended questions formatted primarily using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." The questionnaire was developed to quantitatively assess key dimensions such as job satisfaction, compensation, workload, work-life balance, institutional support, and professional development opportunities. Items were adapted from validated instruments in existing literature where applicable, ensuring content validity. Pilot testing was conducted with a small subset of respondents to refine item clarity and structure before full administration. The questionnaire allowed for standardized data collection across a large sample, facilitating statistical analysis and comparison.

Semi-structured interviews

Alongside the survey, semi-structured interviews were performed with a purposive selection of participants to obtain profound insights into their life experiences and perceptions. The interview guide was structured around essential issues like institutional policies, professional advancement, workplace problems, and personal coping mechanisms. The core set of questions ensured consistency be-

tween interviews, but the semi-structured style permitted freedom to explore emergent themes and pursue noteworthy replies. Interviews were recorded with consent, transcribed verbatim, and subjected to thematic analysis. This qualitative component yielded comprehensive, contextual data that facilitated the interpretation and elaboration of the quantitative results

Collectively, these tools facilitated a rigorous mixed-methods approach, guaranteeing the gathering of both extensive and profound data for a thorough comprehension of the study issue.

Coding Procedure

Themes were developed around compensation dissatisfaction, limited promotion pathways, excessive workload, institutional leadership challenges, and retention strategies. Findings from the qualitative strand were integrated with quantitative results during interpretation to provide contextual depth and convergence.

Turnover Trends

The analysis revealed notable patterns in turnover intention across institutional type and demographic groups.

Staff in public institutions exhibited higher turnover intention compared to those in private institutions. This may be attributed to bureaucratic constraints, slower promotion processes, and less flexible institutional policies often associated with public sector institutions.

Furthermore, younger staff (below 30 years) demonstrated a higher intention to leave compared to older colleagues. This trend may reflect greater career mobility, higher expectations, and a stronger desire for improved opportunities among early-career academics.

These results confirm that both economic and institutional factors play a significant role in shaping turnover intention among staff.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to data collection, the proper institutional authorities of the participating Colleges of Education granted ethical approval for the study. Everyone included in the study was made aware of its goals, that their participation was entirely voluntary, and that they could stop at any point without any consequences.

Before taking part in any survey or interview, we made sure to get everyone's written informed consent. The respondents were guaranteed anonymity and secrecy, and the final report did not contain any personally identifiable information. At all times, the data collected from interviews and surveys was kept in a safe environment and utilised only for academic purposes.

4. Discussion of Findings

Overview

The findings reveal that staff turnover in selected Colleges of Education is significantly influenced by inadequate compensation, limited career progression opportunities, excessive workload, and low job satisfaction. Both quantitative and qualitative findings consistently demonstrate that poor institutional conditions

increase employees' turnover intentions.

Demographic Attributes

The demographic attributes of respondents offer essential context for analysing the study findings and indicate a comparatively equitable workforce among the chosen colleges of Education.

Gender Demographics

The results reveal that 58% of participants were male, whilst 42% were female. This indicates a moderate gender disparity favouring male personnel, a trend frequently noted in higher education establishments. The significant number of female workers indicates a growing gender inclusivity in the academic setting.

Demographic Age Distribution

The age distribution of answers indicates that the majority (45%) fell between the 31 - 40 years age bracket, signifying a primarily youthful and mid-career profession. Individuals aged 21 - 30 constituted 20%, indicative of early-career academics who are generally more mobile and receptive to different employment options. Individuals aged 41 - 50 years represented 25%, whilst merely 10% were beyond 50 years, indicating a rather minor fraction of senior near-retirement personnel (**Table 1**).

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of respondents.

Variable	Category	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	58%
	Female	42%
Age	21 - 30	20%
	31 - 40	45%
	41 - 50	25%
	50+	10%
Rank	Assistant Lecturer/Equivalent	40%
	Lecturer/Equivalent	35%
	Senior Lecturer/equivalent	25%
	Professor/equivalent	-

Scholarly and administrative Position

Regarding status, Assistant Lecturers and its equivalent constituted the predominant group (40%), succeeded by Lecturers and their equivalence (35%) and senior lecturers and their equivalent grades (25%). This distribution indicates a workforce predominantly situated in the intermediate phases of academic careers, where apprehensions regarding promotion, research prospects, and job security are most acute.

Factors Influencing Turnover Intention

The study identified several key factors contributing to staff turnover and turn

intention. These were ranked based on the proportion of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed.

The most significant factor was inadequate salary and benefits (78%), indicating widespread dissatisfaction with compensation levels relative to qualifications and workload. This suggests that financial considerations remain a major driver of turnover intention.

The second most important factor was limited career advancement opportunities (66%), reflecting concerns about slow, unclear, or limited promotion pathways within institutions.

Excessive workload (60%) was also identified as a major concern, with respondents indicating that the combination of teaching, administrative duties, and research responsibilities creates significant pressure and stress.

In addition, poor leadership and institutional practices (58%) were reported as contributing to dissatisfaction, particularly in relation to decision-making processes and organisational fairness.

Finally, lack of research support (49%) was identified as a limiting factor affecting academic growth and professional satisfaction (Table 2).

Table 2. Factors influencing turnover intention.

Factor	Percentage (%)
Inadequate salary & benefits	78%
Limited career advancement	66%
Excessive workload	60%
Poor leadership	58%
Lack of research support	49%

Turnover Intention Trends

The study further revealed important patterns in turnover intention across institutional and demographic categories.

Academic staff in public Colleges of Education exhibited higher turnover intention compared to their counterparts in private institutions. This difference may be attributed to bureaucratic procedures, slower promotion systems, and less flexible working conditions in public institutions.

Additionally, younger academic staff (below 30 years) demonstrated a higher intention to leave than older staff. This trend reflects greater career mobility, higher expectations for rapid progression, and stronger external job opportunities among early-career academics.

Regression Analysis Results

Inferential analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression to examine the extent to which compensation, career advancement opportunities, workload, and job satisfaction predicted staff turnover and turn intention among respondents.

The regression model was specified as:

$$\text{Turnover Intention} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (\text{Compensation}) + \beta_2 (\text{Career Advancement}) + \beta_3 (\text{Workload}) + \beta_4 (\text{Job Satisfaction}) + \varepsilon$$

The analysis utilised responses from all 100 survey participants. The turnover intention variable was constructed by computing the mean score of four Likert-scale questionnaire items measuring respondents' intention to leave the institution, seek alternative employment, and willingness to remain in the institution.

The overall regression model was statistically significant and explained a substantial proportion of variance in turnover intention ($R^2 = 0.61$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.58$, $p < 0.001$). Preliminary diagnostic checks confirmed that the assumptions of linear regression were reasonably satisfied, including linearity, normality of residuals, absence of multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity.

The results show that:

- Compensation had a significant negative effect on turnover intention ($\beta = -0.45$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that improved salary and benefits reduce staff intention to leave.
- Career advancement opportunities also demonstrated a significant negative relationship with turnover intention ($\beta = -0.38$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that transparent promotion pathways enhance staff retention.
- Workload showed a significant positive relationship with turnover intention ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that excessive workload increases employees' desire to leave.
- Job satisfaction demonstrated a strong negative relationship with turnover intention ($\beta = -0.41$, $p < 0.01$), confirming that satisfied employees are less likely to consider leaving their institutions.

These findings confirm that both economic and non-economic factors jointly shape turnover intention among academic staff in Colleges of Education (**Table 3**).

Table 3. Regression analysis results.

Variable	Beta (β)	p-value	Interpretation
Compensation	-0.45	< 0.01	Significant negative relationship
Career Advancement	-0.38	< 0.05	Significant negative relationship
Workload	0.29	< 0.05	Significant positive relationship
Job Satisfaction	-0.41	< 0.01	Significant positive relationship

These results confirm that both economic and non-economic factors jointly influence academic staff turnover and turn intention in higher education institutions.

Qualitative Findings

Qualitative Themes and Integration with Survey Findings

The qualitative interviews provided important contextual insights that complemented and extended the survey findings. Five dominant themes emerged from

the thematic analysis.

Compensation Dissatisfaction

Participants consistently described salary levels and allowances as inadequate relative to their workload and qualifications. One participant stated:

“After obtaining higher qualifications, many of us still struggle with the same conditions of service. It becomes difficult to remain motivated.”

This finding supports the quantitative result where 78% of respondents identified inadequate compensation as the strongest predictor of turnover intention.

Limited Career Advancement Opportunities

Several participants expressed frustration regarding delays in promotion and limited professional growth opportunities. A senior academic participant remarked:

“Promotion processes are slow and sometimes unclear. Younger academics become discouraged because they do not see a clear future.”

According to an Assistant Registrar, “promotions beyond senior assistant registrar’s rank to Deputy Registrar’s rank are non-existent because they usually subject to declared vacancies and not until such vacancies are declared, you remain on your current rank”.

This theme reinforces the regression findings showing that career advancement opportunities significantly reduce turnover intention.

Excessive Workload and Burnout

Participants also highlighted the burden of combining teaching, supervision, research, and administrative responsibilities.

“One person may be teaching several courses, supervising students, and handling committee work simultaneously. The pressure is overwhelming.”

The interviews therefore confirm the survey evidence that excessive workload contributes significantly to staff dissatisfaction and turnover intention.

Leadership and Institutional Support

Interviewees further stressed the importance of supportive leadership and participatory governance.

“When management does not involve staff in decision-making, people feel undervalued and disconnected from the institution.”

This finding extends the quantitative data by showing that leadership affects turnover intention not only through policy decisions but also through staff morale and institutional belonging.

Research Support and Professional Fulfilment

Academic staff also identified inadequate research funding and limited conference support as major challenges affecting professional fulfilment.

“Research expectations keep increasing, but support for publications and conferences remains limited.”

This theme complicates the quantitative findings by showing that turnover intention is influenced not only by economic concerns but also by unmet professional aspirations linked to self-actualisation needs.

Overall, the qualitative findings corroborate the survey results while providing deeper explanations regarding how institutional conditions shape employees' decisions to remain or leave.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that staff turnover intention in selected Colleges of Education is influenced by a combination of economic, organisational, and professional factors. Consistent with previous studies (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020; Tetey, 2006), inadequate compensation emerged as the strongest predictor of turnover intention. Staff members who perceived salary structures and benefits as inadequate were more likely to express intentions to leave their institutions. This finding aligns with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, which suggests that unmet physiological and safety needs reduce organisational commitment.

The study further revealed that limited career advancement opportunities significantly contribute to turnover intention. Delays in promotion, unclear advancement pathways, and insufficient professional development opportunities weakened employees' long-term attachment to their institutions. This finding corroborates Allen et al. (2003), who observed that employees are more likely to remain in organisations where transparent advancement opportunities exist.

Excessive workload also emerged as a significant contributor to turnover intention. Participants reported that the combination of teaching, supervision, research, and administrative responsibilities created stress and burnout. This finding is consistent with Johnsrud and Rosser (2002), who argue that heavy workload and weak institutional support negatively affect employee morale and retention in higher education institutions.

The qualitative findings extended the quantitative results by demonstrating that institutional leadership and collegial relationships shape staff perceptions of belonging, recognition, and professional fulfilment. Participants emphasised that participatory leadership, research support, and recognition of academic contributions improve morale and organisational attachment.

Overall, the findings suggest that turnover intention in Colleges of Education is not caused by a single factor but rather by the cumulative effect of unmet economic and professional needs.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Considering the findings from this study, it is evident that addressing staff turnover requires a multi-pronged strategy that targets both structural and human factors. The following recommendations are proposed to improve staff retention, enhance job satisfaction, and foster institutional stability in higher education set-

tings:

1) Improve compensation packages and incentives for academic and administrative staff

Institutions and relevant educational authorities should prioritize the review and enhancement of compensation structures for both academic and administrative staff to ensure that salaries, allowances, and other benefits are competitive and commensurate with employees' qualifications, experience, and workload. Improved remuneration packages, including research incentives, housing support, and performance-based rewards, can significantly enhance staff motivation, job satisfaction, and long-term commitment. Competitive compensation is essential for reducing dissatisfaction and minimizing the migration of qualified staff to better-paying institutions or sectors.

2) Strengthen promotion and professional development pathways

Clear, transparent, and accessible promotion systems should be established to provide staff with realistic opportunities for career advancement. Institutions should also invest in continuous professional development programs, including sponsorship for higher education, research support, workshops, conferences, and leadership training. Strengthening professional growth opportunities will not only improve staff competencies but also foster a sense of institutional value and career progression, thereby reducing turnover intentions associated with stagnation and limited advancement prospects.

3) Reduce excessive workload through equitable staff distribution

Management should implement effective workload management strategies to ensure fair distribution of teaching, administrative, and supervisory responsibilities among staff members. Excessive workload has been identified as a major source of burnout, stress, and job dissatisfaction. Recruiting additional qualified staff, optimizing departmental assignments, and balancing institutional responsibilities can help reduce pressure on employees, improve productivity, and create healthier working environments that encourage staff retention.

4) Enhance institutional leadership and staff support systems

Institutional leadership should be strengthened through participatory management approaches that promote fairness, transparency, communication, and staff welfare. Effective leadership plays a critical role in employee retention by fostering trust, professional recognition, and supportive workplace relationships. Colleges of Education should also establish robust staff support systems, including mentorship programs, counselling services, conflict resolution mechanisms, and employee welfare initiatives to address professional and personal challenges that may contribute to turnover.

5) Develop comprehensive retention policies for Colleges of Education in Ghana

There is a need for national and institutional policy frameworks specifically designed to address staff retention challenges within Colleges of Education.

Such policies should incorporate strategic interventions related to compensation, promotion, working conditions, staff welfare, and institutional development. Comprehensive retention policies will provide structured and sustainable solutions to workforce instability, ensuring that Colleges of Education are better positioned to retain qualified personnel and maintain the quality of teacher education in Ghana.

These recommendations are intended to serve as a framework for university management, policymakers, and stakeholders aiming to mitigate staff turnover and build resilient, high-performing academic institutions. Implementation should be guided by institutional context, resource availability, and ongoing staff feedback to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

Theoretical Implications

The study reinforces Human Capital Theory and Organizational Support Theory by demonstrating that employees are more likely to remain in institutions where their professional contributions are recognized, adequately compensated, and supported by favorable working conditions.

Practical Implications

Institutional leaders and policymakers must prioritize staff welfare through competitive remuneration, professional development programs, improved workload distribution, and stronger organizational support systems to reduce turnover rates.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research focused on selected Colleges of Education within the Oti Region, which limits the generalisability of the findings to other higher education institutions in Ghana. Second, the study relied primarily on self-reported cross-sectional data, which may be affected by response bias and does not allow for the establishment of long-term causal relationships. Third, the study examined turnover intention rather than actual staff exit behaviour; therefore, some respondents who expressed intention to leave may ultimately remain within their institutions.

Future Research

Future studies should adopt longitudinal designs to examine how turnover intentions translate into actual staff exit behaviour over time. Additional studies across universities and Colleges of Education in different regions of Ghana would also improve the generalisability of findings. Future research may further explore the mediating or moderating effects of job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and leadership style on staff retention in higher education institutions.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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