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**THE MEDIATING ROLE OF JOB SATISFACTION AT  
SELECTED PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN AFGHANISTAN:  
THE EFFECT OF JOB SECURITY ON TURNOVER  
INTENTION**

**EL PAPEL MEDIADOR DE LA SATISFACCIÓN LABORAL  
EN UNIVERSIDADES PÚBLICAS DE AFGANISTÁN: EL  
EFECTO DE LA SEGURIDAD LABORAL EN LA  
INTENCIÓN DE CAMBIAR DE TRABAJO**

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**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of the study is to ascertain whether job satisfaction has a mediating role in the association between job security and the turnover at several public Universities in Afghanistan. The issue with the study is stated as follows. In addition to the significant impact employee, retention has on an organization's effectiveness; public colleges in Afghanistan nevertheless confront several challenges. An online Google form with a cross-sectional survey methodology was specifically utilized in this research's quantitative approach. The study's researchers designed this normative measurement method. It has a Likert scale of five. The scale's validity and dependability were

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also examined. Cronbach's alphas for job security reliability, job satisfaction reliability, and job turnover reliability were 0.84, 0.68, and 0.87, respectively. An online Google form was employed to administer the convenience sampling technique. From several public universities in Afghanistan, 152 people took part. Job security had a major impact on job satisfaction. Furthermore, the intention to leave a job was significantly impacted by job security. Moreover, there was a sizable impact of job satisfaction on the intention to leave. In the association between job security and turnover intentions, job satisfaction had a strong mediating influence as well. Therefore, it is contended that job satisfaction plays a statistically positive and significant effect on job security and the intention of job turnover.

## KEYWORDS

Normative measurement, job security, mediation, job satisfaction as mediator, Public Universities, Afghan

## RESUMEN

*El propósito del estudio es determinar si la satisfacción laboral tiene un papel mediador en la relación entre la seguridad laboral y la rotación en varias universidades públicas de Afganistán. El problema con el estudio se enuncia de la siguiente manera. Además del impacto significativo que tiene la retención de empleados en la eficacia de una organización, las universidades públicas en Afganistán enfrentan varios desafíos. En este estudio se utilizó específicamente un formulario en línea de Google con una metodología de encuesta transversal enfoque cuantitativo de la investigación. Los investigadores del estudio diseñaron este método de medición normativo. Tiene una escala de Likert de cinco puntos. También se examinaron la validez y confiabilidad de la escala. Los coeficientes alfa de Cronbach para la confiabilidad de la seguridad laboral, la confiabilidad de la satisfacción laboral y la confiabilidad de la rotación laboral fueron 0,84, 0,68 y 0,87, respectivamente. Se utilizó un formulario en línea de Google para aplicar la técnica de muestreo por conveniencia. Participaron 152 personas de varias universidades públicas de Afganistán. La seguridad laboral tuvo un impacto importante en la satisfacción laboral. Además, la intención de abandonar un trabajo se vio significativamente afectada por la seguridad laboral. Además, la satisfacción laboral tuvo un impacto considerable en la intención de abandonar. En la relación entre la seguridad laboral y las intenciones de rotación, la satisfacción laboral también tuvo una influencia mediadora fuerte. Por lo tanto, se sostiene que la satisfacción laboral tiene un efecto estadísticamente positivo y significativo en la seguridad laboral y la intención de rotación laboral.*

## PALABRAS CLAVE

*Medición normativa, seguridad laboral, mediación, satisfacción laboral como mediador, Universidades Públicas, Afganistán*

## INTRODUCTION

The degree to which an employee is content with their job and its associated elements, such as compensation, perks, working conditions, job security, and advancement possibilities, is referred to as their level of job satisfaction (Spector, 1997). It is a multidimensional construct that captures how an employee feels and behaves concerning several facets of their work (Judge et al., 2001). The degree of positive affective orientation towards a job is known as job satisfaction (Sahibzada & Pandya, 2022).

According to the definition of job satisfaction, people's feelings regarding their jobs are generally or universally effective. I'm happy with the work I do. Employees' contentment with their jobs is reflected in this sentence. Defined Physiological, environmental, and psychological factors all contribute to job satisfaction. Employee attitudes and feelings toward their existing jobs are referred to as "job satisfaction." Strong discontent or strong satisfaction can be used to gauge a worker's level of job satisfaction. In addition, workers can have opinions regarding various characteristics of their jobs, including salary, salary involvement, colleagues, supervisors, and subordinates (Khawrin et al., 2022). Numerous factors affect job satisfaction, such as the salary of the employees, which was significantly correlated with the job satisfaction of the lecturers at Paktia University, and the recognition of the employees, which was significantly correlated with the job satisfaction of the lecturers at Paktia University (Sahibzada & Khawrin, 2023). One of the most difficult problems that managers today are dealing with satisfaction when it comes to managing the workforce is job satisfaction (Sahibzada et al., 2022).

Job happiness is positively correlated with several outcomes, including job performance, according to research (Judge et al., 2005), organizational dedication and commitment (Meyer, 2016). Also, it has been discovered that job satisfaction is negatively correlated with undesirable outcomes, including absenteeism and the intention to leave a job (Maertz & Campion, 1998). Job satisfaction was shown to be inversely correlated with absenteeism and turnover, and favorably correlated with task performance, citizenship behavior, and unproductive work behavior in one meta-analysis of 312 studies (Judge et al., 2001). Another meta-analysis discovered a link between job satisfaction and life satisfaction and well-being (Faragher et al., 2005). In conclusion, job satisfaction is a crucial concept that has been proven to significantly affect a range of employee outcomes. To foster a healthy work environment and keep their employees, businesses must recognize and address the issues that affect job satisfaction.

Job security is the promise that an employee will be able to continue working and earning the same amount of money for a considerable amount of time. It refers to an employee's level of assurance that their employment won't be terminated unwillingly or as a result of organizational reduction or reorganization. The constancy and predictability of an employee's employment status and salary level are referred to as "job security." It is a crucial element of employment that has an impact on worker dedication, productivity, and well-being.

A worker's level of trust that their employment will last for a long time without the threat of an unjustified termination, organizational change, or downsizing is referred to as job security (De Cuyper et al., 2008). It is a crucial component of

job satisfaction and has a big impact on the dedication, commitment level, and productivity of employees.

Job insecurity has been linked to poor mental and physical health, according to research (Ferrie et al., 2003) and this may result in diminished organizational commitment and job satisfaction. (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). In addition, it has been discovered that job instability negatively affects employee performance because unmotivated employees are more likely to participate in unproductive work practices (De Cuyper et al., 2008). Many variables, such as the state of the economy, technological development, and organizational changes, impact job security. such as, using long-term employment contracts and assurances of job stability can boost worker loyalty and lower turnover. In a nutshell, job security is an important component of employment that significantly affects worker commitment, well-being, and productivity. By implementing equitable policies and practices, giving long-term employment contracts, and providing job security assurances, organizations can improve job security.

An employee's self-reported likelihood of quitting their current employment shortly is referred to as turnover intention (Shore et al., 2011). It is a key indicator of genuine turnover and can have serious effects on businesses, including higher training and recruitment expenses, knowledge and skill loss, and decreased productivity. Low job satisfaction, a perceived lack of organizational support, limited possibilities for career growth, and a poor work-life balance are just a few of the elements that research has found to be associated with turnover intention (Laulié & Morgeson, 2021). Job stress, position uncertainty, and low perceived work security are other variables that could affect turnover intention (Xie et al., 2015).

Improvements in job satisfaction, more organizational support, career development possibilities, and work-life balance are just a few of the tactics that have been suggested to reduce employee turnover and keep them on board (Harter et al., 2002). Exit interviews can also be used by businesses to learn more about the reasons why workers depart and to pinpoint areas that need improvement. For businesses to keep skilled people and maintain organizational success, it's critical to understand turnover intentions. Organizations may foster a healthy work environment and lower the expenses related to employee turnover by recognizing and addressing the factors that contribute to turnover.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Since it might moderate the relationship between job security and turnover intentions, job satisfaction has been highlighted as a crucial factor in predicting employee turnover (Davy et al., 1997). Job security is a key factor in employee happiness and has a big impact on intentions to leave. According to research, employees are more likely to report better levels of job satisfaction and have lower inclinations to leave their jobs when they feel their jobs are more secure (Hobfoll et al., 2018). However, when workers feel less secure in their jobs, it might severely affect their job satisfaction and raise their intentions to leave (Probst, 2002).

A study by Davy et al. (1997) studied how job satisfaction affected the connection between job security and intentions to leave. The study's findings showed that work satisfaction partially buffers the association between job

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security and turnover intentions, which means that job security has a direct negative impact on intentions to leave your job. In other words, the relationship between job security and the intent to leave work heavily depends on job satisfaction. Employees are more likely to be content with their employment and less inclined to leave the company when they feel safe in their positions. Companies can encourage job stability and job satisfaction using a variety of tactics, including open communication about expectations and responsibilities for the position, chances for training and development, support for work-life balance, and competitive pay and benefit packages (Knight et al., 2017).

Organizations can create effective retention strategies and lower employee turnover by recognizing the mediation function of job satisfaction in the relationship between job security and turnover intentions. The idea that job satisfaction can significantly contribute to explaining the relationship between job security and turnover intention is known as the mediating role of job satisfaction. Job security can indirectly affect turnover intention through job satisfaction, specifically acting as a mediator between job security and turnover intention (Obeng et al., 2020).

Job security is a significant predictor of work satisfaction and the intention to leave the job, according to research. Employees are more likely to be content with their work and are less likely to consider quitting when they believe their position is secure (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004). Nonetheless, employees may feel more stressed and anxious when job security is viewed as being low, which can result in decreased job satisfaction and a higher intention to leave the company (Heffernan & Rochford, 2017).

According to studies, work satisfaction plays a mediating function in the relationship between job security and the intention to leave one's employment. One study of Chinese workers, for instance, discovered that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between job security and turnover intention, meaning that job security had a positive impact on job satisfaction and a negative impact on turnover intention (Obeng et al., 2020). Similar findings from another study of Malaysian workers point to job satisfaction as a potential mediator of the association between job security and the intention to leave one's employment (Al-Ali et al., 2019). These results imply that job satisfaction can be a significant factor in the link between job security and the intention to leave a job. Employers can increase job security by giving staff members clear job expectations, the opportunity for professional growth, and feedback on job performance (Heffernan & Rochford, 2017). Organizations can contribute to increased employee satisfaction and decreased turnover by doing this.

### **Problem of the statement**

The study aims to investigate the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between job security and turnover intention among employees at selected public universities in Afghanistan. The following is a statement of the study's problem. Beside the crucial role that staff retention plays in an organization's performance, public universities in Afghanistan continue to face many difficulties. Job security is a significant element that influences individuals' intention to leave their existing jobs, according to previous studies. In the context of Afghan public universities, the mechanism through which job security affects turnover intention has not yet been thoroughly studied. Also, it has been discovered that job satisfaction serves as a mediating factor in the association

between job security and turnover intention. By investigating the mediating effect of work satisfaction in the relationship between job security and turnover intention among employees at chosen public institutions in Afghanistan, this study intends to close the research gap. The results of this study can help Afghan Public Universities and the Ministry of Higher Education of Afghanistan (MoHE) improve job security and work satisfaction in Afghanistan's public higher education sector by shedding light on the variables that affect employee retention.

### **Objectives**

- To understand the effect of job security on job satisfaction.
- To research the effect of job satisfaction on turnover intentions.
- To examine the effect of job security on turnover intentions.
- To determine the mediation effect of job satisfaction on both job security and turnover intention.

### **Hypothesis**

- H1: Job security has a significant effect on the job satisfaction of teachers.*
- H2: Job satisfaction has a significant effect on the turnover intentions of teachers.*
- H3: Job security has a significant effect on the turnover intentions of teachers.*
- H4: Job satisfaction has a mediating role in the relationship between job security and the turnover intentions of teachers.*

## **METHODOLOGY**

The appropriate methodology for this research topic was likely to involve a quantitative approach, specifically an online google form with a cross-sectional survey design used in this research.

### **Research tool**

The researchers of this study developed this normative measurement tool. It had five point Likert scale from (1) Strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, and (5) strongly agree. Furthermore, Validity and reliability of the scale was tested. The academicians of Kunduz and Nangarhar Universities' examined content validity it had content validity. Job security had four items and its convergent validity was 0.81, Job satisfaction had four items and its convergent validity was 0.63, and Job turnover had also four items and its convergent validity was 0.82. Furthermore, Discriminant validity of all dimensions was 0.40. Moreover, Job security reliability or Cronbach alpha was 0.84, Job satisfaction reliability was 0.68, and Job turnover reliability was 0.87.

### **Sampling and Data Collection method**

The convenience sampling method was used through an online google form. There were 152 participants from different public universities in Afghanistan. There were 146 male and 6 female participants, with an age range of 25 to 45 years. Further, the teaching experience of the participants ranged from 1 to 17 years. Data was collected through a self-administered survey questionnaire that

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includes established scales for measuring job security, job satisfaction, and turnover intention. The questionnaire was in English to ensure the respondents' comprehension.

### Data Analysis and ethical consideration

The collected data was analyzed using Jamovi software for appropriate statistical methods. First, descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data. Secondly, inferential statistics were used to test the research hypotheses, and assess the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between job security and turnover intention. On the other hand, ethical considerations, such as obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring the confidentiality of responses, and providing debriefing information, were taken into account throughout the research process.

**Figure 1.** Mediation model effects of Afghan public universities academicians



Figure 1 showed the mediating of Job satisfaction and paths of job security and the turnover intentions of teachers at Afghan public Universities.

## RESULTS

The result was shown in two porting, first descriptive and inferential analysis as below.

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics of participants' education level

No.	Education level	Counts	% of Total
1	Bachelor	21	13.8 %
2	Master	95	62.5 %
3	Ph.D. and above	36	23.7 %
Total		152	100%

Table 1 depicts the educational level of the participants. There were 21 bachelor's teachers, 95 master's degree holders, and 36 Ph.D. degree holders who participated in this online research.

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics of Universities' participants

No.	University	Counts	% of Total
1	Nangarhar University	41	27.0 %
2	Khost University	3	2.0 %
3	Bamyan University	2	1.3 %
4	Laghman University	14	9.2 %
5	Herat University	19	12.5 %
6	Paktia University	16	10.5 %
7	Kandahar University	39	25.7 %
8	Kabul University	7	4.6 %
9	Parwan University	11	7.2 %
Total		152	100%

Table 2 depicts the universities of the participants. There were 41 from Nangarhar University, 3 from Khost University, 2 from Bamyan University, 14 from Laghman University, 19 from Herat University, 16 from Paktia University, 39 from Kandahar University, 7 from Kabul University, 11 from Parwan University, participated in this online research.

**Table 3.** Path estimation and direction effects of variables

variables	Estimate	SE	Z	p
Job security→ Job satisfaction	0.159	0.0725	0.0725	0.028
Job satisfaction→ Turnover	0.801	0.1254	0.1254	<.001
Job security→ Turnover	0.222	0.0940	0.0940	0.018

Table 3 showed the results of the job security analysis on job satisfaction showed a path coefficient value of 0.159 and a p-value of 0.028 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05 ( $P\text{-value} < \alpha$ ). This means that job security has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction.

*H1: Job security has a significant effect on the job satisfaction of teachers.* H1 was accepted. Because there was a significant effect of job security on job satisfaction with a 0.05 level of significance.

Furthermore, the results of the job satisfaction analysis on employee turnover intention showed a path coefficient value of 0.801 and a p-value of less than 0.001 which is less than the alpha value of 0.001 ( $P\text{-value} < \alpha$ ). This means that job satisfaction has a significant effect on employees' turnover intentions. Thus, H1 in this study is accepted.

*H2: Job satisfaction has a significant effect on the turnover intentions of teachers.* H2 was accepted. Because there was a significant effect of job security on the turnover intention on 0.001 level of significance.

Moreover, the results of the job security analysis on employee turnover intention showed a path coefficient value of 0.222 and a p-value of 0.018 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05 ( $P\text{-value} < \alpha$ ). This means that job security has a positive and significant effect on employee turnover intentions.

*H3: Job security has a significant effect on the turnover intentions of teachers.* H3 was accepted. Because there was a significant effect of job satisfaction on the turnover intention on 0.05 level of significance.



**Table 4.** Mediation Estimates of Job satisfaction in the relationship between job security and the turnover

Effect	Estimate	SE	Z	p	% Mediation
Indirect	0.127	0.0581	2.19	0.028	36.5
Direct	0.222	0.0940	2.36	0.018	63.5
Total	0.349	0.1113	3.14	0.002	100.0

Table 4 showed the indirect effect of job security was 0.127, which was significant. Moreover, job security directly also significantly affect Afghan public university teachers' turnover. It was 0.222 with was also statistically important the  $p = 0.018$ .

Generally, this model postulated that Job satisfaction acts as a mediator on the effect of job security on turnover intention, showing a value of 0.349 and a p-value of 0.002 which is less than an alpha value of 0.01 ( $P\text{-value} < \alpha$ ). This means that job satisfaction had a statistical mediator effect between job security and turnover intention of Afghan public Universities teachers.

*H4: Job satisfaction has a mediating role in the relationship between job security and the turnover intentions of teachers.* H4 was accepted. Because there was a significant mediation effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between job security and turnover intentions on 0.01 level of significance.

**Figure 2.** Estimate Plot

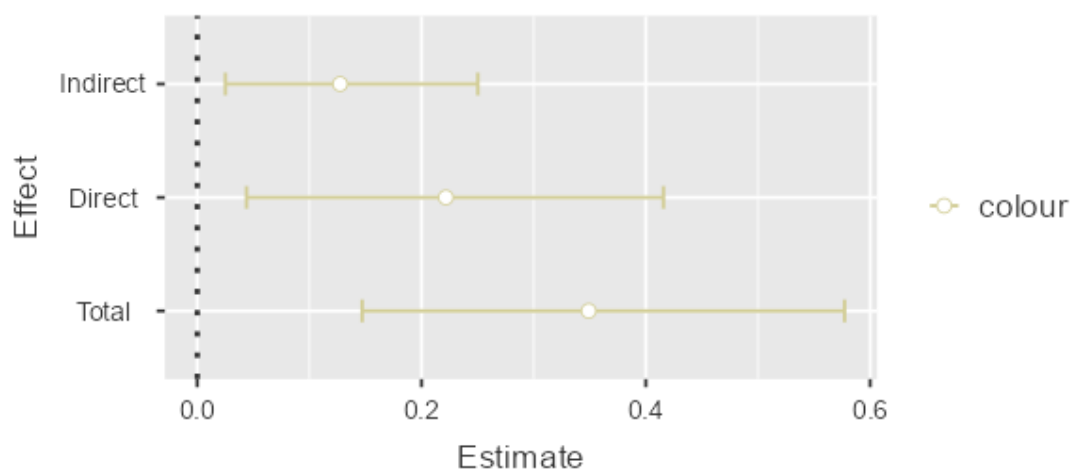


Figure 2 showed the estimated plot of the indirect effect, which is less than other effects. The direct effect and the total effect of variables.

## DISCUSSION

The relationship between job security and turnover intentions also revealed a substantial mediation effect on job satisfaction. Same results were also discovered through several researchers. This study indicated a significant connection between job satisfaction and security of employment. Moreover,

there was a strong correlation between the intention to turnover and employment security. Such as , Davy et al. (1997) and Hobfoll et al. (2018) discovered that job satisfaction has been emphasized as a critical factor in predicting employee turnover because it affects the relationship between job security and turnover intentions. Davy et al. (1997) argued that employees are less likely to leave their jobs when they feel their jobs are more secure, and job satisfaction has a positive impact on this relationship. When they feel their position is safe, employees are more likely to be happy with their jobs and are less likely to consider leaving (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004). Nevertheless, when employees lack job security, it may negatively impact their job satisfaction and increase their intention to quit (Probst, 2002). And job satisfaction acts as a mediator between job security and turnover intention, mediating the effect of job security on job satisfaction and turnover intention (Obeng et al., 2020).

### **Summary**

A 0.05 level of significance revealed a significant relationship between job security and job satisfaction. Moreover, there was a significant relationship between work security and intention to leave at the 0.001 level of significance. In addition, at a 0.05 level of significance, there was a significant relationship between work satisfaction and intention to leave. The association between job security and turnover intentions also showed a significant mediation impact on job satisfaction at the 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, it is contended that job satisfaction plays a statistically significant positive role between job security and the intention of job turnover.

### **Limitation**

There are several limitations to the study on study including as below:

**Sample size:** The study was conducted on a limited sample size of selected public universities in Afghanistan. The results may not be generalizable to all public universities in Afghanistan or other countries.

**Cross-sectional design:** The study used a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to establish causality between the variables. Longitudinal studies that follow the same participants over time would provide stronger evidence of the relationships between job security, job satisfaction, and turnover intention.

**Self-reported data:** The data was collected through self-report questionnaires, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Participants may have provided answers that they believe are socially acceptable, rather than reflecting their true opinions and feelings.

**Limited variables:** The study only examined the relationship between job security, job satisfaction, and turnover intention. Other factors, such as salary, benefits, work-life balance, and organizational culture, may also influence employee retention in public universities.

**Cultural context:** The study was conducted in Afghanistan, where cultural factors may play a significant role in employee retention. The findings may not be applicable to other cultural contexts, and caution should be taken when generalizing the results.

### **Recommendation**

It can be concluded that the study "The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction at Selected Public Universities in Afghanistan: The Effect of Job Security on

Turnover Intention" is a valuable source of information for the Afghan Public Universities and the Ministry of Higher Education of Afghanistan (MoHE). The study shows that job security is a critical factor in retaining employees in the public higher education sector in Afghanistan. It also indicates that job satisfaction plays a significant role in mediating the relationship between job security and turnover intention. Therefore, organizations need to focus on improving job security and work satisfaction to reduce the employee turnover rate. The findings of this study can be used by Afghan public universities and the MoHE to develop effective retention strategies for cadre employees. By providing job security and addressing the factors that affect job satisfaction, universities can create a positive work environment that attracts and retains talented individuals. This can lead to improved organizational performance and better service delivery to students. Overall, this study provides important insights into the factors that influence employee retention in the public higher education sector in Afghanistan. The recommendations based on the findings can be utilized by organizations to develop policies and programs that promote job security and work satisfaction.

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