

## The Impact of Job Characteristics on Intention to Leave: The Mediating Role of Career Satisfaction

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### Extensive Summary

#### Introduction

According to the Job Characteristics Model (1975), the features of job enables employees to adopt and to be motivated. Task significance, skill variety, task identity, autonomy and feedback are five characteristics of a job (Hackman and Oldham, 1976). In accordance with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs it can be said that (1943), the importance and the meaningfulness of the job are the vital factors which show if an employee can meet the need of self esteem and is respected by others. Furthermore, the autonomy that employee has in the organization can be seen as an effective factor for the employee to create self esteem and confidence. On the other hand, feedback from managers and colleagues about performance and job behaviour can be seen as an important factor controlling personal and occupational development of workers. In the direction of these information, it is assumed that employees who have autonomy will be able to integrate more easily to organizational goals with positive psychological attitude and perceptions, so they can contribute better quality work outputs. On the other hand, negative perceptions about these circumstances can lead negative work outcomes. In such cases it is possible to experience undesirable outcomes such as poor quality outputs, absenteeism, delaying work and intention to leave. Another variable that is considered in the study is "career satisfaction". Career satisfaction is described as "to be pleased with the achievements and the hope about future progress of employee perceived" (Nauta et al., 2009). In this context, having an important work, autonomy and being able to take feedback while performing tasks, can be seen as factors that will enable workers to be satisfied with their careers and may decrease intention to leave. In scope of this study hypotheses are developed as:

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a positive and significant relationship between job characteristics (meaningfulness of the work, autonomy and feedback) and career satisfaction.

H<sub>2</sub>: There is a positive and significant relationship between job characteristics (meaningfulness of the work, autonomy and feedback) and intention to leave.

H<sub>3</sub>: There is a positive and significant relationship between career satisfaction and intention to leave.

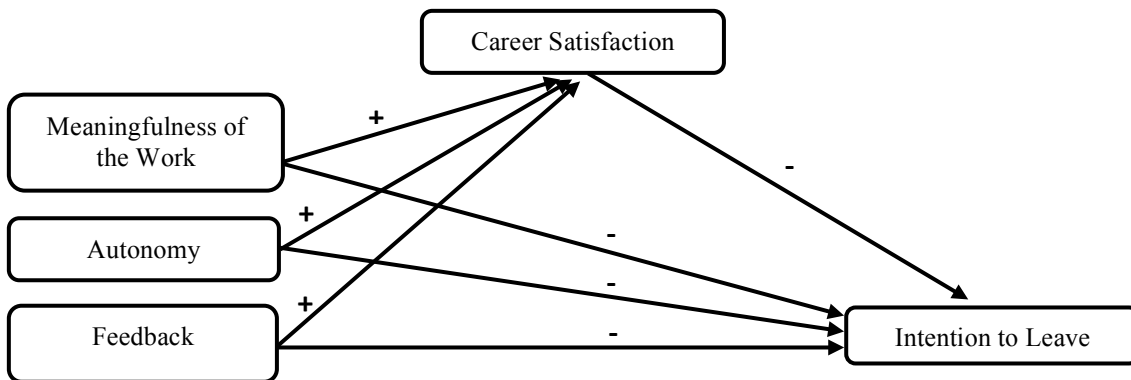
H<sub>4</sub>: Career satisfaction has a mediator affect on the relationship between meaningfulness of the work and intention to leave.

H<sub>5</sub>: Career satisfaction has a mediator affect on the relationship between autonomy and intention to leave.

H<sub>6</sub>: Career satisfaction has a mediator affect on the relationship between feedback and intention to leave.

### Methodology

The aim of this study is to analyze the relationship between the variables of job characteristics (meaningfulness of the work, autonomy, feedback) career satisfaction and intention to leave, and to indicate the mediator role of career satisfaction between job characteristics (meaningfulness of the work, autonomy, feedback) and intention to leave. The proposed mediational model is graphically displayed in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Research Model**

According to research model (see. Figure 1) task significance, autonomy and feedback were defined as independent variables, career satisfaction was defined as the mediator variable and intention to leave was defined as the dependent variable.

The scale of work meaningfulness (13 items, e.g. “Many people are affected by the job I do.”; Cronbach’s  $\alpha = ,756$ ), the scale of autonomy (4 items, e.g. “I have almost complete responsibility for deciding how and when the work is to be done.”; Cronbach’s  $\alpha = ,745$ ) and the scale of feedback (6 items, e.g. “Just doing the work provides me with opportunities to figure out how well I am doing.”; Cronbach’s  $\alpha = ,800$ ) were taken from Job Diagnostic Survey which was developed by Hackman and Oldham (1975). Career satisfaction (5 items, e.g. “I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career.”; Cronbach’s  $\alpha = ,87$ ) was measured with the scale which was developed by Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley (1990). Finally, intention to leave (3 items, e.g. “I often think about quitting.”; Cronbach’s  $\alpha = ,87$ ) was measured with the scale which was developed by Camman (1979). All items were scored on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 'strongly disagree' to 5 'fully agree'.

Participants in this study were 271 research assistants from 2 public universities. The total sample is formed of 60,1% (n=163) female and 39,9% (n=108) male participants. Participants' age varied between 24 and 41 years, with a mean of 30,31 years. With respect to level of education, 10% of the participants (n=27) continuing master education, 65,3% of the participants (n=177) obtained an academic master's degree and continuing doctoral education, 24,7% of the participants (n=67) obtained Phd degree. With respect to tenure in the organization, 13,7% of the participants (n=37) are working for 0-2 years, 62,7 of the participants (n=170) are working for 3-6 years and finally 23,6% participants (n=64) working for 7 years and above.

The corresponding analyses which reliability, correlation and regression analyzes were performed using the SPSS 23 software package. According to Table 1. H<sub>1</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>3</sub> and H<sub>4</sub> were supported. Job characteristics (meaningfulness of the work, autonomy and feedback) have a positive and significant correlation with career satisfaction, career satisfaction has negative and significant correlation with intention to leave and job characteristics (meaningfulness of the work, autonomy and feedback) have significant and negatively correlation with intention to leave.

**Table 1. Intercorrelations Among the Variables**

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
Meaningfulness of the work	(,774)				
Autonomy	,114	(,745)			
Feedback	,519**	,507**	(,800)		
Career Satisfaction	,439**	,469**	,559**	(,876)	
Intention to leave	-,386**	-,319**	-,379**	-,380**	(,878)

\*p<0,01; The values in the parentheses are reliabilities of variables.

Three different models have been developed in order to determine the mediating role at this stage. In the first model, it was examine to determine the mediating role of career satisfaction on the effect of job meaningfulness to leave work.

Results of regression analyzes performed for Model 1 are shown in Table 2. According to the Table 2 task significance has a negative effect on intention to leave ( $\beta = -,257$ ;  $p<,001$ ); and also career satisfaction has a significant and negatively effect on intention to leave ( $\beta = -,380$ ;  $p<,001$ ). Finally, along with the inclusion of career satisfaction in the last step, there is a change on the effect of the importance of the task on intention to leave. Importance of the task's effect on intention to leave decreased from  $\beta = -,257$  ( $p<,001$ ) to  $\beta = -,155$  ( $p = ,009$ ). According to results H<sub>4</sub> was supported and it could be said that career satisfaction has partial mediator effect on the relationship between importance of the task and intention to leave.

**Table 2. Results of Regression Analysis (Model 1)**

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	B	$\beta$	p	R <sup>2</sup>	Mediator Affect
Meaningfulness of The Work	Intention To Leave	-,350	-,257	,000	,066	
Meaningfulness of The Work	Career Satisfaction	,327	,307	,000	,094	<i>Conditions</i>
Career Satisfaction	Intention To Leave	-,486	-,380	,000	,145	
Meaningfulness of The Work	Intention To Leave	-,211	-,155	,009	,166	<i>Test</i>
Career Satisfaction	Intention To Leave	-,425	-,333	,000		

The results of the regression analyzes performed for Model 2 are shown in Table 3. According to Table 3 autonomy has a significant and negatively effect on intention to leave ( $\beta = -,439$ ;  $p < ,001$ ); and also career satisfaction has a significant and negatively effect on intention to leave ( $\beta = -,380$ ;  $p < ,001$ ). Finally in the last step, there is a change on effect of autonomy on intention to leave along with the inclusion of career satisfaction. Autonomy's effect on intention to leave decreased from  $\beta = -,439$  ( $p < ,001$ ) to  $\beta = -,180$  ( $p = ,009$ ). According to results H<sub>5</sub> was supported and it could be said that career satisfaction has partial mediator effect on the relationship between autonomy and intention to leave.

**Table 3. Results of Regression Analysis (Model 2)**

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	B	$\beta$	p	R <sup>2</sup>	Mediator Affect
Autonomy	Intention To Leave	-,439	-,319	,000	,102	
Autonomy	Career Satisfaction	,505	,469	,000	,220	<i>Conditions</i>
Career Satisfaction	Intention To Leave	-,486	-,380	,000	,145	
Autonomy	Intention To Leave	-,248	-,180	,005	,170	<i>Test</i>
Career Satisfaction	Intention To Leave	-,378	-,296	,000		

Finally, results of regression analyzes performed for Model 3 are shown in Table 4. According to Table 4 feedback has a significant and negatively effect on intention to leave ( $\beta = -,542$ ;  $p < ,001$ ); and also career satisfaction has a significant and negatively effect on intention to leave ( $\beta = -,380$ ;  $p < ,001$ ). Finally, along with the inclusion of career satisfaction in the last step, there is a change on effect of feedback on intention to leave. Feedback's effect on intention to leave decreased from  $\beta = -,542$  ( $p < ,001$ ) to  $\beta = -,347$  ( $p = ,009$ ). According to results H<sub>6</sub> was supported and it could be said that career satisfaction has partial mediator effect on the relationship between feedback and intention to leave.

**Table 4. Results of Regression Analysis (Model 3)**

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	B	$\beta$	p	R <sup>2</sup>	Mediator Affect
Feedback	Intention To Leave	-,542	-,389	,000	,144	
Feedback	Career Satisfaction	,626	,559	,000	,313	<i>Koşulları</i>
Career Satisfaction	Intention To Leave	-,486	-,380	,000	,145	
Feedback	Intention To Leave	-,347	-,243	,000	,185	<i>Testi</i>
Career Satisfaction	Intention To Leave	-,313	-,245	,000		

### Conclusion

The aim of this study is to indicate the mediator role of career satisfaction between job characteristics and intention to leave. According to the analyses there were significantly positive relationships between meaningfulness of the work and career satisfaction; autonomy and career satisfaction, and feedback and career satisfaction and so H<sub>1</sub> was accepted. This results have similarities with the studies of Landon, Reschovsky and Blumenthal (2003), Katerndahl, Parchman, and Wood (2009), Singh (1988). On the other hand, significant and negatively relationship was found between job characteristics and intention to leave, so H<sub>2</sub> was accepted. That results are similar with studies of Spector and Jex (1991), Samad (2006), Kim and Stoner (2008). According to another result there was a significantly negative relationship between career satisfaction and intention to leave, and H<sub>3</sub> was accepted. This result has similarities with Joo and Park (2010), Laschinger (2012), Chan and Mai (2015). Moreover, analyses' results show that career satisfaction has a partial mediator effect between job characteristics and intention to leave. Finally, H<sub>4</sub>, H<sub>5</sub> and H<sub>6</sub> has not rejected.