

EXPATRIATE TURNOVER TENDENCIES IN SAUDI ARABIA: AN EMPIRICAL EXAMINATION

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The authors explore turnover tendencies among expatriate employees in Saudi Arabia. They: (1) discuss the novelty of expatriates in Saudi Arabia; (2) review the literature on employee turnover tendency and its correlates—job satisfaction and employee characteristics; (3) hypothesize a negative relationship between extrinsic job satisfaction and expatriate turnover tendencies, a negative relationship between general job satisfaction and expatriate turnover tendencies, no relationship between intrinsic job satisfaction and expatriate turnover tendencies, and no relationship between expatriate characteristics and expatriate turnover tendencies, and (4) empirically test the hypotheses with a sample of expatriate employees. Results provide strong support for most of the hypotheses except "pay," one of the extrinsic job satisfaction variables, and "job feedback," one of the intrinsic job satisfaction variables.

Expatriate employee turnover is a major concern for managers in Saudi Arabia (Ben-Bakr, Al-Shammari, Jefri, & Prasad, 1994). Due to shortages of indigenous manpower, firms in Saudi Arabia hire employees from a wide variety of countries. A high percentage of these expatriates do not perform effectively and are returned home or dismissed early. The resulting high turnover rate causes significant direct and indirect costs to companies (Bhuian & AbdulMuhmin, 1995; Yavas, Luqmani, & Quraeshi, 1990). The literature has consistently reported that employee *turnover tendency*, that precedes the actual turnover, presents the single best turnover predictor (Bluedorn, 1982; Donnelly & Ivancevich, 1975; Hom & Griffeth, 1987; Mobley, Horner, & Hollingsworth, 1978; Price & Mueller, 1981).

Past research has identified three categories of determinants of employee turnover tendency: work-related attitudes, personal characteristics, and external environmental factors (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Tyagi & Wotruba, 1993). Once an employee is hired, it is the work-related variables (e.g., *job satisfaction* and organizational commitment) that can be controlled by the organization and, therefore, an

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understanding of the nature of the relationship between employee turnover tendency and work-related variables can be quite useful in effectively managing expatriate employees (Lee & Mowday, 1987; Naumann, 1993). Likewise, personal variables (e.g., age, education, and experience) can be controlled through employee selection processes and, after hiring, through training programs. Finally, external environmental variables (e.g., organizational climate, management practices and supervisory behaviors) are usually unchangeable in the short run. Therefore, the literature has paid greater attention to the two former types of determinants of employee turnover tendency (Michaels & Spector, 1982; Tyagi & Wotruba, 1993).

Whilst numerous studies have investigated employee turnover tendency and job satisfaction, the work-related variables included in this study, within the contexts of developed countries using different types of employees, few studies have done so in the context of a developing country utilizing a sample of a novel type of expatriate employee. This limitation exists even though the literature suggests that employee turnover tendency and job satisfaction may differ with respect to the types of employee (e.g., domestic and expatriate) (Banai & Reisel, 1993), the nature of the job (e.g., permanent and contractual) (Cohen, 1992), and the types of organizational culture (e.g., traditional-bureaucratic and supportive culture) (Gregersen & Black, 1992). Saudi Arabia, one of the most important international markets in the developing world, provides an ideal setting for a study on expatriate employee turnover tendencies because of the attendant presence of a large expatriate community in the country.

Therefore, this study attempts to empirically examine: (1) the nature of employee turnover tendency and job satisfaction among expatriates in Saudi Arabia; (2) the extent to which job satisfaction is associated with turnover tendencies of expatriate employees in Saudi Arabia; (3) the satisfaction with which particular job facet(s) is related to expatriate employee turnover tendencies; and (4) the association between personal variables and expatriate employee turnover tendencies.

The study setting of Saudi Arabia is well suited for an examination of turnover tendencies of a novel type of expatriate employees. Saudi Arabia is one of the most important markets among developing countries, representing \$25 to \$30 billion worth of annual export potential to international exporters. The attractive incentives offered to foreign investors have been drawing multinational enterprises from around the world to form joint ventures in the country. Consequently, Saudi Arabia has become a focal point of international business activity and, in recent years, has witnessed a thriving interest in the study of its managerial practices and related issues (Yavas et al., 1990; Bhuian, 1995).

An additional reason for selecting Saudi Arabia is that the shortage of indigenous manpower has resulted in the hiring of over 6 million expatriates from various countries (Baker & Abou-Ismaïl, 1993). Therefore, cultural plurality is a dominant feature of the workforce in Saudi Arabia. These expatriates differ from the typical expatriates of multinational companies who are assigned from home offices to various subsidiaries. Expatriates in Saudi Arabia are hired on a contractual basis and are believed to be overly concerned about the extrinsic rewards (e.g.,

pay, security and fringe benefits) of their jobs (Bhuyan & AbdulMuhmin, 1995). A great number of these expatriates cannot adjust themselves to the different culture of Saudi Arabia and, therefore, do not perform effectively. Consequently, the turnover rate of expatriates in Saudi Arabia is quite high, causing significant direct and indirect additional costs to both domestic and multinational companies (Bhuyan, 1995; Yavas et al., 1990).

Research Domain

Employee Turnover Tendency Construct

Employee turnover tendency or propensity to leave or intention to quit is believed to precede actual turnover. The correlation between turnover tendency and ultimate turnover has been found to be very high in several studies (Futrell & Parasuraman, 1984; Hom & Griffeth, 1987; Price & Mueller, 1981; Steel & Ovalle, 1984; Tyagi & Wotruba, 1993). Empirical research has also consistently shown that turnover tendency is an effective predictor of employee turnover (Naumann, 1993). Research attempting to link work-attitudes directly with employee turnover has had little success (Naumann, 1993). However, the presence of the employee turnover tendency as an intermediate linkage between work-attitudes and turnover has been strongly supported (Bluedorn, 1982; Hom & Griffeth, 1987; Naumann, 1993). Although the turnover of a typical expatriate is either voluntary internal, requesting an early transfer home, or voluntary external, quitting the organization, the turnover of an expatriate in Saudi Arabia is always external either voluntarily or by dismissal. A high percentage of expatriates returning home after completing assignments in Saudi Arabia wanted to leave the organization and delayed the gratification of that intention for several years (Ben-Bakr et al., 1994; Yavas et al., 1990).

Job Satisfaction Construct

Job satisfaction is defined as the extent to which a worker feels positively or negatively about his or her job (Odom, Boxx, & Dunn, 1990). It can be conceptualized in a variety of ways, such as intrinsic, extrinsic or general satisfaction. Intrinsic satisfaction refers to actually performing the work and experiencing feelings of accomplishment and self-actualization (e.g., freedom in job and task-identity). Likewise, extrinsic satisfaction is derived from the rewards given to an individual by the organization, peers, or superiors that can include compensation and job security. Lastly, general satisfaction refers to an aggregation of satisfaction with various job facets or an aggregation of a few measures of general satisfaction (Levin & Stokes, 1989). Employee job satisfaction with the various job facets has long been studied in management, organizational theory, and socialization literature. Job satisfaction has been theorized as being highly influential in directing employees' actions that are desirable for organizations. More specifically, when the members of an organization are satisfied with their jobs, organizational success will be enhanced. As Peters and Austin (1985) point out in their study of excellent

companies, virtually all the superior performance firms have employees who are highly satisfied with their jobs.

Job Satisfaction as an Antecedent of Employee Turnover Tendency

Of the possible predictors of employee turnover tendency, work-related attitudes of employees have received the most attention by researchers (Futrell & Parasuraman, 1984; Sager & Johnston, 1989; Sager, Varadarajan, & Futrell, 1988). The one work-related attitude receiving the greatest research attention as a predictor of employee turnover tendency is job satisfaction (Johnston, Parasuraman, Futrell, & Black, 1990). This implies that an employee's positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of his or her job or job experience (satisfaction with the job) will reduce the employee's turnover tendency. However, empirical research has been inconsistent with respect to the antecedent effect of job satisfaction on employee turnover tendency. Some researchers (e.g., Sager & Johnston, 1989; Sager et al., 1988) have found that job satisfaction exerts a significant effect on employee turnover tendency, whereas others (e.g., Johnston et al., 1990) have not.

Insight into the influence of job satisfaction on employee turnover tendency can be gained by considering the relationship between employees and their organizations as that of an *exchange* (Hunt, Wood, & Chonko, 1989). In this exchange relationship, on one side are employees who come to organizations with certain needs and desires. Some of those needs may be extrinsic (e.g., pay, security, and other fringe benefits), while others could be intrinsic (e.g., job variety, task-identity, job feedback, and freedom). Within the organization they expect to find a work environment in which they can use their abilities to satisfy many of these needs. On the other side, organizations hire employees who can accomplish the tasks necessary for the survival, growth and prosperity of the organization. In essence, organizations satisfy employees' needs and, in return, employees work hard to accomplish organizational goals. When organizations provide an environment conducive to such exchanges, the likelihood of receiving desirable responses, including lower turnover tendencies, from employees, is theorized to increase.

One of the desires of all organizations is to have lower turnover tendencies among their employees. Therefore, applying the concept of an exchange relationship, it can be said that when employees are satisfied with their jobs, they are likely to have lower turnover tendencies. However, this is true when employees perceive the presence of those job facets that are important to them in their organizations and these employees are satisfied with those job facets. It is also believed that the importance of different job facets differ with respect to different types of employees (Naumann, 1993). Therefore, it has been suggested that the linkage between job satisfaction and employee turnover tendency should be studied with different types of employees in different types of management and organizational culture (Brown & Peterson, 1993). Although it is generally believed that expatriates in Saudi Arabia are more concerned about the extrinsic facets of their jobs (e.g., pay, security) than the intrinsic aspects of their jobs (e.g., task-identity, job variety)

(Baker & Abou-Ismael, 1993), no study has empirically investigated expatriate extrinsic job satisfaction as a determinant of lower turnover tendency. Likewise, no study has examined if indeed intrinsic job satisfaction is unrelated to expatriate turnover tendencies.

Demographic Variables as Antecedents to Employee Turnover Tendency

A number of empirical studies indicate that demographic variables are relevant to understanding employee turnover tendency (Arnold & Feldman, 1982; Parasuraman, 1989; Williams & Hazer, 1986). However, of the three categories of predictors of employee turnover tendency, the characteristics of employees have received the least attention. Age has been found to be negatively related to employee turnover tendency (Dewar & Werbel, 1979; Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Steers, 1977). The relationship of education to turnover tendency has also been observed, with highly educated employees more likely to leave the organization than less educated employees (Arnold & Feldman, 1982; Brief & Aldag, 1980). Also, employees with a high income have been found to have low turnover tendencies (Morrow, 1983). Finally, employees with long work experience have been found to have a low turnover tendency (Gregersen & Black, 1992). Although the nature of the effects of employee characteristics on turnover tendency may differ in the international environment, empirical research on the influence of employee demographics on employee turnover tendency in an international context is scanty (Naumann, 1993). Several studies have examined the influence of personal characteristics on employee turnover, but very few have investigated the effect of employee characteristics on employee turnover tendency (Brown & Peterson, 1993; Tyagi & Wotruba, 1993). In the context of Saudi Arabia, a number of studies (e.g., Ben-Bakr et al., 1994; Yavas et al., 1990) found no relationship between employee characteristics and turnover, implying that individual differences among expatriates were unrelated to their turnover rate. However, no study has investigated the influence of demographics on expatriate turnover tendencies. As explained earlier, given the nature of the prime motivation of expatriates behind coming to work in Saudi Arabia, it can also be expected that expatriate characteristics will also be unrelated to their turnover tendencies.

Hypotheses

The preceding discussion warrants the examination of the following research hypotheses.

- Hypothesis 1:* The turnover tendency of expatriates in Saudi Arabia is unrelated to their age, education, income, and experience.
- Hypothesis 2:* The turnover tendency of expatriates in Saudi Arabia is a negative function of their satisfaction with the extrinsic facets of their jobs (i.e., pay and job security).
- Hypothesis 3:* The turnover tendency of expatriates in Saudi Arabia is a negative function of their satisfaction with their jobs in general.

Hypothesis 4: The turnover tendency of expatriates in Saudi Arabia is unrelated to their satisfaction with the intrinsic facets of their jobs (i.e., freedom, feedback, identity, variety, interaction and friendship).

These hypotheses represent both partial replication and extension of previous studies on turnover tendency, job satisfaction, and individual differences with a different sample population—expatriates in Saudi Arabia.

Method

Data Collection

In this study, a convenience sample of 504 expatriate employees was drawn via drop-off and pick-up methods from a variety of establishments located in the major metropolitan areas (the tri-cities of Dammam/Dhahran/Al-Khobar, Riyadh, & Jeddah) of Saudi Arabia. Not only do these cities contain most of Saudi Arabia's business establishments but most expatriate employees also work and live there (Bhuan, 1995). Because of the non-existence of a listing that could serve as a sampling frame for drawing a random sample and because of the difficulties inherent in the task of drawing a probabilistic sample in Saudi Arabia (see Tuncalp, 1988), we used a convenience sample. The realities of the Saudi environment force the use of non-probabilistic sampling methods, such as the one employed in this study. Hence, it is believed that by keeping the sample size as large as practical and by replicating a study many times, using different convenience samples, more reliable findings can be expected.

Initially, 780 questionnaires were distributed. After three call-backs, 504 of these were retrieved, resulting in a return rate of 65 percent. This response rate compares favorably with other studies undertaken among expatriate employees in Saudi Arabia (Baker & Abou-Ismaïl, 1993). The characteristics of the sample indicated that respondents have widely varied educational backgrounds. Further, respondents differ in age, size of firm worked for, income, activities of the organization, level of responsibility, major field of study, number of firms worked for, and total years of work experience.

Measurement

The constructs of employee turnover tendency and job satisfaction were measured on multiple-item as well as on single-item scales drawn from previous research. Employee turnover tendency was measured using a scale adopted from Futrell and Parasuraman (1984); Hunt et al. (1985); Johnston et al. (1990); Sager and Johnston (1989); and Parasuraman (1989). This scale measures the degree to which expatriate employees in Saudi Arabia have turnover tendencies given attractive incentives to change companies, such as higher pay, more freedom, more job status, and friendlier colleagues. Respondents were asked to respond to the four turnover tendency statements on a 5-point Likert format where 1 indicated "strongly agree" and 5 "strongly disagree." The statements are as follows: "I would

be willing to change companies if the new job offered a 25 % pay increase;" "I would be willing to change companies if the new job offered more creative freedom;" "I would be willing to change companies if the new job offered more status;" and "I would be willing to change companies if the new job was with people who were more friendly."

The employee job satisfaction was measured by a 9-item scale adopted from Ironson, Smith, Brannick, Gibson, and Paul (1989), Quinn and Staines (1979) and Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967). Two items measured the extrinsic job satisfaction, one item assessed general job satisfaction, and six items represented intrinsic job satisfaction. Respondents were asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert format (1 = "strongly agree" and 5 = "strongly disagree") to what degree they agreed with the following nine statements: "I am satisfied with the pay I receive from my job (*pay*);" "I am satisfied with the security my job provides me (*security*);" "In general, I am satisfied with my job (*general*);" "I am satisfied with the freedom I have to do what I want on my job (*freedom*);" "I am satisfied with the information I receive from my superior about my job performance (*feedback*);" "I am satisfied with the opportunities my job gives me to complete tasks from beginning to end (*identity*);" "I am satisfied with the variety of activities my job offers (*variety*);" "I am satisfied with the opportunities my job provides me to interact with others (*interaction*);" and "I am satisfied with the opportunities to develop close friendships on my job (*friendship*)." The first two statements measure the extrinsic job satisfaction, the third statement assesses the general job satisfaction, and the last six statements represent the intrinsic job satisfaction.

The properties of the above scales have been reported in several previous studies. However, the reliability coefficients (Cronbach's α) for job satisfaction (.84) and turnover tendency (.81) meet the recommended standard of .70 suggested by Nunnally (1978).

Analysis

The extent of employee turnover tendency and job satisfaction were assessed using descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations. A correlation matrix is also provided with all the variables of the study. To examine the hypotheses posed in this study, a set of hierarchical regression equations were estimated. In the first equations of the set, all the four demographic variables were included. Next, all the nine job satisfaction variables were entered cumulatively according to a specified hierarchy. The hierarchy was determined based on the importance of the variables in explaining the variance in employee turnover tendency. In equation 2, "pay" was added because it was hypothesized to be the most relevant to employee turnover tendency. In equations 3 and 4, "security" and "general" were included respectively because these variables were also hypothesized to be influencing the dependent variable, employee turnover tendency. Next, in equations 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10, the lesser relevant variables to employee turnover tendency were

added in the following order: "freedom," "feedback," "task-identity," "variety," "interaction," and "friendship."

The major advantage of this hierarchical regression analysis is that a unique partitioning of the total variance of the dependent variable accounted for by the independent variables can be made. Thus, the incremental changes in R^2 and changes in the direction and strength of *beta-coefficients* can be observed.

Results

Table 1 shows the means and standard deviations of the research variables. The mean of the sum of the four items pertaining to employee turnover tendency is 2.67, indicating that an average expatriate is *ambivalent* with respect to turnover tendency with a slight inclination towards having turnover tendency. Likewise, the mean of the sum of the nine job satisfaction items and the means of each of the nine items range from 2.17 to 2.82. The corresponding standard deviations range from .68 to 1.23, indicating a reasonable amount of variance in the responses. Therefore, an average expatriate is neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the nine facets of his job. However, there is a slight inclination towards being satisfied.

Table 2 reports the results of the ten hierarchical regression equations. In general, the results are mostly consistent with the hypotheses, with the exceptions of "pay" and "feedback." Similarly, all the demographic variables appeared to be unrelated to employee turnover tendency. Equation 1, consisting of four demographic variables, only explains 2.9 percent of the variance of employee turnover tendency.

The independent variable "pay" turned out to be nonsignificant in the full regression model. The variables "security" and "general" remained significant in all the equations and the inclusion of these two variables caused substantial increases in the values of R^2 (5.9 and 4.0 percent respectively). The variable, "feedback," appeared to be consistently significant in all the equations, which was contrary to what was hypothesized. However, its addition caused a 2.3 percent increase in the value of R^2 . Finally, all the five intrinsic variables, "freedom," "task-identity," "variety," "interaction," and "friendship" were found to be insignificant in all their respective equations and conformed with what was hypothesized. The additions of these variables caused very nonsignificant changes in the magnitudes of R^2 .

Discussion

This study suggests that expatriate employees in Saudi Arabia have neither strong turnover tendencies nor satisfaction with the nine job facets. These results are mostly consistent with past research on the subject in Saudi Arabia (Yavas et al., 1990; Bhuiyan & AbdulMuhmin, 1995). The findings that expatriate employees' age, education, income, and experience are unrelated to their turnover tendencies conform with the popular management thinking in Saudi Arabia. Earlier research

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlation Coefficients
(N = 504)

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Education	2.05	.76													
2. Income	3.17	1.92	.26 ^c												
3. Experience	2.57	1.36	.04	.20 ^c											
4. Age	2.11	.97	.13 ^b	.21 ^c	.72 ^c										
5. Turnover	2.67	1.03	.06	.13 ^b	.10 ^a	.13 ^b									
6. Pay	2.82	1.23	.01	-.12 ^b	-.09	-.08	-.22 ^c								
7. Security	2.53	1.19	.03	-.08	.06	.04	-.31 ^c	.42 ^c							
8. General	2.33	1.00	-.06	-.09 ^a	-.04	-.06	-.37 ^c	.49 ^c	.61 ^c						
9. Freedom	2.50	1.03	-.09 ^a	-.05	-.19 ^c	-.17 ^c	-.21 ^c	.34 ^c	.28 ^c	.42 ^c					
10. Feedback	2.69	1.10	-.01	.01	-.03	-.06	-.26 ^c	.24 ^c	.26 ^c	.35 ^c	.39 ^c				
11. Identity	2.26	.89	-.08	.03	-.11 ^a	-.13 ^b	-.20 ^c	.25 ^c	.25 ^c	.38 ^c	.44 ^c	.43 ^c			
12. Variety	2.44	.99	-.10 ^a	-.09 ^a	-.09 ^a	-.11 ^a	-.27 ^c	.36 ^c	.34 ^c	.56 ^c	.42 ^c	.33 ^c	.40 ^c		
13. Interaction	2.30	.92	-.10 ^a	-.10 ^a	-.05	-.09	-.17 ^c	.28 ^c	.27 ^c	.41 ^c	.43 ^c	.44 ^c	.56 ^c	.42 ^c	
14. Friendship	2.17	.90	-.06	.04	.02	-.01	-.13 ^b	.16 ^c	.17 ^c	.35 ^c	.34 ^c	.28 ^c	.50 ^c	.33 ^c	.44 ^c

^a $p < .05$. ^b $p < .01$. ^c $p < .001$.

Table 2
Hierarchical Regression Results
Dependent Variable: Turnover Tendency

Equ. No.	Independent Variables													R^2	ΔR^2	
	Educ β	Incm β	Expr β	Age β	A β	B β	C β	D β	E β	F β	G β	H β	I β			
1.	.02	.06 ^a	-.02	.13											.029 ^b	
2.	.03	.04	-.03	.13	-.17 ^c										.070 ^c	.041
3.	.05	.03	-.01	.13	-.09 ^a	-.23 ^c									.129 ^c	.059
4.	.02	.03	-.01	.11	-.03	-.13 ^b	.27 ^c								.169 ^c	.040
5.	.02	.03	-.01	.10	-.02	-.13 ^b	-.25 ^c	-.05							.171 ^c	.002
6.	.05	.04	-.01	.11	-.02	-.13 ^b	-.22 ^c	-.01	-.13 ^b						.194 ^c	.023
7.	.03	.04	-.01	.09	-.02	-.12 ^a	-.24 ^c	-.01	-.13 ^b	-.01					.196 ^c	.002
8.	.04	.04	-.02	.11	-.02	-.11 ^a	-.23 ^c	.01	-.13 ^b	.00	-.05				.197 ^c	.001
9.	.03	.05	-.02	.10	-.02	-.11 ^a	-.24 ^c	-.01	-.14 ^b	-.03	-.06	.10			.198 ^c	.005
10.	.04	.04	-.01	.08	-.03	-.12 ^a	-.24 ^c	.01	-.13 ^b	.00	-.08	.11	-.05		.208 ^c	.010

Note: Educ = Education, Incm = Income, Expr = Experience, A = Pay, B = Security, C = General, D = Freedom, E = Feedback, F = Identity, G = Variety, H = Interaction, I = Friendship.

^a $p < .05$. ^b $p < .01$. ^c $p < .001$.

in Saudi Arabia revealed no significant differences in the levels of employee turnover and job satisfaction for such demographic variables (At-Twaijri, 1987; Hailu, 1987). As discussed earlier, the primary force that drives these expatriates abroad is the extrinsic benefits of jobs. Generally, demographic variables have substantial impact on various work-related attitudes, including the constructs of this study, when the intrinsic aspects of jobs are important to the employees and are emphasized by the management (Banai & Reisel, 1993).

The result that "satisfaction with pay" is a nonsignificant predictor of employee turnover tendency is contrary to the prominent management belief in the country. It is popularly believed in Saudi Arabia that if expatriates are satisfied with their pay, they will not leave their jobs (Baker & Abou-Ismael, 1993). However, the results suggest that when expatriates consider their pay alone, it is a significant predictor of turnover tendency, but when pay is considered along with other aspects of their jobs, it is nonsignificant. One possible explanation of this seemingly inconsistent result is the high correlations of "pay" with all other satisfaction variables. Similarly, the findings that "satisfaction with job security" and "job in general" are significantly related to employee turnover tendency conform with the past theorizations of these linkages in Saudi Arabia (Ben-Bakr et al., 1994; Sadeldin, 1989). Nevertheless, the lack of empirical research prevented the authors' ability to compare results.

Finally, the findings that satisfaction with most of the intrinsic aspects of jobs are unrelated to employee turnover tendency support the expectations of most of the academicians and practitioners in Saudi Arabia (Ben-Bakr et al., 1994; Kanovsky, 1986). Since this is the only empirical study that has examined the relationship between satisfaction with intrinsic aspects of job and employee turnover tendency in Saudi Arabia, no comparison can be made. The finding that satisfaction with job feedback is significantly related to employee turnover tendency, contrary to the hypothesis, can be explained. Baker and Abou-Ismael (1993) pointed out that expatriates in this region value the importance of winning the support of "the decider" members of the organizations. As mentioned earlier, the nature of management and organizational culture in Saudi Arabia may instill perceptions of uncertainty in jobs. Hence, expatriates tend to ensure that they receive the support of the powerful members of their organizations. Job feedback may help expatriates to remain informed about the attitudes of authority towards them. Hence, if they are satisfied with the job feedback, they tend to remain with their organizations.

Managerial Implications

Managers of multinational corporations have an understandable interest in the employee turnover tendency and job satisfaction of their multicultural work forces because these issues relate to the effective management of work forces that are characterized by multiculturalism (Davis & Rasoul, 1988). In particular, managers of multinational enterprises as well as domestic firms in Saudi Arabia would benefit from the findings that expatriate employees in Saudi Arabia do not have strong turnover tendencies and satisfaction with the nine facets of their jobs. Since both

employee turnover tendency and job satisfaction are associated with several desirable employee behaviors (e.g., turnover, job performance, and absenteeism) steps can be taken in hiring, training, motivation, and incentive programs to reduce employees' turnover tendencies and enhance job satisfaction.

Also, the findings that expatriate satisfaction with the intrinsic job facets are unrelated to employee turnover tendency can benefit managers. For one thing, managers may be less inclined to spend resources on these job facets. However, the high correlations between intrinsic and other job facets indicate that the intrinsic job aspects may also become indirectly influential in reducing the turnover tendencies of expatriate employees. In sum, taking steps to enhance employee job satisfaction and subsequently reducing employee turnover tendency could be economically advantageous for employers in terms of reducing costs associated with high turnover.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study is limited by several factors that should be addressed in any future research. First, the relationship between employee turnover tendency and job satisfaction should be tested further with other independent samples. Testing hypotheses on a given data set "might capitalize on the peculiar characteristics of that data set" (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988, p. 83). Second, no studies have examined the influence of expatriate job satisfaction pertaining to nine job facets on their turnover tendencies in Saudi Arabia. Each of the two variables, independently and in tandem, clearly have the potential to influence expatriate employee turnover and performance. Although this study has included nine types of job satisfaction, further research should consider other specific types of job satisfaction (e.g., satisfaction with co-workers, supervision, and opportunities for personal growth). Third, various other factors (e.g., anticipatory socialization variables, job search behaviors, work relationships, job characteristics, and organizational commitment) were theorized as having an influence on employee turnover tendency (Hunt et al., 1985). Therefore, the effects of these variables on employee turnover tendency need to be examined in Saudi Arabia. Fourth, in the international environment, other employee characteristics may be of importance (e.g., expatriate linguistic ability in other languages, expatriate years of previous international experience, expatriate family situation, and expatriate marital status). Finally, though we conducted a cross-sectional study to examine the relationship between employee turnover tendency and job satisfaction, the constructs investigated might be dynamic in nature. This could be a potential limitation because the cross-sectional data does not reflect any ongoing transformations that might affect the relationships among those variables. For example, the job satisfaction of expatriate employees in Saudi Arabia could be moving toward a greater or lesser level of satisfaction, but the effect on the turnover tendency might be delayed. A longitudinal study would better capture the dynamism of these constructs.

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