

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 406 572

CE 073 848

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 TITLE Attitudes toward Money, Intrinsic Job Satisfaction, and Voluntary Turnover.
 PUB DATE Sep 96
 NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual Colloquium of the International Association for Research in Economic Psychology (21st, Paris, France, September 11-15, 1996).
 PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
 EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS Adults; *Employee Attitudes; *Job Satisfaction; *Labor Turnover; *Mental Health Workers; *Values; Work Attitudes
 IDENTIFIERS *Money

ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to determine whether employees' attitudes toward money (money ethic endorsement) moderates the relationships between intrinsic job satisfaction on the one hand and thoughts of withdrawal and voluntary turnover on the other. Data were collected from workers in the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation in a southeastern state in the United States. At the beginning of the study, 155 workers were surveyed, with a 56 percent return rate. Eighteen months later, 82 of the employees were rated as stayers (62) or leavers (20). Employees' demographic variables such as age, education, sex, tenure in the organization, and annual income, and their attitudes toward money and intrinsic job satisfaction were measured using rating scales. The study found that, for employees with high money ethic endorsement, there was a negative and nonsignificant relationship between intrinsic job satisfaction and turnover: workers with high money ethic endorsement tend to have higher turnover behavior regardless of their intrinsic job satisfaction. Employees with low money ethic endorsement and low intrinsic job satisfaction tend to have the lowest actual turnover, perhaps because they burn out and withdraw psychologically, developing an "indifferent" personality orientation. Opportunity and money ethic were the highest predictors of voluntary job turnover. (13 references) (KC)

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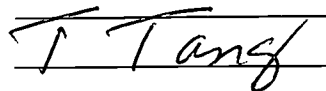
Paper Presented at the 21 Annual Colloquium of the
International Association for Research in Economic Psychology
Paris, France
September 11-15, 1996

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**ATTITUDES TOWARD MONEY, INTRINSIC JOB SATISFACTION,
AND VOLUNTARY TURNOVER**

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ABSTRACT

Data were collected from employees of the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation of a southeastern state in the United States. The authors examine whether employees' attitude toward money (Money Ethic endorsement) moderates the relationships between intrinsic job satisfaction and withdrawal cognitions and voluntary turnover. Results suggest that withdrawal cognitions are not significantly related to voluntary turnover, measured 18 months later. For employees with a high Money Ethic endorsement, their voluntary turnover is high regardless of their intrinsic job satisfaction, whereas for those with a low Money Ethic, their turnover pattern is different. These results suggest that employees in the present sample do not need both a push and a pull to experience turnover: just a pull is needed for those who endorse the Money Ethic. Implications for future research and practice are discussed.

Key Words: Money Ethic, Job Satisfaction, Withdrawal Cognitions, and Turnover

This research was supported by funds from the Faculty Research Committee of Middle Tennessee State University. The authors thank Pamela R. Gilbert, Janet Chamblee, Melissa McCann, and Bradlee Butler for their assistance in data collection, Whitney K. Jones for her assistance, Jwa K. Kim for his assistance in statistical data analysis, and Michael B. Hein and Michael . Hitt for their comments.

ATTITUDES TOWARD MONEY, INTRINSIC JOB SATISFACTION, AND VOLUNTARY TURNOVER

For the past several decades, turnover research has been an important topic in the human resources and organizational behavior literature (Campion, 1991; Cohen, 1993; Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino, 1979; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). At the macro level, researchers have focused on the relationship between the aggregate level of economic and employment activity and turnover behavior. At the micro level, scientists have investigated the relationship between job dissatisfaction and turnover. Dissatisfaction may "push" the employee to look for alternative employment, whereas the perception of attractive alternative job opportunities may "pull" them to consider alternative employment (March & Simon, 1958). Attitudes will predict behavior effectively only when there is a high correspondence between the "attitude object" and the "behavioral option" (Tang & Baumeister, 1984). Mobley et al. argued that "the more specific the intention measure and the closer the person is to actually quitting, the more trivial the prediction" (1979: 508, emphases added). This research examines the interaction effects between attitudes towards money and intrinsic job satisfaction (i.e., general and deep-rooted attitudinal variables) on withdrawal cognitions (Time 1) and actual turnover behavior (Time 2, 18 months later).

Money and the Pulling Forces

The most important reason for voluntary turnover is "higher wages/career opportunity" (Campion, 1991). Employees are more satisfied with the turnover outcome when they are leaving for higher wages or career opportunities. Leavers also receive significant increases in pay, about 20 percent, on their new job. Leavers had more negative attitudes toward pay than those who stayed. Economic conditions in the society will have strong impacts on alternative employment opportunities and on employee turnover.

The Money Ethic Scale

Tang developed the Money Ethic Scale (MES) which examines the psychological meaning of money (Tang, 1992, 1993, 1995). People who endorse the Money Ethic tend to think that money is a symbol of their success, money is good and not evil, and they

budget their money carefully. This short MES scale is not significantly correlated with income and educational level. MES is significantly correlated with low pay satisfaction, high economic, theoretical, and political values, and low aesthetic, social, and religious values. We expect those who endorse the Money Ethic may value money more highly and have a stronger desire to leave an organization for more money than those who do not.

Job Satisfaction

The relationship between job satisfaction and turnover is significant but not particularly strong. Many researchers have investigated variables that are short-term, specific, and closely related to turnover: commitment, behavior intentions, and withdrawal cognitions. Pay (or extrinsic) satisfaction is related to intention to quit. However, correlations between pay satisfaction and turnover are not significant.

Commitment. Commitment is a more direct measure of intentions to stay or leave than job satisfaction. Leavers' commitment is significantly lower than that of the stayers "1-1.5 months" before leaving, based on the "last back" technique. Leavers and stayers' organizational commitment attitudes are indistinguishable if the leavers are at least 6 months away from leaving the organization. Cohen (1993) found that the commitment and turnover relationship is significantly stronger when the interval between these measures is six months or less than when it is more than six months.

Intrinsic Job Satisfaction

Intrinsic job satisfaction has a significant genetic component (Arvey Abraham, Bouchard, & Segal, 1989), is very consistent, and can be considered as a dispositional variable. Employees appear to bring important predispositions to the job that are relatively difficult to modify. Satisfaction with work itself and intrinsic satisfaction are all significantly and negatively related to turnover (Mobley et al., 1979). High pay alone will not lead to job (or life) satisfaction. Researchers have suggested that intrinsic job satisfaction has become more important among many employees. We predict that there will be significant interaction effects between Money Ethic endorsement and intrinsic job satisfaction on withdrawal cognitions and voluntary turnover.

METHODS

Participants

At Time 1, 155 workers of the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation in the Southeastern U.S.A. completed a survey voluntarily. The response rate was 56.36%. At Time 2 (18 months later), 84 workers (out of 112 participants who provided identification numbers at Time 1) were classified as either (1) still on the staff ($n = 62$), (2) left the organization (voluntary turnover, $n = 20$), and (3) fired (involuntary turnover, $n = 2$). The response rate at Time 2 was 75.0%.

Only voluntary turnover was examined in the present study. Subjects were labeled as either stayers ($n = 62$, coded as 1) or leavers ($n = 20$, coded as 0) at Time 2. From this sample ($N = 84$), 23.8% of the employees ($n = 20$) left the agencies during the 18-month period. There were 15 male employees and 66 female employees (missing data = 1). The majority were white ($n = 72$) (African American, $n = 5$; American Indian, $n = 1$; and missing data, $n = 4$). There were 36, 11, and 29 people in direct care, administration, and management (job level coded as 1, 2, and 3, respectively).

Measures

Employees' demographic variables (age, education, sex, tenure in the organization, and annual income) were measured (see Table 1). A 5-point scale with disagree strongly (1), neutral (3), and agree strongly (5) as anchor points was employed for all other measures. Attitudes towards money were measured by the 12-item Money Ethic Scale (Tang, 1995). Some sample items are listed as follows: Money is a symbol of success. I budget my money very well. Money is evil. The two items related to the construct that money is evil were reverse scored. The Cronbach's alpha for the MES was .73. Employee commitment ($\alpha = .77$) was measured by a modified 10-item scale by Romzek (1989). Intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction (α s = .84, .74) were measured by the short Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967). Withdrawal cognitions ($\alpha = .89$) were measured by a 4-item scale, based on suggestions presented in the literature (Mobley et al., 1979). The items are as follows: I have been thinking about quitting the present job. I have been evaluating the cost of quitting my job. I intend to quit. I will quit my job in the next 6 months. Employees'

perceived alternative employment opportunities was measured by the following item: The economic and market conditions are good for me to find a new job.

RESULTS

Withdrawal Cognitions

Table 2 shows the hierarchical multiple regression on withdrawal cognitions. Job level in the organization and perceived alternative employment opportunity were entered on steps one and two serving as controls. The amount of variance (withdrawal cognitions) explained by commitment and extrinsic job satisfaction was significant.

The interaction effect of Money Ethic and intrinsic job satisfaction on withdrawal cognitions was significant (R^2 change = .042, F change (7, 74) = 6.90, $p = .01$). The significant interaction effect was further investigated by examining the differences between those employees who endorse the Money Ethic and those who do not, using a median split of their Money Ethic scores. For employees with high Money Ethic endorsement, there was a negative and nonsignificant relationship between intrinsic job satisfaction and withdrawal cognitions ($\beta = -.27$, $t = -1.69$, $p = .10$). However, for those who did not value money, the relationship was positive and nonsignificant ($\beta = .21$, $t = 1.32$, $p = .19$).

Actual Voluntary Turnover Behavior

The major concern of the present study was to ascertain the interaction effect between the Money Ethic endorsement and intrinsic job satisfaction on employees' voluntary turnover. In the first logistic analysis, all seven variables were used as predictors of actual turnover (see Table 3). In the second logistic analysis, all eight variables (seven variables used in Table 2 as well as the interaction effect between Money Ethic and intrinsic job satisfaction) were used to predict voluntary turnover (see Table 4). By examining the differences in these two logistic regressions, a researcher will be able to notice the amount of improvement, the interaction effect between Money Ethic endorsement and intrinsic job satisfaction, on actual turnover behavior.

The results of the first logistic analysis showed a poor fit of the model. The results of the second logistic regression showed that the combined effects of these eight variables were significant ($-2 \text{ Log } (L) = 68.16$, $\text{Chi Square } (8) = 17.89$, $p = .02$) indicating a good

fit of the model. Table 3 showed that the interaction effect was significant (Wald Chi-Square = 6.48, $p = .01$). The significance of the interaction effect on turnover behavior was further investigated by examining both logistic regressions. The results showed that with the addition of the interaction effect, the second logistic regression has provided a significantly better fit of the model than the first logistic regression (Chi Square (1) = 9.49, $p < .01$).

For employees with high Money Ethic endorsement, there was a negative and nonsignificant relationship between intrinsic job satisfaction and turnover behavior ($t = -1.48$, $p = .15$). Workers with high Money Ethic endorsement tend to have higher turnover behavior regardless of their intrinsic job satisfaction. For those who do not value money, the same relationship was positive and significant ($t = 6.12$, $p < .001$). People's attitude toward money moderates the intrinsic job satisfaction-turnover relationship. Further, withdrawal cognitions were not related to voluntary turnover. On the other hand, commitment and intrinsic job satisfaction were related to voluntary turnover.

DISCUSSION

The most important point is that the patterns of voluntary turnover for those employees who endorse the Money Ethic and for those who do not are not the same. For those who value money, they will quit their jobs regardless of their intrinsic job satisfaction. It is speculated that leavers in the present study may have already enjoyed the financial gains due to job hopping in the past. It is also possible that the mental health industry has high salary compression and/or a strong market for transferring workers.

Those employees with low Money Ethic endorsement and low intrinsic job satisfaction tend to have the lowest actual turnover behavior. This may be related to the employees' negative "affect" in a work setting. Stayers may withdraw psychologically and also develop the "indifferent" personality orientation. Most victims of burnout seem either to change jobs or to withdraw psychologically.

Our research shows that withdrawal cognitions do not predict voluntary turnover. Future research needs to re-focus on employees' actual turnover behavior, rather than the substitutes or proxies of turnover behavior. Withdrawal cognitions appear to be closely

related to "push" factors, such as job attitudes, however actual turnover appears to be related to "pull" motivations (opportunity and Money Ethic) as well as "push" factors.

Intrinsic job satisfaction is a predictor of voluntary turnover, whereas extrinsic job satisfaction is a predictor of withdrawal cognitions (both measured at Time 1) and is not a predictor of voluntary turnover (measured at Time 2). It appears that intrinsic job satisfaction has played a much more significant role in predicting actual turnover behavior than extrinsic job satisfaction. Future research needs to pay closer attention to the time of measurement and the amount of time between measurement (attitude) and turnover (behavior) as suggested by Cohen (1993). Moreover, temporal and cross-situation stability appears to be different for different variables.

Further, employees in the present study do not have the opportunities to make a great deal of money in the mental health and mental retardation field. It is plausible that those who score low (relatively speaking) on this Money Ethic Scale may be attracted to the mental health field, whereas those who score high may choose careers as investment bankers. Thus, occupational differences on the Money Ethic endorsement need to be investigated in the future.

Although it is believed that the endorsement of Money Ethic is relatively stable, it is plausible that people do change their attitude depending on their employment status and the amount of money they have in the society. Thus, managers may have limited success to enhance intrinsic satisfaction using employee involvement, quality circles (Tang, Tollison, & Whiteside, 1987), and other programs (Arvey et al. 1989). More research is needed in this direction.

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Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of Major Variables

Variable	Whole Sample		Stayers		Leavers	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
1. Age	36.96	8.87	37.27	9.19	35.88	7.81
2. Education	14.21	1.75	14.03	1.74	14.74	1.73
3. Sex (Male = 0, Female = 1)						
4. Income	16841.48	10345.39	15891.07	6652.59	19851.11	17534.99
5. Tenure	57.92	51.71	67.12	53.24	29.84	34.75
6. PAEO	2.66	1.24	2.66	1.20	2.68	1.42
7. MES	39.25	6.99	39.13	7.88	41.25	4.06
8. Commitment	37.05	6.77	37.61	6.47	35.26	7.57
9. MSQ-Intrinsic	49.60	6.47	49.24	6.73	50.74	5.60
10. MSQ-Extrinsic	20.14	4.69	20.08	4.69	20.32	4.80
11. Cognitions	21.18	9.41	21.08	8.94	21.47	11.01
12. Turnover (Leaver = 0, Stayer = 1)						

Note. PAEO = Perceived Alternative Employment Opportunities. MES = Money Ethic Scale.

Table 2

Hierarchically Arranged Multiple Regression Analyses on Withdrawal Cognitions

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable			
	R Square Change	F Change	df	p
1. Job Level	.033	2.70	1, 80	.104
2. Perceived Alternative	.005	.38	2, 79	.537
3. Commitment	.379	50.70	3, 78	.000
4. Extrinsic Satisfaction	.085	13.16	4, 77	.001
5. Money Ethic (A)	.000	.00	5, 76	.968
6. Intrinsic Satisfaction (B)	.000	.03	6, 75	.868
7. A x B	.042	6.90	7, 74	.011

Table 3

Logistic Analysis for Actual Turnover Behavior (Model 1)

Analysis of Maximum Likelihood Estimates

Variable	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	Wald Chi-Square	p	Standardized Estimate
1. Intercep	2.132	3.550	.361	.548	.
2. Job Level	.302	.399	.576	.448	.169
3. Alternative	-.025	.231	.012	.914	-.017
4. Commitment	.125	.064	3.833	.050	.473
5. Withdrawal	.028	.090	.099	.753	.073
6. Extrinsic	-.066	.098	.452	.502	-.173
7. Money Ethic (A)	-.032	.044	.545	.460	-.126
8. Intrinsic (B)	-.074	.063	1.355	.244	-.288

Association of Predicted Probabilities and Observed Responses

Concordant	= 73.9%	Somers' D	= .485
Discordant	= 25.4%	Gamma	= .488
Tied	= .7%	Tau-a	= .183
(1102 pairs)		c	= .742

Table 4

Logistic Analysis for Actual Turnover Behavior (Model 2) With Money Ethic x
Intrinsic Satisfaction Interaction Effect

Analysis of Maximum Likelihood Estimates

Variable	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	Wald Chi-Square	p	Standardized Estimate
1. Intercept	61.693	24.581	6.299	.012	.
2. Job Level	.359	.378	.903	.342	.201
3. Alternative	-.143	.253	.315	.574	-.098
4. Commitment	.175	.072	5.875	.015	.661
5. Withdrawal	.124	.103	1.438	.231	.320
6. Extrinsic	-.083	.109	.586	.444	-.218
7. Money Ethic (A)	-1.604	.623	6.623	.010	-6.241
8. Intrinsic (B)	-1.260	.483	6.819	.009	-4.919
9. A x B	.030	.012	6.478	.011	8.439

Association of Predicted Probabilities and Observed Responses

Concordant	= 80.8%	Somers' D	= .617
Discordant	= 19.1%	Gamma	= .618
Tied	= .2%	Tau-a	= .232
(1102 pairs)		c	= .809



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