

A Bibliometric Analysis of Teachers' Turnover Intention in Higher Education

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Abstract

The study of turnover intention has been concerned by scholars. This study examined trends in turnover intention publications and conducted a literature review. In this study, following the PRISMA diagram and using bibliometric methods to evaluate teachers' turnover intention, which using descriptive analysis and cluster analysis to analysis 82 selected articles and investigate its current situation, influencing factors and future research direction. The results of the analysis show that the number of publications on teachers' turnover intention in higher education had a positive growth trend recently. It has grown dramatically since 2019, Frontiers in Psychology and Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education played significant roles. The United States is the country with the most publications and is also the most influential. It was followed by Malaysia, China, Pakistan and Malaysia. The results also show that turnover intention, job satisfaction and higher education are the most used keywords in teachers' turnover intention literature. Future research areas identified based on VOSviewer will explore potential literature gaps in work engagement, work-family conflict, and work-family balance.

Keywords: Higher Education, Turnover Intention, Bibliometric Analysis, VOSviewer.

Introduction

In the fierce global competition, many countries emphasize the importance of human resources, and talent is seen as a guarantee of increased competitiveness for organizations (Gustafsson et al., 2023; Saufi et al., 2020). Turnover intention, which refers to an individual's willingness to leave an organization in search of a better job, may be the best predictor of turnover (Fu et al., 2022). It is estimated that the turnover rate of teachers with three years or less experience in the United States reaches 30% (Ellison et al., 2022). Turnover intention has a critical impact on the development of organization (Otache & Inekwe, 2022). This is because it has a significant impact on organizational performance, financial costs, and knowledge (kakar et al., 2021; Saufi et al., 2020). When skilled employees leave the

organization, it causes tangible costs associated with recruitment and training, as well as intangible costs associated with loss of productivity and knowledge (Ahmad & Masood, 2011; Asfahani, 2022; Shah et al., 2020).

University staffs are the most valuable asset of education. In a national survey of university faculty, the majority of faculty (54.9%) had considered transferring, 50.8% had considered changing careers, and only 29.7% had never considered leaving their current position (Li et al., 2022). High teachers' turnover rate not only adversely affects organizational productivity and stable student-teacher relationships, it reduces the quality of education and teacher performance, and hinders student learning and research activities (Gustafsson et al., 2023; Saufi et al., 2020). In this context, faculty retention should be a major goal of universities (Ababneh, 2020). Therefore, examining how to reduce teachers' turnover intention is crucial for universities to remain competitive.

Due to the significant impact of turnover intention on organizations and individuals, scholars are conducting literature reviewer on the turnover intention from a broad perspectives. However, limited bibliometric studies have been conducted on teachers' turnover intention in higher education institutions. The purpose of this study was to conduct a bibliometric evaluation of teachers' turnover intention, to understand trends in teachers' turnover intention in higher education, to explore the factors influencing teachers' turnover intention in the educational context, and to identify ways to retain teachers in future research. To achieve the above objectives, this study analyzes the intention of faculty to leave in higher education through bibliometric methods using the Scopus database and answers the following questions:

- (1) The current status of research on teachers' turnover intention in higher education.
- (2) Factors affecting teachers' turnover intention in higher education.
- (3) The future research direction of teachers' turnover intention in higher education.

Literature Review

Turnover intention indicates that the employee is aware of the possibility and willingness to leave the organization in the future (Asfahani, 2022). The intention to leave may be due to positive or negative changes within the organization (Pieters et al., 2020). Turnover intention is the consideration of an employee to leave the organization, and the employee begins the search for an alternative job (Asfahani, 2022). Teachers' turnover intention is defined as teachers' willingness to leave the current organization (Li et al., 2022). Teachers' turnover is considered to be the transfer of teaching and research skills between education institutions, and the availability of higher incomes and a reduced emphasis on publishing may be attractive to some teachers (Zhou & Volkwein, 2004).

Many researchers consider turnover intention as a phenomenon that exists in the workplace, and a large number of studies have investigated the factors that influence turnover intention in different contexts. Scholars have argued that turnover intention is triggered by a variety of factors, including job satisfaction (Otache & Inekwe, 2022), burnout (Li et al., 2022), organizational commitment (Maryam et al., 2021), work-family conflict (Asfahani, 2022; Shah et al., 2020), and job embeddedness (Artiningsih et al., 2023). Different theories exist in the literature to explain employees' intention to leave their jobs. The most frequently cited general theories are: Social Exchange Theory and Job Demand-Resource Model. Knowledge

about the theories and models is significant for understanding the research topics in the turnover intention.

Blau's (1964), Social Exchange Theory is one of the most influential theories for understanding workplace behavior. This theory stated that the relationship between two parties depends on social and material exchange. From the perspective of social exchange, the relationship will continue to exist when all parties close to the relationship are satisfied with exchange, and vice versa (Kakar et al., 2019). Thus, when individuals receive preferential treatment from an organization, they are likely to be rewarded with work engagement (Pieters et al., 2020), job satisfaction (Hofmann & Strobel, 2020), organizational commitment (Oliveira & da Costa, 2019), and lower intention to leave (kakar et al., 2021; Kakar et al., 2019).

Otache and Inekwe (2022), conducted a study on the attrition of PhD lecturers in Nigeria and found that job satisfaction was negatively related to the turnover intention because satisfied employees were less likely to look for new jobs. This negative relationship can then be explained by the social exchange theory. This theory suggests that when both parties are willing to provide each other with valuable resources in the form of trust and support, the relationship becomes stronger and employees are more likely to stay in their current organization (Jin et al., 2018).

Job Demand-Resource Model Bakker & Demerouti (2007), identified job demands and job resources as key determinants of employees' turnover intention. Job demands are job characteristics that may lead to stress, while job resources provide support for employees to achieve work-related goals and stimulate personal growth. In other words, the better the match between job demands and job resources, the higher the employee's identification with and engagement, which means that the employee is willing to stay with the organization. When job demands and resources do not match, employees may become burnout, resulting in turnover intentions and turnover.

According to Job Demand-Resource Model, employees' job performance depends on job demands and job resources. COVID-19 has brought additional challenging work for teachers as they have been forced to move quickly to online teaching, increasing their workloads, and consequently, burnout, and turnover intention (Li et al., 2022). On the contrary, teachers' autonomy will lead to a sense of control and freedom in teaching, such as the scheduling of classes and choice of teaching methods, which also reduces teachers' turnover intention (Shah & Jumani, 2015).

Research Methodology

All the literature data in this paper were obtained from Scopus, the time span was set to 2013-2023, and the search terms were TITLE-ABS-KEY "teacher" OR "lecturer" OR "professor" OR "faculty" AND "turnover intention" OR "turnover intentions" AND "university" OR "college" OR "higher vocational" OR "higher education". The source type of literature was limited to journal, and the language limited to English. A total of 108 literatures were obtained. There were 2 duplicates articles. After abstract and keyword screening, 25 articles were excluded and 82 were selected for data extraction and bibliometric analysis. Study screening strictly followed the process shown in the PRISMA flow diagram (Figure 1).

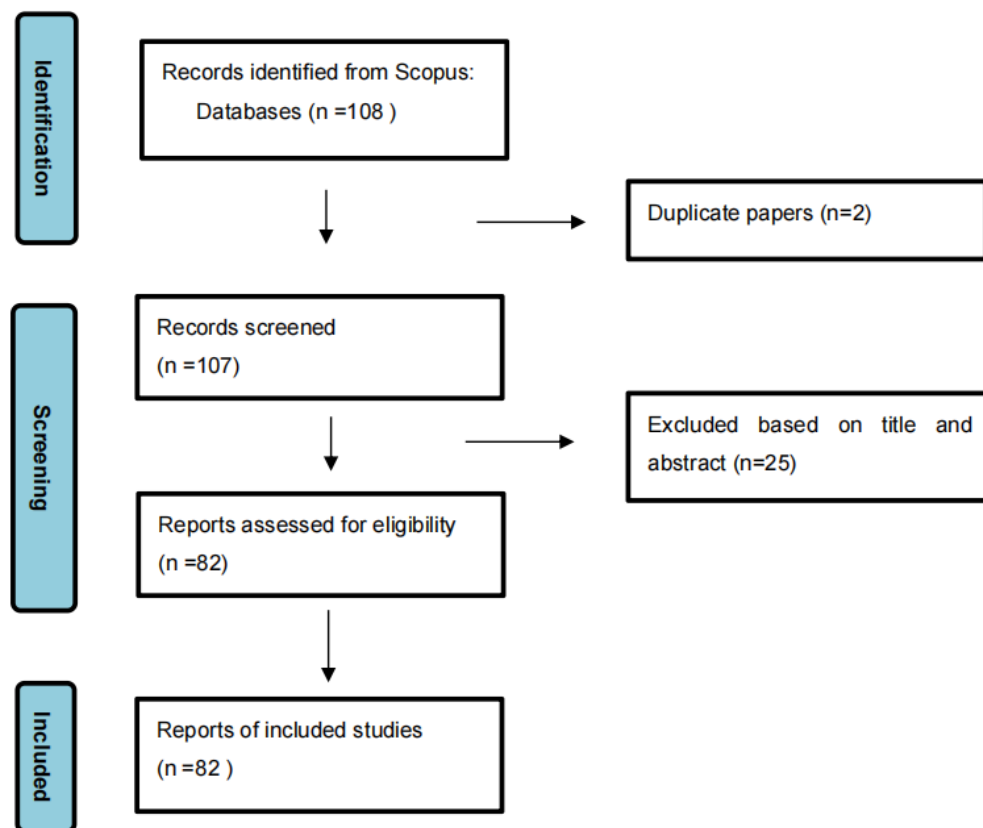


Figure 1 PRISMA flow diagram

Research Results and Analysis

1 Year of publication

A total of 82 papers were analyzed in this study. Figure 2 illustrates the development of the literature on the teachers' turnover intention in higher education. From 2003 to 2018, there was a moderate upward trend, with 25 papers published. The period 2019-2023 was a period of rapid growth, with as many as 57 publications in this period, with an annual growth rate of 350% in 2019. Overall, an average of 4 publications per year was made during these 20 years, a publication profile that suggests further extensive research in this area.

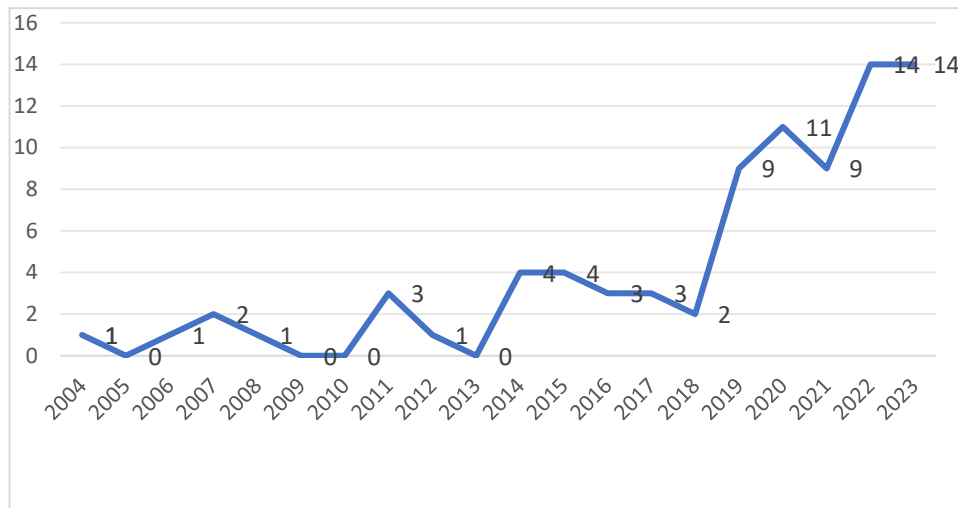


Figure 2 Year of Publication

Country Distribution

Figure 2 lists the 5 countries that contributed the most to the publication on teachers’ turnover intention in higher education. The study showed that the United States contributes the most to the study on teachers’ turnover intention. The United States ranked first with 20 papers, accounting for 24% of the total number of papers in the field, with 789 citations, which indicates that the United States has a strong influence in the field of research on teachers’ turnover intention in higher education. China followed closely with 15 papers, but with only 110 citations, indicating that the influence of China in this field is weaker. In addition, Pakistan and Malaysia ranked third and fourth with 13 and 12 papers, respectively. All in all, more than half (73%) of the publications come from these four countries.

Table1

Country Distribution of Publication

Country	Total Publication (TP)	Citations
United Stated	20	789
China	15	110
Pakistan	13	166
Malaysia	12	134
India	9	9

Distribution of Authors

Through the analysis of the authors of the literature, it is possible to understand the representative authors and core research strengths in the field. Table 3 lists the most prolific authors of research on teachers' turnover intention in higher education. Kakar A.S topped the list with four published papers. From the analysis of published articles, Kakar A.S paid more attention to the relationship between person-organization fit and turnover intention. Person-organization matching occurs when individuals and organizations share similar basic characteristics in terms of values and goals (kakar et al., 2021; Saufi et al., 2020). Employees

may stay in the organization if their personalities, goals, and values are consistent with the organization's goals and career (i.e., P-V match) (kakar et al., 2021; Kakar et al., 2019).

Table 2

Most Productive Authors

Author	Total Publication (TP)	Percentage
Kakar A.S	4	4.88%
Mansor N.N.A	3	3.65%
Miner K.N.	3	3.65%
Saufi R.A.	3	3.65%
Masood M.T.	2	2.44%
Pieters W.R.	2	2.44%
van Zyl E.	2	2.44%
Nel P.	2	2.44%

Subject Areas

Table 1 shows the top 5 subject areas with the most concentrated research on teachers' turnover intention among 19 disciplines. Social Sciences has the most publications in this area (TP: 47), followed by Business, Management and Accounting (TP: 30), Psychology (TP: 21), Arts and Humanities (TP: 7), and Economics, Econometrics and Finance (TP) : 7).

Table 3

Top 5 Subject Area

Subject Area	Total Publication (TP)	Percentage
Social Sciences	47	57.31%
Business, Management and Accounting	30	36.59%
Psychology	21	25.61%
Arts and Humanities	7	8.54%
Economics, Econometrics and Finance	7	8.54%

Most Active Journals

Table 2 shows the journals that have published the most papers in the study of teachers' turnover intention in higher education. Frontiers in Psychology is the most active journal (TP: 5). The rest of the active journals are Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education (TP: 3), European Journal of Social Sciences (TP: 2), Frontiers in Education (TP:2), International Journal of Educational Management (TP:2), Problems and Perspectives in Management (TP:2),

Research in Higher Education (TP:2), SA Journal of Human Resource Management (TP:2), South Asian Journal of Business Studies (TP:2).

Table 4
Most Active Journals

Source Title	Total Publications (TP)	Percentage
Frontiers in Psychology	5	6.09%
Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education	3	3.65%
European Journal of Social Sciences	2	2.44%
Frontiers in Education	2	2.44%
International Journal of Educational Management	2	2.44%
Problems and Perspectives in Management	2	2.44%
Research in Higher Education	2	2.44%
SA Journal of Human Resource Management	2	2.44%
South Asian Journal of Business Studies	2	2.44%

Most Cited Articles

Table 6 lists the five publications with the most cited of teacher’s turnover intentions in higher education. The most cited article is “Gender disparity in STEM disciplines: a study of faculty attrition and turnover intentions”, was cited 270 times. This article focuses on attrition and turnover intention of female faculty at research and doctoral universities, and the study found that women had higher turnover intentions than men, which was associated with dissatisfying factors related to deficit work environments and institutional culture.

Table 5
Most Cited Articles

No.	Author	Title	Total Cites
1	Endris (2008)	Gender disparity in STEM disciplines: A study of faculty attrition and turnover intentions	270
2	Zhou and Volkwein (2004)	Examining the influences on faculty departure intentions: A comparison of tenured versus nontenured faculty at research universities using NSOPF-99	110
3	Jin et al. (2018)	Person-Organization Fit and Turnover Intention: Exploring the Mediating Role of Employee Followership and Job Satisfaction Through Conservation of Resources Theory	104
4	Conklin and	Job turnover intentions among pharmacy faculty	70

	Desselle (2007)		
5	Hassan and Hashim (2011)	Role of organizational justice in determining work outcomes of national and expatriate academic staff in Malaysia	51

Keyword Co-occurrence Analysis

A total of 410 keywords were recorded in 82 publications, and after re-labeling the synonyms, the keywords with at least three occurrences were set to be recorded, and finally 32 keywords appeared in the VOSviewer. Co-occurrence analysis of these keywords revealed that “turnover intention” was the most used keyword in previous studies, with 58 times. In addition, turnover intention was associated with a number of keywords, including job satisfaction, high education, faculty, and job satisfaction, faculty, and burnout.

As shown in Figure 3, the teachers’ turnover intention in was closely related to personal factors, job characteristics and organizational characteristics. Such as women (occurrences:5; links:60), men (occurrences:5; links:60), work-family conflict (occurrences:3; links:2), work engagement (occurrences: 5; links:35), job embeddedness (occurrences:5; links:8), job satisfaction (occurrences:23; links: 98), organizational commitment (occurrences:4; links:7). It can be seen that, for the research on teachers’ turnover intention, scholars have mostly studied the antecedents to explore the influencing factors of the intention to leave their jobs. In addition, the teachers’ turnover intention was a predictor of turnover. Such as turnover (occurrences: 7; link: 32), turnover rate (occurrences: 4; link: 45).

From the research of perspective, most of the studies on teachers' turnover intention was focus on high education (occurrences:11; links:25), university (occurrences:5; links: 57), faculty (occurrences:5; links:50), and education (occurrences:5; links:50). (11 occurrences, total link strength 25), university (occurrences: 5; links: 57), and faculty (occurrences: 8; total links: 71). This means that past research has focused on teachers’ turnover intention in higher education institutions, probably because the teachers’ turnover intention has a crucial impact on the competitiveness of universities. In addition, the results of the previous study showed that questionnaires (occurrences: 4; links: 37) cross-section studies (occurrences: 3; links: 35) are most commonly used in the study of turnover intention.

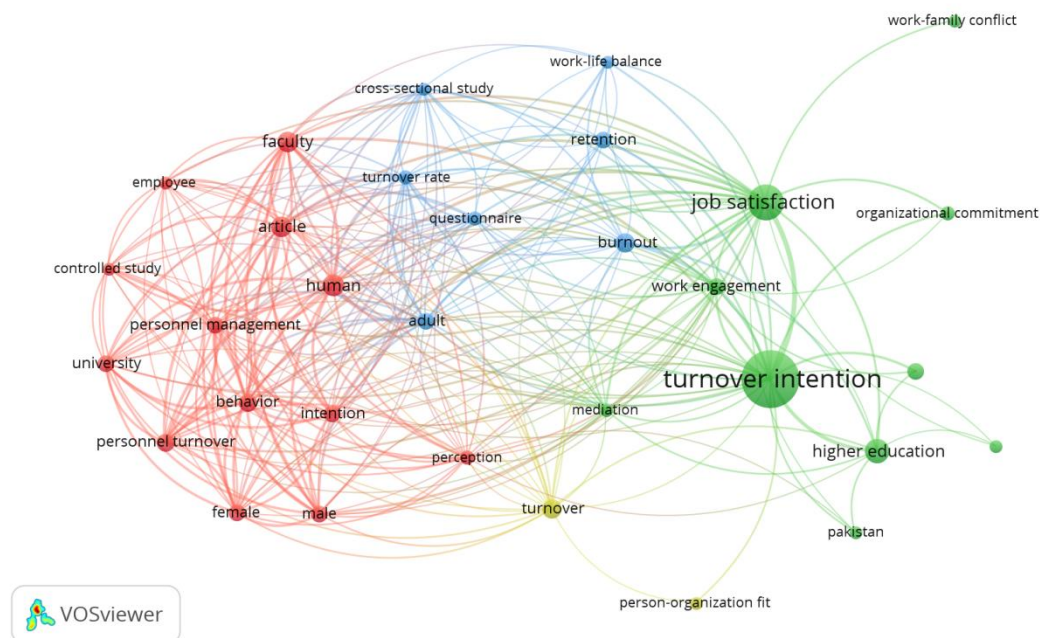


Figure 3 Network Visualization Map of all Keywords Co-occurrence

Figure 3 shows the co-occurrence network of keywords related to the teachers' turnover intention. The results of the analysis indicated that there are four distinct clusters. The red cluster delves into groups such as higher education, colleges, and faculty to examine the teachers' turnover intention. The green cluster contains 10 items that emphasize the impact of job satisfaction, job engagement, organizational commitment, and work-family conflict on the intention to leave. The blue cluster contains a set of 7 items mainly focusing on burnout and home-work balance. The yellow cluster emphasizes personal job fit and turnover.

Figure 4 shows an overlay visualization of the term co-occurrence network by keyword, where the different colors of the keywords allows us to find the average publication year of all the articles containing these keywords. The lighter the color, the more recent year of the publication. Thus, the keywords work-family balance, work-family conflict, work engagement, and higher education have become an emerging and valuable research interest in the field.

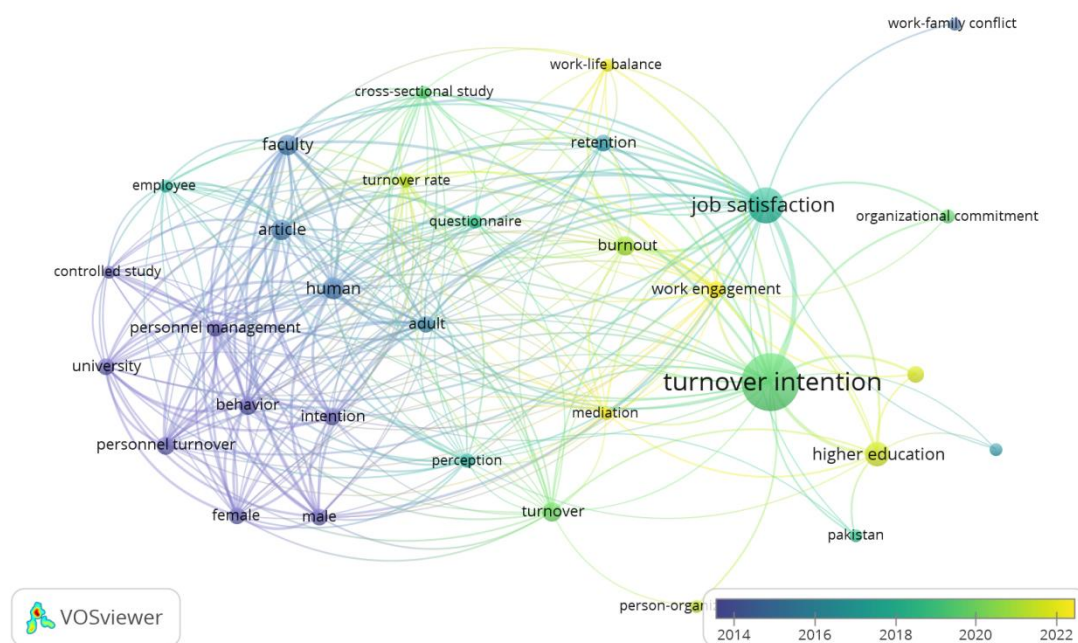


Figure 4 Overlay Visualization Map of all Keywords Co-occurrence

Results of the Study

According to the research objectives, the results of the study are summarized as follows.

1 Research status of teachers' turnover intention in higher education

First of all, the findings show that the publication output and research interest on teachers' turnover intention in higher education has been increasing from 2003 to 2023. The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 also triggered a great discussion about teachers' turnover intention in higher education, resulting in a significant increase in research on teachers' turnover intention in higher education (see Figure 2). This interest and enthusiasm has continued to the present, and it can be inferred that researchers' interest will continue to rise in the future.

Second, it was then found that the most prolific author of the study on teachers' turnover intention in higher education was from Kakar A.S. The most influential author was Yonghong Jade Xu, whose publication has the most of citations. It is important to note that these prolific authors come from difference countries, which suggests that research on teachers' turnover intention is still quite fragmented around the worldwide. In the future, there could be more international cooperation between individual countries.

Moreover, the country distribution of the literature shows that the United States and China are the most prolific countries. Although China leads in terms of the number of outputs, its influence in academia is weaker. In addition, most of the studies on teachers' turnover intention are from developing countries, such as China, Pakistan, and Malaysia. This is in line with the study of Maryam et al (2021), it showed that the turnover of professionals in the Asia-Pacific region is mostly due to the fact that Western countries such as Canada, Germany, the United States, and the United Kingdom provide better opportunities. Future research could conduct more cross-country studies, especially in other developing countries, to understand the teachers' turnover intention in higher education globally.

Finally, among the 11 most active journals, *Frontiers in Psychology* is the journal with the most published papers on teachers' turnover intention in higher education institutions. "Gender disparity in STEM disciplines: a study of faculty attrition and turnover intentions" is the most cited article, which was published in 2008; this article focuses on attrition and turnover intentions of male and female faculty in research and doctoral universities. This article was highly cited because it comparatively examined male and female faculty members' intention to leave from a gender perspective and found that female faculty members were significantly more likely to change positions within academia because the academic culture provided women with fewer opportunities, limited support, and unequal leadership positions. This ultimately prompted more researchers to explain teachers' turnover intention from the perspectives of personal, professional, and contextual factors.

Factors Affecting Teachers' Turnover Intention in Higher Education

According to the keyword co-occurrence analysis, the keywords related to teachers' turnover intention are divided into four clusters (see Figure 5). The red cluster focuses on the study of turnover intention in groups such as higher education institutions, universities, and teachers. Endris (2008), conducted a comparative study of male and female faculty members from a gender perspective, it was found that female faculty members are significantly more likely to job hop in academia because the academic culture provides women with fewer opportunities, limited support, and unequal leadership positions. A questionnaire survey of more than 1,600 professors, Hofmann and Strobel (2020), found that professors who felt well-informed and perceived their university administration and departments as transparent were more satisfied and less likely to express a desire to leave the university.

The green cluster identifies the impact on teachers' turnover intention in terms of personal factors, job characteristics, and organizational characteristics. For example, organizational commitment can be considered as a bond between employees and employers, and employee's lack of commitment may lead to turnover (Gan & Kee, 2022). This is well consistent with the evidence in the studies (Oliveira & da Costa, 2019; Pieters et al., 2020). The job demand-resource model suggests that when there is a mismatch between job demands and job resources, employees may experience burnout and boredom, leading to turnover intention (Pieters et al., 2020). This is consistent with the study in Kakar et al (2023), COVID-19 caused additional challenging work for teachers as they have been forced to change to online teaching, workload burden of teachers, resulting in job insecurity for teachers and increasing the teachers' turnover intention.

The blue cluster focuses on the discussion of burnout, work-life balance. Work-life balance determines how faculty members' work is affected by their personal lives, and academic work life is characterized by demanding work, long hours, and high stress. Organizations can reduce teachers' turnover intention by offering work-life balance practices (e.g., flexible work hours, telecommuting) (Kakar et al., 2019).

The yellow cluster is discussed around person-organization fit and turnover. Organizations need to recognize person-organization fit of employees and organizations in order to make employees become more attached to the organization, intend to stay within the organization, and demonstrate job satisfaction, organizational commitment (Jin et al., 2018). This is consistent with the study of Saufi et al (2020), it found that person-job fit mediates between

person-organization fit and turnover intention. In conclusion, individuals are attracted and stay only if they are aligned with the values and goals of the organization; otherwise, they will quit.

In addition, it was found that keywords such as female, male, work-family conflict, work engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment were the words that appeared high in previous studies. However, there is a need for in-depth discussion about the factors influencing the teachers' turnover intention, and higher education institutions can pay attention to the influence of job resources and job demands on the intention to leave their jobs in JDRM.

Future Research Directions of Teachers' Turnover Intention

Figure 4 shows an overlay visualization of the term co-occurrence network by keyword, with the different colors of the keywords allowing us to find the average year of publication for all articles containing those keywords. The lighter the color, the more recent the year of publication. In 2021, most of the research revolves around turnover intention, organizational commitment, burnout, and person-organization fit. Saufi et al (2020), suggested that in order to further the effect of person-organization fit on turnover intention, other matching concepts such as person-vocation fit, person-supervisor fit, and person-team fit to assess turnover intention. By 2022, terms such as high education, job embeddedness, and turnover rate are gradually becoming high-frequency terms in research. In 2023, the literature is focusing on work engagement, and work-family balance.

Figure 4 shows the terminology analysis at different points in time, which more clearly depicts the rapid development of research on the turnover intention in the education field. Future research could delve into emerging and valuable research points such as work-life balance, work-family conflict, work engagement, and higher education to explore in depth the factors influencing the teachers' turnover intention. In addition, future researchers could conduct a longitudinal study to examine the process of changing dependent variables over time, such as work-family conflict, work engagement, and person-organization fit, in order to obtain relevant data at different points in time and the impact on turnover intention. Finally, future studies could also use a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, which could be more effective in obtaining in-depth information on the research questions to validate the results presented.

Conclusion

This study reviews the previous research on the teachers' turnover intention, and puts forward the future research direction according to the current research situation. The Scopus database was searched and 82 articles published between 2003 and 2023 were analyzed following the PRISMA to identify the most influential journals, countries, authors, and citations. The results also show a continuous rise in publications on teachers' turnover intention over the past 20 years, and teachers' turnover intention has received the attention of scholars, and it can be inferred that the interest of researchers will continue to rise in the future.

In addition, the geographic distribution of the literature shows that the United States and China are the most prolific countries, and China has recently increased its influence in

academia. Future research could increase international collaboration, particularly in other developing countries, to understand the teachers' turnover intention of higher education globally.

Moreover, the study provides valuable information for teachers working in the field of education, with most research on teachers' turnover intention coming from psychology, education, and human resource management journals. Researchers can identify quality journals, the most influential articles and authors in the field of education to guide their future research.

Finally, this study conducted a more scientific and comprehensive review of publications through the application of bibliometric analysis, and discussed the research progress of teachers' turnover intention of university. By using VOSviewer to superimpose and visualize the term co-occurrence network graph and term co-occurrence network for keywords, it found that turnover intention, job satisfaction, high education, behavior and burnout appear most frequently in previous studies. Future studies can start with emerging and valuable research points such as work-family balance, work-family conflict, work engagement, and further explore the influencing factors of turnover intention, so as to better understand its research dynamics and identify potential literature gaps.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has some limitations. Although Scopus is considered one of the most comprehensive databases for social science research (Sánchez et al., 2017), it does not guarantee that our search strategy included all eligible articles because some publications may not be included in Scopus. Future studies could attempt to obtain more comprehensive bibliometric data by integrating multiple databases (e.g., WoS, Google Scholar, and Science Direct). Future research could be conducted in other industries such as healthcare, hospitality tourism and IT using the same methodology to understand the intention of employees to leave their jobs in different industries.

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