PERSON-ENVIRONMENT FIT AND TURNOVER INTENTION OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS IN GHANA

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Abstract

The government of Ghana spends a considerable amount of the national budget on training and recruiting teachers every year, but reports indicate that about 10,000 teachers leave the classroom annually for various reasons. Retention of qualified teachers has therefore become a challenge in schools to ensure quality teaching and learning. Empirical studies indicate that when individuals achieve congruence between their career anchors and the work environment, they are more likely to experience positive career outcomes. Previous research and policy directions largely focused on extrinsic teacher motivation factors such as improved salaries and working conditions, but failed to look at career-related inner drives. The current study investigated the extent to which teachers’ person-environment fit predicts their turnover intentions through their career commitment. The study employed the cross-sectional survey design with a sample of 919, comprising 705 males and 214 females. This consisted of 243 teachers in the rural setting, 282 in the peri-urban and 394 in the urban setting. The Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modelling was used for the analysis. The results indicated that career commitment had a strong negative relationship with turnover intentions. Also the person-job fit and person-organisation fit dimensions of the person-environment fit measure significantly predicted career commitment and turnover intentions such that higher scores on these person-fit dimensions could lead to higher commitment, and reduced intention to leave the teaching service. The findings were discussed and practical implications and recommendations were made. Among others, the authors recommend that the selection process for recruiting teachers should consider using job screening psychological tests to hire individuals who fit the teaching profession and the academic environment.

Keywords: Person-environment fit, career commitment, turnover intentions, secondary school teachers, career anchors.