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Unraveling Turnover Dynamics: The Strategic Role of Employee Engagement and Career Pathways

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Abstract

This research offers a comprehensive exploration of the relationship between employee engagement, career management, and employee turnover within organizational environments. Utilizing a quantitative approach, data were gathered through structured surveys involving participants from various professional backgrounds. The analysis reveals that career management has a significant and positive impact on employee turnover, highlighting the importance of robust career development initiatives in retaining valuable talent. Furthermore, employee engagement was found to significantly influence career management practices, emphasizing its essential role in encouraging employees to take ownership of their professional development. However, the study identified no direct and significant relationship between employee engagement and turnover, suggesting that while engagement can foster motivation and positive work behaviors, it may not be sufficient to reduce turnover unless supported by tangible opportunities for career progression. This underscores the need for organizations to adopt a more integrated human resource strategy—one that combines engagement efforts with structured, transparent, and supportive career development frameworks. For HR practitioners and organizational leaders, these findings offer critical insights. Strengthening career management systems—such as implementing clear advancement pathways, customized development plans, and consistent training programs—can effectively reduce employee turnover, reinforce organizational commitment, and cultivate long-term workforce loyalty. Ultimately, the study advocates for a holistic approach to employee retention, where individual aspirations are aligned with the organization's strategic vision, fostering sustainable growth and employee satisfaction over time.

Keywords: *Employee Engagement, Career Management, Employee Turnover, Employee Turnover Intention*

1. Introduction

An educational institution functions as a formal structure designed to facilitate the learning process and cultivate the intellectual and moral development of future generations. As a service-oriented entity, such institutions are inherently dependent on the quality and stability of their human resources. While employee turnover is a phenomenon that may occur naturally within any organization, excessive turnover poses serious challenges. When the frequency of employee exits becomes disproportionately high, it can lead to operational disruptions and substantial financial losses (Iskandar & Rahadi, 2021).

Employee turnover has emerged as a pivotal concern in the domain of human resource management, influencing not only organizational performance but also the psychological well-being and morale of the workforce. A comprehensive study conducted by Al-Suraihi et al. (2021) underscores the significant costs associated with turnover, noting its adverse effects on a company's productivity, sustainability, competitiveness, and overall profitability. The authors emphasize that organizations must gain a deep understanding of individual employee needs and design strategic interventions that enhance job satisfaction, motivation, and performance. This requires a comprehensive approach to retention, one that integrates personal, team-level, and organizational cultural factors into its framework.

Furthermore, Khan et al. (2023) describe turnover as the process of replacing existing employees with new ones, whether due to voluntary resignations or employer-initiated dismissals. This cycle of exit and replacement imposes considerable costs on companies, particularly in the context of recruitment and onboarding. The study also points out that firms—especially those in developing economies—are increasingly aware of the importance of aligning organizational support with employee expectations. Such alignment is vital to fostering mutual value creation and sustaining employee engagement, which in turn contributes to higher profitability. A rapid turnover rate tends to amplify recruitment expenditures and consequently reduce overall productivity.

Several underlying causes contribute to high turnover rates. These include mismatches between employee competencies and job demands, inadequate infrastructure, limited opportunities for career progression, lack of appreciation, and deficient mentoring or supervisory practices. Moreover, inequitable or poorly structured compensation systems often serve as a catalyst for employee dissatisfaction. Nelson (2021) highlights that employees are likely to leave in pursuit of better compensation, more attractive benefits, or clearer pathways for professional advancement. These insights highlight the critical role of acknowledgment, recognition, and strategic job placement in mitigating turnover. Ensuring congruence between employee capabilities and organizational roles not only promotes retention but also fosters a more motivated and productive workforce.

Employee engagement is one of the variables that can reduce the level of turnover intention. When employees are engaged with the company, the likelihood of employees leaving the company will be small. This can be caused by the age factor, where the older the employee, the more engaged they will be (Fauzya & Chaniago, 2022). (Natalia & Rosiana, 2011) stated that Employee engagement is not proven to have a negative and significant effect on Employee turnover but has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. (Ratri Meiliawati et al., 2022) stated that Career management has a direct and significant effect on Employee turnover. Based on the interviews and answers obtained by the respondents, it is known that compensation in the form of facilities received by employees is not complete, including the absence of counseling facilities for employees, accommodation facilities for employees, and sports facilities for employees. This causes employees to think that the compensation they receive has not been maximized, which can ultimately lead to the desire of employees to leave the company.

Career management is an integral aspect that cannot be separated in an effort to increase employee engagement and reduce turnover rates. Companies that have a good and structured career management system can provide clarity on the direction of career development for their employees, create opportunities for professional growth, and build a positive perception of their future within the company. When employees feel that the company is paying attention and support to their career development, this can increase their sense of belonging and loyalty to the organization.

The era of globalization has brought significant changes in the dynamics of the business environment, where competition between companies is increasingly fierce and complex. In this context, human resources are a vital asset that determines the success and sustainability of the organization. However, the phenomenon of employee turnover or employee turnover is still a serious challenge faced by many companies. The high turnover rate not only has an impact on the swelling cost of recruitment and training, but also affects productivity, work morale of other employees, and overall organizational stability.

The key factor that is believed to reduce the turnover rate is employee engagement or employee engagement. When employees have high engagement, they tend to have a strong emotional commitment to the organization, show more dedication to their work, and have a lower desire to leave the company. However, creating and maintaining employee engagement is not an easy task, considering that every employee has different expectations and needs in their career development. This phenomenon is interesting to study considering that there is still a gap between employee expectations and the reality that occurs in the field. Many companies have not been optimal in implementing employee engagement and career management strategies, so they still face high turnover rates. In addition, previous studies have shown mixed results regarding the relationship between the three variables, indicating the need for further exploration to understand the dynamics of the relationship between employee engagement, career management, and employee turnover in the context of modern organizations.

This study aims to comprehensively analyze and understand the influence of employee engagement and career management on the level of employee turnover in the company. In the midst of the increasingly competitive and complex dynamics of the workforce, the phenomenon of employee turnover has become a critical challenge for many companies due to its significant impact on productivity, operational costs, organizational stability, and long-term business sustainability. High turnover rates not only result in financial losses in terms of the cost of recruiting and training new employees, but can also disrupt workflows, demoralize remaining employees, and affect the quality of employee performance. This study aims to examine how employee engagement practices can play a role in reducing employees' desire to leave the company. The aspects of employee engagement that will be studied include employee involvement in strategic decision-making, a sense of belonging to the organization, positive relationships with colleagues and superiors, satisfaction with the work environment, and the alignment between employees' personal values and company values. An in-depth understanding of these engagement factors is important considering that employees who have a high engagement rate tend to be more productive, loyal, and contribute positively to the success of the organization. This research will also investigate in depth how career management practices in companies can influence employees' decisions to stay or leave the company. The aspects of career management that will be studied include clarity of career paths, individual career development planning, training and competency development programs, an objective

performance appraisal system, fair promotion opportunities, and organizational support in achieving employee career aspirations. Effective career management is not only important for motivating employees, but also for ensuring the organization has a strong talent pool for future needs.

Through the analysis of the relationship between the three variables, this study is expected to make a significant contribution both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research will enrich the literature on human resource management, especially in the context of employee engagement, career management, and employee turnover. Practically, the findings of this study can provide an empirical foundation for companies in developing more effective employee retention strategies, designing more targeted career development programs, and creating a work environment that is more conducive to employee professional growth. The results of the research can also help organizations in optimizing their investments in human resource development and building a sustainable competitive advantage through better talent management.

2. Research Methods

The demographic analysis of the respondents in this study reveals a rich and diverse distribution across several key dimensions. In terms of gender composition, the sample is perfectly balanced, with 50% male and 50% female participants, indicating equal representation. Regarding age, a significant portion of respondents—43.80%—were aged above 35 years, highlighting a maturity level that may influence workplace perceptions and decisions. Conversely, only 12.50% of respondents fell within the youngest age group of 18–25 years, suggesting that the workforce is predominantly composed of experienced individuals. Examining the length of employment, half of the respondents (50%) had worked for 1–3 years, indicating a notable presence of relatively new employees. Interestingly, 34.40% had more than a decade of experience, while only a small fraction (6.20%) had worked between 7–9 years, suggesting a possible retention gap during mid-career stages. When categorized by job position, an overwhelming majority—81.30%—identified as teachers, making them the dominant occupational group in the sample. The remaining respondents were evenly distributed between administrative personnel and flight attendants, each accounting for 9.40%. With regard to educational attainment, most respondents held a bachelor's degree (S-1), representing 75% of the sample. Other qualifications included diploma (D-3) holders at 9.40%, senior high school graduates at 6.30%, and junior high school graduates at 3.10%. A small proportion—6.30%—held a master's degree (S-2), reflecting advanced educational backgrounds. This demographic composition offers a comprehensive understanding of the respondent profile, characterized by a strong representation of educators, moderate tenure diversity, and relatively high educational qualifications. These attributes are crucial in contextualizing the research findings and shaping managerial recommendations that are responsive to the demographic realities of the studied workforce.

Table 3. Validity Test

Variable	Statement	Outer Loadings	Information
Y	Y.1	0,803	VALID
	Y.2	0,897	VALID
	Y.3	0,858	VALID
X1	X1.1	0,816	VALID
	X1.2	0,782	VALID
	X1.3	0,706	VALID
	X1.4	0,817	VALID
	X1.5	0,817	VALID
	X1.6	0,784	VALID
	X1.7	0,758	VALID
X2	X2.1	0,874	VALID
	X2.2	0,828	VALID
	X2.3	0,759	VALID
	X2.4	0,866	VALID
	X2.5	0,722	VALID

Source : SmartPLS 4 Output (2025/)

The validity analysis of the construct carried out through the evaluation of the outer loading values on each indicator set showed that all indicators had values above the threshold set at 0.7, indicating good validity on all measurement instruments. Specifically, the Y variable is measured using three indicators, namely Y.1, Y.2, and Y.3. The outer loading values of each indicator are 0.803, 0.897, and 0.858. All of these values show that these indicators have a strong contribution in representing the construct of the variable Y. Variable X1 consists of seven indicators, namely X1.1 to X1.7. The outer loading values for these indicators are in the range of 0.706 to 0.817. Although the X1.3 indicator has a value close to the minimum limit (0.706), it still meets the validity criteria. Furthermore, the X2 variable has five indicators, namely X2.1 to X2.5. The results of the analysis show that the outer loading value ranges from 0.722 to 0.874. The high consistency of outer loading values across all variables provides strong empirical support for the construct variability in this study. These findings confirm that the research instruments have been well designed and are able to accurately measure the constructs in question. The results of this validity test provide a solid foundation for further analysis, ensuring that all indicators have met the validity criteria that are being tested. in scientific research.

Table 4. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Information
Y	0,869	Reliable
X1	0,895	Reliable
X2	0,815	Reliable

Source : SmartPLS 4 Output (2025)

The results of the analysis of the reliability test showed very significant findings in the aspect of consistency of measurement of all variables. Based on the results of the test, it was found that all of the research variables demonstrated an excellent reliability level, as evidenced by the value of Cronbach's Alpha yang substantially exceeding the required minimum value of 0.7. In this test. Variable Y has a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.869, Variable X1 has a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.895. Furthermore, the X2 variable has a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.815 which is greater than 0.7. This shows that these three variables are reliable and consistent in measuring what is meant which means that there are similarities in data at different times and the data produced is accurate.

Table 5. R Square Test

Variable	R-square	R-square adjusted
CM	0,458	0,440
ETO	0,460	0,423

Source : SmartPLS 4 Output (2025)

The results of the determination coefficient analysis (R Square) in this study show substantial findings regarding the ability of independent variables to explain variations in dependent variables. Based on the test results, the R Square value for the CM variable was 0.458 or 45.8% with an R Square Adjusted value of 0.440 or 44.0% which indicates that although there is a slight decrease from R Square to R Square Adjusted from 45.8% to 44.0%, the model still shows a fairly good relationship between the CM variable and the bound variable. Furthermore, the R Square value for the ETO variable was 0.460 or 46.0% with an Adjusted R Square value of 0.423 or 42.3%. These results suggest that the addition of variables or model complexity may not provide a significant improvement in predictions. Overall, both the CM and ETO variables have R Square values that are close to each other, namely 0.458 for CM and 0.460 for ETO, indicating that they have almost the same predictive ability for bound variables. The R Square Adjusted value shows a slight decrease in CM to 0.440 and ETO to 0.423, which is normal in regression analysis, especially if the model involves more than one independent variable. These results provide strong empirical support for the relevance of the selection of variables in the research model, although there are still other factors outside the model that also contribute to the variation in the dependent and mediating variables.

Table 6. Test Path Coefficients

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
CM -> ETO	0,452	0,457	0,173	2,615	0,009
EE -> CM	0,677	0,687	0,100	6,744	0,000
EE -> ETO	0,285	0,286	0,182	1,564	0,118

Source : SmartPLS 4 Output (2025)

The results of the analysis of the path coefficients test in this study revealed several findings. Based on the test results, CM->ETO (Career Management vs. Employee Turnover) has an Original Sample value of 0.452, T-Statistics of 2.615, and P-Value of 0.009 smaller than 0.05. EE -> CM (Employee Engagement to Career Management) showed that the Original Sample value was 0.677, T-Statistics was 6.744, and P-Value 0.000 was smaller than 0.05. EE -> ETO (Employee Engagement to Employee Turnover) Original Sample value of 0.285, T-Statistics 1.564, and P-Value 0.118 greater than 0.05. This study confirms that Career Management (CM) has a positive and significant influence on Employee Turnover (ETO), Employee Engagement (EE) has a positive and significant influence on Career Management (CM) and Employee Engagement (EE) does not have a significant influence on Employee Turnover (ETO). This finding provides strategic direction for management to focus more on increasing Employee Turnover which can be done effectively through improving Career Management which is significantly influenced by Employee Engagement in an effort to improve employee welfare and performance.

Employee Engagement Relationship to Employee Turnover

Employee Engagement does not have a significant influence on Employee Turnover in an organization. The relationship between the two is not always significant in all organizational contexts. External factors such as better job opportunities outside the company, higher salaries, or more favorable job market conditions are considerations for employees in making the decision to move. Structural issues, such as unclear career paths, lack of promotional opportunities, or an unsupportive organizational culture, can encourage employees to seek out workplaces that provide more space for their personal and professional development. Even if the employee feels valued and engaged in his or her work, a more attractive offer from another company can be that many other factors also influence the employee's decision to stay or change jobs.

The findings regarding Employee Engagement do not have a significant influence on Employee Turnover are becoming increasingly relevant from the demographic characteristics of the study respondents. The profile of respondents is dominated by the teaching profession with the majority in the productive age group with a relatively short and very long working period. This demographic composition reflects that the correlation between Employee Engagement and Employee Turnover is not significant because other factors are more dominant in influencing the decision to leave a job. The stability of age, working period, and the dominance of the teaching profession show that turnover decisions are not solely influenced by work attachment, but other external factors such as welfare, workload, and other career opportunities.

These findings are in line with several previous empirical studies that have confirmed an insignificant relationship between Employee Engagement and Employee Turnover. Research conducted by (Riyanto et al., 2021) in the information technology industry reveals that employee engagement can have different effects on motivation and job satisfaction. Although engagement is positively related to motivation, the results show that job satisfaction tends to be not directly related, so the impact on Employee Turnover is not significant. In line with this, a study (Juliantara et al., 2020) on the Golden Tulip Jineng Resort Bali Hotel identified that the relationship between employee engagement and turnover intention, found that there was no significant relationship between the two. Furthermore, a research study conducted by (Gašić & Berber, 2023) on Highly educated employees in the Republic of Serbia reinforced these findings by identifying employee engagement and turnover intention engagement at a given level of engagement, the relationship becoming

insignificant. Other factors such as job satisfaction and organizational dynamics affect these relationships in a complex way.

The results of the study show that employee engagement does not have a significant influence on employee turnover both in the theoretical and practical dimensions for organizations. Theoretically, these findings challenge the common assumption in the literature that employee engagement has always been a key factor in reducing employee turnover. The theoretical framework developed in this study provides a strong foundation that the role of employee engagement on turnover may be contextual, depending on organizational characteristics, type of work, or labor market conditions. More research is needed to explore these relationships in a variety of contexts. Organizations should dig deeper into other factors that contribute to employee turnover, such as job satisfaction, competitive compensation, and career opportunities. Good management in these aspects can help minimize turnover rates

The Relationship between Career Management and Employee Turnover

Career Management has been proven to have a positive and significant influence on Employee Turnover in organizations. This is reflected in the results of statistical analysis which shows a coefficient with a strong level of significance. These findings underscore that a structured and consistent career management program shows that employees tend to feel more valued, motivated, and optimistic about their future within the organization. The application of career management helps employees in developing their careers according to their personal needs and organizational goals. By providing clear career paths, targeted training, and professional development opportunities, organizations create a higher sense of engagement, loyalty, and commitment among employees. This ultimately provides a double benefit both for the well-being of individual employees and for the overall performance of the organization.

Significant findings regarding the influence of career management on employee turnover become increasingly relevant when viewed from the demographic characteristics of the study respondents. The profile of respondents who are dominated by the more senior productive age group, short working period, and higher education is critical for organizations. The results of the study show that employees with short working periods are more prone to turnover if there is no effective career management support. Meanwhile, employees who work longer periods of time need clarity on promotions or career development to maintain loyalty. The diversity of background and characteristics of respondents strengthens the urgency of implementing career management in supporting employee career development.

The findings of this study are in line with several previous empirical studies that have confirmed a positive relationship between career management and employee turnover. Research conducted by (Adiputra & Milleny, 2024) reveals that career development practices influence employees' intention to leave the organization and strong career development opportunities significantly reduce employee turnover intentions. In line with this, research conducted by (Sinisterra et al., 2024) on the retail and healthcare industries shows that offering opportunities for career advancement can significantly reduce turnover rates. Furthermore, research by (Aziedjo, 2024) highlights how career development strategies, such as training, mentoring, and internal mobility, are related to reducing turnover rates. Employees who feel that career advancement is available within the organization will be loyal to their work and stay longer.

The findings of this study produce significant practical and theoretical implications in the context of employee career management. In practical terms, research emphasizes the need for management to focus on providing fair opportunities to employees, organizations need to understand that employees who feel they are not getting adequate career development opportunities tend to be more likely to turn to other companies that offer clearer and more diverse career paths. The strategy to improve the career management of employees is built based on concrete and measurable interventions. From a theoretical perspective, this study makes a substantial empirical contribution in understanding the mechanism of improving employee well-being in organizations. Further, the study supports the approach of individuals within organizations to create a high emotional attachment between employees and organizations. The significance of the research lies in its ability to offer a new perspective that emphasizes the importance of direct and practical interventions in improving career management and retaining employees. When organizations provide clear career paths and opportunities for growth, employees tend to feel more satisfied and have a sense of ownership of the company, which reduces their intention to change jobs. By integrating comprehensive statistical analysis and considering the context of respondents' demos, this research not only provides academic insights, but also strategic guidance that can be applied.

4. Conclusion

The findings of this study reveal that employee engagement does not have a statistically significant effect on employee turnover within the organizational context examined. Although high levels of engagement

were observed among employees, other influential factors—such as job satisfaction, the quality of the work environment, and the availability of career development opportunities—appear to play a more decisive role in shaping turnover intentions. This indicates that while engagement remains a valuable component of employee motivation and emotional connection to the workplace, it alone may not be sufficient to ensure long-term retention if other organizational conditions are lacking. In contrast, career management was found to have a positive and significant influence on employee turnover. When organizations implement structured career development frameworks—such as transparent promotion pathways, targeted training initiatives, and consistent support for employee advancement—they are more likely to foster a strong sense of belonging, satisfaction, and loyalty among their workforce. Conversely, unclear or limited career prospects tend to push employees toward seeking alternative employment that offers greater professional growth and fulfillment, thus increasing turnover risk. Given these outcomes, future research should broaden its analytical lens to incorporate additional variables that may affect employee turnover, including organizational culture, leadership styles, compensation fairness, and broader psychological and social factors. Scholars are also encouraged to adopt more holistic methodologies that integrate both internal organizational variables—such as engagement and career strategy—and external influences such as labor market dynamics, economic volatility, and industry-specific conditions. Moreover, future studies would benefit from employing longitudinal research designs or analyzing larger, more diverse samples across multiple sectors. Such approaches would yield a deeper, more generalizable understanding of the complex interplay between employee engagement, career management, and turnover, ultimately contributing to more effective human resource strategies across organizational contexts.

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