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# Career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention

## The effects of goal orientation, organizational learning culture and developmental feedback

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### Abstract

**Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to investigate the impact of personal characteristics (goal orientation) and contextual characteristics (organizational learning culture and developmental feedback) on employees' career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention.

**Design/methodology/approach** – Subjects were drawn from four *Fortune* Global 500 companies in Korea. Descriptive statistics and hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to explain the variance in outcome variables.

**Findings** – The results indicate that career satisfaction is predicted by organizational learning culture and performance goal orientation. Organizational learning culture, developmental feedback, and learning goal orientation are the significant predictors of organizational commitment. Finally, organizational learning culture, career satisfaction, and organizational commitment turn out to be the predictors of turnover intention.

**Practical implications** – By enhancing organizational learning culture and by considering goal orientation, human resource development/organization development practitioners could play important roles in improving organizational commitment, in career satisfaction, and in decreasing turnover.

**Originality/value** – The theoretical contribution of this paper lies in its inclusive approach encompassing both the personal and contextual factors (such as organizational learning, leadership, and personality) on career and organizational commitment research. It is an interesting finding that while performance goal is associated with career satisfaction, learning goal orientation is related with organizational commitment.

**Keywords** Learning organizations, Career development, Job satisfaction, Employee turnover

**Paper type** Research paper



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## Introduction

For an organization to have a sustained competitive advantage in the product and labor market, it needs highly committed and engaged employees. Recently, many firms try to become an employer of choice, which refers to an organization that outperforms their competition in attracting, developing, and retaining people with business-required talent (Joo and McLean, 2006). Recently, managers and researchers in diverse fields have been interested in employees' turnover intention (Lambert *et al.*, 2001). The turnover issue has long been a critical organizational issue. Turnover intention has been emphasized as an important factor for the financial performance of organizations (Lambert *et al.*, 2001) and has been influenced by diverse variables in organizations. For example, Mobley *et al.* (1979) proposed four core antecedents of employee turnover including demographic characteristics influencing a person's decision, job satisfaction, work environment factors, and turnover intention.

With regards to turnover, what predicts organizational commitment and career satisfaction has been an important research agenda in the field of human resource development (HRD) and organization development (OD). Organizational commitment is one of the predictors of turnover intention (Arnold and Feldman, 1982; Hollenbeck and Williams, 1986). Organizational commitment refers to an individual's feelings about the organization as a whole. It has become more important than ever in understanding employee behavior because it is identified as more stable and less subject to daily fluctuations than job satisfaction (Angle and Perry, 1983; Mowday *et al.*, 1982). Career satisfaction is another major factor that determines turnover. Career satisfaction is commonly assessed as a subjective career success that is defined by the individual's satisfaction with their career accomplishments (Judge *et al.*, 1995). Significant predictors of career satisfaction include goal-specific environmental supports and resources, which provide social and material supports for employee's personal goals (Barnett and Bradley, 2007).

In the field of HRD and OD, career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention are frequently used variables for satisfaction, performance, change, and innovation. Although there are diverse studies exploring the relationships among career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention (Lambert *et al.*, 2001; Shields and Ward, 2001), little research has been conducted, focusing on the common antecedents of three variables simultaneously to reflect the dynamics in organizations. For example, while a few studies have examined relationships among organizational learning culture, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Wang, 2005; Xie, 2005), little research examining goal orientation, organizational learning culture, and developmental feedback within one study as antecedents of career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention has been found.

In addition, many studies on career satisfaction and organizational commitment have focused on leadership, rather than organizational climate and personal characteristics. Even if several studies have included organizational and personal factors influencing career satisfaction and organizational commitment, these factors are related to demographic information such as organizational size (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990) and socio demographic status (Ng *et al.*, 2005). Based on these findings, we have considered more influential factors in organizational and personal level to distinguish previous research, still maintaining leadership factor for career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. Through this process and literature review,

organizational learning culture, goal orientation, and developmental feedback are selected as organizational, personal, and leadership factors, respectively. Goal orientation, one of the personal characteristics, is an important individual factor relevant to learning, motivation, and performance (Kozlowski *et al.*, 2001). Goal orientation could be explored through integrated perspectives with goal setting, performance feedback, and work role innovation (Farr *et al.*, 1993). Organizational learning culture and developmental feedback would be the contextual components (related to organization and leadership) to enhance career satisfaction and organizational commitment. Organizational learning culture refers to “an organization skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights” (Garvin, 1993, p. 80). Supervisor developmental feedback provides valuable information to employees and enables the employees to learn, develop, and make improvements on the job (Zhou, 2003).

The purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of personal characteristics (i.e. goal orientation) and contextual characteristics (i.e. organizational learning culture and developmental feedback) on employees’ career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. The theoretical contribution of this study lies in its inclusive approach encompassing both personal and contextual factors. Another contribution is that it links organizational commitment research with organizational learning and career research. The research question of this study was:

*RQ.* What is the relationship between organizational culture, goal orientation, and developmental feedback and three attitudinal variables (i.e. career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention), respectively?

This paper is divided into four parts. The first part provides a theoretical framework and hypotheses. Then, research methods including data collection and measures are described. The next part summarizes the research findings, based on hierarchical multiple regression analyses. Finally, the implications, limitations, and future research areas will be discussed.

### **Theoretical framework and hypotheses**

Based on the comprehensive literature review, a set of constructs was selected: goal orientation for personal characteristics and, organizational learning culture and developmental feedback for contextual characteristics. As mentioned earlier, these constructs are considered necessary for influencing career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention.

#### *Career satisfaction*

As in much career research, career satisfaction and career success are interchangeably used in this study. Career success is defined as positive psychological or work-related outcomes or achievements that a person accumulates as a result of work experiences (Judge *et al.*, 1995). Models of career success have included a number of demographic, human capital, and motivational variables related to career success (Judge and Bretz, 1994; Judge *et al.*, 1995). In the past, much research on careers has viewed the individual as being passive and influenced by situational factors (Bell and Staw, 1989). However, more recent studies have assumed that personality through certain behaviors can have a direct effect on the environment. Few researchers have noticed this with regards to studying career success (Seibert *et al.*, 1999). Since career success can be seen as the

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cumulative outcome of behaviors over a long-time period, personality is likely to play a role (Seibert *et al.*, 1999). Thus, we examined the role of goal orientation as a personality on career satisfaction in this study.

### *Organizational commitment*

Organizational commitment refers to an individual's feelings about the organization as a whole. It is the psychological bond that an employee has with an organization and has been found to be related to goal and value congruence, behavioral investments in the organization, and likelihood to stay with the organization (Mowday *et al.*, 1982). Organizational commitment is conceptualized as an affective response that results from an evaluation of the work situation that links the individual to the organization. Meyer and Allen (1991) have termed the three components as affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Three characteristics of organizational commitment are:

- (1) A strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values.
- (2) A willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization.
- (3) A strong desire to maintain membership in the organization (Mowday *et al.*, 1982).

This study focuses on affective organizational commitment, which is specifically defined as "the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Employees with a strong affective commitment continue employment with the organization because they want to do so" (Meyer and Allen, 1991, p. 67). Affective commitment has demonstrated powerful correlations with desirable outcomes and organizations have fostered this affective commitment among their employees (Meyer and Allen, 1997). In addition, some studies have used affective commitment as a single measure of organizational commitment (Feather and Rauter, 2004; Lee and Bruvold, 2003).

*Goal orientation.* Goal orientation refers to the goals pursued by individuals in achievement situations. Goal orientation is a motivational variable expected to affect the allocation of effort during learning (Fisher and Ford, 1998). Goal orientation can be summarized into two categories: learning (task or mastery) orientation and performance (ego/social) orientation (Farr *et al.*, 1993).

*Performance goal orientation.* It refers to a desire to demonstrate one's competence to others and to receive positive evaluations from others. Ability is a fixed, uncontrollable, personal attribute and therefore extra effort indicates low ability (Bell and Kozlowski, 2002; Fisher and Ford, 1998). Individuals with high-performance goal orientation are interested in demonstrating task competence through gaining positive and avoiding negative judgments of competence. Thus, such individuals tend to avoid challenges, decrease their effort and persistence following failure, and fear negative evaluation by others (Button *et al.*, 1996). Considering performance goal orientation had a positive relationship with the comparison goals (Brett and VandeWalle, 1999) and with psychological satisfaction of work experiences, performance goal orientation may have a positive influence on career satisfaction and organizational commitment of employees when managers provide appropriate tasks and feedback enhancing the strengths of performance goal orientation. From the limited literature on goal orientation, it is expected that performance goal orientation will affect career satisfaction and organizational commitment:

*H1a.* Performance goal orientation will be positively related to career satisfaction.

*H1b.* Performance goal orientation will be positively related to organizational commitment.

*Learning goal orientation.* It refers to a desire to increase one's competence by developing new skills and mastering new situations. Individuals with high-learning goal orientation focus on increasing their learning and/or task competence, seeking challenges, and persisting in the case of failure (Dweck and Leggett, 1988). Those with learning orientations have adaptive response patterns, thus leading to positive outcomes. Although little research has examined the relationship between learning goal orientation and career satisfaction and the relationship between learning goal orientation and organizational commitment, high-learning goal-oriented employees exhibited higher managerial aspirations and career satisfaction in the mentoring (Egan, 2005; Godshalk and Sosik, 2003):

*H2a.* Learning goal orientation will be positively related to career satisfaction.

According to incremental theory, ability is a malleable attribute and can be developed (Bell and Kozlowski, 2002; Fisher and Ford, 1998). Ability also leads to intrinsic task involvement and continuous efforts for organizations (Maurer, 2002; Pintrich, 2000). Thus, it is more likely that learning goal orientation will affect employee commitment:

*H2b.* Learning goal orientation will be positively related to organizational commitment.

#### *Organizational learning culture*

Organizational learning culture is one of the key contextual components to enhance organizational commitment. It is defined as "an organization skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights" (Garvin, 1993, p. 80). Watkins and Marsick (1997) provided a framework that identified seven action imperatives for a learning organization:

- (1) create continuous learning opportunities;
- (2) promote inquiry and dialogue;
- (3) encourage collaboration and team learning;
- (4) establish systems to capture and share learning;
- (5) empower people to have a collective vision;
- (6) connect the organization to the environment; and
- (7) use leaders who model and support learning at the individual, team, and organization levels.

Thus, learning organization involves an environment in which organizational learning is structured so that teamwork, collaboration, creativity, and knowledge processes have a collective meaning and value (Confessore and Kops, 1998).

*Organizational learning culture – career satisfaction.* Organizational learning culture enhances the level of career/job satisfaction (Egan *et al.*, 2004). Participative decision making (Daniels and Bailey, 1999), empowerment (Johnson and McIntye, 1998), and leadership behaviors inspiring teamwork (Gaertner, 2000) had a significant impact on

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career/job satisfaction. Although no study has ever examined the relationship between organizational learning culture and career satisfaction, it is likely that overall satisfaction of organizational context will have a positive influence on career satisfaction:

H3. Organizational learning culture will be positively related to career satisfaction.

*Organizational learning culture – organizational commitment.* While the possible link between organizational learning culture and organizational commitment has been much discussed, little research has investigated the relationship between the two constructs. Organizational characteristics can enhance organizational commitment (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). Lim (2003) also reported that there were moderately significant correlations between affective organizational commitment and organizational learning. Thus, it is likely that the more employees perceive that an organization provides continuous learning opportunities, empowerment, system connection, and strategic leadership, the higher they are psychologically attached to their organization:

H4. Organizational learning culture will be positively related to organizational commitment.

#### *Developmental feedback*

Developmental feedback refers to the extent to which supervisors provide employees with useful information that enables the employees to learn, develop, and improve on the job (Zhou, 2003). Engaging in this practice, supervisors provide employees with behaviorally relevant information that leads employees to improve their performance in the future in the absence of pressure for a particular outcome. These informational practices are designed to boost intrinsic motivation (Deci and Ryan, 1980, 1985) and to enhance an interest in the task itself and an orientation toward learning and improvement.

*Developmental feedback – career satisfaction.* Several studies imply that positive or developmental feedback has a positive influence on career satisfaction. Nemeroff and Cosentino (1979) showed the superiority of performance feedback combined with goal setting over performance feedback alone with respect to employee satisfaction with performance reviews. In addition, Jaworski and Kohl (1991) found that positive feedback from supervisors enables employees to learn better ways of doing things, reinforces appropriate behaviors, improves their overall competence, and enhances performance satisfaction in sales marketing. Thus, it is expected that the higher development feedback, the higher career satisfaction employee will have:

H5. Development feedback will be positively related to career satisfaction.

*Developmental feedback – organizational commitment.* While few studies have investigated the relationship between developmental feedback and organizational commitment, the types of feedback influence employees' psychological consequences (Atwater *et al.*, 2000; Jaworski and Kohl, 1991). Developmental feedback provides information about how well employees meet organizational expectations and work requirements for the purpose of future improvement. It also plays a motivational role because it allows employees to experience positive feelings and connections about themselves and the organization. Therefore, it is likely that developmental feedback will lead to higher organizational commitment:

H6. Development feedback will be positively related to organizational commitment.

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*Turnover intention*

Overall, turnover intention has emerged as the strongest precursor to turnover. There is a large body of research confirming the linkage between turnover intention and the actual behavior of leaving. Highlighting turnover intention as a key element in the modeling of employee turnover behavior, scholars have determined that behavioral intentions are the single best predictor of turnover (Abrams *et al.*, 1998; Bedeian *et al.*, 1991; Bluedorn, 1982; Lee and Mowday, 1987; Michaels and Spector, 1982).

*Turnover intention – career satisfaction.* Career/job satisfaction is a significant predictor of employee turnover (Egan *et al.*, 2004; Wright and Bonett, 2007). Whereas, employees are most likely to turnover when both their psychological well-being and their job satisfaction are low (Wright and Bonett, 2007), satisfaction with meaningful work and promotion opportunities were significant predictors of turnover intention (Wright and Bonett, 1992):

H7. Career satisfaction will be negatively related to turnover intention.

*Turnover intention – organizational commitment.* The consequences of organizational commitment have been studied extensively. As the interests in organizational commitment are based on the belief that it is related to employee turnover (Meyer and Allen, 1997), a number of studies have been done related to intent to leave or turnover (Koch and Steers, 1978; Lee and Bruvold, 2003). It also has been studied regarding the relationship to absenteeism (Steers, 1977) and performance (Mowday *et al.*, 1974):

H8. Organizational commitment will be negatively related to turnover intention.

In summary, one contribution of this study lies in its integration of useful theory and research from related literatures, such as organizational learning, leadership, goal orientation, career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention.

## **Methods**

Sample and data-collection procedure will be described. Then, the information about six measures will be elaborated below. Finally, the analytical strategy will be briefly discussed.

### *Sample and data-collection procedure*

Four *Fortune* Global 500 companies in Korea participated in this study, representing diverse industries: manufacturing, finance, and trading. The HR managers in each company selected participants who received the e-mail request for participation. A self-administered online survey was used to obtain individual perceptions. Of the approximately 500 employees, responses were received from 241 employees (response rate: 48 percent).

The demographic variables included:

- gender;
- age;
- education level;
- hierarchical level;
- the type of job; and
- the length of a leader-follower relationship.

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Most respondents were male (92 percent) in their 30s (97 percent) in manager or assistant manager position (99 percent). In terms of educational level, 37 percent of the respondents graduated from four-year college, and 46 percent from graduate school. The length of the relationships with current supervisor was evenly distributed across the categories: less than one year (19 percent), between one to two years (20 percent), between two and three years (18 percent), between three and five years (19 percent), and over five years (25 percent). Classification by job types were as follows: 15 percent in marketing and sales; 6 percent in production; 6 percent in engineering; 46 percent in research and development; 4 percent in information technology; 14 percent in supporting function such as finance, HR, and legal; and 9 percent in others. In summary, most respondents were highly educated male managers or assistant managers in their 30s.

### *Measures*

All constructs used multi-item scales that have been developed and used in the USA. The instruments were prepared for use in Korea using appropriate translation-back-translation procedures. We used the survey questionnaire with a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

*Goal orientation.* Performance and learning orientation were assessed with two eight-item scales developed and validated by Button *et al.* (1996). In this study, the reliabilities of performance and learning goal orientation were 0.81 and 0.86, respectively. A sample item from the performance orientation was: "I like to work on tasks that I have done well on in the past." For the learning orientation, a sample item was: "I prefer to work on tasks that force me to learn new things." In terms of social desirability, we assumed all participants might not differentially respond to items on each scale because Korean social value has been perceived in the similar way according to historical and cultural backgrounds.

*Organizational learning culture.* To measure the organizational learning culture, as suggested by Yang (2003) and Marsick and Watkins (2003), this study used seven items from Yang *et al.* (2004) shortened version of the Dimensions of Learning Organization Questionnaire. The seven items represent each sub-construct (i.e. continuous learning, dialogue and inquiry, team learning, empowerment, embedded system, system connection, and strategic leadership). In effect, this treats organizational learning culture as a single (unidimensional) construct. The reliability of seven items was 0.81 in this study. A sample item included: "In my organization, people spend time building trust with each other."

*Developmental feedback.* The three items of Developmental Feedback Scale (Zhou, 2003) were used. Employees indicated the extent to which they agreed with three statements. The reliability in this study was 0.80. A sample item was: "While giving me feedback, my supervisor focuses on helping me to learn and improve." Zhou (2003) reported that the reliability coefficient was 0.86.

*Career satisfaction.* Career satisfaction has been widely used in research as an indicator of subjective career success. The five-item career satisfaction scale developed by Greenhaus *et al.* (1990) will be used to measure subjective career success. The reliability of seven items was 0.82 in this study. A sample item was, "I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career."

*Organizational commitment.* Of the three characteristics of organizational commitment (i.e. affective, continuance, and normative commitment), we used only



affective organizational commitment (six item) (Meyer *et al.*, 1993). In this study, the reliability was 0.81. A sample item was, "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization."

*Turnover intention.* A three-item scale developed by Mobley *et al.* (1978) was used for this study to measure turnover intention. The three items were distinctive from each other in the factor analysis they conducted. In this study, the reliability was 0.82. An example of one item is, "As soon as I can find a better job, I'll leave the organization."

## Results

The results of the study are reported in two parts. First, the descriptive statistics, correlations, and reliabilities of the reduced measurement model analyses were reported. Second, the hierarchical multiple regression models were tested and the results of the hypothesis testing were addressed. Descriptive statistics, correlations, reliabilities, and hierarchical multiple regression analysis were conducted, using SPSS 16.0.

### *Descriptive statistics, correlations, and reliabilities*

Table I presents the correlations among the five constructs and the reliabilities. The relationships among organizational learning culture, developmental feedback and organizational commitment were relatively high ( $r = 0.42-0.53$ ). While performance goal orientation turned out to be associated with career satisfaction (0.24), learning goal orientation was significantly related to organizational commitment (0.23). All measures demonstrated adequate levels of reliability (0.80-0.86).

### *Hierarchical multiple regression analysis*

Table II illustrates the results of hierarchical multiple regression of career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. In Step 1, demographic variables such as gender, age, education level, hierarchical level, the type of job, and the length of a leader-follower relationship were entered to discover any influence on career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. The demographic variables failed to explain the variance in any outcome variable in this study. In Step 2, goal orientation as a personal factor was included to examine the main effect on career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. In Step 3, the second main effects, contextual factors including organizational learning culture and development feedback were added. Consequently, each model of career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention (Models 1-3) was created by the process of Steps 1-3 for hierarchical multiple regression analysis. Step 4 was conducted only for turnover intention to create Model 4. In Step 4, career satisfaction and organizational commitment were included to clarify any influence of these two variables on turnover intentions in Model 4.

Overall, personality (i.e. performance and learning goal orientation) and contextual factors (i.e. organizational learning culture and developmental feedback) explained 19 percent of the variance in career satisfaction and 30 percent of the variance in organizational commitment. In terms of the changes of  $R^2$ , career satisfaction was more impacted by organizational learning culture ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.13$ ) than goal orientation ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.07$ ). Organizational commitment was more influenced by contextual factors ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.27$ ) than core personality factor ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.05$ ). Finally, 28 percent of variance in turnover intention was accounted for by organizational learning culture ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.12$ ),

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Performance goal orientation	3.69	0.53	(0.81)						
Learning goal orientation	4.10	0.49	0.24**	(0.86)					
Organizational learning culture	3.32	0.59	0.11	0.18**	(0.81)				
Developmental feedback	3.42	0.72	0.08	0.19	0.48**	(0.80)			
Career satisfaction	3.29	0.67	0.24**	-0.00	0.36**	0.25**	(0.82)		
Organizational commitment	3.37	0.68	0.11	0.23**	0.53**	0.42**	0.39**	(0.81)	
Turnover intention	3.04	0.85	-0.03	-0.09	-0.37**	-0.19**	-0.36**	-0.51**	(0.82)

Notes: Significance at \* $p < 0.05$  and \*\* $p < 0.01$ ;  $n = 241$ ; pearson correlations

Table I.  
Descriptive statistics,  
correlations,  
and reliabilities

**Table II.**  
Hierarchical multiple regression results for career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention

	Career satisfaction			Organizational commitment			Turnover intention			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Step 1: demographics</i>										
Gender	-0.02	-0.06	-0.05	-0.01	0.00	0.02	-0.01	-0.02	-0.03	-0.30
Age	-0.08	-0.01	-0.09	0.07	0.08	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.06	0.05
Education	-0.07	-0.07	-0.05	0.00	-0.06	-0.04	-0.03	-0.00	-0.02	-0.05
Hierarchical level	0.01	-0.05	-0.03	-0.02	-0.03	0.01	-0.02	-0.02	-0.04	-0.04
Job type	0.00	-0.01	-0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	-0.05	-0.04	-0.04	-0.04
Tenure	0.08	0.10	0.10	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.07
<i>Step 2: goal orientation</i>										
Performance orientation		0.29**	0.26**		0.05	0.00		-0.00	0.03	0.09
Learning orientation		-0.01	-0.13***		0.23**	0.13*		-0.10	-0.04	-0.01
<i>Step 3: contextual Factors</i>										
Organizational learning culture			0.33**			0.42**			-0.37**	-0.13***
Developmental feedback			0.08			0.18**			0.01	-0.10
<i>Step 4: behavioral outcomes</i>										
Career satisfaction										-0.41**
Organizational commitment										-0.20**
F-value	0.69	20.85**	60.28**	0.31	10.89***	100.41**	0.16	0.40	30.54**	80.23**
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	-0.01	0.06	0.19	-0.02	0.03	0.30	-0.02	-0.02	0.10	0.28
ΔR <sup>2</sup>	-	0.07	0.13	-	0.05	0.27	-	0.00	0.12	0.18

**Note:** Significance at \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.10$

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and employees' attitudinal outcomes (i.e. career satisfaction and organizational commitment) ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.18$ ). Thus, the following hypotheses were supported in this study: *H1a* (performance goal orientation – career satisfaction), *H2b* (learning goal orientation – organizational commitment), *H3* (organizational learning culture – career satisfaction), *H4* (organizational learning culture – organizational commitment), *H6* (developmental feedback – organizational commitment), *H7* (career satisfaction – turnover intention), and *H8* (organizational commitment – turnover intention). However, *H5* (developmental feedback – career satisfaction) was not supported.

In summary, while employees' performance goal orientation affected career satisfaction, learning goal orientation influenced organizational commitment. There was no contribution of goal orientation to turnover intention. Organizational learning culture was a significant predictor for both attitudinal outcomes. Finally, organizational learning culture, career satisfaction, and organizational commitment turned out to be the significant antecedents of turnover intention.

### Discussion and conclusion

The findings of this study are discussed on the basis of the hypothesized model, with comparisons to previous research. Then, we will discuss the implications of this study for research and practice in the field of HRD and OD. Next, the limitations of this study and recommendations for future research are discussed. Finally, some conclusions follow.

#### Discussions

This study found that a personal factor (i.e. goal orientation) and contextual factors (i.e. organizational learning culture and developmental feedback) contributed to career satisfaction and organizational commitment, which, in turn, affected turnover intention. Detailed findings are discussed below.

First, employees exhibited the highest career satisfaction, when they had higher performance goal orientation and when they perceived that their organization provides a better learning culture. About 19 percent of the variance in career satisfaction was explained by the above-mentioned factors. In terms of effect size, the contextual factors ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.13$ ) were stronger than personality factors ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.07$ ). Performance goal-oriented employees are likely to be satisfied with a task that they can easily compare to that of others or from which they can acquire outcomes without additional efforts. Thus, this result also reflects the similar findings in previous studies (Button *et al.*, 1996; Dweck and Leggett, 1988; Fisher and Ford, 1998). Contrary to the results of Egan (2005) and Godshalk and Sosik (2003), learning goal orientation was not significantly associated with career satisfaction in this study. Little previous research has focused on the relationship between organizational learning culture and career success. Thus, it is a contribution of this study which found the performance goal orientation and organizational learning culture are the significant predictors for career satisfaction.

Second, employees demonstrated the highest organizational commitment, when they had higher learning goal orientation and when they perceived higher organizational learning culture and development feedback from their supervisors. Overall, 30 percent of the variance of organizational commitment was accounted for by learning goal orientation and the two contextual factors (organizational learning

culture and developmental feedback). Contextual factors ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.27$ ) were stronger than learning goal orientation ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.05$ ) in terms of effect size. That is, the more employees perceived that an organization provides continuous learning, dialogue and inquiry, team learning, established system, empowerment, system connection, and strategic leadership, the higher they were psychologically attached to their organization. In this study, developmental feedback was significantly related to organizational commitment, replicating previous research (Atwater *et al.*, 2000; Jaworski and Kohl, 1991). When employees perceived higher developmental feedback, employees are more likely to show higher organizational commitment. Regarding goal orientation, employees who are learning goal-oriented people are likely to have a stronger emotional attachment, such as a stronger acceptance of the organization's goals and values, a higher willingness to exert effort for the organization, and a stronger desire to maintain membership in the organization, replicating previous research (Maurer, 2002; Pintrich, 2000). This study will add an important building block to the integrative research of personality, career, organizational learning, and organizational commitment.

Third, organizational learning culture, career satisfaction, and organizational commitment were the significant predictors of turnover intention. About 28 percent of the variance in turnover intention was explained by the three factors. In terms of effect size, the career satisfaction and organizational commitment ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.18$ ) were stronger than organizational learning culture ( $\Delta R^2 = 0.12$ ). This study replicated the previous studies by comparing career satisfaction and turnover intention (Egan *et al.*, 2004; Wright and Bonett, 2007) and organizational commitment and turnover intention (Koch and Steers, 1978; Lee and Bruvold, 2003; Meyer and Allen, 1997). It is noteworthy that organizational learning culture turned out to be an important antecedent for turnover intention.

### *Implications*

With regard to the theoretical contributions, this study linked organizational learning, leadership, personality, career, and organizational commitment research. Little research has been done integrating organizational learning, supportive leadership, goal orientation, and career and commitment. More specifically, no research has explored organizational learning culture and goal orientation as the antecedents of career success and organizational commitment. It is an interesting finding that performance goal orientation was associated only with career satisfaction, whereas learning goal orientation was related only with organizational commitment. In addition, this study provides useful information based on Korean context to researchers who conduct similar studies in different cultural backgrounds. This study also contributes to recognizing the critical role of managers in organizational learning culture and developmental feedback. Managers encourage subordinates to increase career satisfaction and organizational commitment through establishing productive learning culture and providing positive feedback.

The practical implications for HRD/OD professionals who develop relevant practices for the purpose of enhancing organizational commitment and goal orientation are suggested below. First, organizational learning culture can significantly influence career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and ultimately turnover intention. Thus, HRD/OD can play an important role in enhancing all the sub-constructs of

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organizational learning culture, in both the people level (i.e. continuous learning, dialogue and inquiry, team learning, and empowerment) and the structural level (i.e. embedded system, system connection, and structural leadership), as suggested by Yang *et al.* (2004). For example, HRD/OD professionals can stimulate organizations to establish an open organizational culture that allows people to express their views and to listen others' opinions, and that supports questioning and feedback. Consequently, this culture can contribute to fostering organizational commitment and career satisfaction.

Second, HRD/OD professionals could establish environments in order to use the preference of employee's goal orientation for improving organizational commitment. One of the most effective ways for HRD/OD professionals to assist an organization that strives to become a learning organization is to help managers adopt new roles as coaches and learning facilitators (McLean, 2006). That is, developing managers and supervisors is another role of HRD/OD professionals. HRD/OD professionals can help managers change their leadership by providing relevant training programs and supporting developmental relationships such as coaching and mentoring. For instance, mentoring can be used one method for this change in the management leadership. The pairs that both a mentor (manager) and a protégé (subordinate) both of whom have a high learning goal orientation are likely to have higher idealized behaviors, managerial aspirations, and commitment to achieving goals (Egan, 2005), and are likely to provide higher psychosocial support and career development (Godshalk and Sosik, 2003). Through these advantages of mentoring, managers, and HRD professionals can provide additional opportunities to employees to find their potential and motivations for diverse issues and tasks, which ultimately might influence organizational commitment.

Finally, goal orientation could be used to recruit and select the right people in the right place at the right time for organizations. As goal orientation tends to be stable over time, organizations need to identify what kind of employee in terms of goal orientation would best fit with their organizational culture as well as with the specific jobs. In addition, HRD practitioners would make the best use of goal orientation for employee development and retention. Based on our findings in this study about relationships between goal orientation and career satisfaction and organizational commitment, HRD professionals can develop and implement career management programs according to individual characteristics.

*Limitations and future research.* In terms of methodology, this study has several potential limitations. First, this study relied on self-reported recollection of the indicators of the constructs by volunteer participants. Second, the causality among the variables is considered because this study used cross-sectional survey method. Third, the sample of this study is likely restricted to a certain group with similar demographic characteristics (e.g. males of relatively high-cognitive ability).

To solve the limitations above, methodologically, future research needs to be based on objective indicators and multiple sources. In addition, to increase generalizability of the present study, more studies in various industries representing diverse demographic cohorts are needed. More specifically, this study focused on knowledge workers with higher educational levels. The results might vary according to the cohorts in different educational levels. More research on different educational backgrounds is recommended.

### Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to investigate the impact of goal orientation, organizational learning culture, and developmental feedback on employees' career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. The theoretical contributions of this study lie in its integrative approach encompassing both personal and organizational factors. HRD/OD professionals can help their employees to improve career satisfaction, organizational commitment and to decrease turnover intention through establishing positive organizational learning culture and considering managerial support and employees' differences.

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### Further reading

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