

The Effect of Business Ethical Values on Turnover Intention: Mediating Role of Person-organization Fit Dimensions. The Case of Iranian Teachers in Public School

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Abstract *Business ethical values are considered as one of the important and comprehensive issues in the world nowadays. Disputing about these values and ignoring ethical principles in workplaces influence employee's job attitude and provide backgrounds of turnover for employees, and because of this, many costs are put on organizations. Therefore, this study seeks to examine types and levels of business ethical values effects on turnover intention and also concentrates on mediating the role of person-organization fit dimensions. The statistical population of this study includes active teachers of public schools in Isfahan and Yazd. In order to select sample members, classification sampling method has been used. Then, the questionnaire is used to gathering the data. The results of this study indicated that business ethical values influence employee's turnover intention directly and indirectly, and level of these indirect effects was stronger than direct ones. Also, the results indicate that different dimensions of person-organization fit have low correlation with each one of other variables, and these dimensions are mediators in the relationship between business ethical values and turnover intention.*

Key words Business ethical values, turnover intention, person-organization fit, teacher
JEL Codes: M41

1. Introduction

Business ethical values are considered as an important and comprehensive issue in the world nowadays, and many organizations formalize ethics and ethical principles in frame of rules, procedures, and policies (Paine, 2005; Jung *et al.*, 2010: 538). It seems that this expression "good ethic is good work and business" has been converted to common belief (Jung *et al.*, 2010: 538; Pettijohn, 2008). The studies conducted in this area have indicated that the companies with high levels of ethical values and social responsibilities are more beneficial and profitable than other companies. Costs of developing ethics and applying social responsibilities are compensated by the profit that is achieved through reinforcing working spirit and

employee's operation (Jung *et al.*, 2010: 538; Pettijohn, 2008). Further, the role of business ethical values in organizations have received huge importance in terms of recruiting and maintaining committed and ethical human resources (Andrews *et al.*, 2011:5). The results of these studies have indicated that employee's perception from ethical values leads to improving person-organization fit, which influences employee's effective burnout level, and their job satisfaction leads to decreasing turnover level and increasing loyalty intention in organizations (Valentine *et al.*, 2002; Jaramillo, 2006; and Andrews *et al.*, 2011). In Iranian culture, job of teaching is one of such important jobs that our prophets introduced their missions as improving and maturing human being's ethics. Issue of ethics among teachers has lots of importance because of this fact that the ethical fundamentals of society are institutionalized by them. Also, with respect to this issue that teacher is fundamental and directorial factor in educating future generations and that they are pioneers of social ethical framework, this study seeks to examine the relationship between business ethical values with teacher's turnover intention and supposes different components of person-organization fit as mediating factors. These components include values congruence, personality congruence, goals congruence, KSAs congruence, and work environment congruence.

2. Literature review and hypotheses of the research

In this section, the literature of examined variables has been reviewed generally; also, their relations with each other have been examined. Hence, hypotheses have been formulated based on them.

2.1. Business ethical values

Because of comprehensive scandals in today business, ethics are reckoned as an interesting subject. Doing which activities congruent with ethical values leads to defection of consumer. This also decreases employees' satisfaction levels and their job performance and leads to increasing turnover intention among them. Therefore, it should be remembered that organizational ethical climate influences its present and future efforts (Mulki *et al.*, 2008: 559). Ethical climate refers to employee's perception of their activities, procedures, norms, and organizational values in ethical frame. In other words, ethical climate refers to the working climate that reflects policies, procedures, organizational efforts that have different ethical outcomes and results (Mulki *et al.*, 2008: 561). Hunt *et al.* (1989) defined corporate ethical values as combination of manager's individual ethical values and organization's formal and informal policies. Similarly, Carroll and Buchholtz (2000) described that business ethical values have critical role in determination of correct or incorrect and good or bad of management behaviors and attitudes (Jung *et al.*, 2010: 538). All in all,

ethical values are subset of organizational culture that indicates to multi-dimensional interactions between formal and informal systems of behavioral control (Andrews *et al.*, 2011: 7). An individual value that is important part of self-concept is a basis for judgment about good or bad of phenomenon. When ethical conflict occurs that employee's individual values are inconsistent with their organization and this leads to undesirable phenomenon such as stress, lack of organizational commitment, absence, and leaving organization. These undesirable phenomenons come from incongruences among employee's value and their organization (Thorne, 2010:270). With respect to this fact that costs of ethical conflicts maybe are comprehensive and exorbitant, this issue is interesting and important (Thorne, 2010:269).

2.2. Employee's turnover intention

Turnover intention refers to leaving organization and finishing employee's membership in organization. Reviewing literature of this subject indicates that turnover intention is a multistep process that consists of three components including mental, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions (Takase, 2001). This variable effectively predicts individual's turnover intention and could consider as a warning measure before than actual turnover. Based on this fact, turnover intention considered as alternative measure of actual behavior (Jung *et al.*, 2010:539). Most teachers leave their job before than retirement (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2011:1029). The results of the study that conducted in USA indicated that 25% of teachers during the first three years and 40% of them during the first five years leave their job (Chang, 2009).

Also, the results of studies conducted in terms of organizational ethical issues reported different interpretations about the relationship between organizational ethical climate and employee's turnover intention. Thorne (2010) examined the relationship between ethical conflict and its organizational undesirable outcomes (such as stress, lack of organizational commitment, absence, and turnover intention) in the frame of person-organization fit indicated that these variables have relationship with each other and ethical conflict could be beneficial in prediction of employee's turnover intention. Therefore, each ethical tension in organization leads to increasing employee's turnover intention in organizations. Attitudinal theory states that individual's evaluation of a subject leads to the attitude that is descriptor of their behavioral purposes. As a result, individual's positive evaluation from organizational climate leads to higher levels of job satisfaction, and this decreases employee's turnover intention (Mulki *et al.*, 2008: 559).

Levy and Dubinsky (1983) found that ethical disharmony leads to lower organizational commitment and high turnover intention. Sparks and Johlke (1996) stated that employee's recognition from unethical status of workplaces leads to

turnover intention. Also, Eisenberger *et al.*, (2002) described that employee's perception from organization's commitment to ethical functions has relationship with lower level of turnover intention. Also, there are studies that indicated leadership plays an important role in the relationship between organization's ethical climate and turnover intention. Mulki *et al.* (2008) reported employees who work in desirable ethical climate have more reliability on their supervisors and finally work with more happiness, and there is rare probability that leave their organization. In the similar study, Valentine *et al.* (2006) found that amount of employee's perception from their manager's supportive styles is the mediator of effects of ethical frame on turnover intention (Mulki *et al.*, 2008). Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) examined content variables of schools such as value outcomes, supportiveness of school's managers, relations with coworkers, relations with student's parents, time pressure, and discipline issues influence job satisfaction and turnover intention indirectly and through affective burnout and sensation of belonging. Also Mulki *et al.* (2008), Chang *et al.* (2010), and Thorne (2010) in their studies found the relationship between ethics and ethical values with turnover intention. With respect to these evidences, the following hypothesis formulated.

H1: Business ethical values influence employee's turnover intention negatively.

2.3. Mediator variables

Person-organization fit

Usually individuals have tendency to employment in organizations that their skills and competencies utilized in the best manner and have which environment that is consistent with their individual characteristics. Person-organization fit could consider as congruence basis among individual and organizational goals. Person-organization fit refers to the level congruencies among of values, beliefs, personality, and individual and organizational (Andres, 2011:6). Person-organization fit states how much of individual's knowledge, skills, competencies, needs, and personal values are consistent with their job requirements (Gang *et al.*, 2010: 539). Recognition and perception of congruence and incongruence has strong effect on teacher's welfare level (Sharplin *et al.*, 2011) and also influences their commitment and performance (Pyhalto *et al.*, 2011:1102). Webel and Gilliland (1999) developed mode or employee-organization fit that indicates employee's goals, values, and needs that are predictor of person-organization fit level. This variable predicts job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and staying at organization intention (Torne, 2010:270). Perceived non-fit between teachers and their environment that characterized as predictor of turnover intention and hasty retirement (Hakanen *et al.*, 2006). There are different studies that indicate person's fit is mediator variable in the

relationship between business ethical values and turnover intention (Sim and Keon, 1997; Valentine *et al.*, 2002; Gand *et al.*, 2010; Andrews *et al.*, 2011). In order to giving better perception of mediator role of Person-organization fit, different factors should distinguish from each other. Hoffman and Woehr, (2006); Abzari *et al.*, (2008, 2010) in their studies indicated that the components of Person-organization fit include five dimensions: ·personality congruence, goals congruence ·KSAs congruence, and work environment congruence. These components described in the following section.

Values congruence

This component defines Person-organization fit as congruence between organizational values and individual values (Westerman, 1997). Generally values congruence includes this dimension of fit that consists from similarities of organizational values with individual values and evaluates them (Kristof, 1996; Abzari *et al.*, 2010). Leung and Chatvedi (2011) and Nicol *et al.*, (2011) point out that person-organization fit concentrates on value fit between organization and its employees.

Goals congruence

This dimension discussed in Schneider's frame of Attraction-Selection-Attraction (ASA). Based on this perspective, employees attracted to which organizations that these organization's values are consistent with their own values. So goals congruence includes similarities between employees and organization's goals (Hoffman *et al.*, 2006; Abzari *et al.*, 2008).

Personality congruence

This refers to fit between individual's personality styles and their perceived image from organization (Abzari, 2008). Based on this, individuals prefer which organization that is consistent with their personality traits.

KSAs congruence

This dimension refers to congruence among individual's skills and abilities with organizational requirements. This perspective refers to congruence of job, implementation, and technical requirements to doing effective works (Abzari *et al.*, 2008, 2010; Segoguchi, 2003).

Workplaces congruence

This refers to organizational members fit on congruence between employee's values from workplaces that created by organization and employee's actual perception of workplaces that is consistent with their needs (Abzari, 2010). With respect to literature review the following hypotheses developed.

H2: The components of person-organization fit (personality congruence, goals congruence, KSAs congruence, work environment congruence) are mediator in the relationship between ethical business values with turnover intention.

Job satisfaction

Satisfaction refers to employee's happiness and glad about their job in the organization (Nickel, 2011). In other words, job satisfaction defined as positive or pleasurable affective status that come from individual's evaluation in term of their job (Andrews *et al.*, 2011). With respect to this definition, teacher's job satisfaction perceived as effective and positive reactions about their job. This job satisfaction influenced by different factors such as intrinsic rewards of teaching, factors extrinsic to the school, and school-based factors (Andrews *et al.*, 2011). Lee and Mitchell indicated that person-organization fit influences job satisfaction and also employee's job satisfaction levels lead to turnover intention. Shafer (2002) in his study about job satisfaction indicated that is employees perceive any ethical conflicts through organizational unethical behaviors their job satisfaction will reduce and consequently turnover intention increase. In the similar study, Jermilou *et al.* (2006) resulted that recognition of unethical behaviors of an organization or coworker leads to lower levels of job satisfaction and high levels of turnover intention. Pitchmen *et al.*, (2008) found that employee's insight influences job satisfaction and turnover intention strongly than business value and its behaviors. With respect to this literature review, hypotheses developed at the following section.

H3: Job satisfaction meditates the relationship between business ethical values and turnover intention.

H4: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between person-organization fit and turnover intention.

Job burnout

Affective burnout is the main component of job burnout that comes from long-term job stress that is important especially for services job (Skaalvik, 2011:1030). The effects of affective burnout in services job is prominent that employees interact with

consumers and have direct relationship with them (Maleki *et al.*, 2006:122). The studies in different cultures indicated that teaching in schools is one of the professional jobs with high levels of job stress (Skaalvik *et al.*, 2011:1030; Paltou *et al.*, 2011:1101). Affective burnout is end point of unsuccessful debate with chronic stress. The results of the study that conducted in Finland indicated teachers have the highest level of affective burnout than other employees in official and services sections (Kolyima *et al.*, 2000). Job burnout influences teachers healthy, job satisfaction, learning level, and also their children's behavior rather than motivational level (Paltou *et al.*, 2011:1029). Theory of conservation of resources (COR) indicates that affective burnout and high levels of stress is the results of individual's perception from lack of resources than job requirements. When such perception occurs and an employee believes that his/her competency is insufficient than job expectations (Wright and Hobfoll, 2004; Maleki *et al.*, 2006:1224). Time pressure has positive correlation with job burnout among teachers (Leiterand Maslach, 2009:3). In the study among teachers that abandon their job in England indicated that over-working is the main factor in creating turnover-related thought (Buchanan, 2010), Leung and Lee (2006) in their study that conducted on turnover intention in Hong Kong found that job burnout is predictor of job turnover. Different studies indicate that affective burnout influenced by ethical values (Maleki *et al.*, 2008; Kammeyer-Mueller, 2010; Kilic *et al.*, 2011) and person-organization fit (Maleki *et al.*, 2006; Pitalou *et al.*, 2011) and also predicts turnover intention (Jermilou *et al.*, 2006; Maleki *et al.*, 2008; and Abzari *et al.*, 2010). Therefore the following hypotheses developed with respect to literature review.

H5: affective burnout mediates the relationship between business ethical values and turnover intention.

H6: Affective burnout mediates the relationship between person-organization fit components and turnover intention.

3. Methodology of research

This study was practical and descriptive-survey. In order to gathering information, first library methods followed to gather literature of subject. Then in order to gathering data from sample members, the questionnaire with two section (first is demographic variables, and second is the main section of questionnaire) has been developed. The main section of this questionnaire that measures main variables of this study consists of business ethical values, person-organization fit, job satisfaction, job turnover, and turnover intention that include 34 items with 5 points Likert scale. In order to this, business ethical values questionings derived from Gang *et al.*, (2010) and Lopez *et al.*, (2009) studies, questions of job turnover and job

satisfaction derived from Knudsen *et al.*, (2008) and Anders (2011) studies, person-organization fit questions derived from Abzari *et al.*, studies, and finally turnover intention derived from Gang *et al.*, (2010) studies. In order to applying this questionnaire, it first translated to Persian and then some corrections were applied in it with respect to management professors of University of Isfahan.

Some studies considered turnover intention, organizational turnover, or movement in the organizations, while other studies don't considered internal movement as job turnover (Hayes *et al.*, 2011). The main purpose of this study is turnover from the latest type. In other words, turnover intention refers to individual's intention to leaving their job and finishing their job and membership in the organization. Methods of fit evaluation were subjective fit, perceived fit, and objective fit (Christo, 1996; Elanain, 2008; Hoffman *et al.*, 2006; Loang *et al.*, 2011). The main common point of these perspectives is that they evaluate existing conflicts between individual and organizational characteristics (Alanain, 2008; Abzari, 2010). It is should remember that method of fit evaluation is our study is mental and inferred. On the other hand, some authors in the study of job satisfaction concentrated on specific aspects of job, while some others concentrated on overall sense of job satisfaction (Skaalvik, 2011). Also it is should remember that the second type of job satisfaction was our focus in this study. Statistical population of this study includes active teachers in Isfahan and Yazd (who teaching in schools in academic years of 2011 and 2012). We couldn't receive any information about number of these teachers, regardless of efforts to gathering information about them. In order to determining validity and reliability of the questionnaire, a primary sampling has been done by 30 male and female teachers and its reliability and validity examined. The results of these analysis indicated that our questionnaire had good validity (86% Cronbach's Alpha). But because validity of two questions in measures of business ethical values were low than minimum level (64%), then they removed from our questionnaire. In order to selecting sample members, classification sampling method has been used. The 700 questionnaires distributed among population members that 454 of them indicated our questionnaire (65% of them) and then our analysis conducted based on these questionnaires. Demographic characteristics of sample members indicated at the table 1.

Table 1. Samples demographic characteristics

Variables	Groups	%
Gender	Male	45.3
	Female	54.7
Educational levels	Diploma	2.3
	AB	18.7

Variables	Groups	%
	MA	67.4
Teaching experiences	Less than 5 years	12.6
	5-10 years	6.4
	10-15 years	13.7
	15-20 years	35.5
	More than 20 years	31.8

4. Findings

In order to examining the relationship among variables, correlation coefficient has been used. The results of this test indicated at the table 2. As the results of this table indicate, there are weak correlations between person-organization fit, but all of this are significant with sig 0.01. This indicates that all dimensions of person-organization fit dimensions should examine in its studying. On the other hand, the results of correlation test indicate that there are significant relationship among turnover intention and all of research variables. Also average statistic indicates that these teachers have good mental fit with their organizations and low intention to leave their organizations. The main goal of this study is to analyzing business ethical values on employee's turnover intention. So in order to answer this question, that how business ethical values influence turnover intention and through which path, path analysis method used. This method that is generalized version of multi-variable regression to developing casual models identifies indirect effects of independent variables on dependent variables than direct variable. This method analyzes indirect impacts rather than direct impacts of each of independent factors on dependent factors. The default of this linear regression to applying in path analysis is normal or near to normal of dependent variables. In order to examining normal status of data, one sample K-S test has been used. This test, that is one of the good fitness tests, compare observed cumulative distribution function with theoretical cumulative distribution function (normalized). The results of One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test indicated that much of these variables weren't normal and there are significant differences between observed and actual frequencies. Therefore with respect to abnormal distribution of data, their natural logarithm has been used to conducting regression method. In order to analyzing this method, turnover intention considered as final dependent variable, job satisfaction, affective burnout, and person-organization fit considered as mediator variable, and business ethical values considered as independent variable. The results of path analysis method indicated at the table 3.

Table 2. The results of correlation among research variables

Variables	Ethical Value	Value congruence	Goal congruence	Personality congruence	KSA congruence	Workplace congruence	Job Satisfaction	Work Exhaustion	Turnover intention
Ethical Value	1								
Value congruence	.526**	1							
Goal congruence	.120*	.266**	1						
Personality congruence	.448**	.579**	.187**	1					
KSA congruence	.087	.247**	.228**	-.294**	1				
Workplace congruence	.206**	.377**	.171**	-.480**	.454*	1			
Job Satisfaction	.117*	.351**	.204**	.487**	.444**	.584**	1		
Work Exhaustion	-.200**	-.238**	-.165**	-.366**	-.264**	-.421**	-.480**	1	
Turnover intention	-.384**	-.257**	-.206**	-.115**	-.196**	-.463**	-.526**	.461**	1
Mean	4.11	3.74	4.17	3.92	4.00	4.07	3.68	2.14	1.89
Std. Deviation	6.16	1.010	.871	1.021	.960	.887	.907	.792	.885

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results of analysis of regression indicate that business ethical values influences turnover intention significantly. This finding supported by Gang *et al.*, (2010), Maleki *et al.*, (2008) and Torren (2010) studies. Workplaces congruence had the highest effect on turnover intention than other dimensions of person-organization fit. Also the results indicate KSA congruence and personality hadn't any direct effect on turnover intention. All in all, the results indicate that dimensions of person-organization fit (exempt workplace congruence) haven't high clarity because they can't precipitates causal path of independent variable on dependent variable and show this clearly. One of the most important prerequisites in test of casual relations is lack of linear relationship among variables. If linear relationship is high in regression model, it means low reliability of model, regardless of its high exploratory coefficient. In order to test collinearity, variance inflation factor was used. This statistic is reverse of tolerance statistic. The tolerance is an independent variable that didn't explained by other independent variables. As much as tolerance is lower, then this leads to increasing VIF and consequently collinearity increased. This leads to increasing variance of regression coefficient and also leads that regression model is inappropriate for prediction. In the present study, maximum level of VIF in regression model in all steps of path analysis is 1.969 that is acceptable value. Therefore VIF is a good measure to deciding about low of collinearity among independent variables and result that model has good validity. Empirical model of this study indicated in figure 1.

Table 3. The results of path analysis method

Steps	Dependent Variable	R ²	F	sig	Predictors	Beta	t	sig	VIF
1	Turnover Intention	.283	34.520	.000	Ethical Value	-.181	-3.953	.000	1.512
					Value congruence	-.107	-2.107	.036	1.863
					Goal congruence	-.069	-1.748	.048	1.120
					Personality congruence	-.017	-.245	.807	1.969
					KSA congruence	-.006	-.060	.952	1.372
					Workplace congruence	-.161	-3.192	.002	1.826
					Job Satisfaction	-.274	-5.224	.000	1.310
					Work Exhaustion	.262	6.001	.000	1.372
2	Job Satisfaction	.440	59.04	.000	Ethical Value	.329	3.244	.001	1.461
					Value congruence	.088	1.897	.048	1.849
					Goal congruence	.047	1.252	.211	1.111
					Personality congruence	.264	5.540	.000	1.825
					KSA congruence	.184	4.555	.000	1.312
					Workplace congruence	.362	8.253	.000	1.545
3	Work Exhaustion	.232	10.43	.000	Ethical Value	-.069	-1.232	.171	1.461
					Value congruence	-.341	-4.629	.000	1.440
					Goal congruence	-.071	-1.695	.098	1.111
					Personality congruence	-.190	-3.425	.001	1.825
					KSA congruence	-.067	-1.402	.162	1.312
					Workplace congruence	-.292	-6.631	.000	1.545
3-1	Value congruence	.276	172.77	.000	Ethical Value	.526	12.144	.000	1.000
3-2	Goal congruence	.014	6.603	.011	Ethical Value	.120	2.570	.011	1.000
3-3	Personality congruence	.202	114.407	.000	Ethical Value	.449	10.696	.000	1.000
3-4	KSA congruence	.008	3.472	.063	Ethical Value	.067	1.363	.063	1.000
3-4	Workplace congruence	.042	20.034	.000	Ethical Value	.206	4.476	.000	1.000

In order to answer the main question of this study, direct, indirect, and overall effect calculated. The results of this examination indicated at the table 4. These results inform us that business ethical values influence employee's turnover intention directly. These also influence employee's turnover intention indirectly through job satisfaction components, affective burnout, and person-organization fit indirectly. But indirect effects of business ethical values are more than its direct effects. In other words, Ethical tensions in workplaces lead to mental and behavioral reactions with applying effect on teacher's feelings and attitudes and finally initialize turnover intention in their mental. Additionally, overall effects indicate that person-organization fit is mediator of the relationship between business ethical values and turnover intention strongly.

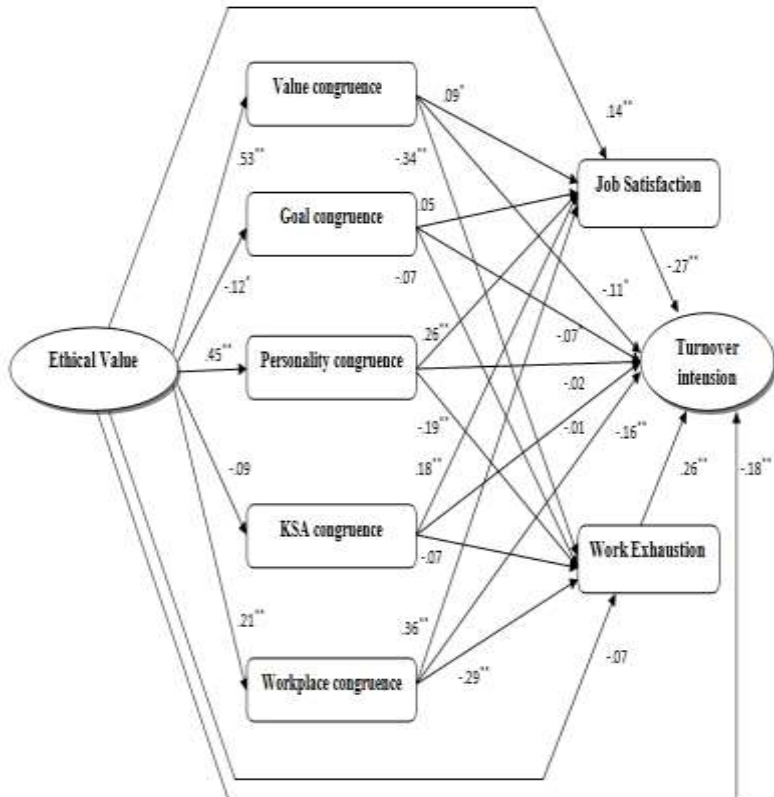


Figure 1. Empirical model of study

Table 4. Type and level of each variable's effect on turnover intention

Variable	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect
Ethical Value	-.181	-.287	-.468
Value congruence	-.107	-.113	-.220
Goal congruence	-.069	-	-.069
Personality congruence	-	-.123	-.123
KSA congruence	-	-.050	-.050
Workplace congruence	-.161	-.176	-.337
Job Satisfaction	-.274	-	-.274
Work Exhaustion	.262	-	.262

5. Conclusions

With respect to the importance of the ethical issues and ethical tensions in workplaces and its mental effects on employee's feelings and attitudes, this study was aimed to examine the level and type of business ethical values on employee's turnover intention as the mental-behavioral predictor variable and job satisfaction, job burnout, person-organization fit were examined. Reviewing the literature of the relationship between ethical values and turnover intention indicates that the mediating role of person-organization fit dimensions doesn't consider in organizations, while the correlation between different dimensions of person-organization fit indicate that these dimensions are autonomous from each other and authors should examine all of its dimensions simultaneously (including values congruence, goals congruence, personality congruence, KSA congruence, and workplaces congruence) to achieve more comprehensive perspective about its mediating role.

The results of path analysis indicate that business ethical values influence turnover intention directly and indirectly, but coefficients of paths indicate that its indirect effect is more than direct effect. These results indicate that business ethical values influences employee's turnover intention directly and through job satisfaction components, affective burnout, and person-organization fit indirectly. But indirect effects of business ethical values are more than its direct effects. In other words, Ethical tensions in workplaces lead to mental and behavioral reactions with applying effect on teacher's feelings and attitudes and finally initialize turnover intention in their mental. Additionally, overall effects indicate that person-organization fit is mediator of the relationship between business ethical values and turnover intention strongly. This study examined the effects of ethical values on some attitude variables such as job satisfaction, job burnout, and turnover intention and especially concentrates on turnover intention.

Therefore its findings couldn't generalize to scientific environments such schools and it is necessary to more comprehensive examinations. Also conducting informal interviews with teachers indicated that they distinguish between teaching profession and activity in educational organization (more apparent differences between person-organization fit and person-job fit). Therefore it is suggested that future studies other components of person-environment fit such as person-job congruence and person-profession congruence examined. It is should remember about limitations of our study that this study was sectional and there is probability to ambiguity n casual relationships. On the other hand, this study concentrated only on public schools, while it is necessary to conduct such studies both in privative an public schools to generalize its findings to population.

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