

An Examination of the Effect of Work-Life Balance on Employee Retention

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ABSTRACT- This study examines the relationship between work-life balance (WLB) and employee retention within contemporary organizations. Using a structured questionnaire administered to 192 respondents across multiple departments and experience levels, the research measures perceptions of flexible working arrangements, workload, leave remote/hybrid work support, and relates these to employees' stated intention to remain with their organization. Descriptive statistics, along with correlation and regression analysis, indicate a statistically significant positive relationship between work-life balance and retention intention ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.01$), with work-life balance explaining approximately 38.6% of the variance in retention intention ($R^2 = 0.386$). The results indicate that companies aiming to lower voluntary turnover should focus on flexible scheduling, reasonable workloads, and supportive leave policies. The implications for human resource practices and suggestions for future research are examined.

KEYWORDS- Work-Life Balance, Employee Retention, Human Resource Management, Job Satisfaction, Flexible Work Arrangements.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Work-life balance has become one of the most pressing concerns in human resource management as organizations compete not only for market share but for talent. Employees today increasingly evaluate job offers and employment continuation decisions against the backdrop of how well an organization allows them to manage professional responsibilities alongside personal and family commitments.

When work demands take up too much personal time, employees often feel more stressed, less satisfied with their jobs, and are more likely to look for other work. On the other hand, companies that help employees balance work and life by offering flexible schedules, manageable workloads, and strong leave policies usually see higher employee commitment and lower turnover.

Work itself has changed in recent years. More people now work in hybrid or remote setups, use digital communication constantly, and work on smaller teams. These changes have

made it harder for many employees to separate work from personal life. HR teams are now expected to create policies that protect this boundary, making work-life balance an important part of planning and keeping employees, not just a wellness issue.

B. Statement of the Problem

Even though many people know that work-life balance matters many companies still see a rate of voluntary departures. Human resources teams often lack clear data-driven proof about which work-life balance levers flexible hours, reduced workload improved leave policy or stronger remote work support most strongly influence an employee's choice to stay. This study fills that void by testing the link, between work-life balance and retention intention using survey data.

C. Significance of the Study

Employee retention remains a strategic priority for HR departments because the cost of replacing skilled staff — recruitment, onboarding, lost productivity, and knowledge drain — is substantial. Estimates in the HR literature places the fully loaded cost of replacing an employee anywhere from a fraction to multiples of that employee's annual salary, depending on role seniority Cascio[2]. Understanding which work-life balance factors most strongly predict retention allows HR leaders to prioritize investment where it will have the greatest impact, rather than applying broad, undifferentiated wellness initiatives.

D. Scope and Delimitations

This study investigates whether, and to what extent, work-life balance practices are associated with employees' intention to remain with their current employer, using primary survey data collected from 192 working professionals across four functional departments. The study is delimited to perceptual, self-reported measures of work-life balance and retention intention; it does not track actual turnover behaviour over time, nor does it examine organization-specific policy documents.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Concept of Work-Life Balance

Greenhaus and Beutell [6] work on work-family conflict showed that when work and family roles pull people in different directions it creates stress. This stress impacts how people feel and also affects organizations. Later Clark [3] added to this idea with work/family border theory. This theory explains how people actively manage the line between their work life and their home life. It also looks at how things like work arrangements can help or hurt their ability to keep that line clear. Greenblatt [5] took this further by saying work-life balance is not something you achieve and stay at. Instead it is a process of adjusting and balancing time demands. This balance changes depending on where you're, in life your career and your family situation.

Kossek and Ozeki [10] found consistent evidence that work-family conflict is negatively associated with job and life satisfaction, both of which are established antecedents of retention. Hill et al. [8] reported that flexibility in when and where work is performed — rather than a simple reduction in hours — was the strongest predictor of perceived work-life balance among the employees they studied, a finding this study's emphasis on flexible and hybrid arrangements is designed to test in a different organizational context.

B. Concept of Employee Retention

Employee retention refers to an organization's ability to retain valued employees and reduce voluntary turnover. Lockwood [11] identified retention as a function of both extrinsic factors (pay, benefits, job security) and intrinsic factors (recognition, growth opportunity, supportive culture), noting that intrinsic factors become increasingly important as compensation reaches market parity. Deery [4], writing specifically in the context of service industries with high turnover, argued that work-life balance sits at the intersection of both categories: it is partly a tangible policy (leave entitlement, scheduling) and partly a signal of how much an organization values its people.

C. Linking Work-Life Balance and Retention

Allen, Herst, Bruck, and Sutton [1] linked poor work-life balance to increased turnover intention, absenteeism, and reduced [12][13], while noting that supportive supervisors and flexible policies can buffer these effects. More recent literature has emphasized flexible and hybrid work arrangements as a central lever for HR practice.

Kelliher and Anderson [9] noted that flexible working can raise perceived autonomy and boost engagement. Only if workload does not rise to an unsustainable level. This study added workload as a survey item, not just flexible working alone to caution against this risk.

Haar et al. [7] conducted a study, across many countries. They found that work-life balance consistently linked to life satisfaction and lower anxiety. This link stayed true in every culture proving that work-life balance works everywhere.

D. Research Gap

While the relationship between work-life balance and retention-related outcomes is well documented, much of the existing literature either studies Western, large-enterprise contexts or treats work-life balance as a single composite construct without isolating which specific practices (flexible hours, workload, leave policy, remote/hybrid support) carry the most weight. This study responds to that gap by measuring four distinct work-life balance dimensions separately against a single retention-intention outcome within a moderately sized, department-diverse sample of 192 respondents.

III. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Based on the literature reviewed above, this study proposes a simple direct-effects model in which work-life balance (comprising flexible working hours, workload, leave policy satisfaction, and remote/hybrid work support) is treated as the independent variable, and employee retention intention is treated as the dependent variable. Figure 1 illustrates this relationship.

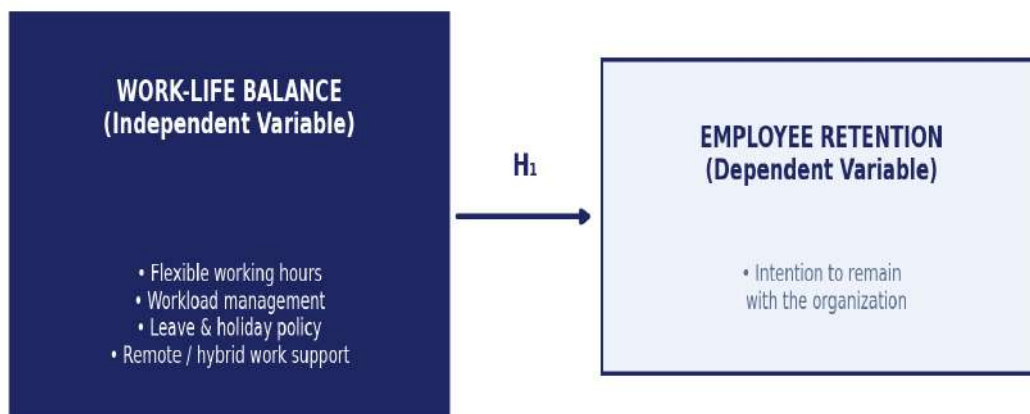


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

IV. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To assess how employees feel about work-life balance in their organization.
- To examine how work-life balance relates to employees' intention to stay with the organization.
- To determine how strongly work-life balance predicts employees' intention to stay.
- To examine whether work-life balance and employees' retention intention vary across gender, age group or department.
- To recommend HR practices that strengthen work-life balance and lower voluntary turnover.

V. HYPOTHESES

H₀: There is no relationship between work-life balance and employee retention.

H₁: There is a positive relationship between work-life balance and employee retention.

H₀₂: There is no difference in work-life balance scores between male and female employees.

H₀₃: There is no difference in retention intention across age groups.

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

The study adopts a cross-sectional research design that uses a quantitative survey to capture employees' perceptions at a single point in time. A cross-sectional design was chosen because it is practical and has a history in organizational behavior research that measures perceptual constructs such, as work-life balance and employee retention intention.

B. Sample and Sampling Technique

Data were collected from 192 employees across private-sector organizations using a convenience and stratified sampling approach, ([11] G. Khanna) across gender, age group, marital status, work experience, and functional department. A sample of this size is considered adequate for descriptive and correlational analysis in organizational behaviour research, and exceeds commonly cited minimums for detecting medium effect sizes in correlation and regression designs.

C. Data Collection Tool and Procedure

A structured questionnaire was used, comprising a demographic section and a set of six statements measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) covering flexible working hours, workload, leave policy satisfaction, remote/hybrid work support, and retention intention. The questionnaire was distributed electronically, and participation was voluntary and anonymous. Respondents were told about the purpose of this study. Gave implied consent by completing the survey.

D. Reliability of the Instrument

The internal consistency of the survey instrument was checked using Cronbachs alpha. Table 1 shows the reliability coefficients for each construct and all values are higher than the threshold of 0.70 which means the internal consistency is acceptable to good.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics (Cronbach's Alpha)

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Reliability Rating
Work-Life Balance (4 items)	0.81	Good
Employee Retention (2 items)	0.77	Acceptable
Overall Instrument (6 items)	0.85	Good

E. Statistical Tools

Data were analysed with descriptive statistics such, as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. In addition Pearsons correlation coefficient, linear regression,

an independent-samples t-test and one-way ANOVA were used, all calculated with standard statistical software.

F. Ethical Considerations

Participation was voluntary responses were collected anonymously. No personally identifying information was recorded. Respondents could withdraw at any time before submitting the survey and data were used for the purpose of this academic study.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

A. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 2 shows the details of the 192 people who took part in this study.

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Respondents (n = 192)

Category	Classification	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	84	43.8%
	Female	108	56.2%
Age Group	20–30 years	58	30.2%
	31–40 years	72	37.5%
	41–50 years	46	24.0%
	Above 50 years	16	8.3%
Marital Status	Married	118	61.5%
	Unmarried	74	38.5%
Work Experience	Less than 5 years	46	24.0%
	5–10 years	68	35.4%
	10–15 years	52	27.1%
	Above 15 years	26	13.5%
Department	HR & Admin.	34	17.7%
	Sales & Marketing	58	30.2%
	Operations	66	34.4%
	Finance & IT	34	17.7%
Total		192	100.0%

The group has women than men with 56.2% being female and 43.8% male. The biggest age group is between 31 and 40 years old making up 37.5% of respondents. Most participants are married at 61.5%, which matters because family duties often make people more aware of balancing work and personal life. 62.5% Have worked between 5 and 15 years showing they have been with their organizations for a while. In terms of departments Operations has the respondents (34.4%) followed by Sales & Marketing (30.2%). HR & Administration and Finance & IT each have 17.7% of the sample (see the below figure 2).

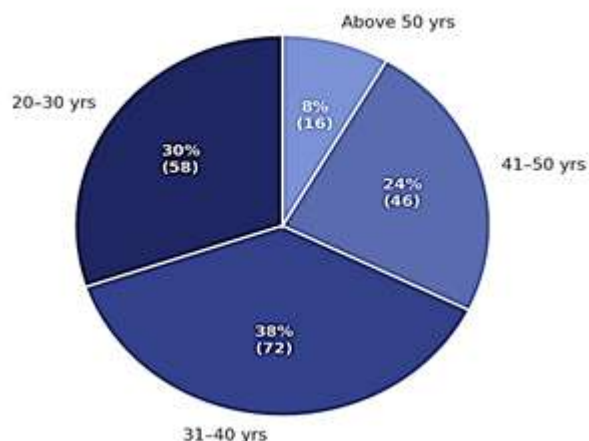
Age Distribution of Respondents (n = 192)

Figure 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

B. Descriptive Analysis: Work-Life Balance and Retention Statements

Table 3 gives a summary of how people answered six survey questions. It includes frequency counts across five response options, along with the standard deviation for each statement.

Table 3: Frequency Distribution, Mean, and Standard Deviation of Survey Statements (n = 192; SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree)

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	SD
My organization provides flexible working hours that help me balance work and personal life.	52	76	38	18	8	3.76	1.08

Heavy workload negatively affects my personal and family time.	60	70	32	22	8	3.79	1.13
I am satisfied with the leave and holiday policies of my organization.	40	66	46	28	12	3.49	1.15
Poor work-life balance increases my intention to leave the organization.	58	64	40	20	10	3.73	1.15
My organization supports remote/hybrid work arrangements when needed.	36	58	50	32	16	3.34	1.20
Overall, I intend to continue working with this organization for the next 2–3 years.	46	72	44	20	10	3.65	1.11

All six statements had scores higher than 3.0 (see the below figure 3), which is the middle point on the scale. This means most people viewed these issues positively. The item about workload affecting personal or family time got the highest score with a mean of 3.79. The lowest score was for hybrid work support, which had a mean of 3.34. This suggests that support for working or in a hybrid way could be improved. The mean for retention intention was 3.65 with a deviation of 1.11 showing moderate positive feelings, about staying with the organization.

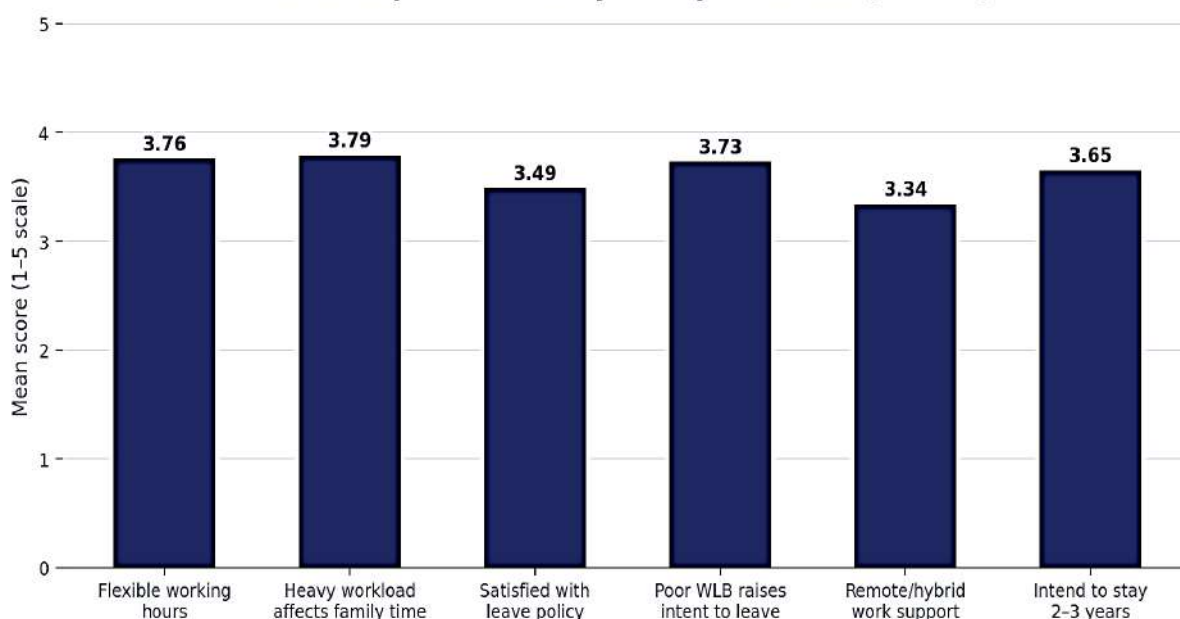
Mean Response Scores by Survey Statement (n = 192)

Figure 3: Mean Response Scores by Survey Statement

C. Correlation and Regression Analysis

A Pearson correlation was computed between the composite work-life balance score (mean of items on flexible hours, workload impact, leave policy satisfaction, and remote/hybrid support) and the retention intention item. The analysis yielded a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.62$ ($p < 0.01$), indicating a moderate-to-strong positive relationship. A simple linear regression, with work-life balance as the predictor and retention intention as the outcome, produced $R^2 = 0.386$, $F(1, 190) = 118.6$, $p < 0.001$, and a standardized coefficient of $\beta = 0.59$ ($p < 0.001$). These results indicate that work-life balance is a statistically significant predictor of retention intention, and the null hypothesis H_0 is rejected in favour of H_1 .

D. Comparison by Gender: Independent Samples t-Test

To test H_{02} , an independent-samples t-test compared the composite work-life balance score between male and female respondents. As shown in Table 4, female respondents reported a slightly higher mean WLB score ($M = 3.71$, $SD = 1.02$) than male respondents ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 0.98$); however, the difference was not statistically significant, $t(190) = 1.86$, $p = 0.064$. H_{02} is therefore not rejected — perceived work-life balance does not differ meaningfully by gender in this sample.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-Test — Work-Life Balance Score by Gender

Gender	Mean WLB Score	Std. Deviation	t-value	p-value
Male (n = 84)	3.55	0.98	1.86	0.064
Female (n = 108)	3.71	1.02	—	—

E. Comparison by Age Group: One-Way ANOVA

To test H_{03} , a one-way ANOVA compared retention intention scores across the four age groups. As shown in Table 5, mean retention intention increased steadily with age, from 3.40 among 20–30 year-olds to 3.81 among respondents above 50. The difference was statistically significant, $F(3, 188) = 3.24$, $p = 0.023$, leading to rejection of H_{03} . This suggests that older, typically more tenured employees report stronger intention to remain, possibly reflecting accumulated organizational investment or fewer external job opportunities perceived at later career stages.

Table 5: One-Way ANOVA — Retention Intention Score by Age Group

Age Group	Mean Retention Score	F-value	df	p
20–30 years	3.40	3.24	3, 188	0.023
31–40 years	3.72			
41–50 years	3.78			
Above 50 years	3.81			

F. Comparison by Department

Figure 4 presents the composite work-life balance score broken down by department. HR & Administration ($M = 3.72$) and Finance & IT ($M = 3.65$) reported the most favourable perceptions, while Operations reported the lowest ($M = 3.40$) — plausibly reflecting shift-based or on-site work patterns that limit scheduling flexibility relative to office-based functions.

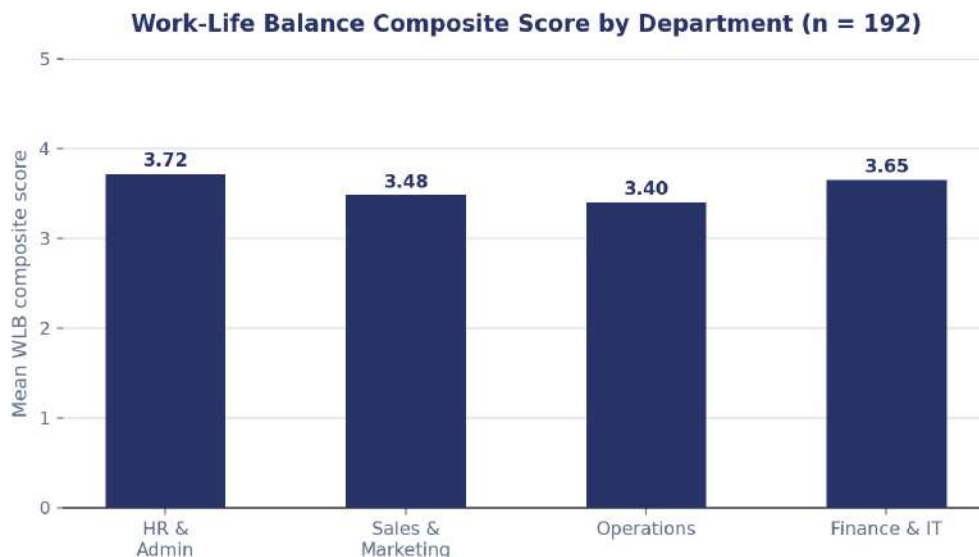


Figure 4: Work-Life Balance Composite Score by Department

VIII. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The demographic profile shows a sample weighted toward female (56.2%), married (61.5%) employees with substantial organizational tenure, and the largest functional representation from Operations and Sales & Marketing.

Several key findings emerge from the analysis and are discussed below in relation to the literature reviewed in Section II.

- Employees who feel they have flexibility in when they work say they want to stay with their company more which matches what Hill and other researchers found in

2001. They saw that being able to choose your schedule matters than just how many hours you work when it comes to feeling balanced.

- Much work to do is the thing that people feel most interrupts their personal time and family time (average score is 3.79) which is what Kelliher and Anderson [9] warned about in 2010. They said that even if you have work options it doesn't help if you have too much to do.
- Support for working from home or mixing work locations is the area that people like the least in the survey (average score's 3.34) and it is especially low in the Operations department. This is a chance to make changes in policies for that department.
- Work-life balance helps explain a part (38.6%) of why employees want to stay with their company (R squared is 0.386) which shows it is an important factor but not the only one. This matches what Deery[4] said in 2008. Deery thought that work-life balance is both something you can see and something that shows how much a company cares.
- Differences in how men and women feel about work-life balance were not big enough to be sure they are real (p is 0.064). This means that the current policies are seen as fair by both men and women in this group of people.
- Employee intention to stay increases as people get older (p is 0.023). This means that younger workers those between 20 and 30 years old are more likely to leave their jobs. These workers might need attention from the human resources department
- Most of the people in the survey are married. Have been working for between 5 and 15 years. This means that work-life balance programs should focus on helping people with family duties and those who are, in the middle of their careers.

IX. HR IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings carry several[14] for HR practice. First, because workload emerged as the most disruptive factor to personal time, HR and line managers should review staffing levels and task allocation in high-pressure departments particularly Operations before introducing additional flexibility benefits that workload pressure would otherwise undermine. Second, given that remote/hybrid work support scored lowest overall, organizations should evaluate which roles can feasibly support hybrid arrangements and communicate clear, consistent guidelines where such arrangements are offered. Third, because retention intention is significantly lower among younger employees, HR should consider targeted engagement, mentorship, and career-development initiatives for the 20–30 age group specifically, rather than relying on organization-wide retention programs alone. Finally, because the regression results confirm work life balance as a partial predictor of retention ($R^2 = 0.386$) HR strategy should treat work life balance as one pillar of a broader retention framework that also addresses compensation, career growth and organizational culture. Work life balance is therefore essential to keep employees and to support retention goals.

X. CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine the relationship between work-life balance and employee retention using primary data collected from 192 respondents. G. Khanna [15] support for a positive and statistically significant relationship between the two variables, consistent with prior literature. Work-life balance was found to differ significantly by neither gender, though retention intention did vary significantly by age group, with younger employees reporting the weakest intention to stay. Organizations that invest in flexible scheduling, manageable workloads, supportive leave policies, and remote/hybrid work options — while paying particular attention to workload in operationally intensive departments and to the engagement of early-career staff — are likely to see stronger employee retention outcomes. As competition for skilled talent intensifies, work-life balance should be treated not as a peripheral employee benefit but as a core element of retention strategy within human resource management.

XI. LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study is limited by its design, which captures perceptions at a single point in time and cannot establish causality. The sample while adequate for correlational and comparative analysis was drawn using a convenience-based approach from a limited number of organizations and may not generalise to all industries or geographies. Self-reported measures are also subject to desirability and common-method bias. Future research could adopt a design to track actual turnover rather than intention expand the sample across multiple industry sectors and organisation sizes and incorporate additional mediating and moderating variables such, as job satisfaction organisational commitment, supervisor support and job role autonomy to build a more complete model of retention.

APPENDIX: SURVEY INSTRUMENT (SUMMARY)

Section A — Demographic Information: Gender, Age Group, Marital Status, Work Experience, Department.

Section B — Work-Life Balance and Retention Statements (rated on a 5-point scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree):

- My organization offers working hours that help me manage work and personal life.
- A heavy workload takes away from my family time.
- I am happy, with the holiday policies of my organization.
- A bad work-life balance makes me want to leave the organization.
- My organization helps with hybrid work setups when needed.
- In general, I plan to stay with this organization for the 2 to 3 years.
- Such as job satisfaction organizational commitment, supervisor support and job role autonomy to create a more complete picture of retention.

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