CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of the Study

Nonprofit organizations have been vital to American society for over a century. They play an important role in providing education, social services, housing, and health care. As the number of nonprofit organizations grows, the challenges they face also grow. One challenge is the increased competition for funding and employees. “Recruitment, motivation, and retention of qualified staff and volunteers have become harder due to increased competition. The resulting work environment is most demanding” (Barbeito & Bowman, 1998: 2). Another challenge is the aging of the nonprofit workforce. Nonprofits will find recruiting more difficult as baby boomers move towards retirement (Joslyn, 2002a). It is important for nonprofit scholars and practitioners to give more attention to these challenges in order to sustain and improve the nonprofit community. “The range of essential nonprofit contributions to our communities—from healing the sick to showcasing artistic expression—depends on the vitality of our nonprofit workforce” (Peters, Fernandopulle, Masaoka, Chan, & Wolfred, 2002: 22). Unfortunately, many in this workforce are leaving their employers at a detrimental rate
(Joslyn, 2002b; Peters et al., 2002; Taketa, 2002). For executive directors, the average tenure is three to five years (Peters et al., 2002).

Since the 1980s, nonprofit organizations have come under increasing pressure to be efficient and effective. As a result, nonprofit managers need to utilize stronger leadership techniques to manage staff and to raise funds (Barbeito & Bowman, 1998). Nonprofits are experiencing an elevating reliance on fundraisers for financial stability (Wagner, 2002). At the same time, the turnover rate for fundraisers (also called development officers) is becoming a matter of great concern (Peters et al., 2002). Past studies illustrate that fundraisers have an average length of service of every 3 to 4 years, jeopardizing the capacity of nonprofits to remain financially healthy (Schwinn, 2002; Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002; Sommerfeld, 2002a; Anonymous, 2003). For planned giving officers—a subset of fundraisers—the average turnover is even higher, at every 2 years (Ashton, 2005). According to Mal Warwick, a fund-raising consultant in California,

[turnover among fundraisers] represents a major cost, and is one of the most significant factors holding back many leading nonprofit organizations from fulfilling their fundraising potential. The issue is really worth academic study to give charities the facts they need to tackle the issue (Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002: 41).

The purpose of this dissertation is to enhance the nonprofit sector’s understanding of the determinants impacting fundraisers’ voluntary turnover, and thereby help nonprofits retain their fundraising staff. Nonprofit managers can make better human resource decisions if they are equipped with the knowledge of why
turnover is occurring. The research questions are: (1) What is the average length of service among fundraisers? and (2) What are the main variables predicting fundraisers’ intent to stay in their current job?

Literature Review

The Nonprofit Sector as an Employer

The growth of the nonprofit sector affects not only the people it serves, but also the people it employs. Nonprofit organizations are commonly referred to as charities, third sector organizations, tax-exempt, philanthropic, and voluntary associations. By definition, nonprofits are regulated under the federal tax code utilizing the charitable status under section 501(c)(3) of the tax code. This group, also called 501(c)(3) organizations, makeup the majority of nonprofits and serve the broad public through social services, education, religion, scientific advancement and relief of poverty. Another type of nonprofit organization falls under the 501(c)(4) section of the tax code. These organizations differ from the 501(c)(3) organizations in that they are not tax exempt. The majority of their activities include lobbying and political work (Boris, 1999). For the purpose of this dissertation, when referring to a “nonprofit organization” it will be defined as a 501(c)(3), not a 501(c)(4). The discussions around the research sample in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 also will be referring to 501(c)(3) employees only.
Estimates show that the nonprofit sector grew slowly from the 19th century to about 1960, and since then has grown rapidly (Hammack, 2001). “Numbering 12,500 in 1940 and 50,000 in 1950; by 1967, there were 309,000 secular nonprofits; by 1977, there were 790,000; and by 1989, just under a million—an eighty-fold increase in 40 years” (P. D. Hall, 1994: 19). Other accounts of nonprofit sector growth show that in 1989 there were 1,262,000 nonprofits and in 1996 there were 1,455,000, an increase of 15.3 percent over 7 years. Today, that number is over 1.8 million organizations (V. Orlando from Independent Sector, e-mail communication, April 21, 2005). The growth in the number of nonprofits has been substantially faster than the population growth (Boris, 1999).

Translating these numbers into salaries and wages these organizations pay out is helpful in understanding the extent of the nonprofit sector’s influence on the nation’s economy. In 1930, nonprofit expenditures accounted for about 1.6 percent of all wages and salaries; by 1960, they accounted for more than 3 percent. Their share has continued to grow.

Nonprofit expenditures as a share of U.S. wages and salaries increased by 36 percent in the 1970s, then doubled between 1980 and the mid-1990s. In the year 2000, nonprofit organizations account for as much as 10 percent of U.S. employment and perhaps 9 percent of the domestic economy as a whole (Hammack, 2001: 165).

The Independent Sector (2004) reports that 64 percent of workers in the nonprofit sector are employed by health organizations and educational institutions. However, the most rapid growth is occurring in social service agencies. A forecast
done by the Independent Sector states that between 2000 and 2010, “the health services industry is estimated to add 2.8 million jobs. Social and human services will add another 1.2 million jobs” (2). The nonprofit sector will have to make sure that nonprofit managers and their human resource professionals are equipped with the skills and strategies to recruit and retain the quality employees needed for these millions of new jobs.

The growth in the nonprofit sector has drawn the attention of scholars (Hammack, 2001, Barbeito & Bowman, 1998) and practitioners to the fact that competition among nonprofit organizations is real. As a result, more sophisticated ways of bringing in and retaining quality staff, volunteers, and funding has become a topic of concern and discussion.

**Problem Statement: Turnover Within the Nonprofit Sector**

Turnover has long been a focus of study by organizational management scholars. Employee turnover—people leaving organizations—is a major organizational phenomenon. In recognition of this fact, turnover is included in many definitions of organizational effectiveness (Mobley, 1982 b). Scholars and practitioners have focused on turnover and retention because these are issues that impact businesses’ bottom lines. Businesses and organizations can realize a financial loss from turnover due to an increase in recruiting, hiring, and replacement costs
(Mobley, 1982 b; Fitz-Enz, 1997; Chambers, 2001; Peters et al., 2002). Turnover drains organizations’ resources through advertising, through time spent interviewing and training new staff, and through opportunity costs during the period the new employee is becoming familiar with the job and the organization (Peters et al., 2002). Specifically, turnover costs can range from

... six months of an hourly worker’s salary to 18 months of salary for a professional employee. If a 1,000-employee hospital loses 84 nurses per year (an average for a hospital with 400 nurses), it will spend nearly $5 million per year in replacement costs alone, or more than $18,000 every business day (Drizin, 2002: 4).

Turnover of top staff in nonprofit organizations is recognized by scholars and practitioners as a problem. A study done by the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation found that among their 184 affiliates, the average length of service for the top executives was three years. This lack of tenure was causing turmoil among the organizations and preventing them from raising funds efficiently (Marchetti, 1999). According to Paul Light, it is important to reduce the sector’s well-known high turnover rate in order to deal with the shrinking workforce issue (Joslyn, 2002b). The Council of Michigan Foundations (2004) states that nonprofit executives used to average 10 years’ tenure, but that number has now dropped to 5 years. Recent national studies predict this declining trend to continue. A 2002 study found that one-third of nonprofit executive directors on the Hawaiian Islands expected to leave their jobs by 2004, and only 27 percent planned to remain in their jobs past 2007 (Taketa,
2002). A similar scenario is seen for nonprofits nationwide. This trend toward “short-tenure executives can do lingering harm to any agency’s culture and performance” (Peters & Wolfred, 2001: 6).

A 2002 study (Peters et al.) found that 64 percent of nonprofit managers said the impact of turnover and position vacancy was high or very high. Only nine percent said it had no impact at all. The Peters study found that the responses to this question did not vary significantly by agency mission or budget size. Within these same nonprofits a disproportionate number of administrative, non-program staff (including fundraisers) leave their jobs. The majority of nonprofits operate with administrative (budget) rates of 10 to 20 percent, yet administrative staff represent 47 percent of employees that leave their jobs (2). One reason for this is that administrative staff have more transferable skills than program staff. As a result of nonprofits’ struggling to retain administrative staff, some agencies have stretched their previous limits by offering senior fundraisers higher salaries than those of the executive directors hiring them (Peters et al., 2002).

Not all turnover is bad. There are also positive organizational consequences, namely the displacement of poor performers and the influx of new knowledge and ideas (Mobley, 1982 b; Griffeth & Hom, 2001; Sommerfeld, 2002b). However, research indicates that high exit rates tend to negatively affect organizational effectiveness due to hiring costs, opportunity loss during vacancy, and resources spent on training new employees (Alexander, Nuchols, & Bloom, 1994).
Additionally, the Peters (2002) study showed that nonprofit managers felt that the ideal voluntary turnover of their staff would be zero percent.

*The Fundraising Profession*

Fundraisers are people who acquire revenues from private sources for nonprofit organizations (Wagner, 2002). Private sources generally come from individuals, corporations and foundations. More recently, nonprofits are charging their fundraising staff to not only bring in dollars from private resources, but from government and commercial activities as well. This is called Total Resource Development (Pollack, 2003). Nationwide, nonprofits rely on fees and dues for approximately 38 percent of their income; government for 31 percent; “other sources” for 11 percent; and private gifts (i.e., foundations, corporations, and individuals) for the remaining 20 percent (Hodgkinson, Nelson, & Sivak, 2002). These percentages may shift as government continues to cut back in funding nonprofits, which will increase nonprofits’ dependency on fundraisers (Herbst, 2005).

Fundraisers are not only important to the health of the country’s philanthropic activities, but they also play a vital role in the health and stability of the nonprofit sector. According to Wagner (2002), “fundraising [does not] take place in a vacuum. It is an essential function in the entire scope of the nonprofit sector” (13). In 2003, Americans gave $241 billion to nonprofits (The Center on Philanthropy at IU, 2003).
Many of these donations came in response to an “ask” made by charities through their fundraising staff.

Robert Hartsook (1996) stated that “fundraising is an important part of the success of any nonprofit institution. Serious attention to the means and type of supervision of the fundraising staff can be critical to success” (41). For those nonprofits that rely on private contributions for a large portion of their budget, this statement weighs even more heavily. An example of this reliance is National Public Radio, which obtains 85 percent of its budget from private contributions (National Public Radio, 2004).

Using data from a 2002 study done by The Urban Institute (Hager, Rooney, & Pollack, 2002), a conservative estimate can be made of nearly 200,000 fundraisers (defined as staff members whose main responsibility is to raise money for their organization) in the United States. That number is significantly larger than an estimate of 25,000 in 1995 (Hohler, 1995). Historically, fundraisers were responsible for acquiring private donations for nonprofit organizations (Duronio & Tempel, 1997).

In 1952, Arnaud Marts determined that the tremendous growth in charitable giving since 1900 was attributed not only to a burgeoning growth in wealthy Americans, but to a new way of encouraging people to give—the modern fundraising campaign. Organizations such as the March of Dimes and United Way revolutionized fundraising. They started what some call the “democratizing of philanthropy” or the
mass campaign for small donations. As these fundraising strategies became more organized, so did the individuals who ran them (Hodgkinson, 2002; Hodgkinson et al., 2002).

As the new profession of fundraising emerged in the mid-1930s, the American Association of Fund Raising Counsel (AAFRC) was created. This led to the development of professional standards for fundraisers. Today, the largest association for fundraisers is the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), previously the National Society of Fund Raising Executives (established in 1960). (See Appendix A for AFP’s Statement of Ethical Principles.) AFP reported 1,899 members in 1979; 20,000 members in 2002 (Hodgkinson, 2002; Hodgkinson et al., 2002); and 26,000 in 2004 (AFP, 2004) throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico, and China. Since all fundraisers are not members of AFP, the actual number of fundraisers is larger than 26,000, and may be closer to the estimated 200,000 fundraisers aforementioned.

The largest influx of fundraisers was seen in the 1980s as a response to the cut in federal funding of nonprofit organizations. Around the same time, nonprofits started hiring internal fundraisers instead of consultants. In 1980, the creation of the Independent Sector, a membership organization now consisting of 800 nonprofits, was created. This led to donors and fundraising professionals working together in a more formalized fashion due to increased networking and educational opportunities (Wagner, 2002).
In the 1990s, the development of the profession continued as more individuals chose fundraising as a career. The escalating growth in the number of nonprofits required more fundraisers. In addition, there was increased activity in research and publications, and more colleges and universities offered fundraising classes and certifications (Wagner, 2002).

Fundraising is a growing and important profession, yet there is limited empirical research on fundraisers. The Association of Fundraising Professionals, Indiana University’s Center on Philanthropy, search firms, and nonprofit associations, such as the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), have done some initial studies on the demographics of fundraisers. One of the most comprehensive empirical studies done on a national level is Margaret Duronio and Eugene Temple’s book, *Fundraisers: Their Careers, Stories, Concerns, and Accomplishments* (1997). The authors surveyed 1,651 respondents regarding their age, gender, education, salary, professional history, current positions, and attitudes towards fundraising. (Details of this study will be discussed further in Chapter 2).

Today, the demographics of fundraisers can be better understood by looking at AFP’s 2005 Compensation and Benefits Study, which is a survey of AFP’s membership. This study confirmed that 68 percent of the membership is female and 32 percent is male. Less than 10 percent self-identified as non-white. The types of nonprofits most represented are educational organizations, health services, and human/social services. These fundraisers tend to be older, with 60 percent between
the ages of 45 and 64. The study found that among fundraisers in the United States, the average salary is $80,685; for males it is $95,879 and for females it is $73,295 (Brown, Healey, Maehara, & Williams, 2005). This is good demographic information, yet there is much more to learn about this population; such as why they joined the fundraising profession, what career or academic path they came from, and what they perceive as the opportunities and challenges of working as fundraisers.

Problem Statement: Turnover Among Fundraisers

The impact of staff departure is not equal for all positions in nonprofit organizations. Obviously, a receptionist’s departure has a different effect than the departure of a fundraiser. Since a fundraiser generates resources and a receptionist typically does not, there is a greater opportunity cost associated with the exit of a fundraiser (Peters et al., 2002). Because fundraisers are often charged with building relationships with donors on behalf of the organization, turnover negatively affects those relationships and thereby, donors contributions. Donors who feel that they are passed from fundraiser to fundraiser may not be as inclined to give (Schwinn, 2002). A specialist in staffing of fundraisers stated that a major impact of fundraisers’ turnover is confusion among donors. “They like to know that the people who ask them to support the organization also stay and support it” (C. Murray, personal communication, October 5, 2004).
It is difficult to estimate exactly how much of an organization’s fundraising capacity is lost each time a fundraiser leaves, but the loss can be estimated by figuring the amount of time the position is vacant and the amount of money that the fundraiser raised in a year. William J. Smith, a business consultant calculates that

... if a fundraiser who brought in $2 million a year leaves and it takes four months to find a replacement, a third of the $2 million—aabout $667,000—in future income is lost. If it then takes six months for the replacement person to get fully set up in the new job, the charity can expect to lose as much as $1.16 million, Mr. Smith says, because the new hire may bring in 30 to 50 percent less in gifts while (s)he is learning the ropes (Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002: 40).

Some scholars believe the turnover rate problem is overstated. In exploring turnover in the field, Duronio and Temple (1997) found that the average length of service for female fundraisers was 3.31 years and 4.42 for male respondents. Looking at those with 10 or more years’ experience in the profession, the average length of service increased to 4.6 years for women and 5.72 for men. Duronio and Temple concluded that

... the turnover rate problem is overstated... our research data suggest that turnover in [fundraising] is related to the rapid growth of the field, the resulting opportunities for advancement for [fundraisers], and the strong competition for experienced [fundraisers]. The implication is that as growth of the field slows, the field itself will become more stable (57).

That time of a “slowing field” may have arrived. According to recent trends, data suggest that the nonprofit labor market has weakened significantly. While the nonprofit sector maintained a good pace in the 2001 recession and its aftermath, 2004
data show a halt in employment growth in the sector nationwide. Between 1990 and 2004, the average employment growth in the nonprofit sector was 2.4 percent. In the year ending July 2004, that rate had fallen to .5 percent (Irons & Bass, 2004). “The nonprofit sector really has ground to a halt over the last year and a half . . . there is something else going on here beyond the normal ebb and flow of the sector” (Jensen, 2004: 23). Even though this data does not focus on fundraisers per se, the historically rapid growth of the nonprofit workforce, which directly affects the growth of the fundraising profession, is changing. Therefore, the turnover issue needs to be revisited.

Other experts disagree that the turnover phenomenon is overstated. The Chronicle of Philanthropy (Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002) featured an article called “The Revolving Door Dilemma,” which indicates that “for all the talk of high turnover among [fundraisers], the issue has received little recent attention from researchers, charity associations, or foundations” (40). The authors reported that charity executives, board members, and other fundraisers are frustrated by the problems caused by high turnover among fundraisers. “This is a problem that, at least anecdotally, appears to be going strong or getting worse, despite a weak national economy that has prompted people in other professions to curtail their job hunting” (Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002: 39).

In New York City, the issue gained attention from The New York Times (Herbst, 2005). Nonprofits in New York say that the problem of high turnover among
fundraisers is not only worrisome, it is critical. One executive suggested that demand for fundraisers has outpaced the supply and that “there is a terrible dearth of good fundraisers” (1).

The problem is not only a problem for organizations, it also has become an issue for individuals who go into interviews with the “revolving door reputation” of the profession. According to Colette Murray, 2004 Chair of AFP and an executive for a search firm specializing in development positions, “we are always asked to find candidates who will make a long-term commitment” (C. Murray, personal communication, October 5, 2004). In a conversation with a fundraiser in higher education, he stated that in his recent job search interviews, several of his potential employers questioned him about his intentions regarding staying in the new position for a significant length of time, as they were tired of staff leaving after a year (P. Gaines, personal communication, August 13, 2004).

The Research Questions

Based on a literature review of the fundraising profession, research questions will look at how the situation is now and why turnover is happening. The research questions are: (1) What is the average length of service among fundraisers? and (2) What are the main variables predicting their intent to stay in their current job?
The Turnover Rate Among Fundraisers

A 2002 study done by CASE (Council for Advancement and Support of Education) found that fundraisers have the lowest average length of service of the five divisions in higher education institutional advancement (development, advancement management, advancement services, alumni relations, and communications/marketing). In fact, even though fundraisers were the second highest paid group of the five, they spent at least one year less in their positions and institutions than did employees in the other four disciplines. The Council for Advancement and Support of Education found that, on average, fundraisers stayed in their current positions 3 years and at their current institutions 6 years (Lajoie & Pollack, 2002). Although this study was limited to higher education, it is an indication that fundraisers may have a shorter length of service than their colleagues in institutional advancement.

In 2002, AFP surveyed 1,215 people who, on average, said they had been in their current jobs for 3 years or less (Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002). DRG (Development Resource Group), a New York search firm, found that in 2003 fundraisers were staying in their current positions longer than previous DRG surveys indicated. Nineteen percent stayed 5 to 6 years, 52 percent stayed 3 to 4 years and 16 percent stayed 1 to 2 years (DRG, 2003).

A 2004 study conducted by AFP found that 24 percent of fundraisers had changed jobs the previous year. This turnover rate is down from 2002, when a similar
study found 36 percent of the profession switching jobs. The same study found that 61 percent of fundraisers plan to stay in their jobs indefinitely, up from 42 percent in 2003 (Hall, 2004).

Another study concluded that among all the sectors (nonprofit, for profit, and government), the average employee stays in his or her job 3.4 years (Drizin, 2002). For nonprofit executive directors it is about 3 to 5 years (Peters & Wolfred, 2001). Therefore, the 2003 data showing fundraisers leaving every 3 to 4 years (DRG, 2003) is similar to other professions’ average length of service. Yet several Chronicle of Philanthropy articles discuss the turnover rates among fundraisers as “high” (Baldwin, 2002; Schwinn, 2002; Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002: 39; Sommerfeld, 2002b) and “higher, compared to other professions” (H. Hall, 2004:18). Even if the data do not consistently support that fundraisers’ turnover rate is high compared to other professions, the fundraising profession is questioning the reasons for what is seen as a revolving door problem.

Determinants Found in the Nonprofit/Fundraising Profession Literature

Regardless of how fundraisers compare to other professionals in turnover rate, nonprofits experience hardship as a result. Therefore, in conjunction with the argument that there is a problem of turnover among fundraisers, there is also the question of why it is happening. Regardless of the labor market (as hypothesized by Duronio and Temple), people leave jobs for different reasons. In order to decrease the
nonprofit sector turnover rate among fundraisers, practitioners need to understand the related determinants. The determinants suggested by interviews in Duronio and Tempel’s 1997 study included: (1) a desire for personal achievement over dedication to an organization, and (2) a lack of support from their board and president (Duronio & Tempel, 1997).

The Chronicle of Philanthropy (Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002) cited AFP’s survey of 1,215 people who said the reasons for their turnover included: (1) stress from the demands of the job, especially from the board and president; (2) ability to get a higher salary from another organization; (3) desire to obtain a job with a more prestigious title; and (4) lack of agreement with their supervisor. Common determinants, such as support from supervisor and board and a desire for personal achievement (i.e., salary and title) are evident in these two studies.

Yet other studies have found different issues and variables relating to the turnover of fundraisers. The president of DRG hypothesized that the economy is a factor. “Scarce jobs and sluggish giving patterns have made many [fundraisers] reluctant to jump ship . . . charities may have grown more patient with the [fundraising] process and are putting less pressure on slow-producing employees” (Anonymous, 2003: 33). The DRG survey found that 46 percent of the 109 nonprofit organizations responding stated that fundraisers who left their current positions did so for quality of life reasons such as spending more time with family or deciding to obtain additional education (DRG, 2003). These conclusions were made from a low
number of respondents, all of whom were speculating on behalf of fundraisers who had left the organization. Therefore, the reliability and validity of this research is questionable.

In summary, various factors found in the literature for fundraisers’ voluntary turnover are: (1) fundraisers’ relationships with their organization’s president and board (Duronio & Tempel, 1997; Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002); (2) availability of higher paying jobs in the field (Duronio & Tempel, 1997; Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002); (3) quality of life needs (Anonymous, 2003; DRG, 2003); (4) the strength of the economy (Anonymous, 2003; DRG, 2003); (5) self-interest motivators such as job title and salary (Duronio & Tempel, 1997; Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002; Anonymous, 2003; DRG, 2003); and (6) commitment to the organization’s mission (Duronio & Tempel, 1997; Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002). The theoretical model discussed in Chapter 4 will further examine these and other determinants.

The Significance of the Study

The Practical Significance of the Study

Practically, the big picture goals of this research are to help nonprofits retain fundraisers so that they can (1) reap the benefits of having tenured fundraisers and (2) avoid the costs associated with turnover. As discussed in the problem statement,
tenured fundraisers are beneficial because they have gotten beyond that first-year learning curve, during which they do minimal fundraising (Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002), and they tend to have better-developed relations with their donors, which leads to more consistent contributions (Schwinn, 2002).

Research estimates that the cost of turnover ranges between 93 percent to 200 percent of a leaver’s salary, depending on skill and responsibility levels (Griffeth & Hom, 2001). For the average fundraiser making $80,685 and leaving their job, it would cost their employer between $75,037 and $161,370. Indeed, if nonprofits could minimize avoidable turnover, they would also circumvent these costs, ultimately improving their efficiency.

Nonprofit managers need to better understand the reasons for fundraisers’ turnover so that they can implement retention strategies that combat the related determinants. Some human resource professionals rely on surveys to predict who will quit a company and the reason for their leaving. Such predictions can assist managers in forecasting future turnover problems. In addition, scholars have long known that employee surveys diagnose the causes of voluntary turnover more accurately than the perceptions of supervisors or exit interviews by human resource managers on why people quit (Griffeth & Hom, 2001). For the majority of nonprofits that do not take the time to survey their own employees on these issues, this study will add insight into the main reasons why fundraisers leave, and can act as a tool for managers to improve retention rates.
As the fundraising profession continues to grow (Wagner, 2002), the demand for profession-based research will increase. Specific topics of interest to the population, such as turnover, should be studied to support the development of the field.

The Theoretical Significance of the Study

Theoretically, there are two major objectives for this research: (1) to add to nonprofit management literature and (2) to extend the application of employee turnover theory to a new population—fundraisers.

Most theoretical models improve with use. This dissertation will use an existing theoretical model, the Causal Model of Turnover, which historically has measured for-profit and military employee populations, and adapt it for fundraisers. Scholars dedicated to turnover research now have additional knowledge to support, or refute, theories important to the field of turnover research.

Management technologies within the nonprofit sector have historically borrowed from the for-profit sector and the public sector. Because nonprofits have an audience and goals that differ from the other sectors, their management tools must be modified to meet their unique needs (Block, 1990). The literature on nonprofit management and human resources is growing. This research project adds to this important movement. This dissertation, and its conclusions, will encourage future research on human resource issues within the nonprofit sector.
The following chapters will provide details on the theoretical model chosen for this research. They will also cover the research methodologies used and the results found regarding fundraisers and their intent to stay in a job.
CHAPTER 2
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Turnover Models

In the field of organizational development and behavior, theories around retention and voluntary turnover have been developing for years. Turnover is an important field of study because it adversely influences organizational effectiveness or the ability of organizations to meet their goals (Price, 2001). Turnover is “the movement of members across the boundary of an organization” (Price, 2001: 600). Voluntary turnover is “turnover that is self-initiated” instead of organization-initiated (Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino, 1979: 496). It is also referred to as “quitting” or “avoidable turnover” (Price, 1997: 532). The term “turnover” in this dissertation means “voluntary turnover.”

The measurement of turnover among organizational scholars is typically done by measuring turnover within an organizational setting. There are several formulas used to measure turnover, most of which look at employee records (Price, 1997). It is also common to measure the average length of service within an industry or profession (Filipowski 1992, Pennington 2003). For the purposes of this dissertation, the term turnover will be used when looking at the literature; however, the dissertation’s actual research will be measuring the average length of service (not
turnover). This will be described further in Chapters 3 and 4. Formal inquiry on employee turnover first appeared in the mid-1950s with research indicating a link between turnover and employee dissatisfaction (Mowday, Koberg, & McArthur, 1984). Since the 1950s, over a dozen turnover models have been proposed and 1,000 studies have been conducted (Hom, Caranikas-Walker, & Prussia, 1992). In 1973, Lyman W. Porter and Richard M. Steers reviewed 60 studies from the turnover literature. They found that more comprehensive studies were needed to look at the many possible variables related to turnover (Porter & Steers, 1973). The turnover theory landscape received most of its shape between 1977 and 1981 when scholars became more sophisticated in developing comprehensive models (Steel, 2002).

Thomas Lee and Richard Mowday (1987) suggested that the three main turnover models of that time were from (1) William H. Mobley, (2) Richard M. Steers and Richard T. Mowday, and (3) James L. Price. Although decades have passed, the models developed by these scholars continue to shape current research.

The scholar most commonly referenced in the turnover literature is William H. Mobley. His work has been one of the most influential turnover models because it serves as a foundation for other scholars to confirm and/or question. (Hom & Griffeth, 1991; Hom et al., 1992; Sager, Griffeth, & Hom, 1998). “Mobley’s 1978 conceptual framework has attracted more research attention than any other turnover theory” (Hom et al., 1992: 890).
Mobley began developing his framework by criticizing the existing turnover research, which was limited to establishing economic and job dissatisfaction as factors contributing to turnover. Economists and personnel researchers focused on vacancy rates and economic activity to understand turnover; behavioral scientists tried to understand the correlation between job dissatisfaction and turnover. Mobley believed that these approaches were “conceptually simplistic and empirically deficient bases for understanding the employee turnover process” (Mobley et al., 1979: 493).

Mobley believed that there was more to the phenomenon of turnover and advocated for a better-developed conceptual model. Mobley (1977) originally hypothesized that the causal relationship leading to turnover was made up of intermediate linkages of variables. He looked at job attitudes and withdrawal cognitions (thoughts about quitting), which were associated with the decision to leave a job. If a person is unhappy at a job, his or her dissatisfaction will arouse thoughts of quitting. Those thoughts will then lead to a consideration of seeking another job. Therefore, a decision to leave, he theorized, was indirectly related to actual turnover.

The second model Mobley (1979) developed came from his realization that turnover was much more comprehensive and complex than his original framework suggested. He expanded his model to include a broader range of variables that could
influence a person’s decision to leave. Instead of concentrating on the intermediate linkages within the decision process, he focused on the complex relationships between factors (job- and non-job-related) that can influence the decision process.

In order to study the complex relationships between determinants, he organized his new model into individual demographic and personal variables (i.e., age, tenure, sex, family responsibilities, and education) and work environment variables (i.e., pay, promotion, supervision, and peer group relations). In addition, he included job satisfaction, organizational commitment, involvement, job attachment, met expectations, job content factors, the external environment, and intentions to search and quit into his model.

Both of his models have been frequently challenged (Mowday et al., 1984; Lee & Mowday, 1987; Hom et al., 1992; Sager et al., 1998), and from those challenges, a variety of cognitive constructs have developed using additional factors that Mobley did not consider. For example, Hom et al (1992) compared the construct of thoughts of quitting, search decisions, and quit intentions among the military, civilian, nursing, and non-nursing professions. He found that military turnover experienced a different process than non-military turnover, mainly due to the occupational market. The effect of thoughts of quitting among the military might not lead to quit intentions as quickly as other occupations because of the military’s innate relocation process. Military personnel often commit to multi-year employment due to strict enlistment policies.
In contrast, because of chronic nursing shortages, nurses show a greater correlation between quit intentions and actual quitting than do military personnel. Nurses have an easier ability to implement their intent to leave because of their confidence in finding other work in the market (Hom et al., 1992). The fundraising profession may be similar to the nursing profession because it also shows signs of a high market demand (Duronio & Tempel, 1997; Herbst, 2005). Chapters 4 and 5 will look at this assumption further.

The second of the three models is the Steers-Mowday model developed by Richard M. Steers and Richard T. Mowday (Steers & Mowday, 1981). This model includes a sequence of variables that leads to turnover. Steers and Mowday argued that job expectations that have been met (or not met) lead to the intention to stay (or leave). The intention to leave, plus the influence of non-work variables and alternative job opportunities, then leads to actual leaving. The Steers-Mowday model is unique among most of the turnover models offered because it considers more non-job related variables, such as the spouse’s job and time left for family. The main difference between the Steers-Mowday model and Mobley’s model is the order of events leading to turnover (see Figure 2.1). “Mobley theorized that search processes precede intention to leave, whereas Steers and Mowday theorized that search processes follow intention to leave” (Lee & Mowday, 1987: 724).
The third significant model of turnover was developed by James L. Price. He began developing this model in 1972 with colleague Charles W. Mueller and graduate students at the University of Iowa. Next to Mobley, Price has received the most systematic research attention (Lee & Mowday, 1987). Price’s approach to developing a model came from a wish to look beyond the models that were predominantly developed by economists and to consider non-economic factors. Price believed that the economic models focused too heavily on monetary variables and did not incorporate enough non-monetary variables.

Like many other scholars in this field, Price focused on creating a comprehensive model. Price theorized that the interaction between job satisfaction and job opportunities occurred just prior to an employee leaving an organization. He focused on five main determinants that were directly related to job satisfaction: pay (income), integration (worker’s cohesion), instrumental communication (the transmission of information necessary to do a job), formal communication (officially transmitted information), and centralization (the degree to which power is differentially distributed).
Price’s model differed from that of the Steers-Mowday’s model in that Steers and Mowday proposed that the “immediate antecedent of an employee’s leaving is the interaction of the intention to leave and alternative job opportunities.” Price, instead, hypothesized that the immediate antecedent of an employee’s leaving is the interaction of job satisfaction and alternative opportunities (Lee & Mowday, 1987: 722) (see Figure 2.2). Price also put more emphasis on structural variables (autonomy, distributive justice, job stress, pay, promotional changes, routinization, and social support). Even though Mobley and Mowday included structural variables in their models, they have more of a social psychological focus, looking at satisfaction, utility, and values. Price admits that all the models show an overlap of multiple variables, but there is a distinct difference in the emphasis on the types of variables (economic, social psychological, structural) used in each model (Price, 2001).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEERS-MOWDAY</th>
<th>Intent to Leave</th>
<th>Alternative Opportunities</th>
<th>Leaving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRICE</td>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>Alternative Opportunities</td>
<td>Leaving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

= interaction

Figure 2.2: Comparison of Steers-Mowday Model and Price’s Model

Price spent his career developing this original theory into the Causal Model of Turnover, one of the most respected in the field (Price, 2004). The model was developed over several decades and went from incorporating six main variables to
incorporating over 20 variables. With continued advancement and research, however, turnover models continue to receive criticism. Much of the criticism comes from the lack of quality empirical research and validation studies (Lee & Mowday, 1987; Hom et al., 1992; Steel, 2002).

Robert P. Steel (2002), in his analysis of the current field of turnover research, outlined its three limitations. The first is the “gaping disparity between the conceptual importance of job search mechanisms and their empirical significance” (347). Most turnover models give job search mechanisms a central role. Yet the average correlation between perceived employment alternatives and turnover is actually insignificant at $r = .13$. Even though researchers have tried to explain this disparity, they have not been completely successful, and Steel (2002) argues that this disparity has caused a “blemish on turnover research’s otherwise enviable record of scholarly progress” (347).

The main concern is that giving job search mechanisms a central role in research fails to explain why some people leave their jobs without any kind of job search. Steel suggests an evolutionary search model, which theorizes that the search behavior of individuals is more complex than previous models depict. He theorizes that individuals receive various levels of information or feedback about the job market, which influences their search behavior. While he acknowledges that static cohort methodology has a role in understanding turnover, he suggests a longitudinal methodology to appropriately test his evolutionary model (Steel, 2002).
The second gap Steel identified is the field’s lack of research sensitivity towards the amount of time the turnover process takes. The popular static and cross-sectional studies do not appropriately capture the decision-making process of turnover.

Although turnover theorists consistently choose to portray turnover as the product of a time-lapse process, relatively little progress has been made in the empirical literature toward accommodating the temporal aspects of turnover. Longitudinal, episodic forms of research would appear to be particularly well suited to the study of decisional processes with strong evolutionary overtones, but turnover researchers have relied almost exclusively on static methods of investigation (347).

Steel concludes that the discipline’s lack of progress could be repaired with the addition of quality studies to validate the field.

His third criticism is that the majority of turnover research is on occupationally homogeneous samples, which show less variance than occupationally diverse samples. He recommends that the field pay more attention to those small variances in order to expand the understanding of the turnover process. “Clearly, turnover studies must capitalize on all key sources of intrastudy variance if they are to maximize predictive yields” (358).

After reviewing the leading models in turnover theory, as well as the criticism of past research, the framework developed by James L. Price (2001) was selected for this study. Steel’s recommendation of paying more attention to small variances in an occupationally homogeneous sample will be discussed in the chapter on the study’s
results. However, this research will not attempt to apply Steel’s recommendations of incorporating an evolutionary model or using longitudinal methodology due to limited time and resources. Even though this project will not be able to overcome all the weaknesses identified in this literature review, the strengths of Price’s model, especially its comprehensiveness, will be emphasized.

The Causal Model of Turnover

The Causal Model of Turnover (CMT) serves as a framework to understand the determinants of voluntary turnover. The CMT was chosen for this study because it has been well tested (Price, 1990; Price & Kim, 1993; Price, 1995; Kim, Price, & Mueller, 1996; Iverson, 2000; Kim, 2000; Price, 2001, 2004), and it is an “explanatory” model which includes variables from the three main perspectives: economic, psychological, and sociological. This is different from the other existing models, which are not explanatory (Price, 1990).

The CMT has been previously used to study the military and the medical workforce. By adapting it to a new population—the fundraising profession—additional knowledge will be available for future researchers. For example, this study may discover that certain CMT variables are or are not applicable for this profession. Future researchers may choose to add or delete variables from the model if their population is similar to fundraisers.
Historically, turnover research predominantly focused on men and blue-collar workers. More recently, research has expanded to study women and various service industries (personal communication, Dr. James Price, October 27, 2004). This is an important advancement in the field because there is still much to learn about the distinct differences found in certain populations. For example, women and men often differ in factors such as pay, promotion, and turnover rates. Testing this and other turnover models in various populations and industries is important for research to be applicable to a wide-range of people. The fundraising profession, for example, has been looking at the salary discrepancy between women and men for years (Boice, 2006), but has done very little empirical testing to better understand this phenomenon.

Turnover research originally asked study respondents their reasons for leaving a job. James Price changed this type of research by asking respondents to describe their work and then measuring leavers versus stayers. The CMT is based on this method of research (personal communication, Dr. James Price, October 27, 2004). A challenge to the former style of research is that after an employee leaves a job, it may be difficult to find him or her to ask them why they left. Instead, using this new type of research, a researcher can access all employees at one point in time and then, after a period of time, analyze data from the surveys against those who left and those who stayed.

There are 23 identified variables (or determinants) in this model (see Figure 2.3). They are categorized into exogenous (originating from without) variables;
intervening (coming between) variables; and endogenous (originating from within) variables. The variables in the model are discussed in the order that Price (2001) discusses them mostly by how they are organized in the model. They are not listed in order of significance. The exogenous variables are listed vertically on the left and connect to the intervening variables which are illustrated horizontally (see Figure 2.3).

There are three categories of exogenous variables: (1) environmental, (2) individual, and (3) structural. There are two environmental variables: (1) opportunity and (2) kinship responsibility. Opportunity is the availability of alternative employment, a determinant often emphasized by economists. In this model, increased opportunity leads to greater turnover. Kinship responsibility is the level of obligation one has to local relatives such as spouse and children. It is hypothesized that an increase in kinship responsibility reduces turnover. Price recently added two other environmental variables to the CMT relating to kinship responsibility: the extent to which an employing organization is responsive to kinship concerns and the extent to which both the husband and wife have careers (Price, 2001).

The second category of exogenous variables are individual variables: (1) general training, (2) job involvement, (3) positive affectivity, (4) and negative affectivity. General training is the transferability of skills and education between employers. The CMT shows that the higher the transferability of skills, the higher the number of turnover. Job involvement is the exertion of effort on the job or the
“degree to which an employee is willing to work” (Price, 1997: 411). It is argued that job involvement positively affects job satisfaction, which negatively impacts turnover (Price, 2001). Positive and negative affectivity indicate the individual’s feelings about the job. Positive affectivity selectively perceives the favorable aspects; negative affectivity selectively perceives the non-favorable aspects. Positive affectivity is believed to indirectly decrease turnover through an increase in job satisfaction; negative affectivity indirectly increases turnover through a decrease in job satisfaction (Price, 2001).

The third category of exogenous variables are structural variables: (1) autonomy, (2) procedural justice, (3) distributive justice, (4) stress, (5) pay, (6) promotional chances, (7) routinization, and (8) social support. Autonomy is the degree to which an employee exercises power in relation to his or her job. The assumption is that autonomy decreases turnover through its positive relationship to job satisfaction. Procedural justice or equality is defined as the degree to which rights are applied equally to all employees.  

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1 Price (2001) discusses procedural justice and recommends that it be used in turnover research “the evidence for procedural justice’s positive impact on job satisfaction is of such a magnitude as to require its inclusion in future research” (611-612). He also provides questions for a survey to measure procedural justice. However, he does not include it in his model because of the lack of literature on this determinant. Due to his recommendation that it be used for research, it is included for this study.
Figure 2.3: Causal Model of Turnover

+ = positive relationship
- = negative relationship

* Includes resource inadequacy, role ambiguity, role conflict, and workload

** Includes supervisory support, peer support, and kinship support
Distributive justice or *equity* is the extent to which rewards and punishments are associated with job performance. The CMT theorizes that both procedural justice and distributive justice decrease turnover through positive impact on job satisfaction (Price, 2001). Job stress is a determinant that includes four types of stress: resource inadequacy, role ambiguity, role conflict, and workload. The CMT posits that job stress increases turnover through its negative impact on job satisfaction. Pay includes the salary and benefits employees receive for their services to the employer. This model theorizes, as do most, that an increase in pay decreases turnover (Price, 2001).

Promotional chances refer to potential for vertical mobility within an organization. The CMT argues that promotional chances indirectly decreases turnover by positively affecting job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Routinization is the level of repetitiveness in a job. Routinization increases turnover by its negative impact on job satisfaction.

Social support is the availability of informal aid with job-related problems. Price (2001) distinguishes three types of support: supervisory (support from supervisor), peer (support from coworkers), and kinship (support from family and friends). Social support (specifically supervisory) decreases turnover through its positive impact on job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

The intervening variables include: (1) job satisfaction, (2) organizational commitment, (3) search behavior, and (4) intent to stay. Job satisfaction is the extent to which employees enjoy their job. Organizational commitment is the level of
loyalty one feels towards their employing organization. Both of these determinants are believed to have a negative correlation with turnover.

Search behavior is the extent to which employees look for other job opportunities. The CMT shows that search behavior increases turnover. Intent to stay is the degree to which employees plan to continue at their current employment. The CMT hypothesizes that intent to stay decreases turnover due to employees’ intentions to stay in a job and not leave (Price, 2001).

James Price (2001) identified some concerns related to the CMT. He acknowledges that demographic variables (gender, age, etc.) are not included in this model. Demographic variables do not precisely indicate the conditions that produce variations in turnover. That is because demographic variables are believed to affect the identified determinants, but are not determinants themselves. For example, marital status does not directly affect turnover, but it does affect kinship responsibility. Price notes that demographic variables can be used as control variables in the data analysis process. Another concern, or warning, identified by Price is that not all of the exogenous variables affect turnover through job satisfaction, organizational commitment, search behavior, and intent to stay. Determinants of opportunity, kinship responsibility, and general training may, or may not, directly impact turnover. Price’s point is that there may be multiple paths from the exogenous variables to turnover.
To implement the CMT into this research proposal, a few alterations have been made. First, instead of turnover being the dependent variable, intent to stay is the dependent variable. Due to the nature of this study, the subjects are individuals from different organizations; this research is not based on one organization. In addition, due to time and resource limitations associated with this dissertation project, a longitudinal study cannot be conducted. Most research measures actual turnover a year after the beginning of a study. Therefore, actual turnover cannot be measured. However, intent to stay has been identified as the closest variable to turnover in the causal chain of explanation (Price & Kim, 1993; Price, 2001; Thatcher, Stepina, & Boyle, 2003). Because of this, “scholars who wish to study turnover commonly focus on intent to stay” (Price & Kim, 1993: 125). Using intent to stay instead of turnover as the dependent variable limits the researcher’s ability to identify those in the sample who quit their jobs, even if they have a high sense of intent to stay, due to other factors; such as, a spouse getting relocated out of state, the need to care for a family member, or a sudden organizational change which creates a working environment that is no longer desirable. Therefore, even though intent to stay is often used by scholars when turnover cannot be measured, it is not as accurate as measuring actual turnover.

Second, the variable “pay” will be split into two variables, actual pay (money and its equivalents which employees receive for their services to the employer) and perception of fairness of pay (the degree to which employees perceive their pay as
being fair). Price only includes actual monetary pay; however, literature supports the distinguishing perception of fairness of pay as an important factor in turnover (Kim, 2005).

The third alteration adds a few variables that relate specifically to fundraisers’ turnover (intent to stay). Through an analysis of the limited research on fundraisers, seven variables have been identified that are worth further investigation, including: (1) fundraisers’ relationship with their organization’s president and board (Duronio & Tempel, 1997; Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002); (2) availability of higher paying jobs in the field (Duronio & Tempel, 1997; Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002); (3) quality of life needs (Anonymous, 2003; DRG, 2003); (4) the strength of the economy (Anonymous, 2003; DRG, 2003); (5) self-interest motivators such as job title and salary (Duronio & Tempel, 1997; Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002; Anonymous, 2003; DRG, 2003); (6) commitment to the organization’s mission (Duronio & Tempel, 1997; Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002; Brown & Yoshioka, 2003; Moore, 2004); and (7) unrealistic fundraising goals.

The first factor, relationship with the president and board, can be partially measured within the CMT determinant of social support. Support from the organization’s president is represented through supervisory support. Support from the board of directors, however, is an important variable that is unique to the field of fundraising. Fundraisers often rely on board members to assist them with asking donors for money. If board members do not understand or acknowledge the important
work of fundraisers, fundraisers may feel unsupported and their tasks may become more difficult because they are raising money without the assistance of the board. Based on the possible influence of the support of the board of directors on fundraisers’ intent to stay, board of directors’ support will be added as a fourth type of social support.

The second factor, availability of other higher paying jobs, can be measured within the CMT’s determinant of opportunity. The third factor, quality of life needs, includes decisions to leave a job to stay home with children or other family members. This is represented in the model through kinship responsibility. The fourth factor, the economy, will not be added as a determinant since this study was conducted at one point in time. The fifth factor, self-interest motivators, is already represented within the CMT through the promotion and pay determinants.

The sixth factor, commitment to mission, is similar to the variable organizational commitment, but is not exactly the same. Organizational commitment is more broad—including a belief in an organization’s goals and values, a willingness to exert effort on behalf of an organization, and a strong desire to maintain membership in an organization (Price, 1997). Commitment to mission focuses on the mission only. For example, a fundraiser might have a strong commitment to an organization that provides summer camp programs for kids, but (s)he is not really passionate about the mission. That same fundraiser might be more passionate about working on behalf of abused kids. (S)he could work for an agency that protects
abused children, and therefore, have a high commitment to mission, but a low organizational commitment if (s)he does not support the goals of the agency in fulfilling its mission. Because commitment to mission is not represented in the CMT, it will be added as new variable with a positive correlation with intent to stay.

The seventh factor, unrealistic fundraising goals, is not represented in the model so it will be added as a fifth type of job stress. This additional variable is in response to informal conversations with fundraisers about job stress resulting from their inability to accomplish the unrealistic fundraising goals set by their organization (see Figure 2.4).

Hypotheses

The hypotheses in this study are based on the CMT and the aforementioned adjustments. Due to the large number of variables in this study, the variables were positioned into five different hypotheses and arranged by their positive or negative impact on intent to stay, by their type of determinant (exogenous or intervening), and whether or not a variable was part of the original CMT or newly added for this study. The researcher’s goals in developing these hypotheses are to (1) find a manageable way to interpret the variables and data within the context of this complex model and (2) discover and understand the role of the significant determinants within the model.
H₁: The group of exogenous variables containing opportunity, general training, negative affectivity, job stress (including unrealistic fundraising goals), and routinization will have a negative effect on intent to stay.

This hypothesis includes the exogenous variables that have a negative correlation with intent to stay. All are in the original model, except for unrealistic fundraising goals. The factor of unrealistic fundraising goals was included because it is considered along with the other job stresses: resource inadequacy, role ambiguity, role conflict, and workload.

H₂: The group of exogenous variables containing kinship responsibility, job involvement, positive affectivity, autonomy, distributive justice, procedural justice, pay (actual salary), pay (perception), promotional chances, and social support (coworkers, supervisor, and family/friends) will have a positive effect on intent to stay.

This hypothesis includes the exogenous variables that have a positive correlation with intent to stay. All are in the original model.
H₃: The group of intervening, endogenous variables containing job satisfaction and organizational commitment will have a positive effect on intent to stay.

This hypothesis includes the two intervening variables, job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which have a positive correlation with intent to stay. They are both in the original model.

H₄: The intervening, endogenous variable of search behavior will have a negative effect on intent to stay.

This fourth hypothesis includes the one intervening variable, search behavior, which has a negative correlation with intent to stay. It is in the original model.

H₅: Commitment to mission and support of the board of directors will have a positive effect on intent to stay.

This last hypothesis includes the remaining two of the three new variables, commitment to mission and support of the board of directors. Both will have a positive correlation with intent to stay. Support of the board could have instead been included with Hypothesis 2 along with the other support determinants, but it was
included here because the fact that it is a new variable is weighted with higher inquiry interest from the researcher than the fact that it is a support variable. The CMT and the five hypotheses will be further analyzed in Chapters 4 and 5.
Social Support*** Includes supervisory support, peer support, kinship support, and board support

Job Stress* Includes resource inadequacy, role ambiguity, role conflict, workload, and unrealistic goals

Pay** Includes actual pay and perceived fairness of pay

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**Figure 2.4:** The Adjusted Causal Model of Turnover Using Intent to Stay as the Dependent Variable
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the demographics of this study’s sample and outlines the methodological approach to the study. First, a description of the data collection is offered. Second, the sample’s demographics are compared to the demographics of a sample of fundraisers involved in a previous study by the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) (Brown, Healey, Maehara, & Williams, 2005) to add insight to how representative this dissertation’s sample is to the fundraising population. Third, the changes made to the measurement tool are discussed. Fourth, a description of the quantitative data analysis methods is offered. Fifth, reliability and validity issues around this study are analyzed. Last, concluding remarks summarize the findings of this chapter.

Data Collection

The methodology of this research was greatly influenced by James Price and the CMT (Causal Model of Turnover). Methodological decisions mirrored those of previous CMT studies in order to maintain as much of the validity and reliability of the model and its measurement tool as possible. The research process followed a quantitative approach.
Primary data were collected from fundraisers\(^2\) using a survey. Following past research using the CMT, individuals were studied, not organizations. Fundraisers were randomly identified from two sources. One source was the Association of Fundraising Professionals. The second source was an institution that serves fundraisers, which asked to remain anonymous. Therefore, it will be referenced as the “anonymous institution” from here forward.

The Association of Fundraising Professionals was asked to be a source of subjects because it is the leading organization that serves fundraisers through a membership association.\(^3\) In addition, AFP sponsored this research project with a grant, which illustrates their commitment to supporting research on the fundraising population.

The researcher approached one other institution in addition to the Association of Fundraising Professionals in order to obtain a sample that was not solely AFP members. Previous research done by AFP has been criticized because it is limited to their membership and cannot be generalized to the entire fundraising population. There are only a small handful of institutions that have a significant database of fundraisers. These participating institutions (AFP and the anonymous institution) were the first two to be approached and were very responsive to assisting with this study.

\(^2\) Fundraisers are defined as spending at least 50 percent of their job raising funds for a nonprofit organization.

\(^3\) According to its website, “For more than 40 years, AFP has been the standard-bearer for professionalism in fundraising” (AFP, 2006).
The anonymous institution was chosen because it has a large database (approximately 26,000 fundraisers or people interested in learning about fundraising). It provides education to fundraisers, from intermediate to advanced. The anonymous institution does not track whether participants are AFP members or not.

Both AFP and the anonymous institution maintain databases of fundraisers that represent all arenas of the nonprofit sector (education, health, social services, the arts, etc.) and various sized organizations. At the researcher’s request, each of these two sources supplied approximately 600 subjects through their own random computer sampling. Approximately 70 subjects were discarded from the lists because they were out of the country, and this study intended to focus on the United States. There was only one duplicate name found between the two lists.

The two participating institutions provided names, titles, organizations, and addresses of the subjects, but not e-mail addresses. A letter (see Appendix B) was sent to a total of 1,129 subjects in June 2005 introducing them to the study and asking them to access and participate in a Web-based survey at www.surveymonkey.com. Prior to the mailing, the survey was piloted with approximately 30 participants. Feedback on how to improve the survey was received and used to make changes before the final mailing. These changes will be discussed later in the chapter.

A reminder postcard (see Appendix C) was sent to the 1,129 subjects two weeks after the initial letter was sent. The letter and postcard encouraged people to e-mail the researcher to request the results of the study: 100 people responded to this
opportunity. The data of 228 participants were collected from 

www.surveymonkey.com six weeks after the final mailing, for a 20 percent response rate.

Five of the 228 surveys were excluded from the study because respondents selected “b” on question no. 3 (see Appendix D), indicating that they did not work for a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. This study’s focus is fundraisers in the nonprofit sector. Forty-five additional surveys were excluded based on their responses to survey question no. 4: Answering “a” or “b” to no. 4 indicated that they spent less than 50 percent of their time on fundraising. This study’s focus is on those employees who consider themselves fundraisers and spend the majority of their job doing fundraising. An additional nine surveys were discarded because respondents did not answer a majority of the questions. The final sample size was 169.

Sample

The sample of 169 is being compared to that of the 2005 AFP Compensation and Benefits Study of its membership (Brown et al., 2005). The Association of Fundraising Professionals’ study (United States respondents only) is being used because AFP is the leading organization doing research on fundraisers and has access to the fundraising population. In fact, this is the only recent report on fundraisers available to use as a comparison. The main difference between AFP’s sample and this study’s sample is that all of the 664 fundraisers (a 22 percent response rate) from the
AFP sample are AFP members; this dissertation study incorporated both AFP members and non-members. The study participants were not asked whether they were AFP members, but it is assumed that the sample includes both AFP members and non-members since 50 percent of the initial pool came from AFP’s database. It is unknown what percentage of fundraisers from the anonymous institution are AFP members as this question was not included in the survey.

Some demographic variables were included in the survey measurement, however, most are not used in the CMT. Demographic variables were included not for their theoretical significance but for their ability to create a comprehensive dataset and give additional information about these subjects. For example, if a researcher wanted to do additional research on the fundraising profession using this dataset, demographic variables could be helpful in detailing the sample population and looking at different research questions.

The demographic variables to be discussed are gender, ethnicity, age, salary (also an independent variable), years of experience, and education. The representation of nonprofit sub-sectors also will be reviewed. The other demographic variables not mentioned here are marital status and number of children, which will be discussed in Chapter 4 in regards to the independent variable kinship responsibility.

The gender distribution in this study is 75.4 percent (N=126) female and 24.6 percent (N=41) male (see Table 3.1). In the 2005 AFP survey, 66.7 percent of respondents (from the United States) were female, 32.1 percent male. Of the 169
respondents in the current study, 167 answered the question on ethnicity (see Table 3.2). Less than 10 percent of this study’s sample are non-white. Hispanic/Latino was the second most frequent ethnicity with six respondents. The ethnic demographics are very similar to the ethnic demographics of AFP’s study.

Table 3.1: Sample by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Dissertation</th>
<th>AFP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Female)</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Male)</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>98.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>656</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2: Sample by Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Dissertation</th>
<th>AFP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian, not Hispanic</td>
<td>92.2</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Ethnic</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>98.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>656</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Not Valid Due to Low Representation: African American and Alaskan Native
The median age of this study’s sample is 39 and the mean age is 40.71 (see Table 3.3). This sample is younger than that of AFP’s study. Over 65 percent of AFP respondents were between the ages of 45 and 64; only 35 percent of this study’s sample are in that bracket. One reason for this difference could be related to AFP’s hypothesis that AFP members are weighted toward older practitioners (Brown et al., 2005), and this sample includes people who are not AFP members.

Membership in AFP entails paying a fee, and therefore, it may be more likely for fundraisers in established, stable, larger nonprofits to be members (assuming their employer is paying the fee for them). Small grassroots organizations may not have the funds to pay for an AFP membership. Established nonprofits can attract higher experienced fundraisers, who are likely to be older than non-experienced fundraisers. The anonymous institution may be serving younger fundraisers than those that AFP serves. This anonymous institution does not have a membership fee, only fees for the cost of the education programs, which may attract people who are newer to the profession, and therefore, likely to be younger on average.
Table 3.3: Sample by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>AFP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 25</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 or more</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.8</td>
<td>98.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>653</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Salary was measured in increments of $20,000—starting at $30,000 or less to $130,000 or more (see Table 3.4). This study found a mean salary of $56,712.\(^4\) This is significantly less than the mean salary in AFP’s sample, which was $80,685. Unfortunately, AFP data on salary were not available in a similar form for comparison purposes. The difference is probably due to this study’s having a younger sample. It is also likely to be correlated to years of experience in the field. Over half (64.1 percent) of this study’s sample reported having nine years or less of experience in fundraising (see Table 3.5). This is a high percentage compared to AFP’s sample with only 13.7 percent of fundraisers having nine years or less experience. This issue of years of experience will be discussed further in Chapter 4 where average length of service is examined.

\(^4\) Taking the mid-point of each salary level and multiplying it by the frequency of respondents, adding them together, and dividing by N (total number respondents).
### Table 3.4: Sample by Salary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Dissertation*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;$30K</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30-49K</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50-69K</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$70-89K</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$90-109K</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$110-129K</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;$130K</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*AFP raw data for this demographic were not available

### Table 3.5: Sample by Years of Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Dissertation</th>
<th>AFP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 or more</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>99.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>659</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a comparison of education level, the two samples are quite similar. In this study’s sample, 43.8 percent (N=74) completed college and 37.3 percent (N=63) completed graduate school (see Table 3.6). The Association of Fundraising
Professionals’ sample is also well-educated, with 35 percent having a college degree and 45 percent having a masters degree. This similarity reinforces the observation that the main differences between the two samples are age and tenure, not education.

Table 3.6: Sample by Education Completed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Dissertation*</th>
<th>AFP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completed Grade School</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed College</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Graduate School</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed Graduate Degree</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>655</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Not Valid: Completed High School

The types of nonprofit sub-sectors with the highest representation in this study’s sample and AFP’s study are education, social/human services, and health organizations (see Table 3.7). In this study’s sample, 72.70 percent (N=123) of the respondents fall into these three sub-sectors; a little more than the 61 percent in AFP’s sample. Comparing these samples to the nonprofit sector in general shows that these fundraisers under-represent the health and religious sub-sectors, and over-represent the arts/culture sub-sector. This may be due to the fact that many health related organizations have a large portion of their budget from patient fees and public sources and do not need a large fundraising staff. Likewise, religious organizations
receive donations during weekly services, and do not need specialized fundraising staff. The arts/culture sub-sector may a good example of nonprofits that need substantial fundraising staff due to limited commercial activities and public funding.

Table 3.7: Sample by NPO Sub-Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NPO Sub-Sector</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dissertation*</td>
<td>AFP</td>
<td>Nonprofit Sector**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts/Culture</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy/Law</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade, Professional or Association</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/Medical</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>41.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human/Social Services</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Research</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>17.53</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>98.03</td>
<td>99.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>657</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Not Valid: Federation Appeals
** (Independent Sector, 2001)

In conclusion, the most significant finding in the comparison between this study’s sample and AFP’s sample are the differences in age, compensation, and tenure. The surprise is not that there is a correlation between these variables, but that these two samples would have this significant of a difference, particularly in age. In their report, AFP (2005) includes anecdotal evidence that its membership represents an older, more tenured group of fundraisers. It is possible that the anonymous
institution attracts younger, less experienced fundraisers. The survey tool used in this study did not ask respondents if they are AFP members, so it cannot be statistically tested here. Future research should consider this question to better understand if, and why, AFP attracts older fundraisers. These findings also reinforce the fact that fundraising is still developing as a profession and that describing the true population of fundraisers is challenging. Data on this population are limited to a few institutions. Until a clearinghouse for fundraisers, or some way to track these professionals is implemented, it is difficult to generalize this research to the entire population.

Measurement Tool

James Price’s (2001) measurement tool used in the CMT was replicated as much as possible in order to preserve the reliability of the tool in measuring the impact of the determinants. A few adjustments were made to Price’s tool to appropriately adapt it to this study. The first adjustment was in the number of questions per variable. Instead of using four to six items (questions) per variable, this survey used primarily two, and sometimes three, resulting in a total of 75 questions. The process of selection included finding the two or three items per variable from Price’s tool that were the most different from one another, and often selecting a positive response and a negative response. Without this adjustment, the survey tool would have been too lengthy, which might have negatively impacted the response rate (Dillman, 2000).
The second adjustment was to include questions for the new variables: commitment to mission, support of the board, and unrealistic fundraising goals. In order to maintain the validity of the tool as much as possible, wording used in the survey tool for these items was taken from items used in similar variables. For example, question number 40 measures the variable “support from coworkers:” *I enjoy working with most of my coworkers.* That same language was used for question number 38 to measure the new variable “support from the board of trustees:” *I enjoy working with most of the people on the board of trustees.*

The third adjustment was the addition of an introduction. The introduction included occupational-specific items to determine whether or not the respondents worked for a nonprofit, which sub-sector they worked in, if they were self-employed or employed by an organization, and if the respondents fundraised at least 50 percent of their time. This section was added because the study’s focus is on people who work in the nonprofit sector and consider themselves fundraisers (defined as fundraising at least 50 percent of the time). The sub-sector question determined what type of nonprofit (education, social services, etc.) they worked for to help create a comprehensive dataset. It is common for practitioners and scholars to perceive, or analyze, nonprofits based on their type. Even though this research did not analyze the differences among the sub-sectors, future research may want to look at that more closely.
The fourth and fifth adjustments were the addition of two questions: (1) to measure the average length of service (to be discussed in detail in Chapter 4) and (2) question No. 68 asking respondents why they left their last job (see Appendix D). The sixth adjustment was the addition of basic demographic information questions at the end of the survey (as discussed at the beginning of this chapter). The final adjustments were minor changes to the language used for a few questions and the clarification of confusing questions based on feedback from those in the pilot study. For example, using the wording “current employer” instead of “present employer.” Another example of a question that was unclear to the pilot study participants was: 

*Compared to other people, I am more likely to think of my job as a career.* Based on the feedback, the researcher changed the wording to: *I view my job as part of my career*. (*Career is defined as a line of work that an employee plans to pursue for many years.*)

**Data Analysis**

A formula was created to answer the research question, *What is the average length of service among fundraising professionals?* The formula used to determine the average length of service is the difference between current age and age when entered the fundraising profession divided by the number of fundraising jobs held (see Figure 3.1). The average length of service among the 169 fundraisers in this study was calculated using Microsoft Excel.
Multiple regression analysis was used to answer the research question, *What are the main variables predicting fundraisers’ intent to stay?* Multiple regression analysis can estimate the effects of each of the determinants in the CMT on intent to stay. Primary data from the surveys were downloaded from [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com) into a Microsoft Excel format. From there the data were inputted into SPSS for analysis. A data journal was kept throughout this process to track the reversing and recoding of date (see Appendix E).

Most questions used a Likert scale response option (strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree). Responses ranged from five to one (5=strongly agree, 1=strongly disagree). Responses were reversed for negative items (see Appendix F for the Research Matrix). Per Price’s (2001) recommendation, the responses were averaged instead of summed to get a score for each variable for the purpose of comparison.

![Average Length of Service Formula](image-url)
Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity were considered in this research. According to Price, “the measures generally possessed acceptable validity and reliability” (2001: 617).

Factor analysis was used to provide data about discriminant and convergent validity. Most of the research, especially since about 1980 used Confirmatory Factor Analysis provided by LISREL. Reliability is assessed with alpha. The measures generally possessed acceptable validity and reliability. The psychometric properties of the measures are available in the sources cited (Price, 2001: 617).

Even with the adjustments made to the instrument, the researcher feels that the instrument closely reflects the survey suggested by the CMT (2001).

As in many research projects, there are threats to validity. Findings that come from a study that have external validity may be generalizable to other cases or populations (O'Sullivan & Rassell, 1999). In this research design, the use of random sampling has helped increase external validity. However, because the sources of the subjects were institutions that serve fundraisers in exchange for a fee, it is likely that part of the fundraising population who cannot afford, or choose not to participate in, these types of institutions will not be represented in this study. Until there is a way to track the majority of fundraisers in this country, it is difficult to generalize this research to the entire population. Hopefully, future research will continue to seek out ways to identify and understand the actual population of fundraisers.
Conclusion

In comparison to the AFP 2005 Compensation and Benefits Study, this dissertation’s sample is younger, less experienced, and makes less money. The main reason for the differences is most likely related to the fact that this sample was not solely AFP members. Therefore, future research done on the fundraising population should include both AFP members and non-members to strengthen the ability to generalize findings to the entire fundraising population. It is also recommended that future studies find a way to include fundraisers who come from nonprofit organizations that cannot afford educational programs and other fee-based services for their development staff. Those people may not be well represented in this sample, nor that of AFP’s studies. This is a concern for this researcher because if people in smaller, more grassroots organizations were not well represented in this research, the results may only represent those who work in larger, more developed nonprofits and may differ in their intent to stay. This and other possible limitations of this research will be further discussed in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter discusses the results of the data analysis. The first research question (What is the average length of service among fundraisers?) is analyzed using a simple mathematical formula. The second research question (What are the main variables predicting fundraisers’ intent to stay?) is analyzed using multiple methods. First, all of the independent variables are run through multiple regression analysis. In order to determine the most significant variables, a backward elimination regression\(^5\) is used. The variables that survive the elimination process are discussed in further detail. Second, the five hypotheses are tested to determine the number of variance in “intent to stay” that each group explains. The variables that are statistically significant are discussed. Third, the intervening variables (job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and search behavior) are used as dependent variables and regressions are run to test the path of the exogenous (environmental, individual, and structural) variables as illustrated by the adjusted Causal Model of Turnover (CMT). Lastly, a conclusion reviews the findings.

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\(^5\) Backward elimination (or backward deletion) is a form of statistical (or stepwise) regression that takes all independent variables into the statistical equation and then are deleted one at a time if they are not significant in the regression, leaving only those variables that are significant (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001: p 117).
What is the Average Length of Service?

The average length of service for this study’s sample is 3.66 years (see Table 4.1). This formula does not capture those fundraisers who may have been out of the workforce to care for family, or to take time off for education. A limitation of this formula is that it does not take into account those who have not had a continuous employment experience. People take off from working for periods of time for various reasons; unfortunately, this formula does not capture that reality. Therefore, the average length of service of 3.66 years for this sample may be inflated.

Table 4.1: Average Length of Service Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average Length of Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average All</td>
<td>3.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>4.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1997, Duronio and Temple found that the average length of service for female fundraisers was 3.31 years and 4.42 for males. This dissertation project found the average length of service for females was 3.50 years and 4.17 for males. This indicates that the average length of service is still lower for women than men, but it has not changed much within the profession since 1997. Looking at previous research, it may be possible that the average length of service is increasing. In 2002, AFP surveyed 1,215 people who, on average, said they had been in their current jobs
for three years or less (Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002). In 2003, a New York search firm, DRG, surveyed fundraising professionals about job retention: 19 percent stayed 5-6 years, 52 percent stayed 3 to 4 years and 16 percent stayed 1 to 2 years (DRG, 2003). These studies are consonant, although not statistically comparable with the findings of this research.

A 2004 study conducted by AFP found that 61 percent of fundraisers plan to stay in their jobs indefinitely, up from 42 percent in 2003 (Hall, 2004). The possible recent shift in intent to stay found in the research of AFP, DRG, and this dissertation may be related to the halt in growth in the nonprofit sector workforce. Since 1990, the average employment growth in the nonprofit sector has been 2.4 percent. In the year ending July 2004, the rate had fallen to 0.5 percent (Irons & Bass, 2004). Other possible reasons for the change in the average length of service include a maturing profession, the improved pipeline that is feeding trained fundraisers into nonprofit organizations, and the trend of nonprofits merging. These hypothesized reasons will be further discussed in Chapter 5.

The 1997 study by Duronio and Temple looked at fundraisers with 10 or more years of experience in the profession and found the average length of service increased to 4.6 years for women and 5.72 years for men (from 3.31 years and 4.42 years with less than 10 years, respectively). This study found that those with 10 or more years experience in the profession had a significantly longer length of service of 6.48 years compared to those with less than 10 years of experience (an average of
only 2.11 years). Unfortunately, this dissertation does not confirm that there has been a recent increase in length of service among fundraisers. A longitudinal study would need to be done to confirm this theory.

What are the Main Variables Predicting Fundraisers’ Intent to Stay?

Before analyzing the variables within their respective hypotheses, a backward elimination multiple regression analysis was run on all of the 26 independent variables. See Table 4.2 for definitions of the variables. See Table 4.3 for the descriptive statistics of all 26 independent variables and the dependent variable.

Testing the Assumptions for Multiple Regression

The following assumptions were tested prior to running a multivariate regression: (1) linearity, (2) homoscedasticity, (3) normality, and (4) independence. Intent to stay was analyzed through histograms, which indicated a normal curve. Though it was slightly skewed negatively (-0.690), it did not require transformations. The correlations table (see Table 4.4) confirms that there is no threat of multicollinearity (the highest correlation between variables is job satisfaction and promotional chances at .709).6

---

6 Correlations are assumed to be low (.1-.3), moderate (.4-.6), and moderately high to high (.6-1) (Goodwin, 2003).
Table 4.2: Variable Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intent to Stay ‘Intent’</td>
<td>Extent to which employees plan to continue membership with their employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction ‘JobSatisfaction’</td>
<td>Extent to which employees like their work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>Degree to which an employee exercises power relative to his/her job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to Mission ‘Mission’</td>
<td>Extent to which employees have loyalty to the mission of their employer*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Commitment ‘OrgCommit’</td>
<td>Extent to which employees have loyalty to their employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routinization</td>
<td>Extent to which jobs are repetitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributive Justice ‘DistJustice’</td>
<td>Extent to which rewards and punishments are related to job performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedural Justice ‘ProcedJustice’</td>
<td>Degree to which rights are applied universally to all employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotional Chances ‘PromoChance’</td>
<td>Degree of potential occupational mobility within an organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Involvement ‘JobInvolve’</td>
<td>Willingness to exert effort on the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress (Inadequate Resources) ‘StressIR’</td>
<td>Lack of means to perform a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress (Conflict) ‘StressConflict’</td>
<td>Inconsistent job obligation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress (Ambiguity) ‘StressAmb’</td>
<td>Unclear job expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress (Workload) ‘StressWork’</td>
<td>Number of effort required by a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress (Unrealistic Fundraising Goals) ‘StressGoal’</td>
<td>Unrealistic fundraising goals*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Support (Supervisor) ‘SupportSup’</td>
<td>Assistance with job-related problems from supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Support (Family and Friends) ‘SupportFamFr’</td>
<td>Assistance with job-related problems from family and friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Support (Coworkers) ‘SupportCoWo’</td>
<td>Assistance with job-related problems from coworkers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Support (Board of Trustees) ‘SupportBOT’</td>
<td>Assistance with job-related problems from the board of trustees*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 Definitions with an * are the author’s. All others are quoted directly from Price (2001).
Table 4.2: Variable Definitions Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Training ‘GenTraining’</td>
<td>Extent to which the knowledge and skills required for a job are transferable between employers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity</td>
<td>Availability of alternative jobs in the environment (locally and non-locally)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Affectivity ‘PositiveAff’</td>
<td>Dispositional tendencies to experience pleasant emotional states</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Affectivity ‘NegativeAff’</td>
<td>Dispositional tendencies to experience unpleasant emotional states</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search Behavior ‘Search’</td>
<td>Degree to which employees are looking for other jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of Fairness of Pay ‘PayPercep’</td>
<td>Degree to which employees perceive their pay as being fair*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinship Responsibilities ‘KinshipResp’</td>
<td>Existence of obligations toward relatives living in the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>Money and its equivalents which employees receive for their services to the employer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3: Descriptive Statistics: Mean and Standard Deviation for All Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intent</td>
<td>3.5483</td>
<td>1.02376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JobSatisfaction</td>
<td>3.9911</td>
<td>.97051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>3.8876</td>
<td>.79756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>4.0266</td>
<td>.80041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OrgCommit</td>
<td>3.9941</td>
<td>.75787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routinization</td>
<td>2.2278</td>
<td>.79799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DistrJustice</td>
<td>3.3757</td>
<td>.74758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ProcedJustice</td>
<td>3.3373</td>
<td>1.07259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PromoChance</td>
<td>3.4083</td>
<td>1.01133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JobInvolve</td>
<td>3.1243</td>
<td>.81244</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3: Descriptive Statistics: Mean and Standard Deviation for All Variables Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>StressIR</td>
<td>2.7160</td>
<td>.87921</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Handling of Missing Data

There were only two questions on the survey that produced a significant percentage of missing values. Question No. 57 asked respondents about the career of their significant other: they were instructed to skip the question if they did not have a significant other. Thirty-three respondents skipped this question.

Question No. 75 asked respondents if they have children living at home. Participants were instructed to answer the question only if they have children. Fifty-four of the 82 participants who did not have children skipped this question. The other 28 may have misunderstood the instructions and answered the question anyway, most likely as not having children living at home. However, there may have been participants who do not have children of their own, but have children living in their...
home. A weakness of this question is that it was not clear for people in this latter situation.

Taking these two questions (No. 57 and No. 75) out of the missing data analysis, less than 1 percent of the values had missing data. However, because these data are non-continuous, the answers were left blank.

Explanation of Various Data Analyses in Chapter 4

Due to the researcher’s interest in looking at the 26 variables in a variety of ways, an explanation of this chapter’s order of analyses is helpful. This chapter introduces the bigger analyses first (correlation table and backward elimination multiple regression analysis of all 26 variables) and then moves to the smaller analyses of each of the five hypotheses. It concludes with a more complex analysis which follows the various paths that the 26 independent variables take to intent to stay (using job satisfaction, organization commitment and search behavior as dependent variables). Explanations of findings will be given throughout the chapter.
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Multiple Regression Analysis of the 26 Independent Variables

Due to the large number of independent variables in this analysis, a backward multiple regression was run to eliminate those independent variables that are not significant. An alpha of .10 will be used for all of the statistical analyses. The small sample size of this research results in low power; therefore, the alpha is set at .10 to increase the power. Seven variables survived (stayed in) the backward elimination analysis: job satisfaction, commitment to mission, distributive justice, promotional chances, job involvement, support of supervisor, and search behavior (see Table 4.5).

Table 4.5: Results from Backward Elimination Regression Analysis (Displaying Standardized Betas)

<table>
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<th>Variable</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>.111  **</td>
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<td>DistrJustice</td>
<td>.120  **</td>
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<td>PromoChance</td>
<td>.247  ***</td>
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<td>JobInvolve</td>
<td>.075  *</td>
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<tr>
<td>SupportSup</td>
<td>.097  **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search</td>
<td>-.257 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F value</td>
<td>77.822 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>169</td>
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</table>

Adjusted $R^2$ = .764

a. Dependent Variable: Intent
b. 05 enter, .10 removed
c. *** p< .0001; ** p<.05; *p<.10

Most of these significant variables are consistent with the Causal Model of Turnover (CMT) literature. Discussing in order of beta weights, the highest variable
is job satisfaction, which is frequently cited in turnover literature as having a relatively important effect on turnover (Kim, Price, & Mueller, 1996; Price, 1997). There were two items used in the survey to measure job satisfaction: (1) *I am very satisfied with my job*, and (2) *I do not find enjoyment in my job*.

Responses to these items, and those in the upcoming discussion, were based on a 5-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. There is no clear reason why fundraisers would be different from people in other occupations or populations regarding the effect of job satisfaction on their intent to stay in a job.

The second highest variable is search behavior which, as predicted, had a negative impact on intent to stay. There were two items used in the survey to measure search behavior: (1) *I rarely seek out information about job opportunities with other employers*, and (2) *I almost always follow up on job leads with other employers that I hear about*.

The turnover literature includes a variety of theories regarding the effect of search behavior and where it is in the causal chain, as discussed in Chapter 2. The focus on search behavior is viewed by Robert P. Steel as a limitation (Steel, 2002). He found that when looking at all turnover research, the correlation with search behavior and turnover is *r* = .13. The correlation found here (*r* = .664) is significantly higher. Note that this study regressed search behavior on intent to stay, not on turnover, which could explain for the disparity between the two correlations (.13 and .664).
Another explanation for the large negative beta and high correlation of search behavior in this study is the fact that it is very likely that this sample of fundraisers has easy access to the Internet, a popular venue for job announcements. Future turnover research should consider technological capabilities when looking at the importance of search behavior. It is much easier and more convenient to search for jobs than it was 10 years ago.

The variable with the third highest beta is promotional chances. The two items used in the survey instrument to measure promotional chances were: (1) *I am in a dead-end job*, and (2) *There is a good chance to get ahead with my employer*.

Previous turnover research has validated the importance of promotional chances as a predictor of turnover, especially research by sociologists (Kim et al., 1996). Indeed, for most fundraisers a promotion is the only way to make more money and have a more prestigious title, if they want to stay with their organization. Duronio and Tempel (1997) predicted this to be important to fundraisers a decade ago.

The next largest variable is distributive justice (or equity) within an organization. The two items used in the survey instrument to measure distributive justice were: (1) *Promotions by my employer are almost totally based on seniority*, and (2) *Competent employees are well rewarded by my employer*.

This finding is interesting because distributive justice is not overly emphasized in the CMT literature nor the nonprofit literature. Distributive justice is the concept of being rewarded for good performance. Furthermore, it relates to how
others in the organization are being rewarded for their performance and the equity of rewards for performance among all employees. This indicates a similar motivation to that of promotional chances. Being recognized and rewarded by the organization seems to be important to this sample of fundraisers.

The reward system for many fundraisers is not the same as for personnel in the for-profit sector. Many fundraisers, especially those who are members of AFP, follow a strict ethics policy that indicates they cannot be paid through a commission-type arrangement. Whether someone raises $100,000 or $1 million, that individual should be salaried or paid by the hour. A fundraiser should not get a cut or percentage of funds raised. Chapter 5 offers suggestions for nonprofit managers on how to ensure that fundraisers have a high sense of distributive justice.

The significance of distributive justice and promotional chances indicates that rewards and career advancements are important to this sample of fundraisers. The determinants (distributive justice and promotional chances) are mildly correlated (.499); therefore, there is not an issue of multicollinearity.

The next variable in rank is commitment to mission. This new variable was added to the CMT because of its predicted importance for employees in the nonprofit sector. Very little empirical research has been done on commitment to mission, so it is noteworthy to see that it came out ahead of so many other variables. Commitment to mission has one of the highest means (4.03) of the independent variables (see Table 4.3). It confirms the hypothesis of practitioners who argue that fundraisers do
what they do because they are dedicated to the mission of the organization for which they raise money. The two items used in the survey instrument to measure commitment to mission were: (1) *I am passionate about the mission of the organization I work for*, and (2) *If I had to choose one mission to be affiliated with, it would be that of my current employer.*

The next variable is support from supervisor. The significance of supervisory support is not very surprising as both the CMT literature and nonprofit literature discuss the importance of the relationship between employee and supervisor. Looking at Table 4.3, support from supervisor has one of the highest standard deviations (1.04), indicating that supervisory support meant a lot to some respondents, and little to others. Support from supervisor was measured via two items in the survey: (1) *My immediate supervisor cannot be relied on when things get tough on my job,* and (2) *My immediate supervisor shows a lot of concern for me on my job.*

According to the CMT, supervisory support affects intent to stay through a correlation with both organizational commitment and job satisfaction. This indirect correlation with supervisory support and intent to stay will be discussed later in this chapter. In many organizations the fundraising staff is small in comparison to the programmatic staff, which makes support from a supervisor even more important for fundraisers to ensure that they do not feel isolated or unimportant. In addition, because fundraising has been referred to as an “art” not a “science” (Grayson, 2002), fundraisers may appreciate extra support from their supervisors in decision making.
and strategizing. Employees in scientific professions such as accounting, may feel that they have more control over the outcomes of their efforts. Employees in artistic professions, such as fundraising, may feel that they have less control over the results of their efforts. A fundraiser may spend lots of time cultivating a likely prospect, using all the right tricks of the trade, and yet, never see a donation from that prospect.

The final variable is job involvement, which is the degree to which an employee is willing to work. Synonyms for job involvement found in the turnover literature include “motivation, central life interest, and the Protestant work ethic” (Price, 2001: 605). Job involvement was measured via two items in the survey: (1) *Most of my interests are centered around my job*, and (2) *I have strong ties with my present job which would be difficult to break.*

The significant variables in this research thus far indicate a theme among this sample population of fundraisers that focuses on their advancement and career path within the nonprofit sector. Job involvement, promotional chances, distributive justice, and commitment to mission support the notion that these employees want the opportunity to move up in their organization, be busy and involved, get rewarded fairly for their efforts, and advance the mission of the organization.

It is surprising that organizational commitment, which is an intervening variable along with search behavior and job satisfaction, is not significant in this study. It had a moderately high mean at 3.99 (see Table 4.3). The survey asked the
following two questions to measure organizational commitment: (1) *I do not really care about the fate of my current employer (the organization)*, and (2) *My current employer inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance*.

There are a variety of instruments in the literature that can be used to measure organizational commitment (Price, 1997). The measurement tool in this study used two items to measure this variable, which may not have been enough, and therefore, problematic for such a comprehensive determinant. Organizational commitment includes a variety of concepts such as “a strong belief in and an acceptance of the organization’s goals and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization” (Price, 1997: 337). The measurement tool may or may not be the reason for this variable’s lack of significance in this study; nonetheless, it is recommended that a more comprehensive instrument be used in future research.

Another explanation for the lack of significance of organizational commitment in this study is because it reflects the nonprofit sector and commitment to mission, which is a new competing variable in the analysis. Since commitment to mission is significant in the study, it may be so important to fundraisers that organizational commitment is less relevant. The correlation table (see Table 4.4) indicates that the determinants measured two different things. Yet, it is possible that commitment to mission used up the variance that would have otherwise
profit sector) gone to organizational commitment. Further research should inquire how the determinant commitment to mission affects organizational commitment in the nonprofit sector.

Analysis of the Hypotheses

Regression analysis was run for each of the five hypotheses, each of which included only the variables in that hypothesis. Even though the correlation table (see Table 4.4) and beta weights (see Table 4.5) give insight into answering the five hypotheses, individual regressions were run in order to see how much variance each group has on intent to stay and to determine if any variables that were insignificant in the previous analysis are significant here.

**H1:** The group of exogenous variables containing opportunity, general training, negative affectivity, job stress from insufficient resources, job stress from conflict, job stress from ambiguity, job stress from workload, job stress from unrealistic fundraising goals, and routinization will have a negative effect on intent to stay.
Table 4.6 shows that Hypothesis 1 is partially supported. This group of variables explains 35 percent of the variance in intent to stay at a significance level of <.0001. However, only stress from inadequate resources, stress from ambiguity, and routinization are statistically significant and negatively correlated with intent to stay. None of these were significant in the backward elimination analysis of the 26 independent variables.

The survey instrument measured stress from inadequate resources via two items: (1) I have adequate equipment/technology to do my job, and (2) I have enough support services to do my job. It is possible that stress from inadequate resources was significant due to the fact that this was tested in the nonprofit sector, which may be less likely to have the financial resources for the latest and greatest technology, or
needed support such as administrative assistance. It would have been interesting to measure the budget size of the organizations to see if that affected the way respondents viewed their access to adequate resources.

As in any profession, nonprofit or for-profit, if employees do not have the resources they need to do their job, the resulting stress is negatively correlated with their intent to stay. For fundraisers, technology is very important for tracking donors, writing grants, and having access to e-mail and the Internet. In addition, if fundraisers are spending all of their time doing administrative work, they will not have time to meet with donors. The significance of this variable may be indicating that fundraisers do not want to fail, and if they feel that their organization is not giving them the resources they need to be successful fundraisers, they will go somewhere else.

The next significant variable in Hypothesis 1 is stress from ambiguity. In the *Handbook of Organizational Management*, job ambiguity is described as having three dimensions: performance criteria, work method, and scheduling. Performance criteria refers to the standards used in evaluating employees’ performance. Work method is the actual procedures employees use to accomplish their work. Scheduling is defined as the sequencing of activities for employees to do their job (Price, 1997).

The survey used the following two items to measure this variable: (1) *I know exactly what is expected of me in my job*, and (2) *I have to work under vague directives*. These statements do not address the three types of stress from ambiguity,
as they are more general. However, they do address the main issues of ambiguity—unclear expectations and vague directives.

Stress from ambiguity also seems to be a typical determinant of intent to stay for all professions. But for fundraisers, being in an “art” profession, it may be even more important. Focusing on performance criteria and work methods, it is important for fundraisers to know how much money they need to raise, what the money is for, who they should ask for the funding, and how they should go about raising those funds. The fundraising profession has not produced extensive guidelines on how to measure fundraisers’ performance, which may be a challenge for some organizations. Quite often, organizations evaluate fundraisers on how much money they raise. Others evaluate fundraisers on their activity (i.e., grants written, prospects researched, donors contacted, etc.). Some look at both the funds raised and the activity level of the fundraiser. Regardless of how a fundraiser is evaluated, it is important for the expectations to be clarified beforehand. It is understandable that if fundraisers are unclear about what is expected of them, which will lead to stress, and therefore, a desire to leave the organization. This is similar to stress from inadequate resources, in that a fundraiser might perceive this type of negative situation as being a set up for failure.

The other significant variable in Hypothesis 1 is routinization. Routinization is “the degree to which a job is repetitive” (Price, 1997: 521). It is typically more relevant in clerical and laboring jobs than in professional jobs (Price, 1997). Since
there are a variety of positions among fundraisers, it would have been interesting to see if a fundraiser’s specific position (i.e., planned giving officer, grant writer, direct mail coordinator, etc.) impacts a person’s perception of routinization. Nonetheless, it is not surprising that routinization is significant among this sample population. Yet, the mean for this variable was low at 2.22 (see Table 4.3). This may indicate that the majority of respondents did not relate routinization with intent to stay, but that those experience routinization more than others have a lower intent to stay. The two items used to measure this determinant were: (1) *My duties are repetitious in my job*, and (2) *My job has variety*. It is likely that fundraisers do not like to do the same things day in and day out—they do not like to be bored. Assuming this indicates that they appreciate variety in their work or need to be challenged. These themes make sense in light of the fact that promotional chances and job involvement were statistically significant among all 26 variables (see Table 4.5). Fundraisers are a motivated group of professionals, and therefore, factors such as inadequate resources, ambiguity, promotional chances, routinization, and job involvement all impact their ability to feel successful.

Even though only three of the nine variables in Hypothesis 1 are statistically significant, as a group they explain 35 percent of the variance in intent to stay when controlling the other independent variables. And, those three significant determinants provide new and interesting insight into this population of fundraisers. The six determinants that were not significant include opportunity, general training, negative
affectivity, stress from conflicting direction, stress from workload, and stress from unrealistic fundraising goals. There is no clear reason as to why these variables were not significant in this study. However, a brief analysis of each is offered.

The lack of significance from opportunity is surprising as the turnover literature (Hom, Caranikas-Walker, & Prussia, 1992) refers to the market (or available job opportunities) being related to turnover. This variable is likely the same for all respondents, because they belong to the same occupational market, and therefore, opportunity may have been irrelevant in this study. General training also was not significant, yet the data indicate a high mean of 4.49 and a low standard deviation of .596 (see Table 4.3). It is possible that general training is pertinent to this sample, yet they do not see it as a factor to finding another job. This may be related to the population studied. The fundraising profession entails a large skill set (i.e., being able to ask someone for money, familiarity with donor databases, etc.), but it may not be as important as other variables that impact their intent to stay.

Negative affectivity is still a mystery in the field of turnover research. It may be too complex of a variable to measure with only two survey items, as this research attempted to do. It is recommended that future research either exclude this variable or utilize a more comprehensive measurement tool to measure it. Next is stress from conflicting direction. It may be that either fundraisers have figured out how to work through this stress or, as this study would suggest, it is not an important factor when contemplating leaving or staying. The next non-significant variable is stress from
workload, but had a high mean of 3.97 (see Table 4.3). It is possible that these fundraisers are accustom to, and expect, a heavy load and therefore it does not cause stress that would affect their intent to stay.

The last non-significant variable in Hypothesis 1 is stress from unrealistic fundraising goals. This variable has not been previously tested, so we are still learning about its impact on fundraisers. Responses to Question No. 68 (see Appendix G) include comments related to this determinant. Yet, it may be that there are other intervening variables involved with stress from unrealistic fundraising goals. For example, fundraisers may feel that they cannot meet the fundraising goals because they are on their own and have no support from their board or supervisor. Or, maybe they have inadequate resources. There may be other factors related to this variable that need further research. It is recommended that future studies include stress from unrealistic fundraising goals, but include an open-ended question to ask respondents _why_ they believe they cannot realistically meet their goals.

**H2**: The group of exogenous variables containing kinship responsibility, job involvement, positive affectivity, autonomy, distributive justice, procedural justice, pay (actual salary), pay (perception), promotional chances, and social support (coworkers, supervisor, and family/friends) will have a positive effect on intent to stay.
Reviewing Table 4.7, Hypothesis 2 is partially supported. The variables as a group explain 65 percent of the variance and have a significance level of <.0001. This percentage of explanation in variance is almost double that of Hypothesis 1 (35 percent). There are a few extra variables in Hypothesis 2 as compared to Hypothesis 1, which may be part of the reason for this difference. Also, the high correlation of promotional chances (.722) in Hypothesis 2 with intent to stay may also explain the disparity. Or, it may be that positive factors are more influential than negative factors on a fundraiser’s intent to stay or leave. This leads to a recommendation for future inquiry about the influence of negative versus positive variables (or push versus pull) within the turnover process.

Table 4.7: Results from Multiple Regression Analysis for Hypothesis 2 (Displaying Standardized Betas)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JobInvolve</td>
<td>.203  ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DistrJustice</td>
<td>.158  **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PromoChance</td>
<td>.440  ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SupportSup</td>
<td>.152  **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SupportCoWo</td>
<td>.136  **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$F$ value</td>
<td>27.002 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted $R^2$</td>
<td>.653</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Intent
b. *** p<.0001; ** p<.05; *p<.10
Five of the 12 determinants in this hypothesis are statistically significant: job involvement, distributive justice, promotional chances, support from supervisor, and support from coworkers. The first four will not be discussed here because they were already examined earlier in the chapter; they were significant in the backward elimination multiple regression analysis (see Table 4.5). However, support from coworkers will be briefly discussed as it was not previously significant in the backward elimination analysis.

The reason why support from coworkers is significant may be related to support from supervisor, even thought they are different determinants. The reasons given for the importance of support from supervisor were that in many organizations the fundraising staff is small in comparison to programmatic staff, which makes support even more important so that fundraisers do not feel isolated or undervalued. In addition, because fundraising has been referred to as an “art” not a “science,” fundraisers may appreciate extra support in decision making and strategizing. Both of these challenges for fundraisers can be alleviated by the support of not only a supervisor, but of coworkers as well. If a fundraiser has positive support from coworkers, the feeling of being isolated and the need for assistance in decision making and strategizing may be minimized.

Even though kinship responsibility was not statistically significant, a brief discussion will look at the individual determinants within this variable as it may be important to future research. In this study, mirroring the CMT, kinship responsibility
was a combined variable including: responsive employer, marital status, children, children at home, kinship responsibility beliefs, and career of fundraiser and significant other. In order to investigate the importance of each of these independently, multiple regression was run with only the kinship responsibility variables (see Table 4.8). See Appendix E for the Data Journal to see how these variables were coded.

Table 4.8: Multiple Regression Results for Kinship Responsibility (Displaying Standardized Betas)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marital</td>
<td>.203 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRCareer</td>
<td>.181 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KREmployer</td>
<td>.221 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F value</td>
<td>3.421 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted $R^2$</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Intent  
b. *** $p<.0001$; ** $p<.05$, *$p<.10$

Excluding all non-kinship responsibility variables, kinship responsibility accounts for 8 percent ($p = <.001$) of the variance in intent to stay. Responsive employer is the most significant of all the kinship variables. According to Price (2001), the level to which an employer is responsive to kinship concerns is a newer determinant in the CMT. It was measured by asking respondents if there are child care facilities on site, if there is paid leave for childbirth, and if a flexible work
schedule is available. These factors may be significant to this sample due to the fact that nearly 75 percent are women, who may place a higher importance on maternity leave issues than their male colleagues.

Marital status was statistically significant and had a positive correlation with intent to stay. It may be that those who are married or have a significant other feel support for their work, instead of feeling that the relationship is a conflicting responsibility. It is unclear as to why this population was not greatly affected by the kinship responsibility factors. Their identification with a career and their significant other’s identity with a career may be key to understanding the lack of a significant relationship with kinship responsibilities and intent to stay. The respondents’ high value for a career could be related to the importance of promotional chances, job involvement, and climbing the ladder of success.

Two other variables worthy of discussion, even though they were not statistically significant in this hypothesis, are salary and perception of fairness of pay. Unlike the original CMT, this adjusted model included not only salary, but also perception of fairness of pay. Shown in Table 4.7, pay perception had a higher statistical significance (p = .104) than salary (p = .471). It is recommended that both of these two determinants be looked at in future research. It is surprising that neither of these were statistically significant in this study given the fact that the nonprofit literature discusses salary as a determinant of turnover (Duronio & Tempel, 1997; Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002; Anonymous, 2003; DRG, 2003). Duronio and
Temple (1997) describe self-interest motivators, such as salary and job title, as important determinants to fundraisers’ retention.

It is possible that a more prestigious job title increases a fundraiser’s sense of responsibility in an organization, and may even be more important to this population than the amount of their paycheck. Price (2001) makes the distinction between a career, which is a line of work for many years, versus a non-career job, which is obtained mainly for the income. It is probable that fundraisers are more likely to see themselves in a career, and thus put less weight on their salary and more on their opportunity for a more prestigious position.

**H₃**: The intervening, endogenous variables containing job satisfaction and organizational commitment will have a positive effect on intent to stay.

Table 4.9: Results from Multiple Regression Analysis for Hypothesis 3 (Displaying Standardized Betas)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JobSatisfaction</td>
<td>.673  ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OrgCommit</td>
<td>.204  ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F value</td>
<td>150.864  ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted $R^2$</td>
<td>.641</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Intent
b. *** p< .0001; ** p<.05; *p<.10
Table 4.9 shows that Hypothesis 3 is fully supported. Both job satisfaction and organizational commitment have a positive effect on intent to stay and were statistically significant (p = <.0001). Including only these two variables in the analysis, they explain 64 percent of the variance in intent to stay. Because these are intervening variables, they describe the interaction between the exogenous (environmental, individual, and structural) variables and intent to stay. Therefore, job satisfaction and organizational commitment also will be interpreted as dependent variables later in this chapter.

**H₄:** The intervening, endogenous variable of search behavior will have a negative effect on intent to stay.

Table 4.10: Results from the Pearson Correlation for Hypothesis 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Search</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Intent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.660(*)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>.000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Hypothesis 4 is supported (see Table 4.10). Search behavior has a negative correlation with intent to stay. It is logical to think that fundraisers would start searching for another job as they begin to think about leaving. In the last decade, searching for another job has become much easier and more convenient due to
Websites and e-mail announcements are new and easy ways for fundraisers to search for a possible job change. This study did not ask fundraisers how they search for other jobs, but that may be an interesting topic for future research: Does enhanced technology increase fundraisers’ search activity?

**H5: Commitment to mission and support of the board will have a positive effect on intent to stay.**

Table 4.11 shows that Hypothesis 5 is fully supported. Both commitment to mission and support of the board are positively correlated with intent to stay. If no other variables are in the model, these two independent variables account for nearly 25 percent of the variance in intent to stay and have a significance level of < .0001. No empirical studies were found on the impact of support from the board on fundraisers’ turnover, so this information will add to the nonprofit and turnover literature. Yet, because there was a moderately low beta weight (.238) and the lowest mean (3.33) of the four support determinants (see Table 4.3), it should not be overly emphasized in future model-building. However, because commitment to mission has shown relevance in this analysis and the backward elimination analysis (see Table 4.5), it should be included in future turnover research in the nonprofit sector.
Table 4.11: Results from Multiple Regression Analysis for Hypothesis 5 (Displaying Standardized Betas)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>.354  ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SupportBOT</td>
<td>.238  **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F value</td>
<td>27.183  ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adjusted R^2</td>
<td>.247</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Intent
b. *** p< .0001; ** p<.05; *p<.10

_Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, and Search Behavior as Dependent Variables_

Since the five hypotheses only looked at the direction of the independent variables in relation to intent to stay and the amount of variance explained, another layer of analysis is needed to test how the variables interact according to the adjusted CMT. There are various paths that the exogenous variables take in their relationship with intent to stay. See Figure 1.4 for the paths in the adjusted CMT.

The adjusted CMT illustrates that many of these variables are indirectly correlated with intent to stay through their direct relationship with one, or both, of the two intervening variables (organizational commitment and job satisfaction) and search behavior. Therefore, additional multiple regression analyses were run with organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and search behavior as the dependent variables. In this section, the only correlations tested were those illustrated in the adjusted CMT (see Table 4.12).
The multivariate analyses successively used the following as dependent variables: job satisfaction, organizational commitment, search behavior, and intent to stay. When job satisfaction is regressed on the exogenous variables, five of the variables are statistically significant. Autonomy, promotional chances, and support of coworkers have positive impacts on job satisfaction, whereas opportunity and stress from unrealistic fundraising goals each have a negative impact. The explained variance for job satisfaction is 67 percent. These five variables follow the adjusted CMT in the direction of their correlation with job satisfaction, yet only five of the 23 variables are statistically significant. The lack of significance among a large number of variables will be addressed later in this chapter and the next.

Table 4.12 also shows the results from the multivariate analysis when organizational commitment is regressed on the exogenous variables. Four of the variables are statistically significant: procedural justice, promotional chances, support from supervisor, and commitment to mission. These four variables are positively correlated with organizational commitment, as expected. The explained variance for organizational commitment is 45 percent.

When search behavior is regressed on job satisfaction and organizational commitment, both independent variables are statistically significant. These results are consistent with the model and explain 31 percent of the variance in search behavior. Lastly, intent to stay was regressed on the causal variables in the model. Search behavior is statistically significant and negatively correlated with intent to
stay, as predicted. In the original CMT, the exogenous variables of opportunity, kinship responsibility, and general training are hypothesized to be directly correlated to turnover. However, Table 4.12 illustrates that of these three variables, only general training is statistically significant. Interestingly, general training is positively correlated with intent to stay, instead of negatively as the CMT predicts. The CMT states that general training gives employees the ability to find other work easier. An explanation for why it is statistically significant in this analysis and not in the backward elimination analysis (see Table 4.5) is that this analysis only included four independent variables, not 26.8

In order to visualize how these variables interact, a new model has been created which include the various paths that the independent variables take to intent to stay. Figure 4.3 illustrates these paths, which also includes the direct correlations with intent to stay (see Table 4.12) and the seven significant variables from the backward elimination analysis (see Table 4.5).

---

8 Within multiple regression analysis, the more independent variables involved, the larger the sample size needs to be to produce meaningful results (George & Mallery, 2001). A recommended formula to check the appropriate sample size is $N \geq 50 + 8m$ (where $m$ is the number of IVs) for a $\alpha$ of .05 and a of .20 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001: p 117). This means that an analysis with $N = 169$ is more meaningful when it includes four variables versus 26 variables.
Table 4.12: Multiple Regression Results Using the Intervening Variables as Dependent Variables (Displaying Standardized Betas)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Job satisfaction</th>
<th>Organizational commitment</th>
<th>Search behavior</th>
<th>Intent to stay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td>Beta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intervening Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.469 ***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.152 **</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search Behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.616 ***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exogenous Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity</td>
<td>-.087 **</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.077</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GenTraining</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td></td>
<td>.166 **</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>.276 ***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ProcedJustice</td>
<td>-.015</td>
<td>.206 ***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StressGoal</td>
<td>-.115 *</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PromoChance</td>
<td>.341 ***</td>
<td>.123 **</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SupportSup</td>
<td>.094</td>
<td>.304 ***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SupportCoWo</td>
<td>.107 **</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.278 ***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N= 169</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>.717</td>
<td>.476</td>
<td>.321</td>
<td>.476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adju $R^2$</td>
<td>.668</td>
<td>.453</td>
<td>.313</td>
<td>.463</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. *** p< .0001; ** p<.05; *p<.10
Figure 4.3: Model of Multiple Paths to Intent to Stay
It is possible that the reason general training had a positive correlation with intent to stay is due to the population studied. Price (2001) acknowledges that general training may be less important to specific professions such as weapon technicians, who have very specific and specialized skill sets. Whereas, general training would have more of an impact on computer technicians, who have a more general skill set than weapon technicians. It is reasonable to assume that fundraisers are similar to weapon technicians in that they, too, have specialized skills and are less impacted by general training for their job search. Examples of these skills are: understanding the motivations of donors, knowing how to appropriately acknowledge donors, having the ability to put a complicated grant application together, and being versed in planned giving tools such as a charitable gift annuity. If someone has been a fundraiser for five years, but that individual has general skills outside of those related to the profession, those general skills may not influence that person’s ability to find other work as a fundraiser. Looking back at Table 4.3, general training had the highest mean (4.49) of all the independent variables. This indicates that this sample of fundraisers felt that their skills sets were relevant to finding other work.

These four analyses confirm what Price (2001) said: “all of the exogenous variables do not impact turnover [intent to stay] through job satisfaction, organizational commitment, search behavior, and intent to stay” (p. 610). He goes on to say the there may be a direct impact on turnover from opportunity, kinship responsibility, and job training. This research did not find any significant direct
correlation of opportunity and kinship responsibility on intent to stay. However, it did
discover that four variables have a significant correlation through both a direct (see
Table 4.5) and indirect (see Table 4.12) path with intent to stay: promotional chances,
support of supervisor, commitment to mission, and job satisfaction. Interpreting these
analyses confirms that these four determinants are important in understanding
fundraisers’ intent to stay.

Distributive justice and job involvement were two of the seven variables that
were significant in the original backward elimination analysis (see Table 4.5), but
were not significant in this multivariate analysis (see Table 4.12). This means that
they have a direct, instead of an indirect, impact on intent to stay, which goes against
the CMT.

Price (2001) reminds us that just because some variables are not significant, it
does not mean that the model is deficient. “Lack of significance can be due to close
approximation of the conditions which usually lower turnover, small sample size and
inadequate measurement” (p. 610). The paths that the exogenous variables take are
likely to differ for populations in various studies. The additional analysis (see Table
4.12) has been helpful because it allows us to see if any of the variables that did not
have a significant direct relationship to intent to stay might instead have an indirect
relationship. Looking at the variables in more than one way adds knowledge to the
turnover literature and the use of the CMT.
Conclusion

Of the 26 independent variables tested in the adjusted CMT, there were some that acted as expected and others that did not. Most of the seven determinants (job satisfaction, commitment to mission, distributive justice, promotional chances, job involvement, support of supervisor, and search behavior) that survived the backward elimination, showing that they were the most statistically significant of all, were not a surprise.

One unusual outcome was the fact that organizational commitment was not significant. Organizational commitment is frequently used in turnover models and is a key area of study for organizational management scholars (Price, 1997). Unfortunately, the author of this study has no clear reason for why organizational commitment was not statistically significant. One theory, however, is that organizational commitment may be different for those in nonprofits than in for-profits. If a fundraiser has strong loyalty to an organization, it could be to the organization’s mission or cause, instead of the organization itself. Future research should consider this theory and include questions about whether someone leaving a job is going to look for another job serving a mission similar to the one they are leaving. This may give more insight into how mission affects a person’s commitment to an organization.

The other variable of interest is search behavior. This turnover model gave search behavior a central role, and it acted accordingly by being statistically
significant with a moderately-high correlation with intent to stay. Yet, through a previous meta-analysis of all the turnover research, search behavior has a very low correlation with turnover (Steel, 2002). In addition to the reality that this research measured intent to stay instead of turnover, it is possible that another explanation for this discrepancy is due to the sample population of fundraisers. There may be something unique about this population that encourages them to search for other jobs just before they leave an organization. Or, it may be that searching for another job is so easy these days with advanced technology that fundraisers are not as inconvenienced or inhibited in looking for other jobs as in previous years. Literature on this topic assumed that fundraisers switch jobs a lot because they know that there is a lot of opportunity out there for other work (Schwinn & Sommerfield, 2002), yet this study did not confirm that assumption.

In the end, the strongest story is told by the seven variables that survived the multiple regression backward elimination analysis (see Table 4.5). Job satisfaction, commitment to mission, distributive justice, promotional chances, job involvement, support of supervisor, and search behavior paint an interesting picture of the average fundraiser participating in this study. The fundraisers who have a strong intent to stay love their job, are passionate about the cause for which they raise funds, feel that they are rewarded equally in the organization, have a chance to move up and take on more responsibility, are supported by their supervisor, and are not spending time searching for another job.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Introduction

This dissertation has reviewed the literature on voluntary turnover within the nonprofit sector and among fundraisers, in addition to summarizing the most popular turnover models. It has also outlined the model used in this study—The Causal Model of Turnover (CMT) by James Price (2001). This research utilized the CMT and applied it to the fundraising population, which resulted in specific findings about the determinants that are important to understanding the phenomenon of intent to stay among fundraisers.

This last chapter of the dissertation will highlight how this research has contributed to the literature in the field. In addition, limitations of the study will be discussed along with recommendations for future research. In conclusion, implications for practitioners will be offered.

Contributions to the Field

In the beginning of this research project, a literature review found that within the nonprofit sector, there was little to be found on the turnover of fundraisers. The nonprofit sector includes a handful of researchers (Duronio, Hall, Hartsook, Joslyn,
Schwinn, Sommerfeld, and Temple) who have focused on the turnover of fundraisers. Many of these researchers are not traditional academics, instead journalists for the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*. This dissertation project can be helpful in filling the gap of the turnover and nonprofit literature, since there is not much available regarding the turnover of fundraisers.

One of the main contributions to be made to the scarce literature is that the average length of service among fundraisers remains stable and not getting worse. In addition, it adds insight to which variables are likely to be related to fundraisers’ decisions to stay or leave a job. Seven variables were found to be important to this study’s sample of fundraisers: job satisfaction, commitment to mission, distributive justice, promotional chances, job involvement, support of supervisor, and search behavior. The fundraisers who experience a strong intent to stay: (1) love their job, (2) are passionate about the cause for which they raise funds, (3) feel that they are rewarded equally in the organization, (4) have a chance to move up and take on more responsibility, (5) have a high sense of job involvement, (6) are supported by their supervisor, and (7) are not spending time searching for another job.

Before this research, there was little available for practitioners to assist them in identifying ways of slowing the turnover of fundraisers. This chapter will offer specific suggestions for practitioners on how they can help alleviate the turnover problem. First, a look at the limitations of this study will assist in determining how much these findings can be generalized to the entire fundraising population.
Limitations

One limitation of this research is the small sample size, which weakens the power of the statistical analyses. The main multiple regression analysis included 26 independent variables, which implies the need for a large sample size. Based on a formula that Tabachnick & Fidell (2001) recommend, the sample size needed for 26 independent variables should be approximately 258 people. The goal for this research was to have a 40 percent response rate, thus having a sample size of 390. A follow-up reminder post-card was sent to all the possible participants; and a 20 percent response was achieved. While it is unclear as to exactly why the return was low, it is interesting that the 2005 AFP Compensation and Benefits Study (Brown, Healey, Maehara, & Williams, 2005) received a similar response rate to its Web-based survey of 22 percent. Reasons for the limited response for this dissertation may have been timing, lack of an incentive, or not enough follow up contacts to encourage people to participate.

Another reason for this low response rate may be due to the Web-base style of survey used. Because e-mail addresses were not available, the sample population had to type in the Web site address to access the survey. This created one extra step that may have deterred some from participating in the survey. Dillman (2000) discusses the limitations of using a Web-based survey, which are often related to coverage (access to the Internet). However, he states that if surveying university professors, government employees, or other professions, coverage is not a big issue these days as
most professionals have access to the Internet. Even though there is no data to identify what percentage of fundraisers have access to the Internet, it is assumed by the nature of the work of the profession, that coverage should not influence the response. Instead, ease of taking the survey by getting to the Web-site may have been a bigger limitation.

Future research that uses the Causal Model of Turnover should consider additional ways to achieve a more appropriate sample size. Another alternative would be to decrease the number of independent variables used in the study.

In addition to decreasing statistical power, the small sample size weakens the ability to confidently generalize the research’s findings to the general population of fundraisers. Because the research participants come from organizations that charge a fee for their service, there is a concern that fundraisers from smaller, grassroots organizations may not have been represented in this study. In order to get more insight into this, an informal interview was conducted with Mike Roque (personal communication, April 13, 2006), who is the Director at the Denver Office of Strategic Partnerships. Roque has initiated a support and educational network for fundraisers in grassroots organizations and organizations that serve people of color. The educational programs are free of charge and have become very popular in the greater Metro-Denver area seen by its increase in attendance, and it is the only service of its type for these fundraisers.
Roque believes that the findings of this research may not be applicable to fundraisers in grassroots organizations, compared to those in higher educational institutions or larger organizations. The variable of promotional chances may be most important to fundraisers in large institutions, but promotional chances may be irrelevant for fundraisers who are in grassroots organizations and are the only staff person involved in development. These fundraisers may be more concerned with supervisory support, stress from inadequate resources, and unrealistic fundraising goals because they are likely to be alone in their work of raising funds with extremely limited support and resources. In Roque’s experience, he has observed fundraisers, many of whom are people of color, get burned out because they are trying to raise money on their own with little staff support, and without funds for training. These fundraisers might be social workers who had to step in to help raise money, or individuals passionate about the organization’s mission, but without a background in fundraising. Smaller organizations may not have the funds to hire experienced fundraisers, and so they hire inexperienced, passionate supporters to work in fundraising. Placing people into positions for which they are not adequately qualified creates stress and high turnover; adversely affecting these small, grassroots organizations.

Another limitation to this study was the alteration to James Price’s 2001 original measurement tool. Even though alterations to the survey were justified to adapt it to this population, the changes may have weakened some of the questions’
validity. A main concern includes decreasing the number of items per variable from five to two. This is most relevant with some of the compound variables such as organizational commitment, which was surprisingly insignificant in this study.

In order to keep the survey to an appropriate length, it was not realistic to include five items per variable, as Price used in his measurement instrument. There are many challenges when including 26 independent variables in a study — creating a survey that is user-friendly (needing a reasonable amount of time to complete) is one of those challenges.

Implications for Academics and Recommendations for Future Research

*The Average Length of Service*

The findings of this research also warrant implications for academics and researchers involved in studying turnover. The first issue for academics to look at further is whether or not the average length of service among fundraisers is static or changing. The average length of service for this sample is 3.66 years (3.50 years for women and 4.17 for men). In 1997, Duronio and Temple found that the average length of service for female fundraisers was 3.31 years and 4.42 years for males. This indicates that the average length of service is still lower for women than men, but it has not changed significantly between 1997 and 2005. Even though there are few comparable studies to confirm the change in length of service rates over the years, looking at the rate of 3.66 along with previous research (Schwinn & Sommerfield,
suggests that the rate may be increasing. The 3.66 average length of service of this sample population is relevant to fundraisers that come from organizations that can afford to pay for professional development. Fundraisers from smaller, grassroots organizations may have a different average length of service than the fundraisers in this study.

The researcher has developed three theories to explain the possible shift in the rate. Each of these deserves further analysis: (1) advancement of the fundraising profession, (2) the improved educational pipeline that is feeding nonprofits trained fundraisers, and (3) the trend of the merging of nonprofits. The advancement of the fundraising profession is suggested as a reason for the shift in the average length of service because the fundraising profession it is still developing as a profession (Wagner, 2002). With that comes a growth in the profession’s ability to serve its colleagues. Compare fundraisers to other professions such as medicine or law, which have well established networks, resources, programs, etc. for professional development. Fundraisers, on the other hand, have fewer options for developing their expertise and engaging in professional development with colleagues. These drawbacks may have decreased every year as the profession develops, and this advancement may encourage fundraisers to not only remain in the profession, but to find greater satisfaction and success in their current positions as well.

Second, the improving pipeline of fundraisers may also be affecting the increasing length of service among fundraisers. Higher education programs focusing
on nonprofit management and resource development continue to develop in colleges and universities across the country (O’Neill & Fletcher, 1998). Twenty-five years ago, educational opportunities in fundraising were scarce but they are much more prevalent today. More organizations and institutions have begun programs designated to teach fundraising skills and techniques to all levels of fundraisers.

Third, there is a recent trend of nonprofits merging (The James Irvine Foundation, 2002; Golensky & Deruitter, 1999) due to competition and declining government support of the nonprofit sector. Similar to the for-profit sector, merging is seen as a way to cut costs and be more effective and efficient. This trend may be affecting the availability of fundraising jobs, or slowing the growth of these positions. The impact of nonprofit mergers on the fundraising job market is a topic which deserves additional study and research. This research did not find a significance correlation between opportunity (the perception of the job market) and intent to stay. However, if there is a significant downward shift in the job market, that shift may affect turnover.

*The Variables*

In this research, the Causal Model of Turnover was adapted to the nonprofit sector. Future use of the CMT in the nonprofit sector should also include commitment to mission in the model. Commitment to mission is statistically significant in this research (see Table 4.5) — yet organizational commitment is not. This contradicts turnover research, which consistently focuses on the importance of
organizational commitment. It is possible that this anomaly is because this research was done in the nonprofit sector instead of the for-profit sector, where most of turnover research is done. Fundraisers with strong loyalty to an organization’s mission may have low commitment to the organization. Future research should study if nonprofit employees have a higher commitment to mission than organizational commitment compared to employees from the for-profit sector. This may give more insight into how mission affects a person’s commitment to an organization. Turnover research done in the nonprofit sector should look closer at the definitions of, and relationship between, commitment to mission and organizational commitment.

Turnover research should also consider technological advancement related to search behavior. The ability to search for other jobs via the Internet makes job hunting much easier than before. No longer do employees have to search through the newspapers and professional publications, and then do research on the institution and position, and send out resumes. Today, details of jobs are readily available on-line, and sending out resumes to possible employers is often accomplished through e-mail. While this dissertation did not focus on the technological aspect of search behavior and intent to stay, the actuality that search behavior had a moderately-high correlation (−.664) with intent to stay deserves further attention. One suggestion may be that people in professions who have easy access to technology experience a higher rate of search behavior than people in professions who do not have easy access to technology. For example, many Association of Fundraising Professionals’ chapters
now post all employment opportunities on-line. Even if fundraisers are not searching for a job, they will still see job postings regularly. Other professions, such as retailers working in a mall, are not typically on-line during work, and therefore have less opportunity to search for jobs. Future inquiry should look at the correlation between technology on the job, search behavior and intent to stay.

The next suggestion for academics relates to this dissertation’s inclusion of both salary and perception of fairness of pay as independent variables. Shown in Table 4.7, pay perception had a higher statistical significance (p = .104) than salary (p = .471). Incorporating these two salary variables advances the theory which argues that perception of pay has a stronger relationship with turnover than actual salary. This study’s sample population, fundraisers, may represent other occupations which include employees that have a high sense of commitment to mission, a need for promotional chances, distributive equity and job involvement. These employees are looking at advancing their career, and salary does not have to be a significant factor in career advancement. It is recommended that perception of fairness of pay be a variable instead of, or in addition to, salary in future turnover models.

Another implication discovered with the Causal Model of Turnover was finding a balance between having a comprehensive model, and having the right number of variables for a statistically significant study. This dissertation utilized 26 independent variables, which was too many for a sample size of 169, as it decreased the power of the statistical results. In addition to decreasing the statistical power,
having a large number of independent variables brings the challenge of organizing the variables within the study in a meaningful way. The method of grouping the variables with less than 12 variables in each of the five hypotheses was helpful in order to find a more powerful way of analyzing the significance of the variables on intent to stay. Future research should consider risking the exclusion of some variables for the sake of finding more meaningful results from the included variables.

When studying the fundraising profession, researchers need to find ways to include fundraisers who are not part of the traditional fundraising networks. Institutions that serve smaller, grassroots nonprofits, must be identified for potential research subjects. Future research on this population may need to incorporate sample stratification to include a more representative number of subjects from the various sized organizations in order to better generalize to the fundraising population.

Unrealistic fundraising goals is a variable that was not statistically significant in this research, yet it was mentioned several times in the open-ended responses to survey question no. 68 (see Appendix G). Future studies of fundraisers’ turnover should include stress from unrealistic fundraising goals as an independent variable, and include an open-ended question about why respondents believe they cannot realistically meet their goals. The stress may be a result of inadequate resources or an unsupportive supervisor. It would be interesting to conduct additional research on the possible relationship between unrealistic fundraising goals, other negative variables, and turnover.
Additional inquiry on fundraisers’ turnover could also look at the influence of negative versus positive variables (or push versus pull) within the turnover process. There was no turnover literature found on push versus pull. Yet in this study, the group of positive variables explained a much larger variance in intent to stay than the negative variables (see Hypotheses 1 and 2 in Chapter 4). It is unclear if the pull of positive determinants is actually stronger than the push of negative determinants. If positive determinants are more influential than negative determinants in keeping an employee at an organization, that would be important information for organizations to know. Organizational leaders could focus on positive variables, such as promotional chances, as a way to minimize the negative variables, such as job stresses.

This study concluded with a theory that the average length of service among fundraisers may be increasing. In order to confirm this premise, a longitudinal study is needed. If future research does confirms that the average length of service is increasing among fundraisers, then three additional questions can be asked: (1) does the advancement of the fundraising profession have an affect on length of service?, (2) does the improved pipeline that is feeding nonprofits trained fundraisers have an affect on length of service?, and (3) does the trend of nonprofits merging have an affect on length of service? These are only three of the author’s theories of why the average length of service among fundraisers may be increasing. Hopefully, more theories will develop as organizations and fundraisers put more consideration into the occurrence of turnover.
Another recommendation for future research concerns the Association of Fundraising Professionals and its 2005 report, which reviews anecdotal evidence that its membership represents an older, more experienced group of fundraisers. Because AFP requires a membership fee, its members typically come from larger, more financially stable nonprofits that can afford to pay for professional development. Significant professional development budgets imply a sophisticated and fiscally sound organizations. Those sophisticated organizations likely pay higher salaries for their fundraising staff, attracting more experienced, older, fundraisers. This is an untested theory, therefore, research should inquire as to if and why AFP attracts older fundraisers.

Future research on the fundraising population should include both AFP members and non-members to generalize findings to the entire fundraising population. This is a profession that is still growing and contains little research on fundraisers compared to older, more established professions. It is important to cast a wide net so that future research can benefit the entire fundraising profession.

Lastly, this research should serve as a tool for furthering the study of turnover among all employees in the nonprofit sector. Even though fundraisers may be unique among their nonprofit colleagues; there are significant similarities between them and other employees in the sector. The findings in this research could be compared to those in other turnover research to better understand factors related to intent to stay. The effectiveness of nonprofits is dependent on the retention of all employees.
Implications for Practitioners

This research has implications for practitioners. These implications affect not only fundraisers, but organizational leadership as well. The seven main determinants that emerged from the multiple regression analysis (job satisfaction, commitment to mission, distributive justice, promotional chances, job involvement, support of supervisor, and search behavior) have important implications for fundraising.

Organizational leaders and fundraisers can use this information to help improve the recruitment and retention of fundraisers.

The first of the seven variables is job satisfaction. Chapter 4 analyzed job satisfaction as a dependent variable (see Table 4.12), and found five variables that were significantly correlated with job satisfaction: autonomy (positive), promotional chances (positive), support of coworkers (positive), opportunity (negative) and stress from unrealistic fundraising goals (negative). Organizations can be proactive in encouraging high job satisfaction among their fundraisers by focusing on these five determinants.

Autonomy is the degree to which employees exercise power in relation to their job. If fundraisers are qualified to do their job, then organizations will benefit by giving fundraisers more authority and responsibility. This increase in autonomy will positively affect fundraisers’ job satisfaction. Organizations can also establish promotional opportunities for their fundraisers. Even if organizations have pre-determined employee levels, identifying ways to give fundraisers additional
responsibility that advances them to the next employee level is essential.

Organizations may need to create new employee levels if one does not exist that would be appropriate for a fundraiser’s promotion. For example, if a Director of Development is taking on additional responsibilities and is approved for a promotion, but the next level is the Vice President of Development, which is already filled, then an Assistant Vice President of Development position could be created.

Organizational leadership can help ensure a high sense of job satisfaction among its fundraising staff by developing team-building opportunities to encourage coworkers’ support of each other. If fundraisers have a high sense of support from their coworkers; that will positively affect their job satisfaction. Opportunity is a determinant in this study that negatively affects job satisfaction. It is unrealistic for organizations to control fundraisers’ sense of opportunity of other jobs in the field. However, organizations should acknowledge the fact that other job opportunities for their staff exist. If managers sense that fundraisers believe they can get a better job somewhere else with little effort, then those fundraisers may be experiencing low job satisfaction. Fundraisers can be proactive by occasionally going on job interviews to keep their sense of job opportunity in check. The experience of interviewing will either confirm or reject fundraisers sense of opportunity.

The last determinant that effects job satisfaction is stress from unrealistic fundraising goals. Organizational leadership can determine what goals are realistic by asking similar organizations how much they raise, and how many fundraisers they
employ to raise those funds. A variety of issues should be considered when an organization determines its fundraising goals; the experience of the fundraising staff, whether the community is philanthropic or not, the reputation of the organization, and the organization’s track-record of raising funds. If the organization does not do this comparison research, then the fundraiser who is experiencing this stress should take the initiative to do the research, and present the findings and recommend changes to the organizational leadership.

Most of the suggestions given for these five determinants were directed to the leadership of organizations, however, fundraisers need to be aware of their own job satisfaction and find ways to work with the leadership to ensure a high sense of satisfaction. Fundraisers are responsible for taking issues, and suggestions to solve the issues, to their management.

Commitment to mission is another determinant found among the seven variables of the backward elimination regression analysis (see Table 4.5). There are actions that organizational leadership and individual fundraisers can take to ensure and increase fundraisers’ commitment to their organization’s mission. During the interview and application process, organizations can ask about the applicant’s dedication to the mission. It is helpful if fundraisers applying for a job have a track-record of involvement or exhibited commitment to the organization’s mission. Another recommendation for organizations is to include ways for their employees to continue learning about the issues related to the organizations’ missions in order to
enhance their commitment to the cause for which they raise money. For example, if a fundraiser works for an affordable housing organization, it would be beneficial for him or her to occasionally attend a conference on the latest issues in affordable housing. Fundraisers need to be aware of the importance of commitment to mission in relationship to not only their turnover, but also their career. Fundraisers can proactively seek out positions with organizations that they care about, not just positions that may pay well or are geographically convenient.

The next important variable for organizations and fundraisers to reflect on is distributive justice (equity) within an organization. Organizational leadership can find creative and meaningful ways to reward fundraisers for their work. Two suggestions are: (1) setting non-monetary goals and rewarding employees for reaching those goals with an extra vacation day, a financial bonus, or an opportunity to go to a conference of their choice, etc.; and (2) setting monetary goals, where if they or the team meets their fundraising goals then there is an extra reward, such as management taking the team out to lunch or awarding gift certificates. Supervisors should be aware of rewards that are used in other departments to make sure that similar systems are in effect for the fundraising staff. Additionally, when hiring fundraisers, managers should investigate from potential employees how they expect to be rewarded for their accomplishments.

Promotional chances is another relevant determinant. As aforementioned, this variable may be more challenging to implement for organizations that have pre-
existing employee levels and benefits. Fundraisers who see little opportunity for growth within their organization should approach their supervisor with a plan for advancement. Organizational leadership should not only be responsive to fundraisers’ intentions for advancement, but find ways to encourage their fundraisers’ upward movement within the organization.

Job involvement also has implications for practitioners and is conceptually similar to promotional chances because it relates to fundraisers’ needs to be key players within their organizations. Organizational leadership can take proactive steps in ensuring quality job involvement among its fundraisers. The first suggestion is for supervisors to work directly with their fundraising staff to identify which parts of their job they most value and feel confident and determine ways to increase and enhance those job activities. The goal for supervisors should be to assist fundraisers in shaping their job description to match their passions and skills.

Support from supervisor is another key factor when looking at fundraisers’ intent to stay. Supervisors of fundraisers who have no fundraising experience themselves may run into the most difficulty in knowing how to support their employees. If supervisors find themselves in that situation, they should seek out some basic fundraising training, or hire a consultant to help supervisors understand the basic support systems that should be in place for their fundraising staff. Fundraisers need to also take responsibility in communicating what support they need from their supervisor, or identify someone else to take on that responsibility. This
issue is even more important for the small, grassroots organizations, where there may be only one fundraiser on staff, and therefore, that employee runs the risk of feeling isolated and undervalued by leadership who have little knowledge of how to raise contributions from the community.

The last of the seven important determinants is search behavior. The key variable affecting search behavior found in this study is job satisfaction (see Table 4.11). Therefore, the previous recommendations for ensuring job satisfaction among fundraisers are relevant here. Organizations can help decrease search behavior among their fundraisers by focusing on the five variables that affect job satisfaction: autonomy (positive), promotional chances (positive), support of coworkers (positive), opportunity (negative) and stress from unrealistic fundraising goals (negative).

In addition to looking at these statistically significant variables related to intent to stay, a few of the variables that were not significant can provide insights as well. For example, salary is commonly thought of as having a high correlation with intent to stay (turnover). This and other research (Kim, 2005) found this not to be true. Salary is not as important to some employees as often perceived by managers. If people live comfortably and do not have financial problems, then salary may be even less important. The significant variables of commitment to mission, promotional chances, distributive justice and job involvement indicate that fundraisers have a need for a meaningful career. A fundraiser’s salary number is usually not public information, however, job title and other identifiers of success are
public. Because these non-monetary benefits (title, prestige, etc.) are important to fundraisers, organizations need to put energy in developing systems for rewarding and promoting fundraisers in addition to salary increases.

The other insignificant variable is stress from workload. Managers may believe that if they give fundraisers more work to do, that they may drive them away. However, that was not confirmed in this study. Supervisors may want to consider the opposite, asking fundraisers if they can take on more tasks and meaningful activities. This, after all, will give fundraisers more experience, and therefore, help advance their opportunity for an internal promotion.

These implications are directly targeted to fundraisers and their supervisors. However, the nonprofit sector as a whole needs to become aware of the negative impact that turnover among fundraisers has on nonprofit organizations. If a nonprofit organization loses a quality fundraiser that has been with the organization for 10 years, that organization should consider lowering its fundraising goals for the next 12 months, as that loss of a fundraiser will likely have a negative impact the organization’s fundraising capacity. Organizations need to invest in quality fundraisers, and do what they can to keep them satisfied, because the benefits of having quality, tenured fundraisers will outweigh the costs associated with retaining those employees. The organizations will benefit, the employees will benefit, and the donors will appreciate having consist liaisons to the organization.
As the main membership association of fundraisers, AFP’s annual survey should continue as it is the key organization researching this population, other researchers depend on AFP for a variety of information on fundraisers. Findings of this research will hopefully be disseminated throughout AFP and various publications so that practitioners can benefit from the work of this dissertation.

Conclusion

The turnover of fundraisers is a topic that may seem irrelevant to the majority of the population, but it is an issue that impacts much of our society. As the nonprofit sector grows, it will continue to touch the lives of millions of people. Nonprofits need to pay close attention to the turnover of fundraisers in order to be financially stable. If nonprofits are not fiscally healthy, it will eventually impact their bottom line and jeopardize their ability to fulfill their missions. The missions of the nonprofit sector serve much of our society; feeding the poor, providing healthcare, alleviating disease, showcasing various forms of art, educating our future generation, helping drug addicts, and offering job training to those in need.

As academics and practitioners pay closer attention to the issue of turnover among fundraisers; progress can be made in increasing retention, and ultimately, the effectiveness of the nonprofit sector. The fundraising profession is responsible for
alleviating the problem of turnover. It is in the profession’s power to continue to encourage and financially support research on this topic, and to find ways of educating its professionals on how to halt the rate of turnover.
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