


The Retention of Public Child Welfare Workers



A Curriculum of
The California Social Work Education Center
University of California at Berkeley

By

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MODULE I

The Present Study

- ✦ Research question: What are the individual, agency and local economic factors that predict worker turnover in public child welfare?
- ✦ Two different outcomes were used: Intention to leave the job, and actually leaving the job.
- ✦ A survey of new public child welfare workers hired in California between April 2000 and April 2001 was administered.
- ✦ 44 of 58 California counties participated. Those not participating were mostly small counties.



The Present Study (cont.)

- ✦ Over 1,700 surveys were mailed. Response rate was approximately 34%.
- ✦ Thirty-two (6%) of the respondents had already left the agency at the time of data collection.
- ✦ Data from public sources on county demographic and economic factors were included.



The Present Study (cont.)

- ✦ Final turnover data for the entire population were collected from each study county several years after hire.
- ✦ Qualitative data regarding reasons for departure were obtained for 657 workers.



MODULE II

The Importance of Retaining Workers

- ✦ A statewide shortage of social workers is being experienced and is expected to get worse (O'Neill, 2000).
- ✦ Public child welfare is also facing a shortage of social work personnel. Statewide there are 6,500 public child welfare positions funded for FY 2000/01, yet there was a need for twice as many social workers to meet minimum standards and three times that many to meet ideal standards (American Humane Association, 2000).



The Importance of Retaining Workers (cont.)

- ✦ The U.S. GAO (2003) reports that high turnover rates in child welfare agencies are a major obstacle to timely investigations.
- ✦ Title IV-E represents a significant investment in the education and training of professional child welfare workers. In California, 300 MSW graduates per year join child welfare agencies (California Social Work Education Center, 2005). The retention of these workers has become an important issue because of the investment in their education.



The Importance of Retaining Workers (cont.)

- ✦ Retaining workers will be expected to accomplish the following goals:
 - Increase the number of qualified child welfare workers.
 - Help reduce the shortage of social workers in public child welfare.
 - Better meet more complex client needs.
 - Reduce training and recruitment costs.
 - Increase the effectiveness of the Title IV-E stipend programs.



MODULE III

Definitions and Rates of Turnover

Definitions of Turnover

- ✦ The common definition: Workers voluntarily leave jobs because they obtain a better job elsewhere.



Definitions of Turnover (cont.)

✦ But turnover also includes:

- Workers who are fired or not retained past probation.
- Workers who leave for personal reasons without being dissatisfied with the job.
- Workers who have transferred to similar positions in similar agencies.
- Workers who have been promoted to similar positions in larger human services agencies.



Definitions of Turnover (cont.)

- The American Public Human Services Association distinguishes between departures that are preventable by the agency and those that are not. Preventable departures comprise up to 60% of the turnover rate of public child welfare workers (APHSA, 2001).



Definitions of Turnover (cont.)

- ✦ Turnover as a problem: It depends on the point of view.
 - Unavoidable departures are seen as negative but outside control of agency.
 - A transfer from one county's child welfare agency to another county is negative for the first county but neutral or positive for public child welfare.
 - A promotion to another department within a county department is a positive for the county department but a negative for the child welfare agency.



Definitions of Turnover (cont.)

✦ Intention to leave

- Because it is easier to do research at one point in time (cross-sectional), many studies use the workers' stated intention to leave the job as the outcome, rather than waiting some time (longitudinal research) to see who actually leaves.
- The present study uses both outcomes and so is an opportunity to compare the outcomes.



Turnover Rates

- ✦ It is difficult to specify precise current turnover rates in public child welfare because of regional differences and because of different ways of measuring turnover.
- ✦ While the U.S. GAO (2003) estimates the annual turnover rate of public child welfare workers to be as high as 30-40%, more rigorous measures are in the 10-20% range (APHSA, 2001; Daly et al., 2000; National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being Research Group, 2001), though with considerable geographical differences.

Turnover Rates (cont.)

- ✦ In San Diego, Title IV-E workers were more likely (89% retention) than other workers to remain on the job one to three years after hire (Jones & Okamura, 2000).
- ✦ The one statewide study to date found a 76% retention rate within three to six months after the payback period (Dickinson & Perry, 2002).
- ✦ All of the above studies have been limited to small sample sizes and have not included comparisons by agency characteristics or local economic markets.



Turnover Rates (cont.)

- ✦ Studies regarding Title IV-E students have not covered a sufficiently long period of time to account for the required payback period.
- ✦ In the present study:
 - 27% of respondents left the job. The mean and median time on the job was about 16 months.



Turnover Rates (cont.)

- Those who stated their intention to leave at the time of the initial data collection were more likely to leave than others. However, there is a significant number of workers still on the job who intended to leave.
- Of the 1,165 respondents for whom turnover data were received, 386 (33%) had left the job.



Turnover Rates (cont.)

- We obtained information on the reason for leaving the job on 657 workers from 26 counties. Of these, 240 (37%) had left the job.
 - 16 (7%) were fired or unable to complete probation.
 - 26 (11%) transferred to other social service departments in the same county.
 - 8 took similar positions in other nearby counties, 2 were subsequently rehired by the same department of the county.



Turnover Rates (cont.)

- 11 (5%) moved out of area; 8 went back to school; 6 reported leaving for personal reasons, such as pregnancy.



MODULE IV

Theoretical Frameworks

- ✦ Current empirical research on the predictors of turnover among social workers is relatively; that is, it focuses on determining predictors of turnover.
- ✦ The work of March and Simon (1958) provides a foundation for current theories. They focused on the degree of ease of movement that workers have as the basis for the likelihood of seeking a new job.



Theoretical Frameworks: Psychological Theories

- ✦ Psychological theories focus on individual characteristics and the ability of individuals to adapt to and handle situations in the workplace.
- ✦ Some psychological research has focused on the effect of stress on turnover (Todd & Deery-Schmitt, 1996), including both occupational stress and stress experienced outside of the workplace.
- ✦ Also, individual well-being has been identified as a predictor of greater job satisfaction and lower job stress (Koeske & Kirk, 1995).

Theoretical Frameworks: Psychological Theories (cont.)

- ✦ Burnout has also been given considerable attention in the turnover literature. For example, Maslach's scale (Maslach & Jackson, 1984), which includes the emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment constructs, has been used to explain the stress levels of workers who exit their jobs.
- ✦ Drake and Yadama (1996) found that emotional exhaustion had a direct effect on job exit, while depersonalization appeared unrelated to worker retention.

Theoretical Frameworks: Psychological Theories (cont.)

- ✦ The theory of job embeddedness focuses on three factors that contribute to an individual concept of being embedded in an organization: a) relationships with others in the organization; b) perceptions of goodness of fit with the job, organization, and community; and c) perceived losses that would occur if the job or organization is left (Lee et al., 1999).
- ✦ Preliminary research shows lack of job embeddedness is a predictor of both intent to leave and actual voluntary turnover and is closely associated with other related outcomes such as job satisfaction & commitment (Mitchell et al., 2001).



Theoretical Frameworks: Sociological Models

- ✦ Sociological models focus on the specifics of workplace situations and job characteristics and their effects on the satisfaction and commitment of workers (Glisson & Durick, 1988).
- ✦ Employees gauge the legitimacy of the rules and actions of their superiors and weigh those factors against the subordination that they must incur. The more legitimate the actions of the superiors are perceived to be, the greater the level of worker attachment (Halaby, 1986).

Theoretical Frameworks: Sociological Models (cont.)

- ✦ Lawler's (2001) affect theory of social exchange explains how the emotions produced by social exchange develop stronger or weaker ties to relations, groups, or networks. Individuals will attribute their exchange-based emotions to social units--such as relations, networks, or groups--to the degree that the exchange brings them together in a common endeavor and creates a sense of shared responsibility.



Theoretical Frameworks: Sociological Models (cont.)

- ✦ Orthner & Pittman (1986) found that organizational support for families increases the level of work commitment among the employees.



Theoretical Frameworks: Economic Theories

- ✦ Economic theories focus on supply and demand and indicate that a more open job market is a major factor that leads to a greater level of employee turnover (Price, 1977).
- ✦ Economic theories focus on the employees' likelihood of staying in their current jobs based on weighing the utility of continuing with the current employer or leaving the job (Halaby, 1986).



Theoretical Frameworks: Economic Theories (cont.)

- ✦ Hulin, Roznowski, and Hachiya (1985) indicate that a correlation exists between the objective labor market and job satisfaction, which in turn predicts intention to leave.
- ✦ On the contrary, a study conducted by Hui (1988) did not find the situation in the objective labor market to have an effect on job satisfaction or on the withdrawal process on an individual level.



MODULE V

Predictive Models

- ✦ Most quantitative studies, including the present study, develop sets of variables (models) to predict turnover.
- ✦ The advantage of this approach is statistical control. When a set of variables is considered as a whole, the model is controlling for the interactions of variables among themselves. This means that a relationship between a factor and leaving the job may be apparent, but in fact be due to some other factor.



Predictive Models (cont.)

- For example, in this study, it is apparent that workers with lower salaries are more likely to leave the job when we consider only those two variables. However, when other variables are added to the model, the effect of salary on turnover disappears. This *could be* because workers with less education, who have lower salaries, are more likely to leave, or because workers who have been on the job less time, also with lower salaries, are more likely to leave.



Predictive Models (cont.)

- ✦ Though this process is successful at identifying a number of variables that are statistically related to turnover, each model falls short of including all relevant variables, and so falls short of completely predicting turnover. Many studies, for example, including the present study, do not include many non-work related factors, such as quality of family relationships.

Predictive Models (cont.)

- ✦ The individual decision to leave a job or to remain is very complex, made in the context of individual, agency, and economic circumstances. It is very difficult to develop models that include all possible factors affecting the decision to leave.
- ✦ As described above, workers leave the job for many different reasons. Clearly, the factors predicting getting fired are different from the factors predicting getting promoted, yet all of these different reasons are included in the outcome of turnover.



Predictive Models (cont.)

- ✦ In the present study we divided factors into four categories.
 - Individual/demographic--factors that the worker brings to the job (e.g., gender, education).
 - Individual/job relationships--the ways that the worker responds to the particular job situation (e.g., job satisfaction).
 - Agency/job factors--elements of the job that can be changed by supervisors and administrators (e.g., salary, quality of supervision).

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Predictive Models (cont.)

- Economic factors likely to affect a turnover decision (e.g., the local availability of well-paying jobs).



MODULE VI

Predictors of Leaving the Job

- ✦ In this section, using the above categories of variables, we describe factors that are associated with job turnover, first from the empirical literature, and second from the present study.



Predictors of Leaving the Job: Individual Variables in the Literature

- ✦ This literature review relies heavily on Mor Barak, Nissly, and Levin (2001) and Clark (2002). Recent important studies include Dickinson and Perry (2002), Ellett, Ellett, and Rugutt (2003), and Landsman (2001). Reagh (1994), Rycraft (1994), and Samantrai's (1992) early exploratory studies remain useful for their qualitative descriptions.
- ✦ From both the literature and the present study, it is apparent that individual factors as a group are not strongly associated with turnover.

Predictors of Leaving the Job: Individual Variables in the Literature (cont.)

- ✦ Studies have found little or no relationship between personal characteristics and job satisfaction (Butler, 1990) or worker attitudes (Oldham & Hackman, 1981).
- ✦ Koeske and Kirk (1995) found that only psychological well-being was significantly related to retention of social workers, but that no other individual characteristic predicted workers would remain on the job.

Predictors of Leaving the Job

Individual Variables in the Literature: Gender

- ✿ Women who work in the field of human services are more likely to report experiencing higher levels of stress, fewer opportunities for self-expression, and more environmental pressure than men (Ratliff, 1988) despite the fact that human service agencies are largely female dominated.
- ✿ While Mor Barak et al. (2001) and Dickinson and Perry (2002) did not find gender to be a predictor of turnover, Landsman (2001) found that males were more likely to intend to leave, while Vinokur-Kaplan, Jayaratne, and Chess (1994) found the opposite.



Predictors of Leaving the Job

Individual Variables in the Literature: Ethnicity

- ✦ While Mor Barak et al. (2001) and Dickinson and Perry (2002) did not find ethnicity to be a predictor of turnover, Landsman (2001) found that Whites were more likely to intend to remain, while Jones and Okamura (2000) found the opposite.

● Predictors of Leaving the Job

Individual Variables in the Literature: Age

- ✦ While some studies (Dickinson & Perry, 2002; Jones & Okamura, 2000; Koeske & Kirk, 1995) did not find a relationship between age and turnover, there is strong evidence from a number of studies (Mor Barak et al., 2001) that younger workers are more likely to leave the job.
- ✦ In a study of social workers that serve the severely mentally ill, younger workers were found to be less likely to remain on the job due to their lack of readiness to work with this population (Acker, 1999).

Predictors of Leaving the Job

Individual Variables in the Literature: Family

- ✦ Among child welfare workers, support from a spouse has been found to be beneficial in dealing with job-related stress, in addition to support from supervisors and co-workers (Jayaratne, Chess, & Kunkel, 1986).



Predictors of Leaving the Job

Individual Variables in the Literature: Education

- ✦ Some research indicates that a social work education, either graduate or undergraduate, best prepares individuals for the field of social work (Dhooper, Royce, & Wolf, 1990).
- ✦ A higher level of education has been associated with a higher level of career commitment (Glisson & Durick, 1988).
- ✦ Research on Title IV-E programs has indicated that those who complete these programs feel a greater sense of confidence in their work (Hopkins & Mudrick, 1999).



Predictors of Leaving the Job

Individual Variables in the Literature: Education (cont.)

- ✦ Ellett et al. (2003) report that Title IV-E graduates express a higher intent to remain on the job; Jones and Okamura (2000) and Dickinson and Perry (2002) report that Title IV-E workers are more likely to remain on the job.



Predictors of Leaving the Job

Individual Variables in the Literature:

Work Experience

- ✦ Looking across studies, Mor Barak et al. (2001) found amount of work experience to be strongly associated with remaining on the job, as did Landsman (2001).

Predictors of Leaving the Job

Individual Variables in This Study

- ✦ Latinos and, to a lesser degree, Asians were less likely to leave the job than African Americans or Whites.
- ✦ Respondents who are divorced, separated, or widowed were only about half as likely to leave as married respondents.



Predictors of Leaving the Job

Individual Variables in This Study (cont.)

- ✦ These variables were significant when considered separately, but not when considered in the complete models.
 - Males appeared more likely to leave their jobs than females.
 - Respondents born in the USA appeared more likely to leave the job than immigrants.



Predictors of Leaving the Job

Individual Variables in This Study (cont.)

- Workers with MSWs appeared less likely to leave the job than workers with other degrees.
- Those with a high level of commitment to public child welfare appeared less likely to leave.
- ✦ Variables that were not associated with turnover include age, work experience, having children, outside income, and having a clinical license.



Predictors of Leaving the Job

Individual/Job Variables in the Literature

- ✦ People who are satisfied with their jobs tend to perform better and tend to stay longer at their agencies (Krueger, 1996).
- ✦ There is mounting empirical and experiential support for the belief that higher levels of satisfaction are associated with lower levels of turnover and absenteeism (Butler, 1990).
- ✦ Jayaratne and Chess (1991) suggested that dissatisfaction with the job may lead to burnout, with negative implications for both workers and clients.

Predictors of Leaving the Job

Individual/Job Variables in the Literature (cont.)

- ✦ Weiner (1980) found no correlation between attitudes toward unions and leaving the job among welfare workers, but Iverson and Currivan (2003) found that union participation among teachers was associated with remaining on the job.
- ✦ High levels of self-efficacy have also been linked to high levels of innovation and skill in bringing about positive change in an organization (Pearlmutter, 1998).

Predictors of Leaving the Job

Individual/Job Variables in the Literature (cont.)

- ✦ Self-efficacy, along with other traits such as general high self-esteem, has also been linked to both job satisfaction and job performance (Judge & Bono, 2001).
- ✦ Preliminary evidence suggests a relationship between high levels of self-efficacy and intention to remain in the currently held child welfare job (Ellett, 2001).
- ✦ General job satisfaction was strongly associated with remaining on the job, but satisfaction with specific job aspects were not.

Predictors of Leaving the Job

Individual/Job Variables in This Study (cont.)

- ✦ Self-efficacy, especially as regards personal motivation, was associated with remaining on the job, though this relationship disappeared when controlling for additional variables.
- ✦ Union membership had no relationship to turnover.



Predictors of Leaving the Job Agency/Job Variables in the Literature

- ✦ Many studies suggest that organizational factors have a greater influence on job satisfaction than do personal characteristics of the worker (Poulin, 1994).
- ✦ Variables such as heavy workload, low salary, poor agency operation, low agency morale, and few opportunities for advancement are closely related to a desire to change jobs (Sze & Ivker, 1986).

Predictors of Leaving the Job Agency/Job Variables in the Literature (cont.)

- ✦ Jayarante and Chess (1991) found that among protective services workers, characteristics of the organization, such as opportunity for promotion, job challenge, workload, agency change, and role ambiguity were related to job satisfaction.

Predictors of Leaving the Job

Agency/Job Variables in the Literature: Salary

- ✦ Vinokur-Kaplan (1991) found a significant association between satisfaction with salary and job satisfaction in a study of child welfare social workers, as well as satisfaction with leadership and supervision.
- ✦ Some have found that the importance placed on salary as an indicator of self-worth or satisfaction has been overstated, and that sources of job and life satisfaction are primarily found elsewhere (Henry, 1990).



Predictors of Leaving the Job

Agency/Job Variables in the Literature: Salary (cont.)

- ✦ Some have found no clear relationships between job satisfaction and salary when other variables are controlled (Glisson & Durick, 1988; Vinokur-Kaplan, Jayaratne, & Chess, 1994).
- ✦ Other studies have found that salary does in fact affect job satisfaction among social workers (Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991), as well as retention (Powell & Yourk, 1992).



Predictors of Leaving the Job

Agency/Job Variables in the Literature: Workload

- ✦ The amount of work needs to be distinguished from the difficulty or complexity of the work (Jex, 1998).
- ✦ Multiple studies have found that a major contributor to workers' decisions to leave their jobs was high caseloads (Rycraft, 1994).
- ✦ Excessive policy changes and paperwork were found to be sources of job dissatisfaction among social workers who work with the elderly (Dressel, 1982).

Predictors of Leaving the Job

Agency/Job Variables in the Literature: Training

- ✦ The availability of training that is relevant to the occupation and affords an opportunity for professional development has been found to be a source of job satisfaction for child welfare workers (Tracy, Bean, Gwatkin, & Hill, 1992; Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991).
- ✦ Learning opportunities that are tailored to the specialized field of child welfare and that address the needs of the worker have been identified by child welfare workers as extremely important to their professional development (Reagh, 1994).

Predictors of Leaving the Job Agency/Job Variables in the Literature:

Job Stressors

Landsman (2001) found structural characteristics as they relate to levels of stress on the job to be closely related to the retention of child welfare workers.

- ✦ A high level of stress is a factor that has been found to be closely related to low job satisfaction and job commitment (McLean & Andrew, 2000).
- ✦ Sze and Ivker (1986) found that stressful conditions (e.g., high workload, low agency morale) were closely related to a desire to change jobs.

Predictors of Leaving the Job Agency/Job Variables in the Literature:

Peer Support

- ✦ Peer & social support was found to be closely related to the intentions of child welfare workers to remain at their current jobs (Acker, 1999; Mitchell et al., 2001).
- ✦ Social support, including supervisors and peers, was found to be a major factor in whether MSW graduates remained at their child welfare jobs after completing their one year obligation for receiving Title IV-E stipends (Dickinson & Perry, 2002).
- ✦ Support from child welfare co-workers is also associated with reduced levels of burnout (Jayaratne et al., 1986).

Predictors of Leaving the Job Agency/Job Variables in the Literature:

Quality of Supervision & Administration

- ✦ Satisfied workers can often recall the support and encouragement they got from their supervisor and colleagues on the job (Krueger, 1996).
- ✦ Quality of supervision is a key element in the success of child welfare workers (Pecora, Whittaker, & Maluccio, 1992; Reagh, 1994; Rycraft, 1994; Samantrai, 1992).
- ✦ The importance of the actions of administrators has been found to be extremely important in the satisfaction and retention of social workers (Reagh, 1994; Rycraft, 1994; Vinokur-Kaplan et al., 1994).

Predictors of Leaving the Job Agency/Job Variables in the Literature:

Organizational Factors

- ✦ Glisson and Hemmelgarn (1998) found that creating a positive organizational climate (including role clarity, low conflict, and cooperation) was more effective in providing successful child welfare services than increasing the actual services available to clients.
- ✦ A positive organizational culture has also been found to increase the likelihood of retaining skilled child welfare workers (Ellett, 2001)

Predictors of Leaving the Job Agency/Job Variables in the Literature:

Organizational Factors (cont.)

- ✦ Poulin and Walter (1992) found that workers who have experienced greater work autonomy and have greater control over their jobs have higher levels of job satisfaction.
- ✦ Connections have been made regarding the lack of authority in the workplace and feelings of burnout (Arches, 1991).
- ✦ Guterman and Bargal (1996) found that social workers who did not have significant individual discretion were more likely to feel ineffective with their clients.

Predictors of Leaving the Job Agency/Job Variables in the Literature:

Organizational Factors (cont.)

- ✦ Role conflict emerges from discussions with workers about their experiences on the job (Reagh, 1994; Rycraft, 1994; Weaver, 1999). Mor Barak et al. (2001) report that role conflict, role ambiguity, or role stress are associated with intent to leave the job, but not with actual turnover.

Predictors of Leaving the Job Agency/Job Variables in This Study

- ✦ While caseload size was unrelated to turnover, respondents who were allowed more time before acquiring a full caseload were much more likely to remain on the job than respondents who were given full caseloads more quickly.
- ✦ Contrary to expectations, the presence of stressful job conditions was associated with remaining on the job.
- ✦ A high degree of role conflict was associated with leaving the job.

Predictors of Leaving the Job Agency/Job Variables in This Study (cont.)

- ✦ Several variables were significant when considered separately, but not when considered in the complete models.
 - It appeared that low salaries were associated with leaving the job.
 - Peer support, good supervision, and good administration were associated with remaining on the job when compared directly with turnover.

Predictors of Leaving the Job County Economic & Demographic Variables in This Study

- ✦ Child welfare workers from counties with higher salaries for all child social workers were more likely to leave the job than workers from counties with lower child social worker salaries.
- ✦ Child welfare workers from more densely populated counties were less likely to leave the job than were workers from rural counties

MODULE VII

Leaving Compared with Intending to Leave

- ✦ Many studies use intention to leave as an outcome rather than actual turnover. The present study included both outcomes, which gave the researchers an opportunity to compare results.
- ✦ Following are the differences and similarities in results:
 - Male and older workers tended to express a higher commitment to the job in the cross sectional analyses, yet tended to leave more than female and younger workers.



Leaving Compared with Intending to Leave (cont.)

- Latinos were less likely to leave the job than other ethnic groups, but there were no differences in expressed intention to leave by ethnicity.
- Divorced respondents expressed a greater intention to stay and did stay more than married respondents.
- MSWs expressed a lack of commitment to the job, but were less likely to leave than workers with other degrees.




Leaving Compared with Intending to Leave (cont.)

- The pattern of relationships between the two outcomes and job satisfaction and self-efficacy variables were similar.
- Among agency variables, time to receiving a full caseload was not related to intention to leave but was strongly related to actually leaving the job.
- Amount of training was strongly related to intending to stay, but less strongly related to actually staying.



Leaving Compared with Intending to Leave (cont.)

- While various stressful job conditions were predictors of a low commitment to the job, these same variables tended to be predictors of actually remaining on the job.
- Finally, there is some evidence of economic motivation, as the workers who stated that it was relatively easy to find a better job were more likely to express less commitment to the present job.



MODULE VIII

Lessons Learned

- ✦ Workers leave the job for many different reasons, some positive, some negative. In predicting turnover, the type of turnover should be specified.
- ✦ Leaving the job is a complex individual decision, made in social, professional, and economic circumstances. It is difficult to determine all of the reasons that workers leave.
- ✦ Some apparent reasons for leaving the job may be due to other factors.



Lessons Learned (cont.)

- ✦ It is difficult to specify precise current turnover rates in public child welfare because of regional differences and because of different ways of measuring turnover.
- ✦ The average annual turnover rate is probably 15-25%, possibly higher for new employees.
- ✦ Agency factors, many under the control of administrators, have a greater effect on turnover than individual demographic factors.
- ✦ Latinos and Asians are generally more likely to remain on the job than Whites or African Americans.



Lessons Learned (cont.)

- ✦ While salary alone is not a predictor of turnover, it is important to remember that leaving a job is in part an economic decision that will be affected by the worker's family and community resources.
- ✦ Education, training, and professional background are less related to turnover than social work educators might hope.
- ✦ As expected, general job satisfaction is strongly correlated with turnover and can be used by an agency to predict turnover levels.

Lessons Learned (cont.)

- ✦ Workload does not seem to be related to turnover.
- ✦ However, gradually giving new employees cases, rather than immediately giving them full caseloads, will result in workers remaining on the job. This is an important and unexpected result of the present study, and indicates a change in practice that can be implemented immediately by administrators at relatively little cost.
- ✦ Experiencing role conflict on the job is associated with worker turnover, and indicates another useful area for administrative change.



Lessons Learned (cont.)

- ✦ Individual attitudes, such as commitment to the career of child welfare and satisfaction with various aspects of the job, are associated with the expressed intention to leave the job more than with actually leaving the job.
- ✦ Those who express intention to leave the job are in fact more likely to do so than others, but many who intend to leave the job in fact remain, thus presenting a challenge for administrators.



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