

THE IMPACT OF SELF DISCLOSURE ON TURN OVER INTENTION: THE PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYEES IN TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES IN JORDAN

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to explore the impact of self disclosure on turnover intention from the viewpoint of employees in the telecommunication industry in Jordan. A quantitative study (a questionnaire with 298 employees) was conducted in order to achieve the study objectives. The results showed that both overall self-disclosure and breadth self-disclosure do not have an impact on turnover intention while depth self-disclosure has a negative impact on turnover intention. In other words, if depth self-disclosure increases the turnover intention is likely to decrease. Several recommendations were suggested to reduce the turnover intention in the telecommunication industry in Jordan from the perspective of self-disclosure approach.

Keywords: Self-disclosure, Turnover intention, Human Resources.

INTRODUCTION:

In our rapidly developing world we have accelerating changes in the scientific, social, economic and political fields. This has called for freedom of thought in the Middle East, convinced that the restrained thought becomes unusable after a period of time.

The above has resulted into, how can we liberate our thoughts, our feelings and desires, and to exchange and share information and ideas with those around us to become mutual, overlapping network of information to reach a high level of transparency. Imposing self-disclosure in such situations to illustrates itself as a concept not limited only to the transfer of information and facts, but including the feelings and desires and needs as well, which is called self-disclosure.

Self-disclosure creates opportunities for the exchange of ideas, experiences, feelings, desires and needs as well, and a way out that individuals resort to when attending the urgent need to vent pressure, frustration, and dissatisfaction. Thus self disclosure creates an exit for employees to self express their stress, pressure and frustration, which may result on improving the organization performance in terms of efficiency and effectiveness, decreasing turnover intention (Steele, 1975).

Harris et al. (2002) found that high turnover intention is caused by low self-disclosure, and concluded that it might lead to lowering the companies' incentive to provide training programs, and therefore reduce productivity. Self disclosure also plays a key role in the field of Human Recourses, which contributes largely to the goals and profit of an organization, through the focus on employee performance (Omarzu, 2000).

To the best of our knowledge, examining the impact of self disclosure on employees' turnover in general and in telecommunication industry in particular has largely been overlooked in previous literature. Therefore this study represent a humble contribution to the field in general and to the telecommunication industry in particular.

Furthermore the telecommunication industry contributes to the state treasury and supporting the national economy, the percentage contribution of this sector to GDP in 2008 accounted for 14.3% (9.5% directly and 4.8% indirectly), and estimated employment opportunities provided by the sector equals 82 thousand job opportunity cumulatively (Oxfordbusinessgroup, 2012).

Moreover, the average turnover rate was 2.8% in 2011 in Jordan and still rising due to the world economic crisis (Directorate of Labor Statistics, 2011) therefore it is important to find new approaches to reduce the turnover among employees (Ministry of Planning, 2012).

This study therefore aims to address the following question:

Does Self disclosure impact on turnover intention, from the perception of employees in telecommunication Companies in Jordan?

The following sub-questions will be addressed as well:

1. Does breadth self-disclosure impact on employee turnover intention?
2. Does depth self-disclosure impact on employee turnover intention?

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Self-disclosure is when a individual reveals parts of his characteristics, abilities, and features during his social interaction, and how it would be reflected in the minds of others, whether this presentation was planned or automatically happen without deliberate planning (Chelune, 1979).

There are many Self Discloser definitions and concepts cited by scholars in the field of psychology and management. For Example, Cozby (1973, p. 79) defined self disclosure as "Personal information orally transmitted to other people, as every behaviour by an individual is shared with others". As the time passed, the concept of self-disclosure has been evolved as a communication skill. However, the definition that has been adopted for this research defined self-disclosure as "the one of the Hall-marks of intimate relationships. Revealing your motives, intentions, goals, values, and emotions' (Offermann and Rosh, 2012). This definition was adopted due to its collectiveness and close association with the Management Administration field rather than the psychological field.

There are a few studies that explored self –disclosure in Jordan. For example, Al-sabhan (2001) has investigated the factors influencing self - revealing among High- school students in Mafrqa Governorate. The results of the study shown that, the person most targeted in concern to self - disclosure was a friend of the same sex, then mother and father and finally a counsellor.

It is worth noting that there is a difference between the concept of self-disclosure and self-description, as self-description includes the discovery of non-hazardous or basic information that can be obtained from other people, such as age, workplace, and favourite food. On the contrary, self-disclosure contains dangerous information which reveals his private and personal information that others cannot obtain via other individuals , such as sense of the individual to be part of a minority, etc. (Reece, 1999). Brenner (2011) found that cultural differences has an impact on self-disclosure, for example what is normal for a group of people may not be normal for others, and this has high influence in any business aspect. Therefore Self-disclosure can be implemented either online or offline (Nguyen et al., 2012). For example, it could be implemented through social media, such as Facebook because Facebook offers users the ability to disclose different categories of information on their Facebook page (Special and Li-Barber, 2012).

Self-disclosure is identified by three dimensions (i.e. breadth, depth, and duration) that are used in the process of self-disclosure. The first dimension (breadth) is measured by the number of topics that are discussed during the conversation. The more a person share with others varies topics the more it generates a desire to disclose their subjects in return.

As for the second dimension, which is depth information is converted from general to more private individual information. Taylor and Altman (1987) suggested that the type of relationship is determined based on the breadth and depth of information disclosed. After determined the relationship we can classify the relation as a casual or solid relationship. Therefore, in any organization workers are more likely disclose to their co-workers, because co-workers support is related to fewer job disruptions and also help with work tasks (*Gignac and Cao*, 2009), on the other hand Madaus (2008) found that workers may not disclose to their managers because they have concerns or fears of job security.

The third dimension is the duration dimension, where the duration is the period in which the person discloses it also reflects the desire and determination to practice the behavior of self-disclosure, taking into account the predisposing conditions of the person who wishes to disclose (Rubin, 1975).

Therefore, the first two dimensions (breadth, depth) were only explored in this study, because of its significant impact on the degree of self-disclosure. The third dimension was not explored in this study due to lack of accurate measurements, limited time with employees specified by the company, and company policies.

Before discussing the impact of self-disclosure on labour turnover, we must address the importance of self –disclosure and what are the needs that drive human to self-disclose with others in general. We can't talk about human needs without reference to Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Hall and Raffo, 2004), where the order of human needs explain the nature of the motives or needs that drive human behaviour. Where the base of the pyramid represents the physical and basic biological needs, and those rang increasing upwards until it reaches the top of the pyramid, where self-realization need is located. Maslow noted that employees can't move to a higher level, without at least satisfying the need prior.

It should be noted here that Maslow Theory is exposed to many criticism, such as the theory assumes a gradual arrangement for the needs, but some people may differ in satisfying these needs. The theory also did not care about the size of fulfilment necessary for the transition to the Top level need, but it is assumed that there is satisfaction only without specifying the amount or scale (Globe 2004). Despite the criticism directed at Maslow's theory, the main concerns is that communication (e.g. self-disclosure) generally is considered a core need, as it satisfies needs mentioned in Maslow's hierarchy, therefore its considered a social needs, which is an initiating point for the following top –level needs.

With regards to labor turnover, people leaves their work from time to time for several reasons they may retire, be fired, join other businesses, which led to employee turnover. Employee turnover therefore, is the number of people that leave a business over a period of time as a percentage of people employed (Hall and Raffo, 2004). The telecommunication industry has one of the highest turnover percentage

11.9% among the industries (Directorate of Labor Statistics, 2011).

Numerous research studies have been conducted to explain the reasons behind employees' turnover. Work environment (open-door policy) is the most important factor that affects the employees' tendency to disclose in a workplace. McKnight et al. (2009) studied the factors that reduce IT turnover intention and found that workplace factors and psychological incentives are the most factors that induce them to stay.

Various studies suggest that peer relationships influences employee turnover. For example, Scott et al. (1999) found that strength peer relationships are negatively associated with employees' turnover. Comparably, Sias and Cahill (1998) found that employees with close relationships often choose to stay in their work because they don't want to leave their co-workers.

Also when employees reveal in breadth (share general information) and then in depth (share detailed information), so this will increase employees commitment, engagement and cohesion among the organization and co-workers (Sias, 2009). Individual's worry after disclosing to be evaluated negatively; they might lose the respect of peers or job security, hence if evaluated negatively it will impact their future work opportunities and self-disclosure (Steele, 1975). Thus workforces that are accepting of others opinions and ideas will encourage self disclose and lower employee turnover. Knox et al. (2011) found that many supervisors disclosed primarily to normalize and also to build relationship with supervisees and to instruct them.

Illustrating what motivate employees to stay in their jobs lead us to mention the two-factor theory by the psychologist Frederick Herzberg. Herzberg created a two-dimensional factors affecting people's attitudes toward work; which are hygiene and motivational factors (Hall and Raffo, 2004). He determined that such elements as company's policy, supervision, interpersonal relations, working conditions, and salary are hygiene (maintenance) factors. Based on the theory, the non-existence of hygiene factors can make job dissatisfaction, but their existence does not motivate or make satisfaction (Hall and Raffo, 2004). In contrast, he determined that motivational factors were factors that enriched a worker's job; he discovered five aspects in particular that were tough determiners of job satisfaction which are achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and advancement (Hall and Raffo, 2004).

According to theory motivational inspire more than hygiene (maintenance) factors. Motivation contains stimulating profession, accountability, and fulfilment. In comparison, the hygiene (maintenance) factor do not bring positive satisfaction, however dissatisfaction happens from their deficiency (Hall and Raffo, 2004).

Employees who are satisfied and saturated are in a pleasant and comfort (maintenance factor) work environment and have achieved personal development (motivational factor), therefore commitment, belongingness and involvement to the organization will increase and consequently increase their desire to stay in their work which will reduce employees turnover in organizations (Hall and Raffo, 2004).

In the literature, there is some evidences of self –disclosure activities contributing to lowering employee turnover. For example, when comparing two companies of Fortune 500, Amazon and Nike it was found that self –disclosure has an impact on employee turnover.

Amazon.com one of the growing Fortune 100 companies in the world (Amazon.com) has been criticized for its business practices towards its employees that didn't encourage the practice of self disclosure (Mahaparta 2013). According to Mahaparta (2013) Amazon.com has the second highest employee turnover of all the Fortune 500 companies.

On the other hand, Nike Inc. has a similar problem, but the world's largest sporting-goods maker (Nike Inc.) took an initial approach “persuade contract manufacturers that better labour practices can sustain improving productivity with lower worker turnover and reduced costs” (Townsend, 2012). And inviting “openness and innovation, where new perceptions and thoughts are requested, understood and considered” through “group trainings and brainstorming sessions” (Townsend, 2012).

Comparing the two companies in terms of approach Amazon.com has a high turnover, which might be caused by low self –disclosure of its employees. It might be also caused by many other factors. Although Nike Inc. has a similar problem but it is initiating a new approach towards lowing its labour

turnover, though allowing employees to self –disclosure as part of its corporate police.

RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES:

Based on the literature review and to fill the gap in the literature, we have developed a research model to guide us in this study. This model uses a combination of two self disclosure variables that might impact on turnover intention. The model is presented in Figure 1. A short discussion on each factor is presented below.

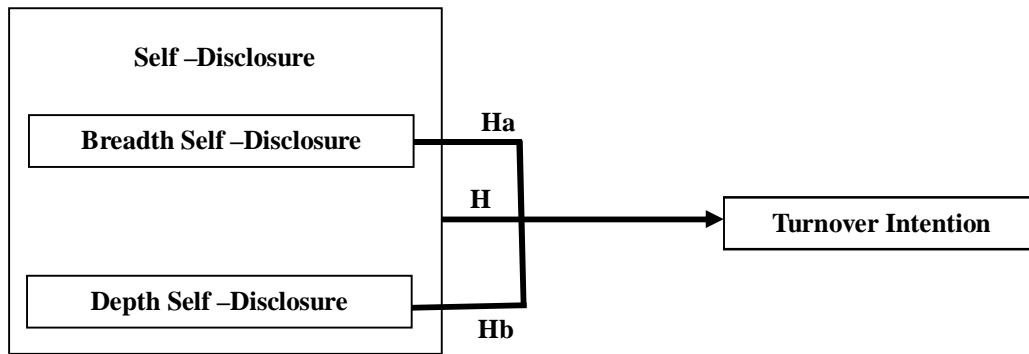


Figure 1: illustrates the research model

Self-disclosure refers to the exchanging of ideas , experiences, feelings , desires and needs as well, and a way out that individuals resort to when attending the urgent need to vent pressure, frustration, and dissatisfaction. From a relational perspective, the worker’s disclosures promote the working alliance and a positive attachment between the client and worker (Knight 2012). Therefore, the more a person discloses to others the more he/she is likely to stay in his/her current position. Based on the discussion in literature review section, we hypothesize that *self disclosure does have an impact on employee turnover intention* (H).

Breadth self-disclosure is the number of topics that are discussed during the conversation. Vera (1990) found that the frequency of self-disclosure was the strongest predictor of relationship satisfaction. Therefore, the more a person share with others various topics the more it generates a desire to disclose their subjects in return and the more he/she is likely to stay in his/her current position. Based on the discussion in literature review section, we hypothesize that *breadth self-disclosure does have an impact on employee turnover intention* (Ha).

Depth self-disclosure is the in-depth information that is shared and disclosed. Here is the transition from general information to information that is more private for the individual. According to Van Horns (1997), intimate self-disclosure mattered more than descriptive self-disclosure in relationships staying together. Therefore, the more a person share with others depth topics the more he/she is likely to stay in his/her current position. Based on the discussion in literature review section, we hypothesize that *depth self-disclosure does have an impact on employee turnover intention* (Hb).

METHODS:

For the purpose of this study, a survey of the telecommunication companies in Jordan was conducted. The main method of data collection was a questionnaire which was distributed to a sample of employees in three telecommunication companies in Jordan. The target population for this study is all employees in the three telecommunications companies in Jordan. The numbers of employees in these three companies are as follows:

- Orange Jordan Company, the number of employees approximately 2000 employees (Orange Annual Report, 2013).

- Zain Jordan Company, the number of employees approximately 1000 employees (Zain Annual Report, 2013).
- Umniah Telecommunication Company, as the number of employees approximately less than 1000 employees (Umniah Annual Report, 2013).

The study sample consists of various kinds of employees (e.g. technicians, engineers, and administration management level). We used a random sampling method. The survey items were adopted from Jourard and Lasakow (1958), Billeter (2002), and Jacobs (2005) with some modifications to suit the context of this study. Section A in the survey relates to the employees profile such as (Gender, Age, Social statuses, educational level, Job title, years of service, and monthly salary) and Section B includes the items used to measure two factors (Breadth and depth self disclosure) that influence turnover intention. Section C relates to the obstacles of self-disclosure. A three-point response scale (1 = rarely to 3 = highly) was used. The questionnaire was tested by three experts from the telecommunication industry and necessary alterations were made.

The survey was distributed through a personal visit by the first three authors. The participants were explained the purposes of the study and asked to complete the surveys. In all, 450 surveys were administered to employees in the telecommunications companies in Jordan (150 surveys in each company) while only 298 surveys were returned and usable for this study. A summary of the demographic characteristics of the respondents is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Demographic characteristic	Categories	n=298	%
Gender	Male	164	55.0
	Female	134	45.0
Age	From 21 to 30	161	54.0
	From 31 to 40	89	29.9
	From 41 to 51	33	11.1
	From 51 and more	15	5.0
Marital Status	Single	141	47.3
	Married	151	50.7
	Other	6	2.0
Education	Undergraduate	65	21.8
	Postgraduate	233	78.2
Years of service	Less than 3 years	122	40.9
	From 4 to 8 years	92	30.9
	More than 9 years	84	28.2

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS:

This study aimed to explore the impact of self disclosure on turnover intention, from the perception of employees in telecommunication Companies in Jordan. The data obtained from the study are analyzed through various techniques in SPSS 15.0 program. Data analysis involves three processes. First, the reliability of the measurement model were evaluated by computing the Cronbach's alpha. Second, the descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to identify the current state of self disclosure of employees. Finally, simple linear and multiple regression and Pearson correlation were used to assess the impact of each factor on turnover intention considered in this study.

The measurement model was evaluated for reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity. Construct reliability or internal consistency was assessed by computing Cronbach's alpha. Table 4 shows the reliability results of the constructs. The alpha values range from 0.806 to 0.880. Construct reliability is achieved if the alpha values are above the acceptable value of 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978).

Therefore, construct reliabilities of all the three factors used in the study are demonstrated.

Table 4 . Results of construct reliability assessment

Factor	No. of items	Valid numbers	Cronbach's Alfa
Breadth of self disclosure	11	298	0.806
Depth of self disclosure	16	298	0.865
Overall self disclosure	27	298	0.880

Table 5 illustrates the mean and standard deviations of employees' current state of self-disclosure in telecommunication companies in Jordan. The following scale is used; to facilitate reporting the participants' results:

- 1.High self-disclosure: Calculated mean for estimations greater than 2.33.
- 2.Often self-disclosure: Calculated mean for estimation is between 1.67 and 2.33.
- 3.Rare self-disclosure: Calculated mean for estimation less than 1.67

The table clearly illustrates that both dimensions of self-disclosure (Breadth and Depth) are extremely close to one another, however Depth show a (m=1.78) higher than Breadth (m=1.75), which means employees in both dimensions are often self-disclosed. The table also shows the mean of self disclosure in general at a value of (m=1.77), indicating that employees at telecommunication industry in Jordan is often self-disclosed.

Table 5.Mean and Standard Deviation of Self-Disclosure dimensions

Dimension	Mean	SD
Breadth	1.75	0.445
Depth	1.78	0.423
Self-Disclosure	1.77	0.382

To test the impact of overall self disclosure and self-disclosure dimensions (breadth and depth) on turnover intention simple linear and multiple regression and Pearson correlation were used. Table 6 shows a summary of the influence of the three factors on turnover intention in the telecommunication industry in Jordan.

Table 6: A summary of the influence of the three factors on turnover intention

The factor	B	Beta	t-test	p value
Self-disclosure	0.147	0.112	1.940	0.053
Breadth	0.08-	0.073-	1.049-	0.295
Depth	0.222	0.188	2.721	0.007

As shown in the table, there is a significant impact of depth self-disclosure on turnover intention at $p=0.007$. Also Pearson correlation = -0.148 at $p = 0.011$ (see Table 7) reflects a significant moderate and negative relationship between the two variables.This means that when depth self-disclosure increases, turnover intention is likely to decrease. For overall self disclosure and breadth self disclosure, there is no impact of these two variables on turnover intention from the employees' perception. This is also supported by Pearson correlations between these two variables and turnover intention as shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Pearson Correlation between self disclosure dimensions and turnover intention

Self-disclosure Dimensions	Correlation Coefficient	P value
Breadth	-0.032	0.582
Depth	-0.148	0.011
Overall Self-disclosure	-0.112	0.053

Summary of the results:

- Overall self-disclosure has no impact on employee turnover intention.
- Breadth self disclosure has no impact on employee turnover intention.
- Depth self disclosure has an impact on employee turnover intention.

DISCUSSION:

According to the findings of the study, the employees in the telecommunication industry in Jordan reported that they often self-disclosed ($m=1.77$). Therefore, the telecommunication employees have an initiative to self disclose. However, the depth dimension of self-disclosure is found to be higher ($m=1.78$) than the breadth dimension.

On the other hand, the employees in the telecommunication industry are likely to stay in their jobs ($m=1.97$) because they think that disclosing their selves help reducing the possibility to leave the work.

Various statistical analyses have been employed to examine if self-disclosure (and depth and breadth) has an impact on turnover intention. As presented in the results section, the overall self-disclosure has no impact on employee turnover from employees' perception (H Rejected). This could be explained using Maslow Hierarchy of Needs, where self-disclosure is located on the top of the pyramid noted that employees can't move to a higher need level, without at least satisfying the need prior.

Moreover, the results shown that self-disclosure in terms of breadth doesn't have an impact on turnover intention (Ha Rejected). This shows that employees in the telecommunication companies in Jordan did not perceive that they are likely to stay in their jobs if they self-disclosed in breadth.

In contrast, self-disclosure in terms of depth has an impact on employee turnover intention from employees' perspective (Hb Accepted), accordingly when self-disclosure in terms of depth increase this leads to reducing the possibility of employee's turnover, this shows that employees in telecommunication companies in Jordan, who reveal in depth are less likely to leave their position at work.

We could clarify these results through the use of Herzberg Hygiene Theory of motivation, where breadth is a hygiene factor, and the absence of it will cause dissatisfaction but won't motivate employees or have an impact on turnover intention. On the other hand, depth is a motivational factor and will increase employee satisfaction leading to reducing turnover intention.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The dilemma of the study that there was a high turnover 11.9% in the telecommunication industry, through reviewing previous literature; self-disclosure was the least tackled variable by human resource management that could explain these high rates of turnover intention.

The study importance is derived from the importance of the telecommunication industry and its contributes to the state treasury and supporting the national economy, the percentage contribution of this sector to GDP in 2008 accounted for 14.3% (9.5% directly and 4.8% indirectly), and estimated employment opportunities provided by the sector equals 82 thousand job opportunity cumulatively (Oxfordbusinessgroup.com).

The aim of the study was therefore to provide possible solutions to reduce the turnover percentage in the telecommunication sector, through shedding light on the importance of self-disclosure and its practice. A quantitative (a questionnaire with 298 employees) study was conducted in order to achieve the study objectives.

The questionnaire results showed that both breadth self-disclosure and overall self-disclosure did not have an impact on turnover intention, while depth self-disclosure has an impact on turnover intention. In other words, if depth self-disclosure increases the turnover intention is likely to decrease.

Like any other research this study has limitations; this study is limited to two dimensions of self-disclosure, future research could explore other dimensions that may impact on turnover intention such as the duration of self-disclosure. This study also explored self disclosure in the telecommunication industry, the applicability of these results on other sectors deserves further study.

In light of the above results, several recommendations can be suggested to reduce the turnover intention in the telecommunication industry in Jordan from the perspective of self-disclosure approach. These recommendations include conducting training sessions and workshops to encourage self-disclosure, especially in the depth dimension. Managers in the telecommunication sectors need to work on expansion of knowledge and awareness of self-disclosure, by conducting training sessions and workshops to improve the communication skills among employees with one another and also with their managers. Throughout these sessions employees will be able to disclose their opinions, values and goals, and managers will accept employees thoughts and ideas even if it conflict with their own ones. Self-disclosure will provide relaxed work environment furthermore accepting and respecting all kinds of cultures regardless of the differences, which will reduce turnover intention. Managers could understand the basic needs and wants of their employees and know how to satisfy those needs such as love and belonging needs, by practicing and encouraging self-disclosure employees will explicit their knowledge, objectives and motives. Nevertheless some managers may empower their employees so employees will feel that they are an important part of this organization and consequently will increase their commitment, therefore satisfying their belonging needs.

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