

Employee poaching and turnover intention investigation model at five famous universities in Medan City

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Orientation: Turnover intention and faculty poaching have become serious challenges to sustaining the quality of higher education, particularly in developing countries. Factors such as financial rewards and cultural openness patterns are suspected to influence these phenomena.

Research purpose: This study aims to examine the effects of financial rewards and cultural openness patterns on turnover intention and poaching susceptibility among tenured lecturers at five famous universities in Medan, Indonesia.

Motivation for the study: The study is motivated by the increasing incidence of poaching experienced lecturers, which results in the loss of valuable academic talent. This issue calls for a better empirical understanding of its causal factors to support more effective lecturer retention strategies.

Research approach/design and method: Adopting a quantitative explanatory research approach, data were collected from 471 tenured lecturers using a structured survey. The relationships among variables were analysed using structural equation modelling.

Main findings: The results reveal that financial rewards have a significant influence on turnover intention and poaching susceptibility. In contrast, cultural openness patterns show no significant effect on either outcome.

Practical/managerial implications: These findings highlight the importance of competitive and sustainable compensation policies in reducing turnover intentions and susceptibility to poaching. University administrators can use these insights to design more effective retention strategies.

Contribution/value-add: This study enriches the human resource management literature by providing new empirical evidence on turnover and poaching dynamics in higher education within the context of developing countries, particularly Indonesia.

Keywords: financial rewards; cultural openness pattern; turnover intention; employee poaching; Medan.

Introduction

The advancement of higher education in Indonesia has progressively improved annually. The proliferation of higher education institutions in Indonesia is occurring at an accelerated pace. Presently, institutions of higher education are encountering escalating rivalry. The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) reports that, as of December 2023, the Ministry of Research and Higher Education indicates there are 4004 public and private higher education institutions. Private higher education institutions must possess human resources with the capability and quality to enhance their performance effectively to enable universities to compete on a national or international level (Ghasemy, 2023). In light of the escalating rivalry among higher education institutions, it is imperative for these institutions to recruit proficient lecturers to gain a competitive advantage (Muhdar et al., 2022).

Nonetheless, the number of private institutions is now increasing in many big cities, including Medan. The assistance of competent instructors who can articulate their roles and responsibilities is crucial. Universities face the peril of losing their professional lecturers to rivals that provide superior remuneration and advancement prospects to professorship (Mudumba et al., 2022). Retaining lecturers is essential. To alleviate turnover risk, private

institutions in Medan City must persist in improving their operations and provide management assistance to guarantee welfare.

Presently, there is a demand for professors holding functional roles, possessing PhD degrees and having a minimum rank of lecturer from different campuses (Moore et al., 2021). This condition enables each university to retain prospective instructors through various methods (Zhao et al., 2023). Furthermore, colleges must evaluate the loyalty of their lecturers to ensure a sense of security, confirming that faculty members would remain despite competing offers from other institutions (Nieman & Nieman, 2024). Preserving the presence of lecturers is a strategic approach to attain cost-saving efficiency and organisational flexibility (Kameswararao et al., 2023).

The turnover in a private institution is not exclusively attributable to instructor dissatisfaction. Moreover, faculty from other institutions with superior management systems and more attractive remuneration are frequently hired (Sampson et al., 2022). Lecturers are unlikely to go if they struggle to secure other employment; these results suggest that the organisation's insufficient job satisfaction warrants prompt and appropriate attention (Battiston et al., 2024).

Employee poaching is a tactic employed by rival colleges to acquire top-performing instructors (Nieman & Nieman, 2024). Universities will endeavour to provide appealing incentives, such as enhanced welfare benefits (Zhao et al., 2023). Consequently, a lecturer's inclination to move will escalate, as they recognise that moving to a competing university provides superior certainties compared to remaining at their former school (Moore et al., 2021).

Prior research indicates that employee poaching significantly influences turnover intention (Mudumba et al., 2022). The proper execution of staff poaching is thought to improve higher education performance (Bhattacharya et al., 2022). Nonetheless, study findings (Fischer et al., 2021) demonstrated that employee poaching did not substantially affect the desire to depart from the firm. A lecturer's choice to depart from their organisation upon receiving an offer from a rival firm is mostly influenced by their impression of welfare and support in their present workplace (Rivera, 2023).

Numerous factors, such as equitable and sufficient financial compensation, might affect lecturers' intentions to resign from their positions (Kristanti et al., 2021). Acknowledging and monetarily compensating lecturers' efforts and contributions typically enhance their work satisfaction and diminish their desire to resign (Naushad, 2021; Orpina et al., 2022). Proper financial incentives can enhance the relationship between educators and their employing institution (Kanu et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2022). Instructors may have a stronger affiliation with the school and a lesser propensity to depart when they see equitable recognition and treatment (Athanasou, 2022; Kisubi et al., 2022).

The study's results indicate that financial incentives directly mitigate the likelihood of turnover intention (Cui et al., 2025). The comprehensive reward system encompasses financial incentives as well as additional components, including recognition, career advancement and non-monetary perks like health insurance and flexible leave options (Madhani, 2021). The comprehensive reward system integrates monetary incentives with additional components, enhancing the workplace appeal for employees, diminishing turnover intentions, and bolstering staff retention (Ferdous et al., 2024).

Moreover, it is posited that the culture of openness markedly diminishes a lecturer's inclination to depart from the institution (Fitriano, 2023). The chance to innovate and aid in the institution's advancement reflects cultural openness (Büchi et al., 2021). Lecturers who see opportunities for participation and self-development generally exhibit elevated work satisfaction, which may diminish turnover intentions (Senbeto et al., 2023). Universities that adopt a framework of cultural openness typically exhibit enhanced tolerance for diversity, particularly regarding work style and work-life balance (Gräbner et al., 2021). When educators perceive that the institution prioritises their own needs, they will exhibit more emotional attachment and less inclination to resign from their positions (David et al., 2021).

Prior study findings indicated that the pattern of cultural openness adversely affects turnover intention (Khanal, 2024; Petrou et al., 2023). Universities that promote creativity and innovation enable instructors to advance academically and professionally (Scharf et al., 2023). A setting that restricts or fails to foster openness may elevate turnover intention, as lecturers perceive their abilities and contributions as unvalued (Behnert et al., 2024). A confined work setting sometimes generates stress among persons because of potential differences that may arise (Buzás & Faragó, 2023). Implementing cultural openness might mitigate conflict among lecturers by promoting mutual understanding and respect of diversity (Obschonka et al., 2023).

While prior research has investigated turnover intentions across other industries, the specific context of private institutions in developing nations has been largely overlooked. This research seeks to address this gap by examining the precursors of turnover intentions and personnel poaching among tenured teachers at private institutions in Medan City. Utilising social exchange theory, we analyse the impact of financial incentives and cultural openness on employee poaching and turnover intentions.

Literature review

Turnover intention

Turnover intention is an individual's subjective assessment of departing from their current employment to seek alternative employment (Akosile, 2022). Factors contributing

to turnover intention encompass internal elements such as job discontent, unfavourable environmental conditions, excessive working hours with inadequate compensation and substandard training programmes (Mittal et al., 2022). External variables influencing the establishment of turnover intention include the national economy, superior salaries in alternative work, local and regional economic vitality, and low unemployment rates (He et al., 2023).

The aim of lecturers to leave their positions results in uneven service delivery to students (Zhang et al., 2021). This includes services like academic advising, administration, and career support, which may greatly influence student happiness (Orpina et al., 2022). Universities face supplementary expenses to recruit and educate new faculty, which can deplete time and resources (Lee, 2021). Elevated turnover may further augment the administrative strain on university administration (Hadush & Katheriyar, 2023). Prospective academics and staff may see institutions with elevated turnover intentions as less desirable workplaces, thereby damaging the institution's image and appeal (Tuzun & Kalemci, 2012). Should high-performing or important professors choose to go, colleges risk forfeiting a competitive edge that impacts accreditation evaluations and institutional rankings both nationally and globally (Mashile et al., 2021).

Employee poaching

Lecturer poaching, or staff poaching, is an issue that necessitates specialised focus, especially from the university's human resources department (Li et al., 2023b). The interplay of many forces renders professor poaching nearly inevitable within a university setting (Ferreira & Nikolowa, 2022). Nevertheless, attempts to reduce turnover resulting from 'seduction' by external entities in the future might alleviate professor poaching. Lecturer poaching transpires when a university recruits a lecturer from a rival institution (Hoey et al., 2021).

Lecturers presented with offers of increased pay, enhanced perks, or appealing incentives from alternative colleges are more inclined to contemplate relocation (Li et al., 2023b). If the institution employing the lecturer cannot match the offer, the lecturer's desire to leave will escalate (In et al., 2024). Employee poaching sometimes includes proposals for roles with enhanced responsibilities or accelerated advancement prospects (Yildiz, 2023). Lecturers seeing stagnation in their careers at their present university may be more inclined to entertain such offers, hence elevating their turnover intention (Battiston et al., 2024). Institutions with more recognition or higher academic rankings are frequently appealing to academics for transfer because such moves might enhance their academic reputation (Mittal & Singh, 2021). Lecturers who perceive a lack of gratitude or recognition at their current university may be incentivised to depart for other colleges that promote a more appreciative culture (Kuiper et al., 2021):

H1: Employee poaching has a direct and significant effect on the turnover intention of lecturers in higher education.

Financial rewards

Rank, group, and seniority explicitly dictate financial remuneration in the teaching profession, including salary, bonuses, allowances, and other incentives (Chi et al., 2023). Subpar lecturer performance frequently results from compensation-related concerns, as salary allocation is determined by position and seniority rather than performance metrics (Elrayah & Semlali, 2023). The problem stems from the uniformity of salaries, regardless of individual achievement (Ibitomi et al., 2022). The financial incentives offered to instructors substantially influence their desire to depart (De Buissonjé et al., 2022). The government's financial remuneration for academics is now insufficient (Zhou et al., 2021). Moreover, prospective teachers may approach colleges that lack a defined payment structure with appealing propositions (Akpom & Ibegbulam, 2023). This phenomenon involves the competition for faculty in the realm of higher education (McWha-Hermann et al., 2022). Competing institutions target the swift acquisition of competency resources to improve their national and worldwide rankings (Li et al., 2023b).

Prior study findings suggest that financial incentives might markedly diminish a lecturer's propensity to resign (Oppong et al., 2023). Monetary incentives might strengthen instructors' dedication against recruitment strategies utilised by rival colleges in their quest for professional talent (Ehlers et al., 2024). Universities jeopardise their success when they do not deliver the anticipated financial incentives to their tenured faculty members (Leitão et al., 2022):

H2: Financial reward directly has a significant effect on employee poaching.

H3: Financial reward directly has a significant effect on turnover intention.

H4: Financial reward indirectly has a significant effect on turnover intention through employee poaching.

Cultural openness pattern

Cultural openness denotes the awareness, comprehension, and acceptance of diverse cultures, influenced by an individual's inclination to engage with individuals from different cultural backgrounds (Özkan Alakaş, 2024). According to Fitriano (2023), cultural openness denotes the degree to which individuals may integrate into social groupings, including diverse cultures, without experiencing social limitations. Engaging with persons and things from many cultures can enhance cultural acceptance because such interactions foster familiarity and acceptance of different cultures among individuals (Mousa Alriyami et al., 2024).

Clear institutional policies guarantee that every instructor understands their obligations unequivocally (Handley et al., 2024). The professor is required to comply with processes and standards in several facets of their responsibilities, including performance assessment, advancement, professional growth, and workload allocation (Benefits, 2023). Instructors with a comprehensive awareness of their institution's standards and

procedures may execute their responsibilities with greater confidence, minimising misunderstanding and doubt (Anderson et al., 2024). The school cultivates an equitable and reliable environment by uniformly enforcing regulations for all lecturers without bias (O'Reilly et al., 2024). Instructors will not perceive that decisions or interventions provided to them are influenced by personal or contextual motives (Aggarwal, 2024). The institution's criteria will guarantee equitable treatment for instructors (Lee et al., 2024):

H5: Cultural openness pattern has a significant direct effect on employee poaching.

H6: Cultural openness pattern has a significant direct effect on turnover intention.

H7: Cultural openness pattern has a significant indirect effect on turnover intention through employee poaching.

Research design

This study employs the structural equation modelling (SEM) to construct concepts, models, and policies concerning turnover intention and employee poaching in private universities located in Medan City. The study's population consists of private universities located in Medan City, and includes the following details:

The sampling technique utilised a cluster sampling model and involved 293 permanent lecturers. With the following details (Table 1):

Table 2 reveals that the selected sample consists of 293 regular instructors from five private institutions in Medan City. Additionally, the data source for this study is primary data collected using a questionnaire developed according to the indications of each research variable. The measuring scale employs a Likert scale:

- Six metrics assess financial compensation: salary and benefits (FR1), bonuses and incentives (FR2), award programmes (FR3), education and professional development (FR4), transparency and communication (FR5) and institutional financial stability (FR6).

TABLE 1: Five private universities in Medan City.

No	University name	N
1	Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara	621
2	Universitas Prima Indonesia	587
3	Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi	385
4	Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara	287
5	Universitas Potensi Utama	243
Total	-	2123

TABLE 2: Sample selection percentage.

No	University name	N	Percentage	Cluster sampling
1	Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara	621	29	86
2	Universitas Prima Indonesia	587	28	81
3	Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi	385	18	53
4	Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara	287	14	40
5	Universitas Potensi Utama	243	12	34
Total	-	2123	-	293

- Seven indicators assess the pattern of cultural openness: acceptance of diversity (COP1), willingness to learn from other cultures (COP2), readiness to confront cultural change (COP3), respect for the traditions and values of other cultures (COP4), awareness of cultural stereotypes (COP5), support for cultural diversity initiatives (COP6) and leadership that honours culture (COP7).
- Eight measures, such as enhanced incentive provision (EC1), opportunities for professional progression (EC2), and aspects related to the work environment (EC3), assess employee poaching. Institutions with Superior Reputations (EC4), Employment Stability (EC5), Psychological Health and Motivation (EC6), Networking and Connections (EC7) and Transformations in the Industrial Landscape (EC8).
- Turnover intention is assessed using seven factors as follows: desire to seek new employment (TI1), intention to resign from current position (TI2), frequency of contemplating departure from the organisation (TI3), job satisfaction level (TI4), loyalty to educational institution (TI5), perception of external career opportunities (TI6) and availability of advancement opportunities (TI7).

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from the Universitas Prima Indonesia Research Ethics Committee (No. EC-2025-045).

Results

Construct validity testing

Table 3 indicates that the validity of the questions for all study variables is confirmed because the total validity value exceeds 0.7.

Construct reliability test

The findings of the data processing indicate the subsequent outcomes (Table 4):

The average value, as seen in the table above, exceeds 0.5. The composite dependability value exceeds 0.7. Consequently, we can ascertain that the study's indicators are accurately quantified.

Coefficient of determination (R^2)

Table 5 indicates that the Employee Poaching variable possesses an adjusted R -squared value of 0.940, or 94.0%, with other excluded factors affecting the residual 0.05%. The turnover intention variable has an adjusted R -squared value of 0.730, or 73%, indicating that the remaining 27% is affected by external factors not included in this study.

Predictive relevance (Q^2)

The Q^2 value is synonymous with the coefficient of determination (R -square). A Q -square value (Q^2) of

TABLE 3: Results of the analysis of cultural disclosure pattern question items.

Variable	Statement	Loading factor	Alpha	Information
Financial rewards (X1)	FR1	0.967	0.7	Valid
	FR2	0.966	0.7	Valid
	FR3	0.901	0.7	Valid
	FR4	0.953	0.7	Valid
	FR5	0.907	0.7	Valid
	FR6	0.909	0.7	Valid
Cultural openness pattern (X2)	COP1	0.838	0.7	Valid
	COP2	0.855	0.7	Valid
	COP3	0.722	0.7	Valid
	COP4	0.794	0.7	Valid
	COP5	0.878	0.7	Valid
	COP6	0.740	0.7	Valid
	COP7	0.737	0.7	Valid
Turnover intention (Y)	TI1	0.786	0.7	Valid
	TI2	0.836	0.7	Valid
	TI3	0.763	0.7	Valid
	TI4	0.960	0.7	Valid
	TI5	0.898	0.7	Valid
	TI6	0.825	0.7	Valid
	TI7	0.942	0.7	Valid
Employee poaching (Z)	EC1	0.983	0.7	Valid
	EC2	0.922	0.7	Valid
	EC3	0.966	0.7	Valid
	EC4	0.919	0.7	Valid
	EC5	0.976	0.7	Valid
	EC6	0.928	0.7	Valid
	EC7	0.928	0.7	Valid
	EC8	0.773	0.7	Valid

TABLE 4: Construct reliability.

Variable	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Financial rewards (X1)	0.970	0.801
Cultural openness pattern (X2)	0.981	0.687
Turnover intention (Y)	0.965	0.759
Employee poaching (Z)	0.980	0.862

TABLE 5: R-square.

Variable	R-square	R-square adjusted
Employee poaching (Z)	0.953	0.940
Turnover intention (Y)	0.742	0.730

0 signifies that the model possesses predictive relevance; conversely, a Q^2 value below 0 implies less predictive relevance. Thus, if all Q^2 values exceed 0, the model is deemed more appropriate for the data. The Q^2 value can be assessed as per Equation (1):

$$Q^2 = 1 - (1 - R_2^2)(1 - R_2^2) \dots (1 - R_n^2)$$

$$Q^2 = 1 - (1 - 0.940)(1 - 0.730)$$

$$Q^2 = 1 - (0.06)(0.27)$$

$$Q^2 = 1 - 0.0162$$

$$Q^2 = 0.984 \quad [\text{Eqn 1}]$$

The Q^2 value is 0.984, according to these statistics. Consequently, we can ascertain that all research variables

give legitimate data to the current structural model, representing 98.4% of the total. We must build the remaining 1.6% independently from the research factors.

Discussion

The influence of financial rewards on turnover intention

This research revealed that monetary incentives directly influence turnover intentions among permanent instructors at private university foundations in Medan City (Table 6). The findings of this study align with those of Boukis et al. (2023; Marrucci et al., 2024; Yin et al., 2023), which indicate that the implementation of a reward system through monetary incentives significantly influences the desire of lecturers to relocate, particularly among the millennial demographic. Moreover, Ehlers et al. (2024) discovered that although there exists a robust association between the reward system and professor productivity, a considerable proportion of academics still want to transition to other colleges that provide greater financial incentives. Consequently, the university's remuneration and the instructors' expectations must correspond with the incentive system (Akpom & Ibegbulam, 2023).

This study's findings indicate that the incentive systems in private institutions in Medan City are determined not by the performance outcomes of individual lecturers but by unilateral management policies. As a result, several

TABLE 6: Research hypothesis test.

Hypothesis	Original sample	Average mean	SD	t statistic	P-value	Conclusion
Financial rewards (X1) → Turnover intention (Y)	2.144	2.073	0.291	7.368	0.000	Significant
Financial rewards (X1) → Employee poaching (Z)	1.175	1.185	0.236	2.742	0.005	Significant
Cultural openness pattern (X2) → Turnover intention (Y)	0.127	1.114	0.198	1.291	0.056	Significant
Cultural openness pattern (X2) → Employee poaching (Z)	0.721	0.716	0.035	1.610	0.206	Not Significant
Employee poaching (Z) → Turnover intention (Y)	1.016	1.010	0.085	2.002	0.000	Significant
Financial rewards (X1) → Employee poaching (Z) → Turnover intention (Y)	2.178	2.083	0.364	5.991	0.000	Significant
Cultural openness pattern (X2) → Employee poaching (Z) → Turnover intention (Y)	0.129	0.003	0.099	1.298	0.195	Not Significant

SD, standard deviation.

professors experience dissatisfaction with the compensation they get, which is incongruent with their performance. Consequently, although the allocation of financial incentives is praiseworthy, it is essential that these incentives correspond with the lecturers' performance. Furthermore, higher education institutions could offer alternative types of remuneration to academics, such as funding for Umrah and additional incentives for outstanding performance, therefore fostering greater motivation among lecturers to enhance their efforts. Monetary incentives, including attractive wages, bonuses, and allowances, might entice proficient lecturers to join colleges and retain current faculty members. Sufficient financial remuneration might enhance job happiness.

The influence of financial rewards on employee poaching

This study demonstrated that financial incentives strongly influence the poaching of permanent instructors at private university foundations in Medan City (Table 6). The findings of this study align with those of (Balakrishnan et al., 2022; cWha-Hermann et al., 2022), which indicate that financial incentives are significant in reducing staff poaching. Organisations that fail to offer competitive financial incentives sometimes struggle to retain high-performing professors, leading to increased turnover and a subsequent loss of talent (McWha-Hermann et al., 2022). Moreover, poaching methods can undermine partnerships across colleges, diminish trust in the business, and induce instability among the workforce (Li et al., 2023a). Consequently, firms must reconcile talent acquisition with upholding ethical standards and equitable competition (Li et al., 2023b). Universities recognised for offering competitive remuneration are often attractive candidates for recruitment by other firms (Ibitomi et al., 2022).

The study's findings indicate that the elevated incidence of instances in Medan City, especially inside private institutions, is because of the insufficient commitment from university administrators to enhance the welfare of permanent professors. Universities inadvertently want an employment environment that they perceive to provide enhanced well-being. Nonetheless, the adverse impact occurs when multiple high-achieving faculty members leave colleges, leading to suboptimal performance from other instructors in teaching, research, and related activities.

The influence of cultural openness pattern on turnover intention

This study revealed that the pattern of cultural openness did not directly influence turnover intention among permanent Lecturers in Foundations at Private Universities in Medan City (Table 6). The findings of the study (An et al., 2024; Badaruddin & Fatmasari, 2021; Benefits, 2023) indicated that the openness pattern exerts a favourable and substantial influence on professor turnover. This suggests that work environment settings that promote a feeling of purpose, community connection, and adherence to institutional values aligned with those of lecturers would enhance lecturer performance (Mashile et al., 2021). Moreover, research indicates that lecturers with a pronounced attribute of openness to experience have a fervour for engaging with scientific advancements from many sources, undertaking study to enhance or evaluate a theory and welcoming feedback from others (Saleh, 2021). This characteristic can enhance the instructional competence that educators ought to possess (Yue, 2021).

The study's findings indicate that a university's degree of cultural openness and the presence of permanent lecturers, such as physicians and professors, can substantially affect their propensity to depart and pursue work at other institutions. This suggests that a university culture lacking transparency and inclusivity may considerably affect faculty retention. Higher education institutions in Medan City have to prioritise the adoption of managerial strategies and policies that promote openness, communication and the active participation of lecturers in organisational decision-making. Private colleges may enhance faculty retention and maintain the quality of instruction and research by cultivating a supportive work environment that addresses the requirements of academics.

The influence of cultural openness pattern on employee poaching

This study indicated that patterns of cultural openness do not directly influence staff poaching among tenured teachers at private university foundations in Medan City (Table 6). The study's findings corroborate prior research (An et al., 2024; O'Reilly et al., 2024; Tietschert et al., 2024), indicating that lecturers exhibiting high extraversion traits marked by amicable conduct, ease in connection formation, a propensity for social interaction and an optimistic disposition possess these characteristics abundantly (Nassani et al., 2024).

This attribute will augment the social competency anticipated of instructors. Moreover, instructors exhibiting high openness to experience attributes are distinguished by their profound interest and receptiveness to novel ideas and thoughts (Handley et al., 2024). Lecturers exhibiting high openness to experience will have a fervour for tracking scientific advancements from many sources, engaging in research to enhance or evaluate theories and embracing feedback from others (Goraya et al., 2024). This characteristic can enhance the instructional competence that educators ought to possess (Nassani et al., 2024).

The outcomes of this study indicate that lecturers with high cultural openness are inclined to pursue scientific advancements from many sources, engage in research to enhance or validate theories, and welcome feedback from others. The deterioration in professor performance in recent years indicates that lecturers in Indonesia, particularly permanent teachers from foundations in Medan City, are not prepared to confront global challenges. Lecturers are the most critical component of a university; the phenomenon of poaching from other schools significantly influences the advancement and deterioration of universities. Lecturers are the main power of the institution. Consequently, it is essential to comprehend the dynamics of academics and the factors that drive them to reject poaching offers from other universities.

The influence of employee poaching on turnover intention

This research demonstrated that staff poaching strongly influences turnover intentions among permanent academics at foundations in private institutions in Medan City (Table 6). The results of this survey correspond with research (Hidayat, 2022), which suggests that the majority of institutions consider lecturer poaching, or staff poaching, to be unlawful conduct. Nonetheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that there are no explicit regulations or statutes that forbid this practice (Kuiper et al., 2021). Employee poaching is a lawful activity when bosses reach out to faculty members from rival institutions to persuade them to transfer to their institution (Li et al., 2023b). Various variables influence instructors to accept an offer or opt to apply to a rival university (Mittal & Singh, 2021). The determinants include a greater wage, a balanced workload, a complete compensation package, and work-life balance (In et al., 2024).

The findings of this study indicate that, within the context of private universities in Medan, particularly for professors holding PhD degrees, there are numerous opportunities to transition to other institutions to enhance the university's reputation. Universities must assess compensation and additional incentives to avert the attrition of their most valuable personnel.

The influence of financial rewards on turnover intention through employee poaching

This study revealed that staff poaching significantly mediates the impact of financial incentives on the turnover intentions

of permanent academics at private universities in Medan City (Table 6). The findings of this study align with those of Elrayah and Semlali (2023), Zhou et al. (2021) and Chi et al. (2023), indicating that an effective reward system significantly impacts professor performance and diminishes their intentions to depart from the university. In this setting, rivals view financial incentives as a potent means of recognition, mitigating the danger of staff poaching to attract university instructors (Oppong et al., 2023). Offering sufficient cash incentives enhances lecturer performance and reinforces their devotion to the firm (Leitão et al., 2022). Mistakes in administering financial incentives can adversely affect universities by heightening the risk of losing prospective teachers, therefore diminishing their market competitiveness (De Buissonjé et al., 2022).

This study implies that the scarcity of teachers with PhD degrees in private universities in Medan City has become a prevalent occurrence. The recruitment of exceptional teachers by other institutions, who are vital for accreditation and instruction, might provide a significant challenge. This occurrence may impede universities in upholding academic excellence and the teaching and learning process. Consequently, colleges must implement strategic measures to retain proficient lecturers and diminish the turnover rate among faculty. Offering financial incentives to outstanding lecturers can enhance the rapport between faculty and administration. Furthermore, colleges may cycle lecturers for training or specialised certification, customised to their specific areas of competence. These measures enhance lecturer competency and foster a heightened sense of ownership, therefore augmenting loyalty and diminishing the propensity to transition to another school.

The influence of cultural openness pattern on turnover intention through employee poaching

This study determined that, indirectly, patterns of cultural openness do not influence turnover intention via employee instruction among permanent teachers at private institutions in Medan City (Table 6). The study's findings (Mashile et al., 2021; Sharma, 2021; Wang, 2021) indicated that cultural openness and personality are the sole elements consistently associated with creativity and cognitive style, which ultimately fosters creative behaviour. These findings indicate that lecturers exhibiting a high degree of openness are often more proactive in investigating, advocating for, and executing creative concepts (Triguero-Sánchez, 2022). This cultural openness does not significantly influence lecturer turnover intentions (Jamali et al., 2022). Conversely, lecturers exhibiting high cultural openness are generally more proactive in investigating, advocating for, and executing innovation in their teaching practices (Saleh, 2021). Universities are expected to empower professors to engage more deeply in scientific exploration, thereby enhancing their professional expertise (Ratnasari, 2023). Such initiatives may serve as a strategic approach to protecting academic staff from the risk of personnel poaching by rival organisations (Imarni, 2022). Universities foster academic

advancement and enhance professors' loyalty by facilitating self-development and creativity (Mezentseva et al., 2023).

The outcomes of this study suggest that a culture of openness is essential not just for lecturers as persons but also in fostering a happy and productive work environment. This culture fosters creativity, cooperation, and the development of novel ideas that enhance academic achievement. The administration of private colleges in Medan City must adopt strategies that promote a culture of transparency to improve the retention of high-calibre faculty and reduce the likelihood of personnel poaching. By facilitating opportunities for lecturers to develop and innovate, universities may foster a deeper commitment between educators and institutions, therefore advancing sustainable growth and innovation in the dynamic landscape of education.

Conclusion

This study advances our understanding of turnover intentions and employee poaching in private universities by empirically examining the impact of financial rewards and cultural openness patterns. Our findings reveal the important role of psychological contracts and recognition in shaping faculty intentions to leave or become vulnerable to poaching. These results contribute to the human resource management literature by demonstrating the complex interplay of factors that influence faculty retention in a developing country context. For university administrators, our study underscores the need for comprehensive retention strategies that go beyond financial incentives to include psychological contracts and strong recognition systems. Future research should explore these relationships across cultural and institutional contexts to further validate and extend our findings.

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Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

CRedit authorship contribution

Sofiyan Sofiyan: Conceptualisation; Formal analysis; Funding acquisition; Methodology; Writing – original draft; Writing – review & editing. Syaifuddin Syaifuddin: Conceptualisation; Methodology; Supervision; Visualisation.

Fajar Rezeki A. Lubis: Data curation; Project administration; Resources. Nasib Nasib: Investigation, Validation, Data interpretation, Writing – review and editing. All authors reviewed the article, contributed to the discussion of results, approved the final version for submission and publication, and take responsibility for the integrity of its findings.

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Data availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author, Sofiyan Sofiyan. The data are not publicly available because of institutional policy and confidentiality agreements.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and are the product of professional research. They do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated institution, funder, agency or that of the publisher. The authors are responsible for this article's results, findings and content.

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