

## **JOB-HOPPING – AN ANALYTICAL REVIEW**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The problem of job hopping has been researched upon by a number of researchers in diverse fields. In the different sectors, which contribute to form a major chunk of a country's GDP, and, claims to provide employment to a major part of the workforce, it is pertinent, therefore, to analyze the factors which lead to the employee's disengagement from these sectors. Further, with the increasing permeability of boundaries on the global front, thanks to neo-liberalisation waves, the cross-occupational and cross-organizational mobility of the employees has witnessed a phenomenal growth. Concurrent with the job hopping of the employees is the attempt by the organizations to bring in practices which might help in the retention of the employees in a bid to offset the damages of the rising attrition. The present paper is one such attempt at reviewing the literature of the concept of job hopping and retention.

**KEYWORDS:** Job Hopping, Employee's Disengagement, Cross-Occupational, Cross-Organizational, Retention

### **INTRODUCTION**

A job hopper is someone who works briefly in one position after another rather than staying at any one job or organization long-term. Although most people change jobs more frequently than was the case in the past, job hoppers do so more often. Job hopping is a pattern of changing companies every year or two of one's own volition rather than as a result of something like a layoff or company closure. Years ago, it was not uncommon for people to work for the same employer their entire careers. Historically, employers have suspected that job applicants with a lot of short stints on their resumes were unreliable. In recent decades, however, people typically change jobs at least a few times through their careers. According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average U.S. worker has been with his current employer for 4.6 years. For workers aged 20-34, the average is 2.3 years. Some employers are still reluctant to hire job hoppers. Others, however, would prefer to see applicants with a few jobs on their resumes to those who have stayed in one job for a long time. Employers often fear such individuals are resistant to change or simply unmotivated. People who have worked in a number of different capacities and in different corporate environments, on the other hand, are likely to have a broader range of skills and be more adaptable.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Employee-emanating forces may have temporal and/or spatial dimensions. Similarly, positive or negative work experiences may goad an employee to quit. A satisfied employee is equally prone to job-switching as a dissatisfied one. For instance, an employee on contractual rolls (contingent, remote or temporary employee, for instance) would prefer shifting to a permanent assignment, even though the former assignment is more satisfying. Thus, risk-taking propensity, personality and attitudes affect the turnover intentions-turnover translation relationship (Allen, 2004).

Because there is a marked uncertainty regarding the probabilities and outcomes, turnover decisions are risk-prone. And, there is an equal amount of uncertainty associated with the prospective assignment as well. Thus, whereas a guaranteed job and attractive benefits may serve as the “pull” factors (Bretz, Boudreau, & Judge, 1994), the picture remains hazy owing to the other unknown attributes such as relationship with the new supervisor, colleagues, apart from the other aspects of the organizational culture. Some individuals would quit in the absence of any concrete job alternative. For instance, an employee may quit an organization to fulfill a family responsibility, and, relocate to a different geographic location.

From a broad perspective (Mobley, Horner, & Hollingsworth, 1978), the process of job hopping originates with the dissatisfaction experienced by an employee with his present job (Griffith, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000) which is followed by a search for alternatives (March, & Simon, 1958; Mobley, 1977; Trevor, 2001). Thereafter, an employee weighs the different alternatives vis-à-vis his current job using an expected-value-like decision process (Mobley, Griffith, Hand, & Meglino, 1979), and, finally, s/he makes the decision to leave if any of the alternatives is adjudged to be preferable than his current position. This stands corroborated in the direct positive relationship between the perceived employment alternatives and turnover (Steel, 2002; Steel, & Griffith, 1989). In other words, factors like pervasive job dissatisfaction (Lee, & Mitchell, 1994) may result in decreased commitment, distrust and disengagement from the organization (Pfeiffer, 2007).

## METHODOLOGY

The research methodology adopted for the analytical study is basically related to the evolutionary research method. The research study particularly based on the secondary resources i.e. different scholarly articles and annual reports of organizations.

## REASONS FOR JOB HOPPING

- **Job-Hopping Allows You to Widen Your Choice of Jobs, Not Narrow it**

When you have more experience in a wide range of positions, you’ll be able to increase your skill set. As long as you’re comfortable and adept at describing your transferable skills, you can easily act as a chameleon and morph from your current position to your dream job. However, if you don’t know what transferable skills are, you may need to stay put.

- **No Need to Impress People You’ve Never Met**

Many people, primarily HR managers, warn against job-hopping so you can theoretically impress another HR manager in the future—*one you haven’t met yet*. Besides the fact that you probably won’t be on the same career path a few years from now, let alone in the same industry, there’s no reason to build your career around what HR managers want. Instead, **impress yourself**. Keep your own commitments and promises, and you’ll be fine.

- **Loyalty No Longer Exists**

Your company is not loyal. Your boss is not loyal. Employees are never put first. More than ever, every job is unstable. It’s now more secure to build your own unique career from scratch. So don’t show loyalty to a company that is not loyal to you. Now, that doesn’t mean ignoring your work or being disrespectful to the people who put money in your bank account, but it does mean being realistic in your career planning.

- **Job-Hopping is a Precursor to the Future of Careers**

Careers are no longer linear. Instead, you will piece together positions and opportunities to fully form your career puzzle. You'll have six to eight jobs before you're 30, and you certainly won't settle into the same company for the rest of your life after that.

As the idea of careers shift toward more contract work and portfolio careers, you can prepare by realizing results quickly and providing massive value.

- **Your Network—Not Your Resume—Gets You Jobs**

When you job-hop, you expand your network tenfold. You meet more people: coworkers, managers, partners, influencers, leaders. And it's your network, not your list of positions that will get you in the door at the next job. While you can and should apply with your cover letter and resume, when your network can recommend you for a position, it is much easier to advance your career.

- **Get a Substantial Raise and Title Upgrade**

It's better to find a new job that pays well and has a great title than to try and convince your existing company to give you a raise and a promotion. After all, you signed their contract. And it's cheaper for them to keep you in your place. When you ask for a raise, you'll likely only receive a two to three percent increase. When you job-hop, the typical increase in income is 20 to 30 percent. Enough said.

- **You Don't Know What You Like Until You do it**

A slim minority of us fall right away into careers that are representative of our dream jobs. Everyone else gets stuck in jobs we hate. While you can try to journal and vision-board your way into a soul-enriching career, it's quicker and more effective to try several different positions until you discover what you truly enjoy. Action is quicker than thought—so don't guess; go out and do.

- **Companies Don't Move as Fast as Results**

From startups to large corporations, every organization is fighting against some sort of barrier, whether it's lack of money or lots of bureaucracy. You may bring stellar results in the first three to six months, but by the time a year rolls around, your plate is likely devoid of challenge and meaningful work. Job-hopping means you always have relevant tasks to work on and can continually create positive impact.

- **The Recession is a Great Excuse for High-Performers**

Naysayers warn Gen Y not to job-hop since it supposedly looks bad. But when Negative Nancies hunker down, it's the perfect opportunity for high-performers to get out and fight. **The recession is your excuse**, as a high-performer in particular, to take risks and reap big rewards. If it doesn't work out, well, it's been a bumpy ride for everyone. But the odds are in your favor.

- **Your Talent is Desperately Needed**

If you love your job, then for goodness sake, hold onto it with all your might. But the truth is, the majority of Gen Y is disillusioned and dissatisfied with their careers. The longer you stay in a position that doesn't fulfill you, the longer

you cheat the world of your unique talents and gifts. So whether you love picking out an accent pillow or get pleasure from financial projections, go on: get after it!

## PROS OF JOB-HOPPING

- **Diverse Background:** “[Job hoppers] probably can point to experience in a number of different industries and different size companies, and exposure to a variety of challenges,” says Tracy Cashman, a partner and general manager in the IT Search division at Winter Wyman. “Someone who has a diverse background is often more attractive to a potential employer because they potentially bring new ideas and ways of doing things. Just make sure to keep some kind of record of what projects you accomplished where, and make sure one to two people at each company will serve as a reference.”
- **Access to More Information and Resources:** “With the entrance of the Internet came a previously nonexistent pipeline of information that functioned as a massive catalyst for change in the employment market,” Parnell says. “The skill sets necessary to keep up with this change must be diverse, dynamic and ever-evolving. In most cases, the environment necessary to foster this growth can’t be found under a single roof. Working in several different environments provides access to different resources – both human and informational – that one couldn’t gain through a single employer.”
- **Exposure to Different Businesses and People:** “Job hopping gives employees the opportunity to expand their experiences and shop around their talents,” adds Kahn. “By working at multiple companies you will get to see ways that others are conducting business, while expanding your network to a whole new pool of professionals.”
- **You’ll Have a Large, Resourceful Network:** “Social and professional networks are more active and influential than ever before,” Parnell says. “While networking used to be important, today it is vital in such a competitive market. Different employers provide access to different networks in which to plant roots and farm relationships; one day these may prove helpful or even career-saving.”
- **A Chance to Find the Right Fit:** Job hopping gives you more opportunities to figure out what you like and don’t, and what is important to you in a position and company, Cashman says. “That way, when you are finally ready to settle down for several years, you know what you are looking for.”
- **Exposure to Different Jobs:** Job hopping gives an employee the opportunity to see what other job is out there, Kahn says. “This could lead to an upgrade of title, salary, benefits or even work environment.”
- **An Opportunity to Show off Some of Your Best Attributes:** “Job hopping allows you to show employers that you are flexible, adaptable and a quick learner, as well as someone who is not afraid of change or taking risks,” Cashman says. “For some industries and companies this will be a selling point.”
- **More Money:** “More often than not, an employer and their employee have a conflict of interests: the employer wants a lot of work for little pay, and the employee wants little work for a lot of pay,” Parnell explains. “While they often meet in the middle when initially negotiating salary—because the future employee has some leverage prior to an acceptance—the subsequent raises are usually lackluster. Jumping to a new position almost always results in more money than a simple raise will provide.”

## CONS OF JOB-HOPPING

- **Employers will be Hesitant to Invest in You:** “When jumping from job to job you are showing future employers that there is a high likelihood that you will do the same to them,” Kahn says. “Also at most companies, putting in the years of work with them prove your loyalty helping to strengthen your job security. Loyalty goes a long way and from the employers perspective gives them dependability that they can count on.” Parnell agrees. “It is usually quite expensive to recruit, court, hire and ramp up a new employee,” he says. “Should they leave in a short period of time, it can be quite costly to an employer. This fact alone makes a spotty employment history very suspicious and scary to a potential employer.”
- **You’re Job May be Less Secure:** If your employer is forced to lay off employees, you might be the first to go (given your track record of leaving companies quickly), Cashman says.
- **Lack of Satisfaction:** “Like the professional version of parenthood, one of the greatest satisfactions in a career is to be a part of a product’s (or services) genesis and ultimate release,” Parnell says. “Where most products and services have a relatively long life-cycle, a job hopper will never experience such a satisfaction.”
- **You May Damage Relationships:** More and more, employers are turning to professional reference checkers to verify information and otherwise double-check their potential investment in a new employee, Parnell says. “In an environment where relationships are more important than ever, gaining experience by job hopping seriously compromises one’s potential for developing deeper, more reliable contacts that can act as guarantors.”
- **They May Question Your Judgment:** The employer might wonder if you’re prone to making bad decisions. “One or two short stints might be acceptable if you went to a company that went bankrupt or were caught up in a layoff or just plain chose the wrong fit—but many of these might indicate you are someone who doesn’t have good judgment,” Cashman says. “Bad judgment is definitely not on the list of desired employee traits.”
- **They’ll Fear You’ll Leave at the First Sign of Trouble:** “The employer will wonder if you jump ship at the first sign of trouble, or if you always think the grass is greener someplace else,” Cashman says. “It’s one thing to read the tea leaves and move on if it’s clear your company is struggling, but a potential employer likely wants to see some history of loyalty and the ability to be part of the solution when the going gets tough.”

## CONCLUSIONS

Given the significant change in the work relationships, in face of globalization, job hopping behavior of employees has emerged as major challenge before the organization. The paper attempted to study the different factors related to the context from a quadrant perspective, which yielded a simplistic yet integrated model. This paper has filled the gap in qualitatively. Perhaps, future studies would appreciate the quantitative aspect as well.

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