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Motivation for Changing Jobs, Personal Background Characteristics and Perceived Opportunity

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Résumé de l'article

Par la présente enquête, on a choisi un échantillon de 159 travailleurs engages dans un processus de mutation d'emploi d'une entreprise à une autre ou d'une occupation à une autre, et ceci en vue d'étudier deux questions fondamentales. L'une a trait à la relation entre les caractéristiques personnelles antérieures et le roulement de la main-d'œuvre; l'autre se rapporte au rôle des occasions d'emploi en perspective dans le roulement lui-même.

Sur la première question, l'enquête a été centrée sur plusieurs des caractéristiques personnelles tirées de recherches corrélatives antérieures à multiples variables se rapportant au phénomène du roulement de la main-d'œuvre : âge, durée de service, scolarité, statut professionnel ou directorial. On s'est efforcé d'examiner les relations entre ces caractéristiques et trois variables théoriques susceptibles d'influer sur le roulement : insatisfaction du poste actuel, attrait de la nouvelle fonction recherche et nombre des occasions d'emploi en perspective. L'insatisfaction et l'attrait sont représentes sous des facettes multiples et les mesures choisies visaient à les refléter.

Les résultats ont aidé de plusieurs façons à la compréhension des rapports entre le roulement de la main-d'œuvre et les caractéristiques personnelles étudiées.

En premier lieu, ces rapports laissent percevoir que l'influence des caractéristiques personnelles antérieures est surtout orientée vers la satisfaction au travail et l'attirance vers un nouvel emploi plutôt que par le nombre des occasions possibles.

Aussi, les caractéristiques personnelles n'expliquent-elles que sept pour cent de la variance totale dans le nombre des possibilités perçues compare à un quart de la variance totale pour l'ensemble des motifs de mutation. L'indice tendant à associer en général l'insatisfaction de l'emploi détenu et l'attrait d'un nouveau poste. En deuxième lieu, les résultats montrent que de toutes les caractéristiques personnelles examinées, seule la durée du service, la scolarité et le statut professionnel concourant d'une façon significative à expliquer la variance dans les principales variables en jeu. Ces résultats laissent percevoir que le rapport fortement négatif entre la durée du service et le roulement de la main-d'œuvre que l'on a note au cours de recherches précédentes est réellement bien fonde. De même en est-il du ressort positif entre le roulement et la scolarité. D'autre part, le résultat des recherches tend à indiquer que le rapport fortement négatif entre l'âge et le roulement est faux. Ces constatations sont conformes à celles des autres études récentes où l'on a utilise des analyses à variables multiples démontrant que le roulement était relie de façon significative à la durée du service et à la scolarité et non à l'âge (voir Koch et Rhodes, 1981; Parasuramon, 1982).

Troisièmement, les résultats révèlent les différentes voies par lesquelles l'impact des caractéristiques personnelles est canalise. Ils montrent que l'impact négatif de la durée du service sur les motifs de mutation est relie au fait que la durée du service est associée à un amenuisement de l'insatisfaction pour l'emploi actuel ainsi que de l'attrait pour le poste de recherche — ce que l'on retrouve dans tous les cas examines.

L'effet de la scolarité, de l'âge et du statut professionnel est plus rigoureusement concentre. Lorsque la scolarité augmente, la motivation pour le changement d'emploi devient plus forte principalement à cause de l'accroissement de l'insatisfaction et de l'attrait pour des raisons d'ordre personnel. L'effet de l'âge se ramène à des considérations relatives aux régimes de retraite qui ont un effet négatif sur la tendance à changer d'emploi. On a trouve que le statut professionnel était relie négativement à l'insatisfaction et à l'attrait pour des motifs d'ordre extérieur. L'effet d'un statut de cadre, d'après les constatations, se fait surtout sentir par l'insatisfaction vis-à-vis l'emploi actuel. Le statut de cadre est associe à une diminution de l'insatisfaction dans tous les types de résultats. Un parallèle entre les conclusions de la présente étude et certaines hypothèses fondamentales mises de l'avant lors de tentatives en vue d'expliquer les conclusions de recherches corrélatives à double variable démontre que quelques-unes seulement de ces hypothèses se vérifient. Quatrièmement, un autre apport des analyses détaillées se retrouve dans leur utilité pour les praticiens qui sont en quête de renseignements sur les remèdes à apporter au roulement de la main-d'œuvre. Cela exige une connaissance approfondie du processus selon lequel divers facteurs influent sur le roulement ainsi que des moyens d'intervention. Les analyses effectuées y contribuent en fournissant un peu d'information, mais peut-être davantage en indiquant les moyens par lesquels on peut obtenir cette information.

Lorsqu'on considère le rôle des occasions d'emploi perceptibles dans le roulement de la main-d'œuvre, il y a lieu de se demander si le rapport positif entre la disponibilité des occasions et le roulement qu'on trouve dans les travaux de recherche en général s'explique par un rapport négatif entre les occasions possibles et la satisfaction de l'emploi actuel ou par un rapport negatif entre les occasions possibles et la satisfaction de l'emploi actuel ou par un rapport positif entre les occasions et l'attrait d'un nouveau poste. Ces constatations révèlent que l'impact principal des occasions se rattache à l'attraction des dites occasions plutôt qu'à l'insatisfaction de la tache présente. En conséquence, on a note un rapport positif entre le nombre des occasions perceptibles et l'attrait général d'un emploi en perspective (R = .023; p. =.002), mais pour ce qui est de l'insatisfaction, le coefficient de corrélation est faible et sans signification statistique.

Les résultats révèlent aussi que l'insatisfaction de l'emploi actuel, le nombre des occasions d'emploi et la décision d'opter pour l'une ou l'autre sont inter relies. En effet, lorsque l'insatisfaction est marquée, il y a tendance à opter pour la première offre qui présente des avantages. Lorsque les occasions d'emploi sont rares, ceci exerce un effet modérateur sur le degré d'insatisfaction. Un degre modéré d'insatisfaction pour l'emploi actuel favorise la recherche intensive d'un nouvel emploi jusqu'à ce qu'une offre particulièrement attrayante se présente.

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A cross-organizational and cross-occupational sample of employees in the process of changing their jobs was chosen for investigating the relationship between turnover and a variety of background characteristics and perceived opportunity. Following recent theoretical conceptualizations the investigation focused on: (1) the relationship between the background characteristics and satisfaction with various facets in the present job, attraction to various facets in the prospective job and number of perceived alternatives; (2) the relationship between the number of perceived alternatives and satisfaction with the present job and attraction to an alternative.

Recent reviews indicate that past researches attempting to investigate the relationship between turnover and various personal background characteristics, and between turnover and opportunity have added only little to the understanding of employee turnover (e.g., Bluedorn, 1982; Mobley, Griffeth, Hand and Meglino, 1979; Porter and Steers, 1973; Price, 1977). The main blame has been put on the lack of a clear conceptual framework which could guide research by focusing attention on the most crucial links needing examination, and by indicating the appropriate frameworks for their investigation (e.g., Mobley et al., 1979). This is perhaps the reason why most past researches did not advance beyond bi-variate correlational analyses. The limitations of such analyses are well known. A most crucial limitation is that such analyses teach us little about the underlying factors and relationships. Moreover, it is difficult to know whether the relationship found are spurious or not. In addition, bi-variate correlational analyses do not allow an assessment of the combined effect of

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the variables involved, nor of the net relative contribution of each of them. Another drawback of past investigations is that many of them are restricted to specific organizations and/or specific occupations, which raises questions concerning the generalizability of their findings.

In the investigation reported in the present paper an attempt was made to overcome the above limitations. The investigation differs in several respects from past approaches. First, recent theoretical conceptualizations are adopted as a basis and starting point for question formulation and research strategy. Second, based on methodological considerations, the research focuses on individuals who are actually in the process of changing their jobs instead of following the usual retrospective or predictive approaches. Third, to minimize specific-context biases, the investigation is based on a sample of individuals differing in occupation and in organizational affiliation. Fourth, methods of analysis were employed by means of which the net individual effect as well as the combined effect of the variables involved can be examined. We proceed now to describe the research itself and its theoretical underpinnings.

THE RESEARCH

Theoretical Background and Major Questions

Generally, recent conceptualizations (e.g., Bluedorn, 1982; Mobley et al., 1979; Steers and Mowday, 1981) suggest that turnover is a function of the desire to improve the perceived balance of attractive outcomes on the job, spurred by dissatisfaction with the perceived balance of such outcomes in the present job, and/or by the perception of more attractive alternatives. More precisely, it is suggested that a felt deficiency in the balance of attractive outcomes in the present job could lead to dissatisfaction with the present job and a desire to leave it for a better alternative (e.g., Price, 1977; Mobley et al., 1979; Bluedorn, 1982). The actual realization of such a change, it is suggested, will depend on the degree to which alternatives are perceived to be present, the degree to which they are perceived to offer an improved balance of attractive outcomes, and the expected attainability of these outcomes (e.g., Mobley et al., 1979). Moreover, it is suggested that the perception of attractive and attainable alternatives could, in itself, lead to job changes, even in the absence of felt deficiencies in the present job (e.g., Mobley et al., 1979; Steers and Mowday, 1981; Bluedorn, 1982).

Concerning the relationship between personal characteristics and turnover, the following propositions prevail. First, background characteristics are conceived to influence job values and job expectations and hence job

satisfaction and attraction to an alternative (e.g., Mobley et al., 1978; Mowday et al., 1979; Porter and Steers, 1973; Steers and Mowday, 1981). Second, they are conceived to influence the type and amount of outcomes derived from the job, and hence job satisfaction (e.g., Price, 1977). Third, background characteristics are conceived to affect the availability of alternative job opportunities (e.g., Blau and Duncan, 1967; Bluedorn, 1982; Porter and Steers, 1973; Rosenfeld, 1980; Tyree and Treas, 1974).

The above conceptual framework suggests that a better understanding of the relationship between turnover and personal background characteristics could be gained by examining, in individual-level analyses, how such characteristics relate to the three intervening variables through which they are conceived to influence turnover — job satisfaction, attraction to an alternative, and the availability of alternative opportunities. Since satisfaction and attraction are conceived to be multifaceted, such examination should aim to reveal the detailed relationships involved, i.e., how the various personal characteristics relate to the various facets of satisfaction and attraction (e.g., Mobley et al., 1979; Porter and Steers, 1973; Price, 1977). One major objective of our research was to conduct such an investigation in regard to certain personal background characteristics which have been found to be significantly related to turnover according to the reviews of past researches (e.g., Mobley et al., 1979; Price, 1977). They are: age, length of service, education, occupation and managerial level. The investigation could serve, among others, to test various hypotheses which have been advanced in the course of attempts to explain the results of past researches. One of the most extensive and thorough works in this direction is that of Price (1977). Price's hypotheses can serve as a basis and starting point for the present research. Briefly stated they are as follows.

A second major purpose of the investigation concerns the role of perceived alternatives in turnover. There is some evidence from aggregate-level studies indicating a positive relationship between turnover and the availability of alternatives (e.g., Price, 1977:81-83). Yet, because of the paucity of individual-level data on the subject, little is known about the role of perceived alternatives in turnover from an individual point of view (e.g., Mobley et al., 1979). Several hypotheses have been advanced. One is that available alternatives influence satisfaction with the present job (e.g., Price, 1977; Steers and Mowday, 1981; Bluedorn, 1982). Support for this hypothesis was found by Pfeffer and Lawler (1979) and by Price and Mueller (1981). On the other hand, there is the thesis that the relative attractiveness of the alternatives is a more salient factor than the mere availability of alternatives (e.g., Mobley et al., 1979). Empirical evidence to support this thesis was found by Mowday and McDade (1979). There is also the proposition that dissatisfaction with the present job leads to a search for more

FIGURE 1

Price's Hypotheses

Variable	*Past findings*	*Hypotheses (rationale)*
Length of service	Strong evidence for negative relationship between length of service and turnover	Length of service will be: 1) positively related to job satisfaction; 2) negatively related to the number of perceived alternatives. (With increased lengths of service: 1) members derive more positive outcomes; 2) members' skills and knowledge become more organizationally-specific).
Age	Strong evidence for negative relationship between age and turnover.	Age is closely related to length of service. Hence «nearly everything said about length of service also applies to age». The only modification pertains to opportunity: pension considerations play a major role in reducing opportunity.
Education	Weak evidence ofr positive relationship between education and turnover.	Education will be: 1) positively related to job satisfaction; 2) positively related to opportunity. (An increase in level of education is associated with: 1) an increase in the level of positive outcomes; 2) an increase in demand relative to supply).
Occupation (skill level/ white collar status)	Medium support for: 1) negative relationship between skill level and turnover among blue-collar employees; 2) negative relationship between white-collar status and turnover.	Opportunity and job satisfaction are expected to have contrary impacts on turnover. Skill level/white collar status are expected to be: 1) positively related to job satisfaction; 2) positively related to opportunity. (The amount of positive outcomes on the job is likely to increase with skill level and is likely to be higher among white-collar employees as compared to blue-collar employees).
Managerial status	Weak support for negative relationship between managerial status and turnover.	Job satisfaction and opportunity are likely to have opposing impacts on turnover. Managerial status is expected to be: 1) positively related to job satisfaction; 2) positively (though not strongly) related to opportunity. (The amount of positive outcomes is likely with managerial status).

preferable alternatives (e.g., March and Simon, 1958; Steers and Mowday, 1981). This hypothesis perceives of available alternatives as being partly determined by one's job attitudes and not merely as an entirely exogeneous environmental variable.

By examining the relationship between the number of perceived alternatives and dissatisfaction with the present job on the one hand, and attraction to a prospective alternative on the other hand, we hoped to provide some empirical evidence bearing upon the above propositions.

Sample and Research Site

Most past individual-level turnover investigations have utilized either a retrospective or a predictive approach and many have used intent to leave as a surrogate for actual turnover behavior. The advantages and disadvantages of these approaches have been widely discussed (e.g., Bluedorn, 1982; Mobley et al., 1979; Porter and Steers, 1973). We considered that our research purposes necessitate a different approach. We thought that in order to obtain fairly reliable data on the dependent variables — job satisfaction, attraction to an alternative and the number of perceived alternatives — it would be best to focus on a sample of employees who are actually in the process of changing their jobs. Another major concern was to avoid as much as possible biases stemming from restricting the investigation to a specific organizational setting and / or a specific group of employees. The research site and target population were chosen with these main objectives in mind. The research site was one of the largest firms in Israel providing advisory and testing services in matters of manpower and employment. The sample of 159 participants was drawn from among candidates sent by their prospective employers to pass a series of tests in order to establish their suitability for a job opening. To ascertain that participants were motivated to change their jobs by considerations relating to the present and prospective jobs, rather than by considerations relating to other «exogeneous» factors, the following screening criteria were employed. In the research were included only those: (1) who had a stable employment history, i.e., who did not, in the past, change jobs within a period of two years or less; (2) who were employed on a permanent basis in their present job; and (3) who were not compelled and / or did not want to change their jobs because of «exogeneous» factors such as health problems, the closedown or geographical reallocation of the employing organization, a desire to change their residential area, etc.

Instruments and Data Collection

The data relating to the participant's background characteristics were obtained from the routine interview applied by the firm to all those being tested for employment purposes. All other data derive from a specially designed questionnaire administered to all the participants in this research. The completion of the questionnaire lasted, on average about thirty minutes.

Measures and Computations

Personal Background Characteristics

Length of Service	— Number of months employed by the present organization
Education	— Years of formal education
Occupational Status	— Based on the Standard Classification of Occupations (first digit groupings)
Managerial Status	— Based on the following classification: Upper management job Middle management job Non-managerial job

Dissatisfaction With the Present Job. Conceptually, dissatisfaction with the present job is conceived to be a function of perceived deficiencies in valued outcomes in the present job (e.g., Locke, 1976; Price, 1977:80). Accordingly, the following method was used for measuring dissatisfaction. Based on satisfaction research literature, twelve items representing valued outcomes relating to the facets of well established satisfaction measures such as the Job Description Index (Smith et al., 1969), were chosen for the investigation as follows: «good chances for professional advancement»; «good relationships with superiors»; «high pay»; «possibilities for autonomous thought and action»; «interesting work»; «appreciation of my work by my superiors»; «special material benefits»; «the opportunity for doing things in which I excel»; «good relationship with colleagues»; «good pay advancement opportunities»; «appreciation of my work by my colleagues»; «good fringe benefits».

The items, listed randomly, were presented to participants asking them to indicate in relation to each:

(1) The degree to which he/she desires it to be present in his/her job (scale: 1 (not at all) — 5 (very much)).
(2) The degree to which it is indeed actually present in his/her job (scale: 1 (not at all) — 5 (very much)).

The degree of dissatisfaction with each aspect was calculated by the following formula:

$$D = \frac{a(5-b)}{20}$$ where:

a- is the degree to which the outcome is desired to be present in the job

$$0 < D < 1$$

b- is the degree to which the outcome is perceived to be actually present in the present job

While a and b can assume values ranging from 1 to 5 and the maximum value of a(5-b) is 20.

Attraction to a Prospective Job. The attraction to a prospective job is conceived to be a function of the degree to which valued outcomes are perceived to be present in this job, and the degree to which they are expected to be attained in practice (e.g., Mobley et al., 1979). Accordingly, the following method was used for measuring attraction. The items mentioned above were presented again to the participants (following a series of questions separating the second presentation from the first) asking them to indicate, in relation to each item:

(1) The degree to which it is present in the prospective job (scale: 1 (not at all) — 5 (very much)).
(2) The degree to which he/she expects to attain it in the prospective job (scale: 1 (not at all) — 5 (very much)).

The degree of attraction of each aspect in the prospective job was calculated by using the following formula:

$$A = \frac{a \times b \times c}{125}$$ where:

a- is the degree to which the outcome is desired to be present in one's job

$$0 < A < 1$$

b- is the degree to which the outcome is perceived to be present in the prospective job

c- is the degree to which the outcome is expected to be actually attained in the prospective job.

While a, b, c, can, each, assume values ranging from 1 to 5 and the maximum value of a x b x c is 125.

The Motivation for Changing Jobs. It was assumed that the propensity to change jobs is a function of dissatisfaction with the present job and attrac-

tion to a prospective job. Accordingly, an index of motivation for job changing was formed by combining the dissatisfaction and attraction scores for each item.

Composite Scales. The scores in each set — dissatisfaction with the present job, attraction to a prospective job and motivation for job changing — were factor analyzed. A principal components, varimax (orthogonal) rotation using R's as a communality estimate was performed (Nie, Hull, Steinbrenner and Bent 1975). The criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1.0 was used for specifying the number of factors. Loadings greater than .40 were interpreted. For each set, a three factor solution was obtained[1]. The factors represent three distinct dimensions.

An intrinsic dimension which refers to the aspects associated with the task itself such as interesting work, professional advancement, skill utilization, and work autonomy.

An extrinsic dimension which refers to the financial aspects of the job such as the pay and advancement in pay, fringe benefits and special material benefits. And a third dimension labelled as social relationships, which refers to the social aspects of the job as relationships with colleagues and superiors. After identifying the above three dimensions, scales measuring each of them were developed for each set — dissatisfaction with the present job, attraction to a prospective job and motivation for job changing. In addition, for each set, summary scales comprising all the items were developed. The scales were constructed by talking the mean of the unweighted scores on component items. Missing data on a particular item were assigned the mean of the cases present on that item. The means, standard deviations and reliability estimates for each scale appear in Appendix B. It should be noted that the reliability estimates are all greater than the minimum (.70) suggested by Nunnally (1978) for research purposes.

The Number of Perceived Alternatives. Participants were asked to indicate whether they have chosen the prospective job from among: (a) 4 and more available alternatives; (b) 2-3 available alternatives; (c) 1 available alternative without having searched for another; (d) 1 available alternative after having searched for another.

The findings

The relationship between the personal characteristics and the dependent variables. The data were analyzed first through partial correlation analyses

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1   The results of the factor analysis may be obtained from the first author.

in which each personal characteristic was correlated with the various indices of dissatisfaction, attraction, and overall motivation, and with the number of perceived alternatives, using all the other personal characteristics as controls. Second, in order to assess the combined effect of the personal characteristics and the relative weight of each, multiple regression analyses were used. We proceed now to report the results of these analyses.

The partial correlation analyses. The results of the partial correlation analyses appear in Table 1a. Table 1b. presents the zero-order correlations and the related statistics. We proceed to discuss the results presented in Table 1a. as they relate to each of the personal characteristics.

Length of Service. The findings indicate a significant negative relationship between length of service and all the indices of dissatisfaction, and between length of service and the number of perceived alternatives. These findings support Price's hypotheses proposing a negative relationship between length of service and dissatisfaction with the present job, and between length of service and opportunity. A finding not anticipated and requiring an explanation are the significant negative correlations between length of service and the various indices of attraction to the prospective job. A possible explanation for the negative correlations found in regard to the extrinsic and intrinsic outcomes lies perhaps in the increasing organization-specificity of skills accompanying length of service. The increasing organization-specificity of skills increases one's value to the organization relative to one's market value (e.g., Becker, 1964). As a result, it becomes increasingly difficult to find an alternative which offers a level of extrinsic and intrinsic outcomes equal to, or higher than that in the present job, and the attractiveness of alternatives is reduced in these respects. The negative correlations found in regard to the social outcomes may be explained in the same vein. Alternatives become less attractive in regard to such outcomes because one's social ties in the organization improve over time increasing thus the gap between the level of social outcomes in the present job and those attainable in an alternative job.

Age. Contrary to Price's proposition the pattern of relationships found in regard to age differs from that found in regard to length of service. Only one of Price's theses — that proposing that pension considerations decrease the propensity to change jobs as age increases — is supported by the findings. Thus the findings indicate a significant negative correlation between age and dissatisfaction with, and attraction to extrinsic outcomes. A more detailed analysis indicates that these are due to the «fringe benefits» item. From among all the extrinsic items, this item is the only one in respect to which significant negative correlations were found in regard to dissatisfaction with the present job (r = -.18; p. = .044), and in regard to attraction to the prospective job (r = -.24; p = .002).

TABLE 1 (a)

Personal Background Characteristics and Dissatisfaction with the Present Job (D), Attraction to a Prospective Job (A), and Overall Motivation to Change Jobs (M):

(a) Partial Correlation Coefficients

	Length of Service			Age			Education			Occupational Status			Managerial Status		
	D	A	M	D	A	M	D	A	M	D	A	M	D	A	M
Outcomes															
Intrinsic	-.18**	-.28**	-.24**	.05	.06	.08	.14**	.31**	.29**	.05	-.16**	.06	-.19**	.02	-.10*
Extrinsic	-.32**	-.26**	-.23**	-.17**	-.14**	-.22**	-.11*	.02	.08	.15**	-.22**	-.23**	-.15**	.09	-.15*
Social	-.13**	-.16**	-.20**	.06	.11*	.03	.05	.12*	.06	.02	-.27**	-.26**	-.14**	.04	.08
Total	-.29**	-.29**	-.15**	.08	.12*	.05	.04	.19**	.01	.05	-.27**	.04	-.22**	.03	.10
Alternatives		-.12*			-.05			-.04			.11*			-.03	

*   .05 < p. < .10

**   p. < .05

TABLE 1 (b)

(b) Zero Order Correlations and Related Statistics[1]

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	$\bar{X}$	S.D.
1. Length of service	—																	33.0	34.0
2. Age	.49	—																31.9	10.3
3. Education	.51	.20	—															12.5	3.3
4. Occupation	-.01	.08	.51	—														—	—
5. Managerial status	.44	.37	.16	.18	—													2.3	0.9
Dissatisfaction:																			
6. Intrinsic	-.54	-.26	.36	-.11	-.33	(.75)												0.40	0.20
7. Extrinsic	-.44	-.40	.04	.27	-.38	.40	(.70)											0.37	0.20
8. Social	-.35	.10	.16	.01	-.22	.43	.30	(.68)										0.25	0.16
9. Total	-.51	-.34	.25	.08	-.41	.81	.76	.72	(.81)									0.34	0.14
Attraction:																			
10. Intrinsic	-.43	-.30	.47	-.03	-.24	.17	.15	-.03	.14	(.83)								0.59	0.24
11. Extrinsic	-.47	-.35	.11	.26	-.33	.05	.42	.09	.21	.54	(.80)							0.43	0.22
12. Social	-.25	-.29	.12	.26	-.26	.07	.24	.01	.14	.51	.58	(.82)						0.46	0.25
13. Total	-.53	-.36	.29	.18	-.31	.12	.32	.03	.21	.84	.85	.81	(.88)					0.49	0.20
Motivation:																			
14. Intrinsic	-.53	-.32	.50	-.10	-.31	.74	.29	.24	.57	.74	.35	.33	.58	(.73)				3.90	0.79
15. Extrinsic	-.40	-.41	-.05	.34	-.27	.18	.78	.18	.50	.37	.83	.42	.65	.34	(.77)			3.43	0.80
16. Social	-.35	-.22	.07	.28	-.41	.22	.33	.46	.43	.38	.52	.83	.66	.34	.45	(.73)		3.19	0.72
17. Total	-.29	-.20	.17	.03	-.21	.62	.55	.63	.78	.04	.13	.01	.08	.44	.35	.27	(.81)	3.50	0.89
Alternatives	-.20	-.12	.22	.17	.03														

1. Numbers in parantheses on diagonal — reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha)

Education. By and large, the findings presented in Table 1a. do not support
Price's theses proposing a positive relationship between education and job
satisfaction and between education and opportunity. Only dissatisfaction
with extrinsic rewards was found to be negatively related to education, as
expected. On the other hand, quite unexpected, a significant positive rela-
tionship was found between education and dissatisfaction with, and attrac-
tion to intrinsic rewards. The above pattern is rather unanticipated and re-
quires an explanation. Why is it that dissatisfaction with intrinsic rewards in
the present job, and attraction to such rewards in the prospective job in-
crease with education, while dissatisfaction with extrinsic rewards decreases
with education? The explanation lies perhaps in the combined effect of two
factors. One is that job expectations tend to rise with education (e.g., Shep-
pard and Herrick, 1972). The other is that organizations are better equipped
to compete with each other in terms of material rewards offered to
employees, than in terms of intrinsic rewards. While the former lend
themselves to relatively easy manipulation, the latter depend largely on the
nature of the job, which is less manipulable, and in regard to which
organizations have much less flexibility. Thus, as job expectations rise,
organizations are able to successfully compete with each other in terms of
material benefits offered to incumbents, yet cannot easily match others in
terms of intrinsic rewards offered.

Occupational Status. Our findings, based on a classification slightly dif-
ferent from that refered to by Price yet comparable with it, tend only partly
to support his theses. Thus they indicate that the number of perceived alter-
natives does indeed increase with occupational status, as Price hypothesizes.
However, they do not indicate a significant negative relationship between
occupational status and overall dissatisfaction with the present job, as ex-
pected. A significant negative correlation was found only in regard to
dissatisfaction with extrinsic rewards. On the other hand, the findings in-
dicate a significant negative relationship between occupational status and
attraction to the extrinsic and social rewards. This rather unanticipated fin-
ding suggests that a major off-setting factor to the increase in available
alternatives, as occupational status rises, is the decrease in the attractiveness
of alternatives rather than the increase in job satisfaction, as Price suggests.
A possible explanation for the decreasing attractiveness of alternatives lies
perhaps in the fact that the degree of specialization increases with skill level
(e.g., Stoikov and Raimon, 1968; Pettman, 1975) and as a result one's value
to the employing organization increases relative to one's value in the open
market (e.g., Becker, 1964; Pettman, 1975:40-41).

Managerial Status. The findings presented in Table 1 tend to support
Price's argument that opportunity would not be very high for managers as
compared to non-managers because of little role-performance visibility,

organization-specificity of skills and knowledge, internal recruitment and little outside contacts (Price, 1977:87). Similarly, the findings showing the existence of significant negative correlations between managerial status and all indices of dissatisfaction, support Price's proposition that compared to non-managers, managers will be more satisfied with various rewards in the present job and will be hence less inclined to change jobs. In addition, the findings indicate a significant negative relationship between managerial status and attraction to extrinsic rewards in the prospective job. Apparently, this is a reflection of the specific opportunity structure associated with managerial status: Alternatives become less attractive in regard to extrinsic rewards because of the organization-specificity of managerial skills, which creates a gap between one's worth to the organization and one's worth in the open market.

The regression analyses. For the sake of parsimony the analyses were performed only in regard to the indexes of motivation for job changing, and in regard to the number of perceived alternatives. The results appear in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Summary Results of Regression Analyses (Stepwise) on Motivation for Job Changing and Number of Perceived Alternatives

		B	beta	T	sig. T		
Overall motivation	Length of service	-.00	-.39	-4.87	.00	Mult R	= .50
	Age	-.09	-.18	-2.76	.02	R^2	= .25
	constant	3.21		13.09	.00	Adj. R^2	= .24
Intrinsic motivation	Length of service	-.03	-.38	-5.07	.00	Mult R	= .59
	Education	.30	.30	4.04	.00	R^2	= .35
	constant	3.50		7.58	.00	Adj. R^2	= .34
Extrinsic motivation	Age	.13	-.24	-3.18	.00	Mult R	= .56
	Occupation	.00	-.31	-4.71	.00	R^2	= .32
	Length of service	-.00	-.28	-3.65	.00	Adj. R^2	= .30
	constant	2.42		9.45	.00		
Social motivation	Length of service	-.00	-.34	-4.80	.00	Mult R	= .44
	Occupation	.78	-.28	-3.89	.00	R^2	= .20
	constant	3.09	34.06	.00	.00	Adj. R^2	= .19
Number of perceived alternatives	Length of service	.00	-.20	-2.62	.01	Mult R	= .26
	Occupation	.68	.17	2.21	.03	R^2	= .07
	constant	1.88		12.39	.00	Adj. R^2	= .06

Briefly stated, the findings indicate that the personal characteristics examined explain about twenty five percent of the total variance in overall motivation for job changing; only two variables — length of service and education were found to make a significant contribution to variances in this variable. Regarding the component indices, the highest percentage of explained variance was found in regard to the intrinsic motives for job changing and the lowest percentage was found in regard to the social motives. Length of service and education were found to make significant contributions to the intrinsic motives variable; length of service, occupational status and age were found to make significant contributions to the extrinsic motives variable; and, length of service and occupational status were found to make significant contributions to the social motives variable.

In regard to the number of perceived alternatives, the findings indicate that the personal characteristics examined explain only a small percentage of the variance in this variable. Only two of the personal characteristics, tenure and occupation, were found to make a significant contribution.

Perceived Alternatives and the Motivation for Job Changing

The question posed was whether the positive relationship between the availability of alternatives and turnover found in aggregate level research, is explainable in terms of a negative relationship between available alternatives and satisfaction with the present job, or, in terms of a positive relationship between available alternatives and the attraction to an alternative. The findings lend support to the first proposition: a significant positive correlation was found between the number of perceived alternatives and overall attraction to a prospective job ($r = .23$; $p. = .002$). Concerning dissatisfaction with the present job, the correlation coefficient obtained is small and not significant statistically ($r = .05$; $p. = .259$). In search for nonlinear effects the mean scores of dissatisfaction as they relate to the number of perceived alternatives were examined. The examination was carried out on the third of the cases having the highest dissatisfaction scores. The examination revealed an interesting non-linear pattern worthy of attention, even though an analysis of variance indicates that the differences are not statistically significant ($F = 1.94$; $p. = .15$). Thus the findings indicate that dissatisfaction is highest among those with one alternative who have not sought other alternatives ($\chi^2 = .53$). Apparently, those highly dissatisfied with their present job are inclined to opt for the first acceptable alternative. On the other hand, dissatisfaction is lowest among those who sought other alternatives but did not find any ($\chi^2 = 0.46$). Presumably, the lack of success in the search for a suitable alternative moderates previous

feelings of dissatisfaction with the present job (March and Simon, 1958), and lead to a decision to opt for a moderately attractive alternative. A moderate degree of dissatisfaction exists among those who perceive relatively many alternatives (χ = 0.49). Apparently, a moderate degree of dissatisfaction with the present job enables one to conduct an extensive search for a suitable alternative without the immediate pressure of gross dissatisfaction. It is also possible that this finding reflects a situation where unsolicited alternatives present themselves, and where one, especially attractive alternative, exerts decisive influence on the decision to change jobs.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The present research adressed itself to two basic issues. One concerns the relationship between certain personal background characteristics and turnover. The other concerns the role of perceived alternatives in turnover. Concerning the first issue an attempt was made to examine the relationship between several personal characteristics shown by past bi-variate correlational research to be related to turnover, and three variables — dissatisfaction with the present job, attraction to an alternative and the number of perceived alternatives — conceived theoretically to intervene between these personal characteristics and turnover. The examination contributed in several ways to an understanding of the relationships between turnover and the personal characteristics examined. First, its findings suggest that the impact of the personal background characteristics examined is channelled mainly through job satisfaction and attraction to an alternative rather than through the number of perceived alternatives. Thus the personal characteristics explain only about 7 percent of the total variance in the number of perceived alternatives, as compared to about a quarter of the total variance in overall motivation for job changing — the index combining overall dissatisfaction with the present job and overall attraction to the prospective job.

Second, the findings show that from among all the personal characteristics examined, only length of service, education and occupational status make a significant contribution to the explained variance in the major intervening variables mentioned above. These findings suggest that the strong negative relationship between length of service and turnover found in past research is indeed well founded. So is also the positive relationship between turnover and education found in the majority of past researches. On the other hand, the findings suggest that the strong negative relationship between age and turnover is spurious. These findings are in line with the findings of other recent researches employing multivariate

analyses, according to which turnover was found to be significantly related to length of service and education yet not to age (e.g., Koch and Rhodes, 1981; Parasuraman, 1982).

Third, the findings reveal the ways in which the impact of the personal characteristics is channelled. They show that the negative impact of length of service on the motivation to change jobs is related to the fact that length of service is associated with a decrease in dissatisfaction with the present job and in the attraction of the prospective job — extending through all the facets examined. The effect of education, age and occupational status is more narrowly channelled. As education increases, the motivation to change jobs increases mainly because of an increase in dissatisfaction with, and attraction to intrinsic outcomes. The impact of age is restricted to pension considerations, which have a negative effect on the propensity to change jobs. Occupational status was found to be negatively related to dissatisfaction with, and attraction to extrinsic outcomes. The impact of managerial status, according to the findings, is channelled mainly through dissatisfaction with the present job: managerial status is associated with a decrease in dissatisfaction with all types of outcomes. A confrontation of the above findings with certain central hypotheses advanced in the course of attempts to explain the findings of past bi-variate correlational research shows that only some of these hypotheses are supported.

Fourth, another contribution of the detailed analyses lies in their potential benefit for practitioners seeking information about, and remedies for employee turnover. This requires detailed knowledge about the ways in which various factors influence turnover and about tentative points of intervention. The analyses performed contribute to this end in supplying some such information, but perhaps even more in showing a way in which further such information may be obtained.

Turning now to the second question — the role of perceived alternatives in turnover — our findings suggest that the main impact of opportunity is related to the attractiveness of alternatives, rather than to dissatisfaction with the present job. The findings suggest that dissatisfaction with the present job, the number of perceived alternatives and the decision to opt for one of them are interactively related as follows. When dissatisfaction with the present job is high there is a tendency to opt for the first alternative offering an improved balance of rewards. When alternatives are scare this has a moderating effect on dissatisfaction with the present job. A moderate degree of dissatisfaction with the present job tends to lead to an extensive search for alternatives, till a highly attractive alternative is found.

The generalizability of the findings should be assessed in light of two major factors. One is the composition of the sample. In contrast to most other individual level studies on turnover, the present study comprises employees from a wide variety of organizations and organizational levels, and from a wide variety of occupations. It can thus be assumed that the results are, by and large, unbiased by organization-specific or by occupation-specific effects. The second factor is the socio-economic setting of the research. Obviously the findings bear the marks of the relevant employment policies and conditions prevailing in Israël. To the best of our knowledge, generally, these conditions do not differ, significantly from those of most other Western industrialized countries. One major exception is the high inflation rate prevailing now in Israël. However, since the research was carried out before Israel entered the present hyperinflationary phase, the potential effects of this factor may be discounted.

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Changements d'emploi, caractéristiques personnelles et perspectives de promotion

Par la présente enquête, on a choisi un échantillon de 159 travailleurs engagés dans un processus de mutation d'emploi d'une entreprise à une autre ou d'une occupation à une autre, et ceci en vue d'étudier deux questions fondamentales. L'une a trait à la relation entre les caractéristiques personnelles antérieures et le roulement de la main-d'oeuvre; l'autre se rapporte au rôle des occasions d'emploi en perspective dans le roulement lui-même.

Sur la première question, l'enquête a été centrée sur plusieurs des caractéristiques personnelles tirées de recherches corrélatives antérieures à multiples variables se rapportant au phénomène du roulement de la main-d'oeuvre: âge, durée de service, scolarité, statut professionnel ou directorial. On s'est efforcé d'examiner les relations entre ces caractéristiques et trois variables théoriques susceptibles d'enfluer sur le roulement: insatisfaction du poste actuel, attrait de la nouvelle fonction recherchée et nombre des occasions d'emploi en perspective. L'insatisfaction et l'attrait sont représentées sous des facettes multiples et les mesures choisies visaient à les refléter. Les résultats ont aidé de plusieurs façons à la compréhension des rapports entre le roulement de la main-d'oeuvre et les caractéristiques personnelles étudiées.

En premier lieu, ces rapports laissent percevoir que l'influence des caractéristiques personnelles antérieures est surtout orientée vers la satisfaction au travail et l'attirance vers un nouvel emploi plutôt que par le nombre des occasions possibles. Aussi, les caractéristiques personnelles n'expliquent-elles que sept pour cent de la variance totale dans le nombre des possibilités perçues comparé à un quart de la variance totale pour l'ensemble des motifs de mutation. L'indice tendant à associer en général l'insatisfaction de l'emploi détenu et l'attrait d'un nouveau poste.

En deuxième lieu, les résultats montrent que de toutes les caractéristiques personnelles examinées, seule la durée du service, la scolarité et le statut professionnel concourant d'une façon significative à expliquer la variance dans les principales variables en jeu. Ces résultats laissent percevoir que le rapport fortement négatif entre la durée du service et le roulement de la main-d'oeuvre que l'on a noté au cours de recherches précédentes est réellement bien fondé. De même en est-il du ressort positif entre le roulement et la scolarité. D'autre part, le résultat des recherches tend à indiquer que le rapport fortement négatif entre l'âge et le roulement est faux. Ces constatations sont conformes à celles des autres études récentes où l'on a utilisé des analyses à variables multiples démontrant que le roulement était relié de façon significative à la durée du service et à la scolarité et non à l'âge (voir Koch et Rhodes, 1981; Parasuramon, 1982).

Troisièmement, les résultats révèlent les différentes voies par lesquelles l'impact des caractéristiques personnelles est canalisé. Ils montrent que l'impact négatif de la durée du service sur les motifs de mutation est relié au fait que la durée du service est associée à un amenuisement de l'insatisfaction pour l'emploi actuel ainsi que de l'attrait pour le poste de recherche — ce que l'on retrouve dans tous les cas examinés. L'effet de la scolarité, de l'âge et du statut professionnel est plus rigoureusement concentré. Lorsque la scolarité augmente, la motivation pour le changement d'emploi devient plus forte principalement à cause de l'accroissement de l'insatisfaction et de l'attrait pour des raisons d'ordre personnel. L'effet de l'âge se ramène à des considérations relatives aux régimes de retraite qui ont un effet négatif sur la tendance à changer d'emploi. On a trouvé que le statut professionnel était relié négativement à l'insatisfaction et à l'attrait pour des motifs d'ordre extérieur. L'effet d'un statut de cadre, d'après les constatations, se fait surtout sentir par l'insatisfaction vis-à-vis l'emploi actuel. Le statut de cadre est associé à une diminution de l'insatisfaction dans tous les types de résultats. Un parallèle entre les conclusions de la présente étude et certaines hypothèses fondamentales mises de l'avant lors de tentatives en vue d'expliquer les conclusions de recherches corrélatives à double variable démontre que quelques-unes seulement de ces hypothèses se vérifient.

Quatrièmement, un autre apport des analyses détaillées se retrouve dans leur utilité pour les praticiens qui sont en quête de renseignements sur les remèdes à apporter au roulement de la main-d'oeuvre. Cela exige une connaissance approfondie du processus selon lequel divers facteurs influent sur le roulement ainsi que des moyens d'intervention. Les analyses effectuées y contribuent en fournissant un peu d'information, mais peut-être davantage en indiquant les moyens par lesquels on peut obtenir cette information.

Lorsqu'on considère le rôle des occasions d'emploi perceptibles dans le roulement de la main-d'oeuvre, il y a lieu de se demander si le rapport positif entre la disponibilité des occasions et le roulement qu'on trouve dans les travaux de recherche en général s'explique par un rapport négatif entre les occasions possibles et la satisfaction de l'emploi actuel ou par un rapport négatif entre les occasions possibles et la satisfaction de l'emploi actuel ou par un rapport positif entre les occasions et l'attrait d'un nouveau poste. Ces constatations révèlent que l'impact principal des occasions se rattache à l'attraction des dites occasions plutôt qu'à l'insatisfaction de la tâche présente. En conséquence, on a noté un rapport positif entre le nombre des occasions perceptibles et l'attrait général d'un emploi en perspective (R = .023; p. = .002), mais pour ce qui est de l'insatisfaction, le coefficient de corrélation est faible et sans signification statistique.

Les résultats révèlent aussi que l'insatisfaction de l'emploi actuel, le nombre des occasions d'emploi et la décision d'opter pour l'une ou l'autre sont interreliés. En effet, lorsque l'insatisfaction est marquée, il y a tendance à opter pour la première offre qui présente des avantages. Lorsque les occasions d'emploi sont rares, ceci exerce un effet modérateur sur le degré d'insatisfaction. Un degré modéré d'insatisfaction pour l'emploi actuel favorise la recherche intensive d'un nouvel emploi jusqu'à ce qu'une offre particulièrement attrayante se présente.