AGENT TURNOVER IN OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

DISSERTATION

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****

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Turnover in organizations has been the subject of much research and in the building of theories since the 1900s (Mowday, 1981). Organizational turnover studies contain data from many countries, describe different organizations, and examine many types of occupations.

Employee turnover in organizations is a behavior of interest to many professionals, including personnel researchers, behavioral scientists, and management practitioners (Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino, 1979). Employee turnover can be defined as, "the cessation of membership in an organization by an individual who received monetary compensation from the organization" (Mobley, 1982, p. 10). Turnover must first be associated with the cessation or separation from an organization, not with the issues of accession, transfer, or other internal movement within an organization. Secondly, turnover must focus on employees--only the people who received financial compensation from the organization. This general definition of turnover applies to all private and public organizations: manufacturing, service, or government, and the definition is applicable to any type of
employee-organization relationship which includes part-time, full-time, hourly, or salary arrangements.

Two types of turnover exist. Voluntary separations are employee initiated. Involuntary separations are normally organization initiated, but death or mandatory retirement requirements can also become a part of an involuntary separation. People leave organizations for many reasons. Employees may be asked to leave due to unsatisfactory performance. Sometimes, the management may feel certain employees do not match the organization's goals and objectives. Other times, people leave on their own accord in hopes of finding a better job (Roseman, 1981).

As illustrated in Figure 1, the causes of turnover in organizations are generally attributed to four classes of determinants (Mobley 1982). The first determinant is comprised of external factors, such as the availability of jobs and unemployment levels. Organizational factors, such as supervisory style, pay, job content, reward system, and work environment comprise the second determinant. Individual factors make up the last two classes of determinants. Individual factors are related to turnover in two ways: first, individual non-work related factors, such as another person's career move or family considerations and individual work-related factors, such as a lack of job auto-
Figure 1. A simplified model of the causes and correlates of turnover.
nomy or the work not challenging or interesting the employee (Mobley, 1982).

Employee turnover is important to individuals, organizations, and society. Turnover, on a personal level can have positive as well as negative consequences. A job change can allow employees to move away from a stressful situation and into a different job that is more in line with one's career objectives. Alternatively, though, turnover can have negative implications for an individual. He/she can lose benefits, disrupt the family's social support, and be disillusioned by a job that did not turn out to be as good as previously imagined. Turnover also has positive and negative consequences for the people who remain within the organization. Turnover may negatively affect the attitudes of the employees who remain. Turnover by itself may stimulate additional turnover by causing a decline in confidence and by highlighting the fact that alternative jobs may be available. Also, morale may be decreased because of the missing social support that the previous employee had provided. On the positive side, however, turnover allows for movement into new positions and opportunities for promotion.

Turnover for society, in general, has both disadvantages and advantages. Turnover is associated with the ability to move into new industries and organizations—movement that is
vital for economic development. However, if turnover is excessive, productivity, growth, and orderly development could be depressed (Mobley, 1982).

The cost elements of turnover can be divided into two categories: tangible and intangible. The major tangible costs of turnover can be divided into the costs of recruitment, selection, orientation and training, and separation (Roseman, 1981). Intangible costs, on the other hand, are difficult to measure, but nonetheless have considerable financial impact on the organization. Intangible costs include the disruption of morale, the breakdown of work teams, increased conflicts, and lack of rapport with customers. These intangible costs hurt and disrupt the organization and indirectly create economic costs (Roseman, 1981).

On the other hand, though, employee turnover can have positive benefits to the organization. Poor performers can be displaced, promotion opportunities are created, and new people with new ideas are able to enter the organization (Mobley, 1982).

As in any organization, Ohio State University Extension (OSUE) can be affected by employee turnover. The impact of turnover is especially true in the case of educational organizations like Extension, where the bulk of the organizational production system is dependent upon its
employees (Clark, 1981). County Extension agents play an important role in introducing and developing educational programs through OSU Extension; the county level is where most citizens directly benefit from Extension programs. Extension agents develop and adapt programs to assist local people in identifying and solving problems. The most effective programs are developed after the professional grasps an understanding of the needs and resources of the local community.

When county Extension agents voluntarily leave their positions, an interruption in the local Extension programming is likely to occur. Even if the position is filled quickly, the replacement agent will need time to become familiar with the local situation to be effective. Agent turnover often times results in disrupted programming efforts while the new agent is being selected and undergoes an acclimation period to the local situation.

Besides the reduction of organizational effectiveness, resources are also used in selecting and training new Extension personnel. Administrative effort is necessary for proper recruitment, selection, and training of replacement agents. When financial resources are used for dealing with the consequences of turnover, those costs reduce the amount of available resources to accomplish the primary mission of
the organization—the delivery of educational programs (Clark, 1981).

By understanding the phenomena and consequences of turnover, OSU Extension can become more aware of the main reasons for employee withdrawal from the organization.

Statement of the Problem

The voluntary turnover of county Extension agents in Ohio has caused vacancies that have remained unfilled for periods of time due to reduced budgets and lack of qualified personnel. An extensive amount of managerial time is involved in recruiting, screening, selecting, classifying, and training to fill empty positions. When a valued employee is replaced, the costs associated with finding a replacement are even greater (Cascio, 1978).

As illustrated in Table 1, from January 1, 1990 to December 31, 1994, 67 county agents voluntarily left OSU Extension; turnover has averaged about 5% per year for the past five years. To arrive at the turnover figure, the total number of county agent resignations per fiscal year was compared with the total number of county agent positions which were funded for any portion of the fiscal year.

A need exists to investigate the reasons for county agent turnover and how these reasons might be classified according to three categories of determinants:
a) organizational, b) individual non-work related factors, and c) individual work-related factors.

Table 1

Turnover of County Extension Agents in Ohio (1990-1994)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Total Number of Positions</th>
<th>Number of Voluntary Resignations</th>
<th>Percent Turnover</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
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Note. Average Percent Turnover = 5%

Purpose and Objectives of the Study

Although previous studies of OSU Extension have focused on the employees' intention to leave, this study will be the first to focus on people who actually left the organization. Little empirical evidence exists to document the main reasons why county agents leave the organization. The main purpose of this study is to determine the reasons why county agents voluntarily leave OSU Extension.
Mobley (1982) has identified four factors in his simplified model of the broad causes of turnover. This model (see Figure 1) was used as a guide for the study. The four determinants of turnover that Mobley identified in his model are the external economy, organizational factors, individual non-work related factors, and individual work-related factors. The study focused on organizational factors, individual work-related factors, and individual non-work related factors. This study used a modified version of Mobley's model, as presented in Figure 2, to examine the voluntary turnover of county agents in OSU Extension.

The specific objectives of the study were to:
1. describe county agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension between January 1, 1990 and December 31, 1994 on the following characteristics at the time of turnover:
   - age
   - gender
   - race
   - marital status
   - involvement in committed relationship
   - number of children
   - educational level
   - degree area
   - faculty vs. non-faculty status
Figure 2. A modified version of Mobley’s model of the causes of turnover.
-tenure vs. non-tenure
-program area
-performance rating
-multi vs. single county
-district county
-years in OSU Extension
-first career choice
-intention/length of time thought about leaving to actual leaving
-current employment status
-number of jobs after leaving
-description of current job
-salary

2. determine the percentage of county agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension between January 1, 1990 and December 31, 1994 due to organizational, individual work-related, and individual non-work related factors.

Voluntary turnover due to organizational factors included: a) no opportunity for advancement, b) too much work, c) task repetitiveness, d) inadequate office space, e) low pay, f) inadequate benefits package, g) conflict with co-workers, h) lack of recognition for a job well done, i) too many requirements for advancement, j) lack of job security, and k) changing administrative policies.
Individual work-related factors included: a) uninteresting work, b) lack of job autonomy, c) job did not match expectations, d) no opportunities to be creative, e) involvement in the decision-making process, f) abilities did not match the job requirements, g) too many late meetings, h) conflict with values, i) other priorities in life, and j) not qualified for the job.

Individual non-work factors included: a) conflicts with other responsibilities, b) interpersonal relationships taking precedence over work, c) attracted to money elsewhere, d) other job alternatives, e) another person's career move, and f) educational opportunities.

Rationale for the Study

By discovering the chief motives that cause county agents to voluntarily leave their positions, OSU Extension can become aware of the reasons for turnover and can work to avoid them in the future. Also, the identification of these motives can help the organization to correct any deficiencies in its policies, work environment, and incentive programs. The knowledge of the agents' reasons for leaving can give OSU Extension an idea of what organizations are competing with them by hiring their employees.
When OSU Extension is able to discover the reasons for voluntary turnover, they may adjust salaries, benefits, and work environments to keep quality employees needed to operate successful programs. By making changes, the organization may not only reduce turnover, but also may reduce the managerial time and costs involved in the recruitment, screening, selection, classification, and training of new employees. Overall reduction of voluntary turnover can alter the current practices to build a better organization.

Definition of Terms

Turnover

Turnover refers to the voluntary termination of participation in employment for an organization, excluding retirement or pressured voluntary withdrawal, by an individual who received monetary compensation from the organization (Rossano, 1985). For the purpose of this study, turnover is operationally defined as the number of county agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension positions between January 1, 1990 and December 31, 1994.

County Agents

County agents refers to OSU Extension employees who conduct educational programming with clientele at the county level. These persons may have faculty or professional
assistant (P.A.) positions within OSU Extension. For the purpose of this study, county agents are operationally defined as persons employed by OSU Extension as agents or associate agents and who voluntarily left OSU Extension between January 1, 1990 and December 31, 1994.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Withdrawal from a position, or turnover, is a phenomenon that has been addressed in many books and articles. This wealth of information comes from many different perspectives. The researchers of turnover have developed conceptual models to enable them to interpret their findings, identify areas of need for further research, and to aid them in guiding others on how to deal with the potential negative aspects of turnover.

Two of the pioneers of turnover research, March and Simon (1958), created a model with two major components applied to employee turnover: a) perceived desirability of movement from the organization and b) perceived ease of movement from the organization. March and Simon displayed their concept of the major factors affecting perceived desirability of movement in a theoretical model. They listed job satisfaction and perceived possibility of intraorganizational transfer as the two major contributions to turnover. March and Simon agreed with the literature current at that time which suggested that the primary factor influencing an employee's motivation to leave an organization is the employee's satisfaction with the job.
In addition, though, they stated three major propositions to withdrawal from employment.

The three major propositions were: a) "the greater the conformity of the job characteristics to the self-characterization held by the individual, the higher the level of satisfaction", b) "the greater the predictability of instrumental relationships on the job, the higher the level of satisfaction", and c)"the greater the compatibility of work requirements with the requirements of other roles, the higher the level of satisfaction" (March & Simon, 1958, pp. 94-95).

One further hypothesis is addressed within this model. March and Simon felt that the larger the organization, the greater the perceived possibility of intraorganizational transfer. The structure of these propositions about the major factors affecting perceived desirability of movement is depicted in Figure 3.

The second component of March and Simon's model addressed the perceived ease of movement from the organization. March and Simon stated that under any conditions, the most accurate predictor of turnover is the state of the economy. When jobs are plentiful, voluntary movement is high; when jobs are not plentiful, there is little voluntary turnover.
Figure 3. Major factors affecting perceived desirability of movement.
March and Simon list some personal factors affecting the ease of movement, including gender of the participant, where male workers will perceive movement to be easier than females. Also, the age of the participant is a factor since the older the worker is, the less likely he/she is to move from a position. Also, the social status of the participant is a factor since members of low status groups will perceive movement to be more difficult than members of high status groups. Length of service and specialization are factors, since the greater one's specialization, the fewer the extra organizational alternatives are perceived.

In addition, though, March and Simon give information about the organization that affects voluntary movement within an organization. They state that if the individual works in an organization with high visibility and prestige, he/she will perceive movement to be easier. Also, March and Simon state that the greater the heterogeneity of personal contacts for the employee at work, the greater the number of organizations visible, which would mean that the more non-work organizations the individual participates in, the greater the perceived ease of movement. Also, March and Simon hypothesize that the greater the visibility of an individual to organizations, the greater the visibility of organizations to him or her. They state there is every
reason to assume a strong feedback relationship between organizational visibility to the individual and that individual's visibility to an organization (March & Simon, 1958).

March and Simon also make the assumption, although they admit that there is an absence of empirical evidence, that the greater the uniqueness of the individual, the more visible he or she is in the organization. Finally, they state that the more satisfied one is within a position, the less likely he or she is to seek movement. They state that unwillingness to move may be associated with habituation to a particular job or organization. All these major factors affecting perceived ease of movement are taken into consideration and are depicted in Figure 4.

Price (1977) published a review of turnover literature. In his publication, he presented a model of the determinants and intervening variables associated with turnover. He identified the primary determinants positively related to turnover as pay levels, integration, instrumental communication, and formal communication. Centralization, the degree to which power is centralized, is the fifth and only negative determinant. He indicated that satisfaction and opportunity are variables that intervene between the determinants and turnover.
Figure 4. Major factors affecting perceived ease of movement.
The fundamental hypothesis of the price model is that dissatisfaction results in turnover only when opportunity is relatively high; when there is an interaction between determinants and opportunity. Price's model of turnover determinants and intervening variables is shown in Figure 5.

In 1977, Mobley argued to move beyond the simple replication of the satisfaction-turnover relationship toward research of the processes that occur between satisfaction and actual turnover. Mobley used the conceptual work of March and Simon (1958) to present a model of the turnover decision process which identifies linkages in the satisfaction-turnover relationship.

This model suggests that dissatisfaction elicits certain behaviors. Those behaviors include thoughts of quitting, search evaluation, the evaluation of alternatives, intentions to quit, and in the end, turnover. This model focuses on turnover as a process and questions the role of satisfaction as the immediate predecessor of turnover. Research based on this model supports the hypothesis that intentions are the best predictors of turnover and that preceding variables, including satisfaction, do not add to the prediction of turnover. The Mobley intermediate linkages model is shown in Figure 6.
Figure 5. Price's model of turnover determinants and intervening variables.
Figure 6. Mobley's intermediate linkages model.
Mobley worked with colleagues Griffeth, Hand, and Meglino in 1979 to create a new turnover model. This new model incorporated elements of the preceding models and attempted to capture the overall complexity of the turnover process. The creators of this model attempted to graphically show the multiple organizational, environmental, as well as individual variables that are associated with the turnover process.

This model, as is shown in Figure 7, suggests four determinants of intentions to quit and turnover: a) job satisfaction-dissatisfaction, b) expected utility of alternative internal work roles, c) expected utility of external work roles, and d) non-work values and contingencies (Mobley, 1982). This model is limited in use in any study because of its complexity. One study would not able to address all of the variables in the model (Mobley, 1982).

To provide a clearer picture of the causes and correlates of turnover, Mobley created a simplified model of turnover. This model gives four general factors of turnover. The external economy factor consists of unemployment and employment levels, job vacancy rates, rate of inflation, and availability of jobs. A prime factor of labor turnover is the state of the economy. In almost every
Figure 7. An expanded model of the employee turnover process.
occupation, the economy plays a key factor on how many jobs are available. An exception to this rule, though, is certain occupations which are in high demand at a particular time. For example, even though in 1980 unemployment was above 7%, certain occupations, such as computer programming, nursing, and skilled crafts, remained in demand. If there are no jobs in which to move, voluntary turnover is not likely to occur.

If the external economy is thriving and many jobs are available, then the chances for voluntary turnover are greater. Inflation is a factor as well. Inflation can influence turnover and other turnover-related variables in a number of ways, including encouraging more secondary wage earners to enter the job market to supplement family income, and to encourage turnover as a means to protect earnings. All of these variables within the external economy must be taken into account to assess how individuals perceive the availability of alternative jobs.

A great deal of research has been conducted in the area of organizational variables and turnover. If turnover is to be understood, an organization must be aware of turnover rates within a particular industry. These benchmark comparisons can allow an organization to be aware of the norms. Comparing turnover rates by occupational group within
an organization to those in the industry and relevant labor market also might be useful.

Organizational size is associated with lower turnover, since organizations which are larger usually have more opportunities for internal mobility, a more comprehensive human resource management system, more competitive compensation packages, and even perhaps research activities that are devoted solely to turnover.

On the other hand, though, larger organizations may experience higher turnover due to communication problems, lower group cohesion, and more of a beaurocratic, impersonal atmosphere. Unfortunately, there have been no clear-cut conclusions relating turnover to organizational size (Mobley, 1982).

Pay must also be taken into account as an organizational sub-factor. Researchers have found a strong relationship between pay levels and turnover rates. Turnover is highest in low-paying industries. Although this statement is true, the correlation between pay levels and turnover rates does not indicate that the job leavers go on to higher paying jobs; however, there is evidence that this is the case. Other organizational factors besides pay, such as supervisory style and job content, non-job factors, and
individual factors clearly play a part in the entire turnover picture.

Job content is an organizational sub-factor that is important to take into account. Too much routine or task repetitiveness and lack of job autonomy and responsibility all can lead to turnover. Porter and Steers (1973) found support for a positive relationship between task repetitiveness and turnover and a negative relationship between autonomy and responsibility and turnover.

The only real generalization that can be made regarding organizational variables is that turnover rates are higher in lower-paying industries (Porter & Steers, 1973). Some evidence does exist, though, that larger work-group size and lower skill levels among blue collar workers are associated with high turnover rates. Also, routine task repetitiveness is associated with higher turnover rates (Porter & Steers, 1973).

Individual work-related factors are also important in Mobley's simplified model of turnover. Age is a key sub factor. Turnover literature reports a consistent relationship between age and the amount of time on the job. Younger employees are more likely to leave a job (Mobley et al., 1979; Muchinsky & Tuttle, 1979; Porter & Steers, 1973; Price, 1977). There may be several reasons for this age-
turnover relationship. Younger employees may have more entry-level job opportunities and fewer family responsibilities which would make job mobility easier. Tenure is another individual work-related sub factor. Turnover is significantly higher for employees of shorter tenure. The U.S. Civil Service Commission in 1977 concluded in a study that two-thirds to three-fourths of the resignations occur by the end of the first three years of service. Of these, more than half will occur by the end of the first year.

Level of education is another work-related sub-factor. Unfortunately, though, since most turnover studies are based on individuals with similar educations, a relationship between turnover and education is difficult to establish. Similar to education, though certainly different in its relationship to research on turnover, aptitude and ability are related to turnover. Evidence exists in the literature to support the idea that organizations should try to use job-relevant aptitude and ability measures as predictors of turnover (Mobley, 1982). Mobley stresses in his model, though, that although this usage of job-relevant and aptitude and ability measures is a good idea, that these predictors alone would be an insufficient way to manage turnover within an organization.
Much information remains inconclusive in regards to turnover and personality, gender, education, professionalism, performance, and absenteeism. Interests, aptitude, and abilities have been found to be related to turnover, but the current research is not sufficient to verify the relationships.

Non-work variables also come into play in Mobley's simplified turnover model. Most turnover research that deals with non-work variables has focused on "family responsibility." Muchinsky and Tuttle (1979) indicate that there is a relationship between family responsibility and turnover, but it is dictated by whether or not the employee is the primary wage earner.

All of these four factors - external economy, organizational factors, individual work-related variables, and individual non-work related variables play a part in the simplified model created by Mobley. The most important thing that Mobley wants to stress through this model, though, is that no single variable can account for turnover. To fully understand the turnover process, an organization must look at all four facets of the model, not just one in isolation. Mobley's model can be examined in Figure 1.

Jackofskey (1984) presented what she called the basic model of turnover. She took two determinants, desirability
of movement and ease of movement, from the work of March and Simon (1958). The other determinant is the intention to quit. Jackofsky said that forming an intention is a necessary condition that occurs immediately prior to actual behavior. Jackofsky's model differs from March and Simon's (1958) by focusing on the source of an individual's motivation to leave a job. As shown in Figure 8, recognition is also given to other partial determinants of both ease and desirability of movement.

Jackofsky (1984) presented a process model of turnover. This model emphasized the potential involvement of job performance. She made several predictions concerning the relationship of performance to different forms of turnover and their precursors. She predicted that job performance and job attitudes interact in the prediction of job turnover. Jackofsky's model serves as a step in the development of a more complete understanding of the turnover process in a theoretical as well as an applied sense.

Jackofsky's model, as shown in Figure 9, addresses some issues for further study, including: a) the psychological process of withdrawal, b) refinement of the turnover criterion, c) an examination of "off quadrant" cases in which a satisfied employee leaves or dissatisfied employee
Figure 8. Jackofsky's basic model of turnover.
stays, and d) the consideration of differentially valued employees in relation to turnover. The model of withdrawal proposes several major factors that have been shown to affect turnover in prior research. Job performance was introduced as a variable that is not only important to include in such models, but is also one that takes on multiple meanings. In total job turnover behavior, Jackofsky's model also gives attention to potential determinants of both voluntary and involuntary turnover.

A previous study of turnover in OSU Extension was conducted in 1981 by Clark. The purpose of Clark's study was to examine the roles of perceived job alternatives and work values in describing the process by which an agent may develop intentions to leave a position (Clark, 1981). Clark provided evidence that perceived job alternatives and work values moderate the linkages between job satisfaction, thinking of leaving, and intentions to leave. Some support was given for the position that the turnover process is influenced by the perception of job alternatives and work values. During the time of Clark's study, though, OSU Extension was facing some uncertainty with regard to funding, which may have affected the findings.
Figure 9. Jackofsky's integration of job performance in process model of turnover.
Using Jackofsky's model as a basis and adding the factor of job performance level, Rossano (1985) conducted a study to determine intentions of county agents in Ohio Cooperative Extension Service, now known as OSU Extension, to leave the job. Rossano's findings suggested that generally Extension agents had low intentions to leave their jobs. Moderate levels of job satisfaction and perceived ease of movement were experienced. The agents mostly perceived themselves to be high performers. Generally, their supervisors concurred. Lower performers, on the other hand, had higher intentions to leave their jobs. The agents tended to reward themselves for good performance, but they did not see that rewards on an organizational level were contingent upon performance level.

The external economy is a factor that has been addressed by other researchers. O'Reilly and Caldwell (1981) investigated the effects of post-decisional justifications on the job satisfaction and commitment of new employees. One hundred eight M.B.A.s were interviewed about their job choice immediately after making the decision and then again six months later. Turnover data were then collected after 24 months on the job. The results indicated that individuals who had made the original decision from a number of other offers and free from external economic factors,
were more satisfied and committed six months later than others.

Martin and Mueller (1981) investigated the idea of other job alternatives. They challenged the theory that employees who leave their organizations are better performers. They evaluated 162 female registered nurses by having their supervisors assess their performance by using the 84-item Slater Nursing Competence Rating Scale. Their findings indicated that nurses who left their jobs did not perform significantly better than those who stayed. Because nursing jobs were plentiful, even nurses who were not the top performers in their field were able to change jobs and choose to do so.

Miller, Katerberg, and Hulin (1979) researched military re-enlistment choices of the National Guard. Their results supported all of the variables in Mobley's model. As far as external economic factors, though, career mobility influenced turnover only through the opportunities for other employment.

Jackofsky and Peters (1983) defined organizational turnover as staying on a job instead of leaving that job by either moving within the organization or outside of the organization. This inter-organizational and intraorganizational movement allows employees to feel a sense of
mobility, which would keep them from possibly seeking other job alternatives.

One of the determinants in Mobley's turnover model involves organizational factors. These factors include the parts of the actual job: the way the job is set up, the opportunities for advancement, the supervisory style, reward system, and pay.

Organizational factors and their effect on turnover have been discussed in much literature. Waxman, Carner, and Berkenstock (1984) conducted interviews with aides in seven nursing homes. They looked at relationships between job satisfaction, job perception, and actual turnover rate. They found higher turnover rates in better quality nursing homes which offered good wages and benefits. They found a positive association between turnover rate and aides' perceptions of the homes' order, organization, and control. Their findings suggest that job turnover would lessen with changes in management style and allowing aides more involvement in the decision-making process.

In 1992, Pfeffer and Davis-Blake studied the amount of dispersion in an organization's salary distribution and how an individual's location in that distribution affected turnover. They used data for the years 1978-79 and 1983-84 on more than 10,000 administrators in 821 U.S. colleges and
universities to find that salary dispersion negatively affected the turnover of administrators with relatively high salaries. An individual who earns a relatively high salary in an organization with high salary dispersion, whose salary is distinct from and better than the salaries of others, will be less likely to leave his or her position. On the other hand, they found that when salary dispersion is low with only minor differences in salary between those at the upper and lower ranges, an employee whose salary is in the upper range is unlikely to be conscious of any great advantage to staying, and will be more likely and willing to leave his or her position than when salary dispersion is high. The joint effect of salary dispersion and relative salary on turnover was strengthened when salary information was publicly available and when a well-developed external labor market was present.

Balfour and Neff (1993) conducted a study which used logistical regression to identify employee and organizational attributes contributing to the probability of voluntary turnover among child protective service caseworkers in a large children's services bureau. Two of the key variables were length of service and overtime hours. Another variable of interest was whether or not the employee had previous experience or had done an internship with a human service
agency. The educational level of the employee, though, was the determining factor of those who chose to leave or stay during high times of turnover and a great deal of outside criticism and questioning of the agency's effectiveness. Employees with more advanced levels of education felt a stronger sense of commitment to the organization. The agency responded to the study by creating a special training program, but later findings concluded that the program did not significantly reduce the probability of turnover.

Porter and Steers (1973) examined research carried out in the sixties and early seventies concerning factors related to turnover and absenteeism. They found overall job satisfaction to be consistently related to turnover. The problem they found, though, was that job satisfaction is a very global concept and needed to be analyzed. In their attempt to analyze this global concept, they created four categories of factors, three of which relate directly to organizational determinants of turnover: a) organization-wide factors, b) immediate work environment factors, and c) job-related factors.

Michaels and Spector (1982) challenged the turnover model of Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, and Meglino. To conduct their study, they collected data from employees of a mental health facility. Michaels and Spector added two new
variables to the model, one of which, confirmation of pre-
employment expectancies, falls into the category of
organizational factors. Findings showed, however, that
perceived alternative employment opportunities added nothing
to the model as the direct cause of intention to quit or
turnover.

Watts and White (1988) challenged the idea of high turn-
over necessarily being bad turnover. They recommended hav-
ing exit interviews or have the leaving employees complete a
questionnaire to obtain important information about the
reasons for turnover. Their findings showed that employees
who remained in the organization felt their work was inter-
esting and that they had desirable salaries. Those who left
the organization emphasized more concern about a need for
better working conditions, a desire to supervise others, and
their status within the organization.

Sales and Marketing Management Magazine (High turnover?,
1989) addressed the idea of turnover by conducting a survey
of more than 500 salespeople and sales managers. Their
findings showed that lack of compensation, advancement, and
management support as the main reasons for an employee to
leave a job.

Gavin (1990) called turnover "a silent cancer in the
public human resource management system." He stated that
the estimated administrative costs to replace separated federal sector employees to be from $300 to $2,200 per occurrence. He cited low pay and decreased benefits as leading contributors to personnel loss. Also, limited career opportunities, work location, poor working conditions, and inflexibility of management were all organizational factors attributed to turnover.

A third determinant in Mobley's simplified model is individual non-work factors, which includes the employee's personal life outside of work. Few studies besides Mobley's research confirm that non-work factors are an important part of the turnover process.

Mobley (1982) cited age as a factor, and indicated that younger employees have a higher probability of leaving. He stated that the younger employees likely have fewer family responsibilities. He said that gender has shown no pattern in linkage to turnover.

Personality, as a non-work factor, was investigated by Porter and Steers (1973). They found that the literature on turnover and personality suggest that people who leave organizations tend to be at the extreme end of personality factors, such as achievement, aggression, independence, and self-confidence.
Mobley (1982) looked at other non-work factors. He cited career decisions involving both members of a dual-career family making decisions. Sometimes both people quit a job or do not accept an attractive job offer in order to stay in a particular city. Perhaps they will not want to disrupt their children's education or one person may be willing to quit to allow a spouse a new career opportunity. Other non-work factors that Mobley (1982) discussed included other roles outside of the job that a person might have which might affect turnover. These roles include that of parent, coach, religious participant, and civic participant.

Watts and White (1998) discussed personal factors as an issue in the turnover process. They stated age as a predictive factor. The younger the employee, and the shorter his/her job tenure, the greater likelihood the employee will leave his/her job. Watts and White found no consistent relationships between turnover and intelligence, educational level, aptitude scores, or gender of the employee. They did state, though, that turnover tends to be higher for employees with high levels of anxiety, emotional instability, and aggressive tendencies. They also stated a strong sense of independence, self-confidence, and ambition as reasons for higher turnover.
A fourth determinant in Mobley's simplified model is individual work-related factors. This factor encompasses the most prevalent reason for turnover, which is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction can include all of the previously discussed factors, as each of them contributes to the satisfaction of the employee. When an employee fails to be satisfied in his/her job, turnover is very likely. The determinant of individual work-related factors also includes values, abilities, and the intentions of the employee.

Kovach (1977) indicated that satisfaction levels have many components including monetary compensation, security, and interpersonal relations. He stated that overall satisfaction levels are the same in small and large organizations. Job satisfaction is directly related to the similarity between individual value systems and organizational reward systems. Kovach stated that since turnover is a manifestation of satisfaction, rates will be the same across different-sized organizations, despite the fact that these organizations may offer different rewards.

Muchinsky and Tuttle (1979) included attitudinal job satisfaction as one of five predictor variables of turnover. Mobley, Horner, and Hollingsworth (1978) collected data from 203 hospitals. Their findings showed that although job
satisfaction was a minor factor, the actual intention to quit was the only significant factor to actual turnover.

Mobley (1977) explained that although the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover is statistically significant and consistent, it is not particularly strong. Mobley initially suggested a model of the employee withdrawal decision process which identified possible intermediate linkages in the satisfaction-turnover relationship.

Jackofsky and Peters (1983) conducted a study using a sample of 290 retail employees. Measures of job satisfaction and the expectation of finding alternative jobs were administered, and eight months later, turnover data were collected. Jackofsky and Peters found that job satisfaction is a key factor in predicting job turnover.

Siegei (1992) looked at factors affecting the job satisfaction of employees, and he gave suggestions to employers on how to avoid voluntary turnover. He stated that there are seven principles that must be upheld in the workplace to reduce turnover. They are: a) employees must be proud of where they work, b) employees must feel that their voice counts, c) the employer needs to recognize and frequently reward good work, d) the employer should create a positive, upbeat work environment, e) have fun - this includes posting cartoons, interesting articles and photos,
hosting after-hour events for the staff, and opportunities for employees to share jokes and stories, f) the employer should challenge employees to grow professionally, and g) the employer must ensure that compensation and benefits are fair.

Gavin (1990) stated that turnover attacks the very core of an organization's functioning. He defined job satisfaction as quality of worklife. He maintained that quality of worklife is the human resource management challenge for the 1990s.

Summary

In this review of literature, many models showing the relationships of factors associated with turnover have been presented. Two of the pioneers in turnover research, March and Simon (1958) were initially discussed. The two major components of their model were: a) perceived desirability of movement from the organization and b) perceived ease of movement from the organization. Price (1977) presented a model of determinants and variables associated with turnover. His fundamental hypothesis was that dissatisfaction results in turnover only when opportunity is relatively high.

Mobley (1977) used March and Simon's conceptual work to present a model of the turnover decision process. This
model focused on turnover as a process. In 1979, Mobley worked with three colleagues, Griffeth, Hand, and Meglino, to create a new turnover model. This model addressed the fact that satisfaction, future expectations and both work- and non-work values must be diagnosed for the full understanding of turnover. This expanded model, however, was limited in use in any study due to its complexity.

In 1982, Mobley presented a more simplified model of turnover. Portions of Mobley's simplified model were used to guide this study. Mobley's simplified model gives four general factors of turnover. External economy is the first factor, consisting of unemployment and employment levels, rate of inflation and availability of jobs, which will not be addressed in this study. Organizational factors are next, and they include changing administrative policies, poor supervision, and pay. Individual non-work factors, the third part of Mobley's simplified model, include family considerations, other job offers, and another person's career move. The final part of Mobley's simplified model is individual work-related factors, including work being uninteresting and lacking challenge and being over or under-qualified for one's position.

Organizational, work, and non-work related factors were examined to fulfill the purpose of this study which was to
determine reasons why county agents voluntarily leave OSU Extension. When OSU Extension understands the reasons for voluntary turnover, they may make changes in order to keep quality employees who are needed to operate successful programs. The reduction of voluntary turnover can change the current human resource practices enabling OSU Extension to build a better organization.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research was a descriptive study. The study was designed to determine the reasons why Extension agents voluntarily left OSU Extension. The study focused on three main factors of turnover -- organizational, individual work-related, and individual non-work related factors.

Population

The population for this study consisted of all OSU Extension county agents who voluntarily left the organization between January 1, 1990 and December 31, 1994. Sixty-seven agents were included in the population of this census study. The frame was obtained from the OSU Extension administrative office at the state level. Since the entire population of extension agents who voluntarily left the OSU Extension were surveyed, sampling and selection errors did not pose a problem for external validity. Frame error was reduced since OSU Extension personnel records were used to obtain the names and addresses of the 67 agents who voluntarily left the organization between January 1, 1990
and December 31, 1994. A number for coding purposes was assigned to each subject in the study.

**Instrumentation**

The research instrument was a mail questionnaire consisting of four sections. The first three sections determined the proportion of Extension agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension between January 1, 1990 and December 31, 1994 due to organizational, individual work-related, and individual non-work related factors.

Part I of the instrument dealt with organizational factors. Twenty statements were designed to collect data representing organizational reasons why the agents left OSU Extension. Part II of the instrument focused on individual work-related factors. Sixteen statements comprised this portion of the instrument to identify work-related factors that might have been instrumental in the voluntary turnover of the county agents. Part III was composed of 12 statements to identify the personal or non-work related reasons why agents left the organization. Each of the items in the three sections were rated on a scale from one to five. If the former agent circled the number 1, then he/she was indicating that the statement definitely did not describe a reason why he/she left OSU Extension. On the
other end of the scale, a rating of five indicated that the statement definitely described a reason why the respondent left OSU Extension.

Part IV consisted of six questions designed to collect data on the personal and work characteristics of the agents when they were employed by OSU Extension. These data were unavailable in the personnel files and include questions on whether or not the agents were involved in a committed relationship at the time they left OSU Extension, number of children, if Extension was the agent's first career choice, how long they had intended to quit, if they currently hold a position, where they work, and what job title they currently hold. The instrument then asked an open-ended question that asked the respondent to list the main reason why he/she left OSU Extension.

The final section of the instrument provided space for the respondents to write additional comments on reasons why they left OSU Extension. A copy of the research instrument is located in Appendix A.

Content validity of the instrument was established by a panel of experts (See Appendix B). The following points were examined by the panelists: item content and clarity, wording, length of the instrument, format, and overall
appearance. In addition, the instrument was field tested by seven extension agents who are presently working in OSU Extension. These agents were asked to make comments and suggestions in the same manner as the panel of experts.

The instrument was pilot tested for reliability purposes by surveying agents currently employed by OSU Extension who had left another organization prior to coming to OSU Extension (n=18). Test-re-test procedures were used to determine the reliability for Parts I, II, and III of the instrument. When perfect matches were considered, the percent agreement for the two administrations of the pilot instrument ranged from 56% to 88% with an overall average of 74%. When matches within one number of the first administration were considered, the percent agreement for the two administrations of the pilot instrument ranged from 90% to 98% for an overall average of 94%. Two weeks were given between the two administrations of the pilot instrument.

In an attempt to reduce measurement error, some data were collected from personnel files of OSU Extension rather than from respondents. A second instrument consisted of a data gathering form. This instrument collected data on selected personal and professional characteristics available
in the personnel files. The data gathering form consisted of two sections. The first section identified personal characteristics of the previous agents: marital status, date of birth, educational level, degree area, race, and gender. The second section dealt with professional characteristics of the former agents. The identified characteristics included: performance rating, tenure standing, multi vs. single county assignment, program area, educational level, number of years in OSU Extension, county/district, and salary level. A copy of the data gathering form is found in Appendix C.

**Data Collection**

The main method of data collection was a mail questionnaire. Additional data were collected from personnel records of OSU Extension. To confirm the correct addresses of the participants, a postcard was sent to the 67 former agents on December 31, 1994. The questionnaire packet was mailed to all subjects on January 6, 1995. Included in the mailing packet was a copy of the questionnaire with the identification number of the subject, a cover letter, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. See Appendix D for copies of the cover letters.
The deadline for returning the questionnaire was set for January 20, 1995. On January 24, a second packet including all the initial materials was sent to the non-respondents. The final deadline for data collection was February 9, 1995.

**Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics were used in analyzing the data. These statistics include means, medians, standard deviations, percentages, and frequencies. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS/Windows 6.1) computer program obtained from The Ohio State University.

For nominal and ordinal data, percentages and frequencies were used to describe Extension agents on the characteristics of performance rating, faculty vs. non-faculty status, tenure vs. non-tenure, multi vs. single county, marital status, educational level, degree area, program area, district/county, whether or not Extension was his/her first career choice, gender and the number of jobs held since departure from OSU Extension. Interval data were analyzed using means and standard deviations to describe Extension agents on the characteristics of age, years in OSU
Extension, salary, and the amount of time the agent thought about leaving prior to his/her actual leaving.

For the second objective of the study, percentages and frequencies were used to determine the percentage of county agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension due to organizational, individual work-related, and individual non-work related factors.
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This chapter supplies information about why OSU Extension agents voluntarily left their positions. The findings of the study are organized and presented under the following sections: a) summary of the data sample, b) a description of the county agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension, and c) the percentage of county agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension due to organizational, individual work-related, and individual non-work related factors.

Data Sample

Data were collected during the months of January and February, 1995. A postcard was initially sent to the 67 agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension between January 1, 1990 and December 31, 1994. From this process, four incorrect addresses were discovered. On January 6, 1995, the first mailing was sent to the study population. Included in this mailing were a cover letter, the questionnaire with a self-addressed, stamped envelope, an
OSU Extension pen, and a packet of instant coffee. Fifty five (82%) of the 67 former agents returned usable questionnaires in response to the first mailing.

A second mailing was sent on January 24, 1995. Six questionnaires were received in response to the second mailing. February 9, 1995 was established as the cut off date for the return of the questionnaires. The overall response rate from the two mailings was 91%.

The six non-respondents were compared to the respondents on the characteristics of age, salary, and years in OSU Extension. These comparative data were obtained from the data gathering sheets. As shown in Table 2, no statistically significant differences were found between respondents and non-respondents. The results of this study can be generalized to all 67 former agents.
Table 2

Differences Between Respondents and Non-respondents on Selected Demographic Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents (n=61)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6.34</td>
<td>-.52</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-respondents (n=6)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7.33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in OSU Extension</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents (n=61)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-respondents (n=6)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents (n=61)</td>
<td>$24,790</td>
<td>$6,111</td>
<td>-1.01</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-respondents (n=6)</td>
<td>$28,324</td>
<td>$8,398</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Description of Former County Agents

Age

Table 3 shows that the mean age of the county agents at the time of leaving the organization was 32 years. Fifty-two percent of the agents were between the ages of 21-30 when they voluntarily left OSU Extension. The youngest agent was 22 years old and the oldest agent was 54 years.

Table 3
Age Breakdown of County Agents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (Years)</th>
<th>Study Population (n=61)</th>
<th>State Comparison (n=302)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 30</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 - 40</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \bar{X} = 32 \text{ Years} \]
\[ \text{S.D.} = 6.34 \]
\[ \text{Min.} = 22 \]
\[ \text{Max.} = 54 \text{ Years} \]
Gender

Data in Table 4 show that two-thirds of the agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension were females (66%).

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Study Population (n=61)</th>
<th>State Comparison (n=302)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Race

As shown in Table 5, 90% of the former county agents were Caucasian with the remaining agents falling under the African American, Asian, and Hispanic categories.

Table 5
Race of County Agents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Study Population (n=61)</th>
<th>State Comparison (n=302)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Marital Status

Table 6 shows that 64% of the county agents were married at the time they voluntarily left OSU Extension.

Table 6
Marital Status of County Agents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Study Population (n=61)</th>
<th>State Comparison (n=287)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Involvement in Committed Relationship

As shown in Table 7, 79% of the county agents were involved in a committed relationship when they chose to leave OSU Extension.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committed Relationship</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Number of Children

Table 8 illustrates that 62% of the county agents had no children when they voluntarily left OSU Extension, while 38% had one or more children at the time of turnover.

Table 8
Number of Children of County Agents (n=61)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or more</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Educational Level

As shown in Table 9, more than half of the study population (57%) had a Master's degree when they voluntarily left OSU Extension.

Table 9

Educational Level of County Agents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Level</th>
<th>Study Population (n=61)</th>
<th>State Comparison (n=302)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's Degree</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Degree Area

Table 10 shows that 24% of the agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension had a degree in home economics, followed by agents with degrees in agricultural education, animal science, and general agriculture.

Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree Area</th>
<th>Study Population (n=61)</th>
<th>State Comparison (n=302)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Economics</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Education</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Science</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Agriculture</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agronomy/Hort.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Faculty vs. Non-faculty

Table 11 shows that 54% of the county agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension had non-faculty status. Agents with faculty status were hired as professional faculty members and were eligible for tenure. Non-faculty status indicates that the individuals had professional assistant (P.A.) positions within OSU Extension.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty Status</th>
<th>Study Population</th>
<th>State Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n=61)</td>
<td>(n=302)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-faculty</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tenure

As illustrated in Table 12, 98% of the county agents did not have tenure when they voluntarily left OSU Extension.

Table 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure</th>
<th>Study Population (n=61)</th>
<th>State Comparison (n=302)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-tenure</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Program Area

As shown in Table 13, 49% of the agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension held 4-H/youth positions.

Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Area</th>
<th>Study Population (n=61)</th>
<th>State Comparison (n=302)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H/Youth</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture/Natural Resources</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Economics</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Performance Rating

Three categories were used to analyze the performance ratings for the former county agents. Table 14 shows that 74% of the agents who chose to leave OSU Extension had received a performance rating of medium. The remaining percentages were equally divided between low and high performance ratings.

Table 14

Performance Rating (n=45)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Rating</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 45 100

Note. The missing data (n=16) exist due to some of the previous agents not being with the organization long enough to undergo a formal evaluation.
Multi vs. Single County

Table 15 shows that 74% of the former county agents worked in a single county position, compared to multi-county positions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Study Population (n=61)</th>
<th>State Comparison (n=302)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi County</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single County</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
District

Table 16 shows the distribution of the county agents among the five districts in Ohio. Nearly half (47%) of the agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension were from the Northeast and Northwest districts.

Table 16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Study Population (n=61)</th>
<th>State Comparison (n=302)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest District</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast District</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest District</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East District</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South District</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
County

Figure 10 shows the distribution of the former county agents among the 88 counties in Ohio.

Figure 10. County agents distribution across Ohio
Years in OSU Extension

Table 17 shows that 3.5 years was the average amount of time that the county agents worked in OSU Extension prior to leaving the organization. Over one-third left in less than two years.

Table 17

Years in OSU Extension Prior to Leaving (n=61)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years in OSU</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 61 100

\[ \bar{X} = 3.5 \text{ Years} \quad \text{Min.} = 2 \text{ Months} \]
\[ \text{S.D.} = 3.43 \text{ Years} \quad \text{Max.} = 17.9 \text{ Years} \]
\[ \text{Median} = 2.58 \text{ Years} \]
First Career Choice

Table 18 shows that 57% of the former county agents indicated that OSU Extension was their first career choice.

Table 18

First Career Choice (n=61)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Career Choice</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Length of Time Thought about Leaving to Actual Leaving

The data in Table 19 show that the average length of time the former county agents considered leaving was nine months with 68% of the subjects leaving the organization after six months or less of consideration.

Table 19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intention (Months)</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01 - 06</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07 - 12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 - 18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 - 24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 - 36</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 and over</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \bar{X} = 9 \text{ Months} \]
\[ \text{Min.} = 0 \]
\[ \text{S.D.} = 9.94 \]
\[ \text{Max.} = 48 \]
**Current Employment Status**

Table 20 illustrates that 92% of the county agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension are currently employed.

Table 20  
**Current Employment Status** (n=60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Number of Jobs After Leaving

As illustrated in Table 21, 70% of the former agents have held one job after leaving OSU Extension.

Table 21

Number of Jobs After Leaving (n=61)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Jobs</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Description of Current Job

Table 22 shows that 27% of the subjects are currently employed as teachers in the public schools, while 19% are working at non-county levels of Extension both inside and outside of Ohio.

Table 22
Description of Current Job (n=55)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Job</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private/Non Ag.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University/Gov't.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private/Agriculture</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>55</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The missing data (n=6) are those respondents who chose not to describe their current occupations. One of those six respondents does not currently hold a position.
Salary

Table 23 illustrates that 46% of the county agents' salaries were between $21,000 and $25,000 when they voluntarily left OSU Extension.

Table 23
Salary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary (Dollars)</th>
<th>Study Population</th>
<th>State Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n=61)</td>
<td>(n=264)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000 - 15,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16,000 - 20,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21,000 - 25,000</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26,000 - 30,000</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31,000 - 35,000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36,000 and over</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total

61  100
264 100

\[ \bar{X} = $24,790 \\
S.D. = $6,110 \\
Min. = $10,500 \\
Max. = $47,640 \]
The second objective of the study was to determine the percentage of county agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension due to organizational, individual work-related, and individual non-work related factors. Tables 24 to 26 provide the data related to the second objective of the study. The data in the tables are rank ordered according to the number and percentage of former county agents who selected the response category “Definitely does not describe a reason why I voluntarily left OSU Extension.”

**Organizational Factors**

As shown in Table 24, over 75% of the agents indicated that they did not leave the organization because of an early retirement package, a lack of in-service training opportunities, or an inadequate benefits package.

Insufficient pay for amount of work performed, too many work responsibilities, too many requirements for advancement, and a lack of recognition for a job well done were the organizational factors receiving the highest number of responses in the “Definitely” and “Great Extent” categories.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Factors</th>
<th>Definitely Does Not</th>
<th>Very Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Great Extent</th>
<th>Definitely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) An early retirement incentive package.</td>
<td>f: 59 97%</td>
<td>f: 2 3%</td>
<td>f: 0 0%</td>
<td>f: 0 0%</td>
<td>f: 0 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Lack of opportunities for in-service training.</td>
<td>f: 51 83%</td>
<td>f: 4 7%</td>
<td>f: 6 10%</td>
<td>f: 0 0%</td>
<td>f: 0 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) An inadequate benefits package.</td>
<td>f: 46 75%</td>
<td>f: 11 18%</td>
<td>f: 3 5%</td>
<td>f: 1 2%</td>
<td>f: 0 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Inadequate office space.</td>
<td>f: 44 72%</td>
<td>f: 8 13%</td>
<td>f: 6 10%</td>
<td>f: 2 3%</td>
<td>f: 1 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Repetitive work.</td>
<td>f: 40 66%</td>
<td>f: 15 24%</td>
<td>f: 5 8%</td>
<td>f: 1 2%</td>
<td>f: 0 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) A lack of up-to-date equipment.</td>
<td>f: 39 64%</td>
<td>f: 15 24%</td>
<td>f: 4 7%</td>
<td>f: 3 5%</td>
<td>f: 3 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Conflicts with my co-workers.</td>
<td>f: 37 61%</td>
<td>f: 8 13%</td>
<td>f: 8 13%</td>
<td>f: 3 5%</td>
<td>f: 5 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Conflicts with my supervisor.</td>
<td>f: 35 57%</td>
<td>f: 9 15%</td>
<td>f: 6 10%</td>
<td>f: 6 10%</td>
<td>f: 5 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Insufficient number of support staff.</td>
<td>f: 32 53%</td>
<td>f: 11 18%</td>
<td>f: 11 18%</td>
<td>f: 5 8%</td>
<td>f: 2 3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 24 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Factors</th>
<th>Definitely Does Not</th>
<th>Very Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Great Extent</th>
<th>Definitely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Lack of feedback regarding my performance.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) A lack of job security.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12) A lack of time for improving my professional skills.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13) A lack of time for improving my technical knowledge.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14) No opportunity for advancement.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15) Changing administrative policies.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16) Too many requirements for advancement</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17) Too many work responsibilities.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 24 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Factors</th>
<th>Definitely Does Not</th>
<th>Very Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Great Extent</th>
<th>Definitely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18) Lack of recognition for a job well done.</td>
<td>f 20</td>
<td>8 33</td>
<td>f 18</td>
<td>8 29</td>
<td>f 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19) Insufficient pay for the amount of work performed.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20) Other.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

83
Individual Work-Related Factors

As shown in Table 25, over 75% of the agents indicated that they did not leave the organization because they were under-qualified for their positions, their work was not interesting, they were not given enough responsibility, or their work was not challenging.

Other priorities in their lives, too many late night meetings, and the values of the organization and personal values being in conflict were the individual work-related factors receiving the highest number of responses in the "Definitely" and "Great Extent" categories.

Individual Non-Work Related Factors

As shown in Table 26, over 75% of the agents indicated that they did not leave the organization because of inadequate educational opportunities for themselves or for other members of their families.

Receiving another job offer, family obligations, not having enough time for developing and/or maintaining personal relationships, being attracted by more money elsewhere, and work conflicting with personal responsibilities were the individual non-work related factors receiving the highest number of responses in the "Definitely" and "Great Extent" categories.
Table 25

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Work-Related Factors</th>
<th>Definitely Does Not</th>
<th>Very Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Great Extent</th>
<th>Definitely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) I was under qualified for my position.</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) My work was not interesting.</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) I was not given enough responsibility.</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) My work was not challenging.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) My abilities did not match the requirements.</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) I was over qualified for my position.</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) I did not have opportunities to be creative.</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) My work lacked self-directing freedom.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 25 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Work-Related Factors</th>
<th>Definitely Does Not</th>
<th>Very Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Great Extent</th>
<th>Definitely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9) I was not involved in the decision-making process.</td>
<td>$f$ 33, $g$ 54</td>
<td>$f$ 14, $g$ 23</td>
<td>$f$ 7, $g$ 11</td>
<td>$f$ 4, $g$ 7</td>
<td>$f$ 3, $g$ 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) The values of the organization and my personal values were in conflict.</td>
<td>$f$ 33, $g$ 54</td>
<td>$f$ 9, $g$ 15</td>
<td>$f$ 7, $g$ 11</td>
<td>$f$ 3, $g$ 5</td>
<td>$f$ 9, $g$ 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) Overall, I was dissatisfied with my work.</td>
<td>$f$ 30, $g$ 49</td>
<td>$f$ 15, $g$ 25</td>
<td>$f$ 13, $g$ 21</td>
<td>$f$ 2, $g$ 3</td>
<td>$f$ 1, $g$ 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12) My responsibilities turned different than they actually were.</td>
<td>$f$ 28, $g$ 47</td>
<td>$f$ 11, $g$ 18</td>
<td>$f$ 11, $g$ 18</td>
<td>$f$ 6, $g$ 10</td>
<td>$f$ 4, $g$ 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13) Unclear job responsibilities.</td>
<td>$f$ 25, $g$ 41</td>
<td>$f$ 14, $g$ 23</td>
<td>$f$ 11, $g$ 18</td>
<td>$f$ 6, $g$ 10</td>
<td>$f$ 5, $g$ 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14) There were too many late night meetings.</td>
<td>$f$ 13, $g$ 21</td>
<td>$f$ 11, $g$ 18</td>
<td>$f$ 13, $g$ 21</td>
<td>$f$ 9, $g$ 15</td>
<td>$f$ 15, $g$ 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15) I have other priorities in my life.</td>
<td>$f$ 12, $g$ 20</td>
<td>$f$ 9, $g$ 15</td>
<td>$f$ 10, $g$ 16</td>
<td>$f$ 13, $g$ 21</td>
<td>$f$ 17, $g$ 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16) Other.</td>
<td>$f$ 0, $g$ 0</td>
<td>$f$ 0, $g$ 0</td>
<td>$f$ 1, $g$ 8</td>
<td>$f$ 2, $g$ 17</td>
<td>$f$ 9, $g$ 75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 26

Individual Non-Work Related Factors Related to Voluntary Turnover in CSU Extension (n=61)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Non-Work Related Factors</th>
<th>Definitely Does Not</th>
<th>Very Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Great Extent</th>
<th>Definitely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Inadequate educational opportunities for other members of my family.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Inadequate educational opportunities for myself.</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Another person’s career move.</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) I wanted to continue my education.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) I was dissatisfied with the location of my work.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) I decided that this kind of work was not for me.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) I was attracted by more money elsewhere.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 26 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Non-Work related Factors</th>
<th>Definitely Does Not</th>
<th>Very Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Great Extent</th>
<th>Definitely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8) Work conflicted with personal responsibilities.</td>
<td>f 24 39</td>
<td>f 14 23</td>
<td>f 6 10</td>
<td>f 5 8</td>
<td>f 12 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Family obligations.</td>
<td>23 38</td>
<td>4 6</td>
<td>9 15</td>
<td>10 16</td>
<td>15 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) I did not have enough time for developing and/or maintaining personal relationships.</td>
<td>22 36</td>
<td>9 15</td>
<td>14 23</td>
<td>11 18</td>
<td>5 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) I received another job offer.</td>
<td>22 36</td>
<td>4 6</td>
<td>8 13</td>
<td>4 7</td>
<td>23 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12) Other.</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>1 9</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>10 91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Responses To The Open-Ended Question

"Although we realize that people voluntarily leave their jobs for many reasons, what is the main reason why you left OSU Extension?" (n=57)

The most common reason (23%) given by the former county agents for voluntarily leaving OSU Extension was a desire for a career change or for another job offer. The agents commented that they found jobs more suited to their interests, goals, and needs. Some former agents wanted to return to their first career choice, to specialize in another area, or they desired better county and state support.

Eleven percent of the respondents stated that excessive time and job requirements were their main reason for leaving the organization. Their comments included: a) "I was not happy with the amount of evening and weekend hours required by my job," b) "I wanted to work more in my field of training in a job that required less evening/weekend/summer hours," c) "Night meetings and time committed to the job makes it very hard to have a happy marriage. If you could make sure you had evenings at home, it could be a great job," d) "Time needed to do a good job linked with time to drive the distance to get to work
allowed me little or no time for family and friends,” and e) “Too many hours of work.”

Family responsibilities followed as the next most popular reason for leaving OSU Extension (16%). “My priority during my child’s surgeries was to be with my child. This was not apparently acceptable to my district supervisor,” said one respondent. Other agents stated that they had conflicts with family obligations, they wanted to start a family, or they needed more time to take care of their family.

Money was the next most frequently found reason (14%) for leaving OSU Extension. The former agents left the organization for more pay, to receive a higher salary more commensurate with experience and abilities, and because of salary inequalities.

Conflict with co-workers or lack of organizational support was the next common reason for leaving OSU Extension. Twelve percent of the respondents gave this reason. Some of the former agents perceived receiving no support from their supervisor or receiving “hovering supervision.” One former agent commented receiving “no support from my county chair for program area changes that needed to occur and very limited support from the district director.”
Personal relationships make up the next most popular reason (9%) for leaving OSU Extension. Some of the former agents wanted to move near their family or left the organization to get married.

The remaining reasons (7%) were varied and included issues like personal illness, lack of challenge, and lack of job security. A complete listing of the responses can be found in Appendix E.

Responses to the Open-Ended Comment Statement

Please use this space to provide any additional comments about why you left OSU Extension. (n=45)

The most common trend of the former agents' responses was to discuss the excessive time and job requirements (24%) required by county agent positions. "My time was not my own due to too many night meetings," stated one former agent. "Being an agent was a very demanding job. I never want to have to work that hard again. We were trying to do too much," said another. "Although the number of late night meetings did not influence my leaving, I will agree that Extension takes a great deal of time with very little reward," stated a former agent. Another agent said that "my program involved too much time and responsibility. Some community meetings would last until 8:00 p.m. and would sometimes extend as late as 11:00 p.m. These meetings,
which occurred as often as three times a week, would take place after a full day of work, beginning at 8:00 a.m."

Family responsibilities was the next most popular trend in additional comments provided by the former agents. Twenty-three percent of the respondents gave examples of situations where family responsibilities contributed to their voluntary leaving OSU Extension. "I left OSU Extension because I found it hard to balance my work and family so that I was doing everything needed in both areas," stated one former agent. "My spouse's position is nearer to both our families," said another. "My spouse and I were in a commuter marriage almost the entire time I was in my original Extension job. [Leaving my county position] meant a chance to "live under the same roof" again—a plus for most marriages!"

Changing/unclear policies and politics (20%) were the next most commonly cited response. "With changes in programming issues the organization's "local leadership" did not support changes that were going to have to occur. The organization did not "walk its talk," stated one former agent. Another respondent said, "There seemed to be some repetition of services provided and the goals and directions of the group were always changing and didn't necessarily meet the needs of the individuals, counties, and
"I was becoming aware of ethical corruption at the local level as well as at the top administrative level and wanted no part of it," said another former agent. "There is a big gap between what really happens in the county and what district and state leaders think they know about what is happening in counties," stated a respondent.

Money was the next most frequently mentioned reason (14%) for why the former agents left OSU Extension. "Insufficient pay for the amount of work performed and for working and living in a big city," stated one respondent. Another former agent, said that "the time commitment was far too great for the salary." "As an 'Associate' Agent, I had TOTAL responsibility for the program, but was paid 'Associate' wages for doing an 'Agent's' job. My supervisors agreed with all this, but had their hands tied financially," said a respondent. "I received a salary increase of 25% after leaving OSU Extension," said another respondent.

Conflict with values was the next most commonly mentioned category. Twelve percent of the respondents listed this reason as a contributory factor to them leaving. "I felt some conflict between the values of the organization and my personal values in the area of to what degree are lives are self determined and education can make us 'good',"
stated a respondent. Another agent stated that "though not a reason for my leaving, there was some resentment/resistance to my position by local development officials." "[I was] disillusioned by the persuasive acceptance of the status quo and lack of motivation," stated another former agent.

The remaining comments (78) dealt with various issues. "I believe that Extension, is a super organization," stated one respondent. "This was the greatest job! I hope to work for the Extension Service again when I do not have small children at home," stated another. "I needed to extend the time allotted for tenure. "Extension was a wonderful job, but I was compared to single professionals who were married to their careers," stated another. The full listing of responses to this open-ended question can be found in Appendix F.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is organized in the following manner: a) problem statement, b) purpose and objectives of the study, c) methodology, d) summary of findings, and d) conclusions and recommendations.

Problem Statement

Turnover refers to the voluntary termination of participation in employment for an organization, excluding retirement or pressured voluntary withdrawal, by an individual who received monetary compensation from the organization (Rossano, 1985).

The voluntary turnover of county Extension agents in Ohio has resulted in some positions remaining unfilled due to reduced budgets and a lack of qualified personnel. When an attempt is made to replace the agents, managerial time is needed to recruit, screen, select, classify, and train the new agents. When a valued employee is replaced, the costs associated with finding a replacement are even greater (Cascio, 1978).

Between January 1, 1990 and December 31, 1994, 67 county agents voluntarily left OSU Extension; turnover rates
have averaged 5% annually for the past five years. This study was designed to investigate the reasons for county agent turnover and how these reasons might be classified according to three categories of determinants: a) organizational, b) individual work-related factors, and c) individual non-work related factors.

**Purpose and Research Objectives**

The purpose of this study was to determine the reasons why county agents voluntarily left OSU Extension. The following objectives were developed to guide the study:

1. describe county agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension between January 1, 1990 and December 31, 1994 on the following characteristics at the time of turnover: a) age, b) gender, c) race, d) marital status, e) involvement in a committed relationship, f) number of children, g) educational level, h) degree area, i) faculty vs. non-faculty status, j) tenure vs. non-tenure, k) performance rating, l) multi vs. single county, m) district county, n) years in OSU Extension, o) first career choice, p) intention/length of time thought about leaving to actual leaving, q) number of jobs after leaving, r) current employment status, s) description of current job, and t) salary.
2. determine the percentage of county agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension between January 1, 1990 and December 31, 1994 due to organizational, individual work-related, and individual non-work related factors.

The organizational factors investigated in the study were: a) no opportunity for advancement, b) too much work, c) task repetitiveness, d) inadequate office space, e) low pay, f) inadequate benefits package, g) conflict with co-workers, h) lack of recognition for a job well done, i) too many requirements for advancement, j) lack of job security, and k) changing administrative policies.

The individual work-related factors addressed in the study were: a) uninteresting work, b) lack of job autonomy, c) job did not match expectations, d) no opportunities to be creative, e) involvement in the decision-making process, f) abilities did not match the job requirements, g) too many late meetings, h) conflict with values, i) other priorities in life, and j) not qualified for the job.

The individual non-work related factors addressed in the study were: a) conflicts with other responsibilities, b) interpersonal relationships taking precedence over work, c) attracted to money elsewhere, d) other job alternatives, e)
another person's career move, and f) educational opportunities.

Methodology

A descriptive design was used in this study. The population of the study consisted of all OSU Extension county agents who voluntarily left the organization between January 1, 1990 and December 31, 1994. Sixty-seven agents made up the total population of this census study.

The research instrument was a mail questionnaire that consisted of four sections. The first three sections focused on organizational, individual work-related, and individual non-work related factors. Part I of the instrument dealt with organizational factors. Twenty statements were designed to collect data representing organizational reasons why the agents left OSU Extension. Part II of the instrument focused on individual work-related factors. Sixteen statements comprised this portion of the instrument to identify work-related factors that might have been instrumental in the voluntary turnover of the county agents. Part III was composed of 12 statements to identify the personal or non-work related reasons why agents left the organization. Part IV consisted of six questions designed to collect data on the personal and work
characteristics of the agents when they were employed by OSU Extension.

Each of the items in the three sections were rated on a scale from one to five. If the former agent circled the number 1, then he/she was indicating that the statement definitely did not describe a reason why he/she left OSU Extension. On the other end of the scale, a rating of five indicated that the statement definitely described a reason why the respondent left OSU Extension.

The final section of the instrument gave the former agents an opportunity to list the main reason they left OSU Extension. Space was also provided for agents to write additional comments on reasons why they left OSU Extension.

Content validity of the instrument was established by a panel of experts. The following points were examined by the panelists: item content and clarity, wording, length of the instrument, format, and overall appearance. In addition, the instrument was field tested by seven Extension agents who were presently working in OSU Extension.

For reliability purposes, the instrument was pilot tested by surveying agents currently employed by OSU Extension who had left another organization prior to coming to OSU Extension (n=18). Test re-test procedures were used
to determine the reliability for Parts I, II, and III of the instrument. When perfect matches were considered, the percent agreement for the two administrations of the pilot instrument had an overall average of 74%. When matches within one number were considered, the percent agreement for the two administrations of the pilot instrument averaged 94%.

Some data were collected from the personnel files of OSU Extension, rather than from respondents, in an attempt to reduce measurement error. This second instrument was a data gathering form. The instrument collected data on selected personal and professional characteristics available in the personnel files. The data gathering form consisted of two sections. The first section identified personal characteristics of the previous agents: marital status, date of birth, educational level, degree area, race, and gender. The second section dealt with professional characteristics of the former agents and included: performance rating, tenure standing, multi vs. single county assignment, program area, educational level, number of years in OSU Extension, county/district, and salary.

Data were collected by mail questionnaire and personnel records. To confirm the correct addresses of the
participants, a postcard was sent to the 67 former agents on
December 31, 1994. The questionnaire packet was mailed to
all subjects on January 6, 1995. The final deadline for
data collection was on February 9, 1995. Sixty-one of the
total 67 questionnaires were returned (91%). The six non-
respondents were compared with the respondents on selected
demographic characteristics (i.e., age, salary, and years in
OSU Extension). No statistically significant differences
were found between respondents and non-respondents.

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data
including means, medians, standard deviations, percentages,
and frequencies. Data were analyzed using the Statistical
Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS/Windows 6.1) computer
program obtained from The Ohio State University.

Percentages and frequencies were used for nominal data
to describe and summarize the demographic characteristics of
the Extension agents who voluntarily left the organization.
Interval data were analyzed using means and standard
deviations to describe Extension agents on personal
characteristics.

For the second objective of the study, percentages and
frequencies were used to determine the percentage of county
agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension due to
organizational, individual work-related, and individual non-
work related factors.

**Summary of Findings**

Objective 1: To describe county agents who voluntarily
left OSU Extension on personal and professional
characteristics.

The mean age of the county agents was 32 years at the
time of turnover with 66% being female and 90% Caucasian.
Sixty-four percent of the previous agents were married when
they left OSU Extension. Seventy-nine percent were involved
in a committed relationship and 38% had children at the time
of turnover. Fifty-seven percent of the former county
agents possessed a Master’s degree, with 24% majoring in
Home Economics. Fifty-four percent of the subjects had non-
faculty status and 98% did not have tenure at the time of
turnover. Almost half (49%) of the agents were in the
program area of 4-H/Youth when they left the organization.

Seventy-four percent of the former agents had received
medium performance ratings. The Northwest (24%) and
Northeast (23%) districts made up almost half of the
voluntary agent turnover for the study. The average number
of years the former agents had worked in OSU Extension was
three and a half years. Fifty-seven percent of the subjects
said that OSU Extension was their first career choice and 74% of the former agents had worked in a single county position. Nine months was the average amount of time the former agents thought about leaving the organization before actually doing so. Seventy percent of the subjects have only had one job since leaving OSU Extension and 92% are currently employed. The types of jobs the former agents currently hold vary, with 27% as teachers in the public schools. The average salary of the former agents when they worked for OSU Extension was $24,790.

Objective 2: To determine the percentage of county agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension due to organizational, individual work-related, and individual non-work related factors.

The organizational factors that received the highest number of responses in the "Definitely" and "Great Extent" categories, as reasons why agents left the organization, included insufficient pay for the amount of work performed, too many work responsibilities, too many requirements for advancement, and a lack of recognition for a job well done.

The organizational factors ranked "Definitely does not describe a reason why they voluntarily left OSU Extension"
included an early retirement package, a lack of in-service training opportunities, and an inadequate benefits package.

Individual work-related factors that received the highest number of responses in the “Definitely” and “Great Extent” categories included other priorities in life, too many late night meetings, and the values of the organization and personal values being in conflict.

Being under-qualified for the position, uninteresting work, not enough responsibility, and unchallenging work were among the most frequently rated categories in the “Definitely does not describe a reason why they voluntarily left OSU Extension.”

The individual non-work related factors that received the highest number of responses in the “Definitely” and “Great Extent” categories included receiving another job offer, family obligations, being attracted to more money elsewhere, work conflicting with personal responsibilities, and not having enough time for developing and/or maintaining personal relationships.

In the “Definitely does not describe a reason why they voluntarily left OSU Extension” response selection, the most selected responses were inadequate educational opportunities for the agents or other members of their families.
The responses to the open-ended question "What is the main reason why you left OSU Extension?" included all three factors of voluntary turnover addressed in this study. The most common reason stated for leaving the organization was due to a career change or another job offer which is an individual non-work related factor. Excessive time and job requirements (including evening and weekend obligations) was the second most commonly stated reason, which is individual work-related in nature. Family responsibilities, an individual non-work related factor, followed as the next most frequently cited reason for turnover. Lack of a competitive salary, an organizational factor, was also cited as a reason for leaving the organization.

Additional comments about why agents left OSU Extension also illustrated that all three of the factors of voluntary turnover were instrumental in the former agents' decisions to leave OSU Extension. Excessive time and job requirements, individual work-related factors, were the most common reasons for leaving the organization, followed by family responsibilities, a non-work related factor, and changing/unclear policies and politics, which is an organizational factor. Money, an organizational factor, was the next most commonly shared comment.
Conclusions/Implications

Based upon the findings of the study, the researcher concludes that agents who voluntarily leave OSU Extension are most likely to be Caucasian females, in their early thirties holding a Master's degree who are married with no children. Agents who voluntarily leave the organization are also more likely to be in a non-tenure track position in a single county working in the 4-H program area. Upon leaving the organization, former agents are likely to obtain a public school teaching position.

The findings of the study are concurrent with the information found in the turnover literature. Pay is addressed in the literature as an organizational factor related to job turnover. Mobley (1982) indicated a direct relationship between pay levels and turnover rates. In this study, low pay was found to be a reason that the former agents left their positions in OSU Extension. Gavin (1990) also cited low pay and decreased benefits as leading contributors to personnel loss. Many agents indicated that by leaving OSU Extension, they were able to make more money and work less hours. The individual work-related factors of excessive time requirements and late meetings were found to be key reasons why the former agents left their former
positions. Balfour and Neff (1993) indicated that overtime hours were one of the key variables contributing to voluntary turnover. Family responsibilities, an individual non-work related factor, has been discussed in the literature on turnover. Muchinsky and Tuttle (1979) found a positive relationship between family responsibility and turnover. Turnover associated with family duties is also dictated by whether or not the employee is the primary wage earner in the family. The findings of this study show that former agents repeatedly gave family obligations and responsibilities as major reasons for leaving OSU Extension.

Demographic characteristics associated with voluntary turnover have been addressed in the literature (Mobley et. al, 1979; Muchinsky & Tuttle, 1979; Porter & Steers; 1973; Price, 1977) indicating that younger employees are more likely to leave their jobs and younger employees may have more entry-level job opportunities and fewer family responsibilities which would make their job mobility easier. In this study, the majority of the former agents who voluntarily left the organization were less than thirty years of age.

Based upon the results of this study, the researcher concludes that county agents are most likely to leave OSU
Extension because of other priorities in their lives, another job offer, insufficient pay for the amount of work performed, family obligations, too many late night meetings, too many work responsibilities, attracted to more money elsewhere, conflicts with personal responsibilities, no time for personal relationships, too many requirements for advancement, conflict with values, and lack of recognition for a job well done.

Figure 11 is a modified version of Mobley's model of the causes of turnover based upon the findings of the study. As illustrated in the model, OSU extension agents are voluntarily leaving the organization due to a variety of organizational, individual work, and individual non-work related factors.
Figure 11. A model of voluntarily turnover of OSU Extension agents.
The following recommendations are based upon the findings and conclusions of the study:

1. OSU Extension administrators at the state, district, and local levels should attempt to reduce the workload and time requirements of county agents. Excessive night and weekend meetings were commonly cited as a reason for voluntary turnover among the former county agents. The amount of required meetings should be reduced and additional compensation and/or additional staff positions should be provided. If Extension administration recognized and addressed concerns of excessive work loads the agents would feel less frustrated and less likely to voluntarily leave OSU Extension.

2. OSU Extension administrators should attempt to address issues dealing with pay. The findings of this study and the literature show that lack of a competitive salary is a reason for voluntary turnover. The former agents consistently indicated that private industry pays higher salaries for similar positions. Salaries should be adjusted to compensate the agents for the amount of work performed and should be
comparable to positions in the public and private sectors.

3. Organizational policies need to remain consistent within OSU Extension. Responses often reflected concern that the organization was not "walking its talk." The organization should focus on its mission and goals and if they are not feasible within the economic and human resources of the organization, then the mission and goals should be changed to meet a more realistic focus for OSU Extension.

Recommendations for Further Study

1. OSU Extension administration should identify the needs and concerns of current Extension agents in all program areas, especially 4-H/Youth. They should address the factors discussed in this study, such as excessive work requirements and low pay. When these concerns have been identified, the organization will be able to address issues that could be possible factors in future voluntary turnover. OSU Extension can then make plans for improvement.

2. OSU Extension administration should support or conduct a similar voluntary turnover study to include all levels of Extension positions and staff. Such a
study would enable OSU Extension administration to have a clearer vision of voluntary turnover within the entire organization, not only the county level. If they view turnover within the whole of the OSU Extension organization, then a consistent means of addressing voluntary turnover can be created.

3. OSU Extension administration should support or conduct a study of all OSU Extension personnel who left the organization within the last five years, either voluntarily or involuntarily, comparing the two types of turnover on personal and professional characteristics. The findings of this study will provide a clear picture of the professional and personal characteristics of individuals who leave the organization by choice and the individuals who are asked to leave.

4. OSU Extension should conduct a study to determine what is the acceptable annual turnover rate for OSU Extension and determine the actual cost of turnover per agent. This study will help OSU Extension to determine where the organization stands in terms of turnover and identify the costs of replacing a county agent.
5. OSU Extension should conduct a comparison study with an Extension organization of comparable size and mission. This study will give the organization a benchmark as well as an awareness of norms within Extension organizations.
APPENDIX A

Research Instrument
AGENT TURNOVER IN OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

The following statements are possible reasons why individuals leave Ohio State University Extension organization. Please read each statement carefully and indicate whether the statement is a reason why you left OSU Extension. Use the following scale to mark your responses:

If the statement DEFINITELY DOSE NOT describe why you left OSU Extension, please circle 1.

If the statement describes VERY LITTLE why you left OSU Extension, please circle 2.

If the statement SOMewhat describes why you left OSU Extension, please circle 3.

If the statement TO A GREAT EXTENT describes why you left OSU Extension, please circle 4.

If the statement DEFINITELY describes why you left OSU Extension, please circle 5.

Example:                      DDN    VL    S     GE     D
I was bored with my work.     1      2     3     4     5

The respondent identified this statement as a definite reason why he or she left OSU Extension.
Part I. ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS

I left OSU Extension because of:

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<td>no opportunity for advancement.</td>
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<td>too many work responsibilities.</td>
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<td>repetitive work.</td>
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<td>inadequate office space.</td>
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<td>insufficient number of support staff.</td>
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<td>a lack of up-to-date equipment.</td>
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<td>insufficient pay for the amount of work performed.</td>
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<td>too many requirements for advancement.</td>
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<td>lack of recognition for a job well done.</td>
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<td>an inadequate benefits package.</td>
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<td>a lack of job security.</td>
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<td>lack of opportunities for in-service training.</td>
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<td>conflicts with my supervisor.</td>
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<td>lack of feedback regarding my performance.</td>
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<td>a lack of time for improving my technical knowledge.</td>
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<td>changing administrative policies.</td>
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<td>an early retirement incentive package.</td>
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<td>conflicts with my co-workers.</td>
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<td>a lack of time for improving my professional skills.</td>
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<td>other, (please list)</td>
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## Part II. INDIVIDUAL WORK-RELATED FACTORS

I left OSU Extension because:

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Part III. INDIVIDUAL NON-WORK RELATED FACTORS

I left OSU Extension because:

1) of inadequate educational opportunities for myself.  
   1  2  3  4  5
2) of family obligations.  
   1  2  3  4  5
3) of another person’s career move.  
   1  2  3  4  5
4) of inadequate educational opportunities for other members of my family.  
   1  2  3  4  5
5) my work conflicted with my personal responsibilities.  
   1  2  3  4  5
6) I was dissatisfied with the location of my work.  1  2  3  4  5
7) I did not have enough time for developing and/or maintaining personal relationships.  
   1  2  3  4  5
8) I received another job offer.  
   1  2  3  4  5
9) I decided that this kind of work was not for me.  1  2  3  4  5
10) I was attracted by more money elsewhere.  1  2  3  4  5
11) I wanted to continue my education.  1  2  3  4  5
12) other (please list)  

Part IV. PERSONAL AND WORK CHARACTERISTICS

1) When you left OSU Extension were you involved in a committed relationship?
   (Circle one number) 1  No
   2  Yes

2) When you left OSU Extension, how many children did you have?
   (Circle one number) 0
   1
   2
   3
3) Was Extension your first career choice?

(Circle one number) 1 No

2 Yes

4) Approximately how long had you thought about leaving OSU Extension before you actually left the organization? ______________________________

5) Since leaving OSU Extension, how many other jobs have you held?

______________________________

6) Are you currently employed?

1 No

2 Yes If yes, go to question number 7.

7) a. Where do you work?

______________________________

7) b. What is your job title?

______________________________

Please use this space to provide any additional comments about why you left OSU Extension. ________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
Please return the completed questionnaire by Friday, January 20, 1989 in the enclosed, self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Thank you for your valuable time and assistance.

Laith Rousan, Graduate Student
Ag. Education Dept.
209 Ag. Admin. Bldg.
Columbus, OH 43210
APPENDIX B

PANEL OF EXPERTS
LIST OF
PANEL OF EXPERTS

Dr. Nikki L. Conklin  Leader, Program Development, Ohio State University Extension
                      Agriculture Admin. Building
                      2120 Fyffe Rd.
                      Columbus, Ohio 43210

Dr. Janet L. Henderson  Associate Professor, Department of Agricultural Education
                        Agriculture Admin. Building
                        2120 Fyffe Rd.
                        Columbus, Ohio 43210

Dr. Jo M. Jones  Associate Director, Ohio State University Extension
                   Agriculture Admin. Building
                   2120 Fyffe Rd.
                   Columbus, Ohio 43210

Dr. Keith Smith  Director, Ohio State University Extension
                   Agriculture Admin. Building
                   2120 Fyffe Rd.
                   Columbus, Ohio 43210

Dr. John Stitzlein  Leader, Personnel, Ohio State University Extension
                    Agriculture Admin. building
                    2120 Fyffe Rd.
                    Columbus, Ohio 43210
*This letter was sent to each member of the panel of experts

Nov. 3, 1994

Dr. Keith L. Smith
Director Of OSU Extension

Dear Dr. Smith:

Attached you will find the questionnaire that I have developed for my dissertation research. I am asking for your help at this time to review the questionnaire for content validity.

The purpose of my study is to determine the reasons why county agents voluntarily leave the OSU Extension. The results from the questionnaire will enable me to focus on three major factors affecting voluntary turnover: organizational factors, individual work-related factors, and individual non-work related factors. The population of the study includes all county agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension between January 1, 1989 and December 31, 1994 (n = 67).

I would like for you to review the questionnaire and then respond to the questions on the comment form. The form addresses the following aspects of the questionnaire: a) item content and clarity, b) wording, c) length of the instrument, and d) format and overall instrument appearance. Please feel free to write on the attached questionnaire.

Please return the comment form and the questionnaire through campus mail to my mail pouch in Rm 209 by Tuesday, Nov. 15. Thank you for your help and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Laith Rousan, Graduate Student
Dept. of Agricultural Education
COMMENT FORM

1. Given the purpose of my study, do you think the questions will gather the appropriate information that I need?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

2. Is the wording clear and easy to understand?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

3. Are the directions easy to follow? ________________

________________________________________________________________________

4. Does the questionnaire appear to be attractive and neat?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

5. Is the instrument too long to be filled out in one setting? ________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Other comments: ________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX C

Data Gathering Form
Data gathered from the record:

I) Personal characteristics:  

   a) Marital status at time of turnover: 1)single 2)married  
   b) Age: (birth date) years ----  
   c) Educational level: 1)B.S. 2) M.S.  
   d) Degree area:  
   e) Gender: 1) female 2) male  
   f) Race: 1) White 2) Black 3) Asian 4) Hispanic 5) Other  

II) Work or professional characteristics:  

   a) Performance rating: 1) high 2) low  
   b) Tenure 1) tenure 2) non-tenure  
   c) Multi vs. single county: 1) multi 2) single  
   d) Program area: 1) Ag. 2) 4H. 3) Home eco. 4) com.dev.  
   e) Years in OSU Extension: how many years? ________  
   f) District/county: which county and which district?  
      ________________________________  
   g) Salary: how much? ________
APPENDIX D

COVER LETTER FOR THE FIRST MAILING OF QUESTIONNAIRE

COVER LETTER FOR THE SECOND MAILING OF QUESTIONNAIRE
January 6, 1995

Dear Friend,

We are asking your help at this time as we are conducting a study on the reasons why Extension agents voluntarily leave OSU Extension. You are one of 67 agents who voluntarily left OSU Extension since January 1, 1990. This research study is designed to allow OSU Extension to determine which factors affect voluntary turnover, including organizational, individual work-related and individual non-work related factors.

The enclosed questionnaire is divided into four short sections and should take less than 15 minutes to complete. We realize that your time is of value, but the findings of this study are very critical. The last section of the questionnaire provides an opportunity for you to respond freely, giving any additional comments that you feel are of importance.

Your responses will be held in strict confidence. You may notice a code number on the back of the questionnaire. This code number is used for follow up purposes only. Please answer as candidly as possible. Your responses are vital to the study.

We thank you in advance for your honest responses. We appreciate your promptness in completing and returning the survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope by January 20, 1995. If you have questions while completing the questionnaire, feel free to call me at (614) 261-7707. You may also receive a summary of the study results by writing "copy of results requested" on the back of the questionnaire.

Thank you again for your time and assistance. Please feel free to use the enclosed pen to complete the questionnaire while enjoying a cup of coffee.

Sincerely,

Dr. Janet L. Henderson
Associate Professor

Laith Rousan
Graduate Student
Dear Friend,

Two weeks have passed since you were sent a questionnaire and were asked to complete it. As of today, we have not yet received your survey.

We are concerned that your questionnaire may have gotten lost in the mail, misplaced, or even discarded by mistake. Because of our concern, we have enclosed an additional copy of the survey for you to complete.

Please rest assured that your responses are completely confidential. The code number listed on the back of the survey is used for follow-up purposes only.

We would appreciate your prompt response by completing and returning the questionnaire in the enclosed stamped, self-addressed envelope. Should you have any question, please feel free to contact Laith Rousan at (614) 261-7707. Also, if you desire the results of this study, please write “Results Requested” on the back of your survey.

Thank you for your immediate attention.

Sincerely,

Laith Rousan,
Graduate Student
APPENDIX E

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION

"WHAT IS THE MAIN REASON WHY YOU LEFT OSU EXTENSION"
Although we realize that people voluntarily leave their jobs for many reasons, what is the main reason why you left OSU Extension?

My priority, during my child’s surgeries, was to be with my child. This was not apparently acceptable to my district supervisor.

I was not happy with the amount of evening and weekend hours required by my job. I did not enjoy working with “XX XX”

I had a choice-- my job or my family. Family won hands down.

The number of hours required to fulfill the job requirements and feeling overwhelmed with the number of duties required.

Career Advancement - A better opportunity with a major utility company for significantly more money.

More pay.

An incompetent secretary, non supportive administration.

First- job advancement. Second- lack of support by supervisors, and Finally- money.

Conflict with family obligations and put-downs from district staff (direct and indirect).

Not much support from supervisor in dealing with a very power-hungry, autocratic co-worker, who was not my boss.

When I started at OSU, I soon after found out I was pregnant. I was very sick during my pregnancy. The distance of my work from home and the uncertainty of my health at that time were the reasons I left.

To be married within six months of leaving, and my fiancé' had two family businesses already established.

I left to work for myself.
To marry someone who was employed and owned a home in West Virginia.

Vague (to me) job description; unclear as to how to prioritize programs, prioritize needs, prioritize my time.

When I was hired, it was mentioned that our agent was thinking about retirement and I could move into the job if I got my Master's Degree. I found out this total expense was mine and then it was decided that the position after the agent retired would be part-time. I left for full-time employment, and more time with my family.

Inability to balance the demands of the job (quantity and high profile in community) with family needs.

Dissatisfied with working in three counties.

To start a family.

I wanted to work more in my field of training in a job that required less evening/weekend/summer hours and allowed me to work part-time.

Funding for my position was ending.

1) A job more suited to my interests, goals and needs. 2) A belief that EXTENSION is heading a different direction than I was interested in working with.

Night meetings and time committed to job makes it very hard to have a happy marriage. If you could make sure you had evenings at home, it could be a great job.

I was very frustrated by the dichotomy of the realities of the county Extension agent position (e.g. serving the needs of the local clientele) and the unrelated (for the most part) expectations and requirements of the university promotion and tenure system (e.g., research and publication). It just becomes a political game--in many cases, agents fabricate irrelevant "research" to survive in the system while local clientele go without service OR, more likely, the agent stretches him/her to the point of breakdown to perform his/her real practitioner position AND satisfy the irrelevant and archaic university requirements.
Another frustrating dichotomy was the theoretical goal of needs-driven programming and the reality of fund-driven goals.

No ranking order: 1) Spouse needed public school teaching position. 2) Salary inequalities. 3) Able to specialize in just livestock in "XX". 4) Better county and state support in "XX".

Another job offer that provided more money and opportunities for career advancement.

For more pay and less hovering supervision.

The "XX" Associate was promoted to Agent and given a $6,000 a year raise. I was not. The "XX" folks lobbied well to receive wages approaching what they could earn in industry. Youth workers are notoriously underpaid, so we don't have that as a bargaining chip.

As a 4-H? (Whatever the title) there are a great number of clients that expect more than any one person can give.

Desire to return to first career choice.

1) Poor pay. 2) Conflict with office supervisor. 3) Too many hours of work. 4) Too many people to please. Too many bosses. Conflicting job descriptions.

I wanted to move back to "XX" to be near my family. Also, my "committed relationship" was there, as well.

No support from county chair for program area and changes that needed to occur (very limited support from district director ) because of this stress generated from work related issues was more than tolerable. (Let me make it clear that District Specialist and State Staff were very supportive.

I already had my Master's and was "locked in" at an associate agent's salary with no chance of improvement.

Career move based on better job with more diversity.
Time needed to do a good job linked with time to drive the distance to get to work allowed me little or no time for family and friends.

Offered grad assistant position in order to work on MS in "XX" at "XX".

Too much time required on the job. No free time to spend with my family.

#1 - New job/career opportunity. #2 - Great time demands on evenings and weekends.

As an Extension agent, I was only 1/2 time. I also was farming full time. There was not enough time to do both jobs adequately.

Job offer.

Stress due to part-time grad school, death of "XX" and added work responsibilities.

My spouse received a teaching position.

The dismantling by my supervisor of "XX" practice that I coordinated for "XX" years (which had widespread support among farmers) to be replaced by volunteer "XX" BY THE FARMERS WHO DID NOT HAVE TIME TO DO THIS AND DID NOT SUPPORT IT. Extension Administration also tried to change my specialization from "XX", in which I am highly trained to "XX" which I have very little training and NO formal course work.

Family bought country elevator.

I needed more time to take care of my family.

Conflict with P.A. No support from supervisor in office.

To pursue mission work in the church in "XX" -- a calling God had given me.

Higher salary more commensurate with my experience and abilities. Greater opportunity for professional advancement within Economic Developmental field.
Family and personal reasons.

Spouse didn’t have job opportunities in county we were living in.

My spouse was transferred to another area.

I was attracted more to a teaching job. It provided a more focused career opportunity than did my 4-H responsibilities.

New job – work less hours. (no night meetings). Get summers off, more time with family, new job, and more money. Spouse got a job out-of-state. Moved closer to extended family.

Too many hours required to do the job properly.

Lack of challenge & clear view of future (both mine and OSU’s)

Lack of job security and raises due to uncertain funding and my opinion that Extension was headed in the wrong direction.
Please use this space to provide any additional comments about why you left OSU Extension

I left OSU Extension because I found it hard to balance my work and family so that I was doing everything needed in both areas. I enjoyed working as a "XX" agent, but found it very demanding.

OSU Extension is a great organization if you are into career politics and programming that the higher-ups think is needed state wide. I enjoyed my time with the university but would challenge state staff to get out and see what really needs to be done in the Ag. Community. In the Ag arena, I would also challenge the interviewers to hire people with some production experience and know how rather than professional grad students-- Those with some production experience will be more effective. Guaranteed.

My work in my specialty of "XX" was widely recognized and greatly appreciated by local clientele and OSU Extension "XX", but NOT by the administration. When the "XX" Service was arbitrarily discontinued, Extension let down the many farmers of our county who consistently supported this program. Many farmers were very upset by it, as was reflected in subsequent policy statements by the county's farm bureau. As for me, the time had come for me to seek employment elsewhere in my chosen field of "XX"

My spouse's position is nearer to both our families, and I wanted to complete my graduate work so I could better devote my time in Extension.

Secondary reason - my time was not my own due to too many night meetings.

Only mechanism for advancement was to seek faculty status which would limit my desire to perform as a local practitioner (New 2 track system appears to be an improvement). Pay scale for Economic Development Director not comparable with other public and private sector equivalent jobs. Extension struggles in providing "lead" role in local economic development. (Perhaps better at
providing ancillary or support role) Education mission not always applicable to local economic development objectives.

In my new position as Extension "XX", I find bigger, heavier responsibilities, but far less evenings and a comparable amount of weekends and much more recognition.

OSU Extension is too worried about "faculty status" of county agents and related promotion tenure activity. Clientele expect their county agent to be in county doing extension work, not in Columbus in "meetings". I found most of my counterparts having the same complaint, yet these concerns fell on "deaf ears" of administration.

The secondary reason was that my spouse and I were in a commuter marriage almost the entire time I was in my original Extension job. The move to OSU also meant a chance to "live under the same roof" again-- a plus for most marriages! Loved my county job and was very difficult to leave.

Other things that influenced my decision was the pay (no credit for experience), no job security, and no guarantee of future positions after short term project. Also, Extension gave little to me as a college intern -- no pay, no mileage, etc., when others were receiving both when interning in industry.

Mentioning. As a recent college graduate, I needed guidance in certain areas and was unable to get it.

I got married and spouse had a job elsewhere.

With changes in programming issues the organization's "local leadership" did not support changes that were going to have to occur. The organization did not "walk its talk". Using the OSU Extension Mission, Vision, and Values statement, let me share my experiences as a result of working with my county and district level administrators: Value -- We believe in an emphasis on excellence in educational programming. However, through word and deed, it was emphasized to me over and over again that mediocre is the best we can do, so be satisfied with mediocrity. Value -- We believe in programs that help people solve problems. Well, in my experiences to just worry about doing the same programming that had been done for the past 25 years and not
to bother with those new "issues that the state comes up with. **Value** - We believe in credibility with clientele. Oh you don't really need to collect that information from your program volunteers-- if they (20-30 yr. volunteers) refuse to supply the requested info-- don't you go making an issue of it -- after all, it really doesn't matter, it's just one of those things "the state office came up with". **Value** - We believe in a philosophy of team work. Do we really need to have an office conference? Why? Don't tell me your concerns, (unless it will cause me (the county chair or district director) a big problem down the road.) I don't have time to deal with you -- and besides it's your problem.

Being a "XX" agent was a very demanding job. I never want to have to work that hard again. We were trying to do too much. The organization needs to focus - AND let go of traditional roles. It would have taken me ten years to get to a point of managing it all well. My new job is focused and I can do it well. It's do-able.

I had been threatened with lawsuits and just plain verbal threats by parents and advisors. I was criticized for allowing the Jr. Fair Board to make major decisions. I also left to be in the same county as my fiancé, who I recently married.

Additionally, as "Associate" Agent "XX", I had TOTAL responsibility for the program, but was paid "Associate" wages for doing an "Agent's" job. My supervisor agreed with all this, but had their hands tied financially.

The position was intended for urban responsibility but the rural, traditional agent wanted traditional programs run, not urban. The office environment was very depressing because of the traditional agents' professional (lack of) behavior.

Note: These are not ranked in any particular order. 1) Lack of advancement for staff without Ph.D. 2) Organization's treatment toward staff who deserved better, especially some who had been with Extension for 20+ years. 3) Being a young, single, professional in a rural community is not easy socially, especially when work takes up much of your time.

I resent the first two questions in Part IV. This is just the type of gender-biased data that OSU Extension
Administration will use to dismiss any relevant valuable feedback in the other parts. Would it even be considered to ask these questions of male employees??

I used my spouse’s career move as a convenient reason to resign my position, but I had no desire to pursue a career with the OSU Extension based upon my experiences. I had genuine concerns about working conditions, lack of resources, lack of support from my immediate supervisor, lack of and/or conflicting direction, and inconsistent application of policy regarding such issues as reimbursement of interview and professional development expenses. It was discouraging to observe incompetent, maintain-the-status-quo agents with tenure supported by the system while competent, progressive agents were maligned and driven out of the system. I was also becoming aware of ethical corruption at the local level as well as at the top administrative level and wanted no part of it.

I worked with the “XX” program. I loved my job a great deal. But after getting married you realize that you have other obligations besides work. People still expected me to be able to drop everything to attend meetings. The job is excellent for someone single and that has no other obligations. I would still love to be involved in Extension if I felt that I could be home in the evenings most nights. I do believe that the Extension office, especially the “XX” program is a super organization.

In “XX” there seemed to be some repetition of services provided and the goals and directions of the group were always changing and didn’t necessarily meet the needs of the individuals, counties and communities.

While I worked with Extension I was very impressed with the organization and the majority of the people in it. I left because I was afraid the conflict within the office was damaging the program. Since then a new person filled my role. The same conflict continued. The P.A. is no longer with extension.

This was the greatest job! I hope to work for the Extension service again when I do not have small children at home.

I received a job offer from “XX” with a salary increase of 25%.
My co-worker (1/2 time faculty agent) was extremely unprofessional and disruptive to all office personnel. As county chair, I was not permitted by the District Director to supervise this individual to the extent changes in behavior might have occurred. The District Director appeared to take no action to change my co-workers behavior.

Although I believe that my training & prep. for Extension work was inadequate, my biggest problems probably were tied to my strengths & weakness. I prefer a more defined job description & a structured work day. I am a successful "teacher"; its the marketing, the juggling of so many different projects & programs that frustrated me.

I needed to extend the time allotted for tenure. My spouse was given a life expectancy of 6 months. Extension’s policy was such that it didn’t allow any interruption once on the tenure tract. I loved my work and wouldn’t have left.

I enjoy Extension, I just had planned on getting married and I could not relocate due to no current openings.

I really enjoyed my work with OSU Extension, and was sorry to leave. There are very caring supervisors and a great staff at main campus. My spouse’s job caused us to move to “XX” last year, but I miss Extension and have considered looking into extension after completing my doctorate.

I feel that OSUE needs to give more time to new staff to assist in learning job responsibilities & how to function in the position - strong monitoring program where mentor is given time to work closely with new staff & vice/versa for first 6 months.

When I left OSU I received an immediate $5000 a year raise, 2 months off in the summer, and compensated opportunity to pursue a Master’s degree. In addition there were only 3 night meetings a year and only 1 over night obligation a year.

OSU Extension was not committed to diversity in programs and staff. Only gave lip service as a front.

Too much time away from my child. Extension stresses family values but does not allow you to be a part of your own family because of increased job responsibility and time
required away from home such as night meetings and in-service.

I felt some conflict between the values of the organization and my personal values in the area of to what degree our lives are self determined and education can make us "good". At the point I left this alone wouldn't have caused me to leave.

Though not a reason for my leaving, there was some resentment/resistance to my position by local development officials. This may have been a complication if I had stayed with Extension. Extension Economic Development Agents, in my opinion, are most suited for and better accepted in areas where there is no "competing" Development Agency. I would be happy to comment further if necessary.

Disagreement with Multi-county agent responsibilities and philosophy being pushed at that time.

I enjoyed Extension work, but having to work on Master's at same time made it difficult to do the kind of programming the county deserves and still have time for family. I also did not like getting less benefits-12 vacation days to a month for agents and being expected to do same job. Also being paid much less. Adjusting for working hours and reduced child care costs - my income increased 25-30% when changed to teaching.

Extension work is very stressful and to succeed and enjoy the work it is of most importance to have positive and supporting relationships with co-workers. Also, your survey never addresses the issue of the problems with future funding of Extension- closing of offices, covering two counties. This was a concern for me and a direct concern for many who left.

Extension was a wonderful job but I was compared to single professionals who were married to their careers or other professionals, who had families & who sacrificed a lot of their family time to keep up the "single" standard. Plus-there is a big gap between what really happens in the county and what district and state leaders think they know about what is happening in counties.
Insufficient pay for the amount of work performed and for working and living in a big city.

I was and I am still quite fond of the OSU Extension system. While I did leave I would like to come back to the system someday. Although the number of late night meetings did not influence my leaving, I will agree that Extension especially "XX" takes a great deal of time with very little reward. (compensation with time or money would be appropriate although not always possible).

Extension offered what I thought I wanted in a career. However, the time commitment was far to great for the salary and my personal life.

(per phone call requested by respondent) There is a difference between the written goals of the 4-H program and what actually occurs. I believe the organization places too much emphasis on the number of youth and adults involved in the program rather than quality programs. The 4-H program involves too much time and responsibility. There were no positive comments for a job well done. Some community meetings would last until 8:00 P.M. and would sometimes extend to as late as 11:00 P.M. These meetings, which occurred as often as three times a week, would take place after a full day of work, beginning at 8:00 A.M. There was no additional compensation for these meetings, and when the County Chair was asked about a possible later beginning time for the next day, they were unwilling to make any adjustments. There was no sharing in the decision making process in the budget, or anything else. We lowered the standards for fair projects and allowed projects not completed or completed by others to be entered. We are not spreading ethics and morality. I had a conflict with what the organization was doing with youth since I had experience in working with youth and knew that the programs were not doing what they had intended to do.

Disillusioned by the persuasive acceptance of the status quo and lack of motivation.

A constant frustration was how often policies changed in Columbus. What they did not realize was that each county is not the same. General policies/programs cannot be established state wide in all cases. Also, the whole funding picture was very uncomfortable.
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