Conceptual Framework on Psychological Ownership as Predictor of Turnover Intentions

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Abstract

People develop feelings of ownership for a variety of objects, material and immaterial and this state is referred to as psychological ownership. In the light of various theories and broad discussions with faculty members of various technical institutions, psychological ownership acts as a positive source of job satisfaction and turnover intention. This conceptual study investigates the links between promotion focused and preventative focused factors of psychological ownership on turnover intentions in context with faculties of technical education institutes of India. On the basis of various research and published literature, the study proposes that this state finds its roots in a set of eight individual motives, which are identified as factors of psychological ownership and predictors of turnover intention. From the review of literature and group discussions, the seven theory-driven domains determined to best constitute the dimensions of promotion-oriented psychological ownership included self-efficacy, accountability, sense of belonging, self-identity, association with the organization, controlling and investing the self. The domain of territoriality was identified as a dimension of a preventative form of ownership. On the basis of various research and published literature, a 36-item research instrument was generated representing the eight theory-driven components of psychological ownership. The work provides a foundation for the development of a comprehensive theory of psychological ownership and the conceptual underpinnings for empirical testing.
Keywords: Psychological Ownership, Individual Factors, Job Satisfaction, Turnover Intention.

1. Introduction:

Organization Behaviour is the study and application of individual or group of people working in team within the organizational setting in context to their attitude and behaviour has been the topic of interest to scholars and practitioners for many decades. To date, many theories and models have been developed to explain employees' behaviour and attitude in the work environment. This study continues this line of research in examining an attitude known as psychological ownership.

Both researchers and human resource (HR) practitioners agree that the employment relationship is undergoing fundamental changes that have implications for the attraction, motivation and retention of talented employees (Horwitz, Heng, & Quazi, 2003: Roehling, Cavanaugh, Moyhihan & Boswell, 2000; Turnley & Feldman, 2000). The employees are difficult to retain due to their tendency to attach more importance to marking out their own career path than to organizational loyalty; a tendency which results in increased rates of voluntary turnover (Cappelli, 2001). Within the HRM literature, retention management has become a

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popular concept to examine the portfolio of HR practices put into place by organizations in order to reduce voluntary turnover rates (e.g. Cappelli, 2001; Mitchell et al., 2001; Steel et al., 2002).

Psychological ownership refers to the employees' subjective interpretations and evaluations of their deal with the organization (Rousseau, 1996; 2001; Turnley & Feldman, 1998). Researchers in this field argue that in order for retention management to be effective, the creation of an optimal portfolio of HR practices is not sufficient and that it is important to manage employees' expectations relating to these practices. Only in this way HR managers can be confident to create a deal that is mutually understood by both the organization and its employees (Rousseau, 1996). While retention management addresses the type of organizational inducements and HR strategies that are effective in reducing voluntary employee turnover, the psychological ownership focuses on employees' subjective interpretations and evaluations of inducements and how these affect their intentions to stay. This implies that retention practices might only turn out successful if they are in line with what employees value and what they take into account when deciding to stay with or leave the organization.

This conceptual study attempts to draw a framework on the various promotion focused and preventative focused antecedents of psychological ownership that influence turnover intentions of faculties of technical educational institutes of India and draw inferences regarding its affects in this context. The review of research and literature in the areas of psychological ownership and turnover intentions aims to demonstrate the links between these factors. The study is expected to contribute to policy makers of technical educational institutes as well as further empirical research work in the associated field.

2. Psychological Perspective of Ownership:

Researchers are also interested in examining ownership from a psychological point of view, referring to the psychological experience of ownership. Many researchers initially saw psychological ownership as a component of legal ownership (Pierce et al., 1991; Wagner, Parker, & Christiansen, 2003). Hence, in an employee-owned organization, an employee who legally holds shares in the company is believed to psychologically experience the feeling of ownership towards the organization, which in turn influences the employee's attitudes and behavior. In this scenario, the legal form of ownership must exist in order for the psychological form of ownership to take place. However, Pierce et al. (2001/2003) have claimed that psychological ownership can exist in the absence of legal ownership. This study follows this viewpoint in examining psychological ownership in the work environment.

3. Literature Review:

Feelings of ownership can develop towards both material and immaterial objects, and serve to shape identity (Belk, 1988; Dittmar, 1992) and affect behavior (Isaacs, 1933; O'Toole, 1979). Such feelings can exist in the absence of any formal or legal claim of ownership. Instead, mere association has been considered ample to produce feelings of ownership (Beggan & Brown, 1994). It is these essential characteristics of possession that are encapsulated in the concept of psychological ownership. Pierce et al. (2001) define psychological ownership as a "state in which individuals feel as though the target of ownership (material or immaterial in nature) or a piece of it is 'theirs' (i.e., 'it is MINE!')."

Considering the ubiquitous nature of feelings of possession and ownership, it can be expected that psychological ownership may develop towards any number of different organizational targets, for example, the organization, the job, the work tasks, the work

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space, work tools or equipment, ideas or suggestions, team members, and so on (Rudmin & Berry, 1987; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004). The intention in the present research is to focus on faculties feeling of ownership towards both their organization and their job.

A sense of possession (feeling as though an object, entity, or idea is 'MINE' or 'OURS') is the core of psychological ownership (Furby, 1978). Possessive feelings are omnipresent, can refer to tangible or intangible objects (Beaglehole, 1932; James, 1890), and can occur based on legal ownership or in the absence of legal ownership (Wilpert, 1991). Scholars in a wide variety of fields note the close connection between possessions, feelings of possession, and feelings of ownership. For example, Etzioni (1991) described ownership as a 'dual creation, part attitude, part object, part in the mind, part "real". In sum, people tend to equate feelings of possession with feelings of ownership (Dittmar, 1992; Furby, 1978).

The psychology of possession literature demonstrates that people feel positively about tangible and intangible targets of ownership. For example, Beggan (1992) proposed the idea of 'mere ownership effects' based on empirical analysis of reactions to perceptions of ownership. Results of this study showed that people evaluated ideas and objects more favorably when they felt a sense of ownership for the target. In other words, feelings of psychological ownership lead to positive attitudes about the entity (Nuttin, 1987).

Pierce et al. (2001) theorized that psychological ownership can be differentiated from other constructs based on its conceptual core (possessiveness) and motivational bases. They argued that psychological ownership satisfies three basic human needs: 'home' (having a sense of place), efficacy and effectance, and self-identity. When employees experience psychological ownership, they are able to satisfy these basic needs.

Based on literature pertaining to what constitutes possession and ownership, Pierce et al. (2001) concluded: (1) the feeling of ownership is innately human, (2) psychological ownership can occur toward both tangible and intangible objects (targets), and (3) psychological ownership has important emotional, attitudinal and behavioral effects on those that experience ownership. These conclusions indicates that psychological ownership is an individual factor and serve as a starting point for how psychological ownership is defined and its effects are used in this study. The overall purpose of the study is to investigate & examine the various individual antecedents of psychological ownership and suggest research instrument for future empirical testing.

3.1   Individual Factors

There are various individual and organizational factors implied on an employee which guides the behavior in a workplace setting. Individual factors are the innate factors of an individual which are controllable. While organizational factors are external factors which are out of the discretion of an employee. The paper focuses only on the individual factors in relation to the psychological ownership of an employee, means how an employee can work on those internal factors which modifies psychological ownership and how an organization can help employee to work on those internal factors for enhanced psychological ownership.

As argued above, the individual is ready for psychological ownership due to the innate motives for efficacy and effectance, self-identity, having a place to dwell and likewise. While these motives are universal, it is been anticipated that there will be individual differences in this process. First, individuals will differ on the strength of motives, both across individuals and within individuals across times. This will result in varying likelihood of developing feelings of

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ownership across individuals, or even within a single individual at different points in time. Different attributes are important for different people and different types of objects are 'sought' by individuals, as a result. From the perspective of the self-concept, individuals may strive to increase feelings of self-worth by attempting to legally or psychologically possess items of greatest importance to them. Ownership is one means to boost self-evaluations and self-esteem; hence, individuals are likely to feel ownership over those objects considered to be most important according to their personal values. For example, individuals whose perceptions of selfworth are predicated on intellect, or who are part of cultures that value intellect, may seek to feel ownership over targets that reinforce this attribute (e.g., books, pieces of art). Finally, and as noted earlier, an individual may legally own some object, but not feel a sense of ownership for it. This condition may exist when the object is not a source of effectance and efficacy, is not associated with one's self-identify, and/or a place within which to dwell, even though it might have been purchased with hard earned cash and is controlled and known.

3.2 Psychological Ownership for the Organization:

Psychological ownership is the psychologically experienced phenomenon in which an employee develops possessive feelings for the target. Building on Furby (1978) and Dittmar (1992), Pierce et al (2001) linked feelings of possession with feelings of ownership and defined psychological ownership as the state in which an individual feels that an object (i.e., material or immaterial) is experienced possessively (i.e., it's 'MINE' or it is 'OURS').

This tight connection between possession and feelings of ownership can be directed at the organization (or workplace) as a whole or at specific aspects of the organization such as the group, job, work tools (i.e., a computer or production machine), or work itself. Different targets of ownership can vary in salience, depending on the individual and the situation. For example, some employees have psychological ownership for their work and others might have ownership feelings for the overall organization. When people have a sense of ownership, they experience a connection between themselves and various tangible and intangible ''targets'' (Dittmar, 1992). The term ''target'' in the psychological ownership literature is quite broad and refers to whatever the object of attachment represents to an individual or group. These targets may be something as small as a preferred seat in the company cafeteria, or as large as the organization or industry as a whole. In this investigation, the focus is on the organization as the target of feelings of ownership (psychological ownership for the organization).

3.3 Dimensions of psychological ownership: Promotion and Prevention

The basis for examining two unique and independent forms of psychological ownership comes from the work of Higgins' (1997, 1998) regulatory focus theory. He proposes that individuals have two basic self-regulation systems: promotion and prevention. Kark and Van Dijk (2007) noted that, ''individuals who operate primarily within the promotion focus are more concerned with accomplishments and aspirations and show more willingness to take risks," whereas "individuals who operate primarily within the prevention focus are more concerned with duties and obligations and experience emotions of anxiety and agitation''.

Higgins (1997, 1998) argues that both prevention and promotion are needed for human survival and that one approach is not necessarily more desirable then the other. When applied to examining psychological ownership, individuals who are more promotion oriented may experience feelings toward targets of ownership

that are quite different from those who are prevention oriented. For example, in a scenario where sharing information may lead to change and improvement within a company, a manager possessing promotive psychological ownership with a successfully completed project may decide to share information ''he owns'' with a cohort or team in a different division of the company because he sees improvement in the company as personally fulfilling.

Building on the three recognized dimensions of psychological ownership (i.e., belongingness, self-efficacy, and self-identify, Pierce et al., 2001), the concepts of territoriality, association with organization, investing the self, controlling and accountability are posited as additional aspects of psychological ownership. Promotion-oriented psychological ownership includes self-efficacy, accountability, sense of belonging, self-identity, association with organization, investing the self and controlling the target. The domain of territoriality was identified as a dimension of a preventative form of ownership.

3.3.1 Self-Efficacy:

Self-efficacy relates to people's belief they can successfully implement action and be successful with a specific task (Bandura, 1997). White's (1959) early conceptualization of ownership and possession argued that one's feelings of ownership may be inextricably linked to the individual's need for effectance. Furby (1991) suggested that feelings of ownership emerge even in young children because of the motive to control objects and to be effectant with their application. This freedom to control one's actions is a psychological component that results in feelings of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) and may promote a sense of psychological ownership concerning a particular task, process, and procedure. This self-efficacy component of psychological ownership seems to say, ''I need

to do this task, I can do it, and I therefore own the responsibility for achieving success.''

White (1959) argues that part of the human condition is revealed by the individual's exploration of the environment, which in turn is driven by the effectance motive, that is, the individual's desire to interact effectively with his/her environment. The effectance motive is aroused by differences in the environment and is sustained when one's actions produce further differences. The motive subsides when a situation has been explored to the point that it no longer presents new possibilities. Exploration of, and the ability to control, one's environment gives rise to feelings of efficacy and pleasures, which stem from "being the cause" and having altered the environment through one's control/actions. In addition to producing intrinsic pleasure, control over the environment may produce extrinsic satisfaction as certain desirable objects are acquired.

Based on the discussion above, the study proposes that psychological ownership is grounded, in part, in the motivation to be efficacious in relation to one's environment. Due to the innate need for feelings of efficacy and competence, individuals are propelled to explore and manipulate their environment. These person-environment interactions may result in the exercise of control and subsequent feelings of personal efficacy and competence. Through this process, "possessions and self become intimately related" (Furby, 1991: 460).

3.3.2 Accountability:

Accountability has become a popular concept in business and public policy domains. Accountability is ''the implicit or explicit expectation that one may be called on to justify one's beliefs, feelings and actions to others'' (Lerner & Tetlock, 1999).

Accountability as a source of psychological ownership is evident in many areas of society such as economic systems and

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sports teams. For example, the owners of major pro sports teams hold others (coaches, players) accountable for team performance, while they themselves are held accountable by other constituents (media, fans) for the team and franchise's failures and successes. Expectations of the perceived right to hold others accountable and to hold one's self-accountable are consistent with Pierce et al.'s (2003) description of expected rights and responsibilities. First, individuals who experience higher feelings of psychological ownership expect to be able to call others to account for influences on their target of ownership. The expectation of information sharing and permission to influence the direction of the target are consequences of this expected right to hold others accountable. Second, individuals not only have expected rights about holding others accountable, they have expected responsibilities for the self, sometimes described as a sense of burden sharing. When targets of ownership are seen as an extension of the self, accountability for what happens to and with those targets has implications for what happens to and with the self. This is also evident in Pierce et al.'s (2003) use of descriptive behaviors such as stewardship and self-sacrifice to characterize those with high levels of psychological ownership.

3.3.3   Belongingness:

The human need for a home or a place to dwell has been articulated over the years by social psychologists (e.g., Ardrey, 1966; Duncan, 1981) as a fundamental need that exceeds mere physical concerns and satisfies the pressing psychological need to belong. For example, Ardrey (1966) argued people will take ownership of, and structure their lives around, possessions in an effort to satisfy their need for belonging. This example is highlighted by Mehta and Belk (1991) who note that immigrants tend to retain possessions as ''security blankets'' to provide them with a sense of place or belongingness.

Feelings of psychological ownership through attachment to a place or an object, becomes a ''home'' or place for the individual (Pierce et al., 2001). Beyond belongingness being enhanced by physical possessions, belongingness in terms of psychological ownership in organizations may best be understood as a feeling that one belongs in the organization. When people feel like owners in an organization, their need for belongingness is met by ''having a place'' in terms of their social and socio-emotional needs being met. The need to belong in a work place may be satisfied by a particular job, work team, work unit, division, organization or industry as a whole.

3.3.4   Self-identity:

Self-identity along with social identity is recognized as major parts comprising the self-concept domain. Researchers have noted that groups of people (Abrams & Hogg, 2004) and possessions often act as symbols through which people identify themselves (Belk, 1988; Rousseau, 1998). Specifically, it has been noted that individuals establish, maintain, reproduce and transform their self-identity through interactions with tangible possessions (Dittmar, 1992) and intangibles such as an organization, mission or purpose (Rousseau, 1998). For example, people may define themselves as a sports car driver, a yacht owner, or an antique collector. These targets of ownership are often used as descriptors of one's identity.

Feelings of psychological ownership over these objects may provide a foundation from which individuals can identify themselves as being unique, thus contributing to their personal identity. In addition to targets such as objects, a job, or a work team, individuals may identify with an organization, mission or purpose (Rousseau, 1998). This is because people have a strong drive to identify with the settings in which they work (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). According to Tajfel's social identification theory, humans

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are not only calculative by nature, but also expressive of feelings and values (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). As stated by Shamir, House, and Arthur (1993) ''We 'do' things because of what we 'are', because by doing them we establish and affirm an identity for ourselves.'' Albert, Ashforth, and Dutton (2000) suggest that by internalizing the organizational identity as a definition of the self, the individual gains a sense of meaningfulness and connectedness. Thus, individuals may feel a sense of psychological ownership over a target at multiple levels to the extent that it appeals to and affirms their values and self-identity. Since people are expressive and seek opportunities to affirm their self-identity, the need for self-identity can be considered a potential component of psychological ownership.

3.3.5   Association with organization:

James (1890) suggested that through a living relationship with objects, individuals come to develop feelings of ownership for those objects. Supporting the notion that feelings of ownership emerge from a lived relationship with objects. Beaglehole (1932) too argued that by knowing an object (person or place) passionately (intimately) it becomes part of the self. Commenting on the processes through which feelings of ownership likely emerge, Weil states "All men have an invincible inclination to appropriate in their own minds, anything which over a long, uninterrupted period they have used for their work, pleasure, or the necessities of life. Thus, a gardener, after a certain time, feels that the garden belongs to him". People come to find themselves psychologically tied to things as a result of their active participation or association with those things. The gardener, for example, "comes to be rooted in the garden," as a result of working the garden and becoming familiar with its needs. Through this process of active association, knowledge develops and the gardener comes to feel that it is his [hers], that he/she is one with the garden - grounded in and

with it (Weil, 1952). Sartre (1943) and Furby (1978b) have also suggested that there is an associational aspect to ownership. Something can be mine, in my feelings, by virtue of my being associated and familiar with it. Consistent with the above, Beggan and Brown (1994) and Rudmin and Berry (1987) suggested that through the process of association we come to know objects. The more information possessed about the target of ownership the more intimate becomes the connection between the individual and that target.

According to James (1890), a part of our feelings about what is ours stems from living close to, getting to know, and experiencing things around us. Thus, the more information possessed about the target of ownership, the more things are felt thoroughly and deeply and in the process the self becomes attached to (one with) the object. Along the same lines, Beggan and Brown's (1994) research found that individuals tend to frame issues of ownership as a function of an association between themselves and the object.

Rudmin and Berry (1987) noted that "ownership is linguistically an opaque concept," its meaning is difficult to grasp outside of looking intra-individually --"After all, a stolen apple doesn't look any different from any other" (Snare, 1972). They suggested that attachment provides part of the meaning of ownership and that attachment breeds familiarity and knowledge. Thus, psychological ownership reflects an intimate relationship or a psychological proximity of the owner to the owned. Horwicz A (1878), they noted that we tend to prefer our own possessions to others, even others of a similar kind (Beggan, 1992; Nuttin, 1987) because "we know them better, realize them more intimately, feel them more deeply" (translated by James, 1890: 326).

3.3.6   Investing the self:

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The work of Locke (1690), Sartre (1943), Rochberg-Halton (1980), among others, provides us with insight into the relationship between work and psychological ownership. As part of his political philosophy, Locke (1690) argued that we own our labor and ourselves, and therefore, we are likely to feel that we own that which we create, shape, or produce. Through our labor, we not only invest our time and physical effort but also our psychic energy into the product of that labor. Sartre (1943) even suggested that buying an object was simply another form of creating an object as it too stems from the fruits of our labor. Thus, that which stems from our labor, be it our work or the widget that we make, much like our words, thoughts, and emotions are representations of the self. The most obvious and perhaps the most powerful means by which an individual invests him/herself into an object is to create it. Creation involves investing time, energy, and even one's values and identity. "Things" are attached to the person who created them because they are his/her product, they derive their being and form from his/her efforts; hence, the individual who has created them owns them in much the same way as he/she owns him/herself (Durkheim, 1957). The investment of an individual's self into objects causes the self to become one with the object and to develop feelings of ownership towards that object (Rochberg-Halton, 1980). This sense of ownership can develop between workers and their machines, their work, and the products of their labor (Beaglehole, 1932). In othermvocations, individuals may feel ownership for the products they create through scholarly pursuitsm (academics), organizations they found (entrepreneurs), or bills they draft (politicians). The investment of the self allows an individual to see their reflection in the target and feel their own effort in its existence.

Lastly, we expect that responsibility for a target, either perceived or real, leads to feelings of ownership. As the person is held or feels responsible for a target he/she begins to invest him/herself into that target through the energy, care, and concern expended. A mentor-protégé relationship is one example of this phenomenon. The mentor feels responsible for the protégé's development, and hence invests their energy, time, emotion, and even their own values, in the protégé. For better or worse, this is likely to result in the mentor coming to think of the other person in terms of 'their' protégé. Social recognition of this relationship tends to further reinforce the fact that people see themselves in the target.

3.3.7 Controlling:

As previously suggested, control exercised over an object eventually gives rise to feelings of ownership for that object (Furby, 1976a; McClelland, 1951; Rochberg-Halton, 1980; Sartre, 1943). In her control model of ownership, Furby (1978a) argues that the greater the amount of control a person can exercise over certain objects, the more they will be psychologically experienced as part of the self. To develop this proposition, she builds upon the work of White (1959) and McClelland (1951). White's (1959) work focused on the motive for environmental exploration, control, and subsequent feelings of efficacy.

McClelland (1951) developed the idea that much like parts of the body and control over them, material objects that can be controlled come to be regarded as part of the self. While recognizing individual differences in terms of importance of possessions for personal identity (e.g., Sampson, 1978). Prelinger (1959) provided support for the proposed relationship between self and control over objects. Specifically, he found that objects over which the respondent had control, could manipulate, or objects by which she/he could be affected, were more likely to be perceived as parts of the self than objects for which neither was the case. Similar findings have been provided by Dixon and Street (1957).

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Control also was found to be a core feature of ownership by Rudmin and Berry (1987) in their studies of ownership semantics. They found that ownership means the ability to use and to control the use of objects. While causality was not explicitly addressed, their work seems to suggest a causal path. Those objects over which individuals exercise the most control are the ones most likely to be perceived as theirs. This is consistent with the thinking of Prelinger (1959), Furby (1978), and Tuan (1984). Similarly, Lewis and Brook (1974) and Seligman (1975), in their earlier work in human development, have argued that through the exercise of control objects become associated with the self, and those objects which are controlled by others or those which cannot be controlled are not a part of the individual's sense of self. Finally, Ellwood (1927) suggested that a key concept might be 'use.' Those objects which are habitually used by an individual become assimilated into the user's self. As noted by Furby (1978a) use of an object can be seen as the exercise of control over that object. Furthermore, access to use of an object gives a person control over others and their access to the object --"That over which I exercise ... control becomes a part of my sense of self" (Furby, 1978a: 322-323).

3.3.8   Terriotality:

Indeed, Brown et al. (Brown, Lawrence & Robinson, 2005) argue that ownership and self-identity are so interrelated that people engage in territorial behaviors, such as marking or defending their territory as a way to identify and defend possessions as an extension of themselves.

Brown et al. (2005) have noted that ''Organizational members can and do become territorial over physical spaces, ideas, roles, relationships, and other potential possessions in organizations'' and that to limit territoriality as being ''petty, political or self-serving is to overlook their importance to employees in contemporary work organizations.'' When individuals form bonds of ownership over objects in the organization including physical, informational or social objects, they may seek to mark those possessions as belonging exclusively to themselves. In addition, if individuals anticipate infringement on their targets of ownership, they may engage in protective territoriality to maintain levels of ownership and to communicate ownership to potential threats and the social unit as a whole. In developing a theoretical foundation of territoriality, Brown et al. (2005) explicitly focused on the concept of territoriality as being behavioral and propose (2005, p. 580) that ''the stronger an individual's psychological ownership of an object, the greater the likelihood he or she will engage in territorial behaviors.'' However, in light of Pierce et al.'s (2001) argument that psychological ownership is a cognitive-affective construct, this study leans heavily on cognitive aspects (versus behavioral displays) of territoriality as a more preventative form of psychological ownership.

3.4   Turnover Intention:

Many researchers argue that the psychological contract plays an important role in helping to define and understand the contemporary employment relationship (Rousseau, 2001; Shore & Coyle-Shapiro, 2003; Turnley & Feldman, 1998). Psychological contracts consist of individuals' beliefs regarding the terms and conditions of the exchange agreement between themselves and their organizations (Rousseau, 1996). They emerge when individuals believe that their organization has promised to provide them with certain inducements in return for the contributions they make to the organization (Turnley & Feldman, 2000). The growing body of literature on the psychological contract reflects accumulating evidence for its influence on diverse work-related outcomes. These studies show that employees evaluate the inducements they receive

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from their organization in view of previously made promises and that this evaluation leads to a feeling of psychological contract fulfillment or breach (Turnley & Feldman, 1998). In turn, a feeling of contract breach has a negative impact on employees' willingness to contribute to the organization and on their intentions to stay with the organization (e.g. Coyle-Shapiro, 2002; Robinson, 1996; Robinson, Kraatz & Rousseau, 1994; Turnley & Feldman, 1998; 2000). Other studies have found a positive correlation with actual turnover (e.g. Guzzo, Noonan & Elron, 1994; Robinson, 1996). Together these results suggest that the psychological contract is a construct of both scientific and practical importance and that it is especially relevant for HR managers concerned with the retention of their employees.

Existing research indicates that employees are rather pessimistic about the extent to which their organization lives up to its promises. For example, Turnley & Feldman (1998) found that approximately twenty-five percent of their sample of employees felt that they had received less (or much less) than they had been promised. This was most strongly the case for promises relating to job security, amount of input into important decisions, opportunities for advancement, health care benefits, and responsibility and power. Robinson et al. (1994) found that fifty-five percent of their sample reported contract violations by their employer two years after organizational entry. Content analysis showed that these violations most frequently concerned training and development, compensation, and promotion. Together, this empirical work demonstrates that psychological contract violation is relatively common and that this could explain the difficulties organizations are currently experiencing in retaining their employees. Since the psychological contract encompasses employees' subjective interpretations and evaluations of their employment deal, the retention factors discussed in the practitioner and scientific literature will only turn out to be effective for employee retention if they are in line with employees' subjective views and expectations. Within the psychological contract literature, the retention factors we have discussed in the previous paragraph are used by several researchers to measure the content of the psychological contract (e.g. Robinson, 1996; Robinson et al., 1994; Turnley & Feldman, 2000). However, as to date researchers have not explicitly paid attention to 10 the relative importance of each of these content dimensions to employees and to their differential impact on employees' willingness to stay with the organization. Instead, global measures of psychological contract evaluation have been constructed in which employees' evaluations of employer promises relating to these different types inducements are aggregated (e.g. Coyle- Shapiro, 2002; Guzzo et al., 1994; Robinson, 1996; Turnley & Feldman, 2000). Turnley & Feldman (1998) did measure overall psychological contract violation as well as violation of 16 specific elements of the psychological contract (e.g. salary, job challenge).
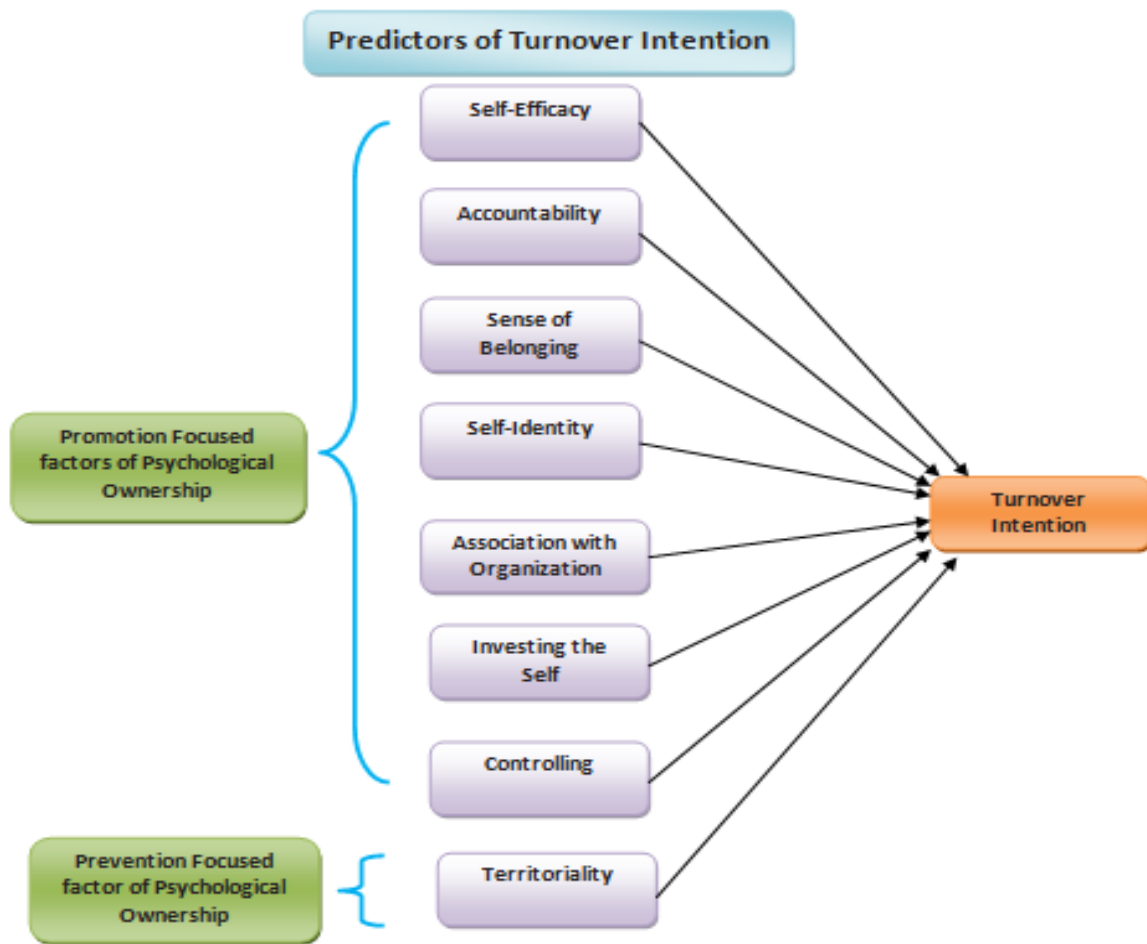
4. Model of the Study:

Fig 1: Conceptual Framework of Psychological Ownership and Turnover Intention

5.   Independent & Dependent Variables

Independent Variables	Source	Dependent Variable

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Psychological Ownership - A sense of possession (feeling as though an object, entity, or idea is 'MINE' or 'OURS') is the core of psychological ownership (Furby, 1978). Pierce and colleagues (2001) linked feelings of possession with feelings of ownership and defined psychological ownership as the state in which an individual feels that an object (i.e., material or immaterial) is experienced possessively (i.e., it's 'MINE' or it is 'OURS').	Guzzo, Noonan & Elron, 1994; Robinson, 1996	Turnover Intention - The implementation of integrated strategies or systems designed to increase workplace productivity by developing improved processes for attracting, developing, retaining, and utilizing people with the required skills and aptitude to meet current and future business needs (Lockwood, 2006).

Independent Variables	Source	Concept	Dependent Variable
Self-Efficacy	Beggan, 1991; Furby, 1978; White, 1959; Bandura, 1997	In other words, self-efficacy is a person's belief in his or her ability to succeed in a particular situation. Bandura (1994) described these beliefs as determinants of how people think, behave, and feel. According to Albert Bandura (1995), self-efficacy is "the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations". Capacity or power to produce a desired effect, desire to experience the power in altering the environment leads to attempt to take possession and to the emergence of ownership feelings. Self-efficacy relates to people's belief they can successfully implement action and be successful with a specific task (Bandura, 1997).	Psychological Ownership
Accountability	Lerner & Tetlock, 1999	Accountability is the implicit or explicit expectation that one may be called on to justify one's beliefs, feelings and actions to others (Lerner & Tetlock, 1999). Accountability is the tendency for an individual to feel a sense of responsibility to hold individuals and	

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		organizations accountable for the object of ownership.
Sense of Belonging	Ardrey, 1966; Mehta and Belk, 1991	Beyond belongingness being enhanced by physical possessions, belongingness in terms of psychological ownership in organizations may best be understood as a feeling that one belongs in the organization.
Self-Identity	Dittmar, 1992; Rousseau, 1998	Albert, Ashforth, and Dutton (2000) suggest that by internalizing the organizational identity as a definition of the self, the individual gains a sense of meaningfulness and connectedness. Thus, individuals may feel a sense of psychological ownership over a target at multiple levels to the extent that it appeals to and affirms their values and self-identity. The term "identity" refers to the capacity for self-reflection and the awareness of self (Leary & Tangney, 2003).
Association with the Target	Sartre (1969)	Association with the target means intimidate knowledge of an object, person or place, a fusion of self takes place with the object (Beaglehole, 1932).
Investing the Self	Sartre, 1969; Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1981	The investment of an individual's energy, time, effort and affection into objects and to develop feelings of ownership toward that object. The investment of one's time, ideas, skills, physical, psychological and intellectual energies. As a result, the individual may begin to feel that the target of ownership flows from the self. (Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg- Halton, 1981)
Controlling the Target	Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1981; Dixon & Street, 1957; Sartre, 1969; Tuan, 1984; White, 1959.	Controlling the target means ability to use and to control the use of object. (Rudmin & Berry, 1987).
Territoriality	Brown et al., 2005	Brown et al. (2005) explicitly focused on the concept of territoriality as being behavioral and propose that ''the stronger an individual's psychological ownership of an object, the greater the likelihood he

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		or she will engage in territorial behaviors.'' Territoriality tends to be preventative (e.g., marking territory, using anticipatory defenses to prevent infringement, and reactionary defenses to prevent future infringements).	

6. Psychological Ownership Measure:

Based on the theoretical framework discussed, a new measure of psychological ownership was developed exclusively for the faculties of technical educational institutes. Item generation was initiated on the basis of comprehensive review of the literature on psychological ownership and discussions with the faculty members. Overall 36 items were generated representing both independent and dependent variables i.e. turnover intention and predictors of psychological ownership.

7. Research Instrument:

Variable	Items	Scale	Source
Turnover Intention (Y)	**Y1**	Satisfaction with present job	Staying or Leaving Index (SLI) - Bluedorn (1982)
	Y2	Thinking about quitting	
	Y3	Intention to quit present job	
Self-Efficacy (X1)	X11	View challenging problems as tasks to master	Bandura A. (1994)
	X12	Develop deeper interest in the activities	
	X13	Form a stronger sense of commitment	
	X14	Recover quickly from setbacks	
Accountability (X2)	X21	Seek out information	Dianne Schilling (2009)
	X22	Own problems and circumstances.	
	X23	Admit mistake	
	X24	Contribution to organizational objectives	
	X25	Extra Task	
	X26	Others accountability	
Sense of Belonging (X3)	X31	Esteem	Somers' (1999)
	X32	Connectedness	
	X33	Efficacy	
	X34	Involvement	
Self-Identity (X4)	X41	Confidence	Erwin T. D. (1979)
	X42	Sexual identity	
	X43	Conceptions about body	
Association with Organization (X5)	X51	Knowing the organization	Beaglehole (1932)
	X52	Active participation	
	X53	Information possessed about the organization	

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Investing the Self (X6)	X61	Effort in organization existence	Locke (1690), Beaglehole (1932)
	X62	Creation	
	X63	Responsibility	
Controlling (X7)	X71	Defining own job responsibilities	Russell A. Matthews, Wendy Michelle Diaz and Steven G. Cole (2003)
	X72	Paid leave of absence	
	X73	Goal setting	
	X74	Setting own working standards	
	X75	Provide reviews of superiors	
Territoriality (X8)	X81	Constructing Territories	Graham B, Thomas B.I. & Sandra L. R. (2005)
	X82	Communicating Territories	
	X83	Maintaining Territories	
	X84	Restoring Territories	
	X85	Psychologically valuing the territory	

8. Implications and Conclusion:

The primary objective in this study was to investigate & examine the various predictors of psychological ownership by undergoing exhaustive literature review and to draw an outline of conceptual research for further empirical testing to predicate relationships between feelings of ownership and employees intention to quit or stay.

In this competitive world, technical educational institutes require satisfied and committed faculties to generate value for the institution. But the question is why should faculties invest more in the firm than they are paid to do? As turbulent environments and changing expectations regarding employment lead to shorter tenure with institutes. Reallocation of ownership rights is an alternative, particularly among highly skilled faculties. Employers prefer to share ownership rights with certain faculties over others, based on the their competence, marketability and potential. Bundling ownership rights with financial information, participation in decision making and other supporting practices can enhance the productivity through creating employment relationships based upon high trust and shared psychological contracts between employer and faculty. But is it practically possible? So, what is the alternative? Without

reallocating the ownership rights, psychological ownership can be generated among faculties towards their institutes with the help of formulating strategies focusing on individual factors of psychological ownership as discussed in the literature.

9. Directions for Future Research:

The paper suggests conceptualization of psychological ownership may serve as a foundation for a more systematic examination of contextual factors. It is anticipated that a wide variety of contextual elements will have an effect on the emergence of psychological ownership, this research focus on discussion of two main aspects –promotion focused and preventive focused.

In addition to the directions for future theoretical development suggested above, this research acknowledges the need for empirical testing and research on psychological ownership. The framework presented here provides the underpinnings for a number of hypotheses and suggests directions for empirical inquiry. As a first step, there is a need for the development and validation of a measurement instrument of psychological ownership. In conclusion, these results are intended to provide a platform and stimulation for further discussion and empirical

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research on the positive resource of psychological ownership and how it can potentially relate to all facets of individual, group, and organizational effectiveness and ultimately competitive advantage.

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