

## Relationship Between Job Stress, Workload, Environment and Employees Turnover Intentions: What We Know, What Should We Know

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**Abstract:** In this competitive era, organizations are continuously looking new ways to develop their human capital. This leads to a new challenge i.e., how organizations can retain their skilled human resource. Present study is focused to find out the relationship among job stressor, workload, work place environment and employee turnover intentions. A random sample of 250 employees from textile industry of Pakistan is selected. Total 109 employees responded and filled the questionnaire, with a response rate of 44%. Structural modelling is used for empirical analysis of data using AMOS 18 software. Results reveal that employee turnover intentions are positively related with job stressor and work load. While negative relationship with work place environment is reported.

**Key words:** Job stress • Work load • Environment • Turnover intentions • Structural Modelling • Pakistan

### INTRODUCTION

Stress at work is a relatively a new phenomenon of modern life styles. The nature of work is gone through drastic changes over the last few decades and it is still changing at rapid speed. It is now became a universal element and persons from nearly every walk of life have to face stress. They have toughed almost all profession, starting from an artist to a surgeon, or a commercial pilot to a sales executives and obviously stress leads toward leaving the job.

Stress exists in every organization either big or small the work places and organizations have become so much complex due to which it exists; work place stress has significant effects over the employees job performance and the organizations are trying to cope with this scenario [1]. Researchers identify that Job stress has cost organization billion of dollars all over the world. Job stress costs American business an estimated \$200 billion annually, the UK £63 billion and Australia \$15 billion. This is the cost for health care, higher rate of absenteeism, turnover and lower performance. The cost are felt in term

of low productivity, reduced profit, high rates of staff turnover and cost of recruiting and training replacement staff [2].

This is a continuous concern of the management to retain their work force. Current study will help organizations in this regard and will find the relationship between job stress and employee turnover intentions. Employers today are critically analyzing the stress management issues that contribute to dissatisfaction and high turnover intention ultimately affecting organizational goals and objectives. How stress affects on employees behavior and consequences of high stress that tend him towards turnover intention are basic aims of the study. Higher level of stress existed with no managerial concern for solution consequently lowering the employee performance; staking organizational reputation and loss of skilled employees. These situations call for immediate concern from organization management for employing effective stress management practices to increase employee satisfaction level and reduce their turnover intention. This study played an important role for managers and for the organization to deal with stress and employees

turnover issues. The stressors impact on turnover intention is analyzed in this research. All the results statistically analyzed and generalized it for the population through this research.

The Objectives of this Research Are as Follows:

- To identify the relationship of job stress and turnover intention.
- To find out the effects of workload and its impact over employees turnover intention.
- To find out the relationship between work environment and turnover intention.

**The Study Divides in to the Following Sections:** After introduction which is presented above, Section 2 describes literature review. Data source and methodological framework are shown in Section 3. Results are discussed in Section 4. Final section concludes the study.

#### **Literature Review**

**Job Stress:** Stress is a term with which everyone is familiar; in fact modern times have been called as the “age of anxiety and stress” [3], however it is notoriously difficult to define. There are many definitions in the literature and the term is often used to describe feelings of fatigue, distress and inability to cope. Nevertheless, [4] had defined stress as a situation which will force a person to deviate from normal functioning due to the change (i.e. disrupt or enhance) in his/her psychological and/or physiological condition, such that the person is forced to deviate from normal functioning. “Work overload has a strong influence on work exhaustion” [5, 6] and sooner or later causes a number of diseases. General Stress includes “three scales measuring general stress, emotional stress and social stress with their consequences” [7].

**Symptoms of Stress:** Stress affects everyone in a unique way; there are certain factors that are common symptoms of stress. A person may face physical as well as psychological problems from stress like headache, more frequent cold or flu, sleeping problems, general anxiety, fuzzy thinking, feeling of frustration and libido [8, 9]. The prolonged effect of the stress response is that the body's immune system is lowered and blood pressure is raised which may lead to essential hypertension and headaches. The adrenal gland may malfunction which can

result in tiredness with the muscles feeling weak; digestive difficulties with a craving for sweet, starchy food; dizziness; and disturbances of sleep [10].

**Causes of Stress:** Ten forces are used as an antecedent of stress by different research findings. These include (Overload, Role ambiguity, Role conflict, Responsibility for people, Participation, Financial insecurity, Lack of feedback, keeping up with quick technological change, Being in an innovative role, Career growth); Overload: excessive work or work that is outside one's capability [11], Role Ambiguity: Role insufficient information concerning powers, authority and duties to perform one's role [12], Role Conflict: Supervisors or subordinates place contradictory demands on the individual [13]. Responsibility for people: Responsibility for people, well-being works, job security and professional development; Participation: Extent to which one has influence over decisions relevant to one's job [14, 15]; Financial insecurity: financial insecure condition of employees [16]; Lack of Feedback: Lack of information about job performance [17, 18]; Keeping up with rapid technological change: Keeping up with rapid changes in the information processing field; Being in an innovative role: Having to bring about change in the organization [19, 20]; Career development: Impact of status dissimilarity, lack of job security, let down ambition [21, 22].

**Turnover Intention:** Focusing on the causes of employee intentions to stay or leave has been one of the recent research approaches in an organizational turnover literature” [23]). According to Naumann [24], turnover as it “typically refers to the separation of an employee from the firm”. Conversely turnover intention is defined as a conscious and deliberate willingness to leave the organization [25]. Although, there is no standard framework for understanding the employees turnover process as whole, a wide range of factors have been found useful in interpreting employee turnover [26, 27]. On the job turnover factors such as communication at workplace, environment, assignment given, salary and benefit received not satisfy the employee. The employee will dissatisfy if the assignment received is too many and at the same time they need to meet dateline [28].

**Stress and Turnover Intention:** Stress among employees and their turnover intention have always been important issues for managers. Studies have attempted to answer

the question of what determines people's intention to quit by investigating possible antecedents of employees' intentions to quit. Firth *et al.* [29], identified that the experience of job related stress; the range factors that lead to job related stress (stressors) make employees to quit the organization. An unstable, unsecured work environment that includes job security, continuity, procedural justice deviate the employees satisfaction level, insert to stress at work and as a result increase their turnover intention. Mano & Shay [20] argue that financial insecure condition of employees generates stress among them and they often quit from organization due financial reasons in order to search the better opportunities. Role stressors also lead to employees' turnover. This causes uncertainty about what our role should be. It can be a result of misunderstanding what is expected, how to meet the expectations, or the employee thinking the job should be different [19]. Insufficient information on how to perform the job adequately, unclear expectations of peers and supervisors, extensive job pressures and lack of consensus on job functions or duties may cause employees to feel less involved and less satisfied with their jobs and careers, less committed to their organizations, undergo stress and eventually display a propensity to leave the organization [30]. Lack of job security and status dissimilarity among employees and the same level also cause stress which may lead their intention to leave the organization [31, 32].

**Work Overload and Turnover Intention:** Workload refers to the amount of work that is allocated to an employee to do. A number of researchers have supported a positive relationship between workload, stress and turnover intention [33]. Glaser *et al.* [34] found that significant relationships between workload and stress and stress and turnover, this research assumes that stress will play an arbitrator role between workload and turnover intentions.

**Working Environment and Turnover Intention:** One among high turnover factors within the workplace is organization working environment which comprise communication at workplace, political environment, colleagues and manager behavior will not satisfy the employee [35-38]. Unfavorable and poor working conditions are cited as a major reason for high turnover intention among employees [20]. The quality of supervision was a significant influence on intent to leave across settings. Little supervision and less support from manager in conducting the assignment will lead towards high level of stress and turnover intention [39-42].

On the basis of above discussion following hypotheses could be developed

- H1: There exists a significant relationship between Job stress and turnover intention.
- H2: There exists a significant relationship between Work overload and turnover intention.
- H3: There exists a significant relationship between Working environment and turnover intention.

A multivariate statistical technique, namely, the SEM was then used to empirically test the proposed hypotheses.

**Data Source and Methodology:** The primary data was collected through questionnaire. The questionnaire was based on five point Likert-scales, comprise of 26 questions to measure the dependent and independent i.e. job stress, work overload, working environment and employee's turnover intention. Structural questionnaires is used to collect data through a mail survey of textile sector of Pakistan. The telephonic interview was adopted to follow up to those respondents who did not reply within four weeks after the questionnaires were posted. Two hundred and fifty potential respondents were randomly selected from textile sector of Pakistan. One hundred and nine replies were received, which constituted a response rate of 43.6%. About 70% of respondents were holding a managerial position;

Kasl [14] instrument was used to measure constructs for all latent variables, namely, Job stressor, Workload, environment and turnover intentions. Each construct contains a set of indicators. Respondents were presented with 26 measurement items grouped under different construct headings. A 5-point interval rating scale system was used in the survey, with 5 equaling the highest extent or degree. A reliability and validity test was then applied to examine these predetermined constructs. Specifically, Cronbach's a reliability estimate test and within-scale factor analyses were applied.

The former was used to assess the internal consistency of the constructs, while the latter was used to measure the extent to which all indicators in a construct measure the same multivariate construct. When applying those tests, we removed the measurement item that might be noted as not being part of our predetermined constructs. Figure 1 shows the research framework of the study.

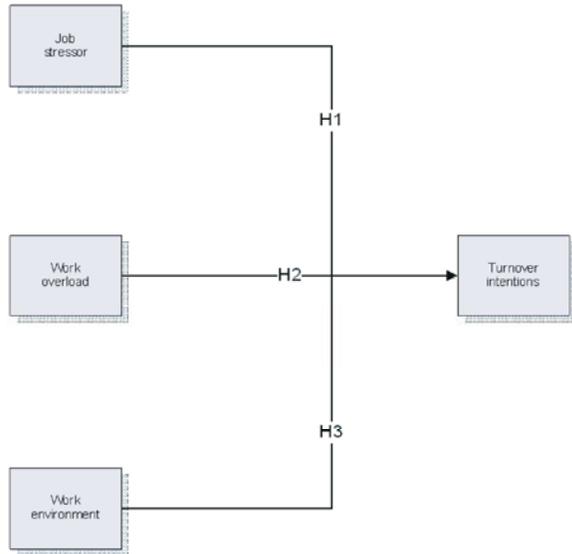


Fig. 1: Research framework

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

Construct	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Turnover intentions	6	0.73
Job stressor	8	0.71
Workload	6	0.84
Environment	6	0.87

Table 1 presents the summary of reliability estimates for each construct used in this study. It is observed from this table that almost all of our research constructs are with Cronbach's a larger than 0.7, which reveal high reliability of our measurements.

The test of the conceptual model was carried out using the AMOS 17. AMOS is one of the most popular SEM software packages used by researchers. Following the details of the process described by Anderson and Gerbing [1], Beehr [4], Naumann [24], Ali [18], the measurement model and structural model were checked to ensure the results were acceptable and were consistent with the underlying theory. The formal model (i.e. the measurement model) deals with the reliability and validity of the constructs in measuring the latent variables, while the latter model (i.e. the structural model) is concerned with the direct and indirect relations among the latent variables. SEM technique is therefore suited for our research purposes.

**RESULTS**

**Model Fit Summary:** Results of the SME was quite satisfactory with GFI equaling to 0.823 and AGFI equaling to 0.712 but the major problem exists with RMESA which

Table 2: Model Fitness summary

Values	Acceptable values
CMIN/df	1.078 <3
GFI	0.901 p>0.95
AGI	0.821 Near to 1
RMESA	0.07 P<0.08
NFI	0.816 Near to 1
CFI	0.89 Near to 1

Table 3: Regression estimates

Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Turnover Intentions <--- Work overload	.36	.027	4.54	.004
Turnover Intentions <--- Job stressor	.62	.045	-5.52	.001
Turnover Intentions <--- Work Environment	-.79	.095	-4.02	.009

has a value of 1.15, which is quite higher and disturbing goodness of fit of the model. To cop this problem model was run again with modification indices threshold 4. The results indicated that the indicator WO1 is causing major problem and have strong correlations of its error term with other is the major issue in fitness of model. Another problem with indicators of turnover intentions is also detected, but this problem could be solved by placing covariances between those error terms which have high covariance indices i.e 25 or above. The model is run again and result indicated goodness of fit. Table 2 shows the fitness of the model.

With respect to our measurement model indicators of all three constructs showed high factor loadings which indicate the reliability of each construct. Figure 2 shows the modified model.

**Hypotheses Testing:** Table 3 is showing the regressions results and hypotheses results. There exists a positive relationship with workload and turnover intentions having value 0.36 and p value 0.004 shows the significance of results.

Results show that with the increase in workload turnover intentions are also increased, which supports our first hypothesis i.e.,

H1: There exists a negative relationship between Work overload and turnover intention.

Regressions estimates of job stressor and turnover intention is 0.62, which indicates the positive association of both variable, p values less than 0.05 shows the significance of relationship. This shows the acceptance of our second hypothesis.

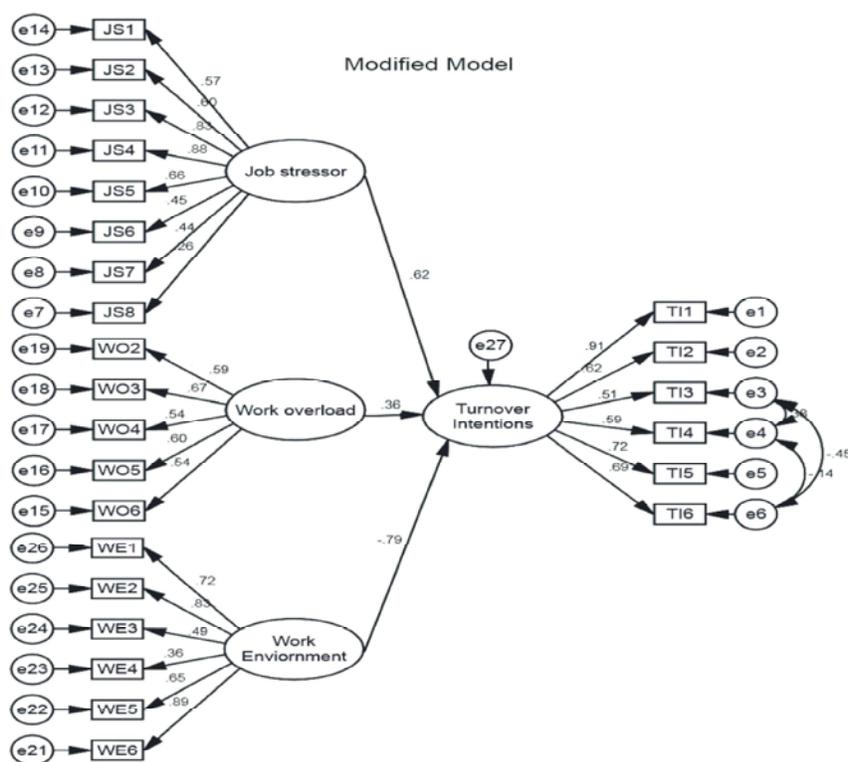


Fig. 2: Modified Model

H2: There exists a significant relationship between Job stress and turnover intention.

The work environment and turn over intentions are negatively associated with each other and estimated value is -0.79 which shows good working conditions can reduce employee turnover intentions. p value indicates the significance of relationship and acceptance of third hypothesis (H3: *There exists a significant relationship between Working environment and turnover intention*).

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Results depict that employee turnover intentions are positively related with job stressor. With the increase in job stress employee turn over intentions increases. If organizations are willing to retain their intellectual capital they must reduce the job stressors which may cause the job stress and ultimately this leads to the employee turnover. Another major factor is workload which is positively related to the employee turnover intentions. A rational workload is win-win situation for the organization, study provide the empirical evidence that employee thinks

to leave the job when they are over burden. Similarly workplace environment is also a key factor to retain employees. Study proved that a good and health work environment will lead to the less employee turnover intentions.

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