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EFFECT OF PERCEIVED ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT, PERCEIVED CO-WORKER SUPPORT AND WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT ON TURNOVER INTENTION AMONG NURSES IN BANGLADESH

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ABSTRACT

Nurses are the largest occupational group responsible for delivering high-quality patient care. However, a higher nurses' turnover rate negatively affects the nurses' morale and quality of care and increases the workload of remaining nurses, resulting in more nurses' turnover. In Bangladesh, hospitals do not have enough nurses. The nurses' turnover rate (15-18%) will lead to substantial financial and service quality loss. The nurses' turnover rate is approximately 17% in Bangladesh. Therefore, this study aims to identify how to mitigate turnover intention among nurses in the healthcare sector in Bangladesh. Still, very little research has been conducted so far on the linkage between perceived organizational support, perceived co-worker support and turnover intention. The findings of these variables are inconclusive, necessitating further research. Moreover, most of the research so far has been conducted in Western settings. However, the relationship has yet to be thoroughly examined in the emerging Asian context, especially in Bangladesh. In addition, previous studies have overlooked the mediating effect of work-family conflict in the relationship between perceived organizational support, perceived co-worker support and turnover intention. The proposed research framework is supported by social exchange theory and conservation of resources theory.

Keywords: Perceived Organizational and Co-Worker Support, Work-family Conflict, Turnover Intention, Social Exchange Theory, Conservation Resources Theory

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Nurses are the heart of healthcare and an essential pillar of society that health standards heavily rely upon (Al-Haroon & Al-Qahtani, 2020). Gebregkziabher et al. (2020) stated that nurses are the largest occupational group responsible for delivering high-quality patient care. However, globally, nurses' turnover adversely affects hospital operations (Huang et al., 2021). Consequently, Alshareef et al. (2020) recommended that reducing nurses' turnover is a key priority. There is a profound effect of the actual turnover of nurses on patients and organizational outcomes (Labrague, 2020). The high turnover of nurses leads to a high nurse-patient ratio, resulting in increased workload and a lower quality of patient care (Shin et al., 2019). Therefore, Huang et al. (2019) stated that researchers should focus on the factors that influence nurses' turnover intention to uncover the causes of nurse turnover and alleviate the problem. Hom et al. (2017) strongly believed that a proxy outcome for turnover is the turnover intention and is viewed as a reliable predictor for actual turnover. Ilyas et al. (2020) admitted that the researchers should study turnover intention rather than actual turnover because employees are less likely to describe the genuine reasons for leaving their organization. Therefore, the concept of turnover intention can be adopted to represent the actual turnover is acceptable (Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2020).

Wong and Wong (2017) reported that most researchers conducted their studies on perceived organizational support (POS) and turnover intention (TI) in western countries. Moreover, perceived co-worker support (PCS) is an overlooked aspect to predict turnover intention (Ghosh et al., 2019). Therefore, a systematic investigation of these variables (POS, PCS and turnover intention) is necessary to assess these findings' generalization in different settings, especially in Bangladesh. In addition, there is some ambiguity about the relationship between perceived organizational support, perceived co-worker support and turnover intention. Therefore, the mixed findings warrant further investigation.

In Bangladesh, most nurses are female (Akter et al., 2019). According to Shen-Miller and Smiler (2015), nurses have a high level of work-family conflict because women dominate the profession. Yildiz et al. (2021) revealed that research on work-family conflict (WFC) is relatively limited in the health sector. In addition, work-family conflict is also used as a mediator by several researchers in various circumstances. However, prior research has ignored the mediating effect of WFC in the relationship between POS, PCS and turnover intention. Therefore, this study determines the role of WFC as a mediator in the link between POS, PCS, and turnover intention.

In Bangladesh, according to Bangladesh Nursing & Midwifery Council (2021), the total number of registered nurses is 67529. Siddiqui (2020) pointed out that Bangladesh has only 24% of the nurses it needs. In addition, according to the Directorate General of Nursing and Midwifery (2020, as cited in Joarder et al., 2021), Bangladesh has only 4.11 nurses to provide services to every 10000 population. Moreover, Joarder et al. (2021) pointed out that there are more doctors than nurses in Bangladesh. Joarder (2021) also confirmed that hospitals do not have enough number of nurses in Bangladesh. Therefore, Joarder et al. (2021) recommended that a favorable policy environment is necessary to allure and retain nurses to fulfil the population need in Bangladesh. The nurses' turnover rate (15-18%) will lead to substantial financial and service quality loss (Dewanto & Wardhani, 2018). Kabir et al. (2022) reported 17% of female nurses turnover in Bangladesh. Therefore, this study emphasizes the nurses' turnover intention to mitigate the genuine turnover in the healthcare sector of Bangladesh.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   TURNOVER INTENTION

The research on turnover first appeared around 1920 (Hom et al., 2017). Dwivedi (2015) defined turnover intention as "the aim of employees to search for alternative jobs or leave the organization in the future" (p.453). Rasheed et al. (2018) argued that employees who have turnover intention are mentally leaving but physically staying in the organization. Hence, the relative significance of turnover intention studies is more than administrative and organizational behaviors (Kim et al., 2017), since turnover intention eventually leads to actual turnover, which increases organizational expenses by requiring the recruitment, selection, and training of new employees (Arshad, 2016). Thus, turnover intention is an important and widely studied topic in human resource management (Jabeen et al., 2020). The perceived support of the hospital motivates

nurses to devote themselves to work and care about the organization's development (Li et al., 2020). As a result, Liu and Liu (2016) argued that nurses probably do not search for other employment opportunities and decide to continue in the existing organization. On the other hand, De Clercq et al. (2020) indicated that co-worker support diminishes turnover intention because it assists individuals to feel less stressed about their organizational functioning. Moreover, Zhang et al. (2019) focused that work-family conflict is a significant predictor of turnover intention among professional nurses. Therefore, this study will also consider the mediating effect of work-family conflict.

2.2 PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

Eisenberger et al. (1986) coined the term "Perceived Organizational Support". The researchers defined POS as "the employees' belief that organizations value their continued contributions and genuinely care for their well-being" (p.501). Loi et al. (2006) stated that employees with a high level of POS report stronger feelings of attachment and loyalty to their organization. Besides, Jones-Carmack (2019) explained that the employees' feel about the organization is affected by POS, and consequently, they behave at work. As a result, an organization's dedication to their employees enhances employees' dedication to their organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986). According to Engelbrecht and Samuel (2019), Employees who lack enough care and support from their organization will seek alternative employment, increasing their turnover intention. Li et al. (2020) contended that the perceived organizational support of the hospital motivates nurses to devote themselves to work and care about the organization's development. Therefore, Liu and Liu (2016) argued that nurses probably do not search for other employment opportunities and decide to continue in the existing organization. Therefore, this study considers POS as a predictor of turnover intention.

2.3 PERCEIVED CO-WORKER SUPPORT

Desrosiers (2001) indicated that the perceived co-worker support (PCS) construct was proposed by Ladd and Henry (2000). From the concept of Ladd and Henry, Desrosiers (2001) defined PCS as "a global belief formed by the employee concerning how their co-workers treat them, and whether their co-workers value their contributions and care about their well-being" (p.60). Previous researchers investigated several factors that might decrease employees' intention to quit their organization (De Clercq et al., 2020). A supportive employee-colleague interaction in the workplace manages professional development and demotivates the employees to quit the current organizations (Karatepe & Olugbade, 2017). Some researchers found that co-worker support reduces the desire to leave their organization (Nazir et al., 2016). Also, co-worker support reduces job stress, diminishing turnover intention (Mazzetti et al., 2016). However, Tews et al. (2013) claimed that additional research is warranted due to little research on co-worker support and turnover intention. Singh et al. (2019) posited that perceived co-worker support improves the work climate and boosts good moods and self-esteem. Consequently, employees are more pleased with their job and have less propensity to leave their employment (De Clercq et al., 2020). Therefore, this study will explore the effect of PCS on the turnover intention of nurses in Bangladesh.

2.4 WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT

The concept of work-family conflict was first defined by Kahn et al. (1964). Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) described the work-family conflict as a "form of inter role conflict on which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect" (p.77). Ghislieri et al. (2017) indicated that the WFC is increasing due to working conditions and gender roles, and an individual (mainly female) faces WFC to accomplish various roles, including spouse, daughter-in-law, employee, and mother (Hussain, 2008). Rasheed et al. (2018) further indicated that women fulfil economic and social needs by entering the South Asian subcontinent workforce. However, as women dominate the nursing profession, they have quit intentions mainly because of family responsibilities (Nooney et al., 2010). Yildirim and Aycan (2008) articulated that the role of WFC in the nursing profession is relevant. Accordingly, researchers have suggested that WFC influences turnover intentions and performance and the nurses' health and well-being (Chen et al., 2015). Labrague (2020) asserted that research is scarce in WFC and nurse managers' turnover intention. However, many researchers revealed that WFC is a significant predictor of turnover intention among professional nurses (Zhang et al., 2019). Williams et al. (2016) also argued that additional research is required on the negative outcome of work-family conflicts, such as increased turnover rates. High WFC leads to high turnover intention, and low WFC results in low turnover intention (Noor & Maad, 2009).

Nikkhah-Farkhani & Piotrowski (2020) found WFC's positive and significant influence on the Iranian nurses' turnover intention. On the other hand, no relationships were found between these constructs for Polish nurses. Therefore, further investigation is needed. From the above discussion, it is clear that WFC is one of the significant factors of turnover intention. However, there is a paucity of research in the mediating effect of WFC. Therefore, this study uses WFC as a mediator.

2.5   PERCEIVED ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT AND TURNOVER INTENTION

According to Eisenberger et al. (1986), POS emerged from Blau's (1964) social exchange theory (SET). Herachwati et al. (2018) stated that POS is a social exchange relationship between the organization and its employees. Based on SET, Rathi and Lee (2017) claimed that employees may feel obligated to the company when an organization facilitates the satisfaction of various employees' fundamental needs. Huang et al. (2019) also indicated that employees would feel obligated to serve their organization if they received fair and supportive treatment and were less likely to quit the organization. Eisenberger et al. (2019) described the norm of reciprocity as employees place high effort to fulfil organizational goals in exchange for a high degree of support. In addition, Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) pointed out that organizations' supportive and caring members are more likely to respond with good attitudes and behavioral intentions. As a result, these organizations are likely to develop positive employee outcomes (Maningo-Salinas, 2010). Based on this idea, previous empirical studies focused on that POS has some outcomes, including turnover intention (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Researchers also agree that reciprocity can develop feelings of obligation, enhance positive outcomes (Kim & Qu, 2020), and reduce turnover intentions (Gupta, 2019).

However, few scholars have shown an inverse relationship between POS and turnover intention, some contradictory findings exist regarding the direct effect of POS on turnover intention. Ghosh et al. (2019) confirmed that POS has an indirect impact on turnover intention, mediated by affective commitment, and the direct effect of POS on turnover intention is insignificant. According to researchers, if employees' contributions are more than inducement, they are more likely to quit the organization (including support at work). In addition, some researchers found no relationship between POS and turnover intention. Buhari et al. (2020) revealed that POS has no impact on turnover intention. As a result, IT companies should reconsider what it means to provide organizational support to IT professionals. This result was supported by Herachwati et al. (2018) and AlHashmi et al. (2019). Therefore, the empirical landscape of the association between PSS and TI contains inconsistent findings, making it impossible to conclude or make broad generalizations about the relationships. To reach a satisfactory solution for this issue calls for further research among nurses in Bangladesh.

2.6   PERCEIVED CO-WORKER SUPPORT AND TURNOVER INTENTION

Social exchange theory has been considered one of the most important theoretical foundations for co-workers' reciprocity and superior behavioral relationships in work organizations (Abugre, 2017). According to social exchange theory, co-workers support help employees to feel obliged to reciprocate by showing positive work behaviors that will eventually increase organizational effectiveness (Kim et al., 2018). Previous scholars found that perceived co-worker support and positive work attitudes are positively related and are negatively related to withdrawal behaviors (Parker et al., 2013). In addition, the perceived supervisor support, perceived co-worker support and credible social exchange relationships will produce various resources, stable energy, and a feeling of executing significant goals (Kim et al., 2018).

Pinna et al. (2020) found a negative association between perceived co-worker support and turnover intention. The researchers indicated that social support (i.e., PCS) is significant in creating a positive attitude of employees and leading to a higher level of satisfaction and engagement at work, reducing turnover intention. However, Ghosh et al. (2019) found an insignificant relation between perceived co-worker support and turnover intention. In addition, the results demonstrated a full mediation effect in the paths of perceived co-worker support-turnover intention. The above discussion illustrates that findings appeared to be mixed or inconclusive. While most results reveal a significant negative relationship between perceived co-worker support and turnover intention, others show perceived co-worker support insignificantly associated

with turnover intention. Therefore, based on these arguments, there is a need to investigate the relationship between perceived co-worker support and turnover intention among nurses' in Bangladesh.

2.7   WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT AS A MEDIATOR

According to conservation of resources (COR) theory developed by Hobfoll (1989), people often aim to conserve their resources, and possible threats to significant resources can generate psychological stress. Grandey and Cropanzano (1999) suggested COR theory as a heuristic model that describes the etiology of the interaction between work and family. Zhang et al. (2019) conceptualized WFC as a stressor. According to the COR theory, occupational stress causes WFC because their valuable resources are threatened and depleted (Hobfoll, 1998). Hobfoll (1989) also conceptualized WFC as a type of stress in COR theory. Employees may experience the loss of resources such as time and energy when balancing work and family demands, resulting in stress that is one type of WFC (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999).

The COR theory is an appropriate framework for the relationship between supervisor support and WFC (Karatepe & Uludag, 2008). In addition, COR theory postulated that supervisor support and co-worker support help employees establish a balance between work and family responsibilities and lessen WFC (Jansen et al., 2003). COR theory states that a supportive supervisor fulfils employees' family needs are assumed to mitigate WFC (Glavelia et al., 2013). Zhang et al. (2019) described that supervisor support (resource gain) could reduce the negative influence of resource loss for nurses facing WFC.

According to COR theory, the experience of inter-role conflict is related to negative outcomes such as quitting from the organization (Hammer et al., 2003) because valued resources are lost from both domains (Singh et al., 2018). As resources are connected, losses of primary resources leave the employee with inadequate resources to be replenished (Singh et al., 2018). This creates further losses and the potential for a "loss spiral" (Hobfoll & Shirom, 1993). In this situation, Singh et al. (2018) argued that employees might need to take stringent actions, such as a career change, to defend against further resource loss. Individuals who do not have adequate resources to cope with the problems resulting from WFC report negative consequences such as family distress, job distress, poor job performance, and plans to leave the organization (Karatepe & Kilic, 2007). In addition, COR theory describes that loss of resources is the basis of stress among employees, which results in adverse outcomes. As a result, Zhang et al. (2019) found that WFC is a significant stressor for nurses, causing them to deplete their psychological resources and eventually leave their professions. The authors also posited that nurses might consider quitting the present job better in dealing with the WFC. In addition, nurses' positive resources are threatened by WFC, such as physical and psychological health; nurses' well-being tends to be protected by having turnover intention (Yildiz et al., 2021). From the above discussion, it can be deduced that COR theory could be a bridge to connect the perceived organizational and co-worker support with work-family conflict and work-family conflict with the turnover intention.

2.8   RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The proposed research model depicted in figure 1.0 below was developed to show the relationship between perceived organizational support, perceived co-worker support and turnover intention. In addition, this study will also examine the mediating effect of work-family conflict in the relationship between perceived organizational support, perceived co-worker support and turnover intention. This research framework is supported by social exchange theory (SET) and conservation of resources (COR) theory.
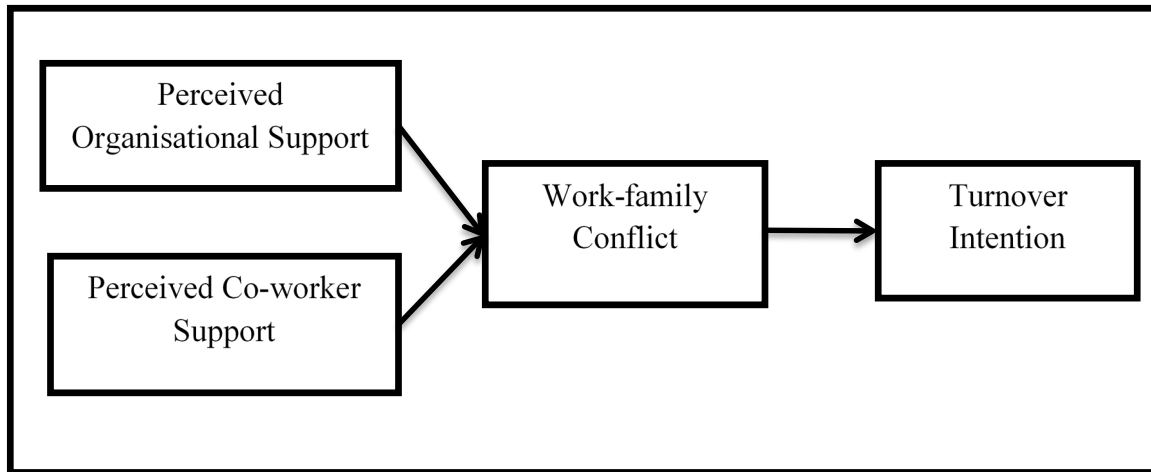
Figure 1.0: Relationship between Perceived Organizational Support, Perceived Co-worker Support and Turnover Intention, Mediated by Work-family Conflict.

3   CONCLUSION

Based on the investigation, it can be concluded that the perceived organizational support, perceived co-worker support and work-family conflict affect turnover intention. However, there are some inconsistencies about the relationship between perceived organizational support, perceived co-worker support and turnover intention, calling for further investigation. In addition, past studies have ignored the mediating effect of work-family conflict in the relationship between perceived organizational support, perceived co-worker support and turnover intention. Therefore, this study would contribute to the existing literature. The research framework is supported by social exchange theory and conservation of resources theory, confirming the study's validity. Besides, a better understanding of nurses' turnover intentions can assist policymakers in taking measures to reduce turnover intentions before actual turnover occurs (Moore, 2021). In addition, researchers can set up strategies by examining the turnover intention factors for retaining valuable healthcare professionals (Alameddine et al., 2017). Also, industry leaders can use this study to realize the nurses' attitudes and compute future turnover intentions. Therefore, this study focuses on nurses' turnover intention in Bangladesh.

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