

A Literature Review on the Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction in the Relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Turnover Intention in Manufacturing Enterprises in Shandong Province, China

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of job satisfaction on the relationship between perceived organizational support and turnover intention among junior staff in manufacturing enterprises in Shandong Province, China. Job satisfaction refers to employees' psychological state during their tasks' completion, influenced by various factors including the nature of the functions, the environment, conditions, patterns, stress, challenges, and interpersonal relationships. Given the rapid development of human resource management in Shandong's manufacturing sector, job satisfaction among junior staff is particularly crucial in a highly competitive environment. Organizations need to monitor the work environment, identify opportunities to enhance job satisfaction and establish close relationships with employees to boost their perceived organizational support and reduce turnover intention. However, there is a notable lack of research on the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between perceived organizational support and turnover intention. Therefore, this study examines the influence of three main factors: work environment, task challenges, and interpersonal relationships. Ultimately, this research aims to enrich the existing knowledge on the relationships between job satisfaction, perceived organizational support, and turnover intention.

Keywords: Turnover intention, perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, human resource management

Introduction

Shandong province is one of China's most comprehensive manufacturing regions and a crucial pillar of its economy (Dazhong Daily, 2016). The current state of manufacturing development in Shandong province shows a positive and upward trend, with multiple indicators demonstrating strong growth and high-quality development (Department of Industry and Information Technology of Shandong Province, 2024). In 2022, Shandong province's manufacturing sector achieved an added value of 2.48 trillion-yuan, accounting for 86.3% of the total industrial output, an increase of 10.3 percentage points compared to 2016. The manufacturing added value accounted for 28.4% of the GDP. The added value of the manufacturing sector has continued to grow from January to July this year, Shandong province's manufacturing added value increased by 7.2%, which is 3.3 percentage points higher than the national average, indicating a robust growth momentum in the province's manufacturing sector (Shanghai Observer, 2024). Additionally, of major annual scientific and technological innovation

projects, 70% are led by manufacturing enterprises, showcasing Shandong province's active progress in technological innovation and new product development (Guo et al., 2020).

Manufacturing is a dominant and advantageous industry in Shandong Province, with a strong demand for labor and a high capacity for job creation (Liu et al., 2023). Among the different levels of job positions, the largest gap is found in junior staff, who account for 86.48% of the total labor shortage. Intermediate workers make up 9.42%, while high-level and above-skilled talents only constitute 4.1%. According to several surveys, junior staff exhibit high mobility, leading to ongoing recruitment pressures. Consequently, retaining employees is a significant concern for manufacturing enterprises (Li & Huam, 2023; Ni et al., 2022).

Employees' increasing emphasis on benefits significantly impacts their satisfaction, engagement, and loyalty (Lu et al., 2016). Currently, the construction of health-focused enterprises is being promoted nationwide, leading to unprecedented attention to employee welfare and a surge in market demand for benefits, further invigorating the welfare market (Dhir et al., 2020).

In manufacturing enterprises in Shandong Province, there is an interdependent relationship between perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, and turnover intention (Wen et al., 2022). Job satisfaction serves as a mediating variable closely linking perceived organizational support and turnover intention (Hu ning et al., 2020). To improve job satisfaction and reduce turnover rates, enterprises must prioritize and enhance perceived organizational support, meeting employees' needs and expectations while providing better working environments and development opportunities (Adnan & Tulen, 2020). Additionally, organizations should monitor job satisfaction to promptly identify and address potential issues that may cause employee dissatisfaction, thereby maintaining a stable and creative workforce (Hu ning et al., 2020).

Conceptual Model

The figure presents a conceptual model based on Social Exchange Theory, illustrating the relationships between perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, and turnover intention among junior staff in manufacturing enterprises in Shandong Province. In this model, perceived organizational support, which includes factors such as industrial-organizational psychology and leadership support, directly influences both job satisfaction and turnover intention. Job satisfaction, which is shaped by the work environment, task challenges, and interpersonal relationships, serves as a mediating variable in this framework.

Social Exchange Theory helps explain these relationships by suggesting that employees who perceive higher levels of support from their organization are likely to experience greater job satisfaction, which in turn reduces their intention to leave the organization. The theory posits that when employees receive tangible and intangible benefits from their organization, they feel obligated to reciprocate, often through increased loyalty and reduced turnover intention. Therefore, the framework emphasizes the importance of organizational support in fostering job satisfaction and mitigating turnover intention, reinforcing the notion that positive exchanges between the organization and employees can lead to more stable and committed workforces.

This model is not intended to be exhaustive but provides a focused exploration of the core dynamics at play, acknowledging that the complex interactions between organizational support and employee outcomes might extend beyond the scope of this study.

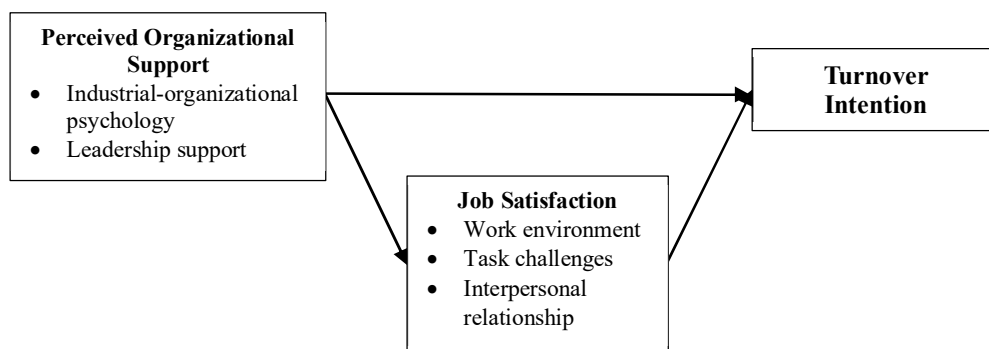


Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Model

Underpinning Theory

Social exchange theory emphasizes the exchange relationships between individuals and organizations, positing that both parties seek fair and reciprocal exchanges based on their respective needs and resources (Zhang et al., 2022). In social exchange theory, rewards and costs are central concepts (Ahmad et al., 2023). Rewards refer to the benefits or satisfactions gained from the exchange, including material rewards, emotional support, and respect. Costs are the resources or efforts expended to obtain these rewards, such as time, energy, and money (Edet, 2023). During the exchange process, organizations and individuals weigh and choose their rewards and costs based on their needs and resources to maximize their benefits (Ohemeng et al., 2019).

The stability and durability of the relationship between an organization and its employees depend on the fairness of the exchange. Fairness encompasses not only the equitable exchange of material resources but also the equal exchange of non-material resources such as emotions and respect. When both parties perceive the exchange as fair, employees perceived organizational support and job satisfaction tend to increase (Maan et al., 2020). Conversely, if one party perceives the exchange as unfair, it can lead to heightened turnover intention or the decision to leave the organization.

Literature Review

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to an employee's overall feelings or attitudes towards their job and its various aspects (Dhir et al., 2020). Employees with high job satisfaction are typically enthusiastic about their work, willing to invest more time and energy, and are more likely to demonstrate high job performance. They are also more inclined to stay with the company, reducing turnover intention and contributing to the organization's long-term growth (Hu Ning et al., 2020).

To enhance job satisfaction, companies need to address employees' needs and expectations actively (Hajiali et al., 2022). This involves improving the work environment, increasing compensation and benefits, strengthening employee training and development, optimizing management practices, and fostering a positive workplace culture. Such measures not only boost job satisfaction but also enhance organizational cohesion and competitiveness (Lin & Huang, 2020).

Work Environment - The work environment is a complex and multidimensional construct that includes aspects such as the physical workspace, organizational culture, work atmosphere, job content, and compensation and benefits (Taheri et al., 2020). These factors collectively shape employees' job satisfaction by influencing their attitudes, emotions, and overall perceptions of their work, both directly and indirectly. To foster higher levels of job satisfaction, organizations must continually refine and enhance the work environment (Adnan & Tulen, 2020).

A workplace that is comfortable, clean, and safe plays a critical role in improving employees' overall work experience (Taheri et al., 2020). Elements such as an efficient office layout, sufficient personal space, and optimal conditions of ventilation and lighting contribute to greater work efficiency. Moreover, the availability of advanced and well-maintained work equipment can reduce operational inefficiencies, enhance productivity, and ultimately, increase employee satisfaction (Lin & Huang, 2020).

Task Challenges - Task challenges are pivotal in enhancing job satisfaction as they stimulate employees' intrinsic motivation and provide a sense of purpose and value in their work (Akdere & Egan, 2020). When employees are presented with challenging tasks, it can significantly boost their satisfaction and loyalty, leading to a reduction in turnover rates. The sense of being trusted and respected, coupled with opportunities for personal growth, makes employees more appreciative of their roles and less likely to consider leaving the organization (Dhir et al., 2020).

Task challenges contribute to job satisfaction in several ways by fostering work motivation and interest: they promote a sense of responsibility and mission, encourage personal growth and development, and ultimately lower turnover intentions (Fadhila & Sulistiyani, 2021). This heightened satisfaction not only enhances employees' well-being and sense of belonging but also supports organizational stability and continuous innovation (Akdere & Egan, 2020).

In the context of organizational management, it is crucial for managers to focus on assigning challenging tasks that can ignite employee enthusiasm and motivation, thereby leading to improved overall job satisfaction (Fadhila & Sulistiyani, 2021).

Interpersonal Relationships - Interpersonal relationships are a crucial determinant of job satisfaction, significantly influencing employees' attitudes, emotional well-being, and overall work performance (Lu et al., 2016). Positive interpersonal dynamics foster trust among team members, enhancing team cohesion and cooperation, which in turn facilitates effective communication and collaboration. When employees cultivate supportive and trustworthy relationships, they become more inclined to share information, exchange ideas, and collectively address challenges, thereby increasing overall team efficiency (AlArafat & Doblas, 2022).

Strong interpersonal relationships contribute to employees feeling respected and valued, which is essential for enhancing job satisfaction (Dhir et al., 2020). When employees feel welcomed and recognized within their team, they are more likely to maintain a positive attitude and enthusiasm for their work. The support and care experienced from colleagues encourage employees to align their personal goals with the team's objectives, increasing their commitment to the organization and their willingness to contribute to its long-term success (Baran & Sypniewska, 2020).

Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived organizational support refers to the degree to which employees feel cared for, assisted, and recognized by their organization (Maan et al., 2020). This sense of support encompasses not only material benefits and compensation but also emotional understanding, respect, and trust. When employees perceive that the organization genuinely cares about their work, growth, and well-being, they develop a strong sense of belonging and purpose, which in turn fuels their enthusiasm and creativity at work (van Tuin et al., 2021).

The success of an organization often hinges on the efficiency and satisfaction of its employees (Quader, 2024). As a crucial component of employees' emotional and cognitive experiences, perceived organizational support plays an irreplaceable role in unlocking employee potential, enhancing team cohesion, and improving overall performance (Kou et al., 2024). Recognizing the importance of perceived organizational support, organizations should prioritize understanding employee needs, fostering an inclusive and open atmosphere, strengthening organizational identity, and providing personalized support (Maan et al., 2020). These efforts are essential to creating a more harmonious and productive work environment.

Industrial-Organizational Psychology - Industrial-Organizational Psychology provides organizations with the theoretical foundation and practical guidance needed to understand and enhance employees perceived organizational support (Aldabbas et al., 2023). When employees feel supported by their organization, they are more likely to view their work positively, trust the organization, and develop a stronger sense of belonging. This positive psychological experience can improve their emotional responses, such as increasing job satisfaction and overall well-being, which in turn motivates them to work harder and reduces their intention to leave the organization (Hu ning et al., 2020).

Drawing from Industrial-Organizational Psychology, organizations should focus on meeting employees' needs and expectations by providing personalized support and assistance (Aldabbas et al., 2023). Additionally, fostering an open and inclusive organizational culture is crucial, where employees are encouraged to participate in decision-making and voice their opinions. Organizations can also enhance perceived organizational support by offering training and development opportunities, establishing a fair compensation system, and creating an environment that values and supports its employees (Maan et al., 2020).

Leadership Support - Leadership support enables employees to feel valued and acknowledged, thereby enhancing their sense of organizational belonging (Maan et al., 2020). When employees perceive support from their leaders, they are more likely to see themselves as integral parts of the organization and become more engaged in their work (Hu ning et al., 2020).

The behaviors exhibited by leaders play a crucial role in enhancing employees perceived organizational support (Aldabbas et al., 2023). By providing necessary resources, addressing work-related challenges, and encouraging innovation, leaders can significantly boost employees' job satisfaction and motivation. This involves addressing employees' work needs, offering equitable treatment and opportunities, and supporting their career development. Such actions are perceived as signals of the organization's care and support, thereby strengthening employees perceived organizational support (Dhir et al., 2020). Concurrently, this support can increase employees' loyalty to the organization and reduce turnover rates.

By offering necessary support, addressing employees' needs, and fostering a spirit of innovation and collaboration, leaders can effectively enhance employees perceived organizational support (Khairy et al., 2023). This, in turn, improves employees' job satisfaction, motivation, and loyalty, laying a solid foundation for the organization's long-term development (Sypniewska et al., 2023).

Turnover Intention

Turnover intention refers to the likelihood that an employee will voluntarily seek to leave their current position or organization within a specific period (Lazzari et al., 2022). This intention reflects the employee's overall assessment and attitude towards their current work situation, organizational environment, and career development opportunities. It is a critical indicator of an employee's psychological state (Aldabbas et al., 2023).

The emergence of turnover intention is often closely related to the employee's satisfaction with various aspects of their job, such as job content, work environment, compensation, and career development (Puhakka et al., 2021). When employees are satisfied with these aspects, their turnover intention tends to decrease. Conversely, if employees are dissatisfied with these areas, their turnover intention is likely to increase significantly. For instance, monotonous job content, poor work environment, unfair compensation, and limited career growth can all prompt employees to consider leaving the organization (Loo et al., 2024).

Understanding and managing turnover intention is crucial for organizations (Lazzari et al., 2022). Turnover intention is not just an individual behavioral inclination but can also impact the overall performance and stability of the organization. High turnover rates can lead to talent loss, increased recruitment and training costs, and potentially affect team morale and work efficiency (Lin & Huang, 2020). Therefore, organizations need to closely monitor employees' turnover intentions and implement effective measures to manage them (Lazzari et al., 2022).

By thoroughly understanding the factors influencing turnover intention, organizations can develop targeted strategies to reduce turnover rates (Lazzari et al., 2022). For example, improving the work environment, increasing compensation, providing more career development opportunities, enhancing employee training and development, and fostering a positive organizational culture can all effectively increase job satisfaction and loyalty, thereby reducing turnover intention (Albtoosh et al., 2022). Additionally, establishing open communication channels to promptly understand employees' needs and opinions can help organizations take timely corrective actions.

Turnover intention is a comprehensive psychological evaluation by employees of their current jobs and organizations, influenced by multiple factors (Puhakka et al., 2021). By proactively managing employee turnover intentions, organizations can maintain a stable workforce, enhance overall work efficiency, and achieve sustained development (Lin et al., 2022).

Discussions

This paper provides an in-depth analysis of how job satisfaction among junior staff in manufacturing enterprises in Shandong Province, China, affects their perceived organizational support and turnover intention. Social exchange theory emphasizes a reciprocal relationship between organizations and employees, where employees contribute effort and dedication to the organization, and in return, the organization provides a supportive work environment, fair compensation, and promotion opportunities. Within this theoretical framework, job satisfaction serves as a crucial indicator of the quality of the exchange relationship between employees and the organization.

The study reveals that job satisfaction is influenced by various factors including the nature of the job, the work environment, and interpersonal relationships. It also directly impacts employees' perceptions of organizational support and their turnover intentions. In the highly competitive manufacturing sector of Shandong Province, job satisfaction among junior staff is particularly significant. To enhance employee satisfaction, organizations must continuously improve the work environment, increase the challenge of job tasks, and foster positive interpersonal relationships.

This paper specifically examines the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between perceived organizational support and turnover intention. This finding further supports the core tenet of social exchange theory, which posits that the exchange relationship between employees and organizations is based on mutual reciprocity. By enhancing employees' job satisfaction, organizations can more effectively build positive relationships with their employees, thereby increasing perceived organizational support and reducing turnover intention.

Conclusion

This study not only enriches the understanding of the relationship between job satisfaction, perceived organizational support, and turnover intention but also provides practical guidance for enhancing employee satisfaction and strengthening organizational cohesion within manufacturing enterprises in Shandong Province. By deeply understanding and applying social exchange theory, organizations can more effectively manage and motivate employees, thereby achieving mutual growth and development for both the organization and its employees.

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