THE FACTORS OF TURNOVER INTENTION AMONG DOCTORS IN HENAN PROVINCE, CHINA: THE MEDIATING ROLES OF JOB SATISFACTION AND JOB BURNOUT

WANG ZHE

UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

2025

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by

WANG ZHE

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

September 2025

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation to Associate Professor Lilis Surienty Abd. Talib, for her unwavering support during my Ph.D. program. Her patience, motivation, enthusiasm, and extensive knowledge have been instrumental in my research and the completion of this thesis. Throughout my Ph.D. studies, I have greatly benefited from her guidance, constructive feedback, and valuable suggestions, which have helped me immensely in the research process. I am genuinely grateful to have had such an exceptional mentor to guide me through my academic journey.

Throughout the arduous years of my Ph.D. studies, I received great support from various individuals. Many people helped me persevere through my studies against all odds, but most importantly, my family's love and patience helped me through my Ph.D. I am deeply grateful to all my family members, particularly my husband, Shuang Yang, and my child, Xuexi Yang, for their steadfast support and understanding. Moreover, I sincerely appreciate my mother, Shuxia Li, and my father, Guiming Wang, for their invaluable help in countless ways.

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LIST OF SYMBOLS

f^2	Effect sizes
Q^2	The statistic is used to assess the predictive relevance of a relative construct in an SEM model.
R^2	Coefficient of determination values

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AVE	Average Variance Extracted
COR	Conservation of Resource
H	Hypothesis
HRM	Human Resource Management
HTMT	Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio
P- E Fit	Person-Environment Fit
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SET	Social Exchange Theory
Smart PLS	Smart Partial Least Square
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

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FAKTOR NIAT PUSING GANTI DALAM KALANGAN DOKTOR DI WILAYAH HENAN, CHINA: PERANAN PENGANTARA KEPUASAN KERJA DAN KELETIHAN KERJA

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini menyiasat mengenai faktor yang mempengaruhi niat untuk berhenti kerja dalam kalangan doktor di China, dengan memberi tumpuan kepada hubungan antara keganasan di tempat kerja, hubungan antara atasan dan bawahan, kebolehsuaian kerjaya, pengambilan dan pemilihan, latihan dan pembangunan, penilaian prestasi, pampasan, kecerdasan emosi, kepuasan kerja, kelelahan kerja, dan niat untuk berhenti kerja. Kajian ini juga meneliti terhadap peranan mediasi kepuasan kerja dan kelelahan kerja dalam hubungan-hubungan tersebut. Data telah dikumpul daripada 426 responden melalui soal selidik atas talian, berdasarkan kajian literatur yang relevan. Analisis data dijalankan menggunakan SPSS versi 29.0 dan pemodelan persamaan struktur dengan perisian SmartPLS versi 4.1. Dapatan menunjukkan bahawa kebolehsuaian kerjaya, pengambilan dan pemilihan, kecerdasan emosi, dan kepuasan kerja memberi kesan negatif yang signifikan terhadap niat untuk berhenti kerja, manakala keganasan di tempat kerja dan kelelahan kerja memberi kesan positif terhadapnya. Selain itu, kepuasan kerja bertindak sebagai mediator dalam hubungan antara atasan dan bawahan, kebolehsuaian kerjaya, pengambilan dan pemilihan, penilaian prestasi, pampasan, dan niat untuk berhenti kerja. Kelelahan kerja pula menjadi mediator dalam hubungan antara latihan dan pembangunan, penilaian prestasi, kecerdasan emosi, dan niat untuk berhenti kerja. Kajian ini menyumbang kepada teori-teori sedia ada dengan menerapkan teori pemuliharaan sumber bagi menganalisis pelbagai faktor yang mempengaruhi niat untuk berhenti kerja dalam kalangan doktor

di China, dengan mengintegrasikan pelbagai pembolehubah, memperluas aplikasi teori ini, dan memperdalam pemahaman tentang niat untuk berhenti kerja. Hasil kajian ini memberikan cadangan praktikal kepada pihak kerajaan dan hospital untuk meningkatkan kepuasan kerja doktor serta mengurangkan kelelahan kerja dan niat untuk berhenti kerja.

THE FACTORS OF TURNOVER INTENTION AMONG DOCTORS IN HENAN PROVINCE, CHINA: THE MEDIATING ROLES OF JOB SATISFACTION AND JOB BURNOUT

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the factors influencing turnover intention among doctors in China, focusing on the relationships between workplace violence, supervisor-subordinate guanxi, career adaptability, recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation, emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, job burnout, and turnover intention. It also examined the mediating roles of job satisfaction and burnout in these relationships. Data were collected from 426 respondents via an online questionnaire, drawing on relevant literature. The analysis was conducted using SPSS 29.0 and structural equation modeling with Smart PLS 4.1. The findings revealed that career adaptability, recruitment and selection, emotional intelligence, and job satisfaction significantly negatively affected turnover intention, while workplace violence and job burnout positively affected it. Furthermore, job satisfaction mediated the relationship between supervisor-subordinate guanxi, career adaptability, recruitment and selection, performance appraisal, compensation, and turnover intention. Job burnout mediated the relationship between training and development, performance appraisal, emotional intelligence, and turnover intention. This study contributes to existing theories by applying the conservation of resource theory to analyze the diverse factors influencing doctors' turnover intention in China, integrating diverse variables, extending the application of this theory, and deepening the understanding of turnover intention. The results of this study would offer practical

advice for the government and hospitals to increase doctors' job satisfaction and reduce job burnout and turnover intention.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The first chapter illustrates the background of the research, expresses related problems, lists the research questions and objectives, explains the significance of this study, and offers definitions for the critical terms in this study. This research focuses on the relationships between workplace violence, supervisor-subordinate guanxi, career adaptability, emotional intelligence, recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation, and turnover intention among doctors in Henan province, China, with the mediating role of job satisfaction and burnout. At the end of this chapter, the definition of critical terms and the chapter's structure are explained further.

1.2 The Background

Turnover intention refers to a psychological state encompassing employees' deliberate contemplation of quitting, active search for alternatives, and evaluation of feasibility prior to actual departure (Labrague et al., 2018). Among doctors, it manifests as a pre-behavioral response that is distinct from resignation itself. Previous scholars found that doctors who have turnover intention prefer to have the frequency of quitting thoughts and job-seeking efforts (Y. Chen et al., 2022). The consequences are critical: the World Health Organization (WHO) projects a global shortage of 27 million healthcare professionals by 2030, driven partly by unsustainable turnover (Harun et al., 2022). This crisis is acute in China, where the physician-to-patient ratio (1:398) lags far behind global leaders like Cuba (1:170) (WHO, 2024). In addition, turnover intention among general practitioners is alarmingly prevalent, with

a global rate of 47% (X. Shen et al., 2020), which would accelerate the critical shortage of doctors. This pervasive turnover intention exacerbates workforce gaps, threatening healthcare systems' stability and effectiveness. Understanding the drivers of turnover intention—including organizational, psychological, and contextual factors—is thus essential to developing targeted retention strategies.

Ding Xiang Talent reported (2020, December 6), 57.9% of Chinese healthcare professionals planned to leave their jobs. The 2022 China Hospital HR Status Study Report, published by Medical Research in September 2022, unveiled a concerning trend: 34% of Chinese doctors are contemplating a shift to new employment opportunities (J. Yi, 2023, May 11). This report shows that Chinese doctors have a high turnover intention. In addition, the average yearly income for Chinese doctors is around RMB94,000, with 70% of doctors' earnings below RMB100,000 pre-tax. Only 14% of department and associate chairs enjoy an annual income exceeding RMB200,000. Meanwhile, doctors working in private Chinese hospitals in China could earn more than RMB 100,000 a year. This income disparity is a compelling factor that has caused doctors to have turnover intention (J. Yi, 2023, May 11).

The China Consumer Protection Relationship has reported an alarming 4,273 complaints concerning healthcare services in China for 2022 (H. Wang, 2023, February 16). According to a complaint record from the Ningbo Healthcare Commission, patients expressed dissatisfaction with doctors who had excessive appointments, often seeing patients for only 2-3 minutes on average. Patients reported feeling rushed, and doctors did not take the time to carefully assess their symptoms and concerns, which is unacceptable (H. Wang, 2022, August 25). More news, a patient stabbed an ophthalmologist at Chaoyang Hospital in Beijing, injuring the

ophthalmologist, two other medical staff, and another patient. This incident followed a fatal slashing incident involving a doctor at another Beijing hospital just weeks earlier (L. Lin, 2020, January 20). The unsafe working environment with low-income exacerbates Chinese doctors' intention to leave.

1.3 The Background of China

China's healthcare industry holds a prominent position on the global stage, ranking second in significance after the United States. Over the past five years, it has witnessed impressive growth, culminating in a substantial revenue of RMB 7.82 trillion ($1.1 trillion) in 2019, with an annual increase of 10% (Wong & Zhang, 2021, November 16). This robust performance underscores China's healthcare industry's pivotal role in global health and economy.

The national economy of China relies on three principal industries: the primary sector, which includes farming, forestry, animal husbandry, and fisheries; the secondary sector, encompassing mineral extraction, manufacturing, natural gas, water production, and construction; and the tertiary sector, which comprises all other sectors (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2003, May 15). Since 2013, the tertiary sector has acted as the driving force behind China's steady economic recovery, with 48% of the total employment attributed to this sector in 2021 (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2022, September 28). The healthcare industry constitutes a segment of the tertiary sector, highlighting its significant contribution to the nation's economic advancement.

The profound link between the Chinese populace’s daily lives and the healthcare industry is undeniable. From the first cries at birth to the final moments in a hospital bed, an individual's life journey is intimately intertwined with the healthcare

system. Demographically, China is home to the second most populous country, totaling 1.413 billion as of January 2022 (Senra, 2023, May 29). By the close of 2021, the population was distributed as follows: 17.95% aged 0-14, 63.35% aged 15-59, and 18.70% aged 60 and above, with 13.50% of the latter category aged 65 and above (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2021, May 11). Projections suggest that by 2035, the population aged 60 and above will exceed 400 million, representing over 30% of the total population (National Health Commission of China, 2022, September 21). This impending shift marks China's entry into a period of significant population aging, increasing the demand for healthcare services.

From the economic development perspective and the population's needs, China's healthcare industry and healthcare employees are intimately connected to the nation’s sustainable economic advancement and the well-being of its citizens. Healthcare employees play an indispensable role in the nation's economic progress and the people's daily lives.

1.3.1 Background of the Chinese Healthcare Industry

China possesses a multi-tiered medical and healthcare service system comprising hospitals, primary healthcare facilities, and specialized public health organizations (Q. Meng et al., 2015). As shown in Figure 1.1, there are public and private hospitals in China. Public hospitals could be divided into government-run hospitals (county, city, provincial, and department-run hospitals based on related functional status) and other types of public hospitals. Chinese hospitals are graded according to the size of the hospital, talent and technical strength, research direction, and hospital hardware. They are divided into three levels, namely, primary, secondary, and tertiary hospitals (National Health Commission of China, 2022, December 18). As

the hospital's level increases, so does the quality of its medical equipment and resources (Hao, 2020, December 15).

Chinese primary medical and health institutions operate at the county level and are categorized into public and private entities. Public health institutions are categorized into government-operated technical public health entities and other specialized public health. Government-operated professional public health institutions are classified into four types based on territoriality: county-operated, city-operated, provincial-operated, and department-operated (General Office of the State Council of China, 2015).

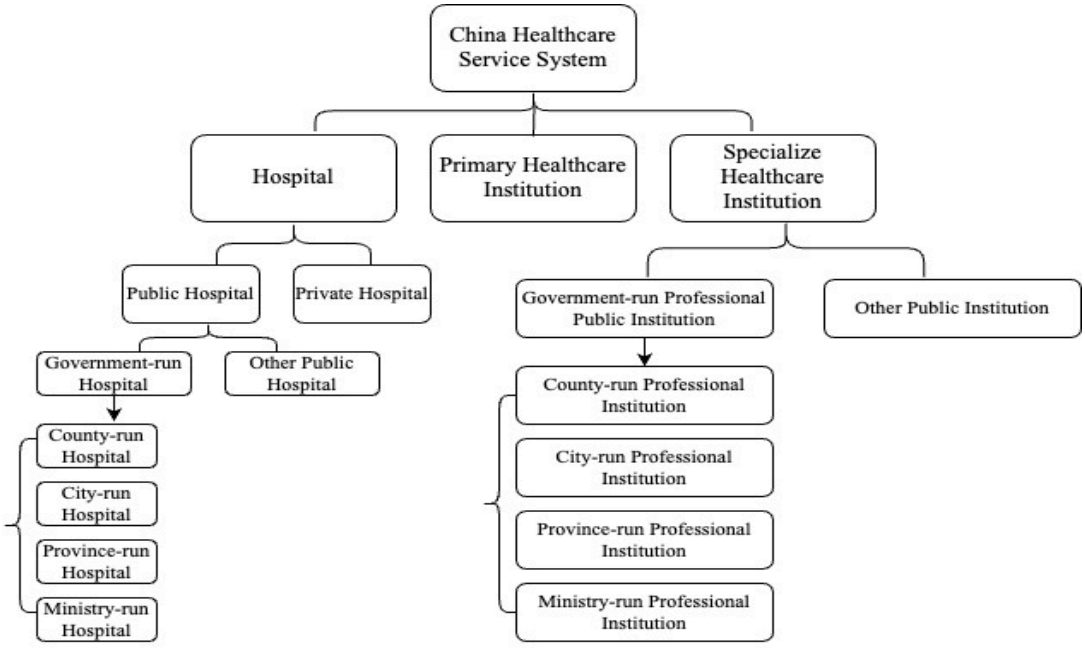

Figure 1.1 The hierarchical structure of the institutions in the healthcare system in China. *Source*: General Office of the State Council (2015, March 30). "《全国医疗卫生服务体系规划纲要（2015—2020 年）》[National Health Service System Construction Planning Outline (2015-2020)]" https://www.gov.cn. https://www.gov.cn/zhengce/content/2015-03/30/content_9560.htm.

The total count of healthcare personnel in China reached 14.41 million. There were 4.335 million doctors at the end of 2022. Table 1.1 shows that the growth rate of healthcare professionals is declining. It decreased from approximately 5.3% between 2020 and 2021 to around 3.9% between 2021 and 2022. As for the distribution of

healthcare employees, 8.748 million worked in hospitals, accounting for 60.7% of total healthcare employees, and 6.672 million in public hospitals, accounting for 46.3% of total hospital healthcare employees (National Health Commission of China, 2023, October 12). It is undeniable that hospitals employ the majority of healthcare professionals in China, accounting for over 60%. In addition, the percentage of healthcare employees in public hospitals is over 76.2% of the total hospital population (China Statistical Yearbook, 2023). Thus, public hospital employees in China are the accurate representative sample for the study—more details are in Table 1.1.

Table1.1 *Healthcare professionals in China's healthcare institutions from 2020-2023.*

Type of healthcare institution	Healthcare Professionals		
	2020	2021	2022
total	1067.8	1124.2	1168.5
Hospital	677.5	711.3	735.3
Public Hospitals	529.2	552.4	571.7
Private Hospitals	148.2	158.9	163.6
Primary health institutions	312.4	330.2	345
Community Health Service Center	44.4	47.6	50.6
Community Health Service Stations	11.4	11.6	11.7
Township Health Center	126.7	128.5	132.6
Specialized public health institutions	72.7	76.4	78
The Center for Disease Control and Prevention	14.5	15.8	16.9
Maternal and child health institutions	42.9	45.4	47.2
Health Surveillance Center	6.4	6.7	5.5
Other healthcare institutions	5.2	6.3	7.5

Source: National Health Commission of China (2022, July 12; 2023, October 12). "2021/ 2022 年中国卫生与健康事业发展统计公报[2021/2022 China Health and Health Development Statistics Bulletin]."https://www.gov.cn. https://www.gov.cn/lianbo/bumen/202310/P020231012649046990925.pdf

In 2021, there were 8.47 billion visits to healthcare institutions in China, which was an increase of 730 million visits and a growth rate of 9.4% compared to 2020. On average, 45% of total visits are to public hospitals by the end of 2021 (National Health Commission of China, 2022, July 12). The 2021 Doctor Survey Report indicates that the average doctor dedicates approximately 7.77 hours daily to patient visits and 1.47 hours to medical research, resulting in an average workweek of about 5.77 days,

totaling roughly 53.31 hours of work weekly. Moreover, the standard working hours in China are 8 hours a day and a total of 40 hours per week for employees (Social Sciences, 2021, April 16). High-intensity work is routine in public hospitals, especially in Henan Province, home to Asia's largest hospital, serving up to 42,000 patients daily (K. Chen, 2022, February 10). Long working hours, low satisfaction compensation, limited opportunities for targeted training and development, and a lack of support and encouragement from supervisors have resulted in a high turnover intention among doctors in China (Y. Lu et al., 2017).

Table 1.2 *China Healthcare Services Workload*

Type	Number of consultations (billion)		Number of hospital admissions (million)	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Medical and healthcare institutions	77.4	84.7	23013	24726
Hospital	33.2	38.8	18352	20149
Public Hospital	27.9	32.7	14835	16404
Private Hospitals	5.3	6.1	3517	3745
Hospital				
Tertiary Hospital	18	22.3	9373	11246
Second-class Hospital	11.6	12.5	6965	6890
First-class Hospital	2	2.2	1117	1120
Primary healthcare institutions	41.2	42.5	3707	3592
Other medical institutions	3	3.4	953	985
Non-public medical healthcare institutions	18.2	19.3	3569	3820

Source: National Health Commission of China (2023, October 12). “2022 年中国卫生与健康事业发展统计公报[2022 China Health and Health Development Statistics Bulletin].”https://www.gov.cn. https://www.gov.cn/lianbo/bumen/202310/P020231012649046990925.pdf

Table 1.2 demonstrates that hospitals, especially public hospitals in China, have the highest volume of inpatients. In 2022, there were 31.9 billion visits to public hospitals (83.5% of total hospital visits) and 6.3 billion visits to private hospitals (16.4% of total hospital visits). Although the number of patient visits decreased slightly in 2022 compared with 2021, the number of consultations in public hospitals was still the

largest, and the proportion was unchanged (45%). The proportion of admissions in public hospitals was also basically unchanged (81%). (National Health Commission of China, 2023, October 12). Public hospitals are the first choice for medical treatment among Chinese citizens in their daily lives (H. Li, 2014, April 16). This study primarily centers on the pivotal role of public hospital doctors within the Chinese healthcare industry, given their significant contribution to patient treatment.

The hospitals in China were divided into public and private hospitals based on ownership (China Ministry of Health, 2011, September 27). When it comes to diseases, people always think of big cities and government-run public hospitals first. According to the National Health Care Commission's "National Healthcare Services and Quality Safety Report 2020, "the total number of people admitted to public hospitals not local for medical treatment reached 82.38 million, occupying 80% of actual patients (A. Zhao, 2022, June 22).

Medical doctors are grappling with substantial work in China. Statistics provide a striking illustration of the healthcare burden. By the end of 2018, China had a staggering 3.607 million doctors providing healthcare services, conducting a remarkable 8.31 billion annual consultations. These figures reflect an astonishing increase of 80.4% and 29.1%, respectively, compared to data from 1998 (Fei, 2021). This substantial growth indicates that China's healthcare system is responsible for catering to a vast global population.

The repercussions of this demanding healthcare environment are concerning. Chinese public hospitals, in particular, experience an exceptionally high daily patient volume. Consequently, doctors in these settings confront a troubling 10% misdiagnosis rate, imperiling the health and lives of their patients (T. Xin, 2022,

February 15). The confluence of doctor shortages, overwhelming patient loads, and the resultant misdiagnoses underscores the urgent need to address the challenges medical professionals face within the Chinese healthcare system.

In 2020, the average annual income of U.S. physicians was USD-$299,999, and the average yearly income of specialists in 2021 was USD-$339,000 (Landi, 2022, April 19). In contrast, released by Dingxiang Talent recently, the average salary for doctors in Chinese hospitals in 2019 was only USD-$25,859.65 (Dingxiang Talent, 2020, December 06). Worldwide, doctors are marked as "three high" people with high practice costs, high risk, and high work intensity. The large gap between doctors' income in China and America has primarily caused low job satisfaction among Chinese doctors. In addition, more than 45% of Chinese doctors are against their children pursuing a healthcare career (Y. Zhang, 2018, January 11).

Position mismatch, largely resulting from deficiencies in recruitment and selection procedures, serves as the primary antecedent to heightened turnover intention among early-career physicians in Chinese military hospitals, manifesting in diminished job satisfaction and suboptimal role adaptation (L. Liu et al., 2022).

Guanxi is essential in Chinese culture, and good supervisor-subordinate guanxi is necessary for personal career development (Wong & Wong, 2013). In the healthcare industry, unfair and non-transparent performance appraisals can cause doctors to lower their job satisfaction and expectations, resulting in increased turnover (P. Fang et al., 2015).

Doctors leave China's public hospitals for better pay and development in higher-paying public or private hospitals (Y. Chen et al., 2022). The head of the emergency department at Peking Union Medical College Hospital transitioned to a

private hospital in 2013, and five prominent doctors at Yulong County Hospital in Yunnan Province resigned en masse to join a better public hospital (H. Jin, 2017, February 9). There is a severe challenge in retaining skilled professionals in Henan Province, even though Henan Province has Asia's largest hospital (X. Lu & Du, 2022, September 21).

Physical and emotional trauma among healthcare employees subjected to workplace violence results in apprehension regarding future safety, diminished satisfaction with work, and a heightened turnover intention (L. Lu et al., 2020; T. Sun et al., 2017). Perceptions of aggression from patients or their families could lead doctors to quit their jobs (T. Sun et al., 2017). Doctors have turnover intention due to their inability to cope well with challenges and changes in the workplace. Career adaptability and emotional intelligence are psychosocial resources that facilitate employees' ability to adjust to career changes and challenges and regulate negative emotions. Employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence and career adaptability have lower turnover intentions (H. Yu et al., 2018; Hong & Lee, 2016).

Turnover intention among Chinese doctors arises from extreme workloads, severe income disparities, pervasive workplace violence, ineffective HRM practices (unfair appraisals, position mismatches), and insufficient individual resources (career adaptability/emotional intelligence) to mitigate these pressures—culminating in a multifaceted retention crisis. Consequently, it becomes imperative to attach importance to this issue and take action to deal with it.

1.4 Problem Statement

The rapid aging of China's population and the rising prevalence of chronic diseases have significantly increased the demand for high-quality healthcare services

(D. Chen et al., 2022). A stable and effective healthcare workforce is essential to meet this demand (Y. Chen et al., 2022). However, turnover intention among Chinese doctors has become a critical concern, especially in Henan province (X. Chen et al., 2019; H. Wu & Liu, 2022). Nationally, 57.9% of doctors report turnover intention—above the global average of 47%—with Henan among the provinces showing a higher rate (Ding Xiang Talent, 2020; X. Shen et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2021). 41.2% of Chinese doctors left their jobs in 2023 (Shen et al., 2025). This alarming trend threatens healthcare quality, patient safety, and public health system sustainability.

Seven point zero four percentage of Chinese citizens, Henan's overburdened healthcare system is a significant part of the problem (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2021, May 11). Doctors in Henan province serve the highest patient visits, receiving up to 42,000 patients daily. This extreme workload, combined with a low doctor-patient ratio of 1:398 (WHO, 2024), has led to long waiting times, increased patient dissatisfaction, and frequent incidents of workplace violence. Public hospitals in Henan province report especially high rates of workplace violence, contributing to psychological trauma, reduced job satisfaction, and higher turnover intention (W. Liu et al., 2018; Y. Hu et al., 2022). Despite its prevalence, the link between workplace violence, job satisfaction, and turnover intention remains underexplored in healthcare research (N. Li et al., 2019).

Supervisor-subordinate guanxi is pivotal in Chinese work culture (Wong & Wong, 2013; Han & Jekel, 2011). In public hospitals, poor supervisor-subordinate guanxi undermines doctors' sense of support and belonging, leading to lower satisfaction and increased intention to leave. While supervisor-subordinate guanxi is widely studied in the hospitality industry (X. Guan & Frenkel, 2021; J. Zhang et al.,

2023), limited attention has been paid to its effect in the healthcare industry among doctors.

Career adaptability also plays a vital role in doctors managing occupational challenges. The rise of new diseases and public health emergencies has increased the need for healthcare professionals to adapt quickly to change (Harun et al., 2021). Doctors with low career adaptability are less capable of coping with shifting demands, which can lead to low job satisfaction and ultimately turnover intention (C. Sun et al., 2023). However, existing research shows inconsistent findings on the link between career adaptability and turnover intention (Chouhan, 2022; Klehe et al., 2011).

Emotional intelligence, which influences how individuals manage stress and regulate emotions, is an underexamined factor among doctors (Y. Cao et al., 2022). Doctors with low emotional intelligence struggle with high-pressure environments, making them more vulnerable to burnout and increasing their likelihood of leaving (X. Zhang et al., 2022). Although the importance of emotional intelligence is recognized, studies on its effect on turnover intention yield inconsistent conclusions (Hong & Lee, 2016; C. Wang et al., 2023).

Human resource management practices also contribute significantly to turnover intention. Inequitable recruitment and selection, untargeted training and development, biased performance appraisals, and inadequate compensation diminish doctors' satisfaction and trust in hospital management (X. Hu et al., 2015; J. Ge et al., 2021; X. Zhao et al., 2020). Many doctors feel unsupported in their career development and experience strong feelings of burnout, which contributes to their intention to leave. Poor human resource management practices not only impact retention but also create a costly brain drain and reduce the efficiency of the healthcare system (L. Liu et al., 2022). However, few scholars have examined the diverse human resource

management practices on job satisfaction, burnout, and turnover intention among doctors in hospitals (X. Cao & Qu, 2014; Pariona-Cabrera et al., 2023).

This study aims to fill gaps by integrating these factors and analyzing how these factors influence doctors' job satisfaction and burnout, ultimately exacerbating turnover intention in Henan province, China. This study reveals the mechanisms of diverse factors affecting doctors' turnover intention, laying the foundation for subsequent studies. This study also provides a scientific basis for healthcare management levels to optimize the working environment, improve doctors' job satisfaction, reduce job burnout, and ultimately diminish doctors' turnover intention to ensure the continuity and quality of healthcare treatment.

1.5 Research Objectives

This study considered the relationship between turnover intention, workplace violence, supervisor-subordinate guanxi, career adaptability, emotional intelligence, recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation, job satisfaction, and job burnout among doctors in Henan province, China to retain them. The following were the study's research objectives:

1. To investigate the effect of work factors (workplace violence, supervisor-subordinate guanxi) on turnover intention.

2. To investigate the effect of individual factors (career adaptability, emotional intelligence) on turnover intention.

3. To investigate the effect of human resource management practices (recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation) on turnover intention.

4. To investigate the role of job satisfaction in mediating the relationship between work factors (workplace violence, supervisor-subordinate guanxi), individual factors (career adaptability), human resource management practices (recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation), and turnover intention.

5. To investigate the role of job burnout in mediating the relationship between individual factors (emotional intelligence), human resource management practices (recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation), and turnover intention.

1.6 Research Questions

In accordance with the aforementioned objectives, the research aims to address the subsequent questions:

1. Do work factors (workplace violence, supervisor-subordinate guanxi) affect turnover intention?

2. Do individual factors (career adaptability, emotional intelligence) affect turnover intention?

3. Do human resource management practices (recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation) affect turnover intention?

4. How does job satisfaction mediate the relationship between work factors (workplace violence, supervisor-subordinate guanxi), individual factors (career adaptability), human resource management practices (recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation), and turnover intention?

5. How does job burnout mediate the relationship between individual factors (emotional intelligence), human resource management practices (recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation), and turnover intention?

1.7 Significance of Study

The present investigation seeks to contribute theoretically and practically to the field by incorporating diverse perspectives on the determinants of turnover intention. In light of the preceding discussion, the significance of this study could be succinctly elucidated from two angles.

1.7.1 Theoretical Contribution

The current study carries several implications as it seeks to furnish empirical evidence on the factors influencing turnover intention within China's healthcare industry. It fills gaps in existing research on turnover intention and analyzes the issue thoroughly, specifically within the Chinese healthcare context.

This study extends Conservation of Resources (COR) theory by demonstrating how turnover intention operates as a behavioral response to three distinct resource processes—threat, depletion, and inadequate gain—within the high-pressure context of the Chinese healthcare sector. By empirically linking workplace violence, career adaptability, emotional intelligence, supervisor–subordinate guanxi, and human resource management practices to these COR pathways, the study shows that turnover intention is not only an outcome of resource loss but also a mechanism through which individuals seek to protect remaining resources or escape further depletion. This expands COR theory by integrating multiple categories of resources—object, condition, energy resource, and personal characteristic, and organizational—into a

single explanatory framework, illustrating how their interactions shape turnover decisions in resource-depleted environments.

This study enriches the literature by exploring the factors affecting turnover intention among Chinese doctors via the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory. The findings differ from prior studies due to varying focus on influencing factors (K. Zhang & N. Yang, 2023; D. Liu et al., 2012; Tschopp et al., 2014). While previous research has shown mixed results using different theories (Aburumman et al., 2020; L. Zhang et al., 2017; Y. Xiao et al., 2021), few have applied COR theory to explore the effect of work factors, individual factors, and human resource management practices on turnover intention. This study, therefore, broadens the use of COR theory in management literature.

This study adds career adaptability as an independent variable to resolve the inconsistencies found in previous research on intention to quit from organization (Ito & Brotheridge, 2005; Klehe et al., 2011; Chan & Mai, 2015; Chouhan, 2022; C. Sun et al., 2023). Career adaptability is crucial, as it is a significant internal resource that affects turnover intention. Previous studies presented inconsistent results: while Ito and Brotheridge (2005) and Klehe et al. (2011) identified a positive relation between workers' career adaptability and their willingness to quit, Chan and Mai (2015) and Chouhan (2022) reported a negative relationship. Rare studies focusing on doctors, this research investigated the related impact of doctors' career adaptability on their turnover intention to contribute to the existing knowledge.

The unique Chinese factor known as supervisor-subordinate guanxi has the potential to influence doctors' turnover intentions in China. However, it is seldom discussed in the healthcare industry compared to other areas within the service

economy. Therefore, elements from job-related factors such as supervisor-subordinate guanxi that trigger turnover intention are tested. Prior research employs social exchange theory (SET) to elucidate the relationship between supervisor-subordinate guanxi and turnover intention. In comparison, this study explains this relationship using COR theory via a new view of resource gain and depletion. Therefore, our findings can offer valuable implications and guidelines for the work factors related to turnover intention in the service industry. Prior scholars mainly focused on the doctor-patient relationship, and supervisor-subordinate guanxi has been substantially investigated in hospitality (Yang & Lau, 2015; J. Zhang et al., 2023). This study extends the research in the healthcare sector by examining the associated influence of supervisor-subordinate guanxi on doctors' turnover intention.

Overall, the study moves COR theory beyond its traditional applications by incorporating culturally specific social resources, refining the role of personal resources, and illustrating the compounded effects of cross-domain resource processes in turnover decisions within the Chinese healthcare industry.

1.7.2 Practical Contribution

This study explores whether workplace violence, supervisor-subordinate guanxi, career adaptability, emotional intelligence, recruitment and selection training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation affect turnover intentions. It assesses the mediated effects of job satisfaction and burnout. Given the related high turnover intention among Chinese doctors, understanding these factors becomes crucial to addressing this issue.

This study offers valuable advice on reducing doctors' turnover intention in China. A safe working environment is a crucial factor that affects doctors' turnover

intentions. Doctors are haunted by workplace violence, increasing security personnel and training doctors on preventing workplace violence in hospitals and self-protection to prevent and respond to workplace violence. It is also a practical way to retain doctors, and hospitals arrange more safeguards to protect the working environment.

Furthermore, this research has practical implications for hospital management departments. The findings of this research will provide hospitals with practical strategies to enhance job satisfaction, alleviate burnout, and decrease doctors' intention to leave. Specifically, the HR department, with insights from this study, can implement appropriate recruitment and selection to match well doctors with positions, practical training and development to meet the need of doctors' need, fair performance appraisal to motivate their progress, and proper compensation to help them keep work-family balance. As a result, these outcomes could guide supervisors and management departments to standardize their specific management practices to retain doctors.

Finally, targeted training should be provided to doctors to improve their emotional intelligence and career adaptability. So that they can control and adjust to the pressure and challenges of jobs well and reduce turnover intention. The current study's practical contribution would support the stable growth of China's healthcare sector and aid in the retention of doctors.

1.8 Scope of the Study

This study seeks to examine the relationship between work factors (workplace violence, supervisor-subordinate guanxi), individual factors (career adaptability, emotional intelligence), human resource management practices (recruitment and selection practices, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation), and turnover intention with job satisfaction and job burnout as mediating factors

among doctors. This study adopts purposive sampling to collect data from doctors in Henan province, China. The respondents are required to meet the following three criteria:

(1) Participants must be doctors employed in public hospitals in Henan Province, China.

(2) Participants must have worked for more than 1 year in the public hospital.

1.9 Definition of Key Terms

Turnover intention: Turnover intention denotes the degree to which an individual is inclined to willingly depart from their existing role and organization (Labrague et al., 2018).

Workplace violence: Workplace violence encompasses a broad spectrum of inappropriate behaviors, including situations where employees have been subjected to abuse, threats, discrimination, or physical assault in contexts related to their employment, including travel, which jeopardizes their safety, health, and overall well-being (P. Wang, M. Wang, G. Hu et al., 2006).

Supervisor-Subordinate Guanxi: Supervisor-subordinate guanxi signifies the interpersonal connections between supervisors and subordinates that evolve from work-related and non-work-related social interactions (Law et al., 2000).

Career adaptability: Career adaptability denotes individuals' ability to overcome challenging situations encountered in their professional lives (Maggiori et al., 2017).

Recruitment and Selection: Recruitment and Selection related process is the plan to find, attract, and select candidates who align with company values, interests, expectations, and competencies (Demo et al., 2012).

Training and development: Training and development are practices with theoretical and practical approaches to help employees acquire competence and continuously learn to enhance knowledge and production (Imna & Hassan, 2015).

Performance appraisal: Performance appraisal evaluates an employee's task performance, facilitating career development and serving as a communication channel between the employee and management (Imna & Hassan, 2015).

Compensation: Compensation, traditionally seen as tangible benefits and financial returns for employees, now takes various forms in the evolving economy and current work environment (Imna & Hassan, 2015).

Emotional intelligence: Emotional intelligence involves accurately perceiving, appraising, and expressing emotions. It includes accessing or generating feelings for enhanced understanding and emotional knowledge and regulating emotions to foster emotional and intellectual growth (Wong & Law, 2002).

Job satisfaction: Job satisfaction pertains to an individual's emotional response to their employment (Smith et al., 1969).

Job burnout: Burnout is an emotional condition characterized by feelings of exhaustion, cynicism, and decreased efficiency, typically arising in response to prolonged exposure to workplace stressors (C. Li & K. Shi, 2003).

Work factors: Work factors are immediate work environment characteristics that affect employee withdrawal behaviors such as turnover and absenteeism (Porter & Steers, 1973).

Individual factors: Individual factors refer to personal attributes that reside within the individual and influence career success and work adjustment (Judge et al., 1995).

Human resource management practices: Human resource management practices are strategic methods that integrate human resource practices to achieve organizational objectives and guide management's thoughts and actions (Demo et al., 2012).

1.10 Organization of Chapters

Chapter one denotes the introductory section, an outline for the present study. This chapter introduces the background, lists the related objectives, and states the research questions. The keywords' definitions follow behind the study's theoretical and practical contribution.

Chapter two is the literature review section. This chapter reviews findings in relevant journals and articles about turnover intention, workplace violence, supervisor-subordinate guanxi, career adaptability, emotional intelligence, recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation, job burnout, and job satisfaction. In addition, this chapter also contains the related hypothesis and the theoretical framework.

Chapter three is related to the research methodology. The related chapter delineates the methodology employed in the study, including research design, population, sample, sampling, sample size, questionnaire design and related process, data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter four denotes the study’s related findings. This chapter expounds on the research findings of data analysis and related hypothesis testing.

Chapter five is the final section of the research, offering the conclusion, limits, and relevant suggestions for future scholars.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The present chapter presents the previous scholars' theoretical works, which contributed to forming this study's framework. It begins with the dependent variable, turnover intention. The study then analyzes the relevant theory and explores the independent and mediating variables, including workplace violence, supervisor-subordinate, career adaptability, emotional intelligence, recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal and compensation, job satisfaction, and job burnout. This chapter also delves into the evolution of these variables and the establishment of relationships between them. Finally, all relevant hypotheses, including all variables of the theoretical framework and gaps, are rationalized and summarized.

2.2 Turnover Intention

Turnover intention denotes the extent to which individuals willingly depart from their existing roles and organizations (Labrague et al., 2018). The rate at which employees leave their positions is a significant issue in the healthcare industry (R. He et al., 2020). There are 2 types of turnover: involuntary and voluntary. Voluntary turnover happens when employees quit the organization due to their own decisions, such as resignation. Involuntary leave is when employees are asked to leave the corporation permanently due to termination or layoff (Shaw, 1998).

Bluedorn (1982) noted that turnover intention is a cognitive process, while turnover is a behavioral process. Turnover intention is therefore both a predictor and a precursor to real turnover. The extent to which an employee engages in planning to

leave their current position—either to look for work elsewhere or with the goal of leaving their current company—is known as turnover intention. Studies concentrate on employees' turnover intention rather than the actual act of turnover (Chung & Jeon, 2020). Because it is tough to obtain the exact resources of employees who leave organizations, turnover intention, also known as turnover cognition, is considered a more informative metric than the turnover rate. It serves as a precursor to turnover and demonstrates superior predictability (Y. Zhang & X. Feng, 2011). Thus, measuring turnover intention can provide a valuable indication of potential turnover in organizations. Thus, the current study concentrates on turnover intention rather than actual turnover.

Previous researchers have used different terminologies to refer to turnover intention in their studies, such as intention to leave (C. Liu et al., 2012), intention to withdraw (Graen et al., 1982), employee retention (Hunt et al., 2012), dropout intention (P. Peng et al., 2022), and intention to quit (Stefanovska - Petkovska et al., 2021).

Turnover intention is one of the most studied themes related to turnover attitudes. It is considered the last stage before an employee leaves the present job. The antecedents of turnover intention are various, such as job satisfaction (X. Chen et al., 2019; Chung & Jeon, 2020), job burnout (X. Chen et al., 2019; Koo et al., 2020), stress (J. Liu, Zhu, et al., 2019), work-life balance (I. Chen et al., 2015), rewards and compensation (Koo et al., 2020), job security (X. Duan et al., 2019; S. Zhao et al., 2018), training (Memon et al., 2016), career development (Memon et al., 2021; D. Wen et al., 2021), performance appraisal (Brown et al., 2010; Memon et al., 2019), supervisor relationship (Westbrook et al., 2022), organizational environment (Al Sabei et al., 2020; Y. Xiao et al., 2021), organizational support (Cai & Zhou, 2009; S. Huang

et al., 2017), emotional intelligence (Hong & Lee, 2016), and career adaptability (S. Chan et al., 2016; Chouhan, 2022; C. Sun et al., 2023). Scholars have identified these factors as key drivers of employee engagement, motivation, and loyalty. All mentioned factors can directly or indirectly influence an employee's intention to turnover from their position or search for a new opportunity in another organization.

Prior scholars have focused on turnover intention as a critical variable (Al Sabei et al., 2020; Chung & Jeon, 2020; Y. Xiao et al., 2021). Schmidt et al. (2018) found that employees not benefiting from HRM practices had higher turnover intentions. According to Aburumman et al. (2020), turnover intention and job satisfaction are primary responses to attitudes related to HRM practices. In the Chinese cultural context, superior-subordinate guanxi has been linked to turnover intention, with job satisfaction mediating this relationship (Cheung et al., 2009). Additionally, at a personal level, emotional intelligence and career adaptability significantly influence turnover (Hong & Lee, 2016; Chan & Mai, 2015).

Recruitment and selection have a clear role in ensuring the sustainability of employees in the organization (Hossain et al., 2015). Training and development are regarded as essential HRM practices (Aburumman et al., 2020). Compensation is a form of recognition for service, work achievement, or hard work and is widely used in HRM among employees (Koo et al., 2020). From the individual's perspective, practical feedback from related appraisal of performance helps achieve the employee's personal goals and enhances the employee's performance and career development (Jawahar, 2006). By implementing effective HRM practices, employees can receive resources such as rewards, career promotions, more training and development opportunities, and recognition from supervisors. When employees are well compensated in the long run, they will be satisfied with their organizations and are willing to maintain their present