TURNOVER INTENTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT OF NURSING STAFF: A CASE STUDY OF SAUDI ARABIA

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ABSTRACT: *The present study focuses on the relationship between Turnover Intention (TI) and organizational commitment (OC) vis-à-vis nursing staff in Saudi Arabia. It is a cross-sectional quantitative study. Data was collected on line from public hospitals located in six cities in Saudi Arabia. Inclusion/Exclusion criteria was established prior to the collection of data. The Questionnaire was translated by students of executive masters' program HSAE 613 studying in King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah as integral part of their learning outcomes for application of statistical tools in hospital administration. Statistical software (SPSS) and (AMOS) were used to address the research questions. The outcomes of the present study will provide guidelines to the managers of Health-care institutions, in public sector, to improve OC and to contain Turnover intentions of nurses working in public hospitals to enhance performance of health care institutions.*

Keywords: Turnover Intention, Organizational Commitment, Nurses, Structural Equation Modelling

1. INTRODUCTION:

The healthcare profession necessitates a high level of competence and expertise, as it entails many challenging responsibilities Simcock, Reeve, et al., [13] The nursing profession is not exempt from encountering challenges and opportunities for professional advancement due to the strong demand for specialized skills Jia, Chen, et al., [9]. Furthermore, the nursing field is experiencing notable growth in career opportunities, as there is a projected substantial rise in the demand for nurses in the foreseeable future Ulupinar and Aydogan, [14]. Nevertheless, the nursing profession presents significant challenges in modern society. Nursing professionals in Asian countries and the Middle East are not exempt from this phenomenon. Furthermore, language obstacles, adherence to religious norms, and societal stigmas pose additional challenges for the Saudi Arabia due to its transition, rendering their jobs more arduous than their counterparts in other global regions Moghadam, [11]. Conducting research in transitioning countries can present challenges due to a prevalent lack of comprehension regarding the intricate nature of the cultural milieu. The kingdom's Vision 2030 aims to develop its economy and society over the long term Chowdhury, Mok, et al., [7]. As part of the plan, the country is investing in infrastructure, healthcare, education, and recreation which will create jobs for Saudi citizens and promote entrepreneurship. Nursing and healthcare workers often face heightened stress levels due to multifaceted challenges. Such challenges include long hours, physically demanding work, and the emotional strain of caring for patients (Mann and Cowburn, [10]; Wong and Cummings, [15]. This issue becomes extreme when healthcare nursing staff feels difficulty dealing with local people with many cultural barriers, like in Middle Eastern countries. This issue can create a problematic situation for the nurses, as it can be challenging to communicate with their patients and provide them with the best care. One comes across very less studies that address the issues concerning nursing staff. The development of organizational commitment among hospital workers in Saudi Arabia has been the subject of numerous scholarly research. However, the debate around this issue remains inconclusive, with no consensus reached thus far Azeem and Altalhi, [5]; Al-Yami, Galdas, et al., [2]; Alsughayir, [4]. Research consistently demonstrates an inverse relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intention Meyer & Allen, [16]. Employees with higher levels of affective commitment, characterized by emotional attachment and identification with the organization, are less likely to express an intention to leave their current positions Meyer & Herscovitch, [17]. Job satisfaction and Organizational Commitment among the paramedics have been studied by Nawal and Khushnoor [1]. Almarashi et; al [3] elaborated on the Job satisfaction and organizational commitment of Doctors in Saudi Arabia.

The authors propose using the Organizational Commitment (OC) and Anticipated Turnover Scale (ATS), widely used and translated into various languages, as a valid and reliable tool for measuring OC and predicting job turnover e.g. de Sul and Lucas, [8]. This process involves testing the scale to ensure it accurately measures OC and predicts turnover. Further, the data collected using the scale should then be analyzed to study the relationship between the study variables OC and turnover intentions. Present study will focus on the relationship between Organizational Commitment and Turnover Intention among nurses in private hospitals in Saudi Arabia. Based on the literature review the authors hypothesize an inverse relation between OC and ATS.

1.2. Format of the Study: The rest of the paper proceeds as follows: Sec (2) explains the methodology adopted to address the research question; in Sec (3) data analysis will be conducted and relevant results will be displayed; Sec (4) discusses the results Sec (5) and Sec (6) briefly concludes the study with certain limitations.

2. METHODS:

2.1. Research Design: Quantitative cross-sectional design with one-time contact with the respondents was adopted to elicit the opinions of respondents. It is a retrospective study and the research method adopted was sample survey and the

data was collected through a transformed/ translated questionnaire.

2.2. Measurement Scales: The data collection instrument was adapted from [6] and it was modified/translated to Arabic language for ease of comprehension through the method of transliteration for eliciting the right perspective of the respondents. The instrument for the present study consisted of three parts. Part 'A' consisted of socio-demographic profile, Part 'B' consisted of 10 items covering AT Scale. Part 'C' consisted of nine items covering OC scale. Both scales were validated for the Portuguese cultural context [6]. The codes for selecting the statement are stated in the questionnaire. English version of the instrument used to elicit information from the respondents/nurses is attached at Appendix 'A'. The statement by which the respondents were assured of their anonymity and the benefits of carrying out the present study was also added at the top of the Questionnaire. The range of scores for AT score will be from 10 -70 points whereas for OC scale is from 9 – 45 scores. In previous studies the internal consistency for AT scale was 0.94 [18] and OC scale was 0.90 [19].

2.3. Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria: Only those respondents who are currently working in private hospitals in Saudi Arabia were included in the study. Respondents not working in private hospitals were not included in the study.

2.4. Study Setting/Data Collection: An online Questionnaire was also developed and the nursing staff of the relevant hospitals were duly informed about the study. Interested individuals then completed eligibility question about the Public/Private Hospital. If a person was not eligible, the survey notified them that they were ineligible and the platform automatically closed the survey. Eligible individuals proceeded to complete the study questionnaire, after which they received a note encouraging them to share the survey link with their contacts. Participants did not receive compensation for completing the survey. Total of 260 questionnaires were received back, of which 20 were discarded due to incomplete information so the response rate was 92%.

2.5. Data Analysis/ Tools: Being an exploratory study, apart from studying socio-demographic profile of the respondents. Univariate analysis for ATS and OC is carried out using relative percentages. Bivariate analysis with special emphasis on association between ATS and OC was carried out. All necessary calculation for extracting the desired results were carried out using SPSS and for studying the relationship between ATS and OC an adds on with SPSS i.e. AMOS is employed to visually represent the relationship.

3. RESULTS:

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic sampling characteristics of the respondents. The sample was composed mostly of Female nurses (71.7%); the average age was 36 years; participants were predominantly married (67.5%). Majority (53.8%)of nurses have professional category of staff nurse and are non-Saudis. The average time respondents had worked in the profession was 12 years (SD = 7.320) and mostly (76%) have spent less than 10 years in the current function unit. 44% of the respondents were working in Community Care unit and Personalized Health Care Unit The study seems be a little gender biased towards female nurses.

Table 1: Showing Mean and S.D for Scale variables and Absolute and Relative Percentages for Categorical Variables.

Scale Variables		Mean	Standard Deviation	
Age		36	7.820	
Years		12	7.320	
Categorical Variables			Absolute frequency	Relative %
Gender	Male	1	68	28.3%
	Female	2	172	71.7%
Marital Status	Single	1	62	25.8%
	Married	2	162	67.5%
	Widowed	3	7	2.9%
	Divorced/ Separated	4	9	3.8%
Professional Category	Staff Nurse	1	129	53.8%
	Nurse Specialist	2	58	24.2%
	Nurse Manager	3	14	5.8%
	Others	4	39	16.3%
Qualification	Nursing Diploma	1	89	37.1%
	Under-Graduate	2	95	39.5%
	Post-Graduate	3	56	23.3%
Current Functional Unit	Community Care Unit	1	53	22.1%
	Personalized Healthcare Unit	2	54	22.5%
	Family Healthcare Unit	3	18	7.5%
	Public Health Unit	4	15	6.3%
	Other	5	100	41.6%
Length of Service in Current Unit	Less than 10	1	181	76.1%
	10-20	2	50	21.0%
	More than 20	3	7	2.9%
Nationality	Saudi	1	90	37.5%
	Non-Saudi (Arabic Speaking)	2	65	27.08%
	Non-Saudi (Non-Arabic Speaking)	3	85	35.41%

Relative frequencies of the Study Variables: Relative frequencies portray the real intentions of the respondents; Table 2 and 3 exhibits the relative frequency of each item of the two study variables under study. Relative frequencies of AT scale indicate that nurses have no intention to leave soon. Item 10 clearly shows 71.3% (19.2+20.8+28.3) nurses strongly disagree to slightly disagree to leave the workplace moreover, Item 1 relative frequencies are more skewed towards agreeing

to stay with the current workplace for some time 80% (16.3+24.6+40). As such the anticipated turnover intentions of our sample was quite low. Relative frequencies for Organization Commitment of nurses are shown in Table 3. Majority of nurses 78.8% were willing to make an effort beyond what is normal to help organization to succeed and 75.4% felt that their personal values coincided with those of the organization where they work

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Table 2: Showing Relative Percentages for 10 items of AT scale

	Intention of Turnover Scale —De Sul and Lucas (2020)	1*	2*	3*	4*	5*	6*	7*
1	I intend to stay at my current workplace for some time.	3.3%	2.1%	3.8%	10.0%	16.3%	24.6%	40.0%
2	I am pretty sure I will leave my workplace in the near future.	18.3%	20.8%	28.8%	15.0%	7.9%	2.5%	6.7%
3	Deciding to stay or leave my workplace is not a key issue for me at the moment	17.5%	24.2%	32.9%	11.3%	5.4%	2.1%	6.7%
4	If I received another job offer tomorrow, I would seriously consider it.	5.8%	1.7%	6.3%	15.0%	19.6%	20.4%	31.3%
5	I have no intention of leaving my current workplace.	5.4%	2.1%	8.3%	14.6%	18.8%	22.5%	28.3%
6	I have been in this workplace as long as I wanted to.	17.5%	24.2%	38.3%	10.8%	2.5%	1.7%	5.0%
7	I am sure I will be here for some time.	2.9%	1.3%	5.4%	13.8%	19.6%	23.8%	33.3%
8	I intend to keep my job in this organization for some time.	2.9%	2.1%	4.2%	11.3%	18.3%	23.8%	37.5%
9	I have serious doubts about whether or not I will actually stay in this organization.	19.2%	20.8%	28.3%	16.7%	4.2%	2.5%	8.3%
10	I plan to leave this workplace in near future.	16.7%	22.9%	31.7%	12.5%	7.9%	1.7%	6.7%

*1= Strongly Disagree, 2=Moderately Disagree, 3=Slightly Disagree, 4= Uncertain, 5= Slightly Agree, 6= Moderately Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree.

Table 3: Showing Relative Percentages for 9 items of OC scale

	Organizational Commitment Scale—Gomes (2007)	1*	2*	3*	4*	5*
1	I am willing to make an effort beyond what is normal to help this organization succeed	7.5%	3.3%	10.4%	49.6%	29.2%
2	I tell my friends that this organization is a great place to work	5.0%	7.1%	19.2%	46.7%	22.1%
3	I am willing to accept almost any kind of assignment so that I can continue to work in this organization	43.8%	20.0%	20.0%	6.3%	10.0%
4	I find that my personal values and those of this organization are quite similar	5.0%	7.5%	24.6%	49.6%	13.3%
5	I am proud to tell others that I work in this organization.	5.0%	5.0%	14.6%	52.9%	22.5%
6	I feel inspired to do my best by the fact that I work in this organization.	3.8%	5.4%	17.5%	50.8%	22.5%
7	I feel very happy to have chosen this organization to work in.	3.8%	5.4%	17.1%	52.5%	21.3%
8	I am really interested in the destiny of this organization.	4.2%	4.2%	18.8%	55.4%	17.5%
9	For me, this is the best place to work.	6.7%	9.2%	20.8%	44.2%	19.2%

*Totally Disagree= 1, Disagree=2, Uncertain=3, Agree=4, Totally Agree=5

Turnover and Organizational Commitment: Regarding the turnover intention, we verified that 80% of nurses agreed with the item "1. I intend to stay at my current . . ." and only 17.1% agreed with the item "2. I am pretty sure I will leave . . ." see Table 2. With reference to organizational commitment, we found that 78.8% of the participants agreed with the item "1. I am willing to make an effort beyond what is normal . . .". The analysis of the remaining items allows us to conclude that nurses in our study are committed to their organization see Table 3. Keeping in view the general trend emerging from Table 2 and 3 it is quite evident that nurses in the current study have high Organizational Commitment and

have high relative frequency to stay in the current organizational. In other words, we can infer that high Organizational Commitment will lead to low intention to leave the organization.

Inter-item Consistency and Association between OC and Turnover Intentions:

The Pearson's Coefficient in Table 4 prompted us to analyze the relationship between the turnover intention and organizational commitment. When correlating turnover intention with organizational commitment, we obtained the value of r = -0.143 (p < 0.05), which shows that there is a significant negative correlation between these variables. It means that when organizational commitment increases the

intention to stay decreases thus, we found that there is a significant negative correlation between turnover intention and organizational commitment among the nurses working in public hospitals in Saudi Arabia.

Table 4: Inter-Item Consistency and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient of Study Variables

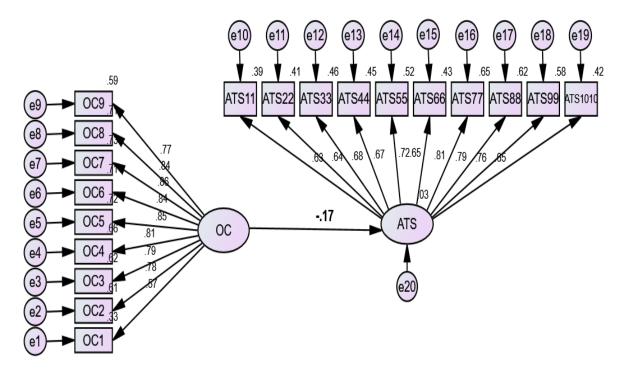| Scales	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Pearson's Correlation Coefficient
Anticipated Turnover Scale	10	0.904	-0.143 (0.02)
Organizational Commitment Scale	9	0.936	

Figure 1: Showing Measurement and Structural Model of OC and ATS

Inter item consistency of the study variables as shown in Table 3 were measured through Cronbach's alpha. The study variables had Cronbach's alpha of 0.904 for ATS and 0.936 for OC which according to Nunnally [12] are quite satisfactory. Figure 1 depicts the inverse relationship between OC and ATS (beta=-0.17 with p < 0.05). Figure 1 is in fact an amalgamation of measurement and structural model where structural model portrays regression between the main study variables. Thus our hypothesized inverse relation between the OC and ATS in the current study is supported.

4. Discussion/Conclusion/Future Implications:
Present study probed into the relationship between OC and ATS in nursing staff working in private hospitals. An inverse relationship as was hypothesized was supported, pointing to the fact that as the OC of nurses increases intention to leave of nurses working in private hospital in Saudi decreases. As regards which items have the most significant impact on the study variables it is seen from Figure 1 that for OC item 1 "*I am willing to make an effort beyond what is normal to help this organization succeed*" and item 7 "*I feel very happy to have chosen this organization to work in*" have the largest factor loading. Regarding ATS item 10 "*I plan to leave this workplace in near future*" has the largest factor loading. The results of the measurement and structural models very much

match the results of relative frequencies of ATS and OC. Outcomes of the current study matches the results of [6] conducted in Portuguese culture. In a nutshell we can say that even in Saudi Arabia where we have contingent diversified work force the constructs of OC and ATS have an inverse relation as manifested in [6] a study conducted in western culture. Despite the fact that much research has been carried on the study variables, but still, there is room for further research. Work on contingency frame work with the same study variables can be carried out for looking into the moderation and mediation effects of some demographic and stress variables before a generalization is made about the study variables. Moreover, an extended study may be conducted in private sector health care institutions to study the differential effect of the study variables across the public and private hospitals.

5. Limitations: There are two limitations to this study:
a. The current study is restricted to only public hospitals so the generalizability of the current study to private sector hospitals may be a constraint.
b. Majority 62% of the respondents are expatriate nurses hired on contract basis (contingent work force)
c. The sample was not equi-represented by gender as 71% of the sample consisted of female nurses.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

All information collected through this questionnaire will only be used for academic purposes. Anonymity of the respondents will be ensured by the person collecting the information. Your contribution in filling the said questionnaire shall be highly appreciated.

Part –A (**Demographic Profile**)

Gender	Male(1)	Female(2)		Age		Years
Marital Status	Single(1)	Married(2)	Widowed(3)	Divorced/Separated(4)		
Professional Category	Staff Nurse(1)	Nurse Specialist(2)	Nurse Manager(3)	Other(4)		
Years of Professional Activity		Years				
Academic		Nursing Diploma(1)	Under-Graduate Education (2)	Post-Graduate Education(3)		

Current Functional Unit:

Community Care Unit	(1)
Personalized Healthcare Unit	(2)
Family Healthcare Unit	(3)
Public Health Unit	(4)
Other	(5)
Years	

Length of Service in Current Unit:

Nationality	Saudi(1)	Non-Saudi (arabic speaking)(2)	Non-Saudi (non-arabic speaking) (3)

Part – B *Anticipated Turnover Scale* (**ATS Scale**)

Strongly Disagree(SD) =1, Moderately Disagree(MD)=2, Slightly Disagree(SLD) = 3, Uncertain(U) = 4, Slightly Agree (SLA)= 5, Moderately Agree(MA) =6, Strongly Agree(SA) =7   (*Circle only one number on each item*)

S.No:	Items	SD	MD	SLD	U	SLA	MA	SA
1	I intend to stay at my current workplace for some time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	I am pretty sure I will leave my workplace in the near future.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Deciding to stay or leave my workplace is not a key issue for me at the moment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	If I received another job offer tomorrow, I would seriously consider it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	I have no intention of leaving my current workplace.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	I have been in this workplace as long as I wanted to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	I am sure I will be here for some time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	I intend to keep my job in this organization for some time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	I have serious doubts about whether or not I will actually stay in this organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I plan to leave this workplace in near future.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Totally Disagree(TD) = 1, Disagree(D) =2, Uncertain(U)=3, Agree(A)=4, Totally Agree(TA)=5

Part - C Organizational Commitment (**OC Scale**)

(*Circle only one number on each item*)

S.No:	Items	TD	D	U	A	TA
1	I am willing to make an effort beyond what is normal to help this organization succeed	1	2	3	4	5
2	I tell my friends that this organization is a great place to work	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am willing to accept almost any kind of assignment so that I can continue to work in this organization	1	2	3	4	5
4	I find that my personal values and those of this organization are quite similar	1	2	3	4	5
5	I am proud to tell others that I work in this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I feel inspired to do my best by the fact that I work in this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I feel very happy to have chosen this organization to work in.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I am really interested in the destiny of this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
9	For me, this is the best place to work.	1	2	3	4	5