

A Study of Job Burnout, Job Satisfaction, and Intention to Leave Their Present Job Among Healthcare Workers Using Structural Equation Modelling

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Abstract

Maintaining and improving the quality of nursing care is a critical issue in the healthcare system, and the shortage of healthcare workers is a significant challenge faced by many countries worldwide. The shortage of healthcare workers can have a severe impact on the healthcare system, leading to decreased quality of care, increased patient wait times, and lower patient satisfaction. It can also lead to higher rates of burnout and stress, low job satisfaction, and intention to leave their job among healthcare workers who are overworked and have limited resources. The current study aims to explore the correlations between job burnout, job satisfaction, and intention to leave. The survey employed random sampling to gather data from employees of a private hospital in Ulaanbaatar. A total of 217 employees participated in the study, and for verification and testing the proposed hypothesis in the study, we conducted various statistical analyses inclusive of factor analysis, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, and structural equation models (SEMs). The study's findings revealed a significant negative effect of job burnout on healthcare workers' job satisfaction, as well as a positive effect on their intention to leave their current position. Furthermore, the study findings indicate that there is a negative relationship between job satisfaction and employee's intention to leave their jobs. In other words, a decrease in job satisfaction correlates with an increase in the likelihood of employees seeking alternative employment opportunities. Additionally, the results revealed that job satisfaction plays a mediating role in the connection between job burnout and the intention to leave. Our study highlights the negative impact of job burnout on job satisfaction and its positive impact on the intention to leave. Additionally, it emphasizes the important mediating role of job satisfaction in this relationship. These findings provide empirical evidence for the importance of addressing job burnout and promoting job satisfaction to reduce the intention to leave among employees in clinics.

Keywords: Job burnout, job satisfaction, intention to leave, healthcare workers

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1. Introduction

The Globally, there is a shortage of 7.2 million healthcare professionals, and it is expected to double annually in the coming year (Ferede & et al, 2018). The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified the shortage of healthcare workers as one of the greatest challenges facing health assistance, service delivery, and quality of care worldwide (WHO, 2020). Research has consistently demonstrated that maintaining an adequate number of specialists in hospitals and healthcare settings has a positive impact on patient safety, mortality rates, and overall patient outcomes. However, as society and the economy undergo rapid changes and population concentrations increase, the demand for healthcare services escalates, resulting in a global shortage of healthcare workers. This shortage is not limited to our country but is a widespread issue worldwide. Addressing the shortage of healthcare workers has become a critical challenge that requires attention and strategic interventions to ensure the provision of quality healthcare services and maintain optimal patient outcomes. Studies show that nurses in Asian countries are more willing to leave their current jobs. For instance, a study conducted in China's Shangjie region reported a dissatisfaction rate of 50.2% among nurses, with 40% of them expressing the intention to leave their current employment (Woldekiros & et al, 2022).

In Mongolia, about 56,000 people are working in the healthcare sector in our country, and among them, 13,473 are nurses. Currently, the number of nurses working in hospitals falls short of the approved number, and considering the demand for medical and service needs as well as bed turnover rates, more nurses than the approved positions are needed (Enkh-amgalan, 2023). The shortage of nurses in hospitals can have a negative impact on the quality of care and patient satisfaction. When there are not enough nurses to meet the needs of patients, it can lead to longer wait times, delays in treatment, and a lower quality of care overall. In addition, the shortage of nurses can also lead to increased workload and stress for the nurses who are on staff, which can lead to burnout and decreased job satisfaction. This can create a cycle where healthcare workers leave their positions, leading to further shortages and exacerbating the problem (Van Bogaert & et al, 2010).

While the issue of healthcare professionals' willingness to leave their current jobs is a global concern, particularly in developing countries like ours, there is a lack of comprehensive studies on this matter. It is crucial to emphasize the importance of conducting ongoing research to gather robust evidence that can support efforts in reducing and resolving this problem. By generating substantial evidence, we can gain a deeper understanding of the underlying factors contributing to healthcare worker turnover and develop effective strategies to address this issue.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine the correlation between job burnout, job satisfaction, and the intention to leave among employees within the healthcare sector.

2. Theoretical framework

There is a significant need for a multitude of scientific research studies to delve into critical aspects such as workload, job burnout, and intention to leave the nursing profession.

Job burnout is indeed a concept extensively discussed in the field of organizational behavior, primarily by researchers such as Freudenberger and Maslach. Job burnout is characterized by feelings of exhaustion, frustration, anger, criticism, ineffectiveness, and failure (Kanchanapa & Karnsomdee, 2019). Job burnout is a persistent and chronic state of mental fatigue, emotional exhaustion, and discouragement that arises from prolonged exposure to chronic job stress (Lau & et al, 2005). This phenomenon can be observed across various occupations and is characterized by a sense of overwhelming exhaustion, reduced motivation, and a negative outlook toward work. It is a long-term consequence of continuous stress in the workplace, which can have detrimental effects on an individual's well-being and job performance. Job burnout is characterized by three main symptoms: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and often a decrease in personal accomplishments (Kim & et al, 2007). Job burnout often arises from an adverse work environment, combined with persistent and prolonged work-related stressors (Kokkinos, 2007) and this subsequently impacts employee performance, diminishes productivity, and erodes job satisfaction (Lin & et al, 2013), and ultimately fosters a sense of motivation to resign.

Job satisfaction is intricately linked to key factors that profoundly impact organizational success, including turnover, job burnout, employee engagement, and productivity (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2001). Job satisfaction encompasses an individual's emotional state that reflects the balance between satisfaction and dissatisfaction regarding their work. It essentially represents the overall attitude employees hold toward their job. Job satisfaction is a complex and multifaceted emotional concept that arises from the interaction between the expectations and values of hospital staff, their work environment, and their personal characteristics. When evaluating the job satisfaction of hospital staff, it is crucial to consider various factors, including the characteristics of the work itself, the workload they face, and the overall work environment they operate (Kavanaugh & et al, 2006). To enhance employee satisfaction, it is crucial to prioritize the psychological well-being of employees. By paying attention to their psychological health, organizations can effectively reduce job burnout, consequently diminishing the intention to leave among employees (Chen & et al, 2019).

The global healthcare worker shortage and the high turnover rate among healthcare professionals have emerged as significant challenges with detrimental effects on health systems worldwide. Intention to leave refers to an employee's deliberate plan or inclination to quit their current job and actively seek alternative employment in the near future. It reflects their intention to discontinue their present position and explore other job opportunities. The intention to leave represents an individual's behavioral intention and serves as the conclusive step in the decision-making process before actually quitting (Bester & et al, 2015). Researchers have extensively explored several significant factors that influence healthcare workers' decisions regarding whether to stay in their profession or leave. The findings of these studies indicate that turnover intention among healthcare workers is significantly influenced by factors such as nursing workload, work-related stress, job burnout, and job satisfaction (Applebaum & et al, 2010; Meeusen & et al, 2011).

2.1 Relationship between Job Burnout and Job Satisfaction

Prolonged burnout at work can lead to a decrease in job satisfaction and impaired work productivity for employees, consequently negatively impacting the quality of service provided. (Aiken & et al, 2012). The researchers Yu-Hsia and Mei-Hsiang (2019) discovered a significant relationship between job satisfaction and burnout. Significantly, the study revealed that personal burnout, work-related burnout, and over-commitment to work are closely linked to both intrinsic satisfaction and extrinsic satisfaction. Numerous studies have consistently demonstrated a negative correlation between job satisfaction and absenteeism among healthcare workers (Kara, 2020; Lin & et al, 2013; Oliveira & et al, 2018; Safari, 2020; Safadi & et al, 2023; Yu-Hsia & Mei-Hsiang, 2019). Building upon the aforementioned research, we propose our next hypothesis:

H1: Job burnout is negatively affecting job satisfaction.

2.2 Relationship between Job Burnout and Intention to leave

Job burnout stands out as a prominent factor that significantly impacts the intention to leave, with a notable positive correlation between the level of burnout and the intensity of the intention to leave (Mat Riffing & Dane, 2022). As job burnout intensifies, job satisfaction tends to decline, and the likelihood of having the intention to leave increases (Akhirah & et al, 2023). The intention to leave is negatively correlated with job satisfaction and positively correlated with job burnout (Chen & et al, 2019). Consequently, reducing professional burnout has the potential to enhance job satisfaction, subsequently decreasing physicians' intention to leave (Zhang & Feng, 2011). Addressing and mitigating job burnout among medical workers can play a pivotal role in reducing turnover rates within the profession (Willard-Grace & et al, 2019). Building upon the findings of these studies, we formulated our subsequent hypothesis.

H2: Job burnout is positively affecting intention to leave.

2.3 Relationship between Job satisfaction and Intention to leave

Various factors contribute to employees' reasons for leaving their jobs, including job dissatisfaction, inadequate compensation relative to the work performed, excessive and inflexible working hours, and high workload (Cooper & Barriball, 2007). Employee job satisfaction exhibits a strong correlation with the intention to leave (Yael, 2012). Dissatisfaction with one's job often gives rise to thoughts and intentions of leaving (Russell & et al, 2020). Job satisfaction significantly impacts their decision-making process regarding whether to remain in their present job or actively seek alternative opportunities. Satisfied employees are less likely to have the desire to leave their organization (Peterson & et al, 2011). However, as employee dissatisfaction grows, so does the inclination to leave the organization, leading to an increase in employees (Liu & et al, 2019). Many studies such as Applebaum, et al (2010), Chen, et al (2019), Galletas, et al (2016), Heinen, et al (2013), Mathieu, et al (2015), Russell, et al (2020), Yücel (2012) found that job satisfaction has a significant effect on the intention to leave. Based on the aforementioned findings, we formulate the following hypothesis:

H3: Job satisfaction is significantly impacting the intention to leave.

H4: Job satisfaction has a mediating effect on the relationship between job burnout and the intention to leave.

Drawing upon theoretical frameworks and empirical research, our proposed model posits that job satisfaction acts as a critical mediator between job burnout and the intention to leave. To illustrate this relationship, we have created the following research model, which is visualized in Figure 1.

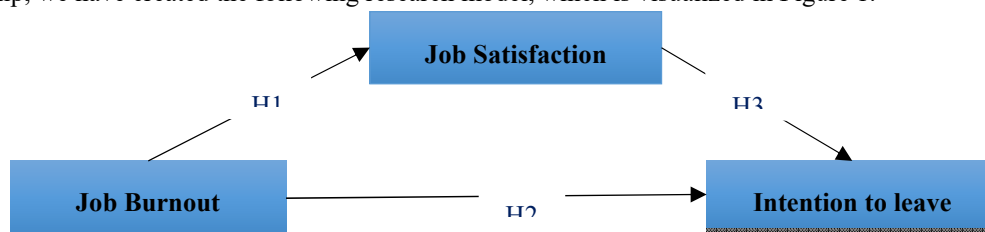


Figure 1. Research model

3. Materials and methods

3.1 Data Collection and Sample Size

The present study aims to investigate the relationship between job burnout, job satisfaction, and intention to leave among employees of one private clinic in Mongolia, and to compare the findings with previous research conducted by other scholars. The survey was conducted online from April 3 to May 5, 2023, and a total of 217 questionnaires were used in the survey.

3.2 Instrument and Reliability

Job Burnout: To assess job burnout, the study utilized a Bergen Burnout Inventory (BBI) developed by Feldt, et al (2014). The measure is composed of nine items with a 6-point Likert scale (1 = Totally disagree to 6 = Totally agree). Cronbach's alpha of the job burnout scale is 0.951, the KMO value is 0.914, and the significance of Bartlett's test of sphericity is 0.000 $0 < 0.05$.

Job Satisfaction: To assess job satisfaction, the study utilized developed by Mac Donald and MacIntyre (1997) was used. The measure is composed of ten items with a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Totally disagree to 5 = Totally agree). Cronbach's alpha of the job satisfaction scale is 0.911, the KMO value is 0.929, and the significance of Bartlett's test of sphericity is 0.000 $0 < 0.05$.

Intention to Leave: To assess the intention to leave, the study utilized developed by Hasselhorn et al. (2003). A measure is a tool used to measure an individual's intention to leave their current job or organization and is composed of 4 items. Evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

agree) was used to rate responses. Cronbach's alpha of the intention to leave is 0.923, the KMO value is 0.914, and the significance of Bartlett's test of sphericity is 0.000 $0 < 0.05$.

4. Research results and discussion

4.1 Demographic Indicators

The respondent's background information is summarized in Table 1. A total of 217 employees participated in the survey, of which 16.1% were male and 83.9% were female. Regarding age, the majority 30% were under 30 years old, 37.8% were aged 31-40, 18.9% were aged 41-50, and 13.4% were over 51 years old. Concerning years of work, 9.2% had worked up to 1 year, 24.4% for 1-5 years, 32.3% for 6-10 years, 7.8% for 11-15 years, 13.8% for 16-20 years, and only 12.4% had worked for more than 21 years. In terms of their positions, the respondents were distributed as follows: 25.8% were doctors, 59.4% were nurses, 6.9% were specialists, and 7.8% were service workers.

Table 1. The demographic of respondents

Indicator	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age (years)	30 under	65	30.0
	31-40	82	37.8
	41-50	41	18.9
	51 above	29	13.4
	Total	217	100
Gender	Female	182	83.9
	Male	35	16.1
	Total	217	100
Positions	Doctor	56	25.8
	Nurse	129	59.4
	Specialist	15	6.9
	Service worker	17	7.8
	Total	217	100
Working experience	Up to 1 year	20	9.2
	1-5 years	53	24.4
	6-10 years	70	32.3
	11-15 years	17	7.8
	16-20 years	30	13.8
	21 and more years	27	12.4
	Total	217	100
Department, division	Department of Diagnostic Radiology	16	7.4
	Department of Anaesthesia and Intensive Care	36	16.6
	Combined Surgical department	81	37.3
	Department of Polyclinic	30	13.8
	Emergency department	48	22.1
	Others	6	2.8
	Total	217	100

4.2 Measurement of Model Assessment

For hypothesis testing, Smart PLS 4.0 was used, whereas SPSS was used for descriptive analysis and data screening. The analysis included measuring the model's reliability and validity, calculating descriptive statistics and correlation, and conducting a Structural Equation Modelling Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) analysis.

4.3 Reliability and Validity

The results of the reliability and validity tests are summarized in Table 2. We conducted factor loading analysis to determine the correlation coefficients between the constructs, and the resulting factor loading values for the items ranged from 0.715 to 0.889. To assess internal consistency, we used Cronbach's alpha reliability, which ranged from 0.911 to 0.951, indicating satisfactory dependability for all factors (>0.70). The composite reliability (CR) values were between 0.925 and 0.959, surpassing the recommended minimum value of 0.70. The average variance extracted (AVE) construct values ranged from 0.654 to 0.812, exceeding the desirable threshold of 0.50, indicating excellent results.

Table 2. Measurement model

Variables	Code of item	Loadings	α	CR	AVE
Job burnout	JB1-JB9	.701-.900	0.951	0.959	0.722
Job satisfaction	JS1-JS10	.715-.889	0.911	0.925	0.654
Intention to leave	IL1-IL4	.710-.781	0.923	0.945	0.812

Note: α , Cronbach's alpha; CR, the square of the summation of the factor loadings; AVE, the summation of the square of the factor loadings

The study's test results demonstrate that all scales have acceptable internal consistency and overall validity.

4.4 Correlation Analysis

Table 3 displays the descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients of all the measured variables in the study. Our observations indicate minimal evidence of multicollinearity issues, as the intercorrelations among the constructs in the model are below the recommended threshold of 0.7 (Gujarati & Porter, 2003).

Table 3. Correlations and discriminant validity by Fornell–Larcker criterion

	Mean	SD	JB	JS	IL
JB	3.1805	.65078	(0.818)		
JS	3.8123	.81255	-0.628***	(0.828)	
IL	4.1025	.83142	0.418***	-0.656***	(0.878)

***Significant at the 0.001 level; **significant at the 0.01 level; * significant at the 0.05 level. Diagonal elements (bold) in brackets are the square roots of AVEs.

Below the diagonal elements are the correlations between the constructs.

Variable definition: JB, Job burnout; JS, Job satisfaction; IL, Intention to leave;

Correlation analysis reveals a significant negative correlation between workplace job burnout and job satisfaction [$r=-0.628$, $p<0.01$], as well as a significant positive correlation between job burnout and the intention to leave [$r=0.418$, $p<0.01$]. Furthermore, correlation analysis demonstrates an inverse correlation between job satisfaction and the intention to leave [$r=-0.656$, $p<0.01$].

4.5 Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

For testing the significance of the structural model and variables R-Square is estimated for PLS analysis. The correlation between independent and dependent variables was reviewed during the analysis. The results of the analysis supported all three assumptions and all the regression weight values were positive and significant ($p<0.01$). The results of the survey are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Research results in PLS-SEM

Hypothesis	Path	Standardize Beta	Standard Error	t statistics	p-value	Remarks
H1	JB→JS	-0.640***	0.126	11.908	.000	Supported
H2	JB→IL	0.218**	0.078	12.879	.002	Supported
H3	JS→IL	-0.305***	0.198	13.713	.000	Supported

***: $p<0.001$; **: $p<0.01$; *: $p<0.05$

Variable definition: JB, Job burnout; JS, Job satisfaction; IL, Intention to leave;

Having established the validity and reliability of the measurement model, the next step was to test the hypothesized relationship by running the PLS algorithm and Bootstrapping algorithm in PLS 4.0.

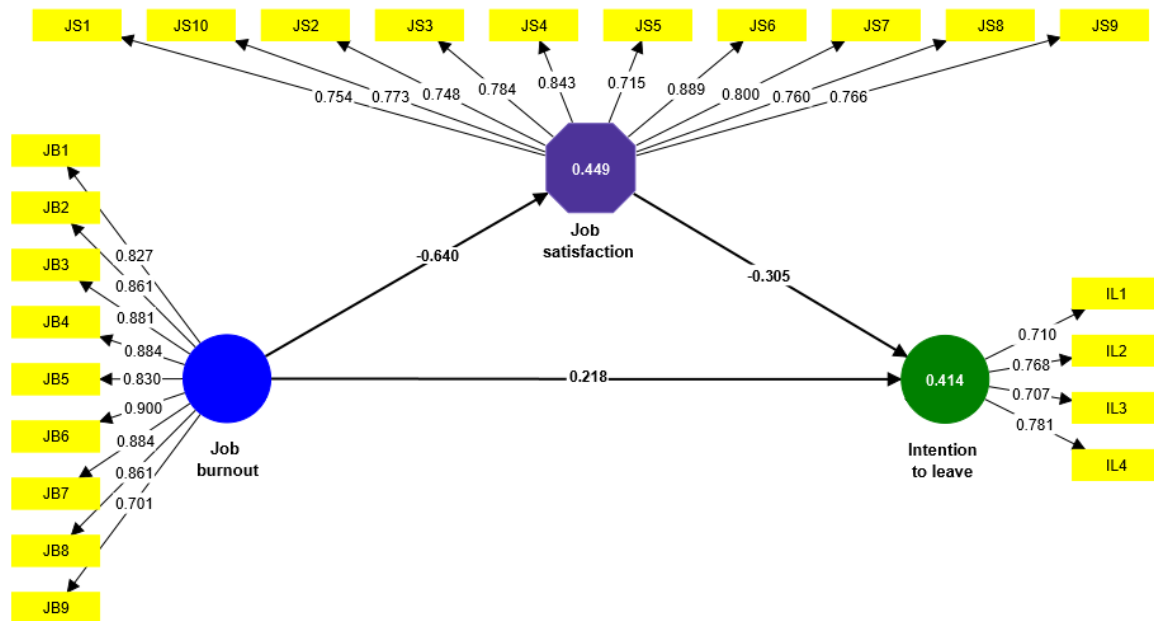


Figure 2. Items loadings and path coefficient

As indicated in Fig. 2 and Table 4, all the hypotheses H1, H2, and H3 were supported by the findings of the study.

The test results show that in the case of respondents, job burnout has a strong negative impact on job satisfaction [$\beta = -.640$, $p < 0.01$] but a slightly positive impact on intention to leave [$\beta = .218$, $p < 0.01$]. The determination coefficient (R square) of 0.449 shows that these factors can be explained by 44.9% and the remaining factors can be explained by other factors not included in the equation. Moreover, job satisfaction is an average negative impact on the intention to leave [$\beta = -.305$, $p < 0.01$]. In other words, as job satisfaction increases, the intention to leave decreases. The determination coefficient (R square) of 0.414 shows that these factors can be explained by 41.4% and the remaining factors can be explained by other factors not included in the equation. In addition to examining the correlation between job burnout and intention to leave study aimed to explore the potential mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between these factors. The Smart PLS methodology was utilized to achieve this aim. The findings of the study, presented in Table 5, revealed that job satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between job burnout and intention to leave, accounting for 25.8% of the Variance Accounted for (VAF). This result confirms the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between job burnout and intention to leave, thereby providing support for hypothesis H4.

Table 5. The Mediating Job Satisfaction

Hypothesis	Path	Direct effects	Indirect effects	Total effects
H4	Job Burnout -> Job Satisfaction -> Intention to leave	0.218**	0.258***	0.476***

***: $p < 0.001$; **: $p < 0.01$; *: $p < 0.05$

The hypotheses are all confirmed because all effects of associated regulator variables (Beta coefficients) are both positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.01$).

4.6 Discussion

The present study aimed to investigate the relationship between job burnout, job satisfaction, and the intention to leave among employees of one private clinic in Mongolia. The study utilized three measurement scales: the Bergen Burnout Inventory (BBI) for job burnout, the job satisfaction scale developed by Mac Donald and MacIntyre, and a measure for the intention to leave developed by Hasselhorn et al. The data was collected through an online survey, and a total of 217 questionnaires were used for the analysis.

The study tested several hypotheses using Structural Equation Modelling Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) analysis. The results supported all hypotheses, showing that job burnout has a strong negative impact on job satisfaction and a slightly positive impact on the intention to leave.

Our study's first finding showed that job burnout has a strong negative impact on job satisfaction. The findings of the present study align with previous research conducted by Kara (2020), Lin, Lin, & Cheng (2013), Oliveira, Silva, Galvão, & Lopes (2018), Safari (2020), Samadi, Biçak, Osman, Abdalla, & Abdullah (2023), and Yu-Hsia & Mei-Hsiang (2019), which also demonstrated a significant negative relationship between job burnout

and job satisfaction. These studies collectively provide support for the notion that experiencing high levels of job burnout is associated with reduced job satisfaction.

The second finding is that job burnout has a slightly positive impact on the intention to leave. This finding is consistent with previous research conducted by Alkhraish, Eivazzadeh, & Yeşiltaş (2023), Chen & et al. (2019), Mat Rifin & Danace (2022), and Zhang & Feng (2011). These studies provide support for the notion that experiencing higher levels of job burnout is associated with an increased intention to leave. The consistency between the present study's findings and previous research supports the understanding that job burnout can have a detrimental effect on individuals' intentions to remain in their current job or organization. It suggests that when employees experience high levels of burnout, they are more likely to contemplate leaving their job, seeking alternative employment opportunities, or changing their career paths.

The third finding of our study that job satisfaction has a negative impact on the intention to leave is consistent with previous research conducted by Applebaum & et al. (2010), Chen & et al. (2019), Galletta & et al. (2016), Heinen & et al. (2013), Mathieu & et al. (2015), Russell & et al. (2020), and Yücel (2012). These studies provide support for the notion that job satisfaction has a significant effect on the intention to leave. The consistency between the present study's findings and previous research supports the understanding that job satisfaction plays a critical role in reducing individuals' intention to leave their job or organization. When employees are satisfied with their job, they are more likely to feel committed, engaged, and motivated to stay, thus reducing their intention to seek alternative employment opportunities.

Moreover, our study not only examined the direct relationships between job burnout, job satisfaction, and the intention to leave but also explored the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between job burnout and the intention to leave. The findings of the study support the hypothesis that job satisfaction acts as a mediator between job burnout and the intention to leave. In other words, individuals who experience higher levels of burnout are more likely to have reduced job satisfaction, which, in turn, increases their intention to leave their current job or organization.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the present study investigated the relationship between job burnout, job satisfaction, and the intention to leave among employees of one clinic hospital in Mongolia. The analysis of the collected data from 217 participants revealed significant correlations between the variables, supporting the proposed hypotheses.

Our study highlights the negative impact of job burnout on job satisfaction and its positive impact on the intention to leave. Additionally, it emphasizes the important mediating role of job satisfaction in this relationship. These findings provide empirical evidence for the importance of addressing job burnout and promoting job satisfaction to reduce the intention to leave among employees in clinics.

Our findings contribute to the existing literature on job burnout and its consequences, specifically in the context of healthcare workers in Mongolia. The findings emphasize the need for interventions and strategies to alleviate job burnout, enhance job satisfaction, and ultimately reduce turnover intentions among employees in this sector. The results of the study indeed provide valuable insights for the participant organization and can serve as a reference for understanding and addressing job burnout and job satisfaction within their specific context. By examining the relationship between job burnout, job satisfaction, and the intention to leave, the organization can gain a deeper understanding of the factors influencing employee well-being, engagement, and retention.

Limitations and Future Research

However, it is essential to note that the study has certain limitations. Firstly, the data collection was conducted through an online survey, which may introduce self-reporting biases. Secondly, the study was conducted in one private clinic, which limits the generalizability of the results to other organizations.

Future research could employ longitudinal designs to investigate the dynamic evolution of job burnout and job satisfaction over time, as well as to delve into the causal relationship between these variables. Additionally, to enhance the comprehensiveness of the findings, future research could incorporate diverse samples from multiple hospitals, thus providing a more comprehensive understanding of the association between job burnout and job satisfaction.

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