

# Job stress and turnover intention: The mediating role of job satisfaction

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## ARTICLE INFO

### Article History

Received (13-07-2024)

Revised (05-11-2024)

Accepted (07-11-2024)

### Keywords

Job Satisfaction;

Job Stress;

Turnover Intention.

**Paper Type:** Research paper

## ABSTRACT

**Purpose-** Human resources are one of the important assets owned by every company. Its existence is needed in the operational process and determines the company's success in achieving its goals. Therefore, companies need to maintain competent employees. This study aims to analyze the level of turnover intention seen from job stress factors and mediated by job satisfaction.

**Design/Methodology/Approach-** The object of this research is Matahari Department Store employees at Palu Grand Mall, Palu, Indonesia who are then given a questionnaire containing indicators of each variable. The number of samples in this study was 100 respondents, and data processing using Smart PLS software version 4.

**Findings-** The results prove that only the first and second hypotheses are accepted, and job stress has a positive effect on turnover intention and job satisfaction. Job satisfaction has a negative effect on turnover intention, but it is not significant. The mediation hypothesis in this study was also rejected, so job satisfaction does not mediate the impact of job stress on turnover intention.

**Research limitations/implications-** This study is limited to employees of the Matahari Department Store in Palu Grand Mall, Palu, Indonesia. Therefore, the results can not be generalized or describe the condition of all employees of Matahari Department Store. However, the results of this study can be used as evaluation material by the management of Matahari Department Store in order to reduce the number of turnover intentions.

**Originality/value-** This study uses employees of the Matahari Department Store in Palu Grand Mall, Palu, Indonesia, as the research object. Similar research has been done with similar objects but in different locations. In addition, this study uses the mediating variable of job satisfaction.

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## 1. The Introduction

Human resources (HR) are valuable assets owned by a company and need to be appropriately managed (Fulmer & Ployhart, 2014). HR comprises individuals or groups who work as the driving force of a company, and their abilities must be continuously trained and developed

(Sessa & London, 2015). HR is a factor that determines the improvement or development of a company; therefore, a qualified and competent workforce is needed (Goswami, 2018). Companies need to be able to manage HR effectively but find a severe problem, namely the high intention or desire of employees to leave the company, which has a negative impact on the company itself (Belete, 2018).

Many companies consider issues related to employees' desire to quit their jobs (Mamun & Hasan, 2017). Turnover intention occurs when employees intend to consciously look for another job as an option in a different company (Memon et al., 2021). Turnover in the business world is expected, but if the employee turnover rate is high, it can be a sign of company problems (De Winne et al., 2019). A high turnover rate impacts a company's risk of losing competent workforce, thus hampering business activities and productivity (Mamun & Hasan, 2017). High turnover can also have a negative impact on the financial and time sides because the company will experience losses in the form of training costs that have been invested in employees who have left, as well as time losses in trying to find new employees and train them to become competent employees (Giao et al., 2020).

Job stress influences turnover intention (Kurniawaty et al., 2019). Stress is a physiological, emotional, or spiritual response that arises when individuals find it difficult or unable to overcome challenges (Shahsavarani et al., 2015). Job stress in an organization can reduce performance, self-confidence, work motivation, and pose a risk of depression (Sheraz et al., 2014). Employees unable to cope with job stress can be unable to work optimally, and may even decide to resign (Ahmad, 2022). Ahn and Chaoyu (2019) and Alblihed and Alzghaibi (2022) proved that job stress positively influences employees' intention to leave the company.

Every employee hopes to obtain satisfaction from the company in which he works. Job satisfaction is related to the emotional reactions of an individual who meets their needs at work (Y. Liu et al., 2016). Employees who are satisfied with their jobs positively contribute to the company (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). Job satisfaction creates an optimal work environment that increases employee productivity (Davidescu et al., 2020). Conversely, job dissatisfaction leads to high turnover rates, decreased motivation and performance, and other actions that can harm the company (Irabor & Okolie, 2019). Job satisfaction refers to the positive emotional state experienced by employees while working, whereas dissatisfaction occurs when there is a gap between employees' expectations and the actual conditions they experience (Dugguh & Dennis, 2014). Job stress often arises due to a mismatch between individuals and their work environment, which affects employees' job satisfaction toward their work. Sheraz et al. (2014) and Ekhsan (2019) proved that job satisfaction has a negative effect on employees' intention to leave the company.

This study focuses on the Matahari Department Store employees located at Palu Grand Mall, Palu, Indonesia. The researcher chose Matahari Department Store employees as the research object because the retail industry is known for its fast dynamics, with high workloads, especially during specific periods such as holidays (Kesavan & Mani, 2015). These conditions can increase job stress in employees, and this study explains the extent to which job stress triggers turnover intention. Job characteristics in the retail industry involve direct customer interaction, which can create pressure to achieve sales targets (Wahab & Blackman, 2023). This can lead to employee dissatisfaction, and ultimately become a driving factor for turnover intention. Similar research on Matahari Department Store employees has been conducted before, but it differs from the one chosen in this study (Narpati et al., 2020).

## 2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Job stress is pressure that affects employees' emotions, mindset, and physical health (Sohail, 2015). If stress is not dealt with effectively, it generally results in an individual's inability to interact positively. Under stressful conditions, individuals become less sensitive and are more concerned about their surroundings (Slavich & Irwin, 2014). Stress causes health problems, even encouraging individuals to make decisions to resign from their jobs (Gould-Williams et al., 2015). Based on this explanation, it can be concluded that high levels of job stress can cause discomfort in the work environment, resulting in the desire to leave the company. Ahn and Chaoyu (2019)

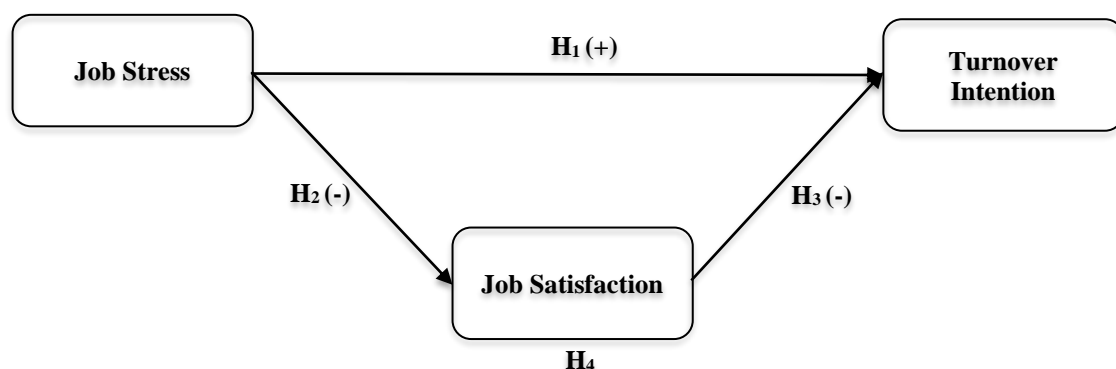
and Alblihed and Alzghaibi (2022) proved that job stress positively affects turnover intention. If employees feel a high level of job stress, they will further encourage their intention to leave their jobs. **H<sub>1</sub>: Job Stress Has a Positive Effect on Turnover Intention**

Job stress can be described as a negative mental state caused by the dynamic interaction between an individual and their work environment (Baqutayan, 2015). Job stress negatively affects productivity and job satisfaction (Hoboubi et al., 2017). The most basic psychological impact of job stress can be reflected in negative behaviour in the work environment, even leading to the decision to quit the job (Gould-Williams et al., 2015). However, job stress at a certain level can create job satisfaction because it motivates employees to generate innovative ideas. Orgambídez-Ramos et al. (2014) and Khamis et al. (2017) have demonstrated that job stress has a negative effect on job satisfaction. This suggests that employees with high levels of work-related stress and emotional triggers have low job satisfaction and high turnover intentions. **H<sub>2</sub>: Job Stress Has a Negative Effect on Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is one of the causes of employee turnover intention in a company (Mamun & Hasan, 2017). Employees who feel that there are alternative job opportunities and can obtain a better job show low satisfaction with working in their current place. In contrast, when employees feel that the market is saturated and it is difficult to find job opportunities, they become more satisfied with their current job (Ramlawati et al., 2021). Thus, the effect of market opportunities in terms of getting new job opportunities is higher than the effect of satisfaction on turnover. Based on this explanation, it can be concluded that job satisfaction negatively affects turnover intention (Yukongdi & Shrestha, 2020). **H<sub>3</sub>: Job Satisfaction Has a Negative Effect on Turnover Intention**

Job stress significantly affects employees' emotional and job satisfaction, ultimately influencing their decision to leave the job (Allisey et al., 2014). Kuo et al. (2014) and Chung et al. (2017) prove that job satisfaction mediates the effect of job stress on turnover intention. Employees are more likely to want to leave when they are dissatisfied with their ability to perform their duties and have no sense of belonging to the organization. Different dimensions of job stress affect employee satisfaction in various ways (Ramli, 2019). Not all sources of job stress are closely related to employees' job satisfaction and dissatisfaction at work (Ahn & Chaoyu, 2019). In addition, there is a negative relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover in organizations (Alam & Asim, 2019). **H<sub>4</sub>: Job Satisfaction Mediates the Effect of Job Stress on Turnover Intention**

Figure 1 explains the framework of this study and reveals the factors that influence turnover intention. This study analyzed job stress factors related to turnover intention, mediated by job satisfaction.



**Figure 1. Research Model**

### 3. Research Methodology

The population of this study was employees of the Matahari Department Store located at the Palu Grand Mall, Palu, Indonesia. In contrast, the sample of this study consisted of 100 people selected by the saturated sampling method or by using all members of the population as research samples. The data collection method used in this study was a questionnaire distributed directly to employees of the Matahari Department Store. The job stress (JST) variable consists of eight indicators developed by Hasibuan (2017), the job satisfaction (JSF) variable consists of eight indicators developed by Judge et al. (2017), and the turnover intention (TOI) variable consists of seven indicators developed from Halimah et al. (2016). The measurement scale for each indicator used a Likert scale with five assessment points.

The data were tested for validity, reliability, and hypotheses. Validity testing was performed using the loading factor value for each variable indicator. According to Hair et al. (2020), an indicator can be removed from the research model if it has a loading factor value below 0.4, and is considered good if it has a loading factor value above 0.6. After the validity testing, reliability testing was performed. The Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values were used to test the validity of this study. If the Cronbach's alpha value is more significant than 0.6, and the composite reliability value is greater than 0.7, the variable is considered reliable (Hair et al., 2020). Furthermore, the p-value for each hypothesis was used to inform the hypothesis testing. A p-value of less than 0.05 is required to accept the hypothesis (Hair et al., 2020).

### 4. Result and Discussion

#### Validity Test

Figure 2 displays the conceptual research model after the data were input into the Smart PLS software for processing. The validity testing process displayed the loading factor value of each variable indicator.

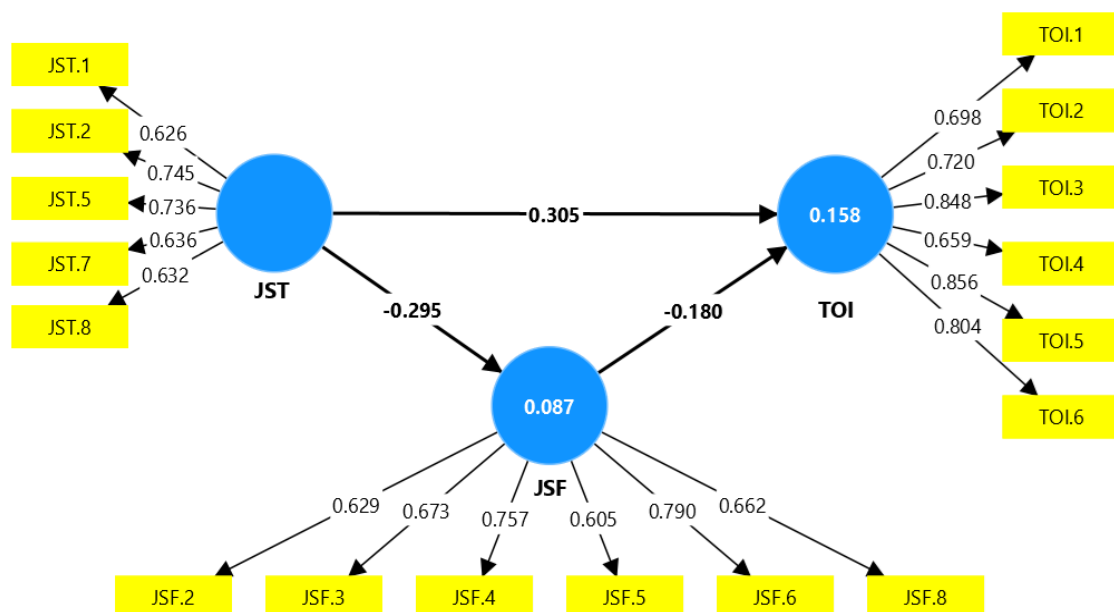


Figure 2. Measurement Model

Table 1 presents the results of the validity tests. Based on the tabulation, it can be concluded that three indicators of job stress variables (JST 3, JST 4, and JST 6) and two indicators of job satisfaction (JSF 1 and JSF 7) are declared invalid because the loading factor value is below 0.6. At the same time, all indicators of turnover intention (TOI) are proven to be valid. The requirement must be declared valid if it has a loading factor value greater than 0.6.

**Table 1. Validity Test Result**

Indicator	Job Stress	Job Satisfaction	Turnover Intention
JST 1	0.626		
JST 2	0.745		
JST 5	0.736		
JST 7	0.636		
JST 8	0.632		
JSF 2		0.629	
JSF 3		0.673	
JSF 4		0.757	
JSF 5		0.605	
JSF 6		0.790	
JSF 8		0.662	
TOI 1			0.698
TOI 2			0.720
TOI 3			0.848
TOI 4			0.659
TOI 5			0.856
TOI 6			0.804

### Reliability Test

Table 2 presents the reliability test results. The test results showed that the variables of job stress, job satisfaction, and turnover intention were reliable. This can be proven by a Cronbach's alpha value greater than 0.6 and composite reliability greater than 0.7.

**Table 2. Reliability Test Result**

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Job Stress	0.713	0.737
Job Satisfaction	0.781	0.806
Turnover Intention	0.862	0.891

Source: Primary Data Processed (2024)

### Hypothesis Test

Table 3 shows the regression test results from the research hypotheses. Based on these results, it can be concluded that of the four research hypotheses, only two are accepted or supported, namely the first and second. The first hypothesis proves that job stress has a positive effect on turnover intention and the second hypothesis proves that job stress has a negative effect on job satisfaction. The regression results of the second hypothesis state that job satisfaction has a negative effect on turnover intention, but is not significant, so the hypothesis is rejected or not supported. The regression results of the mediation hypothesis in this study were rejected; therefore, job satisfaction did not mediate the effect of job stress on turnover intention.

**Table 3. Hypothesis Test Result**

Hypothesis	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Value
Job Stress → Turnover Intention	0.358	0.382	0.100	3.563	0.000
Job Stress → Job Satisfaction	-0.295	-0.331	0.121	2.430	0.015
Job Satisfaction → Turnover Intention	-0.180	-0.191	0.155	1.159	0.246
Job Stress → Job Satisfaction → Turnover Intention	0.053	0.057	0.058	0.922	0.356

### Discussion

#### The Effect of Job Stress on Turnover Intention

Liu et al. (2019) mentioned that job stress positively impacts employee turnover intention. Increased turnover intention is due to high job stress caused by workloads and negative emotions at work. Zahra et al. (2018) and Ahn and Chaoyu (2019) emphasized the relationship between job

stress and turnover rate from the viewpoint of organizational justice. They explained the effect of organizational justice on turnover and revealed a direct relationship between turnover intention and job stress, with satisfaction as a mediating variable between the three variables. Employees' job stress increases their motivation to leave their workplace (Chan et al., 2023). Although every employee aspires to leave the job to varying degrees, job stress is the most significant factor driving exit intentions or resignation from work. Huang et al. (2018) referred to the effects of avoidance, social support, and problem-solving as strategies to address employee turnover intention and job stress.

### **The Effect of Job Stress on Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction refers to behaviours that describe the extent to which individuals like or dislike their workplace (Şchiopu, 2015). Employees' feelings of accomplishment and success at work represent their job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is generally considered to have a direct relationship with productivity and worker well-being (Dziuba et al., 2020). When employees feel stressed, job dissatisfaction has a negative effect (Banerjee & Mehta, 2016). Studies have shown that higher levels of job stress lead to lower job satisfaction (Orgambidez-Ramos et al., 2014; Khamisa et al., 2017). When job satisfaction is low, employee performance decreases, leading to greater turnover intention (Saeed et al., 2014).

### **The Effect of Job Satisfaction on Turnover Intention**

The test results showed that job satisfaction had a negative but insignificant effect on turnover intention. This means that a higher level of job satisfaction will not ultimately reduce employees' desire to leave their current job (Bayarçelik & Findikli, 2016). Job satisfaction is a fundamental issue that influences a person's decision to leave and look for better job opportunities. The lower an employee's level of job satisfaction, the more likely they are to consider looking for a new job. Employee satisfaction always shows a negative relationship with the level of employee exit intentions (Saeed et al., 2014). When employees feel satisfied with their jobs, the turnover rate in the organization decreases, and when employees feel dissatisfied with their jobs, their intention to leave increases (Saeed et al., 2014). The results of this study contradict those of research conducted by Sheraz et al. (2014) and Yukongdi and Shrestha (2020) that job satisfaction has a negative effect on turnover intention.

### **The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction on The Effect of Job Stress on Turnover Intention**

The test results showed that job satisfaction did not mediate the effect of job stress on turnover intention. The results of this study are supported by previous research conducted by Imran et al. (2020), who found that job satisfaction does not mediate the effect of job stress on turnover intention. According to turnover process and voluntary turnover models, job stress and job satisfaction are important predisposing factors that can trigger turnover intention (Chung et al., 2017). The higher the job stress, the higher is the turnover intention in various occupational groups (Bowling et al., 2015; Kazemi et al., 2015). Job stress is different from stress in general because it occurs in the work environment. Previous research has revealed that job stress is related to job satisfaction (von der Embse et al., 2016). One study showed that employees who received stress reduction interventions had higher levels of job satisfaction; therefore, job stress is one factor that affects job satisfaction (Pignata et al., 2016).

## **5. Conclusion**

Based on the regression results previously described, it can be concluded that only the positive effect of job stress on turnover intention and the negative effect of job stress on job satisfaction were accepted in this study. This means that high levels of job stress affect employees' desire to leave their current job and reduce their job satisfaction. Thus, the negative effect of job satisfaction on turnover intention in this study was rejected. This means that the level of turnover intention is influenced not only by the level of job satisfaction but also by many factors. Job satisfaction in this study also did not mediate the effect of job stress on turnover intention.



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