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Organizational Culture and Turnover Intention in Private Schools: Does Employee Gender Matter? Evidence from a Multigroup Comparison

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ABSTRACT

Turnover can disrupt instructional continuity, raise replacement costs, and weaken school-specific knowledge. This study examined the association between employees' perceptions of organizational culture and turnover intention in private schools in Dera Ismail Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. PLS-SEM was applied to 238 usable responses from a previously collected doctoral survey. After indicator refinement, both reflective constructs met the reported reliability, convergent-validity, and discriminant-validity criteria. Organizational culture was negatively associated with turnover intention ($\beta = -.392$, $t = 7.162$, $p < .001$, 95% CI $[-.511, -.297]$), explaining 15.4% of its variance. For the gender-based permutation analysis, partial measurement invariance was established. The OC→TI coefficient was $-.405$ for male employees and $-.422$ for female employees; the difference was not significant ($p = .889$). Thus, H₁ was supported, whereas H₂ was not supported.

Keywords: Organizational Culture, Turnover Intention, Employee Gender, Private Schools, PLS-SEM, Multigroup Analysis.

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INTRODUCTION

The turnover among employees is not a simple staffing occurrence. It takes away experience, compromises relational continuity, and demands that organizations invest time and resources in recruiting, induction, and adjustment. Turnover intention is particularly relevant for use in organizational research because it reflects the thoughtfulness of wanting to leave and is a near antecedent of actual turnover (Mobley *et al.*, 1978; Hom *et al.*, 2017). The consequences of such misbehavior can spread to students, colleagues, and administrators in school, as teaching and administration rely on routine, trust, coordination, and accumulated knowledge. Private schools have employment systems, funding limitations, and practices in management that may be different from those of public schools. Recent studies in private schools have revealed that organizational conditions, such as leadership support, professional recognition, and opportunities, are correlated with student-teacher evaluations. Factors such as growth and teachers' job satisfaction are relevant to teachers' turnover intentions (Mohammad & Borkoski, 2024). So, is organizational culture an important explanatory factor? Culture is the set of common understandings, values, norms, and patterns of behavior that guide employee actions during the performance of their duties (Schein, 2010). A supportive culture can foster a sense of belonging, participation, clarity, and mutual support; an unsupportive or over-controlling culture can convey a lack of fitness and make leaving more appealing. Overall, there is evidence across various occupational settings that positive culture is associated with reduced turnover intention. In other words, consensual culture was negatively associated with turnover intention among nurses (Park & Kim, 2009), organizational culture was negatively related to turnover intentions in a South Africa professional sample (Jacobs & Roodt, 2011), and a systematic review showed that the factors of leadership, support, trust, and work climate were negatively correlated with turnover intentions (Pedrosa *et al.*, 2021).

More recently, studies using a multilevel approach also suggest that culture types are linked to the intention to leave the organization (Li *et al.*, 2024). The studies reinforce the relevance of culture, as well as demonstrating that the meaning and implications of culture will vary depending on context. The mean pathway can mask significant heterogeneity. To investigate whether structural relationships vary by demographic categories, a multigroup analysis has been used in recent studies; however. (Tubussum *et al.*, 2025) The present paper takes a different approach to this heterogeneity but does not make the unproven assumption that a demographic category is a psychological moderator that can be manipulated. The study poses two questions. The first question is whether perceived organizational culture has a negative correlation with the intention to quit among private school employees in Dera Ismail Khan. Second, does the OC→TI relationship differ between male and female employees? This focus differs from the previous thesis-derived EI-employee-performance mediation paper, in which the latter did not include any emotional intelligence or employee performance, nor did it include organizational culture as a mediator. Rather, it is culture that is the focus predictor of interest, turnover intention the sole focal outcome, and demographic heterogeneity the contribution. The paper has three contributions. It implements a parsimonious culture–turnover model in an under-researched private-school context, and it distinguishes the pooled association from demographic group comparisons; it specifies a transparent sequence between PLS-SEM, MICOM, and MGA, which disallows invalid path comparisons across non-equivalent measures. Due to the nature of the data and self-report, the study is viewed in association and prediction rather than causation.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is the common language that helps members understand what is expected, how they should interact, what is important, and how to react to organizational issues. Schein (2010) defines culture as a multidimensional phenomenon that takes place in the form of visible behaviors, explicit values, and tacit assumptions. Culture can be seen in a school in terms of communication, decision participation, treatment of teachers and non-teaching staff, conflict resolution, support for learning, recognition, and consistency between stated values and managerial practice. Culture is important because employees perceive the way the organization treats them in terms of the patterns of treatment they experience, not in terms of individual events.

According to social exchange theory, people will return to a relationship if they receive support and fair treatment, which will be reflected in positive attitudes and staying in the relationship (Blau, 1964). The person–organization fit theory further suggests that, when organizational values and practices match the needs and values of employees, they are more likely to stay in the organization (Kristof, 1996). For private schools, where formal HR systems may not be consistent, the day-to-day culture may be a very important indicator of the level of respect, support, and development that employees enjoy.

Turnover Intention

Turnover intention refers to an employee's conscious inclination or plan to leave the current organization. It is not equivalent to actual turnover, because opportunities and constraints can prevent an intention from becoming behavior. Nevertheless, turnover models consistently position intention to quit as an immediate antecedent of leaving (Mobley *et al.*, 1978), and a century of turnover research confirms the continuing importance of withdrawal cognitions in explaining employee exits (Hom *et al.*, 2017). For schools, turnover intention is consequential even before an employee leaves. Employees considering departure may reduce discretionary effort, delay long-term commitments, or disengage from developmental activities. At the same time, intention measures should not be interpreted as proof that turnover will occur. The present study therefore treats turnover intention as a theoretically important attitudinal outcome rather than as a direct measure of actual attrition.

Organizational Culture and Turnover Intention

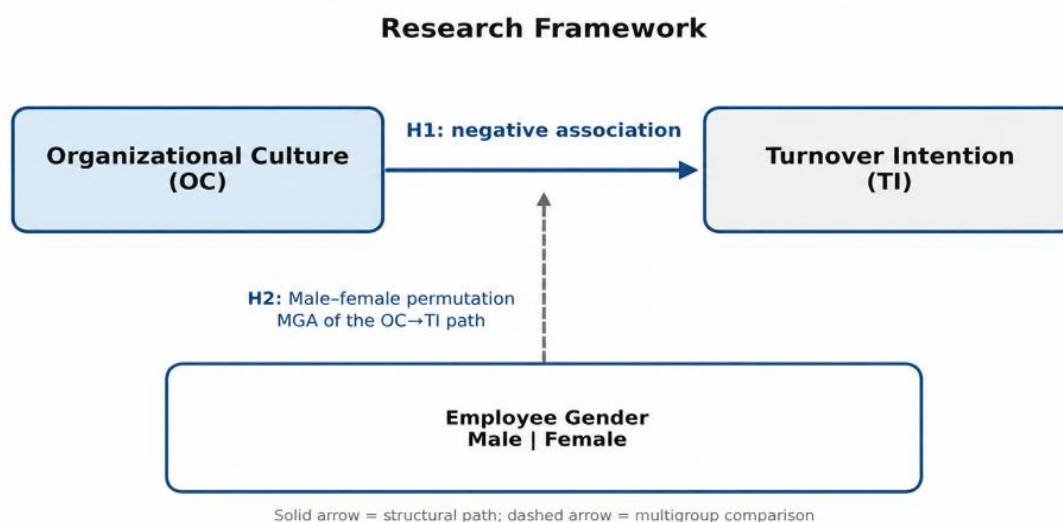
A favorable culture can reduce turnover intention by strengthening a sense of belonging, value congruence, trust, psychological safety, and confidence in organizational support. Conversely, a culture perceived as rigid, inequitable, poorly coordinated, or unsupportive can create misfits and increase the perceived attractiveness of leaving. Empirical findings support this logic. Park and Kim (2009) found that consensual culture was associated with lower turnover intention, whereas hierarchical culture was associated with higher turnover intention. Jacobs and Roodt (2011) reported a negative relationship between organizational culture and turnover intention. Lin and Huang (2021) showed that “A stronger organizational an employee's conscious desire or intention to quit the organization.” It is not the same as actual turnover, as intention may not translate to behavior due to opportunity and constraints. However, intention to quit is always found as an immediate antecedent of quitting in turnover models (Mobley *et al.*, 1978), and withdrawal cognitions have remained significant predictors of turnover for a century of turnover research (Hom *et al.*, 2017). Turnover intention is significant for schools before an employee's actual departure. Staff, during a decision to leave, might dampen their own commitment, put off long-term plans, or withdraw from development opportunities. However, intention measures should not be used as an indicator of whether turnover will happen. Therefore, in the current study, turnover intention is not assessed as an actual attrition measure, but as an important predictor of turnover.

H1: Perceived organizational culture is negatively associated with employees' turnover intention in private schools.

The Role of Employee Gender

Gender might be related to differences in work–family responsibilities, alternative employment opportunities, occupational mobility, and expectations of organizational support. This means that the same organizational-culture experience can have different meanings for male and female teachers in terms of intention to turn over. Therefore, male and female teachers can experience the same organizational-culture experience and have opposite intentions to turn over. This study does not consider gender as a psychological characteristic or as a cause–moderating variable, but rather as a grouping variable to see if there is a difference between the OC–TI relationship for males and females. Turnover processes can be investigated differently depending on the individual and contextual factors (Hom *et al.*, 2017), and multigroup analysis allows for statistical comparison of structural relationships between groups (Tubussum *et al.*, 2025). Thus, the study investigates the difference in the negative relationship between organizational culture and turnover intention based on employee gender.

H2: The negative association between organizational culture and turnover intention differs between male and female employees.

**Figure 1***Research Framework*

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Research Design and Setting

This quantitative, cross-sectional survey examined individual employees of private schools in Dera Ismail Khan City, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The design permits assessment of associations between latent variables and observed between-group heterogeneity, but it cannot establish temporal order or causality. The data are based on a larger doctoral study. In the present manuscript, the variables of organizational culture, turnover intention, and gender are used to respond to a different research question. The shared dataset and the previous article based on the thesis are disclosed in accordance with the policy of the target journal. This manuscript does not contain a results table or narrative from the previous article.

Population, Sample, and Data Screening

The study involved employees of private schools in Dera Ismail Khan City. Of 250 questionnaires distributed, 238 were usable, yielding a 95.2% usable-response rate. The sample comprised 127 teaching and 111 management employees. Screening confirmed valid coded values for the retained indicators and demographic grouping variables. Respondent identifiers were treated only as case labels. Identical indicator coding, data treatment, PLS algorithm settings, and standardization were used for the full sample and the male–female comparison.

Measures

The doctoral questionnaire originally contained eight organizational-culture items (OC1–OC8) and eight turnover-intention items (TI1–TI8), each measured on the original five-point Likert format. The final reflective measurement model retained OC1, OC2, OC5, OC6, and OC8 for organizational culture and TI3, TI5, TI6, TI7, and TI8 for turnover intention. OC3, OC4, OC7, TI1, TI2, and TI4 were excluded during measurement refinement because of weak indicator performance; the same retained indicators were used in both sex groups. Designation was reported descriptively but was not used as a separate MGA variable.

Table 1*Respondent Profile (n = 238)*

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Nature of job	Management	111	46.6
	Teaching	127	53.4
Gender	Male	150	63.0
	Female	88	37.0
Age	20–29 years	108	45.4
	30–39 years	79	33.2
	40–49 years	51	21.4
Qualification	SSC	4	1.7
	FA/FSc	18	7.6
	BA/BSc	36	15.1
	BS/MA/MSc	160	67.2
	MPhil	13	5.5
	PhD	7	2.9
Designation	Assistant teacher	25	10.5
	Teacher	48	20.2
	Section head	52	21.8
	Administrator	52	21.8
	Managing director	61	25.6
Experience	0–4 years	93	39.1
	5–9 years	68	28.6
	10–14 years	48	20.2
	15–19 years	29	12.2

Note. Percentages may differ from 100 because of rounding. Frequencies reproduce the attached data file's coded demographic categories.

Analytical Strategy

The model was estimated in SmartPLS 4 (Ringle et al., 2024) using the two-stage assessment recommended by Hair *et al.* (2019, 2022). The reflective measurement model was evaluated using indicator loadings, Cronbach's alpha, rho_a, composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), HTMT, and collinearity diagnostics. The OC→TI path was then assessed with 10,000 bootstrap subsamples, two-tailed testing at $\alpha = .05$, 95% percentile confidence intervals, a fixed seed, and no sign changes. Structural assessment included β , t , p , R^2 , and f^2 ; SRMR was treated only as a supplementary diagnostic. For the male–female comparison, configural invariance was maintained through identical model specification and settings, and MICOM and permutation MGA were run with 5,000 permutations and two-tailed testing. Demographic control paths, PLS predictions, and PLS-MGA were not present in the supplied final exports and are therefore not reported.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Measurement Model

Five indicators per construct were left in the refined measurement model. All loadings were retained and found to be statistically significant ($p < .001$). Four loadings were slightly below the .708 guideline (OC1 = .570, OC5 = .610, TI5 = .703, and TI7 = .707); they were retained to maintain content coverage, as composite reliability and AVE met their respective criteria.

Both constructs were reliable, with AVE values of .501 and .560 for organizational culture and turnover intention, respectively.

Table 2

Reflective Measurement Model

Construct	Indicators Retained	Loading Range	Cronbach's α	rho_a	CR	AVE
Organizational Culture	OC1, OC2, OC5, OC6, OC8	.570–.820	.757	.809	.831	.501
Turnover Intention	TI3, TI5, TI6, TI7, TI8	.703–.821	.806	.823	.864	.560

Note. Preferred loading $\geq .708$; α , rho_a, and composite reliability generally .70–.95; AVE $\geq .50$. Sub-.708 indicators were retained only where construct reliability, AVE, and content coverage remained adequate.

Table 3

Discriminant Validity and Collinearity

Assessment	Statistic	Value	Decision
Discriminant validity	HTMT: OC–TI	.435	Established
HTMT inference	95% bootstrap CI upper bound	.592	Below .85
Inner-model collinearity	Maximum VIF	1.000	No concern
Supplementary model fit	SRMR	.091	Above .08; caution

Note. HTMT $< .85$ was used as the conservative discriminant-validity guide. The bootstrapped 95% HTMT interval was [.294, .592]. SRMR is reported as supplementary information and is not used to override the measurement and structural evidence.

Structural Model

Turnover intention was negatively associated with organizational culture ($\beta = -.392$, $t = 7.162$, $p < .001$). The percentile bootstrap interval did not contain zero 95% CI [–.511, –.297] so H_1 was accepted. Organizational culture accounted for 15.4% of the variance in turnover intention ($R^2 = .154$; adjusted $R^2 = .150$) and was small-to-moderate ($f^2 = .182$) in terms of effect size. The SRMR of .091 was slightly higher than the conventional heuristic of .08 and is thus considered a caution but not evidence of a poor global model fit.

Table 4

Structural Model Results

Hypothesis/path	β	t	p	R^2	95% CI	f^2	Decision
H ₁ : OC $\rightarrow$ TI	–.392	7.162	$< .001$	.154	[–.511, –.297]	.182	Supported

Note. Two-tailed inference used 10,000 bootstrap subsamples and percentile 95% confidence intervals. Adjusted $R^2 = .150$.

Measurement Invariance and Multigroup Analysis

The provided permutation report is a comparison of male employees ($n = 150$, code 0) and female employees ($n = 88$, code 1). The configural invariance was preserved. For MICOM Step 2, original composite correlations were above their 5% permutation quantiles for both OC ($p = .058$) and TI ($p = .396$), and compositional invariance was demonstrated, and therefore partial measurement invariance. Equality of means and variances was not validated, and as such, full invariance was not supported.

Only partial invariance was enough to be sufficient for the standardized path comparison.

Table 5

MICOM Results: Male–Female Comparison

Group Comparison	Configural Invariance	Compositional Invariance P	Partial Invariance	Equal Means P	Equal Variances P	Full Invariance
Male vs Female	Yes	OC .058; TI .396	Yes	OC <.001; TI .001	OC .013; TI .029	No

Note. Based on 5,000 two-tailed permutations. Step 2 decisions used both the original correlation and the 5% permutation quantile. Step 3 mean and variance differences were significant for both constructs, preventing full invariance.

Table 6

Permutation Multigroup Comparison of the OC→TI Path

Comparison	β Group A	β Group B	$ \Delta\beta $	Permutation p	Conclusion
Male vs Female	-.405 (male)	-.422 (female)	.017	.889	H ₂ not supported

Note. Group A = male employees; Group B = female employees. Partial measurement invariance was established. The permutation test found no significant difference in the OC→TI path ($p = .889$); therefore, H₂ was not supported.

DISCUSSION

The results confirm H1: that is, the higher the organizational culture perception, the lower their intention to leave the organization in a private school. The coefficient was negative and statistically significant ($\beta = -.392$, 95% CI $[-.511, -.297]$), and the contribution of f^2 was small to moderate (0.182). This is in line with findings that supportive culture, consensual culture, and learning-oriented culture are related to lower withdrawal cognitions (Park & Kim, 2009; Jacobs & Roodt, 2011; Lin & Huang, 2021; Li *et al.*, 2024). The reasons suggested here are plausible: respectful treatment, participation, clarity, support, and value congruence are elements that can boost attachment and lower the attractiveness of quitting. The model accounted for 15.4% of the variance of turnover intention. Organizational culture, therefore, is not comprehensive, and pay, leadership behavior, workload, career opportunities, job security, and local employment alternatives may explain a lot of the rest of the variance. The SRMR value of .091 also recommends caution for exact model fit. These findings support an associative interpretation and do not support making a claim that culture is the sole determinant of intention to withdraw. Partial measurement invariance permitted comparison of the male and female structural coefficients. The permutation test subsequently showed that the difference was not significant. The negative coefficient was comparable for male employees ($\beta = -.405$) and female employees ($\beta = -.422$), and the difference was not significant ($p = .889$). H₂ was therefore not supported. This does not conclude that the two groups are the same, however, as the means and variances also varied; it only means that this sample did not show that sex affects the strength of the OC/ TI relationship. Based on this result, it is therefore more defensible to use culture-wide retention practices than sex-specific practices.

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings provided a briefing on a culture–turnover explanation for private schools in Dera Ismail Khan. The supported negative path is consistent with social exchange and person–organization fit reasoning; The nonsignificant gender difference indicates that the pooled OC–TI relationship is applicable to both groups in this sample. This is because full invariance was not achieved; hence, this conclusion applies to the structural coefficient only, and not to the equality of composite means or variances. From a practical standpoint, schools should first build organizational culture (respectful communication, credible procedures, participation, role clarity, recognition, professional support, and consistent treatment). The outcome is not a justification for sex-specific HR decisions, and a difference in the mean for the raw data should not be grounds for taking

discriminatory action.

LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The cross-sectional design does not allow for conclusions to be drawn regarding the direction of causality between culture and intention to turn over. Common method bias is a potential problem as both constructs were measured in the same self-report questionnaire (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The sample is drawn from private schools in one city and does not have a trusted school identifier; the findings should not be assumed to apply to public schools, to other places, or to school-level culture. Indicator refinement enhanced convergent validity and needs to be replicated with the original wording and an independent sample. SRMR = .091 was greater than the heuristic of .08 typically used. The sex comparison also involved unequal group sizes (150 and 88), and full measurement invariance was not obtained. Future studies should employ school identifiers, longitudinal designs, independent measurement occasions, larger samples, preregistered comparisons, and complete MICOM/MGA reporting for gender comparisons.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study showed that there is a significant link between positive organizational culture and lower turnover intention in private schools of Dera Ismail Khan. The statistical analysis showed a negative, small-to-moderate magnitude, and statistically significant structural path between the OC and TI, which was in favor of H₁. The path difference was not significant, and thus male and female employees could be compared due to partial measurement invariance; thus, H₂ was not supported. The evidence thus supports the idea of culture-wide retention practices rather than sex-specific responses. No mediation or causal claim is found in the framework.

DECLARATIONS

Ethical Considerations: This study strictly adhered to the Declaration of Helsinki and relevant national and institutional ethical guidelines. All procedures performed in this study were consistent with the ethical standards of the Declaration of Helsinki. The study was conducted according to ethical and clinical standards for research. Ethical approval and consent to participate: Ethical approval for the doctoral survey was obtained. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the study's purpose, confidentiality, anonymity, and their right to withdraw. Informed consent was obtained before questionnaire completion.

Data Availability: The de-identified data and research questionnaire are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to institutional and ethical restrictions.

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Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Dataset Transparency: The data analyzed in this article were originally collected as part of a broader doctoral survey. A previous article based on the same survey examined emotional intelligence, employee performance, turnover intention, and the mediating role of organizational culture (Yousuf & Siddique, 2025). The present article re-specifies organizational culture as the focal predictor and turnover intention as the sole outcome and adds a male–female multigroup comparison using PLS-SEM. The manuscript reports newly estimated models and does not reproduce the text or results tables of the previous article.

Consent for Publication: All participants were briefed on the aims and process of the research. All the authors agree and consent to the journal for publication.

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questionnaire alignments, yet no AI was involved in conducting the test for the analysis.

Similarity Index/ Plagiarism: The similarity index was checked, and it is well below the threshold value of 19%, whereas each source is less > 5%.

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