

Turnover Intention among Hotel Chefs: The Mediating Effect of Job Stress

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Abstract

Purpose: This study investigates the effects of workload and work conflict on turnover intention among hotel chefs, with job stress as a mediating variable.

Methodology: A quantitative survey was conducted with 120 chefs employed in star-rated hotels in Tangerang, Indonesia, each with at least one year of work experience. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and analyzed to examine the direct and indirect relationships among the variables.

Results: The findings revealed that workload and work conflict significantly increased job stress, which in turn strengthened turnover intention. Both workload and work conflict also had direct positive effects on turnover intention. Job stress partially mediated these relationships, indicating that excessive job demands and workplace conflict influence employees' intention to leave both directly and indirectly through increased stress.

Conclusions: Workload and work conflict are key determinants of turnover intention among hotel chefs. Effective management of job demands and workplace conflicts can reduce stress and improve employee retention.

Limitations: This study is limited to 120 chefs working in star-rated hotels in Tangerang, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other hospitality contexts or regions. Additionally, the use of self-reported survey data may introduce response bias.

Contributions: This research enriches the hospitality and human resource management literature by demonstrating the mediating role of job stress in the relationship between workload, work conflict, and turnover intention, while providing practical implications for employee retention strategies.

Keywords: *Hospitality Industry, Hotel Chefs, Job Stress, Turnover Intention, Workload*

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1. Introduction

The hospitality industry relies heavily on human resources to maintain service quality, customer satisfaction, and organizational competitiveness ([Chung, Quan, Koo, Ariza-Montes, Vega-Muñoz, Giorgi, & Han, 2021](#)). However, employee turnover remains a persistent challenge, particularly in labor-intensive hotel operations ([Octiyana & Diwyarthi, 2023](#)). High turnover rates increase recruitment and training costs, disrupt service consistency and reduce organizational effectiveness ([Salama, Abdou, Mohamed, & Shehata, 2022](#)). This issue is especially critical in hotel kitchens, where

chefs play a strategic role in ensuring food quality, customer satisfaction, and the hotel's overall reputation ([Asfahani, 2022](#)).

Hotel chefs frequently work in demanding environments characterized by high workloads, strict service standards, time pressure, and intensive interpersonal interactions ([Chung et al., 2021](#)). These conditions may generate job stress and increase employees' intention to leave the organization ([Hakro, Jhatial, & Chandio, 2022](#)). Previous studies have identified workload and work conflict as important antecedents of turnover intention, either directly or indirectly through job stress ([Haeruddin, Natsir, Aslam, Aswar, & Mustafa, 2023](#); [Mehmood, Aziz, & Husin, 2023](#)). Excessive workloads can create physical and emotional exhaustion, and workplace conflicts may reduce collaboration and job satisfaction, ultimately encouraging employees to seek alternative employment opportunities ([Lantican, 2021](#)).

Despite extensive research on turnover intention, the empirical findings remain inconsistent. Several studies have reported that workload significantly increases turnover intention ([Anees, Heidler, Cavaliere, & Nordin, 2021](#); [Nassani, Alqabbani, Alarifi, & Almojeiw, 2021](#); [Surya, & Rihayana, 2024](#)), whereas others have found no significant relationship ([Almubarakah, Fatmah, Hermin, & Rahmawati, 2024](#); [Basar, & Supiyadi, 2024](#)). Similar inconsistencies exist regarding the effects of work conflict and the mediating role of stress at work. While some studies confirm that job stress serves as a significant mediator between workplace conditions and turnover intention ([Anggraini, & Kui, 2021](#); [Rathi, & Kumar, 2023](#)), others report weak or insignificant mediation effects ([Almubarakah et al., 2024](#); [Manoppo, 2020](#)). These contradictory findings indicate a clear research gap and highlight the need for further investigation in specific occupational settings.

This study addresses this gap by focusing on hotel chefs in Tangerang, Indonesia. Tangerang represents one of the country's rapidly growing hospitality areas, characterized by increasing competition among hotels and growing demand for service excellence. Despite the strategic importance of chefs in maintaining hotel performance, research on turnover intention in this occupational group remains limited. Most hospitality studies have concentrated on frontline employees, such as receptionists, servers, and general hotel staff, leaving chefs relatively underexplored.

The novelty of this study lies in its explicit examination of hotel chefs as a distinct professional group and its investigation of job stress as a mediating mechanism linking workload and work conflict to turnover intention. By examining these relationships within the context of Tangerang hospitality industry, this study provides a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing the retention of chefs. The findings are expected to contribute to hospitality and human resource management literature while offering practical insights for hotel managers to develop effective retention strategies. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the effects of workload and work conflict on turnover intention among hotel chefs, as well as to examine the mediating role of job stress in these relationships.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1 Turnover Intention

In this study, intention to leave a job was considered the dependent variable. Several experts have explained that the desire to leave an organization is related to the actual decision to resign ([Heilala et al., 2022](#)). Early studies on employee turnover focused on the reasons that drive individuals to choose to stay or leave their jobs. Turnover itself is understood as the end of the employment relationship between an employee and a company, whereas turnover intention describes an employee's conscious and deliberate desire to leave their job ([Boamah et al., 2022](#)). Intention to leave is considered a significant issue that frequently arises in many organizations and is one of the most difficult challenges in human resource management ([Basar & Supiyadi, 2024](#)).

Several studies have shown that turnover rates have increased over time, with workplace stress levels being one of the main triggers ([Arnas et al., 2024](#)). In addition, a number of demographic factors, such

as age, marital status, gender, and number of family dependents, are reported to influence employees' decisions to stay or change jobs ([Almubarakah et al., 2024](#)). Other factors that play a role include salary level, nature of work, promotion opportunities, existence of awards, supportive working conditions, and support from colleagues and superiors ([Mehmood et al., 2023](#)). In addition, heavy workloads and high levels of pressure have been shown to directly contribute to an increase in employees' desire to leave their jobs ([Rahman, 2024](#)).

Although previous studies have consistently identified turnover intention as a precursor to actual employee turnover, the factors influencing turnover intention may vary across organizational contexts and industries. Several studies emphasize psychological factors, such as work stress and job dissatisfaction, while others highlight structural factors, including workload, compensation, and career opportunities. These findings indicate that turnover intention is a multidimensional phenomenon that cannot be explained by a single factor. In the hospitality industry, where employees frequently face demanding service standards and intensive customer interactions, work stress, workload, and work conflict may become particularly important determinants of Turnover Intention (TI). Therefore, examining these factors simultaneously is necessary to provide a more comprehensive understanding of employee turnover behaviors.

2.2 Work Stress

Work stress and employees' intentions to leave the company have long been serious concerns for managers. Many studies have attempted to uncover the factors that cause employees to have the desire to leave their jobs ([Rathi & Kumar, 2023](#)). The experiences that employees have while working can be a source of stress, which then influences their decision to leave ([Basar & Supiyadi, 2024](#)). Work stress can be defined as a negative reaction to excessive pressure or excessively high demands in the work environment ([Wahana et al., 2024](#)). Job stress arises from various job characteristics that are potentially threatening to an individual's well-being.

This condition usually arises from an imbalance between job demands and an employee's ability to fulfill them ([Almubarakah et al., 2024](#)). The main factors that trigger work-related stress are heavy workloads and time constraints. When employees have to complete a large amount of work in a short period of time, the pressure increases and impacts performance ([Mehmood et al., 2023](#)). In a study ([Rahman, 2024](#)), the combination of deadlines and excessive workloads was a significant trigger for increased stress. One respondent in their study described stress arising when multiple tasks were assigned simultaneously, leading to coping mechanisms that exacerbated the stress ([Suryani et al., 2026](#)). Workplace stress is common among various types of employees, both managerial and non-managerial, for example, in the private banking sector ([Lantican, 2021](#)).

Some employees can deal with it well, but there are also quite a few who have difficulties, resulting in declining performance ([Al Hadi & Surya, 2023](#)). Therefore, management is trying to find strategies to reduce employees' stress levels ([Abdullah et al., 2021](#)). Employee turnover intention is often triggered by high levels of work-related stress. When stress is unmanaged, fatigue and turnover intentions increase. However, if stress is managed well, employees can maintain their commitment, increase productivity, and suppress the desire to leave ([Manoppo, 2020](#)).

From a theoretical perspective, the relationship between work stress and turnover intention can be explained through the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory. This theory argues that excessive job demands consume employees' physical and psychological resources, leading to exhaustion and reduced work engagement. When employees perceive that the available organizational resources are insufficient to cope with these demands, they are more likely to develop an intention to leave the organization. Consequently, work stress is not only a direct consequence of unfavorable working conditions but also a key mechanism that influences employee retention and turnover decisions.

2.3 Workload

Workload occurs when job demands exceed an employee's capabilities, especially when the organization places high expectations within a limited time ([Abdullah et al., 2021](#)). Several studies

have shown that workload has a dual impact, leading to both increased and decreased performance depending on the situation faced ([Surya & Rihayana, 2024](#)). When the workload becomes heavier, employee performance tends to decline because they are unable to complete the work optimally ([Basar and Supiyadi, 2024](#)). Workload is often understood as the intensity of assignments that must be completed, including pressure from multiple roles and responsibilities ([Wahana et al., 2024](#)). It is not uncommon for employees to procrastinate on assigned tasks, adding to the impression of a mounting workload ([Seran et al., 2022](#)).

However, a moderate workload can boost work effectiveness because employees are encouraged to complete tasks effectively ([Rahmaditha et al., 2024](#)). However, excessive workload causes emotional and physical stress, even giving rise to negative behaviors such as impatience or the use of harsh words when dealing with customers ([Anggraini & Kui, 2021](#)). This condition has the potential to cause work stress, which ultimately encourages employees to leave their jobs ([Almubarakah et al., 2024](#)). Employees often fail to meet management expectations due to high job demands. Conversely, a balanced workload makes employees feel satisfied and strive to deliver the best results for the organization ([Sylvy et al., 2022](#)).

With a moderate workload, work administration can be carried out more neatly and archived well, making it easier for the next generation of employees to work ([Lantican, 2021](#)). Work stress is often triggered by excessive workload, dissatisfaction, low engagement, loss of motivation, limited career development opportunities and minimal appreciation ([Arnas et al., 2024](#)). However, when workloads are at a reasonable level, employees are better able to provide quality service, work with a positive attitude, and have less intention of leaving their jobs. In fact, a balance between workload and compensation can maintain temporary satisfaction, leading employees to choose to remain with the organization ([Anees et al., 2021](#); [Nugroho et al., 2025](#)).

Previous studies have reported inconsistent findings regarding the impact of workload on employee performance. Some studies suggest that a moderate workload can stimulate motivation and enhance performance by creating positive challenges. However, other studies have consistently demonstrated that excessive workload contributes to emotional exhaustion, decreased job satisfaction, and higher turnover intention. These contrasting findings imply that the effect of workload depends on employees' capacity to manage job demands and the support provided by the organization. Therefore, workload remains an important factor requiring further investigation, particularly in labor-intensive sectors such as the hospitality industry.

2.4 Work Conflict

Work conflict is a condition where there is a mismatch in interests, goals or values between individuals or groups in an organization ([Aritonang et al., 2023](#)). Workplace conflict is not always negative, as it can, to some extent, encourage innovation and creativity and strengthen organizational dynamics. However, if the intensity of conflict is excessive, it can cause stress and tension and reduce employee performance ([Putri & Afriyeni, 2022](#)). Work conflicts are divided into three main forms: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and intergroup conflicts ([Tasya & Kusuma, 2023](#)). Intrapersonal conflict arises when individuals face role dilemmas or ambiguous tasks. Interpersonal conflict typically occurs between employees or between superiors and subordinates because of differing interests, ineffective communication, or unhealthy competition. Intergroup conflict often arises from incompatible goals between divisions or departments within an organization ([Febryansyah et al., 2024](#)). Workplace conflict can stem from individual, team, and organizational factors. Differences in perception, values, and work styles among individuals can trigger personal conflicts ([Yucel et al., 2023](#)). At the team level, unclear roles, uneven workloads, and lack of coordination can increase the potential for conflict ([Wijaya & Samsudin, 2023](#)).

From an organizational perspective, rigid bureaucratic structures, limited resources, and authoritarian leadership styles trigger broader conflicts ([Abdullah et al., 2021](#)). However, well-managed conflict can produce constructive results, such as improved decision quality, more open and honest communication, and the emergence of creative solutions ([Wahana et al., 2024](#)). However, unresolved

conflicts have the potential to cause work stress, decrease motivation, and increase employees' intention to leave the organization ([Anggraini & Kui, 2021](#)). Thus, understanding work conflict is important for management so that they can determine the right management strategy, whether through mediation, compromise, or improving communication between employees ([Mehmood et al., 2023](#)). The literature suggests that work conflict may generate both positive and negative outcomes, depending on its intensity and management. While constructive conflict can encourage innovation and improve decision-making quality, unresolved conflict often creates psychological tension and dissatisfaction among employees. Such conditions may increase stress levels and weaken employees' attachment to the organization itself. Therefore, work conflict is expected to play a significant role in shaping turnover intention, either directly or indirectly, through its influence on employees' stress experiences.

2.5 Hypotheses

2.5.1 The Influence of Workload on Work Stress

According to the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory, workload represents a job demand that requires employees to expend considerable physical and psychological resources. When workload exceeds employees' capabilities and available resources, it can generate strain in the form of work-related stress. Excessive workload increases pressure, reduces recovery opportunities, and contributes to emotional exhaustion ([Hamsal et al., 2025](#)). Previous studies have consistently reported that employees facing higher workloads tend to experience greater levels of work stress ([Arnas et al., 2024](#); [Meliani et al., 2024](#); [Octiyana & Diwyarthi, 2023](#)). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₁: Workload has a positive and significant effect on work stress

2.5.2 The Influence of Work Conflict on Work Stress

Work conflict reflects incompatibilities in goals, interests, and values among organizational members. Based on the stressor-strain perspective, conflict acts as a workplace stressor that can create psychological tension and emotional discomfort. Persistent conflict may disrupt communication, reduce cooperation, and increase employees' stress ([Kuma & Ginting, 2025](#)). Empirical evidence has consistently demonstrated a positive relationship between conflict and stress across different organizational settings ([Faozen, 2020](#); [Sylvy et al., 2022](#); [Wahyuni et al., 2023](#)). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H₂: Work conflict has a positive and significant effect on work stress

2.5.3 The Influence of Workload on Turnover Intention

The JD-R Theory suggests that excessive job demands may lead employees to withdraw from the organization when the demands exceed their available resources. A high workload often causes fatigue, dissatisfaction, and reduced organizational attachment, thereby increasing employees' intention to leave. Previous studies have found that workload is a significant predictor of turnover intention, particularly in service-intensive industries, where employees face substantial work demands ([Aldino & Franksiska, 2021](#); [Anees et al., 2021](#); [Nawawi et al., 2024](#)). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₃: Workload has a positive and significant effect on turnover intention

2.5.4 The Influence of Work Conflict on Turnover Intention

Work conflict may negatively affect employees' perceptions of the work environment and their relationships with the organization. Unresolved conflicts can reduce job satisfaction, weaken organizational commitment, and encourage employees to seek alternative employment opportunities. Prior studies have consistently reported that work conflict contributes to higher turnover intentions among employees ([Aritonang et al., 2023](#); [Putri & Afriyeni, 2022](#); [Tasya & Kusuma, 2023](#)). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₄: Work Conflict has a positive and significant effect on turnover intention

2.5.5 The Influence of Work Stress on Turnover Intention

Work stress is widely recognized as one of the strongest predictors of turnover intention. Employees experiencing prolonged stress often suffer from emotional exhaustion, declining job satisfaction, and reduced commitment to their organization. Consequently, they are more likely to consider leaving their current employment. Previous empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that work stress significantly increases turnover intention across various industries ([Basar & Supiyadi, 2024](#); [Meliani et al., 2024](#); [Nawawi et al., 2024](#)). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₅: Work stress has a positive and significant effect on turnover intention

2.5.6 The Influence of Workload on Turnover Intention through Work Stress

The JD-R Theory explains that an excessive workload functions as a job demand that can increase employees' stress levels. Elevated stress subsequently reduces employees' well-being and increases their intention to leave the organization, thereby increasing turnover. Accordingly, work stress may serve as an important mechanism linking workload and turnover intention. Previous studies have supported the mediating role of work stress in the relationship between workload and turnover intention ([Arnas et al., 2024](#); [Basar & Supiyadi, 2024](#); [Imaroh et al., 2023](#)). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₆: Workload has a positive and significant effect on turnover intention through work stress

2.5.7 The Influence of Work Conflict on Turnover Intention through Work Stress

Based on the Stressor-Strain-Outcome (SSO) framework, work conflict acts as a stressor that creates psychological strain in the form of work stress, which subsequently leads to behavioral outcomes such as turnover intention and OCB. Employees who experience persistent conflict are more likely to feel stressed and eventually consider leaving the organization to which they belong. Prior studies have confirmed that work stress mediates the relationship between work conflict and turnover intention ([Haeruddin et al., 2023](#); [Nawawi et al., 2024](#); [Rathi and Kumar, 2023](#)). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₇: Work conflict has a positive and significant effect on turnover intention through work stress

3. Methodology

This study employed a quantitative approach using a survey method to examine the influence of workload and work conflict on turnover intention, with work stress acting as a mediating variable among chefs working in star-rated hotels in Tangerang, Indonesia. The study involved 120 respondents selected using purposive sampling. This technique was chosen because the research required participants who met specific criteria, namely professional chefs currently employed in star-rated hotels and with a minimum of one year of work experience. A sample size of 120 respondents was considered adequate for SEM-PLS analysis, as it exceeded the minimum sample requirement recommended for models with multiple latent variables and structural relationships ([Sarstedt et al., 2021](#)).

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed from validated scales adopted from previous studies and adjusted to the context of hotel cooking. The variables of workload, work conflict, work stress, and turnover intention were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire was distributed directly at participating hotels and through an online platform (Google Forms) to facilitate data collection. Prior to the main survey, a pilot test was conducted with respondents outside the study sample to assess the instrument's clarity, validity, and reliability. Participation in the study was voluntary, and the respondents were informed about the purpose of the research before completing the questionnaire. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured, and all collected data were used only for academic research purposes.

Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS version 4.0 through the Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach. This method was selected because of its suitability for predictive research models involving multiple latent constructs and relatively moderate sample sizes. The analysis consisted of two stages: measurement and structural model evaluations. The measurement model was assessed through convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability using factor loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Composite Reliability values. Subsequently, the structural model was evaluated using path coefficients, R-squared, and effect size (f-square) values. Hypothesis testing was performed using the bootstrapping procedure to generate t-statistics and p-values to assess the significance of the proposed relationships. These procedures ensured that the model possessed adequate validity, reliability, and predictive capability to address the research objectives (Hair et al., 2022).

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Research Results

4.1.1 Validity and Reliability Test

The evaluation process began by analyzing the outer loading values, which demonstrate the degree to which each indicator accurately represents its associated latent construct. Indicators are generally considered reliable when the outer loading exceeds the threshold value of 0.70, signifying a strong contribution to the construct being measured. Indicators with lower values may require adjustments or removal. The detailed results of this validity assessment for all the construct indicators are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Convergent validity test results

Variables	Indicator	Loading Factor	AVE	Information
Workload	$X_{1.1}$	0.841	0.816	Valid
	$X_{1.2}$	0.886		Valid
	$X_{1.3}$	0.923		Valid
	$X_{1.4}$	0.930		Valid
	$X_{1.5}$	0.930		Valid
	$X_{1.6}$	0.907		Valid
Work Conflict	$X_{2.1}$	0.863	0.761	Valid
	$X_{2.2}$	0.868		Valid
	$X_{2.3}$	0.905		Valid
	$X_{2.4}$	0.921		Valid
	$X_{2.5}$	0.804		Valid
	$X_{2.6}$	0.869		Valid
Job Stress	Y_1	0.905	0.827	Valid
	Y_2	0.860		Valid
	Y_3	0.880		Valid
	Y_4	0.938		Valid
	Y_5	0.925		Valid
	Y_6	0.948		Valid
Turnover Intention	Z_1	0.916	0.741	Valid
	Z_2	0.882		Valid
	Z_3	0.879		Valid
	Z_4	0.836		Valid
	Z_5	0.822		Valid
	Z_6	0.825		Valid

Table 1 shows that all indicators in the Workload, Work Conflict, Job Stress, and Turnover Intention variables have loading values above 0.80, with an AVE exceeding 0.70 for every construct. These results indicate that all questions represent their respective constructs well and are suitable for research use, confirming that the measurement model satisfies convergent validity before proceeding to discriminant validity testing.

Table 2. Discriminant validity test results (Fornell-lacker criterion)

	Workload	Work Conflict	Job Stress	Turnover Intention
Workload	0.903	-	-	-
Work Conflict	0.587	0.872	-	-
Job Stress	0.749	0.689	0.910	-
Turnover Intention	0.778	0.795	0.814	0.861

Table 2 shows that the diagonal value for each construct, representing the square root of its AVE, is greater than its correlation with every other construct in the same row and column. This condition indicates that each tested construct, namely Workload, Work Conflict, Job Stress, and Turnover Intention, is empirically unique and that there is no overlapping meaning between dimensions; thus, the discriminant validity criteria can be declared to be met properly.

Table 3. Reliability

	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite Reliability (rho_c)
Workload	0.955	0.958	0.964
Work Conflict	0.937	0.942	0.950
Job Stress	0.958	0.965	0.966
Turnover Intention	0.930	0.932	0.945

Table 3 shows the reliability values for all study variables. The Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values for each variable were above 0.90. This indicates that the instrument used was highly consistent in measuring workload, work conflict, job stress, and turnover intention, and that the measurement model as a whole meets both convergent validity and reliability requirements before proceeding to structural model evaluation.

4.1.2 Determination Test (*R-Squared*)

The coefficient of determination (R^2) indicates how well an independent variable explains a dependent variable. A value close to one indicates greater predictive power. Common guidelines categorize 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 as strong, moderate, and weak, respectively ([Hair, Sarstedt, & Marko, 2022](#)).

Table 4. Coefficient of determination test (R^2)

	R-square	R-square Adjusted
Job Stress	0.656	0.650
Turnover Intention	0.811	0.806

Table 4 shows the extent of variation that the model can explain. The R-Square value for Job Stress is 0.656 and for Turnover Intention is 0.811, while the adjusted values are slightly lower at 0.650 and 0.806, respectively. Following the common guideline that categorizes values around 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 as strong, moderate, and weak explanatory power, these results indicate that the model explains a substantial share of the variance in Turnover Intention and a moderately strong share of the variance in Job Stress, confirming that the structural model possesses adequate predictive relevance for both endogenous constructs.

4.1.3 Model Fit Test

SmartPLS version 4.0 assesses model fit using the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). This indicator shows the difference between the actual and model-predicted correlations. The smaller the difference, the better is the model fit. A model is considered fit if the SRMR value is below 0.05 ([Hair, Sarstedt, & Marko, 2022](#)).

Table 5. Model fit test

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.080	0.080
d_ ULS	1.905	1.905
d_ G	4.775	4.775
Chi-square	1932.298	1932.298
NFI	0.607	0.607

Table 5 shows the results of the model fit test, where the SRMR, d_ ULS, d_ G, chi-square, and NFI values are identical between the saturated and estimated models. Although the SRMR value of 0.080 slightly exceeds the conventional 0.05 threshold, this level is commonly regarded as acceptable for exploratory PLS-SEM models involving multiple latent constructs. The identical values across the saturated and estimated models further indicate that the structure of the tested model is quite stable, and thus, it can be used as a basis for the hypothesis testing reported in the following subsection.

4.1.4 Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis testing examined the direct and indirect relationships among variables in the research model, with job stress as a mediator. The analysis considered the original sample values to assess effect strength, t-statistics to evaluate significance, and p-values to guide decisions. The results of the hypothesis testing are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Hypothesis test results

	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values
Workload → Job Stress	0.525	7.741	0.000
Work Conflict → Job Stress	0.381	5.187	0.000
Workload → Turnover Intention	0.320	5.960	0.000
Work Conflict → Turnover Intention	0.403	8.305	0.000
Job Stress → Turnover Intention	0.296	5.605	0.000
Workload → Job Stress → Turnover Intention	0.155	4.547	0.000
Work Conflict → Job Stress → Turnover Intention	0.113	4.013	0.000

Table 6 displays the results of the hypothesis test that illustrates how workload, work conflict, and work stress are interrelated and influence employees' intention to leave their job. The numbers in the original sample column indicate the strength of the direction of influence between the variables. For example, workload was highly correlated with work stress at 0.525, while work conflict was also strongly correlated with stress at 0.381. These numbers confirm that the more demanding the work or the greater the level of conflict at work, the greater the pressure felt by employees is.

The direct relationship between workload and intention to leave was 0.320, while that of work conflict was higher at 0.403. This implies that workplace conflict is a stronger trigger for resignation than workload alone. Furthermore, work stress itself increased the intention to leave by 0.296. Furthermore, the indirect pathway through stress also plays a significant role. Stressful workload ultimately increases the intention to leave by 0.155, while work conflict, through stress, has an additional effect of 0.113. All p-values were recorded at 0.000, indicating that the relationships found were truly significant.

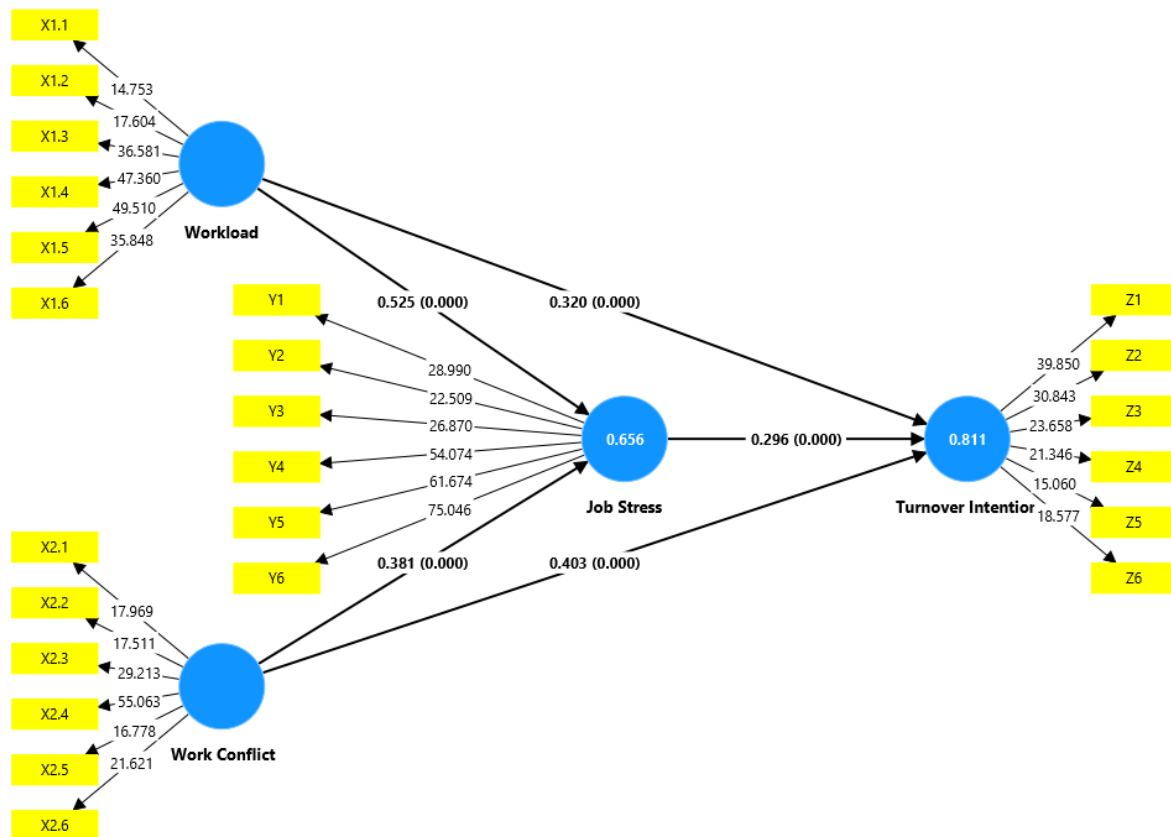


Figure 1. Bootstrapping test results

Figure 1 presents the bootstrapping diagram generated in SmartPLS, visually displaying the path coefficients, loading values, and significance indicators for all direct and indirect relationships among Workload, Work Conflict, Job Stress, and Turnover Intention. As the diagram shows, all seven paths tested, including the three direct effects on Job Stress and Turnover Intention, the direct effect of Job Stress on Turnover Intention, and the two indirect paths mediated by Job Stress, display bootstrapped path coefficients consistent with the values reported in Table 6, providing a visual confirmation of the structural relationships before they are interpreted in detail in the discussion that follows.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 The Influence of Workload on Work Stress

The findings confirm that workload is a significant predictor of stress. Employees facing greater work demands are more likely to experience increased levels of job stress. This finding aligns with the understanding that excessive workload, in terms of task quantity and complexity, can be a major trigger for psychological stress (Imaroh et al., 2023). In a star-rated hotel kitchen, the fast-paced work, high service standards, and long hours create a heavy workload, increasing the risk of stress. These findings support previous research suggesting that stress arises when job demands exceed an individual's capacity (Meliani et al., 2024; Novianti & Roz 2023; Octiyana & Diwyarthi 2023). Thus, management needs to regulate the workload proportionally to avoid a negative impact on employees' mental health (Basar & Supiyadi, 2024).

4.2.2 The Influence of Work Conflict on Work Stress

The findings demonstrate that workplace conflict significantly influences job stress positively, indicating that increased workplace conflict is associated with higher levels of job stress among employees. These findings demonstrate that stressful interactions, whether in the form of task conflict or interpersonal relationship conflict, can worsen employees' psychological well-being. In the hospitality context, disharmonious collaboration between chefs, misunderstandings, or unhealthy competition often leads to significant emotional distress. If these conflicts are left unresolved, they can develop into chronic stress, which reduces motivation and productivity (Febryansyah et al., 2024).

These results are consistent with organizational conflict theory, which asserts that poorly managed conflict disrupts employees' emotional stability ([Febryansyah et al., 2024](#)). In line with previous research, several studies have found that work conflict is closely related to increased stress and work burnout and can trigger dysfunctional behavior in organizations ([Aritonang et al., 2023](#); [Putri & Afriyeni, 2022](#)). Thus, conflict management through open communication, fair leadership, and the creation of a collaborative work culture are important strategies for reducing the negative impact of conflict on psychological well-being and individual performance in the hospitality sector ([Salama et al., 2022](#)).

4.2.3 The Influence of Workload on Turnover Intention

The results indicate that workload has a positive and significant effect on turnover intention. This finding suggests that employees who experience higher workloads tend to have stronger intentions to leave the organization. This implies that employees who perceive their workload as unbalanced with their abilities or compensation are more likely to want to leave their jobs. In a star-rated hotel environment, a consistently high workload without a rotation system or adequate rest periods can lead to both physical and mental exhaustion. This situation creates the perception that the job is no longer worth maintaining, thus increasing the intention to seek other opportunities ([Nawawi et al., 2024](#)). These findings underscore the importance of human resource management in setting realistic workloads while simultaneously providing commensurate rewards to maintain employees' loyalty. These findings align with previous studies that show excessive workloads increase turnover intentions because individuals perceive their jobs as too demanding and exhausting, increasing the likelihood of job changes ([Almubarakah et al., 2024](#); [Arnas et al., 2024](#)).

4.2.4 The Influence of Work Conflict on Turnover Intention

The results indicate that work conflict positively and significantly affects turnover intention. This finding suggests that employees who experience higher levels of workplace conflict are more likely to develop an intention to leave the organization. This indicates that conflict has a stronger driving force in increasing employees' desire to resign. Unresolved conflict can disrupt the comfort of the work environment, lead to dissatisfaction, and erode employees' motivation. In the context of a star-rated hotel kitchen that demands solid team coordination, conflict between chefs or between chefs and management can quickly escalate into a primary reason for seeking another job ([Wijaya & Samsudin, 2023](#)). The results of this study are in line with previous research, which states that interpersonal conflict is the dominant factor that drives increased turnover intention ([Cahyanto et al., 2023](#); [Haeruddin et al., 2023](#)). These findings confirm that the dynamics of interpersonal relationships in the work environment contribute directly to employees' decisions to stay or leave the organization ([Aritonang et al., 2023](#)). Therefore, an organization's ability to manage conflict, strengthen communication, and build a harmonious work culture greatly determines the level of employee retention in the hospitality industry.

4.2.5 The Influence of Work Stress on Turnover Intention

The results indicate that job stress has a positive and significant effect on turnover intention. This finding suggests that employees experiencing higher levels of job stress are more likely to develop an intention to leave the organization. This finding confirms that when job stress is not effectively managed, employees' tendency to leave the organization increases ([Meliani et al., 2024](#)). Stress has been shown to lower job satisfaction, weaken emotional bonds with the company, and increase the urge to seek a work environment that is perceived as healthier and more supportive ([Basar & Supiyadi, 2024](#)). In the hotel chef profession, stress can arise from tight time pressures, varying customer expectations, and demands for extremely high food-quality standards. Without adequate coping mechanisms, this accumulated stress can precipitate an individual's decision to resign ([Mehmood et al., 2023](#)). The results of this study are in line with previous research that states that stress is one of the main predictors of turnover intention in various sectors, both service and manufacturing industries, because the inability of organizations to manage stress has a direct impact on increasing employees' desire to leave ([Al Hadi & Surya, 2023](#); [Almubarakah et al., 2024](#); [Anggraini & Kui, 2021](#)).

4.2.6 The Influence of Workload on Turnover Intention through Work Stress

The results confirm the mediating role of job stress in the relationship between workload and turnover intention, indicating that workload influences turnover intention directly and indirectly through increased levels of job stress. This means that a heavy workload not only has a direct effect but also causes stress, which leads to the desire to resign. This finding suggests a mediating mechanism in which stress acts as an important pathway connecting workload and turnover intention. This aligns with the theory of job stress, which states that the pressure arising from an excessive workload can reduce psychological well-being, ultimately triggering the intention to leave the job ([Anggraini & Kui, 2021](#)). The results of this study are in line with previous research, which states that high workloads increase employee stress levels and significantly impact the tendency to leave the organization ([Al Hadi & Surya, 2023](#)). Other studies have also confirmed that work stress acts as a mediator that bridges the relationship between job factors and turnover intention, especially in the service sector, which demands high work intensity ([Lantican, 2021](#)). Thus, these findings strengthen the empirical evidence that reducing turnover is not enough by balancing work distribution but also requires stress management strategies and ongoing psychological support.

4.2.7 The Influence of Work Conflict on Turnover Intention through Work Stress

The results indicate that work conflict has a significant indirect effect on turnover intention through job stress. This finding suggests that workplace conflict increases employees' stress levels, which subsequently strengthens their intention to leave the organization. This mechanism illustrates that conflict not only has a direct impact but also creates emotional stress, which then strengthens the intention to resign. Continuous conflict can lead to feelings of frustration, discomfort, and mental fatigue. The accumulation of these conditions leads to a desire to seek a more conducive work environment ([Febryansyah et al., 2024](#)). Thus, stress is an important channel that clarifies how conflict drives turnover intention. The results of this study align with previous research suggesting that work conflict increases employee psychological distress, which then leads to the intention to leave the organization ([Shakoor et al., 2023](#)). In line with these findings, another study confirmed that stress acts as a significant mediator in the relationship between conflict and turnover intentions, especially in the service sector with high levels of interaction ([Nawawi et al., 2024](#)). These findings emphasize the need for proactive conflict management and mental health support to ensure that employees remain comfortable working in the organization.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Conclusion

This study examined the effects of workload and work conflict on turnover intention, with job stress serving as a mediating variable among chefs working in star-rated hotels in Tangerang, Indonesia. The findings demonstrate that both workload and work conflict significantly increase job stress, which subsequently contributes to higher turnover intention. In addition, workload and work conflict were found to influence turnover intention both directly and indirectly through job stress, highlighting the important role of stress as an underlying mechanism linking workplace conditions to employees' intention to leave.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the Human Resource Management (HRM) literature by providing empirical evidence that workload and work conflict function as critical job demands that influence turnover intention through job stress. These findings support the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory by confirming that excessive job demands deplete employees' psychological resources and increase withdrawal intentions. Furthermore, this study enriches hospitality literature by providing evidence from hotel chefs, a professional group that operates in a highly demanding work environment characterized by time pressure, service quality expectations, and intensive interpersonal interactions. These findings highlight the importance of managing psychosocial working conditions to improve employee retention and organizational sustainability in the hospitality industry.

5.2 Research Limitations

This study had several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the study involved 120 respondents, which may limit the generalizability of the results to a broader population sample. Second, the research focused exclusively on chefs working in star-rated hotels in Tangerang; therefore, the findings may not fully represent employees in other hospitality settings, geographical regions or occupational groups. Third, the cross-sectional design captured respondents' perceptions at a single point in time, making it difficult to observe changes in workload, work conflict, job stress, and turnover intention over time. Finally, this study examined only workload, work conflict, and job stress, while other factors that may influence turnover intention were not included in the research model.

5.3 Suggestions and Directions for Future Research

Based on these findings, several practical recommendations can be proposed. Hotel management should implement effective workload management practices by ensuring adequate staffing, equitable task distribution, and realistic work schedules. Organizations should strengthen conflict management mechanisms through open communication, teamwork development, and early conflict resolution strategies. In addition, stress management initiatives such as employee counseling, psychological support programs, wellness activities, and supervisor support systems may help reduce stress levels and subsequently decrease turnover intentions among chefs.

From a strategic HRM perspective, hotel organizations should integrate workload assessment, conflict prevention, and employee well-being programs into their talent-retention strategies. Such initiatives can enhance employee engagement, improve job satisfaction, and strengthen organizational commitment, ultimately reducing turnover. For future research, scholars are encouraged to investigate these relationships in different hospitality sectors and geographical contexts, employ longitudinal research designs, and incorporate additional variables such as job satisfaction, organizational support, leadership style, work engagement, and organizational commitment to provide a more comprehensive understanding of turnover intention.

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Author Contributions

PK was responsible for the study conceptualization, research framework development, literature review and overall research design. SS conducted data collection, questionnaire administration, data preparation and preliminary data processing. SS performed data analysis using SEM-PLS, interpreted the research findings, and contributed to the statistical validation. All authors collaboratively contributed to the manuscript writing, critical revision of the intellectual content, and final approval of the version to be published. PK supervised the research process and ensured the study's accuracy, integrity, and consistency. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript and are accountable for all aspects of the work presented.

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