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## A Proposed Framework on Turnover Intention among Nursing Home Nurses

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### Abstract

The majority of studies to date have focused on the job demands that influence nurses in hospital setting; with the nurses working in nursing home is being less explored. Failure to meet the demand in work may give negative impact for employees such as job stress and burnout, which can lead to turnover intention. Burnout has been identified as mediating variable in the relationship between job demands and turnover intention. This paper is aimed to examine the literature on the relationship between job demands and turnover intention. The literature reviews shows that there will be a positive relationship between job demands and turnover intention and there is a mediation effect of burnout through indirect relationship between job demands and turnover intention. Social supports from family, resident and supervisor are suggested to moderate the relationship between job demand and turnover intention. The strength of relationship between job demand and turnover intention depend on the mediation effect of burnout and moderating effect of social support. The findings of this study are expected to help private nursing home and related industry in development of the policy to improve the quality of human resources specifically among nursing staff.

**Keywords:** Job Demands; Burnout; Turnover Intention; Social Support; Nursing Home

### Introduction

Turnover intention among nurses remains a challenging problem worldwide. Turnover intentions have been defined as the employees decide to leave their unit or job (Brewer, Kovner, Greene, Tukov-Shuser & Djukic, 2012; Toren et al., 2012). Recent study proposed that turnover intentions among nurses are in alarming range, which is from 4% to 68% (Sabanciogullari & Dogan, 2015). In a large study conducted in 10 countries, turnover intention among nurses was 33% (Heinen et al., 2013).

According to Department of Statistic, Ministry of Health Malaysia (2015), the number of turnover rate in private nursing homes is significant problem with the rates ranging from 18% among administrative to 39.5% among nursing staff. This number will lead to the shortage of staff especially those who are involved in direct caregiving of the residents like nursing staff and caregivers. Due to shortage of staff, nursing staff also working extra hours and the payment becomes misappropriate compared to their working hours (Woodhead, Northrop & Edelstein, 2014). Exiting nursing has been highlighted to be adapting simultaneous changes that are occurring of burnout (Rudman & Gustavsson, 2011; Rudman et al., 2014).

Nurses in nursing home are responsible to give direct nursing care to nursing homes residents. Demand for nursing staff is expected to intensify with the rising population of older adults globally. In Malaysia, the number of ageing population is projected to double to 5.8 million, or 15.3% of the total population, in the next 13 years. By 2050, it is projected that the ageing population will increase to 9.6 million, making up about 23.1% of the total population aged 60 and above and Malaysia will be an ageing nation soon (United Nation, 2017). Compared to other country in South Eastern Asia, percentage aged 60 years or over in Malaysia is among the highest ageing population after Singapore (19.9%), Thailand (16.9%) and Vietnam (11.1%). This fastest growing leading to an increasing demands for nursing staff in nursing homes.

According to Chiba, Yamamoto-Mitani and Kawasaki (2012), there are numerous challenges as nursing staff since the this job always related to emotional exhaustion and physically draining due to heavy physical and psychological workloads. Working with the older people can cause job stress like handling the residents suffering from behavioral disorders, caring for disable patients or confrontation with the death (Eith, Stummer & Schusterschitz, 2011; Fuss et al., 2010). This kind of job demands related to quantitative demands and attention demands may cause hardship at work as well as emotional and psychosocial impact. Thus, nurses working in nursing homes are exposed to potential risk factors for job demands and burnout that will lead to turnover intention.

Turnover intentions of skilled nurses working with elderly can be very costly and disruptive for the organization. According to Griffeth et al., (2011), losing skilled staff leads organization to encounter substantial costs associated with recruiting, training and others hidden costs of employment (Griffeth et al., 2011). Identifying the factors related to turnover intentions within the healthcare workforce and controlling it through human resource practices and work system design is essential for organizations specifically for nursing home.

Therefore, there is a crucial issues need to explore on turnover intention since the globalization and rapid transformation of work, the economy and social changes widely around the world. Hence, maintaining the current workforce is crucial for the health care sector particularly in nursing homes. Thus, this paper is aimed to review the literature on job demands and turnover intention, burnout as mediating variable and social support as moderating variable and propose the research framework on turnover intention for nursing home nurses.

## Literature Review

### *Job Demand, Burnout, Social Support and Turnover Intention*

The phenomenon of job demands experienced by nurses in nursing homes is not something new in the workplace. In fact, the problem of burnout experienced by nursing home nurses has obtained attention by many scholars and various studies have shown that the negative effects caused from high job demands will lead to burnout and turnover intention. Thus, results in a great loss to the organization.

There are several studies reported that nursing home nurses suffer from many health outcomes due to over job demands and various issues related to management and social support. Therefore, continued pressure leads to burnout phenomenon among nursing staff. The impact of burnout should be considerable by all parties especially nursing homes founder and government. Further discussion of the job demands, turnover intention, social support and burnout explained as follows.

### **Job Demands and Burnout**

There are numerous studies that promote that job demands linked with burnout (Schmidt & Diestel, 2013; Hou et al., 2014; Woodhead et al., 2014). Job demands can be defined as physical, psychosocial or anything related to the work in an organization that requires physical and psychological effort, which in turn results in physiological and psychological costs to the organization (Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2003). Excessive job demands do not necessarily give a positive impact to individuals or organizations; they may turn into burnout when the individual cannot cope with the situation (Bakker et al., 2003). Examples of job demands include time pressure, physical and psychological demands that are related to individual responsibility for certain jobs, role overload and unfavorable environmental conditions (Berg, Applebaum & Kalleberg, 2003).

Numerous literatures have shown that nursing professionals experience high levels of burnout associated with job demands (Chou, Li, & Hu, 2014). In terms of job demands in the nursing profession, nursing home nurses face several physical and psychological burdens not experienced by other professions that can influence their situation and may lead to an increased rate of burnout. The job demands experienced by nursing home nurses can be categorized into two categories: quantitative demands and attention demands.

Firstly, quantitative demand can be defined as the job that requires hard work and it is related to time pressure, excessive workloads and work conflict (Michelle, 2013). Work overload is one of the examples that refer to work time commitments. According to Luo, Yen, Lu, and Oi, (2015), work overload is also related to time pressure, in which employees notice they have to resolve excessive workload in one time or limited time. There is a significant impact of work overload on the organization such as an increase in turnover rate (Moodie et al., 2014). Studies have also shown that work overloads have a negative relationship with employees' job performance. A similar study has been done by Michelle (2013) who found that work overload caused increasing cases of turnover intentions and low employees' performance.

Secondly, attention referred to the level to which constant job monitoring is required in working environment (Dieter & Elsy, 2016). It is proposed by previous studies on sub-constructs of attention demands include problem solving demands, monitoring demands, and production responsibilities (Dieter & Elsy, 2016). To suit the nursing profession, emotional demands and role ambiguity demand will be study as sub-construct for attention demands in this study.

There are an increasing number of residents living in nursing home (Willemse et al., 2014). As a result, the demand for nursing care will rise, whilst the reduction of nursing home nurses. A study by Hsu et al. (2007) found that an inconsistent schedule also significantly connected to heavy workload, poor management, and the working time problem. The inapplicable work schedule implies not only poor management of cycle or day and night schedule, but it indicates deficient human resources. The shortage of nursing staff in nursing home will lead to increasing workload and insufficient time to nurses and finally they will suffer stress and burnout. Thus, it is very important and urgent to study on this issue to fill the gap of the research.

### ***Burnout and Turnover Intention***

Burnout is a phrase that usually used in psychological that referred to enduring exhaustion and loss attention in work, which is an great form of job stress (Karatepe & Karadas, 2014). There is numerous definition of burnout, but the most significant definition of burnout has been defined by Maslach (1984) as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can experience by workers.

Exhaustion is primarily related to the employee's experience of burnout, which is in turn related to a reduction in emotional and physical resources. Cynicism refers to a detachment and suspicious response to the recipients of one's service or care. Cynicism pertains to the loss of enthusiasm and emotional involvement in work (Leiter & Maslach, 2005). The third dimension of burnout, reduced personal accomplishment concerns the perception of incompetence and lack of achievement related to job performance (Leiter & Maslach, 2009).

Early research of burnout focus on human service profession such as nurses and medical staff working in hospital setting. However later, a few researches indicate that burnout can occur beyond this type of setting. Nursing profession especially those who are working in private nursing homes surrounding by challenging environment and limited facilities, which can easily fall into burnout.

In addition, the fastest growing of ageing population also leading to an increasing demand for nursing homes nurses. As the result, the demand for care for elderly will rise, whilst the working population of nursing home nurses decreases. According to Nurul Ashykin et al. (2017), it is projected that a potential shortage of nursing home nurses with an associated risk of burnout and decreased work motivation leading to higher turnover rate.

Turnover intention model is based on the theory of plan behaviors (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) that refers to individual's intention to disengage from their job and seriously considering leaving the job. This theory support that turnover intention will directly link to actual turnover behavior. As a

result, it can give negative impact to the organization due to its indirect cost related to business profit.

In review regarding the consequence of burnout, turnover intention is the most highly related in the category of work related outcome. Aiken, Clarke, Sloane and Silber Sochalski (2002) conducted a study in which a total of 43% reported nurse's burnout, which leads to their high job turnover within 12 months, compared with only 11% who left their jobs without any experience of burnout. Stress from job demands was associated with high burnout and low satisfaction in with job satisfaction and positively related with turnover intention in Malaysian nurses (Alam & Mohammad, 2010).

In recent study, there are statistically significant relationship between lower job burnout and higher work engagement among nursing home nurses' intention to stay (Eltaybani et al., 2018). It means, higher level of job burnout will influence the intention to leave the job. According to Schaufeli et al., (2006), it is clearly stated that, work engagement and burnout are highly negative correlated concepts and previous studies have also identified a relationship between turnover intention and high burnout among nursing homes nurses (Karsh, Booske & Sainfort, 2005; Kennedy, 2005).

*Preposition 1: Job demands is positively related to turnover intention among Nursing Home Nurses*

### ***Social Support as moderator in the relationship between job demands and burnout***

Job demand is not necessarily negative to burnout. However, job demand can change to job stressor when high effort is needed to meet job demand and employee fails to meet the demand (Lewis & Humbert, 2010). This will lead to a negative impact such as job stress, burnout, and turnover intention, while sufficient social support lead to positive consequences, for example support from supervisor and family members.

A current study by Woodhead et al. (2014) suggested social support can be support from supervisors and friends or family members, encouragement of worth, chance for fostering were associated with fewer emotional exhaustion and greater levels of personal achievement. It is reported that many nursing home nurses leave their job due to opposition by their family member who dislike the low social status, pay and prestige (Wu et al., 2005). Additional support from supervisors and colleagues or family members anticipated inferior levels of emotional exhaustion. The result concerning the importance of support from friends or family members highlights the need to look beyond the barriers of the nurse's facility for influences to job demands, burnout, and their reduction or prevention.

Support from supervisors is important to decrease burnout among nursing home nurses. Previous investigation by Eisenberger et al. (2002) on the effects of supervisor support in others settings suggests that rising supervisor support can cause higher employee retention and less absenteeism. It is supported by Garcia-Izquierdo & Rios-Riquez (2012) who found that lack of support specifically the assistance from supervisors would make the staff experience negative physical and emotional changes.

Generally, less social support was found to be projecting for higher depersonalization and

lower personal accomplishment (Woodhead et al., 2014). However, there are no relationship was found between co-worker social support and emotional exhaustion. There are strong evidence demonstrated social support by supervisor is linked to job stress, little is known about the other sources of social support like from residents related to burnout (Woodhead et al., 2014). Thus, this study is intent to examine sources of social support available that linked to burnout experienced by nursing home nurses in Malaysia.

*Preposition 2: Social support moderates the relationship between job demands and burnout among nursing home nurses*

### ***Burnout as mediator in the relationship between job demands and turnover intention***

A study has found that burnout has been associated with various forms of job withdrawal such as intention to leave the job and actual turnover (Kim & Stoner, 2008). Another study done by (Leiter & Maslach, 2009) among Canadian Nurses found that the direct associations between burnout and predictors such as values comparison expected in all three dimensions of burnout, while workload had a direct link to exhaustion.

According to Jyoti & Rajib (2016), specific job demands namely quantitative demands and attention demands have been repeatedly found to predict turnover intentions among various occupational groups. Further study by (Kim & Stoner, 2008) found that burnout mediates the relationship between Job Demand (role ambiguity, role workload and role conflict) and turnover intention. So it is proposed to test others sub-construct of job demands (quantitative demands and intention demands), either it has direct relationship with turnover intention through burnout among Malaysian nursing homes nurses.

*Preposition 3: Burnout mediates the relationship between job demands and turnover intention among nursing home nurses*

### ***Integrating Job Demands, Burnout, Social Support and Turnover Intention into a single model***

Evidence shows that burnout mediates the relationship between job demands and turnover intention (Kim & Stoner, 2008 ;Leiter & Maslach, 2009). Apart from that, previous study also shows that social support moderates the relationship between job demands and burnout. Thus, social support may influence the mediating effect of burnout on job demands and turnover intention relationship. The integration between job demands as independent variable, burnout as mediating variable, social support as moderating variable and turnover intention as dependent variable shown in Figure 1.

*Preposition 4: The mediating effect of burnout on job demands and turnover intention and moderated by social support.*

### ***Propose Research Framework***

Based on previous literature, this paper proposes a relationship between job demands and turnover intention for nurses. It is proposed that there is positive relationship between job demands and turnover intention. Moreover, it is also proposed that burnout mediates the relationship

between job demands and turnover intention. Apart from that, previous literature also found that social support act as an important factor to buffer the relationship between job demands and burnout. So it is proposed that the relationship between job demands and burnout is moderated by social support received from family, nursing home's residents and supervisor support. The overall proposed framework for nurses is shown in Figure 1.

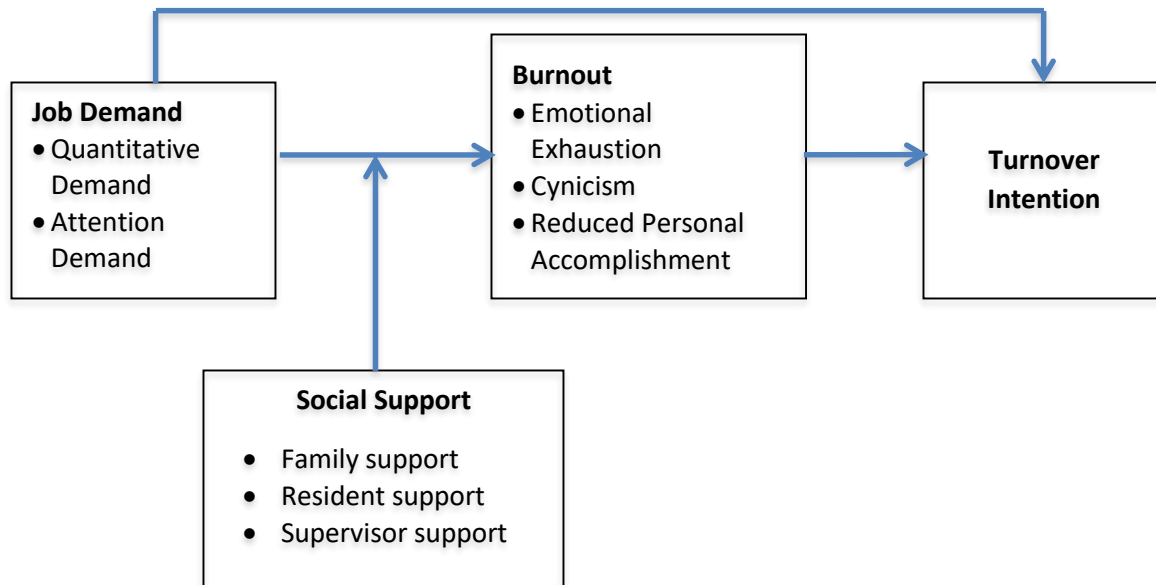


Figure 1: Proposed Research Framework for Nursing Home Nurses

### Conclusion

Although there are strong relationship between job demands and burnout but little is known about quantitative demands and attention demand that influence burnout among nursing home nurses in Malaysia. There are also lacking of evidence to support the moderating effect of social support among this type of profession. Thus, this study is essential to test the hypothesis proposed in order to develop the proposed research framework. To test the hypothesis, the best research design that well matched this study will be correlational cross-sectional research design. In addition, the use of closed ended questionnaire as the instrument to obtain data is strongly suggested in this type of research and testing of hypothesis. The respondent for this study will be comprised of the nurses working in Private Nursing Home in Malaysia. This research will be utilized cluster sampling method to represent the population of nursing home nurses in Malaysia. Understanding the causality will allow for specific and appropriate strategies to address challenges of job demands and burnout among nursing home nurses, so that the turnover rate will be reduced. Further research exploring mediating effect of the relationship between job demands and burnout over longer periods of time is necessary for establishing causality.

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