

**REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
ISTANBUL GELISIM UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

Department of Business Administration

**THE IMPACT OF PROCEDURAL JUSTICE ON
WORK ENGAGEMENT AND CAREER
ABANDONMENT INTENTION AMONG
HEALTHCARE WORKERS IN IRAQ STATE
HOSPITALS**

Master Thesis

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that in the preparation of this thesis, scientific ethical rules have been followed, the works of other persons have been referenced in accordance with the scientific norms if used, there is no falsification in the used data, any part of the thesis has not been submitted to this university or any other university as another thesis.

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SUMMARY

In this study, the relationship between procedural justice, work engagement, and intentions to leave one's career among healthcare employees in Iraqi state hospitals is explored. It is used structured questionnaire established by the previous researchers, which is based on the Likert scale. 102 participants comprised the sample size in an effort to shed light on the variables impacting the career decisions of healthcare workers. The data obtained were analyzed by the partial least squares method through SmartPls 4.0 software. The results of the study revealed that procedural justice has an effect on employees' intentions to leave their careers, and work engagement has a mediating role in this relationship.

Keywords: Procedural Justice, Work engagement, Career Abandonment Intention

ÖZET

Bu çalışmada, Irak devlet hastanelerindeki sağlık çalışanları arasında prosedürel adalet, işe bağlılık ve kariyerden ayrılma niyeti arasındaki ilişki araştırılmıştır. Çalışmada önceki araştırmacılar tarafından oluşturulan ve Likert Ölçeğine dayanan yapılandırılmış anket kullanılmıştır. 102 katılımcı, sağlık çalışanlarının kariyer kararlarını etkileyen değişkenlere ışık tutmak amacıyla örneklem büyüklüğünü oluşturmuştur. Elde edilen veriler smartpls 4.0 yazılımı aracılığıyla kısmi en küçük kareler yöntemi ile analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmanın sonuçları, prosedürel adaletin çalışanların kariyerlerinden ayrılma niyetleri üzerinde etkili olduğunu ve işe tutkunluğun bu ilişkide aracı bir rolü olduğunu ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Prosedür Adaleti, Çalışan Bağlılığı, Kariyerden Ayrılma Niyeti

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY	i
ÖZET	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
PREFACE	viii
INTRODUCTION	1

CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Work Engagement.....	5
1.1.1. Dimensions of Work Engagement	6
1.1.1.1. Vigor	6
1.1.1.2. Dedication	7
1.1.1.3. Absorption.....	7
1.1.2. Work Engagement Theories.....	7
1.1.2.1. Job Characteristic Model (JCM).....	7
1.1.2.2. Self-Determination Theory (SDT).....	8
1.1.3. Achieving Work Engagement	9
1.2. Career Abandonment Intention	10
1.2.1. Theories of Career Abandonment Intention.....	12
1.2.1.1. Push-Pull Theory of Career Abandonment.....	12
1.2.1.2. Push Factors	12
1.2.1.3. Pull Factors	13
1.2.2. Psychological Contract Breach Theory	14
1.3. Dimensions of Career Abandonment Intention.....	15
1.4. Achieving Reduced Career Abandonment Intentions.....	15
1.5. Organizational Justice	16
1.5.1. Dimensions of Organizational Justice.....	18
1.5.1.1. Informational Justice.....	18
1.5.1.2. Procedural Justice	19

1.5.1.3. Distributive justice	19
1.5.2. Theories on Organizaitional Justice	20
1.5.2.1. Euqity Theory	21
1.5.3. Achieving Organizational Justice.....	21
1.6. Hypothesis Development	22
1.6.1.The Relationship Between Procedural Justice and Work Engagement	22
1.6.2. The Relationship Between Work Engagement and Career Abandonment Intention	23
1.6.3. The Relationship Between Procedural Justice and Career Abandonment Intention	24
1.6.4. The Relationship Among Work Engagement, Procedural Justice and Career Abandonment Intention	25

**CHAPTER TWO
METHODOLOGY**

2.1. Limitation of the study.....	27
2.2. Problem Statement	28
2.3. Research Questions	29
2.4. Instruments	29
2.4.1. Measuring Work engagement	30
2.4.2. Measuring Procedural Organizational Justice.....	30
2.4.3. Measuring Career Abandonment Intention.....	30
2.5. Demographic Variables.....	31
2.6. Sample and Procedure.....	31
2.7. Common Method Bias	33
2.8. Population of the research	33
2.9. Sample Size.....	33
2.10. Sampling Technique.....	34
2.11. Data Coding & Processing	34
2.12. Data Analysis Strategy.....	35

**CHAPTER THREE
DATA ANALYSIS**

3.1. Assessment of Measurement Model	36
3.2. Assessment of Structural Model	39

3.3. Hypothesis Acceptance/Rejection..... 46
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS..... 47
DISCUSSION 47
RECOMMENDATIONS..... 49
REFERENCES..... 51



LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Sample Characteristics	32
Table 2. VIF values for Common Method Bias	33
Table 3. Measurement model assessment result.....	38
Table 4. Measurement model assessment result.....	39
Table 5. Discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker), correlations among variables, means and standard deviations.....	40
Table 6. Heterotrait - Monotrait Criteria (HTMT)	40
Table 7. Results of structural model & specific indirect effect.....	45
Table 8. Differences of RMSE values.....	46



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Research Framework	26
Figure 2. Direct effect of procedural justice on work engagement and career abandonment intention	41
Figure 3. t-test of the direct effect of procedural justice on work engagement and career abandonment intention	41
Figure 4. Path coefficients of the mediating effect of work engagement on the relationship between moral procedural justice and career abandonment intention.	42
Figure 5. t test of the mediating effect of work engagement on the relationship between moral procedural justice and career abandonment intention.	42



PREFACE

The field of healthcare, particularly in the context of Iraq's state hospitals, is a critical domain that directly affects the well-being and quality of life for millions of individuals. As a country still recovering from decades of conflict and instability, the healthcare sector in Iraq faces unique challenges, including resource constraints, infrastructure deficiencies, and the ongoing need for reconstruction and development. Within this context, the research presented in this thesis explores the critical issue of procedural justice and its influence on the work engagement and career abandonment intentions of healthcare workers.

The significance of this research is rooted in the understanding that healthcare workers play a pivotal role in providing essential medical services, and their well-being and commitment to their jobs have far-reaching implications for the healthcare system and the broader society. Iraq's state hospitals, as vital institutions in the healthcare sector, have struggled with a range of challenges, including staff shortages, limited resources, and organizational inefficiencies. These challenges can lead to a myriad of consequences, including burnout, reduced work engagement, and the potential for healthcare workers to consider leaving their careers altogether.

The concept of procedural justice is of paramount importance in this study. It refers to the fairness and transparency of organizational procedures and decision-making processes. When employees perceive procedural justice in their workplace, it can significantly impact their job satisfaction, work engagement, and intention to remain in their careers. Conversely, perceived injustice can lead to reduced motivation and a heightened desire to abandon one's career. By examining the relationship between procedural justice and the work engagement and career abandonment intention of healthcare workers in Iraq's state hospitals, this research aims to shed light on the factors influencing their job satisfaction, commitment, and long-term career aspirations.

This research has the potential to generate insights that are not only academically significant but also practically valuable. Healthcare workers are the backbone of any healthcare system, and their well-being and commitment are essential for the delivery of high-quality patient care. If healthcare organizations can understand the impact of

procedural justice on their staff, they can take steps to improve the work environment, ultimately benefiting not only the employees but also the patients they serve. This research also contributes to the broader body of knowledge on procedural justice, particularly in the context of healthcare settings in Iraq, where limited prior research has been conducted.



INTRODUCTION

Work engagement and organisational justice have become crucial variables impacting career abandonment intentions, worker outcomes and overall organisational success in the changing terrain of modern organisations (Laundon et al., 2019). Given its importance to social wellbeing, the healthcare sector of Iraq is a crucial area where these elements come together and have significant effects. This study examines the intricate relationships between procedural organisational justice, work engagement, and career abandonment intentions in the context of the Iraqi healthcare sector (which is one of the important industries in the country).

Iraq's healthcare sector has seen significant changes in recent years as a result of initiatives to modernise the country's healthcare infrastructure, increase medical services, and improve the health of its population. The importance of healthcare professionals has grown in the midst of these developments. However, difficulties brought on by a lack of qualified workers, a lack of resources, and the demanding nature of the industry have highlighted the need to look at elements that influence employee attitudes and behaviours, such as engagement and withdrawal intentions (Iraq Annual Report 2022 | MSF, 2022).

The medical field is of utmost significance to Iraq since it protects the population's wellbeing and general quality of life (Al-Abrow et al., 2021). Accessible and efficient healthcare services are crucial for promoting social cohesion, economic productivity, and human development in addition to meeting acute medical requirements (Mahdi et al., 2023). The healthcare industry helps to lower death rates, stop the spread of illnesses, and increase the productivity of the country's workforce by offering prompt medical treatments, preventative care, and health education. A strong healthcare system is also essential for luring investments, fostering international ties, and creating a resilient populace that can overcome health issues and advance the country (Alhasan et al., 2022). Hence, career abandonment intentions, working culture, and work engagement are some of the key factors that are highly important to consider for developing healthcare industry of Iraq.

Work engagement encompasses the emotional commitment, drive, and participation that employees bring to their job. Positive work environments are fostered by engaged individuals who demonstrate higher levels of devotion, discretionary effort, and a sense of responsibility towards their roles (Ramamurthi et al., 2016). Engaged healthcare personnel are more likely to deliver high-quality treatment, show resiliency under pressure, and increase patient happiness in the healthcare setting (Salee et al., 2021).

Work engagement is one of the five top most crucial business strategies for the business executives. Because the work engagement not only impacts employee productivity (Jaman et al. 2022), employee retention (Ibrahim et al. 2022), employee loyalty (Basheer et al. 2019) but also it impacts company reputation, customer satisfaction, company profitability and overall stakeholder values (Gonring, 2008). Therefore, today a huge list of companies focuses on enhancing work engagement by following multiple strategies.

Another important dimension for improving healthcare industry of Iraq is organizational culture with a special emphasis on workplace justice. The organisational justice that is now in place in the healthcare industry has a big impact on how healthcare personnel see their responsibilities, interact with coworkers and patients, and handle issues (Salam, 2020). Workplace well-being, professional growth, and work happiness may all be improved by a good and encouraging culture. A hostile or unsupportive culture, and poor work engagement on the other hand, might exacerbate stress, burnout, and withdrawal intentions among healthcare personnel.

In today's competitive environment, companies are investing in developing a culture of work engagement for reducing employee's career abandonment intentions. Although it starts from the top management, has its impact way down the bottom of the organization. Work engagement supports the culture of growth, learning, mutual benefits, and prosperity in the organization (Parent, & Lovelace, 2015).

Procedural organizational justice is also one of the most important concepts supporting work engagement and reducing employee turnover intentions. Organizational justice means treating all employees in an identical way fairly. A solid organizational justice framework help an organization to develop a culture of performance, growth, creativity, and development (Erkutlu, 2011). Organizations with

a strong justice framework implemented, benefit their employees in several ways, such as fairness in an opportunity to grow and fairness in financial growth (Winarsih & Riyanto, 2020).

This study has a wide range of important advantages. First off, by shedding light on the connection between procedural justice, work engagement, and career abandonment intention, this research makes a significant contribution to the field of healthcare management and can be used to develop efficient policies and practises in the healthcare industry. Second, it may improve healthcare professionals' general well-being and job happiness, which would improve the standard of the medical treatment given to Iraq's populace. The results of this study can also help hospital managers and policymakers develop plans to recruit and keep qualified healthcare workers, addressing significant workforce issues in the healthcare sector. By encouraging a fair and supportive work environment that fosters greater engagement and decreased career abandonment intentions, this main study ultimately has the potential to help healthcare professionals as well as the healthcare system in Iraq.

By examining the complex relationship between procedural organisational justice, work engagement, and career abandonment in the context of Iraq's healthcare industry, this study aims to fill a significant gap in the field of research. By illuminating the underlying mechanisms that influence career decisions and results in a difficult and crucial industry, this research advances both the theoretical and practical fields of organisational psychology and human resource management. The investigation of the mediating effect of work engagement is one of the study's main contributions. While organisational justice and work engagement have each been the subject of independent studies looking at employee outcomes, little is known about how these two criteria relate specifically to career abandonment (Furtado et al., 2011). By identifying work engagement as a potential mediator, the study reveals a likely mechanism by which employees' perceptions of fairness and equity within the healthcare organisation could affect their emotional and psychological connection to their work, ultimately affecting their intentions to leave their careers.

The research also gains a special dimension from its emphasis on the Iraqi healthcare sector. Iraq has its distinct set of difficulties because of its socio-political milieu, which is frequently described as being demanding and high-stress in the

healthcare sector (Mahdi et al., 2023). Investigating career abandonment in this context broadens the applicability of the results and sheds light on the challenges encountered by healthcare professionals in an area that has seen substantial upheavals and changes. This study has filled different research gaps, first, different researchers have explored work engagement, and withdrawal attentions in different ways (Mulang, 2022; Huang et al., 2016; Memon et al., 2020). These scholars have taken various dimensions of organizational justice and withdrawal attentions into account when examining the relationship. However, the current study used procedural organizational justice to investigate the relationship. Moreover, this research couldn't find any research that collectively investigated the relationship between employee engagement, procedural organization justice and withdrawal attentions in Iraq healthcare industry.

Additionally, some of the researches focused on work engagement its antecedents (Bailey et al., 2017), while some studies explored consequences of work engagement (Barik & Kochar, 2017). One school of thought have found the significance of work engagement in certain industry, i.e. retail, banking, insurance, and sales (Handa & Gulati, 2014; Winasis et al, 2020; Tladinyane & Merwe, 2016). However, this research could not find any evidence from the current literature exploring the work engagement in the health care industry of Iraq.

The purpose of this study is to understand the mediating impact of work engagement that are particularly important to the Iraqi healthcare industry and how they connect to withdrawal intentions in relation to organizational justice. The current literature is deficient in investigating the mediation of work engagement, on the relationship between organizational justice and career abandonment intentions in the healthcare industry of Iraq.

CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Work Engagement

Employees that are totally invested in their job have a good, rewarding, and motivating state of mind known as "work engagement." It is characterised by a strong sense of passion, commitment, and immersion in one's work duties (Knight et al., 2017). A strong sense of attachment to one's work goes beyond simple job pleasure and contributes to enhanced productivity, performance on the job, and general well-being. Self-report questionnaires and interviews are common methods used by researchers to gauge how enthused, committed, and immersed a worker is in their profession (Bakker and Albrecht, 2018).

For organisations looking to improve their performance across the board, work engagement is of the utmost significance. Motivated workers are more productive and dedicated to their work. They voluntarily devote their time and effort to their jobs, which increases productivity and efficiency (Cesário & Chambel, 2017).. Additionally, employee retention and workplace engagement are tightly related. Employee turnover costs are decreased and important institutional knowledge is preserved when employees are more engaged at work. Additionally, motivated employees are more creative and imaginative, offering original suggestions and solutions to organisational problems (Xiong & Wen, 2020).

This encourages inventiveness and strengthens one's capacity for problem-solving. Furthermore, because engaged employees are more likely to deliver great service, job engagement has a favourable influence on customer satisfaction (Babakus et al., 2017). Overall, job engagement promotes a positive feedback loop inside organisations, resulting in increased productivity, rivalry, and long-term success. Therefore, it is an essential component that organisations must build and maintain (Yongxing et al., 2017).

Engagement at work is crucial for both individuals and organisations. It is a significant factor in determining work satisfaction and general well-being at the individual level (Yang et al., 2019). The profound sense of fulfilment and significance that engaged workers derive from their job not only makes their everyday chores more joyful but also has a favourable effect on their physical and psychological well-being.

Personal advantages of job engagement include reduced stress levels, increased self-esteem, and greater work-life balance. These advantages all improve quality of life (Knight et al., 2019).

Work involvement results into a variety of benefits for organisations. Engaged workers are more likely to be productive and dedicated to their jobs, which leads to higher productivity and better work (Ferreira et al., 2019). Their energy and commitment have a good knock-on impact that promotes excellence as well as cooperation in the workplace. Work engagement is also an effective technique for retaining talent. Employee turnover rates and related expenses are decreased when workers have a strong sense of connection to their work (Pattnaik & Panda, 2020).

Additionally, motivated staff members frequently act as sparks for creativity and innovation inside organisations. They are more likely to produce original concepts and responses, which enhances their capacity for problem-solving and gives them a competitive edge in the marketplace (Van et al., 2020). Additionally, because engaged employees are more likely to deliver outstanding service and develop strong bonds with clients, job engagement has been related to better levels of customer satisfaction (Babakus et al., 2017).

1.1.1 Dimensions of Work Engagement

The psychological, mental, and behavioural aspects of work engagement are interrelated and mutually supportive. Engaging workers in all these areas leads to a more thorough and all-encompassing strategy for developing a highly devoted and motivated staff. According to (Seppälä et al., 2008), a commonly used tool for measuring work engagement, found three elements of work engagement: vigor, devotion, and absorption. These elements indicate the employee's levels of energy, interest, and concentration in their task and capture many facets of their experience. The details of each dimension is as follow:

1.1.1.1 Vigor

When referring to a worker's high levels of energy, mental fortitude, and persistence at work, we use the term "vigour." Employees with vigour are eager, proactive, and resilient when faced with difficulties. They approach their work with excitement, and they have a strong drive to put up the effort necessary to accomplish their objectives. A sensation of enthusiasm, liveliness, and the capacity to maintain

high levels of activity and productivity are characteristics of vigour (Jaya and Ariyanto, 2021).

1.1.1.2 Dedication

A profound feeling of importance, pride, and excitement for one's work can be seen in dedication. High-dedication employees that are emotionally invested in their work and company are engaged. They feel a feeling of purpose and can relate to the organization's objectives and core principles. Dedicated workers gain a great deal of satisfaction, engagement, and motivation from their profession. They are dedicated to perfection and harbour a deep feeling of loyalty for their company (Gera et al., 2019).

1.1.1.3 Absorption

The state of being completely absorbed and involved in one's task is referred to as absorption. High degrees of absorption enable engaged workers to focus and become absorbed in their work, losing sense of time. When their abilities and difficulties are in harmony, they have a strong sense of flow, which results in a highly focused and joyful work experience. Being completely focused, alert, and totally engrossed in the current moment are characteristics of absorption, which produce the best possible performance and enjoyment (Jaya and Ariyanto, 2021).

1.1.2 Work Engagement Theories

There are many ideas and models that try to explain and improve work engagement because it is a complex and multifaceted notion. These well-known theories for work engagement include:

1.1.2.1 Job Characteristic Model (JCM)

According to JCM, particular job qualities can have an impact on work engagement. The theory asserts that particular work characteristics might increase employees' motivation, contentment, and engagement levels. According to the under discussion theory, work engagement is influenced by five primary job characteristics:

- The extent to which a job demands a variety of talents and abilities. Because they give workers a chance to use and advance their talents, jobs with a range of responsibilities and difficulties tend to be more engaging.
- Task Identity refers to how much of a job entails finishing a complete, recognisable piece of work. Employees who work in jobs with high task identity can

witness the results of their work in real life, which can increase their sense of accountability and engagement.

- The significance and effect of a task on other people and the organisation as a whole. Work engagement and motivation are more likely to occur when they believe their work is meaningful and serves a greater good.

- Autonomy is defined as the degree of independence and power of decision-making that workers have in carrying out their duties. Work engagement levels are higher in jobs that provide them with a feeling of ownership and control over what they do.

- The degree to which workers receive specific, direct criticism of their work is termed as feedback. Regular feedback enables staff members to evaluate their performance, make necessary modifications, and feel a sense of success, all of which can increase engagement (Anderson, 2017).

Organisations can design occupations that fit these traits by using the JCM's guiding principles, resulting in engaging workplaces that support worker performance and well-being.

1.1.2.2 Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) sheds light on work engagement by emphasising the significance of emotional requirements, satisfaction, autonomy, and intrinsic drive in the workplace. When their workplace fulfils their psychological requirements, engaged employees are more inclined to feel fulfilled and well-being, claims SDT. According to SDT, people have three basic psychological needs:

- **Autonomy:** The requirement that one feel free to make decisions and act on those decisions in their employment. Employees who are engaged have opportunity to exercise autonomy, make choices, and feel in control of the activities and procedures at work.

- **Competence:** The desire to feel competent and successful in carrying out one's job duties. Employees that are engaged are given the chance to grow professionally, get helpful criticism, and feel a feeling of mastery.

- **Relatedness:** The need to relate to, engage with, and feel a part of a group of people at work. Positive interactions between engaged workers and coworkers, managers, and the organisation as a whole. They experience a sense of belonging, recognition, and support.

Employees have a greater probability to be genuinely motivated and interested in their work when these psychological demands are met. In contrast to external rewards or demands, intrinsic motivation refers to the inner drive and delight obtained from the activity itself. By establishing a work environment that promotes the satisfaction of these psychological demands, organisations can increase work engagement. This can entail developing healthy relationships and a feeling of community in the workplace, facilitating skill development and advancement, and offering opportunities for autonomy and decision-making (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Organisations can foster an engaged workforce that will boost productivity, job happiness, and general well-being by integrating SDT's tenets into their practises and policies.

1.1.3 Achieving Work Engagement

Organizations can achieve a high level of work engagement by providing a healthy organizational environment and culture (Robinson, 2006). Higher job satisfaction is usually caused by the motivation received from some rewards and recognitions (Riyanto et al. 2021). Another scholar is of the view that rewards caused some satisfaction that create motivation which leads employees towards work engagement and job satisfaction, in addition he also explains that work engagement is triggered through some monetary and non-monetary benefits (Terek et al., 2014). Research has examined and proved a strong relationship between employee recognition and employee reward (Furham et al. 2009; Ali et al., 2018). Moreover, an upward change in reward and recognition can bring more job satisfaction and motivation Ali et al., 2018).

In order to achieve a great customer satisfaction organization must focus on achieving work engagement by resolving their issues and supporting them to outperform (Harter et al. 2002; wangenheim et al. 2007). An excellent working environment, good payouts, recognitions and other motivations leads an employee toward job satisfaction (Andreas, 2022). This implies to the organizational culture (Belias et al., 2014), creative values (Jaskyte et al., 2020), and organizational environment (Sempan et al., 2002) creates value to the job satisfaction of the workers. The drive of these study is to confirm the relationship of work satisfaction and adjustment which helps making corporate human resource strategies benefiting both employees and the organization. Work bound employees would be more focused and

attentive while interacting with the customer and resultantly produce customer satisfaction, on the other hand an unsatisfied employee cannot create customer satisfaction (Al-dalahmeh et al., 2018).

1.2 Career Abandonment Intention

The psychological propensity or desire of a person to quit their present job or professional path and explore different alternatives, even without having a specific plan in place, is referred to as career abandonment intention (Paré & Tremblay, 2007). This idea depicts a person's consideration of leaving their current employment position for a variety of reasons, such as job discontent, the desire for personal development, or the pursuit of a more satisfying profession. Career abandonment intention is a preparatory stage in which people ponder leaving their existing professional situation; it doesn't always result in quick action (Coomber & Barriball, 2007).

The establishment of career abandonment intention is influenced by a number of variables. Job discontent is one of the main causes, and it can be brought on by things like little prospects for advancement, unfulfilling jobs, terrible working conditions, inadequate pay, and lack of recognition (Han et al., 2015). People begin thinking about quitting their existing jobs when they believe they don't fit with their beliefs, abilities, or goals. Additionally, when workers want to take control over their personal and professional lives, a lack of work-life balance, organisational disputes, and fatigue can intensify the desire to exit a career (Josephson et al., 2008).

The intention to leave one's profession might be encouraged or reduced by organisational variables (Galletta et al., 2016). The chance of workers considering leaving can be considerably decreased by a good and encouraging work environment, clear communication from leadership, opportunities for skill development, organizational justice, and a clearly defined career advancement route (Lubbadeh, 2020). Workplaces with weak leadership, insufficient training, or a toxic culture, on the other hand, are more likely to see greater rates of career abandonment intention (Garner et al., 2007).

Important motivators of career abandoning intention include personal development and fulfilment. As people change, they may become aware of the disconnect between their existing employment duties and their growing objectives (Furtado et al., 2011). They look for jobs that challenge them, offer a feeling of

purpose, and promote personal development. People could be inspired to go into other options if their present employment doesn't provide these features, since they would better fit their shifting priorities (Hughes, 2001).

The inclination to leave a career can also be influenced by economic and market changes. People can feel that their abilities are deteriorating in quickly changing sectors, which can lead them to think about quitting their current jobs in search of more useful chances (Ramamurthi, et al., 2016). Economic downturns can result in employment insecurity, which motivates people to actively look for alternatives before they are put in a challenging situation (Shields & Ward, 2001).

Career abandonment intention is a complex idea that is impacted by a variety of circumstances, including poor organizational justice, work discontent, desires for personal development, organisational dynamics, and larger economic concerns. Individuals are more likely to contemplate leaving a work that no longer fits with their beliefs and ambitions since they place a greater priority on personal fulfilment and advancement (Hassan, 2002). Career abandonment intention can be successfully reduced and talent retained by companies that put a high priority on work engagement, offer possibilities for advancement, and promote a positive work environment (Kaya et al., 2016).

Grasp employee behaviour and retention within an organisation requires a thorough grip of the link between organisational fairness and career abandonment intention. The perceived fairness of the procedures and results of an organisation is referred to as organisational justice. Distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice are its three fundamental facets (Bayarçeli & Findikli, 2016). Employees who feel their present employer is not treating them fairly can think about leaving their position or profession. Employees lose interest in their workplace when they believe that the organization's procedures, relationships, and results are unjust. This can result in higher stress levels, job unhappiness, and a greater propensity to think about quitting your work (Zahednezhad et al., 2021).

On the other side, employees' loyalty to the organisation is increased when they believe it to be a fair and just workplace. They are more likely to think that their contributions and efforts are valued and recognised appropriately (Tende et al., 2017). The psychological relationship between the employee and the company is

strengthened by this sense of justice, which lowers the likelihood of career abandoning intentions (Chong, 2022).

The importance of fostering an atmosphere that is just, courteous, and open at work is shown by a positive association between organisational justice and decreased desire to quit one's profession. Talented personnel and a motivated and engaged staff are more likely to be retained by organisations that prioritise and put these tactics into practice (Sutanto, 2018).

1.2.1 Theories of Career Abandonment Intention

In the fields of organisational psychology and social science, there are several theories that examine the idea of "career abandonment intention" and the causes behind it. Some of the theories are discussed as under:

1.2.1.1 Push-Pull Theory of Career Abandonment

A framework known as the Push-Pull Theory of Career Abandonment is utilised to comprehend why people think about quitting their existing vocations or employment and what influences their decision-making process (McAulay et al, 2006). According to this idea, people are motivated to change careers by a mix of "pull" variables that draw them towards better chances and "push" forces that push them away from their existing circumstances. These elements interact to affect a person's intention to leave their current employment (Sasso et al., 2019).

1.2.1.2 Push Factors

Push factors are unfavourable features of the present employment or workplace that make people feel uneasy or dissatisfied and make them think about quitting. The first factor is job dissatisfaction in which Employees feel pressured to look into alternative choices if they are dissatisfied with their present position owing to elements like tedious jobs, a lack of challenge, or a terrible work environment (Sasso et al., 2019).

Another important factor is employee burnout and can be brought on by experiences of emotional weariness, cynicism, and diminished professional effectiveness. When people feel burned out, they could be more motivated to look for a new profession (Shropshire et al., 2012). One addition in the push factors is slow or low career advancement. Employees start looking for alternatives if they feel trapped

in their present position due to a lack of possibilities for career progression, skill development, or promotion (Chen et al., 2004).

The last push factor discussed by the author is poor work life balance. Stress and discontent brought on by an unbalanced workload between work and personal obligations might lead people to look for jobs that provide a better work-life balance (Noor, 2011).

1.2.1.3 Pull Factors

Pull factors are alluring features of alternative chances that entice people to think about changing their careers. The first pull factor for employees is handsome compensation and benefits. For people looking for more financial stability, higher income, better benefits, and other financial incentives in another job might be a strong draw factor (Odunlade, 2012). Another pull factor in job satisfaction and reducing career abandonment intention is meaningfulness of the work performed. People can look into alternative employment options if they want work that fits with their beliefs, gives them a feeling of purpose, and helps a greater good (Sing & Jain, 2013).

One more pull factor to reduce career abandonment intentions is Improved Work-Life Balance. People can feel tempted to a different career if they believe it offers a better work-life balance or flexibility, especially if their present one does not (Noor, 2011). Moreover, Alternative occupations that enable people to reach their full potential might entice them by providing opportunities to utilise and develop abilities that they value (Sang et al., 2009).

According to the Push-Pull Theory, these push and pull forces interact dynamically to cause career abandonment intention. People evaluate their existing situation and consider the drawbacks (push factors) and possible advantages (pull factors) of changing occupations. The notion emphasises that leaving a job isn't always motivated by discontent; it may also be impacted by how appealing one feels one's options are (Chen et al., 2022). Understanding the Push-Pull Theory can assist organisations enhance job satisfaction, reducing career abandonment intention by addressing push causes, offering chances for advancement, and fostering a positive work environment. By providing competitive pay, fulfilling work, and opportunities for skill development, they may also generate pull factors that improve work engagement and retention (Shah et al., 2010).

1.2.2 Psychological Contract Breach Theory

The Psychological Contract Breach Theory offers important insights into how violations of the psychological contract between workers and their employers might affect intentions to leave their careers (Saleem et al., 2021). The psychological contract serves as a representation of the unstated commitments and duties that exist between people and their organisations. Employees may feel betrayed if they believe that these expectations are not being met, and this may affect their commitment to and willingness to continue in their present employment (Paillé & Dufour, 2013). The Psychological Contract Breach Theory and career abandonment intentions are related in the various ways which are discussed as below:

Employees can feel betrayed, let down, and unfairly treated when there is a psychological contract violation. This violation can occur in many different forms, such as unfulfilled expectations, broken promises, or perceived unfairness. Employees may start to doubt the organization's dedication to them as these bad experiences mount, which can lower work satisfaction and raise the possibility that they would contemplate quitting their careers (Guest, 1998)

Psychological contract violations reduce the loyalty and confidence staff members have for their employer. Employees' emotional attachment and loyalty to the company may wane when they perceive that it is not upholding its half of the deal. They become more open to considering alternate careers that they think would offer better care and be more in line with their ideals as a result of their decreased commitment (Rodríguez-Fernández et al., 2021). A violation of the psychological contract can result in unpleasant emotions including resentment, rage, and cynicism. These unfavourable feelings may manifest at work and influence an employee's productivity, interactions with coworkers, and general wellbeing. Such mental discomfort might fuel a desire to quit one's job in order to escape the unpleasant emotions brought on by the breach (Alharbi et al., 2020)

The psychological contract is frequently broken, which results in perceptions of injustice. Employees are more likely to be unhappy and unsatisfied with their present circumstances if they feel they are not being treated fairly or are not getting the chances and incentives they deserve. This unhappiness may lead individuals to

think about switching to a different line of work where they feel they would receive better treatment (Al-Kilani, 2017).

1.3 Dimensions of Career Abandonment Intention

Career abandonment intention refers to a person's thought process or propensity to voluntarily leave their present work or career path, which is frequently motivated by elements like discontent, burnout, a lack of room for advancement, or a desire for a substantial shift in their professional trajectory. Different factors that influence a person's consideration of quitting their present job or professional path include career abandonment intention. These dimensions capture the elements, mindsets, and motives that affect a person's professional decision-making process. Some of the major components of career abandonment intention are as follows:

1.4 Achieving Reduced Career Abandonment Intentions

Reduced career abandonment intentions necessitate a deliberate, all-encompassing strategy that takes into account all aspects of the workplace and the employee experience. Employers may create a culture where workers feel appreciated, engaged, and devoted to their existing professions, reducing the possibility that they will look for new possibilities (Labrague et al., 2022). Career abandonment intentions can be considerably reduced by organisational justice, which is characterised by fairness in decision-making procedures and equal treatment. Employee work satisfaction rises when they believe they are treated properly and that their efforts are justly acknowledged and rewarded (Chang et al., 2019). This favourable view of justice encourages a higher sense of dedication and devotion to the company. When workers feel appreciated and respected and are convinced that possibilities for growth and promotion are open to everyone based on merit, they are less inclined to consider quitting their jobs. Organisational justice fosters a culture where workers are more inclined to invest in their existing professions and give up ideas of switching to anything else (Aburumman et al., 2020).

In order to reduce career abandonment intents inside organisations, work engagement is crucial. Employees that are highly engaged have a deep emotional bond with their jobs and the company, which fosters a feeling of dedication and purpose. Higher job satisfaction, intrinsic value in their jobs, and a stronger sense of belonging are all characteristics of engaged workers. Because engaged workers are more likely

to view their present position as a gratifying and meaningful long-term possibility, there is a decrease in intentions to leave their careers (Ramlawati et al., 2018). Engaged workers are also more likely to experience pleasant interactions with coworkers, managers, and organisational culture, which supports their decision to stay with the company. Organisations can establish an atmosphere where people are encouraged to participate in their existing professions and are less likely to look for different possibilities by prioritising efforts that increase work engagement (Memon et al., 2020).

1.5 Organizational Justice

Employee perceptions of fairness in a given organization are referred to as organizational justice. The dedication, action and presence of the management towards the employee through high morals in the form of ethics, religion, or legal norms, justice is demonstrated (Al-Zu'bi , 2010). Employees' perceptions of a sense of fairness toward them are important and can influence their behavior, such as their desire to resign, job satisfaction, commitment, and involvement in the workplace (Hutagalung et al., 2020).

In an organization, justice would have a significant impact on employee attitudes in order for them to accept justice in a positive manner, which would have an impact on organizational performance and eliminate any conflicts between employers and their employees. Organizational justice indicators include distributive justice indicator, procedural justice indicator, and interactional justice indicator, according to the research of theories and dimensions from (Suifan , 2019).

Organizational justice is categorized into four classes called: distributive, procedural, informational, and interactional justice. Where the first, Distributive justice means that employee's perceptions about fairness in the distribution of outcomes, whereas the procedural justice indicates an employee perception about the processes which lead to these outcomes in the organization. Then comes the third component of organizational justice i.e. informational justice, this type of organizational justice belongs to the accounts which are being provided for justice-related event (Karem et al., 2019).

Last but not least, interpersonal justice that reflects an employee's perception about the interpersonal interactions in the organization and treatment with the

employees. Although these distinct justice judgments are connected, research shows that they are each predictive of work- and worker-related outcomes (Rahaman et al., 2022). While this classic taxonomy represents historical views that aimed to identify criteria or decision rules for determining the fairness of results, procedures, and interpersonal treatment, more recent approaches have cast a wider net. The reasons why employees care about justice (content theories) and the mechanisms that lead to both the establishment of fairness judgments and individual reactions to perceived injustice are investigated in current justice research (Matteson et al., 2021).

While the majority of the justice literature to date has concentrated on whether or not employees believe they have been treated fairly, more recent ideas take into account employees' reactions to the treatment of others (Sembiring et al., 2020). Researchers have also looked into how employees react to corporate social responsibility - considered a special case of third-party justice perceptions (Chen & Khuangga, 2021; Farid et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2021). Finally, as research has begun to study how shared conceptions of justice evolve inside work groups and organizations (justice environment), as well as how justice perceptions and reactions vary among cultural groups, justice research has become increasingly multilayered (e.g., organizational and national cultures). Organisational justice is crucial because it has an impact on employee satisfaction, performance, retention, reputation, and legal compliance. Fairness and justice are prioritised by organisations, which increases the likelihood of a productive workplace and long-term success (Al-Zu'bi, 2010).

1.5.1 Dimensions of Organizational Justice

Organisational justice is the idea that there is fairness inside an organisation, especially in terms of resource allocation, decision-making, and communication. Procedural justice, informational justice, and distributive justice are its three main facets. Informational justice concentrates on the accuracy and sufficiency of the information offered to people, whereas procedural justice refers to the fairness of the methods and processes used to make decisions. The fairness of resource distribution and allocation, on the other hand, is referred to as distributive justice. These factors are very important in determining how employees view justice, trust, and contentment in the workplace. Organisations may create a climate that encourages trust, engagement, and productive employee results by comprehending and effectively addressing these factors (Mengstie, 2020).

1.5.1.1 Informational Justice

The equality and suitability of the information provided to people inside an organisation are the focus of the organisational justice facet known as informational justice. It speaks to how much employees believe the information they're given is correct, timely, pertinent, and comprehensive. The opinions of staff members regarding fairness, confidence, and general contentment with the organisation are greatly influenced by informational justice (Scott et al., 2009).

Employees anticipate that businesses will be open and honest in how they communicate with them. This entails giving employees accurate and truthful information regarding choices, rules, and adjustments that affect them. Communication that is open and transparent helps to build trust and a feeling of justice. It's critical to offer concise justifications and explanations for any organisational choices or activities that have an impact on personnel. Employees can then comprehend decisions' justifications, even if they disagree with them. Employee perception of choices being fair and based on relevant facts is improved by adequate explanations. To guarantee that staff members have access to current and pertinent information, information should be delivered promptly. Information that is delayed or suppressed might create doubt, annoyance, and injustice impressions (Ellis et al., 2009).

1.5.1.2 Procedural Justice

Procedural justice is an important aspect of organisational justice that focuses on how fairly decisions are made inside an organisation. It relates to how much people believe that the decision-making processes are impartial, fair, consistent, and provide people a chance to participate. Staff should be given the chance to voice their opinions, offer suggestions, and be taken into consideration when decisions are being made. This can be accomplished by using tools like suggestion boxes, open forums, and participation in committees and task forces. Employee perceptions of procedural justice are improved when they feel that their perspectives are acknowledged and taken into consideration (Al-Zu'bi, 2010).

The methods used to make decisions should be uniformly applied to all people and circumstances. This implies that comparable instances or circumstances ought to be handled identically, without favouritism or artificial disparities. Procedure

consistency helps to maintain fairness and lessens the perception of bias. Employees are more inclined to embrace and endorse organisational choices, work together with coworkers, and display good attitudes and behaviours when they feel that procedural justice is being upheld inside the workplace. It strengthens the organization's perception of legitimacy, fairness, and trust (Konovsky, 2000).

Establishing open decision-making procedures, giving workers a voice, educating executives and managers on fair decision-making techniques, and providing channels for raising grievances or other issues are all ways that organisations can support procedural justice. Organisations can improve employee happiness, dedication, and general organisational success by implementing procedural justice into their practices (Greenberg & Tyler, 1987).

1.5.1.3 Distributive justice

A key component of organisational justice, distributive justice is concerned with the fairness of how resources, rewards, and outcomes are allocated within an organisation. It is about how people view the fairness of the results they get in respect to their inputs, contributions, and the results others get.

Equity: The concept of justice based on the idea that people should be rewarded and given resources in proportion to their contributions is referred to as equity. It entails allocating incentives while taking into account elements like abilities, effort, experience, and performance. Employees anticipate that their efforts will be valued and compensated fairly in relation to those of others who make comparable contributions.

Equality: Equality is the idea that everyone should be treated equally and get the same benefits or resources, irrespective of their efforts . By guaranteeing that everyone receives an equal portion of the benefits, this strategy encourages justice.

Need: The need principle places a strong emphasis on giving people what they need in terms of resources and rewards. It acknowledges that in order to carry out their work successfully or deal with personal issues, various people may need various amounts of assistance or resources. Reducing disparities and advancing fairness are the goals of resource distribution based on need.

It is crucial to remember that opinions on distributive fairness are arbitrary and shaped by both personal and cultural variables. What one individual views as fair and equitable may not be the same for another. Distributive justice perceptions can also be impacted by things like the organization's compensation structure, management procedures, and prevalent fairness norms in society (Al-Zu'bi, 2010).

Employee satisfaction, commitment, and motivation are more likely to be present when they sense distributive fairness in the workplace. It generates a healthy work environment, improves perceptions of fairness, and lessens emotions of injustice or unfairness. Distributive justice can be promoted by organisations if reward systems are transparent, performance evaluation criteria are clear and consistent, opportunities for growth and advancement are provided, and the justification for resource distribution decisions are frequently communicated. Making sure that workers believe that awards and results are distributed fairly improves the morale of the workplace and raises employee satisfaction and engagement (Tyler & Allan, 2001).

1.5.2 Theories on Organizational Justice

There are various organisational justice theories that describe how people view and assess fairness within an organisation. Popular theories include the following:

1.5.2.1 Equity Theory

According to the equity theory, people ought to contrast the ratio of their inputs to their results—such as income, accolades, and promotions—with the inputs and outcomes of others. People can judge whether they are being treated fairly compared to their coworkers using this comparison. The theory contends that people aspire to a situation of perceived fairness in which their contributions and results are equal to those of others (Mustafa, 2019).

When the ratio of a person's inputs to results is viewed as being equal to the ratio of others, equity is present. In other words, when people feel that they are getting results that are proportionate to their contributions compared to others, they see fairness. This sense of equity encourages a feeling of justice and satisfaction.

When a person believes that their contributions and efforts are greater than the rewards they receive in comparison to others, underpayment inequality emerges. This sense of unfairness may cause people to feel demotivated and motivated to work towards reestablishing equity. In order to restore a sense of fairness, people can seek

more rewards or do less effort. When a person believes that their outputs surpass their inputs and efforts in comparison to others, overpayment inequality develops. Additionally, this perspective may cause you to experience feelings of unfairness, guilt, or indebtedness. To restore justice, people can do things like put forth more effort or lend a hand to others (Sun, 2018).

1.5.3 Achieving Organizational Justice

A range of practises and laws can be used to promote organisational justice. Organisations ought to create policies and practises that are open, consistent, and impartial. Clear rules for recruiting, promotions, performance reviews, and disciplinary measures are a few examples of this (Yean, 2016). Resources like wages, perks, and workloads should be allocated properly and in accordance with objective standards. This may be accomplished by setting precise standards for calculating pay and benefits and making sure that tasks are divided fairly (Rahman et al, 2016).

Employers can foster organisational fairness by including staff in decision-making. This might entail asking workers for input, including them in problem-solving, and making sure they have a say in decisions that have an impact on their job (Al-Tit & Hunitie, 2015). Employees ought to be accorded decency and respect. Respectful communication, attentive listening, and a dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion may all be examples of this (Schminke et al., 2015).

Leaders should make decisions that are fair and consistent. They ought to serve as role models for moral conduct and make sure that their deeds reflect the principles of the company (Ali et al., 2018). Organisations should have a fair and open conflict resolution mechanism. To resolve the complaints and concerns of employees, a grievance procedure or mediation process can be used. (Yean, 2016). By establishing a fair and open work environment that appreciates employee input, upholds employee rights, and offers a procedure for resolving disagreements and issues, organisational justice can be achieved. Organisations should foster a healthy work environment, increase employee loyalty and happiness, and ultimately succeed in the long run by supporting organisational fairness (Park et al., 2016).

1.6 Hypothesis Development

Studying work engagement and procedural organization justice is crucial since these factors have a big influence on how career abandonment intention. Employee

retention is greatly influenced by work engagement and procedural organizational justice (Kim-Soon et al., 2015). Employees that are fairly treated and engaged are less inclined to leave the company in quest of greater chances. High staff turnover is expensive and disruptive for the business since it results in costs for hiring, training, and reduced efficiency. Organizations can put measures in place to keep top talent and lower turnover rates by understanding the elements that affect engagement and work satisfaction (Bailey et al., 2017).

1.6.1 The Relationship Between Procedural Justice and Work Engagement

Work engagement and procedural organizational justice are intimately tied to withdrawal intentions. The sense of justice and equity at work is referred to as organisational justice (Thangaraj et al., 2020). An essential factor in determining work engagement and career abandonment intention is organisational fairness. Organizations cultivate a productive work environment that promotes employee well-being, boosts engagement, and improves job satisfaction by encouraging justice in the awarding of awards, the making of decisions, and interpersonal interactions (Cahill et al., 2015). Organizational justice is strongly tied by with work engagement. By improving procedural organizational justice, the employees feel more connected with the organization (Zhu et al., 2015). A number of studies have pointed out the importance of work engagement and procedural organizational justice (Mubashar et al., 2022; Saygılı et al., 2017; Ghosh et al., 2014) in relation to withdrawal intentions (Sypniewska et al, 2023). By receiving the information from the previous research work, following hypothesis can be established:

H1: Procedural Justice has an effect on work engagement.

1.6.2 The Relationship Between Work Engagement and Career Abandonment Intention

For an organisation to improve employee well-being, talent retention, organisational success, cost-effectiveness, and strategic planning, it is essential to research the relationship between job engagement and career abandonment intentions. Work engagement can be affected due to family conflicts and high stress. As a result, nurses could decide to pursue another career or quit their jobs. The authors examined the relationship between perceived job demands and intentions to quit, including work engagement, work-family conflict, and family-work conflict. link between work

engagement and nursing professionals' desire to leave the field (Pennbrant and Dåderman, 2021). By considering the significance of work engagement and career abandonment intentions, (Xiong and Wen, 2020) studied the relationship between employee turnover intentions and work engagement. The findings demonstrated a substantial correlation between turnover intention and job engagement as well as between organisational citizenship behaviour and unproductive work behaviour. (Memon et al., 2016) examined the relationship between work engagement and turnover intention with a finding of negative relationship between these two variables. Examining the relationship between these two variables gives a special perspective on how workers' levels of work engagement are influenced by their views of fairness in organisational procedures (Kim & Park, 2017). (Özer et al., 2017) examined the relationship between organizational justice and work engagement which revealed a positive and moderate relationship between these variables. By considering the importance and difference findings on the topic, this hypothesis explores whether work engagement is directly connected with career abandonment intention.

H2: Work engagement has an effect on career abandonment intention

1.6.3 The Relationship Between Procedural Justice and Career Abandonment Intention

In order to improve employee retention and organisational stability, it is crucial to examine the relationship between procedural fairness and career abandonment. Fair processes can increase employee satisfaction and commitment while decreasing the chance of career abandonment (Eilbeigi, 2020). According to this study, workplace justice serves as a barrier to nurses quitting their jobs. To keep nurses in the nursing field, a fair performance review process and more freedom at work are necessary (Chin et al., 2017). On the other hand, (Van et al., 2010) stated that an employee's chance of considering career abandonment directly correlates with their level of work engagement. The author found Organisational justice, employee empowerment, and commitment are increased in the healthcare sector, while career abandonment intention is decreased ((Eun et al., 2016). The researchers discovered a significant positive association between procedural fairness and emotional commitment and turnover intention (Poon, 2012).

The complicated interactions between employees' feelings and their career decisions can be better understood by looking into the possible link between work

engagement and career abandonment intention. Organisations and scholars can learn more about how an employee's degree of engagement in their present position links to their thoughts about leaving by examining this relationship. According to this research hypothesis, there is an association between career abandonment intention and work engagement. Organisations can get knowledge that helps them develop a comprehensive grasp of the elements affecting workers' career decisions by exploring this link.

H3: Procedural justice has an effect on Career abandonment intention.

1.6.4 The Relationship Among Work Engagement, Procedural Justice and Career Abandonment Intention

Investigating the possible interaction between organisational justice and desire to quit one's present employment might provide important insights into the reasons that motivate people to leave their existing positions. Organisational justice is the belief that decisions are made fairly and that everyone is treated equally, whereas career abandonment intention is the desire to leave one's existing professional path (Bayarçelik & Findikli, 2016). According to this theory, the chance of career abandonment intention among employees is strongly influenced by how much organisational justice is believed to exist. Organisations and scholars can gain a better knowledge of how fairness and equality within the organisational setting are related to workers' thoughts of quitting their existing employment by looking at this relationship (Kaya et al., 2016).

This investigation has substantial implications for both academics and practitioners. Organisations can adapt their practises to create a fairer and more open work environment by studying how organisational justice affects career abandonment intention. Additionally, being aware of the connection between organisational justice and the intention to leave a profession helps organisations to take preventative action. Organisations may successfully lower the chance of career abandoning intentions by maintaining clear decision-making procedures, offering fair opportunities, and responding to complaints quickly. This supports the research of (Bibby, 2008), which emphasises effective methods for resolving employee issues and raising satisfaction, broadening the argument to include career options.

H4: Work engagement has a mediating effect between procedural organizational justice and Career Abandonment Intention.

Work engagement serves as a mediator between organisational justice and perceived fairness in organisational processes, which are both embodied by the term "organisational justice." (Shahpouri et al., 2016) explored the purpose of work engagement as a mediator between job resources and personal resources on the intention of turnover among female nurses. The results demonstrated that whereas job resources are only connected with turnover intention through the mediating function of work engagement, personal resources are both directly and indirectly (through work engagement) related to turnover intention.

By understanding the relationship among these variables, organisations can learn more about the ways through which organisational justice affects work engagement by looking into this mediation.

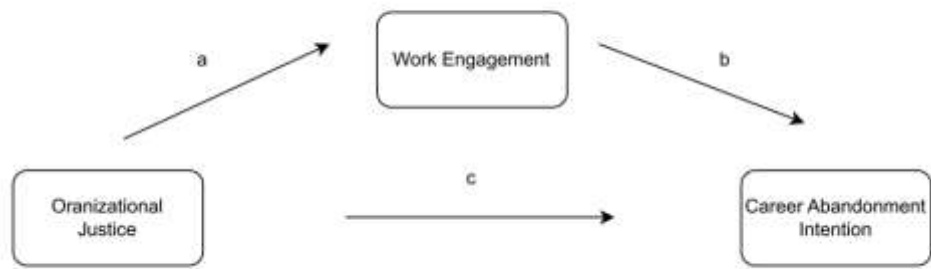


Figure 1. Research Framework



CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

This research is intended to examine how work engagement mediates the relationship between procedural organizational justice and career abandonment intentions in the health care industry of Iraq. This chapter will also discuss population and the selected sample to get responses for the research to find the research results. Discussion on methodology is highly important for selecting the right research design that ultimately leads to finalize methodology.

A research design is essentially a plan for putting the work that focuses primarily on goals, purposes, motivations, and plans within the realistic limits of space, time, resources, and personnel availability. When the beginning of a research study is correctly characterized as a specific declaration of objectives, the study's chances of success are greatly increased.

Each element works cohesively with the others in an effective study design. The theoretical and conceptual framework must match the aims and objectives of the research that is achieved in this study. Similar to how the method of data analysis must match the goals of the research as well as the conceptual and theoretical framework. For achieving the stated purpose, this research has discussed its objectives and significance in the early chapters. And this chapter is aimed to write how stated objectives of the research will be achieved.

Various research designs are available in the literature including descriptive, exploratory, experimental, and correlation research designs. Each research design has its advantages and limitations. The selection of the research design depends upon the problem statement described in the research. This chapter is focused to discuss the research design, methodology, procedures, and data collection method opted by the research. It will help other researchers to get a chance of taking help from this research or provide criticism for future development.

2.1 Limitation of the study

Although this primary research offers insightful information, it is necessary to recognise its limitations. First of all, the technique of data collection depended on self-reported questionnaires, which may include response bias and social desirability bias

and can affect the accuracy of participants' replies. Second, the study's emphasis on Iraqi public and private hospitals which could restrict the applicability of its findings to other healthcare facilities or areas with various socio-cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, the cross-sectional character of the research design restricts our capacity to establish causal connections and monitor changes over time. Additionally, despite efforts to adjust for confounding variables, there may still be factors impacting job engagement and career abandonment intention among healthcare employees that have not been taken into consideration. The dynamics in healthcare environments might alter over time, thereby influencing the findings' long-term applicability. Lastly, the research was done in a given time period. These restrictions should be taken into account when interpreting the findings and may present chances for more study in this crucial field.

2.2 Problem Statement

The interaction of procedural fairness, work engagement, and career abandonment intentions among hospital employees is a significant and complex dilemma in the field of healthcare in Iraq. The deep effects of healthcare workforce employee turnover, where the departure of skilled and committed healthcare workers can have a significant health and financial impact on society. Healthcare organisations have significant financial, operational, and qualitative costs as a result of employee turnover, particularly among healthcare professionals. These costs include the expenditures of hiring and training new employees, the risk for interruptions in patient care continuity, and negative effects on the general calibre of healthcare services. Hospitals face a large financial and skill shortage burden as a result of the costs associated with hiring new employees and onboarding them, as well as productivity losses caused by the shift. Additionally, the loss of seasoned healthcare professionals can undermine institutional expertise, undermine teamwork, and obstruct the provision of high-quality treatment.

Hence the importance of medical staff is highly crucial, especially when they turnover. The foundation of the healthcare system is made up of hospital employees, which includes physicians, nurses, and other healthcare workers. Their devotion, knowledge, and competence are essential to providing high-quality treatment, reducing negative patient outcomes, and guaranteeing the smooth operation of healthcare facilities. The tasks of hospital employees go beyond providing medical

competence; they also aid in communication, offer emotional support, and foster a sense of confidence between patients and providers. The value of hospital employees goes beyond just the bottom line; it encompasses the primary purpose of healthcare, which is to improve the health and wellbeing of people and communities.

The consequences of attrition is severe for the healthcare industry. Without a committed and engaged workforce, healthcare organisations risk having insufficient staffing levels and overburdening their current employees. This can then set off a chain reaction of unfavourable events. Medical blunders, patient safety compromises, and poor physical and mental health are more common in healthcare personnel who are functioning under conditions of high stress, overwork, and burnout. These unfavourable results not only endanger the health of healthcare professionals but also lower the standard of patient treatment. The exodus of healthcare workers emphasises how urgent it is to address the underlying causes of career abandonment intents, such as excessive work-related stress, failing working conditions, and unhappiness with procedural justice inside healthcare organisations.

Due to the many pressures and difficulties experienced by healthcare professionals, the healthcare industry is particularly prone to high turnover rates. Low work engagement, absence of procedural justice, being exposed to emotionally draining circumstances, and, more lately, the pressures connected with responding to health emergencies are just a few of these difficulties. Hence, Investigating the relationship between procedural fairness, work engagement, and healthcare employees' plans to leave their careers is crucial. The future of healthcare delivery is protected by addressing this complex issue, as is the integrity of the medical profession and, most crucially, the health and safety of the patients.

2.3 Research Questions

This research is focused to examine the relationship between procedural organizational justice and career abandonment intentions with mediating role of work engagement. The outcomes of this research will help various hospitals, healthcare centers and other medical facilities centers of Iraq to craft their HR practices for better performance.

Research Questions:

- Is there any relationship between procedural organizational justice and career abandonment intentions?
- Is there any relationship between work engagement and career abandonment intention?
- Does work engagement mediate the relationship between organizational justice and career abandonment intention?

2.4 Instruments

One of the important instruments frequently used for data collection is a structured questionnaire that is comprised of a series of questions to get the opinion or information from the respondents which is helpful to answer the research questions (Bethlehem, 2009).

This study used a questionnaire method designed by the previous studies for data collection from the respondents. The reason behind using the questionnaire method is its easy usability, easiness of the respondents to answer predefined questions, and ease to code the responses in statistical software for performing various analyses.

Likert scale is used to measure the responses of the selected samples (employees working in the healthcare industry of Iraq) that ranged from scale 1 to scale 5 where 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree. For providing ease and limiting the respondents' answers to the questions, we did not use an open-ended question. The questionnaire of this study is comprised of four variables, demographic variable, work engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational justice (mediator). The details of the questionnaire is given as follows:

2.4.1. Measuring Work Engagement

An established and well-known method in the fields of organisational psychology is the use of Schaufeli and Bakker's (2003) scale to assess work engagement. This measure, which consists of 9 thoughtfully constructed items on a Likert measure, offers a reliable framework for determining and quantifying the degree of work engagement. The present study benefited from the reliability and validity provided by a well-known measuring tool by using this established instrument. The

thoroughness of this scale guarantees a full examination of numerous aspects of work engagement, making it an invaluable tool for comprehending the drive, dedication, and passion of the staff. Because of this, the research's conclusions are probably more reliable and significant, enabling a deeper understanding of the variables affecting work engagement and offering evidence-based suggestions for bettering organisational practises and policies.

2.4.2. Measuring Procedural Organizational Justice

For measuring procedural justice, we used a questionnaire designed by (Colquitt, 2001) with eleven questions to get data from the respondents. The validity test was also performed to make the research decision more strong.

2.4.3. Measuring Career Abandonment Intention

Career abandonment intention was assessed using the three-item scale adapted from Krausz et al. (1995). The questions are as follows; I am seriously thinking of leaving the hospital, I am actively searching for another career out of the hospital, and I will leave the profession in the near future.

2.5 Demographic Variables

Demographic variables help to understand various dimensions of the sample including its various distributions to interpret statistical analysis. Demographic variables list may include age, gender, race, work experience, and ethnic group. Descriptive analyses are performed on the stated variables to reach some meaningful interpretation about the respondents that helps to dig deep into many dimensions of the sample. Demographic variables included in this research are age, gender, and work experience. To perform statistical analysis on the demographic variables, this research used gender, age, experience, profession, and marital status as variable to know the respondent distribution.

2.6 Sample and Procedure

This research sample comprised of healthcare professionals of Iraq 160 questionnaires were distributed and received 102 valid responses from our selected sample. The data collection was made from the pr hospitals in Iraq in general with no specific region. Some of the hospitals are private while other was public with the

leading names as Dar Al Handasahf, Al Kindi Hospital and Sulaimaniyah Teaching Hospital.

So, the average response rate was 63,75 % for this study. According to Baruch (1999), a 63,75 % response rate is acceptable for a social science study. Then, we coded this data into SPSS for performing various statistical analyses. The sample characteristics are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Sample Characteristics

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Male	47	46.1	46.1	46.1
	female	55	53.9	53.9	100
Marital Status	Married	43	42,2	42,2	42,2
	Single	59	57,8	57,8	100,0
Age Group	21-29	73	71.6	71.6	71.6
	30-39	24	23.5	23.5	95.1
	40-45	3	2.9	2.9	98.0
	Above 45	2	2.0	2.0	100.0
Job Tenure	1-3 years	67	65,7	65,7	65,7
	4-10 years	25	24,5	24,5	90,2
	11-19 years	8	7,8	7,8	98,0
	20 and above	2	2,0	2,0	100,0
Education	High school	4	3,9	3,9	3,9
	Bachelor degree	82	80,4	80,4	84,3
	Postgraduate	16	15,7	15,7	100,0
Profession	Doctor	44	43,1	43,1	43,1
	Nurse	17	16,7	16,7	59,8

	Others (Technician, lab etc.)	41	40,2	40,2	100,0
Weekly	Up to 40 Hours	72	70,6	70,6	70,6
Working Hours	More than 4 Hours	30	29,4	29,4	100

As shown in Table 1, 102 respondents participated in the research comprised of 46.1% male and 53.9% female, 73% of respondents were between the age of 21 years to 29 years, 24% from 30-39 years and 3% belong to 40 to 45 years of age and 2% of respondents are older than 45 years of age. 67% of respondents have job tenure of 1-3 years, however, 25% of respondents belong to the job tenure category of 4 to 10 years, 8% of respondents belong to 11-19. The rest of 2% of respondents have job tenure of 20 years and above.

2.7 Common Method Bias

Common method bias, which refers to the bias caused by any external factor in the data set, is a potential problem in social sciences research and one of the main sources of measurement error (Podsakoff et al., 2003). To test whether the data has common method bias, full collinearity VIF scores obtained from SmartPLS were evaluated. In accordance with the suggestion by Kock (2015) all the variables were treated as all were dependent variable one by one. The results indicated that all the inner VIF values were lower than 3.3. Hence, there was no common method bias detected in the data as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. VIF values for Common Method Bias

Collinearity VIF Statistics	
	VIF
Work Engagement-> Career Abandonment Intention	1.218
Procedural Justice -> Career Abandonment Intention	1.218
Procedural Justice -> Work Engagement	1.000

2.8 Population of the research

This research is aimed to find the relationship between procedural justice, work engagement and career abandonment intention in the healthcare industry of Iraq. There are many market players operating in the Iraq including private and public identities. The research collected data from the various hospitals and healthcare centers including Dar Al Handasahf, Al Kindi Hospital, Sulaimaniyah Teaching Hospital, American University of Iraq - Sulaimani (AUIS) Health Services, Hiwa Hospital, and Royal Doctors Medical Center.

2.9 Sample Size

Population and sample are two key components of any research. A population is a collection of people sharing some common attributes. The process of selecting respondents on some criteria is called sampling. The number of people in a sample is known as the sample size. More sample size in the research creates more confidence in the results.

After deciding the population for the research, the next important step is to take a proper sample for data collection. Many ethical and scientific procedures are available in the literature for sample size. The selection of sample size and sampling method depends upon the nature of the research and the problem stated to be addressed. The sample size is important as two same research with different sample sizes may produce different results. So selecting the appropriate sampling techniques and sizes is highly important for reaching out right results from the research. By considering all the above-stated facts about sample size and sampling technique, this research taken a sample size of 102 employees who are working in the healthcare industry of Iraq.

2.10 Sampling Technique

There are various sampling techniques available in the literature which carries their own advantages and disadvantages. For example, the random sampling technique is to take the subset of respondents from the whole population while being chance of equal selection. However, there is difficult to access a full list of populations that is not available in some cases. It also bears more time, effort, and cost for collecting data from the respondents.

Other sampling technique used is systematic sampling technique that uses a high degree of representation of the populations. However, it is less random than the simple random sampling technique. Another important sampling method used is convenience sampling. This technique is frequently used for sampling due to its convenience, and less time taking (Stratton, 2021b).

By evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of the sampling technique and this research time and budget constraints, this research used a convenience sampling technique for data collection.

2.11 Data Coding & Processing

Data gathering, coding, and processing for this research, which includes a variety of hospitals from several cities in Iraq, is a complex and important task. This study used computerised questionnaires, which had a number of benefits, such as effective data collection and standardised replies. This study's data gathering phase included input and viewpoints from both public and private institutions, enabling a thorough examination of the healthcare workforce. After data collection of 102 respondents, the replies and survey items were organised and categorised to guarantee uniformity and enable insightful analysis. This process is essential for converting unorganised data into manageable datasets. The last step in data processing involves statistical analysis, comprehension, and summary of the information gathered, allowing this study to make insightful deductions about the influence of procedural fairness on the involvement and career plans of healthcare employees.

2.12 Data Analysis Strategy

In this study, structural equation modeling was used in the analysis of the data. Structural equation modeling is a second-generation analysis method, and it is divided into two as covariance-based structural equation models (Covariance-based SEM/CB-SEM) and variance-based structural equation models (Partial Least Square /PLS-SEM) (Jiang et al., 2021). Structural equation modeling based on the partial least squares method is preferred more than covariance-based structural equation modeling because it does not require normal distribution in the data and has high statistical power. In addition, it is suitable for small samples and can examine complex models with mediator variables (Sarstedt et al., 2017). Based on the variance-based PLS-SEM, SmartPLS has become popular in recent years as one of the data analysis tools frequently used in the field of social sciences (Hair et al., 2021; Wong, 2013).

Therefore, in this study, the SmartPLS program was used for statistical analysis of measurement and structural models.



CHAPTER THREE

DATA ANALYSIS

3.1 Assessment of Measurement Model

The reliability and validity of the measurement model was examined before proceeding to the hypothesis testing. Sarstedt et al. (2021) suggested that indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the variables should be examined to test the validity and reliability of the reflective measurement models.

For this purpose, firstly, factor loadings are evaluated to test the indicator reliability. All the factor loadings should be greater than the threshold value of 0.708. In this study all the factor loadings except for 5 indicators are above the threshold value (Sarstedt et al. 2021). Hair et al. (2022) suggests that if the loadings of indicators are below the threshold, they should be deleted unless the deleting the indicators improves CR and AVE values. In this study, the indicators remain on the scales because deleting them does not make any change in the CR and AVE values. The factor loadings of variables are displayed in Table 3.

To test internal consistency, the Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability (CR) was evaluated. For career abandonment intention, procedural justice and work engagement, the Cronbach's alpha values were 0.742, 0.900 and 0.898 and in addition, CR values were 0.850, 0.920 and 0.916 respectively. Since the Cronbach alpha and CR values of the data were above 0.70, the variables had good internal consistency. Moreover, to test convergent validity, AVE values were investigated. The threshold value for AVE is 0.50. For career abandonment intention, procedural justice and work engagement, the AVE values are respectively 0.655, 0.626, and 0.551. Hence, the results indicate that the variables met convergent validity as shown in table 4.

Table 3. Measurement model assessment result

Variables	Items	Indicator Loadings
Career Abandon ment intention	Cai1. I am seriously thinking of leaving the hospital.	0.83
	Cai2. I am actively searching for another career out of the hospital.	0.73
	Cai3. I will leave the profession in the near future.	0.85
Procedural Justice	PJ1. Have you been able to express your views and feelings during those procedures?	0.653
	PJ2. Have you had influence over the (outcome) arrived at by those procedures?	0.818
	PJ3. Have those procedures been applied consistently?	0.800
	PJ4. Have those procedures been free of bias?	0.700
	PJ5. Have those procedures been based on accurate information?	0.700
	PJ6. Have you been able to appeal the (outcome) arrived at by those procedures?	0.859
	PJ7. Have those procedures upheld ethical and moral standards?	0.900
Work Engagem ent	WE1. At my work, I feel bursting with energy	0.675
	WE2. At my job, I feel strong and vigorous	0.810
	WE3. I am enthusiastic about my job	0.793
	WE4. My job inspires me	0.815
	WE5. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	0.677
	WE6. I feel happy when I am working intensely	0.594
	WE7. I am proud of the work that I do	0.763
	WE8. I am immersed in my work	0.774
	WE9. I get carried away when I'm working	0.751

Table 4. Measurement model assessment result

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Average variance extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliability (CR)
Career Abandonment intention	0.742	0.655	0.850
Perceived Procedural Justice	0.900	0.626	0.920
Work Engagement	0.898	0.551	0.916

Finally, discriminant validity should be assessed. One of the methods used to examine discriminant validity is the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) and the other is Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) purposed by Henseler et al. (2015). The square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) with the correlation of latent variables are compared in the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The square root of a construct's AVE value should be greater than the correlation between the other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The findings of the study proved this criterion is met successfully.

Table 5. Discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker), correlations among variables, means and standard deviations.

Variables	1	2	3	M	SD
1. Career Abandonment Intention	0.809			2.58	1.17
2. Work Engagement	-0.377**	0.742		3.36	0.92
3. Procedural Justice	-0.319**	0.423**	0.791	3.16	0.97

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Square root of AVE on the diagonal (bold)

HTMT coefficients suggested by Henseler et al. (2015) are the ratios of the mean of correlations of items belonging to all constructs in a research model to geometric means of correlations of items belonging to the same construct. According to Sarstedt et al., (2017), this value should be below 0.85. The results indicated that all values were below 0.85. In this respect, the discriminant validity of the structural model in this study was successfully ensured and the results are displayed in Table 5 and Table 6.

Table 6. Heterotrait - Monotrait Criteria (HTMT)

Variables	1	2	3
1. Career Abandonment Intention			
2. Work Engagement	0.407		
3. Procedural Justice	0.345	0.441	

4.1 Assessment of Structural Model

Recent studies suggest that path coefficients and the significance values, explanatory power and predictive power are used to evaluate the structural model (Hair et al. 2022; Sarstedt et al. 2022). In parallel with these studies, a bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS was performed to test path coefficient and significance values of the structural model with 5000 bootstrap samples with 102 cases and a 95 per cent confidence level.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that procedural justice is positively related to work engagement. The results indicate that procedural justice is positively related to work

engagement ($\beta=0.426$, $t=5.708$, $p=0.000$). Hence, Hypothesis 1 was supported. Hypothesis 2 predicted that work engagement is negatively related to career abandonment intention. The research findings show that work engagement is negatively related to career abandonment ($\beta=-0.403$, $t=5.732$, $p=0.000$), thus supporting Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis 3 predicted that procedural justice is negatively related to career abandonment intention. The results affirmed that procedural justice is negatively related to career abandonment intention ($\beta=-0.321$, $t=3.652$, $p=0.000$), supporting Hypothesis 3.

One of the aims in this study is to examine whether work engagement has a mediating effect on the relationship between procedural justice and career abandonment intention. Hair et al. (2017) noted that the Sobel test is not suitable for testing indirect effects in the PLS-SEM context. In this respect, to test the mediating effect, the bootstrapping process in the SmartPLS was utilized in accordance with the suggestion by Hair et al. (2017). The direct relationship between procedural justice and career abandonment intention was significant ($\beta=-0.403$, $t=5.732$, $p=0.000$). Together with the mediator variable work engagement, the relationship became insignificant ($\beta=-0.195$, $t=1.804$, $p>0.05$), indicating that work engagement has full mediation effect according to Baron and Kenny (1986) procedure. In addition to this procedure, the report of specific indirect effect value obtained from the bootstrapping method indicates that work engagement had a full mediating role in the relationship between procedural justice and career abandonment intention ($\beta=0.125$, $t=2.426$, $p<0.05$). Thus, Hypothesis 4 was supported. The direct and indirect effects are shown from Figure 2 to 5.

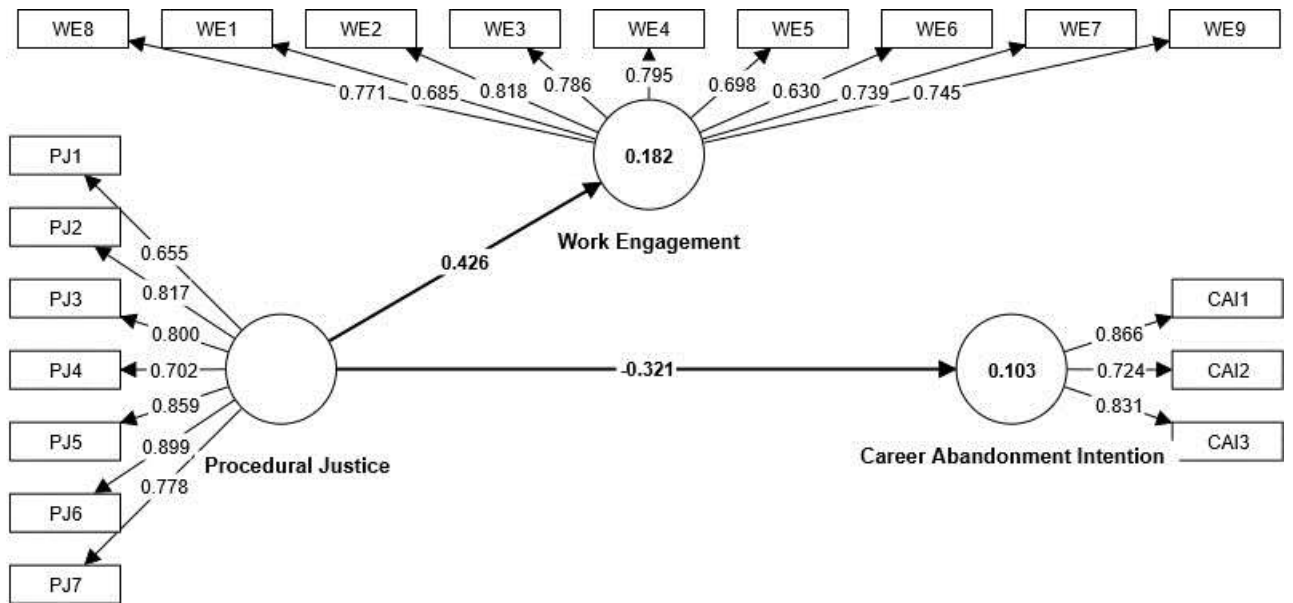


Figure 2. Direct effect of procedural justice on work engagement and career abandonment intention

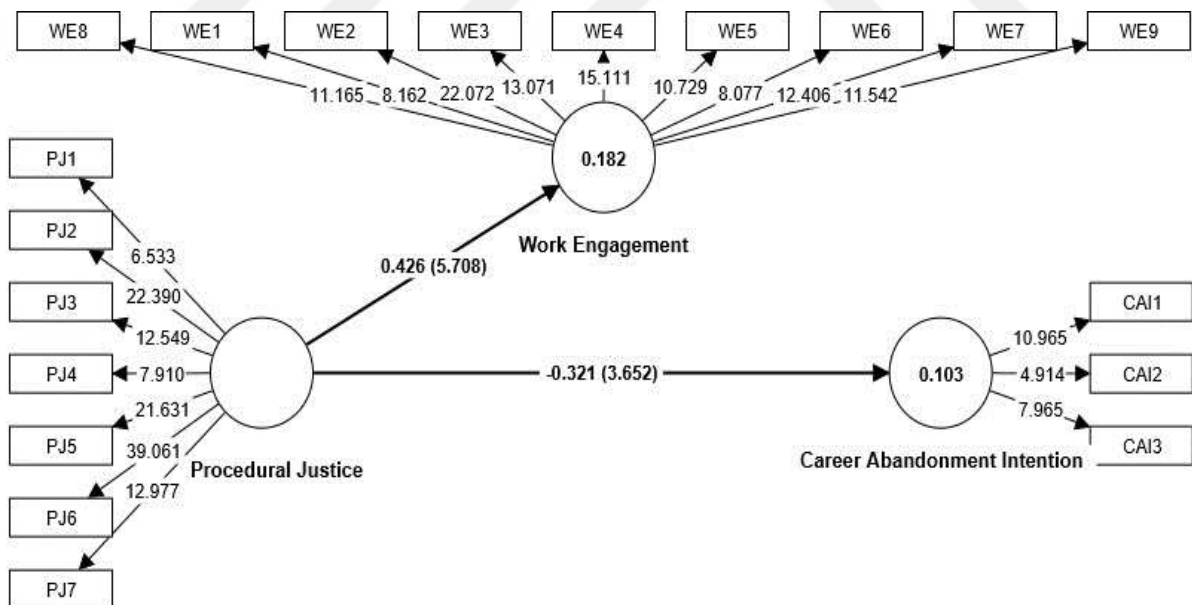


Figure 3. t-test of the direct effect of procedural justice on work engagement and career abandonment intention.

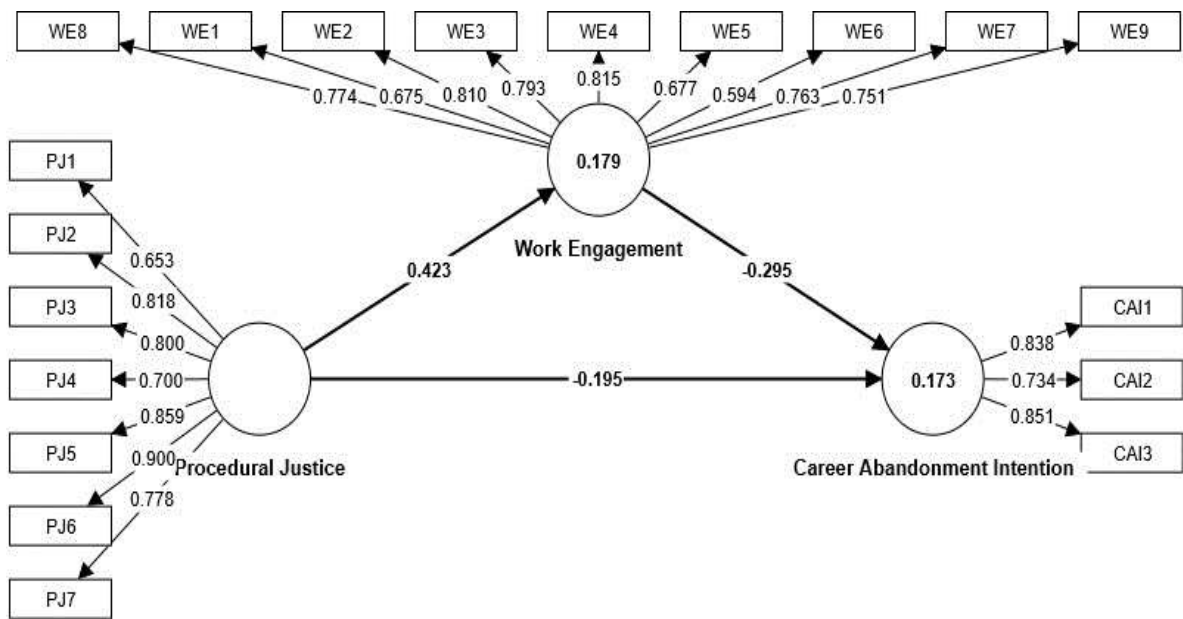


Figure 4. Path coefficients of the mediating effect of work engagement on the relationship between moral procedural justice and career abandonment intention

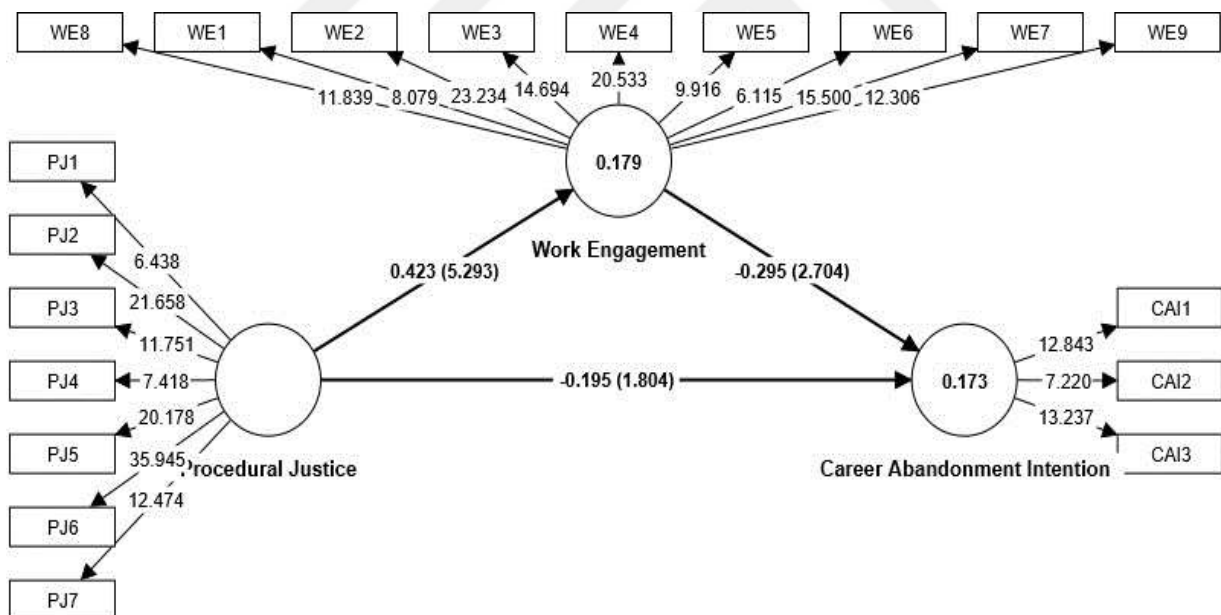


Figure 5. t test of the mediating effect of work engagement on the relationship between moral procedural justice and career abandonment intention

Table 7. Results of structural model & specific indirect effect

Path	<i>B</i>	Std. Deviation	t- Value	p Value	2.5% CI	97.5% CI	Results
PJ → WE	0.426	0.075	5.708	P=0.000	0.254	0.540	H1=Supported
WE → CAI	-0.403	0.070	5.732	P=0.000	-0.492	-0.233	H2=Supported
PJ → CAI	-0.321	0.088	3.652	P=0.000	-0.452	-0.095	H3=Supported
PJ → WE → CAI	0.125	0.051	2.426	P< 0.05	-0.243	-0.035	H4=Supported

Note: PJ= Procedural justice, WE=Work engagement, CAI=Career abandonment intention

In the next step, the explanatory power of the model was assessed in accordance with the suggestion by Sarstedt et al. (2021). Procedural justice and work engagement explained 0.179 % of the variance in career abandonment intention. The explanatory power of procedural justice and work engagement is between .13 _ $R^2 < .26$, indicating medium effect according to Cohen (1988). In addition, the PLSpredict routine with 10 folds and 10 repetitions was utilized to test model validity as suggested by Shmueli et al. (2019). All indicators should have lower RMSE values than the naïve LM benchmark in this procedure. The results of the PLSpredict procedure demonstrated that all the RMSE values of the indicators were lower than the naïve LM benchmark, indicating that this criterion was achieved successfully. Hence, the model has high predictive power (Sarstedt et al., 2021). The results are displayed in Table 7.

Table 8. Differences of RMSE values

Indicators	Q2	PLS-SEM RMSE	LM RMSE	PLS-SEM – LM RMSE
CAI1	0.067	1.411	1.462	-0.051
CAI2	0.003	1.451	1.474	-0.023
CAI3	0.060	1.408	1.451	-0.043
WE1	0.055	1.085	1.115	-0.030
WE2	0.170	1.018	1.034	-0.016
WE3	0.065	1.170	1.188	-0.018
WE4	0.057	1.246	1.263	-0.017
WE5	0.035	1.247	1.261	-0.014
WE6	0.078	1.275	1.372	-0.097
WE7	0.091	1.254	1.362	-0,108
WE8	0.059	1.262	1.340	-0,078
WE9	0.045	1.339	1.439	-0,100

4.2 Hypothesis Acceptance/Rejection

Hypothesis		Accepted/Rejected
H1	Procedural Justice has an effect on work engagement.	Accepted
H2	Work engagement has an effect on career abandonment intention	Accepted
H3	Procedural organizational justice has an effect on Career abandonment intention.	Accepted
H4	Work engagement has a mediating effect between procedural organizational justice and career abandonment intention.	Accepted

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The complex interactions between procedural fairness, work engagement, and career abandonment intentions among healthcare employees in Iraqi state hospitals were investigated in this study. With the use of primary data gathered from healthcare facilities all across Iraq and correlation and regression analyses performed on a sample size of 101, we were able to draw numerous important conclusions that have broad ramifications for regional healthcare management and policy.

This study found a positive correlation between procedural justice and work abandonment intention, with a mediating effect of work engagement. The study concluded that improving procedural justice enhances talent retention in organizations. Moreover, creating work engagement also influences career abandonment intentions, which means that more work-engaged employees are more likely to pursue their career.

Discussion

Our study proved that healthcare professionals' work engagement in Iraqi state hospitals is greatly impacted by procedural fairness. This research emphasises how crucial fair and open practises and treatment are in determining the amount of dedication and passion among healthcare workers. Healthcare professionals are more inclined to give their all to their jobs when they believe they are being treated properly and that the decision-making procedures are open and objective. According to this connection, healthcare organisations may improve work engagement by emphasising procedural justice in their management strategies.

The study found a strong link between work engagement and healthcare personnel' plans to leave their careers. This link emphasises the idea that highly engaged employees are less inclined to consider quitting their jobs early. Healthcare workers are more likely to persist through difficult times and commit to their jobs in the long run when they are profoundly engaged in their work, feeling a sense of purpose, and connection to their responsibilities. This research emphasises the value of encouraging work engagement as a tactic to lower turnover and keep qualified healthcare professionals on staff.

In addition to the aforementioned, our research showed a direct effect of procedural justice on intentions to quit a career. This finding underlines the crucial role that fair and equal treatment within healthcare organisations has in reducing the intentions of healthcare employees to leave their employment. Healthcare personnel are less likely to consider abandoning their employment in an atmosphere where they believe they are treated fairly and with respect. This conclusion has important policy implications for hospital managers and decision-makers and emphasises the necessity to give procedural fairness top priority in order to keep a dependable and committed healthcare staff.

The mediation impact of job involvement between procedural fairness and career abandonment intentions is arguably one of our study's most fascinating findings. This mediation makes the argument that procedural justice has an effect on work engagement, which in turn has an effect on career abandonment intentions. In other words, procedural justice influences work engagement, which in turn influences career plans indirectly. This intricate link underscores how crucial it is to address both procedural fairness and work engagement concurrently inside healthcare organisations.

The ramifications of our research are broad and provide insightful information about healthcare administration and policy in Iraq, an environment with particular possibilities and problems. It is impossible to exaggerate how important procedural fairness is in influencing the attitudes and actions of healthcare professionals. It is evident that administrators can favourably impact both work engagement at work and career goals by adopting fair and transparent processes and developing a culture of justice within healthcare organisations.

This study emphasises the crucial role that procedural fairness and workplace engagement play in determining the career paths of healthcare professionals in Iraqi public hospitals. Healthcare organisations may enhance the quality of treatment and services offered as well as retain their precious staff by addressing these variables, which will eventually lead to improved healthcare results for the general public. This study sets the path for additional research into methods to improve procedural justice and workplace engagement in healthcare settings, leading to the development of a more tenacious and dedicated healthcare staff in Iraq and elsewhere.

Recommendations

This research makes a number of strategic suggestions for Iraqi healthcare organisations based on a thorough examination of the research's findings and findings on the influence of procedural fairness on work engagement and career abandonment intentions among healthcare employees in state hospitals in Iraq. These suggestions are intended to foster a friendly and encouraging work atmosphere that not only improves job satisfaction and engagement but also lessens intents to leave one's profession, ultimately resulting in a more reliable and committed healthcare staff.

- Spend money on training programmes to teach healthcare managers, administrators, and workers the value of procedural fairness. Make sure everyone is aware of procedural justice, what it includes, and how it may enhance the workplace.
- For decision-making, resource allocation, promotion, and dispute resolution inside the healthcare organisation, develop clear and open policies and processes. Make sure that all staff members are informed of these policies and that they are applied consistently.
- Hold healthcare executives and administrators responsible for adhering to the rules of procedural fairness. Establish systems for the organization's internal procedural justice practises to be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis.
- Establish official channels so that staff members may express their opinions and grievances on procedural justice. Utilise this criticism constructively, and make the required adjustments.
- Healthcare professionals that exhibit high levels of engagement at work and commitment to their jobs should be recognised and rewarded. Create programmes for employee appreciation that honour and recognise their achievements.
- Engage healthcare staff in decisions about patient care, workflow optimisation, and quality improvement projects to give them more influence. Encourage them to share their perceptions and suggestions for improving their workplace.
- Provide chances for career progression, skill development, and professional development. Give healthcare professionals access to training, workshops, and mentoring programmes so they can keep up-to-date on their knowledge and abilities.

- Respect the need for a healthy work-life balance. Encourage flexible working hours and support initiatives that aid healthcare professionals in managing their stress at work and preserving a positive work-life balance.
- Create mentorship programmes to offer advice and assistance to healthcare professionals, particularly those who might be going through difficulties in their careers or feeling burned out. Senior healthcare professionals should be encouraged to mentor and direct junior personnel.
- Develop individualised career development plans with healthcare professionals that reflect their professional aims and objectives. To keep people interested and motivated, offer chances for cross-training and skill diversity.
- Implement wellness initiatives that pay special attention to the physical and emotional wellbeing of healthcare professionals. Give them access to tools, stress-management classes, and counselling services to assist them with the rigours of their line of work.
- Conduct exit interviews with leaving healthcare professionals to learn more about their motivations. Utilise this input to pinpoint areas for development and implement the appropriate adjustments to lower turnover.

This study emphasises the crucial role that procedural fairness and workplace engagement play in determining the career trajectories of healthcare professionals employed in Iraqi public hospitals. These suggestions can help healthcare organisations in Iraq establish a more welcoming and encouraging workplace that improves job satisfaction, work engagement, and career retention for healthcare professionals. These initiatives will ultimately result in a more dependable and committed healthcare staff, better patient care, and better healthcare results for the general public. The issues encountered by healthcare professionals in Iraq must be addressed, and it is crucial that healthcare executives, politicians, and stakeholders collaborate to prioritise and put these suggestions into practise.

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