

# The Relationship between Workplace Violence and Turnover Intention with a Mediating Role of Work Engagement and Job Satisfaction

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**Abstract.** The current study aimed at identifying the relationship between turnover intention and workplace violence with a mediating role of work engagement and job satisfaction. A structured questionnaire has been used as a tool. In order to test the relationship, data were collected from 150 employees working in call centers of Pakistan, as the rate of turnover intention is highest in call centers. A cross sectional analysis was used to find out the results. SPSS has been used to find the results. Results indicated that workplace violence has significant relationship with turnover intention, and work engagement and job satisfaction plays a mediating role in this relationship. This paper reveals insight into the relation among the concept of workplace violence, work engagement, job satisfaction and turnover intention and forms a novel study that has not been recently investigated. The examination uncovered that if there is violence at workplace it will reduce work engagement and job satisfaction, which will lead to turnover intention. We support replications and expansion of this examination to build the generalizability.

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## 1 Introduction

Workplace violence is a problem faced by every organization around the world (Park et al., 2015). If we identify violence in its early stages, it can prevent most of the violence at workplace. However, most of the time the situation is masked to save the reputation of the organization. A study was carried out using cross sectional data showing that in case if an employee is suffering from workplace violence, it is likely that the employee may feel anxiety, low motivation and even low job satisfaction. There are four different types of violence during work a) psychological b) racial c) sexual d) bullying e) verbal abuse (Chappell and Di Martino, 2006). Violence has four major categories 1) violence by those who are not connected to the organization or the company. 2) Violence by those whom the organization provides their services 3) violence by the former employee or current employee on the manager or the supervisor. 4) Violence by a person who is not connected to the organization or the company but is connected to the employee (Chappell et al., 2002). Workplace violence also reduces the level of job satisfaction.

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Job satisfaction is positive term while studying the work behavior. Job satisfaction is evaluated through mental state of the employee. Factors, which affect the job satisfaction is workload, environment, etc. that can lead to quitting job or turnover intention (Cicolini et al., 2014).

Turnover intention is the intention that the employee would likely to quit the job. An employee, who stays for longer period of time in the organization, becomes familiar to the organizations values and culture, etc. Then this acquaintance helps the organization to retain their best employee in long-term relationship and helps them to remain committed to organization for giving competitive edge to the organization. Factors that influence the turnover intention are WPV, stress, burnout, workplace engagement. Turnover intention is more cost effective than the actual turnover (Kim and Kim, 2014). Hence it is cost effective to find out the turnover intention of the employees. Previous studies have posited that the effects of turnover intention are burnout, stress, job satisfaction (Kim and Kim, 2014). Another study which was conducted in Korea showed that 50% of the employees had the turnover intention (Jeong and Kim, 2018). Turnover intention is also caused due to disengagement of work.

Work engagement is a positive factor, a psychological state of the employees related to their work, which makes them feel satisfied regarding their work (Salanova et al., 2011). The consequences of work engagement have not yet been developed (Robinson et al., 2004). Work engagement negatively affects the turnover intention of the employees. As per a study conducted on nurses, work engagement has shown negative impact on job satisfaction (Keyko et al., 2016). The importance of work engagement is triggering the need of explanation related to the components that drive the work engagement (Bakker et al., 2008). Work engagement has three dimensions: dedication, absorption and vigor. Vigor means to put your energy in your work. Dedication means to be inspired and to give your time and effort to your job. Lastly, absorption means to have high level of concentration on your job (Schaufeli et al., 2006, 2002). The present study focuses on call center as in call centers the turnover intention is high as compared to any other sector. Because of workplace violence the call center employees feel less satisfied at job; also work engagement is low, which leads to turnover intention. Therefore, present study attempts to examine the effect of workplace violence on turnover intention of call center employees, with the mediating role of job satisfaction and workplace engagement.

Effective event theory supports this model which states that certain situations provoke certain emotions and these emotions subsequently lead to subsequent behaviors (Eissa and Lester, 2017). Research depicts that workplace violence has a great impact on society (Nowrouzi-Kia, 2017; Zhang, 2006). It decreases job satisfaction (Heponiemi et al., 2014), and affects their mental and physical health (Shi et al., 2017), which also reduces work engagement. This may influence their quality of life and increase turnover intention (Sun and Wang, 2017). According to Heponiemi et al. (2014), physical violence (workplace violence) is connected to turnover intention and decreases the level of job satisfaction. Another study by Chen et al. (2016) shows that workplace violence has a negative impact on turnover intention. Similarly, according to the above discussion Affective event theory fully supports the model that certain situations lead a person to leave the organization.

## 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 Workplace Violence and Job Satisfaction

Workplace violence is a worldwide problem which affects professionals (Park et al., 2015). According to world health organization (WHO) (2002) workplace violence is a situation in which

one is the subject of threat and abuse at workplace. According to WHO, workplace violence is of two types: psychological violence (threats, verbal abuse) and physical violence (pushing, pinching, slapping) (Krug et al., 2002). According to past research, society and hospitals are greatly affected by workplace violence (Nowrouzi-Kia, 2017; Zhang, 2006). Workplace violence also causes other issues such as decreased job satisfaction (Heponiemi et al., 2014), reduced performance of job (Kowalenko et al., 2013), which affects mental health negatively (Shi et al., 2017), and also affect the quality of their life and increase in turnover intention (Sun and Wang, 2017). According to the new research, it is identified that workplace violence influences turnover intention (Choi and Lee, 2017). According to previous review experience of workplace violence can lead to mental exhaustion, nervousness and even decrease the level of job satisfaction (Pourshaikhian et al., 2016). Job satisfaction is a main component and a positive concept describing behaviors during work (Cicolini et al., 2014). Factors influencing job satisfaction are working environment, role conflict, job stress, working conditions and so on (Atefi et al., 2015; Lu et al., 2012). Stress decreases the level of job satisfaction (Khan et al., 2016), which will also increase the level of turnover intention. Therefore, following hypothesis has been formulated:

*H<sub>1</sub>: Workplace violence has a negative impact on job satisfaction.*

## 2.2 Work Engagement and Workplace Violence

Workplace violence (WPV) is a worldwide issue influencing all professional experts. It is known as the deliberate utilization of physical power or dangers of such activities at work (Crawford, 2019). Workplace violence and workplace bullying both are considered as social stressors which reduce confidence and the organizations face loss of adapting resources (Nielsen et al., 2011). It may cause behavioral changes such as over eating (McFarlin et al., 2001; Rospenda et al., 2008; Xu et al., 2019) and influence the variety of negative emotions (Balducci et al., 2011; Schablon et al., 2012; Viitasara and Menckel, 2002); whereas, work engagement is a feeling of satisfaction or a positive feeling that advances psychological well-being. Eagerness, pride in work, encountering work achievement and a strong dedication to work are key factors of work engagement (Bakker et al., 2008; Schaufeli et al., 2002). Engaged employees have a high level of mental strength and energy, they are highly dedicated and experience meaningful work with a concentration and complete focus on work (Schaufeli et al., 2002). According to past papers workplace bullying (workplace violence) influences work engagement, directly as well as indirectly (Goodboy et al., 2017; Nielsen et al., 2011; Park and Ono, 2017; Rai and Agarwal, 2017; Rodríguez-Muñoz et al., 2009; Trépanier et al., 2013). Similarly, workplace violence affects work engagement and a person cannot perform well which in turn harms the organization.

*H<sub>2</sub>: Workplace violence has a negative impact on work engagement.*

## 2.3 Turnover Intention and Job Satisfaction

According to Spector (1997) job satisfaction is a proportion of employees satisfaction with their work/job, whether they are satisfied with their work/job or not. Dissatisfaction at job is one of the related sources of stress, a pressing issue for every organization is turnover intention (Gharakhani and Zaferanchi, 2019). Every organization sets goals and targets which they must achieve (Prasetio et al., 2019). According to Bartel (2004) performance of the organization is influenced by their capacity to deal with their employees. An organizations success depends on

the efficiency of employees (Hersey et al., 2007). It also applies to call centers. One of the indicators is turnover intention, which tells whether the organization manages their employees or not (Prasetio et al., 2019). It is the responsibility of organization as well as employee to ensure that their job brought satisfaction. According to different studies, job satisfaction and turnover intention showed negative relation. Turnover intention is defined as a probability of an employee that he will leave the organization after certain period of time (Chao et al., 2015). A more satisfied employee will have less intention to leave the job vice versa (Mahdi et al., 2012; Prasetio et al., 2019). Extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction of job has inverse relationship with turnover intention (Mahdi et al., 2012; Saeed et al., 2014). Meanwhile, Turnover intention is significantly affected by satisfaction with supervisor (Yamazakia and Petchdee, 2015). Based on the above arguments hypothesis three has been proposed:

*H<sub>3</sub>: Job satisfaction has a negative impact on Turnover intention.*

## 2.4 Work Engagement and Turnover Intention

Work engagement is a solid indicator of employee turnover (Saks, 2006; Wan et al., 2018). Employees build a strong and trusting relationship with their organization who are highly engaged (Ajayi et al., 2017; Saks, 2006). Furthermore, employees who are engaged are more satisfied with their job/organization. As they are more committed to their jobs, they don't plan to leave their job (Schaufeli et al., 2006). An employee who is dissatisfied with tasks or work, refers to increase in turnover intention (Fernet et al., 2017). Positive wellbeing at workplace is one of the most important elements of work engagement (Bakker and Oerlemans, 2011). Employees find work meaningful when they are engaged in work and can invest in work in order to accomplish organization goal (Kahn, 1990). When an employee is emotionally committed to his organization, it means he is engaged at work (Mache et al., 2014). According to the previous researches, effective leadership, relationship with coworkers, rewards and interesting work-related tasks are the drivers of employee engagement at work (May et al., 2004). Past studies also show that engaged employee has less intention/aim to leave the organization (Alfes et al., 2013) because engaged employees find meaning in their work, they are enthusiastic about their work and can deal with work related demands (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Organizations should have to retain their best employee using HR strategy (friendly environment and developing job satisfaction). A good HR strategy can reduce turnover intention (Prasetio et al., 2019). Similarly, employees who are highly engaged will continue their present job (Shuck and Reio Jr, 2014); while, less engaged employees will leave their organization. Therefore, from these arguments it is proposed that:

*H<sub>4</sub>: Work engagement has a negative impact on Turnover intention.*

## 2.5 Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction

Lower job satisfaction and turnover intention are caused by bullying, physical violence and workplace violence (Heponiemi et al., 2014). A study shows that WPV has a significant impact on turnover intention and burnout. To eliminate violence from external as well as internal environment ensure a comfortable, trustworthy, safe, supportive and a high quality working environment which will increase retention and job satisfaction (Casey et al., 2017). As it is identified in a study that training employees makes them feel happy and respected, managers should

encourage them instead of threatening them. Respect and support will decrease turnover intention and increase job satisfaction (Lee et al., 2017). According to Pourshaikhian et al. (2016) workplace violence causes fear, mental exhaustion and anxiety which leads to reduced job satisfaction. Therefore, from the above discussion it is proposed that:

*H<sub>5</sub>: Job satisfaction negatively mediates the relationship between workplace violence and Turnover intention.*

## 2.6 Mediating Role of Work Engagement

The construct of individual work commitment has been the focal point of hypothetical discussion given its association with positive authoritative conduct (Bailey et al., 2017). A positive wellbeing at working environment can lead to work engagement, which is the most important element (Bakker and Oerlemans, 2011). To achieve the organization goal an employee can invest in the work and find his work meaningful which is a state of work engagement (Kahn, 1990). An engaged employee is emotionally dedicated to work as well as its organization, they are one of the greatest focused differentiators in the working environment (Mache et al., 2014). Research recommends that the drivers of individual work engagements are relationship among coworkers, rewards, interesting work-related tasks, bonuses, effective leadership and capital to perform their work well (May et al., 2004). Past research recognized that an employee has less aim to leave work, when he is engaged (Alfes et al., 2013), because an engaged employee finds meaning in their work activities, can manage work related demands and they are also excited (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Similarly, an employee who is highly engaged worker is more liable to proceed with his present organization (Shuck and Reio Jr, 2014), while employee who is not engaged tend to leave his organization (Rafiq et al., 2019), which increases the level of turnover. Therefore, it is proposed that:

*H<sub>6</sub>: Work engagement negatively mediates the relation between workplace violence and Turnover intention.*

## 2.7 Framework



Figure 1: Framework

### 3 Methodology

#### 3.1 Sample and Procedure

The purpose of data collection was to demonstrate the impact of workplace violence on turnover with a mediating role of job satisfaction and work engagement at call centers in the context of Pakistan. The participants will be asked to provide information regarding work engagement, turnover intention, job satisfaction and workplace violence. Convenient sampling technique was used for this research, in which 127 structured questionnaires were distributed among the call centers in Islamabad. In Pakistan, as data collection from employees is a bit difficult task because it is a time-consuming activity and due to time constraints data collected would be biased one, thus private sector organizations are more active and functional in research tasks and give better response for accurate results. Furthermore, data collection from this sector was bit challenging because 140 questionnaires were received out of 150, of which 127 questionnaires were considered for the analysis. The respondents of this research were having an age of 24 and above. The respondents were having qualification ranged from matric to MBA, MS/MPhil. Experience of the respondents was ranged between 0-9 years.

#### 3.2 Measurements

Same pattern and type of questionnaires were distributed to each employee of different call centers in Islamabad. Likert scale was used for the measurement of the questionnaires by using the measurement scale of 1= Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree/Nor Disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree. Workplace violence is measured by adapting the scale of the Irish Nurses Organization and the royal college of nursing (UK). Consisting of 5 items ( $\alpha = 913$ ). One of sample item which was asked from the respondents is "Someone threw an object on me at workplace". Work engagement is measured by using scale of [Schaufeli et al. \(2006\)](#), consisting of 5 items ( $\alpha = .799$ ). One of sample is "At my work I feel bursting with energy". Job Satisfaction is measured by using the scale of [Spector \(1997\)](#). He developed a scale of 36 question however in a research conducted by [Sharma et al. \(2019\)](#), he found that most of the questions in the scale was overlapping each other so, they selected 6 items in their study, we have also taken six items of [Spector \(1997\)](#) ( $\alpha = .946$ ). One of the sample items is "My work is helping my professional growth by developing my skills and learning new technologies/tools/practices". Turnover Intention scale of [Leiter et al. \(2011\)](#) is used to measure Turnover intention. Consisting of 5 items ( $\alpha = .741$ ). One of the sample items is "I don't plan to be in this organization much longer."

### 4 Results

Table 1 shows the reliability analysis of variables; the Cronbachs Alpha of every variable is above 0.7. The results show full support for validity and reliability of the scales.

Second table represents Pearson correlation and Alpha reliability. The standard deviation and mean for workplace violence are (S.D = 1.16213, M = 3.1476), for work engagement (S.D = 1.06252, M = 2.7417), for job satisfaction (S.D = 1.33345, M = 2.857), and for turnover intention (S.D = 0.80374, M = 2.6835).

Table 2: Descriptive statistics, reliabilities and correlations among variables.

Table 4.1: Reliability Analysis

Sr. No.	Variable	Cronbach Alpha	No of Items
1	Workplace Violence	0.913	4
2	Work Engagement	0.799	5
3	Job Satisfaction	0.946	6
4	Turnover Intention	0.741	5

Table 4.2: Correlations

	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. WPV	3.1476	1.16213	1			
2. WE	2.7417	1.06252	-.376**	1		
3. JS	2.857	1.33345	-.357**	0.124	1	
4. TI	2.6835	0.80374	.53**	-.343**	-.366**	1

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

The correlation analysis shows the relation among variables. It is investigated that there is a significant relation between the workplace violence and work engagement ( $r = -.376, p < .05$ ). This shows that increase in workplace violence in the organizations decreases the engagement of work. The correlation between the workplace violence and job satisfaction is also negatively related ( $r = -.357, p < .05$ ). This means that job satisfaction of employee will be decreased by the increase in workplace violence in the organization. There is a positive correlation between ( $r = .53, p < .05$ ) the workplace violence and turnover intention.

Table 4.3: Direct Hypotheses Testing

HYPHO	IV	DV	R Square	F	Beta	t
1	Workplace Violence	Job Satisfaction	0.128	18.3	-0.357	-4.278
2	Workplace Violence	Work Engagement	0.141	20.588	-0.376	-4.537
3	Job Satisfaction	Turnover Intention	0.134	19.334	-0.366	-4.397
4	Work Engagement	Turnover Intention	0.118	16.645	-0.343	-4.08

The table: 3 represents the results of direct hypotheses 1, 2, 3 and 4. Regression analysis shows that 12% variation in the job satisfaction is caused due to workplace violence. It indicates that workplace violence causes job dissatisfaction ( $R^2 = .128, F = 18.3, p < .05$ ). Hypothesis 1 indicates that workplace violence has negative impact on Job satisfaction. Regression analysis supports the negative relation between WPV and JS, as the regression coefficient indicates ( $\beta = -0.375, P < .001$ ). Therefore, first hypothesis has been accepted.

Further, second hypothesis indicates that 14% variation in the work engagement is caused due to workplace violence ( $R^2 = 0.141, F = 20.588, p < .05$ ). Workplace violence is negatively related to work engagement. Result of regression analysis also supports the negative relation



between workplace violence and work engagement, that indicates the regression coefficient ( $\beta = -0.376, P < .001$ ). Therefore, second hypothesis is also accepted. Third hypothesis states that job satisfaction has negative impact on turnover intention. Regression analysis shows that job satisfaction has a negative impact on turnover intention, supporting the result regression coefficient indicates ( $\beta = -0.366, P < .001$ ). Therefore, third hypothesis has also been accepted. Fourth hypothesis states that work engagement has negative impact on turnover intention. Regression analysis shows that work engagement has a negative impact on turnover intention, supporting the result regression coefficient indicates ( $\beta = -0.343, P < .001$ ). consequently, the fourth hypothesis has also been accepted.

Table 4.4: Mediation Analysis

	<b>Effect</b>	<b>se</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Total Effect of WPV on TI</b>	0.3278	0.0545	6.0185	0
<b>Direct Effect of WPV on TI</b>	0.2994	0.0583	5.1378	0
	<b>Effect</b>	<b>Boot SE</b>	<b>Boot LLCI</b>	<b>Boot ULCI</b>
<b>Indirect Effect(s) of WPV on TI</b> (Mediation of Job Satisfaction)	0.0284	0.0191	-0.0068	0.0681

For depicting the mediation analysis of work engagement and job satisfaction we used the mediation method recommended by Hayes (2009); which provides the direct, indirect and total effects of mediation in the model. According to table 4(a) the total effect of workplace violence on turnover intention is ( $\beta = 0.3278, t = 6.0185, p < .05$ ); indicating that increase in workplace violence leads to turnover intention. The direct effect of workplace violence and turnover intention is ( $\beta = 0.2994, t = 5.1378, p < .05$ ). The indirect effect of workplace violence and turnover intention clearly indicated that job satisfaction negatively mediates the relationship between workplace violence and turnover intention. The indirect effect  $\beta = 0.0284, [-0.0068, 0.0681]$ , shows that workplace violence negatively influences job satisfaction which increases turnover intention.

Table 4.5: Mediation Analysis

	<b>Effect</b>	<b>se</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Total Effect of WPV on TI</b>	0.3278	0.0545	6.0185	0
<b>Direct Effect of WPV on TI</b>	0.2994	0.0583	5.1378	0
	<b>Effect</b>	<b>Boot SE</b>	<b>Boot LLCI</b>	<b>Boot ULCI</b>
<b>Indirect Effect(s) of WPV on TI</b> (Mediation of Work Engagement)	0.0528	0.0223	0.0104	0.0977

Table 4(b) provides the direct, indirect and total effects of mediation. The overall effect of workplace violence on turnover intention ( $\beta = 0.3278, t = 6.0185, p < .05$ ) shows that increase in workplace violence leads to turnover intention. The direct effect of workplace violence on turnover intention is ( $\beta = 0.2994, t = 5.1378, p < .05$ ). The effect of turnover intention and workplace violence clarifies that work engagement negatively mediates the relationship be-



tween workplace violence and turnover intention. The effect  $\beta = 0.0528$ , [0.0104, 0.0977], shows that workplace violence negatively influences work engagement which increase turnover intention.

## 5 Discussion

The current study examines how workplace violence positively influences employees' turnover intention, through mediating mechanism job satisfaction and work engagement. The findings show that workplace violence has a positive relationship with turnover intention. The First hypothesis Workplace violence has a negative relation with job satisfaction has been accepted after running the regression analysis. If there is violence in the work environment the employees will be detached with their work, they would be no longer motivated hence job satisfaction will be lower amongst the employees. Second hypothesis Workplace violence has a negative impact on work engagement was proved after running the regression analysis. That if there is workplace violence the employee will feel discomfort which will in turn lower the engagement at work place. We proposed third hypothesis as Job satisfaction has a negative impact on Turnover intention. This proposed hypothesis has also been accepted. Moreover, the study proposed the fourth hypothesis as Work engagement has a negative impact on Turnover intention which has been accepted by the regression analysis. If the employees are not motivated enough or are not engaged in their work because of the violence faced at work, he/she would most probably have an intention to leave the organization. Fifth hypothesis Job satisfaction negatively mediates the relation between Turnover intention and workplace violence has also been accepted through regression analysis. When there is workplace violence, the employees of the work environment will feel less motivated and in turn will have intention to leave the organization as they are no longer valued in the work environment. This relation is further mediated by job satisfaction when there is workplace violence the employees will have low job satisfaction and the employee will have strong intentions to leave the work (organization). The sixth hypothesis Work engagement negatively mediates the relationship b/w workplace violence and turnover intention has also been accepted. Moreover, results show that work engagement negatively affects the relationship of the two proposed variables.

### 5.1 Practical Significance

The effects of workplace violence on work engagement, job satisfaction and turnover has been rarely studied. Therefore, with the help of this study we addressed the gap and provided reference for organizations/managers, call centers and hospitals to use to formulate policies relevant to it. The influence of workplace violence and turnover Intention can effectively be reduced by violence prevention climates. Recent studies about nursing suggested that a positive and supportive working environment, mutual respect is important for commitment In the organization (Erdogan and Yildirim, 2017; Perreira et al., 2018).

### 5.2 Conclusion

This paper reveals insight into the relation among the concept of violence at workplace, satisfaction of job, turnover intention and work engagement and from a novel study that has not recently been investigated. The examination uncovered that if there is violence at workplace

it will reduce work engagement and satisfaction of job, which leads to turnover. We support replications and expansion of this examination to build the generalizability.

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