



“An investigation on turnover intention antecedents amongst the academicians in universities”

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AN INVESTIGATION ON TURNOVER INTENTION ANTECEDENTS AMONGST THE ACADEMICIAN IN UNIVERSITIES

Abstract

Employees' decision to quit their present job or company is a turnover intention. The number of employees joining and leaving an organization in a specific period is regarded as employee turnover. This study aims to examine the factors influencing faculty members' intentions to leave universities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The population includes academicians from various universities in Saudi Arabia. The primary data were gathered using random sampling methods; 140 responses investigating various demographics and other factors were obtained from academicians of various universities. The present study chose five constructs: job satisfaction, job stress, work engagement, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. The statistical tools were used to conduct statistics examinations. The mean, correlation, and regressions were used to analyze the data gathered. The results showed a significant association between work engagement, job stress, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. Job stress and turnover intention were not shown to be significantly correlated. Other variables showed significant relationships with the turnover intention of university academicians.

Keywords

job stress, work engagement, organizational
commitment, job satisfaction, turnover intention

JEL Classification

J63, M12

INTRODUCTION

Companies all across the globe have been dealing with the severe issue of job turnover. Human capital has become a crucial component that small industrial companies must take proper control of in the current hostile environment (Abdullah & Othman, 2019). Milgram and Budria (2021) emphasize that since globalization evolves quickly, turnover encourages businesses to struggle with other organizations to look for the finest people. Even though this topic has been the hot research subject, employee turnover needs to get more scientific attention (Malik & Allam, 2021).

Job satisfaction is vital to the success of organizational and personal goals. Experienced employees and upper executives have more job experience, expertise, abilities, and talents than younger employees (Hadi & Ahmed, 2018). Practitioners and researchers have used and studied employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, work engagement, job stress, and other methods of improving staff satisfaction to enhance overall organizational performance (Rasool et al., 2021).

Turnover intention is still a hot topic among management researchers. Most research on turnover intention tends to concentrate on em-



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employees from the hospitality, pharmaceutical, healthcare, and medical sector. According to empirical evidence, employees from universities and colleges, as well as academicians from private institutions, are sampled in a few research. Furthermore, there is still a paucity of research about the determinants of academicians' turnover intention in public institutions. No research has been done on academicians' turnover intentions in public universities, primarily in Saudi Arabia.

Turnover intention is a big concern for both academicians and university administration. Academicians play a critical role in achieving the government's Vision 2030, particularly in developing human capital with acceptable levels of expertise, abilities, and values. Universities should increase employee work engagement to decrease the likelihood of academicians quitting. As a result, the factors influencing academicians' intention to leave are vital to uncovering, particularly at public universities.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee turnover is a long-standing issue that organizations have to cope with. The total number of employees who leave an organization in a given period is defined as turnover intention. The total number of staff who leave the organization divided by the total of employees within the company is the turnover rate, commonly measured annually. Turnover intention refers to quitting a job in various settings, including organizations, occupations, and phases of employment and unemployment (Hausknecht & Trevor, 2011).

Martin and Roodt (2008) investigated organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions in a post-merger environment. According to the results, commitment and turnover intention do not have higher influence than satisfaction. Smart (1990) evaluated the relative impact of personality traits, institutional traits, contextual-work environment factors, and numerous measures of job satisfaction on faculty members' intentions to quit their present institutions through the causal model. Employees had considered quitting the company if they genuinely wanted to quit their positions (Ramlawati et al., 2021).

Turnover intentions can be voluntary and involuntary. Voluntary occurs when employees willingly choose to quit the company. In contrast, involuntary appears when the administration forces individuals to quit the company (Shaik et al., 2021). The choice to leave is made when the employees feel uneasy or uncomfortable about the present work (Charoensukmongkol & Phungsoonthorn, 2021). The decision to quit might also stem from extrinsic reasons like the industry's qualities, financial

worries, interpersonal issues, or professional advancement opportunities (Ahmad, 2018). In addition, job changes will affect those who remain at the organization (Kurdi & Alshurideh, 2020).

With this interaction, employees may work more steadily and quickly adjust to their colleagues, providers, and consumers, which can keep them around for a more extended period (Gupta & Shaheen, 2017). In addition, when workers are involved in their job, they are more likely to react positively to it by being pleased, joyful, and enthusiastic, which reduces or eliminates the likelihood that they will want to quit (Chakraborty & Ganguly, 2019).

Du Plooy and Roodt (2010) showed that when employees are short on capabilities, they often choose to work with their self-belief and emotional capabilities, such as strength and intellectual efforts, which reduces their retaining attempts. Moreover, if workers are interested in their work, they are more likely to continue with their present company than distracted individuals likelier to quit the company (Lu et al., 2016). In contrast to mental and psychological involvement, behavioral involvement is negatively associated with the intention to leave (Kim & Hyun, 2017). When employees experience a decline in their levels of vigor and enthusiasm due to overusing psychological assets, it increases their intentions to leave (Javed et al., 2020).

A person receives support from an organization, and what they anticipate receiving may be used to define job satisfaction (Saeed et al., 2014). Additionally, work happiness might influence a worker's intention to remain with the company

or quit (Alam & Asim, 2019). Employees unsatisfied with their jobs may contemplate quitting and seeking employment elsewhere. Employees will remain in the company for a long time if they are satisfied with their current position (Vuong et al., 2021). However, employees will quit if unsatisfied and have the chance to work for a more evolved firm (Ilies et al., 2018). Job satisfaction is vital in predicting the link between the intention of job changes and other factors (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Employee retention or leaving decisions may be influenced by job satisfaction (Rababah et al., 2022).

An essential factor in the debate of intention to leave is organizational commitment. It is often believed that the more committed an organization is to its employees, the less likely people will want to resign (Tumwesigye, 2010). This is because having employees that are very committed to the organization is an excellent benefit for the business. A complimentary connection exists between employers and employees regarding organizational commitment (Martin & Roodt, 2008). Furthermore, it refers to employees' sense of duty and attachment to the organization's goal.

Organizational engagement often refers to an identity or connection to a particular body. Workers' conducts toward the organization, such as their confidence, loyalty, and support to accomplish corporate goals, might show the outcome from a mental perspective (Toksöz, 2021). The devotion to an organization also indicates how that person feels about the organization overall. According to Redondo et al. (2021), employees with a greater level of organizational commitment are less likely to quit the company unless they feel pressured to perform extra duties.

Work engagement significantly affects the corporate learning environment and willingness to leave (Saks, 2019). The upper executives need to foster a learning climate and help employees to keep them from leaving the organization (Zhou et al., 2009). If employees are sufficiently happy with the organization, it will cause low worker desire to leave the organization. Effectively, it will demonstrate staff devotion to the company and boost output (Faloye, 2014). Previous research found a negative and significant association between organizational engagement and turnover intention.

Job stress ensues when employees are unwilling to meet the demands of their position, and this causes a state of physical and mental imbalance that result in a stressful environment (Wu et al., 2019). Today's employed person has a complicated life, and job stress is one of the key variables influencing how well a person performs. No matter how big or small the company is: stress is an inescapable problem (Karsh et al., 2005). People from various industries are typically affected by job stress, which is ubiquitous and frequently reported. It leads to a high rate of job changes and produces plenty of negative effects for both the individual and the company (Hang-Yue et al., 2005).

A number of work-related stressors (job safety, job consistency, and prescriptive fairness) can affect workers' degree of job satisfaction and cause them to experience pressure at work (Albougami et al., 2020). In order to implement successful pressure managing techniques, the organization has to give this issue more attention to raise worker comfort levels and decrease the percentage of leave intentions. Many studies found a positive link between the intention to leave and job stress. For example, according to Hang-Yue et al. (2005), insufficient knowledge of duties and responsibilities, imprecise expectations of superiors and co-employees, excessive job stress, and role conflicts contribute to a lack of a feeling of connection among employees. As a result, employees experience pressure at work and develop a high intention of leaving the company.

1.1. Aims and hypotheses

Following the literature review, the study sets the following objectives:

1. To examine the various antecedents of turnover intention among university academicians.
2. To study the relationship between different antecedents of turnover intention among university academicians.

According to the literature review, the study chooses four critical elements of turnover intention: job stress, job engagement, job stress, and organizational commitment.

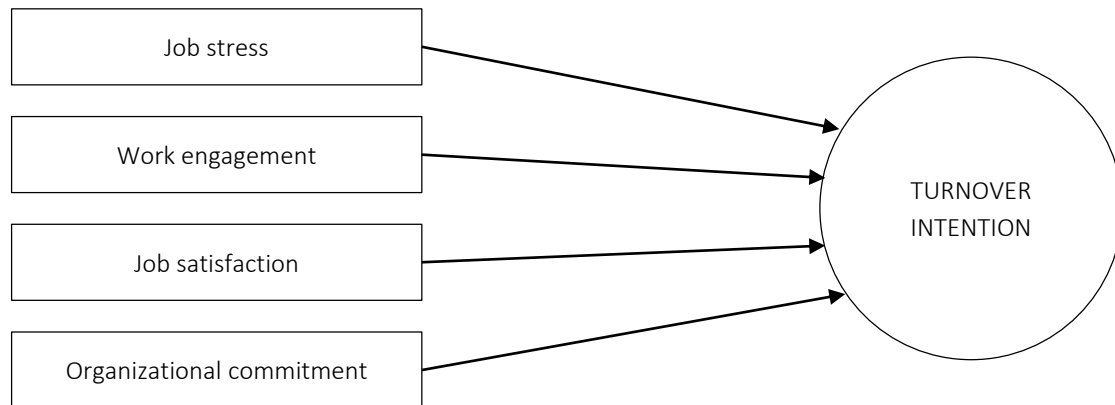


Figure 1. Research framework

The study elaborated on eight hypotheses; Figure 1 presents the study framework:

- H1: *There is a negative impact of work engagement on turnover intention.*
- H2: *There is a negative impact of job satisfaction on turnover intention.*
- H3: *There is a positive impact of job stress on turnover intention.*
- H4: *There is a negative impact of organizational commitment on turnover intention.*
- H5: *There is no significant relationship between turnover intention and job stress.*
- H6: *There is no significant relationship between turnover intention and job satisfaction.*
- H7: *There is no significant relationship between turnover intention and work engagement.*
- H8: *There is no significant relationship between turnover intention and organizational commitment.*

2. METHODOLOGY

The paper used both primary and secondary data to uncover the relevant results. The primary data were acquired using proper sampling methods and data collection instruments. As a result, appropriate questionnaires were adopted (Faisal & Naushad, 2021) and distributed among Saudi

Arabian academicians. The current study only focuses on the intention of academicians from various universities inside the Kingdom to get adequate responses. The questionnaire is divided into two parts: one assesses demographics, and the other contains questions to evaluate the research variables on a 5-point Likert scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree).

All the respondents in this study were university employees in Saudi Arabia. To guarantee that every member of the population had an equivalent and autonomous possibility of being chosen as a participant, the paper used simple random technique. 270 questionnaires were sent through Google Forms to various faculty members. 140 filled questionnaires were received back. The data were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools, mean, SD, correlation, and regression, through SPSS.

The reliability of the items was measured through Cronbach's Alpha (α). The analysis showed that all variables considered in the study have admissible alpha values above Nunnally's (1967) threshold of .50 to .60 for adequate internal consistency; furthermore, the study concluded that only one scale item had a lower alpha value in comparison to other items (Table 1). Multiple regressions were used to test the hypotheses. Data on the respondents' demographic profile, including gender, age, educational attainment, marital status, and experience, were gathered using a different template. To evaluate the data and provide relevant conclusions that fulfilled the study's requirements, descriptive and inferential statistics were employed.

Table 1. Reliability results

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
Job stress	0.532
Job satisfaction	0.749
Organizational commitment	0.794
Work engagement	0.736
Turnover intention	0.863

3. RESULTS

Table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of university academicians. The majority of respondents are assistant professors ($n = 107$, 76.4%), followed by the other staff ($n = 18$, 12.9%), and lecturers ($n = 12$, 8.6%); associate professors scored the 3. Most respondents hold a Ph.D. degree ($n = 104$, 74.3%), followed by the postgraduates ($n = 33$, 23.6%) and others ($n = 3$, 2.1 %). Male respondents constitute the larger proportion ($n = 92$, 65.7%) compared to 48 females (34.3%). 117 (83.6%) respondents are married, 17 (12.1%) are single, and 6 (4.3%) are divorced.

Table 2 also exhibits the frequency and percentage of the respondents' age groups: 42 (30%) of academicians are 40-45, followed by 35-50 ($n = 37$, 26.4%), and the lowest number of respondents are 20-25 and 50-65 ($n = 3$, 2.1%). Most respondents are from the government sector ($n = 80$, 57.1%), followed by the private sector ($n = 57$, 40.7%). Table 2 demonstrates that 33 (23.6%) respondents have 10 years of experience, 19 (13.6%) – 4 years of experience, and 3 – 14, 16, and 17 years of experience, respectively.

Table 2. Demographics frequency and percentage

Source: Author compilation.

Items	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative %
Position			
Lecturer	12	8.6	8.6
Assistant Professor	107	76.4	85.0
Associate Professor	3	2.1	87.1
Others	18	12.9	100.0
Qualification			
Postgraduate	33	23.6	23.6
Ph.D.	104	74.3	97.9
Others	3	2.1	100.0
Gender			
Male	92	65.7	65.7
Female	48	34.3	100.0

Items	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative %
Marital Status			
Single	17	12.1	12.1
Married	117	83.6	95.7
Divorced	6	4.3	100.0
Age			
20-25 years old	3	2.1	2.1
25-30 years old	5	3.6	5.7
30-35 years old	33	23.6	29.3
35-40 years old	37	26.4	55.7
40-45 years old	42	30.0	85.7
45-50 years old	12	8.6	94.3
50-55 years old	3	2.1	96.4
Sector			
Government	80	57.1	57.1
Private	57	40.7	97.9
Others	3	2.1	100.0
Experience with the current organization			
1 year	12	8.6	8.6
2 years	7	5.0	13.6
3 years	6	4.3	17.9
4 years	19	13.6	31.4
5 years	16	11.4	42.9
6 years	12	8.6	51.4
7 years	13	9.3	60.7
8 years	9	6.4	67.1
10 years	33	23.6	90.7
12 years	4	2.9	93.6
14 years	3	2.1	95.7
16 years	3	2.1	97.9
17 years	3	2.1	100.0
Total	140	100.0	

3.1. Descriptive, correlations, and regressions analyses

Table 3 demonstrates the five factors examined and their means and standard deviations. Regarding the factors influencing plans to quit the current position, participants gave the maximum mean to organization commitment (20.09 and $SD = 4.122$). The second highest mean is related to job satisfaction (19.14 and $SD = 4.213$). Turnover intention obtained the third highest mean (18.66 and $SD = 3.562$), job stress had a mean of 16.56 ($SD = 3.070$), and the lowest mean was given to work engagement (15.91 and $SD = 4.191$). The mean values clearly define the variables that enhance the turnover intentions of university employees.

Table 3. Mean and standard deviation

Source: Author compilation.

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
Turnover intention	18.66	3.562
Job stress	16.56	3.070
Job satisfaction	19.14	4.213
Organizational commitment	20.09	4.122
Work engagement	15.91	4.191

Table 4 exhibits descriptive statistics (mean and SD) and the correlation between the variables. The findings showed a strong correlation between all of the variables except for job stress ($r = 0.305$, $p > 0.01$) and job satisfaction ($r = 0.888$, $p > 0.01$), with the lowest values. Job stress, job satisfaction, organization commitment, and work engagement showed high correlation and significant relationships among each other. Organizational commitment showed a low significant correlation ($r = 0.201$, $p > 0.05$).

Based on the results, H5, H6, H7, and H8 are accepted: there is a positive relationship between job stress, job satisfaction, work engagement, and organizational commitment in relation to turnover intention. The results are significant at p-value 0.001 and 0.005.

Table 4. Correlations of variables

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Turnover intention	Job stress	Job satisfaction	Organizational commitment	Work engagement
Turnover intention	18.66	3.562	1				
Job stress	16.56	3.070	.305**	1			
Job satisfaction	19.14	4.213	-.018	.676**	1		
Organizational commitment	20.09	4.122	.201*	.689**	.810**	1	
Work engagement	15.91	4.191	.072	.720**	.888**	.865**	1
			.397	.000	.000	.000	

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5. Model summary of regression analysis between turnover intention, job stress, job satisfaction, work commitment, and organizational commitment

Model Summary ^b										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.500 ^a	.250	.228	3.129	.250	11.270	4	135	.000	1.506

Note: a. Predictors: (Constant), Work Engagement, Job Stress, Organizational Commitment, Job satisfaction. b. Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention.

Table 5 shows the R-value of regression hypotheses H1, H2, H3, and H4 put forward analyzing through multiple linear regression.

Table 6 shows that the framework was statistically significant, as the F value is 11.270 (sig. 0.01). The independent variable might account for up to 25% of the variation in employees' intentions to leave their jobs, as R^2 explains variance among the dependent and independent variables in Table 5. Except for work engagement, all other variables significantly affect turnover intention.

Table 7 demonstrates that three independent variables – job satisfaction ($\beta = -0.577$; sig. 0.01), job stress ($\beta = 0.500$; sig. 0.01), and organization commitment ($\beta = 0.514$; sig. 0.01) – have a significant impact, whereas work engagement ($\beta = -0.221$; sig. > 0.05) has no effect. Job satisfaction has a more significant effect than organizational commitment and job stress in influencing employees' turnover intention. Therefore, the analytical findings demonstrate that H2, H3, and H4 are accepted, whereas H1 is rejected. Table 7 shows no collinearity problem among the variables tested in the study. The tolerance level in all variables recorded more than 0.1, which is generally consid-

Table 6. ANOVA^b

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	441.478	4	110.370	11.270	.000 ^a
	Residual	1322.064	135	9.793		
	Total	1763.543	139			

Note: a. Predictors: (Constant), Work Engagement, Job Stress, Organizational Commitment, Job satisfaction. b. Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention.

Table 7. Coefficients^a

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	12.443	1.665		7.472	.000		
	Job stress	.580	.127	.500	4.551	.000	.461	2.171
	Job satisfaction	-.487	.140	-.577	-3.486	.001	.203	4.926
	Organizational commitment	.444	.133	.514	3.350	.001	.236	4.243
	Work engagement	-.188	.168	-.221	-1.116	.266	.142	7.048

Note: a. Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention.

Table 8. Collinearity diagnostics^a

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions				
				(Constant)	Job stress	Job satisfaction	Organizational commitment	Work engagement
1	1	4.937	1.000	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
	2	.037	11.504	.41	.01	.02	.01	.07
	3	.012	20.187	.26	.95	.07	.02	.00
	4	.008	24.759	.01	.01	.44	.72	.00
	5	.005	30.965	.32	.02	.48	.26	.93

Note: a. Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention.

Table 9. Residuals statistics^a

Residuals	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	15.13	23.53	18.66	1.782	140
Residual	-8.327	6.070	.000	3.084	140
Std. Predicted Value	-1.977	2.736	.000	1.000	140
Std. Residual	-2.661	1.940	.000	.986	140

Note: a. Dependent Variable: Turnover Intention.

ered a good fit. Table 8 and 9 show the Collinearity of various dimensions of turnover Intention and their variance Proportion and residual statistics of dependent variable respectively.

4. DISCUSSION

This study concluded that university academicians play a vital role in the development of a young workforce for a country. This study aimed to demonstrate the relationship between job stress, work engagement, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention of university

academicians in Saudi Arabia. Academicians are the busiest employees of the university as they have many other responsibilities apart from teaching.

According to the study's findings, job satisfaction, job stress, and organizational engagement are the strongest effective determinants for organizations to minimize the degree of job turnover intention among academicians. Universities should offer satisfying and friendly work environments, demanding and relevant responsibilities, work-life balance, and a pleasant work atmosphere demonstrating the organization's engagement to all university employees. Employees who feel valued and that they

belong to the organization are likelier to stay on the job. Employees are less likely to plan to leave their jobs when they have more robust levels of job satisfaction, low level of job stress at work, and high organizational engagement (Cho et al., 2009).

Moreover, academicians should have reachable policies implemented by universities to guarantee that all employees openly speak about the university policies. There should be two-way or clear communication between employees and university management. If employees are encouraged to express their thoughts and views, they will do it with all of their energy and passion. In addition, it will indirectly increase employees' perception of connection to their work with the organization.

Briggs et al. (2022) found that improved employee communication may foster a great workplace culture that contributes collaboration, excellent interaction, and high loyalty. Work engagement shows a significant impact on turnover intention. The results concluded that job satisfaction, job stress, and organizational commitment are significant determinants of employee satisfaction, whereas work engagement has no effect. Job satisfaction has the highest significance compared to organizational commitment and job stress in influencing employee turnover intention. Boštjančič and Slana (2018) suggested procedures for routinely evaluating the degree of work engagement and assessing the result, which will help businesses identify the present degree of staff work involvement and then take remedial response as required.

Eight hypotheses were proposed in this study to investigate the relationships between the variables. H5, H6, H7, and H8 ascertained the association between job stress, job satisfaction, work engagement, organization commitment, and intentions to leave. The analysis confirmed a positive relationship between all the variables in relation to turnover intention: job stress, job satisfaction, work engagement, and organizational commitment have a positive impact on the turnover intention of university employees. The findings stressed the low significance of job stress in turnover intention.

Moreover, there is much pressure from other responsibilities simultaneously with teaching at universities. Therefore, work environment and work engagement play an essential role in stimulating the desire of an employee to switch to a new job. There is a strong correlation between turnover intention, job satisfaction, work engagement, and organizational commitment. Harini et al. (2020) found a direct and unfavorable correlation between turnover intention and level of work involvement, which supports the present findings. Additionally, a favorable and significant association exists between job satisfaction and turnover intention. This finding is similar to Aziz et al. (2021), who showed that if employees are unsatisfied, their desire to leave their position will rise. Finally, there is an unfavorable and significant correlation between organizational engagement and turnover intention.

CONCLUSION

This study researched the antecedents influencing turnover intention among academicians in Saudi Arabian universities. The findings demonstrate that employee's turnover intention reduces when organizational engagement among employees rises; this conclusion supports previous studies. The results of study concluded that job satisfaction, job stress, and organizational engagement are the strongest effective determinants for organizations to minimize the degree of job turnover intention among academicians. Universities should provide a proper balance between work and life, and a pleasant work atmosphere.

The paper notices the issues that lead to high turnover intention among the academicians in the universities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Academicians have become valuable assets to the country in generating highly proficient and well-rounded graduates. The findings are instrumental in designing policies, particularly in providing a better working environment for university academic staff, which is critical in achieving Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. This study offers several ideas to enhance satisfaction and work engagement in the universities that might aid the progress of study and practitioners; this will lead to decreased employee turnover intention.

This paper has several limitations. First, future research can consider other determinants that affect turnover intention since autonomous factors in this study account for job turnover intention. Second, this study is limited to the academicians in Saudi Arabian universities. Further research can compare the results by sampling two or more private or public universities or conducting country comparisons of turnover intention. Further analysis may also include other areas like Saudi Arabia's telecom sector or petroleum industry. Effective management or group dynamics are additional variables that may influence job turnover intention. In addition, this study suggests that social support, strength, and conditioning factors may be investigated in future research.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Azam Malik.
 Data curation: Azam Malik.
 Formal analysis: Azam Malik.
 Funding acquisition: Azam Malik.
 Investigation: Azam Malik.
 Methodology: Azam Malik.
 Project administration: Azam Malik.
 Resources: Azam Malik.
 Software: Azam Malik.
 Supervision: Azam Malik.
 Validation: Azam Malik.
 Visualization: Azam Malik.
 Writing – original draft: Azam Malik.
 Writing – review & editing: Azam Malik.

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