

# The Influence of Employee Engagement and Perceived Organizational Support on Turnover Intention in Guangxi Private Colleges and Universities

Ma Yumei<sup>1,2</sup>, Pei Sung Toh<sup>1</sup>, Xu Yongqiang<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Business, Economics and Accountancy, University Malaysia Sabah, 88400, Malaysia, <sup>2</sup>School of Business, Nanning University, 530200, China

Corresponding Authors Email: 290613298@qq.com

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v14-i9/22250>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBS/v14-i9/22250

**Published Date:** 10 September 2024

## Abstract

Based on the social exchange theory, the paper explores the influence mechanism of perceived organizational support, employee engagement, psychological capital and turnover intention among teachers in Guangxi private colleges and universities. The mediating role of psychological capital in the relationship between Perceived organizational support and turnover intention is also studied. Then, the theoretical model is constructed and a questionnaire survey is conducted among 206 teachers in Guangxi private colleges and universities. AMOS, SPSS27.0 were used for correlation analysis and regression analysis of the data. The results show that the teachers' perceived organizational support, employee engagement and its three dimensions have significant negative correlation with the turnover intention. Overall, psychological capital plays a mediating role in the relationship between perceived organizational support and turnover intention, Finally, some suggestions are given to reduce the turnover intention of teachers in private colleges and universities.

**Keywords:** Perceived Organizational Support, Employee Engagement, Psychological Capital, Turnover Intention, Teachers.

## Introduction

Private higher education is an important part of China's higher education system. Private colleges and universities in Guangxi account for 31.8% of all colleges and universities in Guangxi, exceeding the national average of 3.5%(Jiang, 2018)[1]. From the perspective of different types of Chinese colleges and universities,17% of teachers at private colleges and universities intend to leave in the future, compared with only 4.5% at public colleges and universities (Mycos Research, 2022)[2].The high turnover rate of teachers will inevitably affect the teaching quality of private education and the long-term development , and the voluntary turnover of teachers will usually cause huge financial pressure and increase the

difficulty of human resource management, and even destroy social harmony and stability .

**Significance**

This study takes teachers in private colleges and universities in Guangxi as the object, establishes a model with psychological capital as a mediating variable, discusses the effects of teachers' engagement and perceived organizational support on turnover intention, further deepens the theory, fills the gap and expands the application space of the theory. In addition, this study can help administrators of private colleges and universities to find the problems existing in the current management system, and put forward solutions to reduce the turnover rate of teachers. The research results provide an important reference for the human resource management of private colleges and universities in other regions of China.

**Literature Review and Research Hypothesis**

University administrators and researchers have long been concerned with the issue of teacher turnover. The frequent rotation of instructors will not only escalate the toll on human resources and organizational instability, but also exert a detrimental influence on the sustainable advancement of schools. Turnover intention is a measure of the psychological inclination of employees to leave their current employer. It is a more accurate predictor of actual turnover behavior. Studies have revealed that seeing a strong level of support from an employer is a crucial factor in both attracting and retaining personnel. Research consistently demonstrates a negative correlation between employee engagement and turnover rate. Furthermore, psychological research indicates a strong correlation between psychological capital and individual psychological and behavioral factors [3]. On this basis, this paper studies the effects of perceived organizational support, employee engagement and psychological capital on teachers' turnover intention in private universities. The framework of this paper is as follows:

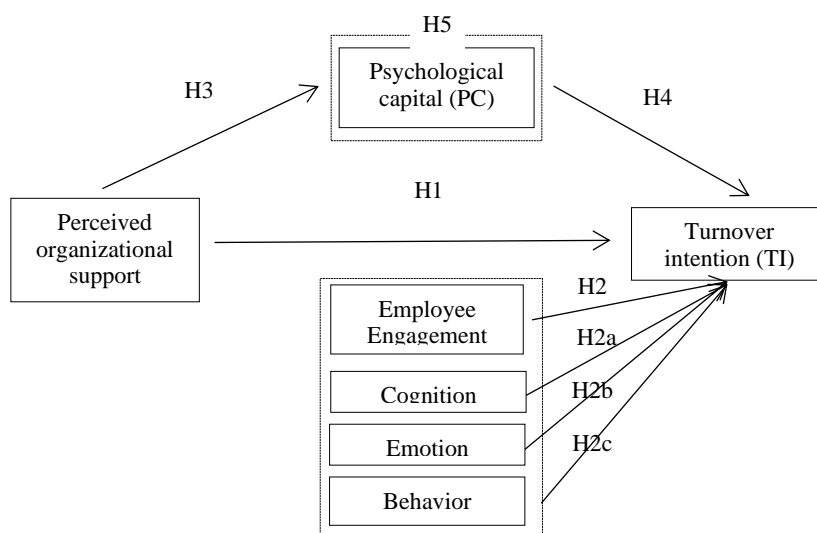


Figure 1. Theoretical model framework

**Perceived Organizational Support**

In 1986, Eisenberger introduced the notion of Perceived Organization Support (POS) based on the principles of social exchange theory. Perceived organizational support refers to employees' general perception and belief of how the organization values their contributions

and prioritizes their interests. Subsequently, scholars from Europe and America have created and devised a sequence of survey scales. For instance, Esienberger created a 36-item questionnaire to assess organizational support [4], and Chinese scholars have also made significant contributions in this area. In their study, Ling and Zhang (2001) examined the correlation between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment. They also evaluated the elements in Eisenberg's questionnaire. Two elements are identified: the level of support provided by the business for employees' personal and professional lives [5]. The questionnaire design by Eisenberger (1986) was utilized in this study to gather content for assessing teachers' opinion of organizational support.

According to the social exchange theory, teachers will only exhibit a positive working attitude and remain committed to the school if they perceive attention and support from the organization. This reciprocity encourages them to teach more attentively and reduces the likelihood of their leaving. Thus, the subsequent suppositions are being made:

H1: Perceived organizational support has a significant negative impact on turnover intention.

### **Employee Engagement**

In 1990, Kahn introduced the concept of employee engagement. Kahn emphasized that engagement should encompass emotional, cognitive, and physical aspects, which may be assessed through employees' psychological involvement in their work, understanding of their task and organization, and ultimate behavior [6]. Schaufeli (2000) assesses work engagement by considering three dimensions: vitality, devotion, and engagement, which all contribute to work pleasure. Schaufeli (2004) subsequently assessed participation using three dimensions: cognition, emotion, and conduct.

This paper measures the employee engagement of university professors by examining three dimensions: cognition, emotion, and conduct. Cognition, in this context, pertains to the psychological condition in which employees are able to recognize and appreciate their own value and significance within their profession. Emotion encompasses the level of proactivity and willingness displayed by individuals in their work, as well as their psychological stamina and ability to bounce back from challenges. The behavior is task-oriented and resistant to extraneous disruptions. Therefore, make the following assumptions:

H2: Employee engagement has a negative effect on turnover intention.

H2a: Cognition has a negative effect on turnover intention.

H2b: Emotion has a negative effect on turnover intention.

H2c: Behavior has a negative effect on turnover intention.

### **Psychological Capital and its Mediating Effect**

Psychological capital encompasses the overall psychological states that enhance an individual's job performance. These positive psychological elements have the potential to foster positive work behaviors among employees. At present, the academic community generally accepts the definition of psychological capital by Luthans, Youssef and Avolio (2007) as the concept and measurement method of psychological capital. In their view, psychological capital refers to "the individual's positive psychological development state."

Furthermore, the academic community has increasingly focused on the significance of organizational support and psychological capital. Despite the significance of perceptual organizational support and psychological capital in the field of organizational behavior, there is a lack of study exploring the comprehensive connection between these two notions. Nevertheless, certain study examines the impact of perceived organizational support on psychological capital as distinct topics. This study posits that there exists an intrinsic connection between organizational support and psychological capital. Specifically, organizational support is deemed a prerequisite for enhancing the level of psychological capital. This study cites the notion of psychological capital as provided by Luthans, Youssef, and Avolio (2007), and presents the following assumptions:

H3: Perceived organizational support has a positive effect on psychological capital.

Psychological capital refers to a favorable mental state and a powerful mental asset that can enhance an individual's subjective well-being and performance. The study reveals a positive relationship between psychological capital and job performance. It also indicates a negative correlation between organizational support and turnover intention. In other words, individuals with higher levels of psychological capital tend to have better performance, while receiving greater support and assistance from the organization. This support can help alleviate physical and mental exhaustion and enhance individuals' work efforts. Psychological capital exerts a beneficial influence on job performance. Several research have indicated that there is a negative correlation between psychological capital and turnover intention. As the workload of an individual increases, their psychological capital decreases, leading to a decline in self-confidence and the emergence of unpleasant feelings such as disappointment and depression. This, in turn, contributes to the development of turnover intention. To summarize, this paper puts out the following hypotheses:

H4: Psychological capital has a negative effect on turnover intention.

There is a limited amount of research on the role of employee psychological capital as a mediator. Most of the existing studies primarily examine how psychological capital influences employee work behavior. In their 1995 study, Renn and Vandenberg examined the impact of Critical Psychological States (CPS) on the connection between perceived organizational support and individual performance. They found that Psychological variables did indeed operate as a mediator in this relationship [9]. Tian and Xie (2010) demonstrated that perceived organizational support and psychological capital significantly influence workers' work behavior. Additionally, they found that psychological capital acts as a mediator in the relationship between perceived organizational support and employees' work behavior [10]. The literature mentioned above serves as a foundation for investigating the role of psychological capital as a mediator in this study. Consequently, this study presents the following hypotheses:

H5: Psychological capital plays a mediating role between perceived organizational support and employee turnover intention.

## Methods

The factors measured in this article are perceived organizational support, psychological capital, employee engagement, and turnover intention. These factors are obtained from prior research to guarantee the integrity of the data. The paper adopted Lambert's (2001) perspective on the dependent variable turnover intention, which refers to the employees' inclination or readiness to quit their current job, manifested as a desire to leave or explore alternative employment opportunities [11]. Furthermore, the study involved the examination of variables that encompassed many questions, and a Likert-5 scale was employed for measurement purposes. The participants of the study were educators employed by private colleges in Guangxi Province. This study utilizes the technique of destination sampling. The survey comprised digital questions. A total of 250 questionnaires were distributed. 230 were recovered, and 206 were effective, and the effective recovery rate was 89.6%. The respondents' profiles are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

### *Basic Information of Respondents*

Demographic variables	items	Percentage
Gender	Male	40.20%
	Female	59.80%
Marital status	Married	70.40%
	Single	30.60%
Work experience	Less than 1 year	18.10%
	1-3years	19.50%
	3-5years	20.10%
	5-10years	31.5%
	Above 10years	10.80%

## Reliability and Validity Tests

SPSS27.0 was used to conduct reliability test and exploratory factor analysis of the questionnaire. The reliability test results showed that the overall reliability coefficient of perceived organizational support was 0.911, and the employee engagement measurement coefficient was 0.786, the measurement coefficient of psychological capital was 0.815, and the measurement reliability coefficient of turnover intention was 0.883, both of which passed the reliability test. KMO Test and Barlett Test of Sphericity were used to test the validity of the questionnaire. KMO was greater than 0.8 and  $P < 0.001$ , indicating that the overall validity of the scale was good and passed the test. In this study, Amos was used to conduct confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on variables to test the discriminant validity among perceived organizational support, employee engagement, psychological capital and turnover intention, among which the single factor model fitted the best.  $\chi^2/df = 1.444 < 2.5$ , RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) = 0.060 < 0.08, CFI (Comparative Fit Index), GFI (Goodness-of-Fit Index), and TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index) were all greater than 0.9, and goodness of fit was significantly higher than other models. Therefore, this paper adopts single factor model to study.

## Correlation Analysis

The mean value, standard deviation and reliability coefficient of each variable can be obtained from Table 2. From the mean value in the table, the highest score is employee engagement

(M=3.72), indicating that most private college teachers have relatively high engagement to their current work. In addition, psychological capital is positively correlated with perceived organizational support ( $R = 0.561$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ), turnover intention is negatively correlated with perceived organizational support ( $R = -0.541$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ), turnover intention is negatively correlated with employee engagement ( $r = -0.456$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ). Turnover intention was negatively correlated with psychological capital ( $r = -0.316$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ).

Table 2  
*Correlation analysis*

Variables	Mea n	Standard deviation	1	2	3	4
Perceived organizational support(POS)	3.08	0.71	0.911			
Employee Engagement(EE)	3.72	0.77	0.672	0.786		
Psychological capital(PC)	3.15	0.82	0.561*	0.577	0.815	
Turnover intention(TI)	3.37	0.91	-0.541*	-0.456*	-0.316*	0.883

Note: Significance level \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

### Regression Analysis

The regression analysis in this paper is structured into three sections. Firstly, it examines the relationship between organizational support, employee engagement, psychological capital, and turnover intention. Secondly, it investigates the impact of organizational support on psychological capital. Lastly, it explores the mediating effect of psychological capital on the relationship between organizational support and turnover intention.

① Regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between organizational support, employee engagement, psychological capital, and turnover intention. To further examine the impact of different factors on teachers' intention to leave their jobs, we conducted regression analyses to assess the relationship between organizational support and turnover intention, employee engagement and its three dimensions and turnover intention, and psychological capital and turnover intention. The specific results are shown in Table 3:

Table 3

*Regression of perceived organizational support, employee engagement and psychological capital to turnover intention*

Hypot thesis	Dependent variable	Independent variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj . R <sup>2</sup>
			B	Std. Error	Beta				
H1		(Constant)	4.326	0.412	/	4.783	0.000	0.461	0.384
		POS	-8.357	0.081	-8.751	3.274**	0.000		
H2		(Constant)	12.651	0.044	/	4.211	0.000	0.319	0.256
		EE	-5.601	0.205	-4.550	2.115*	0.015		
H2a		(Constant)	12.441	0.431	/	7.112	0.000	0.019	0.011
		Cognition	-0.341	0.944	-0.222	7.743*	0.020		
H2b	TI	(Constant)	22.332	0.364	/	6.489	0.000	0.089	0.061
		Emotion	-11.35	0.965	-10.023	2.889**	0.003		
H2c		(Constant)	12.542	0.042	/	3.501	0.000	0.419	0.401
		Behavior	-6.321	0.429	-4.773	2.901**	0.007		
H4		(Constant)	4.403	0.827	/	5.708	0.000	0.075	0.075
		PC	-5.208	0.556	-3.884	1.411*	0.021		

Note: Significance level \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

As can be seen from the regression analysis results in Table 3, the regression coefficient of perceived organizational support is significant at the level of 0.01 and has a negative impact, which means that for teachers in Guangxi private colleges and universities, the higher the perceived organizational support is, the lower the probability of turnover intention. The results of regression analysis support H1.

There is a significant negative correlation between employee engagement and turnover intention at 0.05. Among the three dimensions, there is a significant negative correlation between engagement cognition and turnover intention at the level of 0.05, while there is a significant negative correlation between engagement emotion and turnover intention at the

level of 0.01 in the other two dimensions. In other words, the higher the degree of teacher engagement, the lower the tendency to quit. Supporting the hypothesis H2, H2a, H2b, and H2c. In addition, from the analysis of the standard coefficient of each variable, the standardized regression coefficient (absolute value) of the three dimensions of employee engagement are 0.222, 10.023, and 4.773 respectively, indicating that teachers' engagement emotion has the greatest influence in the three dimensions.

In the regression model of teachers' psychological capital on turnover intention, there is a significant negative correlation between psychological capital and turnover intention at 0.05 level.

② The regression of perceived organizational support and psychological capital.

Table 4

*The regression of perceived organizational support and psychological capital*

Hypothesis	Dependent variables	Independent variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>
			B	Std. Error	Beta				
H3	PC	(Constant)	14.522	0.720	/	2.598	0.000	0.039	0.031
		POS	3.394	0.224	3.007	2.741**	0.003		

Note: Significance level \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

As can be seen from Table 4, in the regression model of perceived organizational support and psychological capital, there is a significant positive correlation between perceived organizational support and psychological capital at the level of 0.01, supporting hypothesis H3.

③ The mediating effect of psychological capital on organizational support and turnover intention.

Assuming that H3 and H4 have been verified, according to the obtained results, that is, the conditions of the intermediate variable test are met, and the regression results of psychological capital as the intermediate variable are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

*The mediating effect of psychological capital on perceived organizational support and turnover intention*

Hypothesis	Dependent variable	Independent variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>
			B	Std. Error	Beta				
H5	TI	(Constant)	4.571	0.093	/	1.169	0.000	0.535	0.419
		POS	-7.236	0.617	-6.853	-4.235**	0.000		
		PC	-3.584	0.396	-2.654	-3.269**	0.006		

Note: Significance level \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ .



As can be seen from Table 5, the perceived organizational support, psychological capital and turnover intention are significantly negatively correlated at the level of 0.01. Therefore, the results of the intermediary regression model support hypothesis H5.

### **Conclusions**

This study examines the intention of instructors to leave their positions in private colleges and universities in Guangxi. It takes into account the impact of teachers' perception of organizational support, level of employee engagement, and psychological capital on their intention to leave. By thoroughly analyzing the existing study findings, the research model is formed, and the research hypothesis is put forward. Regression analysis is used to examine the functional mechanism of organizational support, employee engagement, psychological capital, and turnover intention. The empirical investigation validated that there is a substantial negative correlation between the sense of organizational support, employee engagement, and their respective three dimensions with turnover intention. Additionally, psychological capital also showed a significant negative correlation with turnover intention in general. In summary, psychological capital acts as a mediator in the connection between organizational support and turnover intention.

### **Suggestions to Reduce Teachers' Turnover Intention**

Provide extensive career development opportunities and continuous training programs to enhance professional identity and future development expectations. Build a positive campus culture that emphasizes teamwork and shared honor and enhances cohesion and a sense of belonging among faculty.

Pay attention to the living and working conditions of teachers and provide flexible working arrangements; Implement fair compensation systems and incentive programs. The school provides mental health counselling services, support hotline and mental health workshops to help teachers cope with stress at work and in life and enhance their mental resilience. Training in mindfulness meditation, stress management and time management will be conducted to enhance teachers' self-management ability and positive attitude.

By integrating the above strategies, private colleges and universities in Guangxi can significantly improve teachers' engagement, perceived organizational support and psychological capital, effectively reduce teachers' turnover tendency and promote the long-term and stable development of colleges and universities.

### **Acknowledgment**

This work is partially supported by my supervisor Dr. Toh Pei Sung. The authors also gratefully acknowledge the helpful comments and suggestions of the reviewers, which have improved the presentation.

## References

- Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986). Perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 71*(3), 500.
- Hanna, S., Rosen, M., Eisenberger, P., Rasero, L., & Lachman, L. (1978). GLC determination of warfarin in human plasma. *Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences, 67*(1), 84-86.
- Jiang, L. M. (2019). Investigation and analysis of the stable situation of teachers in Guangxi private universities. *Modern Enterprise, 11*, 133-134.
- Kahn, W. A. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. *Academy of Management Journal, 33*(4), 692-724.
- Krantz, D. S., & McCeney, M. K. (2002). Effects of psychological and social factors on organic disease: a critical assessment of research on coronary heart disease. *Annual Review of Psychology, 53*(1), 341-369.
- Lambert, E. G. (2001). To stay or quit: A review of the literature on correctional staff turnover. *American Journal of Criminal Justice, 26*(1), 61-76.
- Lin, W. Q., & Yang, H. J. (2006). The sense of organizational support of enterprise employees. *Journal of Psychology, 11*, 19-27.
- Luthans, F., Avolio, B. J., Avey, J. B., & Norman, S. M. (2007). Positive psychological capital: Measurement and relationship with performance and satisfaction. *Personnel Psychology, 60*(3), 541-572.
- Mycos. (n.d.). About Mycos. Retrieved from <http://www.mycos.com.cn/index.php/Index/service/nav/2/id/2.html>
- Schaufeli, W. B., & Peeters, M. C. (2000). Job stress and burnout among correctional officers: A literature review. *International Journal of Stress Management, 7*(1), 19-48.
- Tian, X. Z., & Xie, J. Y. (2010). The effect of psychological capital on the attitude and behavior of unemployed employees. *Soft Science, 24*(5), 4-10.