Determinants of Employee Turnover Intentions among IT Professionals in Bangladesh: A Conceptual Model

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ABSTRACT

Employee turnover intentions pose significant challenges to the ICT sector in Bangladesh, impacting organizational continuity, costs, and overall productivity. This research paper proposes a comprehensive framework to understand the factors influencing turnover intentions among IT professionals in Bangladesh. Another purpose to retain great employees because is very critical for firms as it fosters stability and progress. Drawing on existing literature, the research identifies key determinants such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, ethical work climate, job stress, and career advancement opportunities. The framework developed provides a nuanced understanding of turnover intentions by exploring the interactions between these factors and IWE. The research highlights that Islamic work ethics can play a significant role in moderating the effects of these factors on turnover intentions. This research findings is going to help government policy makers and corporate leaders to reduce the reasons of employee turnover intentions. The insights derived offer practical implications for managers and HR professionals in the IT sector, emphasizing the need for culturally aligned retention strategies. This study contributes to the theoretical discourse on turnover intentions and offers a foundation for future research to validate the proposed relationships. The significance of the study is both theoretical, enhancing existing literature on employee turnover in the ICT sector, and practical, aiding organizations in developing effective retention strategies.

Keywords: Career Advancement Opportunities, Employee Turnover Intentions, IT Sector, Job Satisfaction, Islamic Work Ethics

INTRODUCTION

Employee turnover intention is a significant challenge in organizational behaviour that impacts industries worldwide. High turnover rates can result in higher recruitment and training costs, lost organizational knowledge, and productivity disruptions. Globally, the significance of managing turnover intentions is well-

documented. Recent studies illustrate that turnover intentions strongly predict actual turnover, adversely impacting organizational performance and employee morale (Obeng et al., 2021). This issue is not confined to one sector but is particularly pressing in dynamic and rapidly evolving industries such as Information and Technology (IT). The global IT sector is experiencing rapid growth, driven by technological advancements, increased digitization, and the proliferation of internet-based services. However, this growth is paralleled by significant challenges, including high employee turnover rates. Studies have shown that turnover rates in the IT sector are higher than average due to factors such as job dissatisfaction, burnout, and better job opportunities elsewhere (Ladelsky & Lee, 2023; Maier et al., 2015). This trend is concerning as it threatens the sustainability and competitive edge of organizations within this sector.

Bangladesh's IT sector mirrors these global trends, experiencing rapid growth and high turnover rates. Governmental initiatives and international demand for outsourcing have positioned Bangladesh as an emerging player in the global IT market. However, the sector is plagued by high turnover rates, threatening its long-term sustainability. According to recent studies, turnover rates in Bangladesh's IT sector are notably higher compared to other industries (Raza & Hasan, 2021). Factors contributing to this phenomenon include job dissatisfaction, limited career advancement opportunities, and the lure of better employment prospects elsewhere.

Even though turnover intentions have been the subject of much research, the literature needs more information about how Islamic work ethics (IWE) could influence these intentions, particularly in Bangladesh's IT industry. Islamic work ethics, which emphasize hard work, honesty, fairness, and justice (A. Ali, 1988), are deeply ingrained in Bangladesh's cultural and religious fabric. These ethics potentially influence various organizational behaviours, including job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

To close this gap, this study will investigate the moderating influence of Islamic work ethics and the factors that lead to turnover intention among IT workers in Bangladesh. The study examines how Islamic work ethics moderate the links between job satisfaction, organizational commitment, ethical work climate, job stress, career progression prospects, and their effects on turnover intentions. By integrating IWE into the conceptual framework, this study provides a novel perspective on managing turnover intentions in a culturally specific context. Therefore, the objectives of this paper are threefold: first, to identify the key organizational and personal factors influencing turnover intentions among IT professionals in Bangladesh; second, to develop a conceptual framework incorporating these factors and IWE; and third, to provide actionable insights for practitioners to reduce turnover rates and enhance employee retention.

The scope and contribution of this study encompass a detailed analysis of the identified factors and their interrelationships, focusing on the ICT sector in Bangladesh. This paper seeks to enrich the existing literature by providing a culturally nuanced understanding of turnover intentions and proposing a conceptual framework that integrates Islamic work ethics. The findings are expected to contribute to both theory and practice, offering new insights into the role of cultural and ethical considerations in employee retention strategies.

This study addresses the interplay between organizational factors, personal factors, and Islamic work ethics to provide a holistic understanding of turnover intentions among IT professionals in Bangladesh. The insights derived from this research can help organizations develop more effective retention strategies aligned with their employees' cultural and ethical values, ultimately contributing to the sustainability and growth of the IT sector in Bangladesh.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee turnover intention is a critical area of study in organizational behaviour, influenced by various organizational and personal factors. With an emphasis on job satisfaction, organizational commitment, an ethical work environment, job stress, possibilities for career advancement, working conditions, and remuneration, this section examines the pertinent literature on turnover intentions. It also looks at the function Islamic work ethics (IWE) have in moderating these interactions, as well as the relevance of the Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). The objective is to create a framework that incorporates these elements and is the foundation for the next empirical research.

Employee Turnover Intention among IT Professionals

In human resource management, employee turnover intention refers to an employee's decision to leave their current job or organization. Employee turnover intention is frequently converted into numerous categories, including retirements, voluntary separations, layoffs, medical discharges, and firings, due to various causes of employee turnover. An organization benefits from some turnover. Functional or positive turnover is frequently required and contributes to maintaining a modern, productive, and healthy company. The agency can gain from functional turnover by eliminating underperforming staff, fostering cultural shifts, bringing in fresh perspectives, and cutting labor expenses (Schuck & Rabe-Hemp, 2018). In contrast, negative or dysfunctional turnover occurs when good-performing employees leave.

Every employee of an organization plays a crucial role in the company's productivity. However, IT professionals are essential to businesses because they promote technical innovation, guarantee system efficiency, and improve operational skills (Thomas, 2015).Their proficiency in creating, executing, and preserving information systems is essential to the competitiveness and agility of organizations in the digital age. According to Lacity and Willcocks (2018), IT specialists help companies achieve strategic business objectives by navigating complicated technology environments and keeping up with market developments. Their responsibilities go beyond technical assistance; they also include making strategic decisions and creating a fast-paced, technologically driven atmosphere crucial for a corporation's success in the current business environment.

The turnover intention of IT experts within a business can have noteworthy consequences, affecting multiple facets like efficiency, knowledge retention, and overall organization effectiveness. Numerous studies highlight the effects of IT staff turnover intention that offer insights into businesses' difficulties. Excessive turnover rates can interrupt ongoing projects and cause institutional expertise. Staff turnover can lead to budget increases, delays, and challenges in keeping the project running well (Carmeli et al., 2012). Moreover, the exit of seasoned IT workers frequently results in the loss of specific knowledge and abilities. This may impact the company's capacity for innovation, technological adaptation, and successful market competition. Companies must understand the intention of turnover to retain employees.

Furthermore, the surviving team members may feel unstable and unsatisfied due to high turnover. This could, therefore, have a detrimental effect on team morale, cooperation, and the workplace atmosphere (Subramony, 2009). Moreover, the ongoing churning of IT roles may raise the expense of hiring and training new employees. Companies may have to take money away from other strategic projects to devote more significant resources to luring and integrating new employees (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Furthermore, a high personnel turnover rate in IT can impede internal innovation and knowledge sharing. The departure of

seasoned workers may make it more challenging to exchange best practices and foster an environment of ongoing learning. The alignment of IT activities with broader company strategy may be disrupted by frequent turnover. Organizations that need to keep a steady staff of IT professionals may jeopardize long-term strategy.

In Bangladesh, the IT sector is expanding quickly and is regarded as a son of that economic growth. Nevertheless, this industry is growing slowly. Aside from Bangladesh's IT industry's potential and the expansion of the IT workforce, this sector needs to improve. The decline in the proportion of IT professionals, 76.50% in 2016–17 and 74.20% in 2022–2023 is the root of the issue (Figure 1). IT organizations experience a higher-than-average employee turnover rate among IT professionals, which directly and indirectly, hampers the industry's growth. Various effects arise from IT staff turnover, impacting how a business operates. To retain significant IT talent, the IT industry must explore factors that can reduce IT professional turnover intention. The following section discusses the influential factors that influence the intention of IT professionals to turnover employees in Bangladesh's IT industry.

Table 1 Percentage of ICT Workforce and Employed IT Professionals in Bangladesh

Country	% of Share to GDP	% of ICT Workforce
India	7.5%	3%
Malaysia	5.7%	7.9%
Indonesia	4.51%	0.50%
Vietnam	3.51%	1.1%
Bangladesh	1.25%	0.36%

Source: Bangladesh Labour Survey 2016-17, 2022.

Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention

An important factor in determining employee turnover intentions is job satisfaction. According to several research, lower turnover intentions are linked to improved work satisfaction. Several factors, such as the type of employment, pay, working conditions, and interpersonal interactions, are included in job satisfaction. According to Locke's range of affect theory, the gap between what employees want and receive from their jobs is what leads to job satisfaction. Satisfaction rises when expectations are met or surpassed, which lowers the chance of turnover (Locke, 1976).

Recent studies support the link between job satisfaction and turnover intentions in the IT sector. For

example, Chen et al. (2019) found that job satisfaction significantly reduces turnover intentions. Additionally, a study by highlighted that satisfaction with intrinsic job factors, such as job content and growth opportunities, is paramount in reducing turnover intentions in high-tech industries. This emphasizes the need for organizations to focus on creating fulfilling and engaging job roles to retain talent.

Furthermore, job satisfaction is influenced by various dimensions, including work environment, employee recognition, and organizational support. A supportive work environment and recognition of employee achievements can enhance job satisfaction, thus reducing turnover intentions. Recent meta-analyses have reinforced these findings, showing that job satisfaction remains a strong predictor of turnover intentions across different sectors and cultures (Podsakoff et al., 2007).

Ethical Work Climate and Turnover Intention

The ethical work climate is the common belief about what constitutes morally right behaviour and how ethical problems should be resolved within a company. Employee job satisfaction, organizational loyalty, and, eventually, their desire to leave the company can all be impacted by an ethical work environment (Demirtas & Akdogan, 2015). Research shows a decreased inclination to leave the company is linked to a favourable, ethical work environment. An ethical work environment lowers employees' intent to leave the company by increasing their organizational identity and trust. This conclusion is especially pertinent to the ICT industry, as moral problems about data security and privacy are standard.

An ethical work environment can improve organizational commitment, overall job satisfaction, and lower turnover intent. Workers who believe their company upholds ethical standards are more likely to be happier in their roles and become more committed to the company, which is vital for keeping top talent (Kalshoven et al., 2011).

Furthermore, the role of ethical leadership in fostering an ethical work climate must be considered. Ethical leaders set the tone for ethical behaviour within the organization, influencing the ethical environment and turnover intentions. Ethical leadership has positively impacted employee attitudes and behaviours, reducing turnover intentions (Kalshoven et al., 2011).

Job Stress and Turnover Intention

Workplace stress is a reliable indicator of plans to leave. Excessive job stress can cause burnout, lower job satisfaction, and, eventually, more intent to leave the company. The job demands-resources (JD-R) model offers a helpful conceptual framework for comprehending the relationship between turnover intentions and job stress. This concept states that if sufficient workplace resources, such as social support, autonomy, and feedback, are not provided, job demands, including workload, time pressure, and role ambiguity, can cause stress and burnout (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

Recent research in the IT sector underscores the importance of managing job stress to reduce turnover intentions. For instance, a study by Chen et al. (2019) found that job stress significantly predicts turnover intentions among IT professionals, with work overload and work-life imbalance being the most critical stressors. This suggests that organizations must implement strategies to mitigate job stress, such as providing flexible work arrangements and promoting work-life balance, to retain employees.

Furthermore, the impact of job stress on turnover intentions can be moderated by individual factors such as resilience and coping strategies. Employees with higher resilience and effective coping mechanisms are better equipped to handle job stress and are less likely to develop turnover intentions.

Career Advancement Opportunities and Turnover Intention

Career advancement opportunities are a critical factor influencing turnover intentions. Employees are more likely to stay with an organization if they perceive career growth and development opportunities. Career advancement opportunities can lead to job satisfaction and increased turnover intentions, especially in fast-paced industries like ICT, where continuous learning and development are crucial (Weng et al., 2010).

Studies have shown that perceived career growth significantly reduces turnover intentions. For example, Weng et al. (2010) found that career growth opportunities positively impact organizational commitment and reduce turnover intentions. This is particularly important in the ICT sector, where rapid technological changes require ongoing skill development and career progression.

Moreover, organizational support for career development, such as training programs, mentoring, and clear career paths, can enhance employees' perceptions of career advancement opportunities and reduce turnover intentions. Organizations that invest in their employee's career development are more likely to retain talent and maintain a competitive edge (Son & Kim, 2021).

Working Conditions and Employee Turnover Intention

A crucial component of organizational management is understanding the relationship between working conditions and employee turnover intention. High turnover rates are frequently the result of unfavourable working conditions, such as insufficient safety precautions, an overwhelming workload, and a lack of job satisfaction. Workers who experience a lack of respect or feel overworked are more likely to look for work elsewhere to find better job stability, a better work-life balance, and consideration for their well-being. On the other hand, productive workplaces with competitive pay, room for advancement, and a welcoming atmosphere can improve staff retention. Comprehending this dynamic is imperative for establishments seeking to curtail employee attrition, retain a proficient labour force, and cultivate an efficient and constructive work environment. Several studies have assessed the relationship between working conditions and employee turnover intention. Some of the recent studies are discussed below.

Amponsah-Tawiah et al. (2016) investigated how leadership affects job satisfaction and how employee turnover intention is affected in the mining sector. This study used the structural equation model (SEM) to test the hypotheses and analyse those factors. It also performs a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and a route analysis of the model. A study with 368 participants revealed that effective leadership positively impacted lower staff turnover (employee turnover intention) and work satisfaction. The survey also found that working conditions significantly affected employee attrition. The study used the complete research methodology to examine crucial elements connected to the human resource function, which was expressly designed for the mining sector. There are some limitations of this study.

Regarding staff turnover rates, the mining sector is among the best, yet the results of the current study for working conditions and characteristics differ from those of the previous research. Furthermore, the study's conclusions are restricted to Mongolia's mining industry. It cannot extrapolate the findings to other sectors.

Furthermore, Lee et al. (2021)investigated the possible effects of contracting out for employee turnover intention. The Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS), Fedscope, and the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS) of the U.S. Office of Federal Procurement Policy were the primary sources of the data. Since 1981, every contracting-related transaction of every federal agency has been documented in the FPDS. An unbalanced panel data structure is produced by combining FPDS, FEVS, and Fedscope information with a sample of 250 observations from 41 federal agencies between 2010 and 2017. The findings of panel data studies indicate that the intention rate of staff turnover rises when federal agencies engage in more contracting. Through its effect on job satisfaction, contracting out also indirectly impacts employee turnover intention. In addition, the study concluded that physical working conditions significantly impacted employee turnover. The study has several limitations. Initially, the panel model relied on aggregated data, which may result in data loss. This method also avoids drawing any firm conclusions regarding specific actions. Furthermore, there is a chance that this study has a common method bias. Third, even though it was previously argued that turnover intention is a topic worthy of investigation on its own, further studies should go beyond and examine the connection between contracting activity and actual departures as it is mediated by turnover intention.

Research to date clearly shows that employee turnover intention in a wide range of companies is greatly impacted by working conditions. Unfortunately, a large portion of this study is restricted to certain businesses or industries, which limits its generalize ability (Ogony & Majola, 2018). Furthermore, previous research indicated an insignificant effect between working conditions and employee turnover intention, which is inconsistent with previous results. This emphasizes the necessity for more varied research to comprehend the relationship between working conditions and employee turnover intention in many industries, especially in Bangladesh's understudied IT sector.

Salary and Turnover Intention

Salary is a fundamental component of job satisfaction and a crucial factor influencing turnover intentions. Competitive compensation is essential for attracting and retaining talent, especially in the ICT sector, where skilled professionals are in high demand. According to the equity theory, employees compare their inputs (e.g., skills, effort) and outputs (e.g., salary, benefits) with those of others. Perceived inequities in compensation can lead to job dissatisfaction and increased turnover intentions (Trevor et al., 1997)

Studies consistently show that higher salaries are associated with lower turnover intentions. For instance, Trevor et al. (1997)found that salary level and salary growth significantly reduce turnover intentions. This finding is particularly relevant for the ICT sector, where salary competition is intense, and employees frequently receive lucrative offers from competing firms.

Moreover, salary satisfaction can mediate the relationship between other job factors and turnover intentions. For example, a study found that salary satisfaction mediates the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions (Lum et al., 1998). This suggests that even if employees are satisfied with other aspects of their job, dissatisfaction with salary can still lead to turnover intentions.

Islamic Work Ethics (IWE) As a Possible Moderator

IWE is derived from the Qur'an and the Sunna of the Prophet Muhammad (A. J. Ali & Al-Owaihan, 2008). Muslims find guidance from Islam in all areas of life, including social and career pursuits (Rice, 1999). Islam

advises followers to work with total honesty and loyalty to their organization since doing so will provide them satisfaction and fulfilment. They need to keep working hard and making the most of the resources Allah, the Creator, has given them. IWE, which was established based on Islamic law and ethics, includes the labour of both community members and workers of organizations. According to the Qur'an, "one has nothing except that for which one strives" (Qur'an 53:39), and "for all people, there are ranks according to their deeds" (Qur'an 6:132). Muslims who uphold these ideals (i.e., IWE) will gain advantages for themselves, their communities, and their organizations.

Moral and social behaviour are both covered by IWE principles. According to Ali and Al-Owaihan (2008), they also reinforce organizational commitment and continuity by giving workers a sense of vitality and lowering their intention to resign. IWE promotes a strong work ethic and emphasizes diligence and precision. The Qur'an states, "Allah blesses the worker who learns and perfects his profession." In addition to encouraging employees to finish their work, IWE principles inspire them to execute it exceptionally well, raising employee alignment and lowering complaints and turnover (Mohammed & Nadkarni, 2011). Islamic work ethics, which strongly emphasize justice, honesty, and the community's welfare, can moderately affect career advancement opportunities, salary packages, working conditions, job satisfaction, and employee turnover. According to these ethics, employees should be treated fairly, paid fairly, and provided with environments that support their moral and spiritual beliefs. Organizations can improve employee happiness through respectful work environments and equitable promotion opportunities. This adherence to Islamic values increases workers' sense of purpose and community, which reduces attrition. Workers are likelier to stay devoted and motivated if they believe their employer values them and shares their ethical values.

According to Baron and Kenny (1986), a moderating variable is a type of variable in statistical analyses, particularly in the context of psychological, sociological, or behavioural studies, which affects the strength or direction of the relationship between an independent variable (cause) and a dependent variable (effect). In addition, the moderating variable can be introduced between an independent and dependent variable when their relationship among the variables is inconsistent (significant and insignificant). Different studies have used Islamic work ethics as a moderating variable (Subramony, 2009). For example, introduced IWE as a moderating variable between procedural justice and turnover intention. The study concluded that IWE moderates the relationship between procedural justice and turnover intention.

Moreover, introduced IWE as a moderating variable between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. The study found that IWE weakens the relationship between abusive supervision and knowledge hiding. From the literature review discussion, the study found inconsistent relationships between the independent and dependent variables (Amah & Oyetuunde, 2020; Anwar & Shukur, 2015; Elian et al., 2020; Jarupathirun & De Gennaro, 2018; Skelton et al., 2020). In addition, there needs to be more research in the literature concerning using IWE as a moderating variable between independent and dependent variables. So, this study proposes using IWE as a moderating variable, which can strengthen the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The following conceptual framework is proposed based on the literature review and underpinning theory. It integrates job satisfaction, organizational commitment, ethical work climate, job stress, and career advancement opportunities as key determinants of turnover intentions. The moderating role of Islamic work ethics is also incorporated to understand its impact on these relationships.
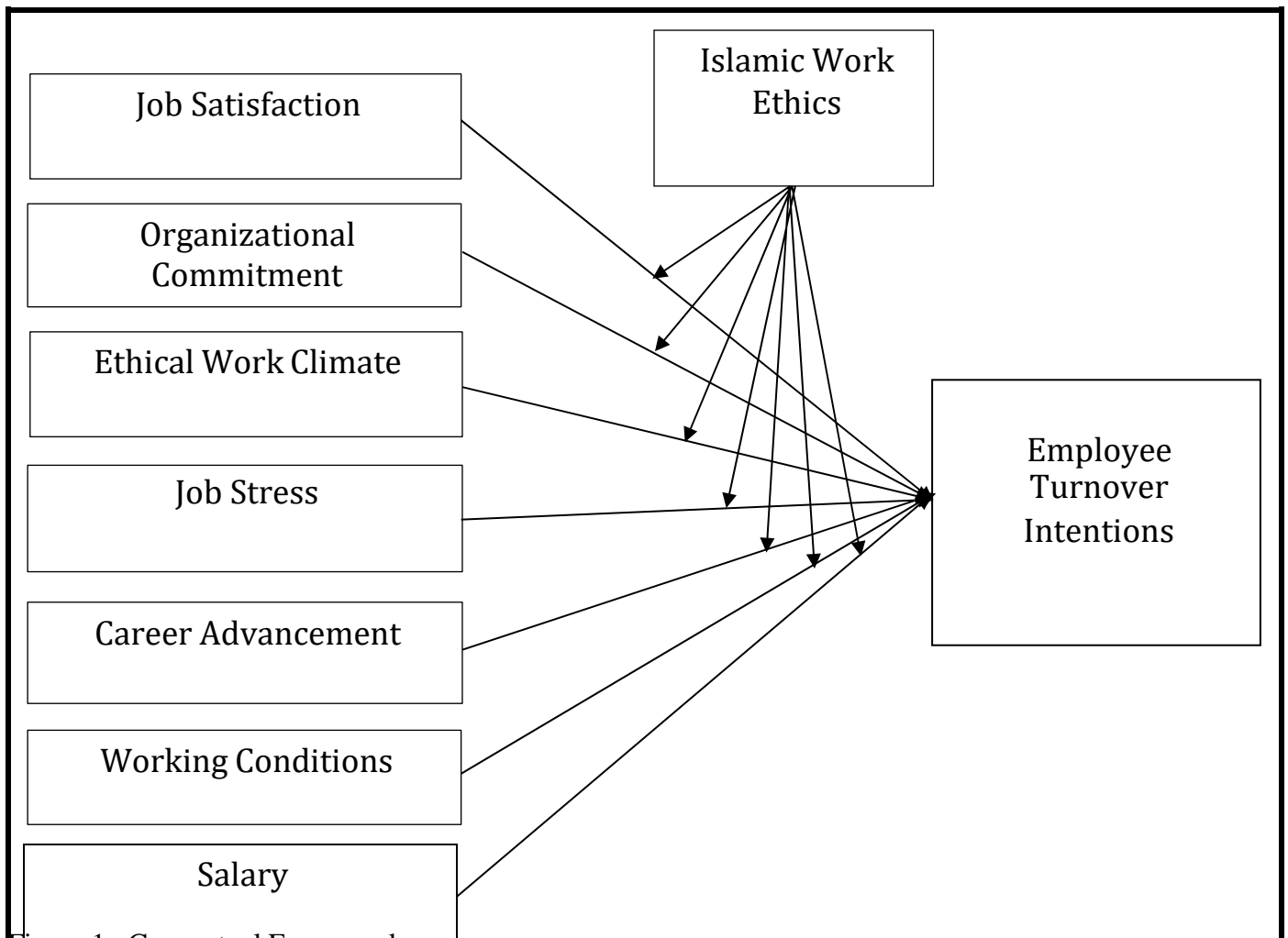
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework.

CONCLUSION

The study proposes a research framework to determine the effect of hygiene factors, such as salary and working environment, and motivating factors such as career advancement and job satisfaction, on employee turnover intention adapted from Herzberg's Motivation Hygiene Theory. The number of studies conducted on employee turnover intention in the ICT industry among IT professionals is rare. The study results will explore whether these hygiene and motivational factors affect the employee turnover intention of IT professionals. The findings of this study will expand the existing literature by providing new insights and perspectives by including hygiene and motivating factors along with Islamic work ethics as moderating variables to determine employee turnover intention among IT professionals in the Bangladesh industry.

The study utilizes "Islamic work ethics" as a moderating variable. Using IWE as a moderating variable in employee turnover studies enriches understanding of how cultural and religious values shape workplace behaviors. By incorporating ideas from Islamic teachings, it subverts the dominance of Western-centric models and expands the field of organizational behavior research. This methodology provides significant insights into worker motivation in Bangladeshi situations, where the overwhelmingly Muslim population is cultured differently. Additionally, it draws attention to the necessity of culturally aware management

procedures and guidelines and advances a more comprehensive comprehension of the factors influencing employee churn. In previous research, Islamic work ethics were not often used as a moderating variable. As a result, the study's findings will enrich the knowledge of employee turnover intention.

By examining the impact of factors that contribute to IT professionals' turnover intention, the study helps businesses create focused talent retention strategies. This study will highlight keeping talented IT workers essential in a field that values creativity and technical know-how. The ICT industry's high IT professional turnover raises the expense of hiring and training new employees. Businesses can create focused retention tactics that lower these expenses by comprehending there sons behind this turnover intention. Firms can optimize resource allocation through strategic investments in work-life balance programs, staff development, or workplace culture enhancements, leading to increased operational efficiency and profitability.

The IT ministry's policymakers will also benefit from the study's findings. Knowing the factors contributing to employee turnover intention provides valuable knowledge for keeping the nation's IT experts who want to leave for better job prospects in other Western countries. In light of the study's conclusions, the ministry can take appropriate action to preserve the nation's IT resources. This stability is essential for continued innovation, high-quality services, and a competitive advantage in a quickly changing sector. It will support the industry's economic expansion.

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